



THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

CENTRE FOR SKILLING AND
LIVELIHOOD - JANATA
VASAHAT

Implementing Partner:
Lighthouse Communities

Implementation Year:
Sept. 2021 - Nov. 2024

Assessment Year: Year 2025-26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 07
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04 - 05
	Key Impacts	06
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	07
02	OECD Framework	08 - 10
03	Introduction	11 - 14
	Background and Need for the Project	11
	Objectives of the Project	11
	Project Details	12
	Stakeholders & their role	12
	Project Activities	13 - 14
04	Research Methodology	15 - 17
	Objectives of the Study	15
	Use of Mixed Method Approach	15
	Application of Qualitative Techniques	15
	Application of Quantitative Techniques	16
	Ensuring Triangulation	16
	Sampling Framework	16
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	16
	Research Design	16
	Key Stakeholders Consulted	16
	Study Tools	17
	Ethical Considerations	17
05	Key Findings	18 - 34
06	Impact of the Program Across Multiple Levels	35 - 36
07	Case Studies	37 - 38
08	Challenge	39
09	Recommendation	40
10	Sustainability Exit Readiness	41
11	Conclusion	42 - 44

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Community/Stakeholder Feedback
Table 2	Stakeholders & their Role

LIST OF CHARTS

Chart No.	Chart Title
Chart 1 - 3	Demographic profile of beneficiaries
Chart 4-6	Educational and Occupational Status Prior to Program Implementation
Chart 7	Program Outreach
Chart 8-13	Foundation Course- Completion & Feedback
Chart 14-20	Skill Development Course- Completion & Feedback
Chart 21-24	Placement
Chart 25-30	Economic Impact
Chart 31-32	Intangible impacts

ABBREVIATIONS

AWS	Amazon Web Services
BFSI	Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EDP	Entrepreneurship Development Programme
FGD	Focus group discussion
FY	Financial Year
HSDI	HSBC Software Development (India) Private Limited (HSDI)
IT	Information Technology
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDC	National Skill Development Council
OBC	Other Backward Classes
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OJT	On-the-Job Training
PMKVY	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
SAP	Systems, Applications, and Products in Data Processing
SC	Scheduled Castes
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ST	Scheduled Tribes
SATB	Skill Analysis Test Battery
UBS	Union Bank of Switzerland

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In collaboration with Lighthouse Communities, Bajaj Auto Limited supported a skill-building initiative in the Singhagad ward of Pune, Maharashtra, India. It follows a two-stage approach: a Foundation Course focused on life skills, confidence-building, workplace readiness, and behavioural competencies, followed by a Skill Development Course aligned with market demand. Through activity-based learning, practical exposure, continuous assessment, and strong industry linkages, the program equips youth (especially young women) with the skills, attitudes, and support needed for transitioning into salaried employment or self-employment. Placement assistance and community engagement further ensure long-term social and economic impact. The program has been able to achieve substantial benefits with an increase in tangible and intangible benefits for urban youth.



**CERTIFICATE
DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM**

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Center for Skilling and Livelihood



Implementing Agency

Lighthouse Communities



Location

Janata Vasahat, Pune



Duration

Sept. 2021 - Nov. 2024



Assessment Location

Pune



Total Budget

304 Lakhs



Assessment Period

2025-26



Total no. of Beneficiaries

2257 candidates



Target Beneficiaries

Youth



Primary Programs

Foundation Course and Skill Development Course

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the sustainable livelihood program implemented in the Singhagad ward of Pune district, Maharashtra. Specifically, the assessment aimed to:



Assess the effectiveness of capacity-building and skill-development interventions in strengthening beneficiaries' technical life, and employability skills for sustainable livelihood options.



Assess post-training employability outcomes, including access to salaried employment or self-employment and changes in beneficiaries' livelihood patterns after course completion.



Examine the extent to which improved skills and employability have contributed to better economic conditions of urban youth from underprivileged families.



**ENTREPRENEURSHIP
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
AT JANTA VASAHAAT**

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: TO SET UP AND OPERATIONALISE A LIGHTHOUSE IN THE JANATA VASAHAT AT SINGHAGAD WARD OF PUNE THAT WILL ENABLE -2000 YOUTH TO HAVE A LIFE PATH OF DIGNITY AND OPPORTUNITY

ENHANCE (REACH, RELEVANCE, AND QUALITY OF SKILLING)



84.2%

of beneficiaries were in the 20-30 years age group indicating that the programme successfully reached its intended target group of transition-ready youth.



62.8%

women and 73.1% beneficiaries from SC, ST, and OBC communities demonstrate strong inclusion and gender responsiveness within the programme.



27.6%

of beneficiaries were unemployed and 25.1% were engaged in part-time work prior to enrolment highlighting the relevance of the intervention in addressing livelihood insecurity.



13.5%

of beneficiaries had been unemployed for over five years and among the unemployed, more than half experienced joblessness for two years or more, pointing to deep employability barriers.



26.5%

of beneficiaries learned about the programme through college outreach, 18.3% through WhatsApp, and 13% through rickshaw announcements indicating the effectiveness of multiple outreach channels in raising programme awareness.



98.1%

completed the Foundation Course and 91.8% completed the Skill Development Course, reflecting high programme relevance and delivery quality, with dropouts largely driven by personal, health, or employment-related reasons rather than dissatisfaction with the programme.

EMPOWER (CAPABILITIES, CONFIDENCE, AND EMPLOYABILITY READINESS)



100%

of beneficiaries reported recognising their own potential, with more than half also reporting improvements in communication skills, digital skills, and workplace awareness following the Foundation Course.

**76.2%**

rated training materials as highly useful and 79.6% rated practical sessions as highly useful, confirming the effectiveness of activity-based and experiential learning approaches.

**63.0%**

gained workplace etiquette skills, 43.4% developed interview preparation skills, and 43% improved communication skills, demonstrating substantial acquisition of employability-oriented soft skills among first-generation job seekers.

IMPROVE (EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOOD TRANSITIONS)

**52.9%**

of beneficiaries secured employment after completing the Skill Development Course, while 30.5% were placed after the Foundation Course, highlighting the complementary value of foundational and vocational skilling.

**16.6%**

of beneficiaries initiated self-employment, reflecting increased confidence and entrepreneurial intent.

**30.4%**

of beneficiaries continue in their current jobs, while 27.1% remained employed for less than six months, indicating positive placement outcomes but also highlighting the need for continued post-placement support to improve early-stage job retention.



**BENEFICIARY
INTERACTION DURING
THE FIELD STUDY**

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: TO SET UP AND OPERATIONALISE A LIGHTHOUSE IN THE JANATA VASAHAT AT SINGHAGAD WARD OF PUNE THAT WILL ENABLE -2000 YOUTH TO HAVE A LIFE PATH OF DIGNITY AND OPPORTUNITY

IMPROVE (ECONOMIC SECURITY AND HOUSEHOLD WELL-BEING)



The proportion of beneficiaries earning below ₹5,000 declined from 12.0% to 4.7%, while those earning above ₹20,000 increased from 0% to 26.0%, demonstrating strong upward income mobility.



48.7% of beneficiaries reported being highly satisfied and 47.6% somewhat satisfied with their current earnings, indicating overall satisfaction with income levels.



51.6% of beneficiaries reported regular savings, with savings directed towards marriages (22.3%), siblings' education (21.2%), and home improvement (17.9%), reflecting improved financial resilience.



46.2% of beneficiaries reported purchasing assets, indicating strengthened household financial stability.



73.3% of beneficiaries feel highly assured about their economic stability and 62.6% reported a high improvement in their living standards, with no respondents reporting stagnation or decline.

EMPOWER (SELF-RELIANCE, DIGNITY, AND SOCIAL STANDING)



67.8% of beneficiaries reported high levels of self-reliance and 28.6% reported moderate self-reliance, indicating strong gains in personal empowerment.



82.8% of beneficiaries reported improvement in their social and family reputation, highlighting the broader dignity and recognition associated with stable livelihoods.

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDERS FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Beneficiaries (Youth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth have seen a major transformation in their life. They reported higher self-confidence and a sense of empowerment. They also noted higher earnings and an improvement in the standard of living.
Community Members/Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-program counselling sessions and outreach activities conducted before enrolment helped parents understand the course structure, expectations, and potential benefits, which increased their trust and willingness to support their children's participation. Many parents observed positive behavioural changes in their children, such as improved discipline, confidence, communication skills, and a more responsible attitude towards family and work. Parents of placed beneficiaries especially appreciated the financial contribution made by youth after employment, noting improved household stability and reduced economic stress. They acknowledged the program's role in bringing visible social and economic change within the community.
Trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They highlighted the strength of the programme's activity-based curriculum, which actively engages learners. They also noted the high usefulness of training materials and practical sessions, as reflected in strong trainee feedback. Trainers also appreciated the monthly market-alignment sessions and employer feedback loops, which allowed them to update course content in line with industry requirements.



INTERACTION WITH A BENEFICIARY AT HER SHOP

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The program demonstrates high relevance to the needs, aspirations, and constraints of the target population. The demographic profile shows that 84.2% of beneficiaries fall within the 20-30 age group, a critical transition phase for education-to-work pathways. The high participation of women (62.8%) and substantial representation of SC, ST, and OBC groups (over 73% combined) further underscore alignment with equity and inclusion objectives. The livelihood baseline confirms relevance: 27.6% unemployed, 25.1% in part-time work, and more than half of the unemployed out of work for two years or more, indicating deep employability gaps and risk of long-term exclusion. The program's strong emphasis on foundational confidence-building, counselling, and career clarity directly addresses these barriers.



COHERENCE

The program showed strong alignment with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- SDG 1: No Poverty
- SDG 4: Quality Education
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities



The program also reflected strong coherence with national initiatives:

- Skill India Mission
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)
- National Skill Development Policy
- Digital India Programme

**EFFECTIVENESS**

The program has been highly successful in overachieving its intended outputs while achieving immediate outcomes. 98.1% respondents completing the Foundation Course, while 91.8% completing the Skill Course, indicate strong engagement and delivery quality. 66.3% employment rate post-skilling, with an additional 13.9% opting for entrepreneurship, reflects an effective transition into livelihoods. 79% of placed participants found the Foundation Course extremely helpful for workplace competencies. Career guidance mechanisms are strong, with 96% found counselling helpful, and 96% found Skill Analysis Test Battery assessments helpful. Dropouts were largely due to personal reasons, not program dissatisfaction.

**EFFICIENCY**

The program demonstrates strong efficiency, with effective use of partnerships and resources. Outreach efficiency is notable with outreach to 3000 households through cost-effective, community-embedded strategies. Institutional partnerships with colleges and NGOs significantly reduced mobilisation costs and improved targeting. Partnerships also enhanced delivery efficiency. Collaborations with organisations enabled specialised workshops without duplicating in-house capacity. Employer partnerships supported placements and feedback, improving alignment with market needs.

**IMPACT**

The program has generated substantial and multi-dimensional impact, extending beyond employment into household well-being, empowerment, and social status. Income data shows a decisive upward shift, with the above ₹20,000 income group increasing from 0% to 26%, while extreme low-income work (<₹5,000) sharply declined. High satisfaction with earnings and strong savings behaviour (51.6%) indicates not just income generation but improved financial management. Social and empowerment outcomes are equally strong. Over 73% report high economic security, 62.6% report high improvement in living standards, and 67.8% feel highly self-reliant. The improvement in social and family reputation (82.8%) is particularly significant in tightly knit urban poor communities, where dignity and recognition are critical. Qualitative evidence from parents corroborates these findings, pointing to lasting behavioural and attitudinal change.



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustained employment outcomes (around 42% retained jobs beyond six months, including 11.8% beyond one year) suggest durable livelihood gains for a sizable proportion. The emphasis on confidence, adaptability, and self-reliance enhances beneficiaries' ability to navigate the job market. Institutionally, sustainability is reinforced through strong community trust, recurring partnerships, and management receptiveness to feedback. However, sustainability risks remain around job churn in the early months, reluctance to travel for work, and limited digital access at home. Continued post-placement support, refresher skilling, and employer engagement will be key to deepening long-term outcomes. With its adaptive design and strong learning culture, the program is well-placed to address these risks over time.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Given the present demographic dividend, India stands at the cusp of a unique opportunity for inclusive economic growth. However, its potential remains unevenly realised due to various socio-economic reasons. Youth from underprivileged communities, particularly women, face multiple barriers to education, employability, and livelihood opportunities. Limited access to quality schooling, early dropouts due to poverty, household responsibilities, early marriage, and social norms restricting women's mobility collectively constrain their participation in the formal workforce. As a result, a large segment of capable youth remains trapped in cycles of low-paid, informal, and insecure work, or excluded from employment altogether.

The evolving demands of various sectors increasingly underscore the need for job-ready skills, technological familiarity, and soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, and adaptability. However, most conventional education and training systems fail to equip marginalised youth with these competencies. The mismatch between available skills and market requirements leads to unemployment and underemployment, even as industries report shortages of trained workers. This gap highlights the urgent need for targeted, demand-driven skill-building interventions that are accessible, relevant, and inclusive.

In this context, a dedicated skill-building and placement initiative for underprivileged youth becomes a strategic development imperative. Thus, this sustainable livelihood project aligns with the broader goal of inclusive growth, while empowering young people to become active contributors to the economy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



To set up and operationalise a Lighthouse in the Janata Vasahat at Singhagad ward of Pune that will enable ~2000 youth to have a life path of dignity and opportunity.



LIGHT HOUSE
CENTER

PROJECT DETAILS

**Title**

Center for Skilling and Livelihood

**Implementing Agency**

Lighthouse Communities

**Location**

Janata Vasahat, Pune

**Total no. of Beneficiaries**

2257 candidates

**Target Beneficiaries**

Youth

**Primary Programs**

Foundation Course and Skill Development Course

STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLE

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Youth	They are the primary participants of the program; they actively participate in skill training, life skills sessions, and placement-related activities.
Parents/Community members	Facilitate community outreach, mobilisation, and trust-building.
Trainers	Deliver industry-aligned technical and life skills training; Mentor youth, assess progress, and prepare candidates for workplace expectations.
Implementing Partner (Lighthouse Communities)	Responsible for overall project planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project; Build linkages with employers and stakeholders, provide placement and post-placement support.
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Provided financial resources, strategic direction, and oversight to support effective implementation and achievement of program objectives.
Primary Programs	Managed scheduling, logistics, communication, digital platforms, attendance tracking, and documentation, and ensured smooth organisation of workshops, retreats, assessments, and learning events.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITATION



Collaborate with the Municipal Corporation to secure rent-free and conducive space for establishing and operating the Lighthouse centre.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & MOBILISATION



Conduct innovative outreach activities including home visits, engagement of Lighthouse youth leaders, collaboration with existing NGO networks, coordination with PMC personnel and local Corporators, and organising recreational/community events at the Lighthouse.

FOUNDATION COURSE IMPLEMENTATION



Deliver a structured Foundation Course focused on building youths' sense of agency, self-awareness, and workforce competencies, including 20 hours of Spoken English training and 20 hours of Digital Empowerment training.

CAREER COUNSELLING & SKILL MAPPING



Administer the Skill Analysis Test Battery (SATB) to assess youth interests, talents, and alignment with market opportunities, along with contextual counselling considering family background, education, and aspirations to guide appropriate skilling pathways.

SKILLS TRAINING FACILITATION



Provide access to diverse skilling programs through partnerships with multiple training providers, ensuring a wide range of career options for youth.

PLACEMENT & POST-PLACEMENT SUPPORT



Facilitate job placements, support youth in independent job searches, and provide continuous mentoring to ensure career progression and retention.

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT



Maintain an open support system for alumni, offering mentoring, coaching, workplace guidance, and a safe space for continued personal and professional development.

LIGHTHOUSE AS A COMMUNITY HUB



Develop the Lighthouse as a multi-functional community centre serving as a livelihood resource hub and a catalyst for broader social transformation within the ward.

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024
Activities				
Infrastructure Facilitation (Center setup)	Yellow			
Community Outreach & Mobilisation		Orange	Orange	Orange
Foundation Course Implementation		Blue	Blue	Blue
Career Counselling & Skill Mapping		Grey	Grey	Grey
Skills Training Facilitation		Brown	Brown	Brown
Placement & Post-Placement Support		Green	Green	Green
Alumni Engagement & Support		Pink	Pink	Pink

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Limited commissioned SoulAce to undertake an impact assessment of the skill-building and livelihood intervention implemented in collaboration with Lighthouse Communities in the Singhagad ward of Pune district, Maharashtra.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of the study were:



To assess the outcomes of the project's skill-building interventions on beneficiaries' skills and employability.



To assess the beneficiaries' level of satisfaction with the capacity-building support provided under the programme.



To assess the impact of the livelihood initiative on improving the economic status of beneficiaries.

USE OF MIXED-METHOD APPROACH

The evaluation adopted a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The qualitative component facilitated an in-depth exploration of the experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders, including youth (primary beneficiaries), parents, community members, trainers, and project staff. This provided nuanced insights into the program's effectiveness. Concurrently, quantitative methods enabled the collection and analysis of numerical data from beneficiaries, offering statistical evidence and identifying trends. By leveraging both approaches, the study ensured robust and multi-dimensional findings, resulting in a holistic understanding of the program's impact.

APPLICATION OF QUALITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Qualitative methods were employed to capture real-life experiences, perceptions, and narratives of beneficiaries and stakeholders involved in project implementation. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions with youth, parents/ community members, trainers, and project staff facilitated a detailed examination of observed changes. These techniques provided insights into the increase in skills and employability of the urban youth supported under the program. By documenting lived experiences, qualitative approaches offered a nuanced understanding of the program's role in enhancing the youth's industry-aligned job-readiness.

APPLICATION OF QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Quantitative methods were applied to objectively measure the program's outcomes through structured surveys and questionnaires. These tools collected quantitative data on key post-intervention indicators from beneficiaries, allowing for an evaluation of the program's outcomes and overall effectiveness. Statistical analysis of this data provided evidence-based insights into the extent of change and the success of the initiative.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

To strengthen the reliability and validity of findings, the study incorporated triangulation strategies. Data triangulation was achieved by collecting information from multiple sources, including field observations, beneficiary interviews, stakeholder interactions, and project staff feedback. Methodological triangulation was implemented through diverse research methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. This cross-verification process mitigated potential biases and reinforced the credibility of the conclusions.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The study employed both random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Random purposive sampling is a hybrid approach that combines elements of purposive sampling and random sampling. While purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on specific characteristics or criteria (e.g., program participation) relevant to the research, random purposive sampling introduces a randomisation step to reduce bias and enhance the representativeness of the sample.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The assessment was guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring adherence to globally recognised standards. This approach provided a structured and credible basis for evaluating the program's relevance, effectiveness, and impact.



RESEARCH DESIGN

- » **Research design used:** Descriptive research design
- » **Sampling technique:** Random Purposive sampling
- » **Sample size:** 323
- » **Qualitative method used:** Semi-structured interviews, testimonials and focus group discussion (FGD) with beneficiaries along with key stakeholders

KEY STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

-  Youth
-  Community members/ Parents
-  Trainers
-  Project Implementation team

STUDY TOOLS

Structured questionnaires were developed for primary beneficiaries after reviewing project details for each focus area. Indicators were pre-defined prior to administering the surveys to ensure consistency and relevance. For secondary beneficiaries and stakeholders, a semi-structured questionnaire and a focus group discussion guide were designed. Stakeholders were identified across all focus areas, and semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with community members, trainers, and project staff to capture diverse perspectives.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The impact evaluation adhered to a rigorous ethical framework, ensuring that the study was conducted responsibly and in accordance with established research ethics.

The rights and well-being of participants were prioritised throughout the process. Informed consent was obtained by providing comprehensive information about the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, enabling participants to make voluntary and informed decisions after their queries were addressed. Strict measures were implemented to maintain confidentiality and privacy. Data were securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel, and participant identities were protected through anonymisation and coding techniques. Participation was entirely voluntary, free from coercion or undue influence, underscoring respect for autonomy and individual choice. Throughout the study, participants were treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, and their well-being remained the highest priority, with appropriate support provided whenever required.

STUDENT INTERACTION DURING FIELD VISIT



05. KEY FINDINGS

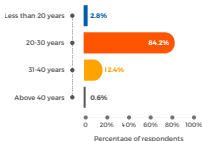


This chapter presents insights and analysis derived from project beneficiaries and community members residing in the Singhagad ward of Pune to evaluate the overall outcomes of the program on the capacity building and promotion of sustainable livelihoods. Drawing on primary survey data and field observations, the assessment examined the extent to which the initiative improved the skills, bolstered job-prepared/entrepreneurship and income stability among the youth from urban underprivileged families.

The evaluation focused on key dimensions, including demographic and socio-economic profiles, access to livelihood opportunities, participation in training programs, and pre-intervention income conditions, thereby contextualising the economic realities of the target communities. Data were collected through field surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions with project participants, local facilitators, and community leaders to provide a comprehensive understanding of the program's impact and effectiveness.

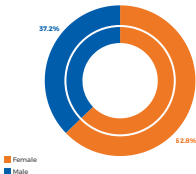
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF BENEFICIARIES

CHART 1: AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS (N= 323)



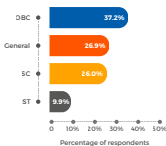
As shown in Chart 1, among the study respondents, 84.2% of beneficiaries were between 20 and 30 years, indicating that the program successfully reached its intended youth demographic, which is the most employable and transition-ready age group. 12.4% of them were in the 31-40 age group. Interviews with community members highlighted that participants aged 20-30 were looking to begin their careers or explore better livelihood opportunities.

CHART 2: GENDER-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFICIARIES (N=323)



As shown in Chart 2, women constitute 62.8% of the total respondents, almost twice the percentage of men (37.2%).

CHART 3: SOCIAL CATEGORY OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=323)

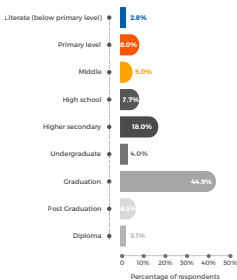


As depicted in Chart 3, the program was effective in reaching out to most socially disadvantaged groups, with representation from the Scheduled Caste (26%), Scheduled Tribes (9.9%), and Other Backward Classes (37.2%). General category participation (26.9%) suggests the program maintains social diversity.



EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS PRIOR TO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

CHART 4: HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION (N=323)



As shown in Chart 4, 44.9% of the respondents held graduation degrees, while 6.5% of them held post-graduation degrees. 18% of them had completed higher secondary education, representing a group at high risk of job stagnation without skill enhancement.

CHART 5: OCCUPATIONAL STATUS BEFORE JOINING THE COURSE (N=323)

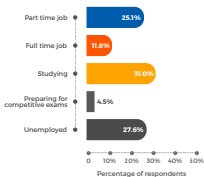
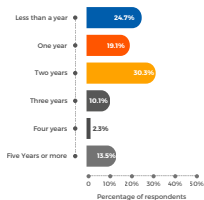


Chart 5 reveals that 27.6% were unemployed and 25.1% were in part-time jobs before starting this program, indicating income instability. 31% were students, suggesting that the program was seen as an option for career preparedness and a transition platform. Only 11.8% held full-time employment.

CHART 6: DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT BEFORE JOINING THE COURSE (N=89)



As depicted in Chart 6, among those who were unemployed, more than half had been out of employment for 2 years or more, indicating a risk of skill erosion. 13.5% had been unemployed for over 5 years, highlighting deep-rooted employability barriers.



INTERACTION WITH CANDIDATES

“ Before joining the programme, I was working but lacked professional growth opportunities. The Accounts Executive course helped me strengthen my technical and workplace skills. I am now working as a Data Entry Operator and earning ₹15,000 per month. The programme has improved my confidence and career direction.

- Pooja Balaji Thorat, 25,
Beneficiary



PROGRAM OUTREACH

CHART 7: SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM (N=323)

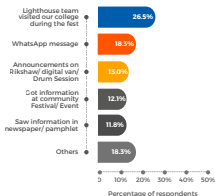


Chart 7 revealed that College-based outreach (26.5%) was the most common source of information about the program, reinforcing the importance of institutional partnerships. WhatsApp (18.3%), print media (11.8%), and modes such as local rickshaw announcements (13%) reflect the strength of digital and local networks. Community events contributed to 12.1%, highlighting location-specific, culturally embedded communication strategies.

Over the three years, the program team has conducted extensive outreach, covering 3000 households across key communities.

The interview with the program implementation team highlighted that the outreach strategy included a plethora of activities, including:

- **Mega Outreach:** Over three years, Mega Outreach engaged 1500 households through door-to-door visits and innovative tools like rickshaw announcements and digital vans.
- **Drum Sessions:** Interactive drum circle sessions were organised in colleges and communities.
- **College Fest Outreach:** Outreach counters at major college festivals directly engaged students in high-energy, youth-centric environments.
- **Community Engagement through Festivals & Events:** Participation in key cultural and national celebrations enabled deeper community connection through activities, competitions, and awareness sessions.
- **Digital & Print Outreach:** WhatsApp campaigns and the distribution of nearly 10,000 pamphlets across targeted localities expanded the program.
- **Institutional & NGO Collaborations:** MoUs with five colleges and partnerships with NGOs and institutions facilitated proactive student mobilisation and community participation.
- **Strategic Community Partnerships:** Collaborations with Ganpati Mandals, political leaders, and local youth groups, supported by banners, amplified outreach at the grassroots level.

These activities were also highlighted by the community members during our focus group discussion. It was also noted that the implementation agency organised a pre-counselling session for the participants to provide an overview of the courses.

“ We introduce the participants to our organisation's work; we make them aware of the importance of having the required skills for various jobs and solve their doubts. We motivate them to join our courses to upgrade their soft skills and vocational skills.

-Bhavana Pagar, Cluster Head (Implementation Agency)



PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The intervention consisted of two parts- Skilling (Foundation Course & Skill Development Course), followed by Placement Support.



Foundation Course: This course lasts 22 days and emphasises self-discovery, recognising one's potential, and fostering agency. It also focused on cultivating workplace competencies through conversational English and Digital Skilling, using creative, activity-based learning methods. Training sessions were held five to six days a week, depending on the course schedule. On average, there were about 8 to 10 hours of theory classes per week, during which trainees learned core concepts, communication skills, and workplace behaviour through discussions and interactive activities. Trainees spent around 12 to 15 hours per week on practical sessions. These included hands-on exercises, simulations, and live demonstrations to ensure they gain real-world experience and confidence. Participants had the option to receive job assistance directly after this course.

Skill Development Course: This course constituted the second part of the program, lasting 3-6 months. This entailed specialised training tailored to the participant's chosen vocation. On-the-Job Training (OJT) was mandatory for all trainees. Several expert training sessions, along with regular classes, were organised to give additional exposure to the participants.

Placement Support: The organisation partnered with several reputed companies to facilitate recruitment. Handholding through activities such as mock interviews and resume building was provided to the individuals, along with post-placement support. Follow-ups were also conducted to ensure retention.



FOUNDATION COURSE- COMPLETION & FEEDBACK

CHART 8: COMPLETION STATUS OF THE FOUNDATION COURSE(N=323)

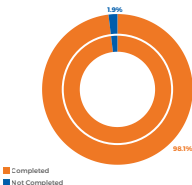


Chart 8 shows that 98.1% of respondents completed the Foundation Course, indicating strong learner engagement, high relevance of the curriculum, and effective programme delivery. The very low dropout rate (1.9%) suggests limited implementation-related barriers. According to the programme team, discontinuation was primarily due to personal and family-related constraints, including household responsibilities for women and migration following marriage. Most beneficiaries who completed only the Foundation Course were placed in roles such as Office Executive/Administration/Front Office, Customer Care Executive, Hospital Administration, and Elderly Caregiver, while a smaller proportion were employed as Nursing Assistants, Phlebotomists, Sales Executives, Data Entry Operators, Technicians, and in other miscellaneous roles.

2030 out of 2257 enrolled youth have completed the Foundation Course, according to the Program Team.

The field team further observed that both mid-term and final assessments are conducted internally by trained facilitators, and successful trainees receive NSDC-recognised certificates. As per the implementing agency's records, certification has been issued to beneficiaries who have completed the assessment process, thereby ensuring formal recognition of the skills acquired through the programme.

CHART 9: KEY LEARNINGS FROM THE FOUNDATION COURSE (N=323)



Among the key learnings from the Foundation Course, all respondents reported "recognising their potentials" as a key learning, indicating a powerful impact on confidence, self-belief, and career orientation. More than half of the respondents gained communication, computer, and workplace awareness skills, which are critical enablers of employability.

During interactions, participants most frequently referred to the "Comfort Zone" activity, which had the highest participation rate (64.7%) among all Foundation Course activities. Beneficiaries also mentioned activities such as the Rope Game, Naiya Paar, Vision Board, and sessions on fear of rejection, noting that these activities helped build confidence, teamwork, self-reflection, and motivation to pursue personal and career goals.

Interviews with Trainers like Mr. Arpita Kamble suggest the presence of effective sessions which help trainees to realise their potential.

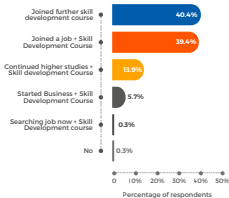
Sessions consist of a mix of practical and theoretical classes. The pedagogical approach is activity-based, which helps students engage. The curriculum of these sessions is continuously improved through monthly discussions, aligning it with market needs and required competencies. Personal feedback sessions are also conducted with trainees to incorporate their suggestions.

“ I have seen remarkable transformations among the youth. Many trainees who joined with low confidence and limited exposure are now working in reputed companies or running their own businesses. One of my students, Pooja, started the Retail Management course with hesitation, but is now employed at a branded store and supporting her family. These journeys show how the Lighthouse program not only builds technical skills but also instils confidence and resilience, making youth industry-ready.

- Arpita Kamble, Trainer



CHART 10: POST-FOUNDATION PATHWAY: SKILL DEVELOPMENT OR EMPLOYMENT (N=317)



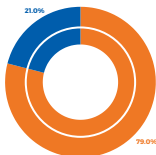
As shown in Chart 10, 40.4% of respondents progressed to the Skill Development Course, while 39.4% of respondents pursued employment alongside the Skill Development Course, reflecting parallel skilling and earning pathways. In addition, 13.9% of respondents continued their higher education while undertaking skill training, and 5.7% of respondents initiated self-employment alongside the Skill Development Course. The very small proportion of respondents with no immediate post-foundation pathway (0.6%) indicates strong career clarity and readiness among respondents.

Respondents who completed both the Foundation and Skill Development courses were placed across a wide range of roles, including Phlebotomists, Nurses, Teachers, Account Executives, Data Entry Operators, Back Office Executives, Graphic Designers, HR Assistants, Front Office Executives, and customer-facing roles. Several respondents also established enterprises in beauty services, fashion designing, digital services, and other small businesses. A segment of respondents reported placements in IT and technology roles, such as cloud engineers, full-stack developers, and hardware engineers, as well as in administration, sales, community outreach, and logistics functions.



TAKING UPDATES FROM THE CANDIDATES

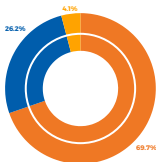
CHART 11: USEFULNESS OF FOUNDATION COURSE FOR WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES (N=143)



■ Extremely helpful
■ Somewhat helpful

Among those who joined jobs or started businesses, 79% found the course extremely helpful in building workplace competencies. No respondents reported the course as unhelpful, underscoring its applicability to real-world work environments.

CHART 12: USEFULNESS OF FOUNDATION COURSE FOR WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES (N=143)



■ Extremely helpful
■ Somewhat helpful
■ Not at all helpful

Nearly 96% of participants found counselling helpful, with close to 70% rating it as extremely helpful. Very low dissatisfaction (4.1%) suggests counselling was responsive, personalised, and aligned with participant aspirations.

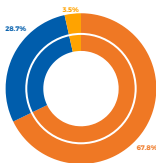


The One-on-One Counselling sessions are very effective and helpful for students to realise their potential.

- **Bhavana Pagar, Cluster Head**
(Implementation Team member)



CHART 13: HELPFULNESS OF PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS IN CAREER UNDERSTANDING



■ Extremely helpful
■ Somewhat helpful
■ Not at all helpful

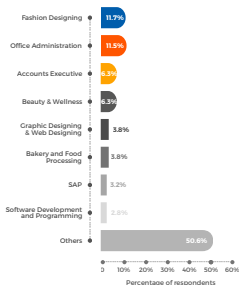
Over 96% of participants found the Skill Analysis Test Battery assessment helpful, reinforcing its value in identifying interests, strengths, and suitable career paths. The high "extremely helpful" rating (67.8%) indicates strong trust in evidence-based career guidance tools.



CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

SKILL DEVELOPMENT COURSE- COMPLETION & FEEDBACK

CHART 14: TYPE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSE JOINED AFTER FOUNDATION COURSE (N=316)



In Chart 14, participation is spread across diverse vocational domains, with Fashion Designing (11.7%) and Office Administration (11.5%) emerging as the most preferred structured courses. Over half the respondents (50.6%) opted for "Other" courses, indicating strong demand for customised or locally relevant skill options beyond standard offerings. These courses included professional career options such as Nursing Assistant, Web Development, Computer/Mobile Hardware Repair and Networking, Education & Training, Digital Marketing, Electrician, Office executive, Elderly Caregiver, Hospital Front Office, Cloud Computing, Automotive Service Technician, Logistics, Drone survey, Data Analysis, Embroidery (aari) work, Full stack development.

“ Before joining the programme, I was doing small part-time work. The fashion design course helped me improve my stitching and practical skills. I am now earning ₹10,000 per month through my work. The programme helped me become more confident and financially independent.

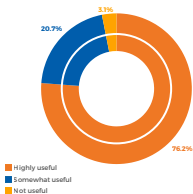
- Sonali Rajesh Hasnale,
Beneficiary ”

According to the programme team, a total of 1,424 youth was enrolled in various skill development courses, including high-demand areas such as Bakery and Food Processing, Office Executive, Logistics, Beauty and Wellness, Web Development, and SAP.



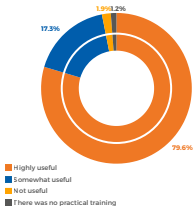
**DRAWING
COMPETITION**

CHART 15: USEFULNESS OF TRAINING MATERIALS PROVIDED DURING THE COURSE (N=323)



As depicted in Chart 15, a large majority (76.2%) rated the training materials as highly useful, indicating relevance and a learner-friendly design. Only 3.1% found the materials not useful, indicating minimal content-quality gaps.

CHART 16: USEFULNESS OF PRACTICAL TRAINING SESSIONS (N=323)



In Chart 16, 79.6% found practical sessions highly useful, reflecting the importance of hands-on learning in vocational education. The negligible share reporting no practical training (1.2%) suggests broad integration of experiential learning across courses.

Multiple hands-on sessions were conducted in collaboration with other institutional partners to provide trainees with exposure. Some of these programs included:



GROOMING WORKSHOP

It was organised in collaboration with the Vipra Foundation to include youth from the Beauty and Wellness course. The aim of the session was to provide insights into self-grooming techniques and workplace makeup application.



DATA ANALYSIS WORKSHOP

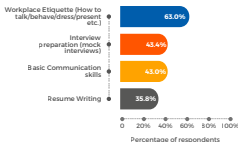
A series of comprehensive sessions on Data Analysis and Data Visualisations was organised in collaboration with HSDI. The aim of these sessions was to provide insights into data processing, interpretation, and visual representation, equipping participants with essential skills for the data-driven industry.



MICRO ENTREPRENEURSHIP WORKSHOP

The Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) organised a two-day workshop that gathered 12 micro-entrepreneurs, all skilled in various domains such as Masala making, Beauty and Wellness services, and Aari work. During the workshop, youth delved into topics such as market research and customer segmentation, gaining invaluable insights crucial to fostering the growth of their businesses.

CHART 17: SOFT SKILLS LEARNED DURING THE SKILL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (N=316)



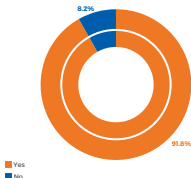
As shown in Chart 17, workplace etiquette emerged as the most commonly acquired soft skill (63%), followed by interview preparation (43.4%), communication skills (43%) and resume writing (35.8%). The focus on workplace behaviour and interview readiness addresses critical gaps faced by first-generation job seekers. While discussing interview preparations with the Program Team, they highlighted that a collaboration with the UBS team was arranged to conduct mock interviews, especially for the Data Analyst batches, offering youth practical experience in interview scenarios. This helped them refine their communication, problem-solving, and technical skills while boosting their confidence for future job opportunities. Moreover, sessions on career opportunities in commerce-related vocations were conducted by subject matter experts with a special focus on market realities, salary structures, and essential skills.

Interaction with community members, mostly parents of these trainees, underscored that the program played a major role in preparing their children for the workplace by equipping them with relevant technical and soft skills.

“ Before joining the programme, I was unemployed and unsure about my career. The Office Administration course helped me build communication and professional skills. I am now working as an Education Counsellor and earning ₹20,000 per month. The programme completely changed my confidence and career path.

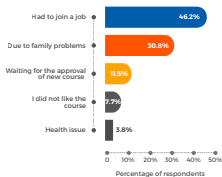
- Dipali Rohit Pawar, 32,
Beneficiary

CHART 18: SKILL DEVELOPMENT COURSE COMPLETION STATUS (N=316)

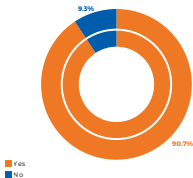


A high (91.8%) course completion rate, depicted in Chart 18, reflects strong learner commitment and effective program delivery. The relatively low dropout rate (8.2%) indicates minimal program-related barriers.

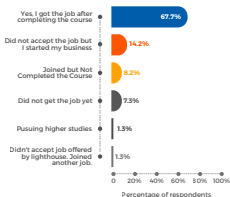
The program team conducts Mid-term and final assessments, post which NSDC-recognised program completion certificates are provided to the participants. According to the program team, 1263 out of 1424 enrolled students have completed the Skill Development Course successfully.

CHART 19: REASONS FOR NOT COMPLETING THE COURSE (N=26)


Among the participants who did not complete the course, 46.2% exited due to early job placement, indicating positive employability outcomes rather than programme-related shortcomings. However, family responsibilities (30.8%) remain a key barrier to course completion, particularly for youth from vulnerable households.

CHART 20: RECEIPT OF COURSE COMPLETION CERTIFICATE (N=280)


In Chart 20, from among the respondents who appeared for the assessment, 90.7% emerged successful and received a course completion certificate, suggesting a very high success rate.

PLACEMENT
CHART 21: EMPLOYMENT STATUS AFTER COMPLETING SKILL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (N=323)


As shown in Chart 21, 66.3% of beneficiaries secured employment after completing the course, indicating strong placement outcomes. In addition, 13.9% opted for self-employment, reflecting increased confidence and readiness to pursue independent livelihood pathways. Most self-employed beneficiaries were engaged in aari work, stitching, boutique or fashion designing, beauty parlour services, and other small home-based enterprises, while a few reported working in areas such as data entry, graphic design, bakery and food processing, and web development. However, 7.2% of beneficiaries were still awaiting employment, highlighting the need for continued placement support and follow-up. A small proportion either did not enrol in skill development courses (2.2%) or chose to pursue higher studies (1.2%), indicating alternative post-programme pathways.

Respondents reported placements across a wide range of sectors, with the highest concentration in the Manufacturing and Industrial, Services and Professional, IT and Agriculture and Allied, Healthcare and Wellness, and Education and Social sectors.

A smaller proportion of beneficiaries were placed in Fashion Designing, Beauty Services, Hospitality, BFSI, Real Estate and the Social Sector, as well as niche areas such as Graphic Designing and Land Surveying.

“ I joined the AWS course while I was a student and exploring technical career options. The training helped me gain strong cloud and technical skills. The Lighthouse Centre also supported me in getting placement opportunities, which enabled me to secure my current role. I am now working as a Cloud Engineer and earning ₹40,000 per month. The programme enabled me to enter a high-growth technology field.

- Gayatri Arun Pangare,
Beneficiary



CHART 22: TIMING OF JOB PLACEMENT: AFTER FOUNDATION OR SKILL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (N=272)

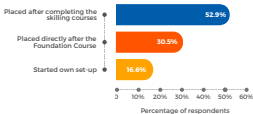
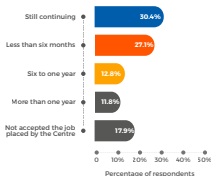


Chart 22 shows that a majority of beneficiaries (52.9%) secured employment after completing the Skill courses, highlighting the effectiveness of technical and vocational training in improving job readiness.

Nearly 30.5% of respondents were placed directly after the Foundation Course, indicating that foundational competencies such as confidence building, communication skills, and career readiness are sufficient for entry-level employment for a significant segment. 16.6% of beneficiaries started their own set-up, reflecting the program's ability to nurture entrepreneurial intent alongside wage employment pathways.

CHART 23: DURATION OF JOB CONTINUATION AFTER PLACEMENT (N=273)



In terms of Job retention data, as shown in Chart 23, 30.4% are still continuing in their jobs, pointing to sustained employment outcomes. 27.1% stayed for less than six months, indicating early-stage job churn or mismatch. 12.8% remained employed for six months to one year, while 11.8% stayed beyond one year, reflecting medium- to long-term job stability. 17.9% did not accept the job placed by the Centre, suggesting preference misalignment or external opportunities.

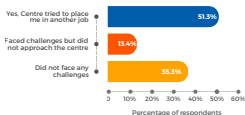
“Earlier, I was unemployed and uncertain about my future. The Lighthouse team guided me through counselling and encouraged me to join the Digital Marketing course. The training not only built my communication and outreach skills but also gave me the confidence to apply them in real settings. Through the Lighthouse placement support, I secured a role as an Outreach Officer and now earn ₹30,000 per month. I continue to pursue the course to strengthen my expertise further, and the ongoing learning keeps me motivated to grow in this field.

- **Alpita Arjun Kamble,**
Beneficiary



The field team noted that a designated placement staff member supports job matching and employer coordination. Post-placement engagement includes regular communication with employers to track workplace performance and adaptability of placed candidates. According to the implementing agency, approximately 70-80% of placed youth remain in their jobs for 1 year or more, while some beneficiaries transition to higher education or alternative employment.

CHART 24: POST-PLACEMENT SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE CENTRE (N=224)



In Chart 24, 51.3% reported that the Centre actively supported re-placement, demonstrating responsiveness to post-placement challenges. 35.3% reported no challenges, indicating satisfactory employer-employee alignment. 13.4% faced challenges but did not approach the Centre, suggesting gaps in awareness or in comfort with seeking support.



TRAINING SESSION

KEY IMPACTS

This chapter presents the key changes brought about by the program across the economic, social, and skill-development dimensions of participating youths. Using both quantitative findings and qualitative insights, the section highlights how the intervention influenced income levels, personal growth, and beneficiaries' confidence and capacities. Together, these impacts reflect the progress achieved during the project period and provide a consolidated understanding of how the program has strengthened the lives of urban underprivileged youth and their families.

ECONOMIC (TANGIBLE) IMPACT

CHART 25: MONTHLY INCOME BEFORE AND AFTER JOINING THE COURSE (N=323)

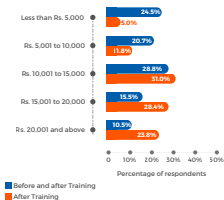
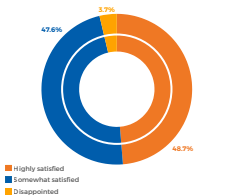


Chart 25 shows that earnings below Rs. 5,000 dropped from 24.5% to 5.0%, indicating a reduction in extremely low-income employment. Simultaneously, the 'above Rs. 20,000' income group increased from 10.5% to 23.8%, marking a substantial upward income shift. Middle-income brackets (Rs. 10,001-15,000 and Rs. 15,001-20,000) remain prominent after course completion.

CHART 26: SATISFACTION LEVEL WITH CURRENT SALARY OR INCOME (N=273)



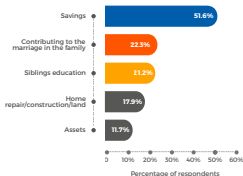
As per Chart 26, 48.7% of respondents are highly satisfied, and 47.6% are somewhat satisfied with their earnings. Only 3.7% expressed dissatisfaction.

The parents of the participants also highlighted that their children are earning salaries ranging from ₹10,000 to ₹15,000 per month, depending on their job role. They also expressed satisfaction with their income, as it supports the family, and some have even received increments for good performance.

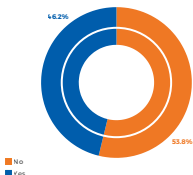
“We are happy to see that the children are earning well and supporting the family.”

- Priyanka Kondhalkar,
community member



CHART 27: CONTRIBUTION TO FAMILY INCOME AFTER TRAINING (N=273)

As shown in Chart 27, among respondents who are engaged in a job or self-employed after the program, more than half (51.6%) are able to save, indicating enhanced financial discipline and surplus income. Significant contributions toward family marriages (22.3%), siblings' education (21.2%), and home improvement (17.9%) reflect strengthened household security. 11.7% invested in assets, demonstrating long-term economic planning.

CHART 28: ASSET PURCHASE AFTER EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS SET-UP (N=273)

As depicted in Chart 28, almost half (46.2%) of the respondents reported purchasing assets, signalling improved financial stability. 53.8% have not yet made asset purchases, suggesting cautious financial planning.

“After completing my course, I secured a stable job with a monthly income of ₹13,000, which I am highly satisfied with. I am still continuing in the same role, and the steady earnings have allowed me to purchase a bike – my first major asset. Beyond this, I've been able to support my family through home repairs and savings. The Lighthouse programme gave me both the skills and the placement support to achieve this stability.”

- Sandesh Kasbe, Beneficiary

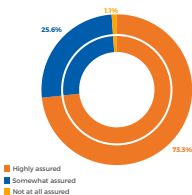
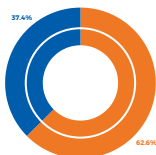
CHART 29: PERCEIVED IMPROVEMENT IN OVERALL ECONOMIC STABILITY (N=273)

Chart 29 shows that a large majority (73.3%) of respondents feel highly assured about their economic stability after engaging in employment or self-employment. A further 25.6% feel somewhat assured, while only 1.1% report no sense of economic security.

CHART 30: IMPROVEMENT IN LIVING STANDARDS AFTER EMPLOYMENT OR ENTERPRISE SET-UP (N=273)

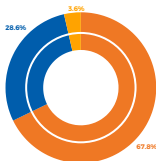


■ High improvement
■ Moderate improvement

As highlighted in Chart 30, 62.6% of respondents report a high improvement in their living standards following employment or enterprise creation. The remaining 37.4% experience moderate improvement, with none reporting stagnation or decline. This shows that the program has been able to create tangible improvements in the quality of life for the participating beneficiaries.

INTANGIBLE IMPACT ON PERCEPTION OF SELF, AND FAMILY STATUS

CHART 31: LEVEL OF SELF-RELIANCE AND EMPOWERMENT AFTER TRAINING (N=273)



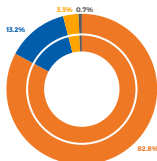
■ Highly self-reliant
■ Somewhat self-reliant
■ Not at all self-reliant

In Chart 31, more than half (67.8%) of respondents feel highly self-reliant after training

and employment, or after enterprise engagement. 28.6% feel somewhat self-reliant, whereas 3.6% do not perceive increased self-reliance. This suggests that the intervention has fostered a strong sense of empowerment and independence among participants.

This empowerment was also testified to by the parents of the participants.

CHART 32: IMPROVEMENT IN SOCIAL AND FAMILY REPUTATION AFTER TRAINING (N=273)



■ Agree
■ Somewhat agree
■ Disagree
■ Strongly agree

As depicted in Chart 32, a strong majority (82.8%) agree that their social and family reputations have improved after training, while 13.2% somewhat agree. This highlights that the program has enhanced social recognition and family standing, reinforcing the intangible value of skill-based livelihoods.

Community members also underscored the tremendous change visible in the lives of these trainees, not only in economic progress but also in their personalities. They also mentioned that they are emerging as the new role models for the next generation.

06. IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM FOR MULTIPLE LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL

At the individual level, the program has significantly strengthened employability, confidence, and career direction among youth. The majority of participants were young adults at a critical transition stage, either unemployed, in part-time work, or uncertain about their future. Through the Foundation Course, youth developed self-awareness, confidence, communication skills, digital literacy, and workplace etiquette. Participants also reported recognising their potential, which reflects a deep psychological shift from self-doubt to self-belief. The Skill Development Course further enhanced technical competencies aligned with market demand, supported by practical exposure and industry interactions. Many reported feeling self-reliant and empowered, showing that the program created both economic mobility and personal transformation.



HOUSEHOLD

At the household level, the program has improved economic security and living standards. A clear income shift is evident, with participants moving from very low-income brackets into more stable, higher-paying roles. Youth are now contributing meaningfully to family income. Many are able to save regularly, support siblings' education, contribute to family functions, improve housing conditions, and invest in assets. Families reported improved comfort at home through the purchase of essential goods and mobility aids. Parents expressed pride in their children's achievements. Economic stability has reduced financial stress and strengthened the family's overall resilience.



COMMUNITY

At the community level, the program has built aspiration, social mobility, and positive role models. Community members observed visible personality development among youth, especially in grooming, communication, and professional behaviour. Employed youth are now seen as role models for others. The program has also strengthened local skill ecosystems through partnerships with institutions, NGOs, and employers. Entrepreneurship pathways have encouraged local economic activity. Overall, the intervention has shifted community perceptions about the value of skills, employability, and career planning.



NATIONAL

At the national level, the program contributes directly to India's priority agenda of skill development, youth employment, and inclusive growth. By training and placing youth in industry-relevant sectors, the intervention aligns strongly with the objectives of the Skill India Mission and the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), which aim to enhance employability through market-driven skills. The issuance of NSDC-recognised certificates strengthens formal workforce participation. Women's participation in the program supports the goals of improving female labour force participation. Its outreach to disadvantaged social categories aligns with the principle of inclusive development under the National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. By facilitating employment and entrepreneurship, the program also contributes to Atmanirbhar Bharat, promoting self-reliance and economic productivity.

07. CASE STUDIES



CASE STUDY 1

Utkarsha Sambhaji Dhupal, a postgraduate student from Pune, was at a critical juncture in her career. Despite her academic qualifications, she faced uncertainty regarding career direction and lacked clarity about the practical skills required to transition successfully into the workforce. Like many young graduates, she possessed theoretical knowledge but limited exposure to structured employability training and industry expectations.

Her introduction to the Lighthouse program came during a college festival, where the Lighthouse team conducted a campus outreach session to present its Foundation and Skill Development Courses. The session aimed to connect with youth who were seeking career guidance and employment opportunities. Recognising her own need for professional direction and skill enhancement, Utkarsha enrolled in the program.

Utkarsha participated in the Lighthouse Foundation Course, followed by job-linked skill development training, which together focused on strengthening English communication skills, enhancing computer proficiency, building professional confidence and workplace readiness. The emphasis on employability skills and interview readiness equipped her with the confidence and competencies needed to navigate recruitment processes successfully.

The program's impact was both immediate and transformative. Within 45 days of completing the skilling course, Utkarsha secured her first job as an Assistant Professor with a monthly salary of ₹35,000.

This employment marked a significant milestone in her journey toward financial independence. Beyond personal achievement, the stable income enabled her to support her siblings' education, contributing to her family's long-term socio-economic well-being.

Utkarsha's journey highlights the effectiveness of Lighthouse's campus outreach and structured skilling approach in bridging the gap between higher education and employment. The program not only strengthened her technical and communication skills but also built clarity, confidence, and a defined career pathway.



CASE STUDY 2: FROM DIAGNOSTIC THINKING TO HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING

Anuradha Thorat, a graduate from Pune, aspired to secure stable employment to support her family. Despite her educational qualifications, she faced persistent challenges in entering the workforce. Limited confidence in spoken English and anxiety during interviews hindered her ability to perform well in recruitment processes. As a result, she struggled to convert opportunities into employment, which affected both her confidence and her financial independence.

Recognising the need to enhance her employability skills, Anuradha enrolled in the Foundation and Skill Development Courses offered by Lighthouse Communities. Through the Foundation Course, Anuradha worked on building her self-confidence, communication abilities, and professional mindset. The course strengthened her sense of personal agency and workplace readiness.

The structured mock interviews were particularly impactful, allowing her to practice real-life interview scenarios, receive feedback, and refine her responses. Over time, she developed greater clarity, confidence, and composure in professional interactions.

Within three months of completing the program, Anuradha secured employment as an Elderly Care Civer, earning a monthly salary of ₹30,000. This marked a significant turning point in her journey. The employment not only provided her with a stable income but also strengthened her sense of self-worth and independence. She is now able to contribute consistently to her household expenses, easing the financial burden on her family.

08. CHALLENGE

The following challenges were encountered during the project implementation:

EARLY JOB EXITS AFTER PLACEMENT



The assessment team found that 27.1% of placed respondents remained in their jobs for less than six months, indicating early-stage job churn despite successful placement outcomes. This suggests that while the programme is effective in enabling job entry, a significant proportion of beneficiaries face difficulties in sustaining employment during the initial months, potentially due to job-role mismatch, workplace adjustment challenges, or contextual constraints such as travel distance and working conditions.



09. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the challenge identified during program implementation, the following recommendation is proposed to strengthen program delivery.

FOR THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY – LIGHTHOUSE COMMUNITIES



Strengthen early post-placement support to improve job retention: To address the finding that 27.1% of placed respondents exit jobs within the first six months, the programme should institutionalise a structured early post-placement support mechanism, with mandatory check-ins at one, three and six months after placement, focused on job-role adjustment, workplace issues and travel or shift-related challenges, and provide rapid counselling and re-placement support where required to improve early job retention.



KITE COMPETITION DURING
OUTREACH ACTIVITY

10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The sustainability of the Lighthouse program lies in its holistic, adaptive, and ecosystem-driven design, which goes beyond short-term placements to enable long-term livelihood resilience. A key driver of sustainability is the activity-based and experiential pedagogy. By embedding learning through practical exposure, the program ensures deeper internalisation of skills. This approach enables youth to retain competencies even as they transition across roles or sectors, reducing their dependence on continuous external support.

The program's market-responsive design further strengthens its long-term relevance. Regular feedback loops with facilitators, employers, and industry partners allow for continuous curriculum updates and the introduction of new courses aligned with emerging opportunities. The shift observed from micro-enterprise-focused courses to technical and digital skill programs reflects the program's ability to evolve with market demand, which is an essential condition for sustainability.

Another pillar of sustainability is the program's strong counselling and skill assessment support framework. One-on-one counselling, skill-based assessments, and parent engagement help address structural barriers such as low confidence, family resistance, and unclear career pathways. By involving families early, the program creates a supportive environment that sustains participation and reduces dropout risks, especially for women.

The program's emphasis on post-placement support and retention further enhances sustainability. Post placement assistance, employer feedback, and home visits ensure that employment outcomes are not short-lived. This focus on retention rather than just placement numbers strengthen the intervention's credibility and builds employer trust.

At a systemic level, the program's partnerships with colleges, NGOs, employers, and community institutions embed it within the local ecosystem. This distributed ownership reduces reliance on a single stakeholder and allows the model to be replicated or scaled across geographies.

Overall, the program demonstrates strong institutional, social, and economic sustainability, positioning it as a scalable and resilient model for inclusive youth livelihood development.

11. CONCLUSION

The findings of this impact assessment study clearly establish that the program was a highly effective, inclusive, and transformative youth employability intervention. By combining confidence-building through the Foundation Course, market-aligned skill development, personalised counselling, and sustained placement support, the program successfully addresses both structural and psychosocial barriers faced by youth from marginalised urban communities.

The evidence points to outcomes that go well beyond job placement, resulting in improved income security, enhanced self-reliance, strengthened family well-being, and elevated social standing. The program's ability to convert educational attainment into tangible livelihood outcomes while remaining adaptable to market trends and participant aspirations is also commendable.

Overall, the program represents a robust, replicable model for youth skilling and livelihood promotion, demonstrating how holistic, community-embedded, and market-responsive approaches can generate sustained socio-economic impact for underserved populations.



INTERACTION WITH THE BENEFICIARY

ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted and innovative brand with over 21 million motorcycles sold in over 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio that includes motorcycles, scooters, and auto-rickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs both in India and international markets. It is also India's No.1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR also contributes to education, health, environment, animal welfare projects, for the sustainable development of the community and the nation.



**SHAHU MAHARAJ
JAYANTI**

ABOUT NGO PARTNER: LIGHTHOUSE COMMUNITIES

Lighthouse Communities is a non-profit organisation committed to enabling sustainable and dignified livelihoods for youth from underserved and marginalised communities. Driven by the belief that economic empowerment is critical to social transformation, Lighthouse works at the intersection of skill development, employment, and community engagement to help young people transition successfully into the world of work.

The organisation primarily focuses on first-generation learners and youth from low-income urban and semi-urban communities who face systemic barriers to employment, including limited access to career guidance, market-relevant skills, and professional networks. Recognising that employability extends beyond technical training, Lighthouse adopts a holistic approach that integrates vocational and digital skills with life skills, workplace readiness, and confidence-building. Through its integrated, gender-responsive, and demand-driven model, Lighthouse Communities contributes to inclusive economic growth by empowering young people to realise their potential, improve household well-being, and become active contributors to India's development journey.



ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

PROMOTION OF
SUSTAINABLE
LIVELIHOODS FOR 108
LEPROSY-AFFECTED
FAMILIES IN 6
LEPROSY COLONIES
OF 3 DISTRICTS OF
MAHARASHTRA

Implementing Partner:
Sasakawa - India Leprosy
Foundation (S-ILF)

Implementation Year:
Nov. 2020 - Feb 2024

Assessment Year: Year 2025 - 26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 07
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04
	Key Impacts	05 - 06
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	07
02	OECD Framework	08 - 09
03	Introduction	10 - 14
	Background and Need for the Project	10
	Objectives of the Project	10
	Project Details	11 - 12
	Project Activities	13
	Timeline of the Project	13 - 14
04	Research Methodology	15 - 17
	Objectives of the Study	15
	Use of Mixed Method Approach	15
	Application of Qualitative Techniques	15
	Application of Quantitative Techniques	16
	Ensuring Triangulation	16
	Sampling Framework	16
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	16
	Design snapshot	16
	Key Stakeholders	17
	Study Tools	17
	Ethical Considerations	17
05	Key Findings	18 - 51
06	Impact of the Project Across Multiple Levels	52
07	Case Studies	53 - 55
08	Challenges	56
09	Recommendations	57
10	Sustainability Exit Readiness	58
11	Conclusion	59 - 61

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Training Modules Covered Under the Project
Table 2	Enterprise type vs current operational status
Table 3	Business reinvestment vs economic status improvement
Table 4	Gender income relationship

LIST OF CHARTS

Table Number	Table Name
Chart 1 - 5	Demographic and socio-economic profile of respondents
Chart 6 - 8	Pre-intervention livelihood and economic scenario
Chart 9-16	Participation in project interventions
Chart 17-25	Enterprise status and financial practices
Chart 26-30	Colony development fund (CDF) and access to credit
Chart 31-34	Access to health services through Tele-OPD
Chart 35-47	Post-intervention livelihood impact

ABBREVIATIONS

APAL	Association of People Affected by Leprosy
CDF	Colony Development Fund
APAL	Association of People Affected by Leprosy
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EDP	Entrepreneurship Development Programme
FGD	Focus group discussion
FY	Financial Year
NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPD	Outpatient Department
PSCM	Project Selection Committee Meetings
REECIS	Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact, and Sustainability
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG	Self-help group
S-ILF	Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation
ZPC	Zonal Program Coordinator

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In partnership with Bajaj Auto Limited, Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF) launched a community-based livelihood initiative to boost economic independence and social inclusion for persons affected by leprosy in Maharashtra. The project, run across six leprosy colonies in Solapur, Nashik, and Sangli, addresses barriers such as stigma, limited income opportunities, and reliance on informal work. Beneficiaries receive support in building sustainable livelihoods through enterprise training, capacity building, seed grants, and mentoring. The initiative strengthens Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for collective savings and peer support. It also encourages social inclusion and confidence-building, enabling individuals, especially women, to manage finances, participate in community life, and lead locally.



**ENTREPRENEURSHIP
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
TRAINING HELD AT NASHIK**

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Promotion of sustainable livelihoods for 108 leprosy-affected families in 6 leprosy-affected colonies from three districts in Maharashtra



Implementing Agency

Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF)



Location

6 leprosy colonies across Nashik, Solapur, and Sangli, Maharashtra



Duration

Nov. 2020 - Feb 2024



Assessment Location

Solapur and Nashik



Total Budget

131 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total nos. of Beneficiaries

108 families



Target Beneficiaries

Persons affected by leprosy and their families



Primary Programs

Enterprise development and SHG management training, disbursed seed grants to beneficiaries for starting or expanding micro-enterprises, mentoring and follow-up support, facilitated health and hygiene awareness sessions and tele-OPD services

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the livelihood intervention implemented in six leprosy colonies across Solapur, Nashik, and Sangli. Specifically, the assessment aimed to:



Examine the extent to which the project improved the economic conditions of leprosy-affected families.



Assess the capacity-building efforts in enhancing beneficiaries' skills for starting and managing micro-enterprises.



TRAINING OF STAFF AND APAL LEADERS

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF BENEFICIARIES TO START AND MANAGE MICRO-ENTERPRISES



82.4%

of the respondents reported improved business knowledge after training.



78.7%

of respondents now maintain basic business records, including sales, expense, and inventory records.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP SUITABLE ENTERPRISE MODELS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS



88.5%

of the active entrepreneurs reinvested earnings to grow their business.



85.7%

of the respondents regularly contribute to repayments or savings, demonstrating shared ownership and commitment to sustaining the revolving fund.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC OUTCOMES OF LEPROSY-AFFECTED FAMILIES



71.8%

of enterprises are currently active, and 91.8% of participating households reported earning regular profits. Among them, over half (53.6%) earned less than ₹ 5,000 per month, 39.2% earned between ₹ 5,000 and ₹ 10,000, and 3.6% earned between ₹ 10,001 and ₹ 15,000.



51.8%

of participating households reported better food availability, 64.7% reported improved housing, and 43.5% reported improved support for children's education.



93.5%

of households reported an improvement in their overall economic situation, including a better ability to manage daily expenses and support their children's education and nutrition.

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF BENEFICIARIES TO START AND MANAGE MICRO-ENTERPRISES



Participants developed practical enterprise management skills, demonstrated by their ability to maintain records, make informed business decisions, and apply new knowledge from training.



Beneficiaries adopted regular financial tracking and management, resulting in more organised and responsible business operations.



Participants reported feeling more confident in independently starting, operating, and expanding livelihood activities, enabling greater decision-making autonomy.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP SUITABLE ENTERPRISE MODELS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS



Livelihood activities continued and grew after initial project support, with beneficiaries reinvesting earnings and managing operations without external reliance.



90.2% of the respondents expanded or diversified their business in the past 6 months, indicating broader income opportunities.



The Colony Development Fund (CDF) operates in 41.2% of colonies. In 91.4% of these cases, community members manage the CDF directly, indicating growing local ownership.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC OUTCOMES OF LEPROSY-AFFECTED FAMILIES



Before the intervention, 21.3% of households earned below ₹ 5,000, 72.1% earned ₹ 5,000-10,000, and 6.6% earned ₹ 10,001-15,000. Afterwards, 19.7% earned ₹ 10,001-15,000 and 4.9% earned above ₹ 15,000, with no households below ₹ 5,000, showing clear income growth.



Income gains varied: 11.5% saw increases of over 50%, 8.2% saw increases of 25-50%, 19.7% saw increases of 10-25%, and 45.9% saw increases of up to 10%. Income gains were unchanged for 1.6%, and 1.6% experienced a decline, indicating overall improvement.



Improved ability to meet daily expenses and manage essential needs.



Enhanced financial security and living conditions, with reduced vulnerability.



The program has also contributed to greater dignity and social acceptance, with 86.9% of respondents noting improved social status and reduced stigma.

Most families improved their economic situation. Many now earn regular profits and better meet daily needs. Even modest income rises brought improved food, housing, and support for children's schooling, showing growing financial stability. Income growth varied by family, but most saw reduced economic stress and more reliable living conditions, enabling better management of expenses.

BAJAJ TEAM VISITED PANDHARPUR FOR MONITORING ALONG WITH ZPC & APAL LEADER



COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Beneficiaries (Leprosy-affected people and their families)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families reported that the livelihood support had contributed to a more stable income. They also stated that they felt more confident in managing their work and interacting with customers and other community members. Many reported an enhanced sense of dignity and greater acceptance within the community.
Community animators & colony leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They observed a notable rise in community engagement, with more people actively participating in meetings and livelihood activities. They highlighted that the use of training materials in the local language (Marathi) had facilitated better understanding of key concepts among beneficiaries. They noted that women had become more vocal and demonstrated increased confidence during group discussion.
SHG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members shared that group participation had encouraged regular savings and mutual financial support. They reported feeling more confident in managing small loans and maintaining essential records. Members also indicated that their involvement in household and community decision-making had strengthened.
Implementing team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementing team observed notable improvements in business management among beneficiaries, particularly in planning and reinvesting earnings. They further noted that tele-consultations had been beneficial for families with limited mobility.

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

Promoting sustainable livelihoods for 108 leprosy-affected families in six colonies in Sangli, Solapur, and Nashik directly addressed their economic vulnerability and social exclusion. These families faced stigma, limited job options, and little access to mainstream employment. By enabling skill development, enterprise establishment, SHG formation, and community financial mechanisms like the Colony Development Fund, the project strengthened sustainable income and inclusion.



COHERENCE

The program showed strong alignment with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- SDG 1: No Poverty
- SDG 3: Good health and well-being
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

The project also reflected strong coherence with national initiatives:

- National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)
- Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana



EFFECTIVENESS

The program effectively delivered planned livelihood and skills interventions. Participation in training was high: 82.4% of respondents reported improved knowledge. Notably, 71.8% of enterprises stayed active, and 91.8% earned regular profits, showing that ongoing support worked. Community Animators and staff ensured communication and mentoring, and 63.5% of respondents reported easy coordination with staff.



EFFICIENCY

The project used resources well, reaching all target families despite dispersed locations and pandemic restrictions. Community Animators and leaders kept coordination smooth. Local-language training helped reduce delivery costs. Both in-person and digital approaches kept activities running. The Colony Development Fund also allows funds to circulate within the community, reducing dependence on external support.

- The project improved participants' economic and social well-being. Income levels shifted up: 27.9% now earn less than ₹ 7,000 per month, 47.5% earn ₹ 7,001-10,000, 19.7% earn ₹ 10,001-13,000, and 4.9% earn ₹ 15,001-17,000.
- Most beneficiaries reported steadier income sources, with 71.8% maintaining businesses. Income improved for 45.9% of respondents; some saw large gains. With 90.2% of businesses expanding or diversifying, participants gained confidence and stability.
- At the household level, 93.5% reported improved economic conditions, including better capacity to manage daily expenses and support children's education and nutrition.

Social outcomes were also positive, with 86.9% noting improved social status and reduced stigma. Women's participation in financial and livelihood decisions strengthened, fostering shared responsibility and increased community leadership.



SUSTAINABILITY

Project sustainability was supported by strong community ownership structures, particularly through the Colony Development Fund (CDF) and Self-Help Groups (SHCs). In several colonies, the CDF was actively functioning, with 85.7% of beneficiaries contributing repayments and 91.4% of funds managed independently by SHCs and community committees. This revolving financial mechanism enabled the redistribution of resources to new or expanding enterprises, reducing long-term dependence on external funding. To further enhance sustainability, the program could strengthen market linkages by connecting beneficiaries with local supply chains, wholesale markets, and buyer networks.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Although India had been declared leprosy-free at the national level, individuals affected by leprosy and their families continued to experience pervasive social stigma, discrimination, and economic marginalisation. Many residents of leprosy colonies remained excluded from mainstream livelihood opportunities, resulting in persistent intergenerational poverty, unemployment, and reliance on charity or welfare schemes. The lack of sustainable income sources not only restricted access to education and healthcare but also impeded social reintegration and compromised dignity within society.

In response to this critical challenge, Sasakawa India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF), in partnership with Bajaj Auto Limited, implemented a community-based livelihood intervention in six colonies across Solapur, Nashik, and Sangli districts of Maharashtra in November 2020. The initiative was designed to empower individuals and families affected by leprosy by facilitating sustainable livelihood opportunities, providing entrepreneurship development training, and extending financial and technical assistance to establish or strengthen small enterprises. The overarching objective of the project was to improve the quality of life and advance socio-economic inclusion by creating viable, self-sustaining businesses managed by beneficiaries. The intervention emphasised fostering self-reliance, confidence, and community ownership, thereby reducing dependency on external aid.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



To improve the economic outcomes of 108 leprosy-affected families in 6 colonies of 3 districts of Maharashtra.



To enhance the capacity of beneficiaries to promote micro enterprises.



To develop suitable enterprise models for sustainable livelihood.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Promotion of sustainable livelihoods for 108 leprosy-affected families in 6 leprosy colonies of 3 districts of Maharashtra



Implementing Agency

Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF)



Location

6 leprosy colonies across Nashik, Solapur, and Sangli, Maharashtra



Total no. of Beneficiaries

108 families



Target Beneficiaries

Persons affected by leprosy and their families



Primary Programs

Enterprise development and SHG management training, disbursed seed grants to beneficiaries for starting or expanding micro-enterprises, mentoring and follow-up support, facilitated health and hygiene awareness sessions and tele-OPD services



BUSINESS OF NEW SELECTED BENEFICIARY AT NASHIK

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Leprosy-affected beneficiaries and families	They are the primary participants of the project; engaged in livelihood training, received seed grant assistance, participated in mentoring processes, and managed micro-enterprises established under the intervention.
Colony Leaders	Mobilised community members; supported the formation and functioning of SHGs; and facilitated coordination between beneficiaries and the project implementation team.
Community Animators	Provided continuous field-level mentoring; supported enterprise operations; delivered capacity-building inputs; and facilitated linkages to relevant services.
Implementing Partner (S-ILF)	Responsible for overall project planning, implementation, monitoring, capacity-building activities, and sustained community engagement.
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Provided financial resources, strategic direction, and oversight to support effective implementation and achievement of project objectives.



BUSINESS ROLLOUT PLAN TRAINING AT NASHIK

Time	Nov 2020 - Dec 2020	Jan 2021 - June 2021	July 2021 - Dec 2021	Jan 2022 - June 2022	July 2022 - Dec 2022	Jan 2023 - June 2023	July 2023 - Dec 2023	Jan 2024 - Feb 2024
Phase								
Market assessment								
Entrepreneurship Training Program								
Business rollout								
Seed grant disbursement and business setup								
CDF activations and repayments								
Monitoring and supervision								
Endline survey								

**The Gantt chart presents the phased implementation of project activities from November 2020 to February 2024, organised in six-month intervals*



STAFF TRAINING AND REVIEW MEETINGS AT NASHIK

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Limited commissioned SoulAce to undertake an impact assessment of the community-based livelihood intervention project implemented in collaboration with the Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation across six leprosy colonies in Solapur, Nashik, and Sangli districts of Maharashtra.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of the study were:



To assess the livelihood conditions and income sources of beneficiaries residing in the six leprosy colonies of Solapur, Nashik, and Sangli districts of Maharashtra prior to the implementation of the project.



To evaluate the extent of beneficiaries' satisfaction with the financial, technical, and capacity-building support provided under the project.



To assess the overall impact of the livelihood initiative on improving the economic status, self-reliance, and social inclusion of persons affected by leprosy and their families in the project locations.

USE OF MIXED-METHOD APPROACH

The evaluation adopted a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The qualitative component facilitated an in-depth exploration of the experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders, including leprosy-affected families, self-help group (SHG) members, colony leaders, community animators, and project staff. This provided nuanced insights into the project's effectiveness. Concurrently, quantitative methods enabled the collection and analysis of numerical data from beneficiaries, offering statistical evidence and identifying trends. By leveraging both approaches, the study ensured robust, multidimensional findings, resulting in a holistic understanding of the project's impact.

APPLICATION OF QUALITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Qualitative methods were employed to capture real-life experiences, perceptions, and narratives of beneficiaries and stakeholders involved in project implementation. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions with leprosy-affected families, SHG members, colony leaders, community animators, and project staff facilitated a detailed examination of observed changes. These techniques provided insights into improvements in household economic conditions and active participation in micro-enterprise activities supported under the project.

By documenting lived experiences, qualitative approaches offered a nuanced understanding of the project's role in enhancing livelihood opportunities, promoting self-reliance, and fostering social and financial empowerment within leprosy-affected communities.

APPLICATION OF QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Quantitative methods were applied to objectively measure the project's outcomes through structured surveys and questionnaires. These tools captured numerical data on key indicators from beneficiaries after the intervention, enabling the assessment of economic improvements and project effectiveness. Statistical analysis of this data provided evidence-based insights into the extent of change and the initiative's success.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

To strengthen the reliability and validity of findings, the study incorporated triangulation strategies. Data triangulation was achieved by collecting information from multiple sources, including field observations, beneficiary interviews, stakeholder interactions, and project staff feedback. Methodological triangulation was implemented through diverse research methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. This cross-verification process mitigated potential biases and reinforced the credibility of the conclusions.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The study employed both random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Random sampling ensured an unbiased and representative selection of participants.

In contrast, purposive sampling targeted individuals and groups with specific characteristics or expertise to provide in-depth insights relevant to the research objectives. Purposive sampling identified eligible entrepreneurship project beneficiaries, and random sampling was used to select respondent families from this group.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The assessment was guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring adherence to globally recognised standards. This approach provided a structured and credible basis for evaluating the project's relevance, effectiveness, and impact.



DESIGN SNAPSHOT



Research design used

Descriptive research design



Sampling technique

Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling



Sample size

85 families



Qualitative method used

Semi-structured interviews, testimonials and focus group discussion (FGD) with beneficiaries along with key stakeholders

KEY STAKEHOLDERS



STUDY TOOLS

Structured questionnaires were developed for primary beneficiaries after reviewing project details for each focus area. Indicators were pre-defined prior to administering the surveys to ensure consistency and relevance. For secondary beneficiaries and stakeholders, a semi-structured questionnaire and a focus group discussion guide were designed. Stakeholders were identified across all focus areas, and semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with family members and project staff to capture diverse perspectives.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

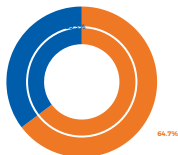
The impact evaluation adhered to a rigorous ethical framework, ensuring that the study was conducted responsibly and in accordance with established research ethics. The rights and well-being of participants were prioritised throughout the process. Informed consent was obtained by providing comprehensive information about the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, enabling participants to make voluntary and informed decisions after their queries were addressed. Strict measures were implemented to maintain confidentiality and privacy. Data were securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel, and participant identities were protected through anonymisation and coding techniques. Participation was entirely voluntary, free from coercion or undue influence, underscoring respect for autonomy and individual choice. Throughout the study, participants were treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, and their well-being remained the highest priority, with appropriate support provided whenever required.

05. KEY FINDINGS



This chapter presents insights and analysis from project beneficiaries and community members residing in 6 leprosy colonies across Solapur, Nashik, and Sangli districts to evaluate the project's overall outcomes in promoting sustainable livelihoods for 108 leprosy-affected families. Drawing on primary survey data and field observations, the assessment examined the extent to which the initiative improved income stability, enhanced entrepreneurial capacity, and strengthened financial resilience among families affected by leprosy.

The evaluation focused on key dimensions, including demographic and socio-economic profiles, access to livelihood opportunities, participation in training projects, and pre-intervention income conditions, thereby contextualising the economic realities of the target communities. Data was collected through field surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions with project participants, local facilitators, and community leaders to provide a comprehensive understanding of the project's impact and effectiveness.

CHART 1: RESPONDENTS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS AFFECTED BY LEPROSY AMONG RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS (N=85)

Family Member
Myself

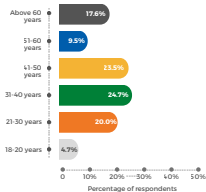
As shown in Chart 1, among the study respondents, approximately two-thirds (64.7%) reported that a family member had been affected by leprosy, while 35.3% were personally affected by the disease. This finding underscored that the impact of leprosy extended beyond individuals to entire families, shaping their social and economic circumstances within the community. The program, therefore, successfully targeted households with the highest vulnerability, ensuring that support was directed to families most in need.

PARTICIPANTS AT THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT HELD AT NASHIK



DEMOGRAPHIC AND EDUCATIONAL PROFILE OF BENEFICIARIES

CHART 2: AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS



As shown in Chart 2, nearly one-fourth of the respondents (24.7%) were in the 31-40 years age group, followed by 23.5% in the 41-50 years category, indicating that most participants were in their middle age. Approximately 20% of respondents were between 21 and 30 years old.

CHART 3: DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY GENDER (N=85)

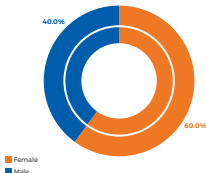


Chart 3 revealed that a majority (60%) of the respondents were women.

CHART 4: EDUCATION STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS(N=85)

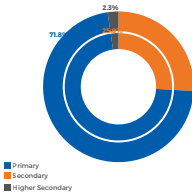
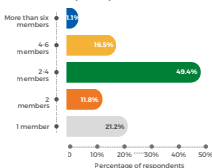


Chart 4 indicated that respondents' educational attainment was generally low. Close to three-fourths (71.8%) had completed only primary education, suggesting functional literacy, while 25.9% had studied up to the secondary level. This reflected limited formal education within the beneficiary population.

CHART 5: HOUSEHOLD SIZE OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=85)



Family size analysis (Chart 5) indicated that nearly half of the respondents (49.4%) reported having 2-4 members in their households, signifying small to medium-sized families.

About 21.2% were single-member households, and 16.5% reported having 4–5 family members, highlighting moderate family composition among the beneficiaries.

LIVELIHOOD PROFILE AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME STATUS PRIOR TO PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

PRIMARY OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS

CHART 6: PRIMARY OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS BEFORE THE PROJECT (N=85)

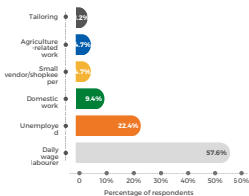


Chart 6 revealed that, when asked about their primary occupation prior to the project, more than half (57.6%) of respondents reported working as daily wage labourers, indicating that the majority were engaged in financially unstable, low-income employment. Another 22.4% were unemployed, reflecting the lack of livelihood opportunities. Additionally, about 4.7% of respondents were small vendors or shopkeepers, showing that only a limited number had prior experience in independent income-generating activities.

The colonies in Nashik were located in urban settings, while those in Pandharpur were semi-urban. In both locations, families and individuals affected by leprosy lived together in the same colony.

Focus group discussions with Self-Help Group (SHG) members revealed that prior to the intervention, most participants depended on irregular daily wages or agricultural work, earning very low incomes. Women had limited opportunities for paid work, and youth faced challenges in securing stable employment due to lack of skills and financial resources.

Interactions with the implementing agency team corroborated these findings. Before the project, the target colonies faced poor socio-economic conditions, with families primarily relying on daily wage labour or small informal activities that yielded unstable, insufficient earnings. Education levels were low, and access to basic services such as health, sanitation, and housing were limited. Many households had minimal savings and few livelihood opportunities, while social stigma and exclusion continued to constrain their economic stability and participation in community development.



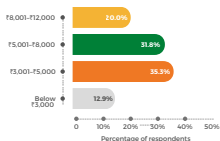
Before the project was introduced, the economic condition in the colonies was extremely fragile. Most families survived on irregular daily wage work or small-scale agricultural activities, earning just enough to meet basic needs. Savings were almost non-existent, and access to formal credit or financial institutions was very limited. Women rarely participated in income-generating activities or community decision-making, which further restricted their empowerment.

-Bhalchandra Nirbhavne



AVERAGE MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

CHART 7: AVERAGE MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME



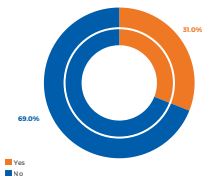
In terms of average monthly household income prior to the intervention, chart 7 showed that more than one-third of respondents (35.3%) reported earning between ₹ 3,001 and ₹ 5,000, followed by 31.8% who earned between ₹ 5,001 and ₹ 8,000. This indicated that most families had very limited, unstable incomes. Additionally 12.9% of respondents reported earnings below ₹ 3,000 per month, reflecting a high degree of economic vulnerability and financial insecurity before the livelihood project.

Insights from focus group discussions with SHG members reinforced these findings.

Participants shared that before joining the SHG, most were engaged in daily wage labour, small-scale agricultural work, or domestic jobs. Earnings were often insufficient to meet basic needs, and saving money was rare. Income opportunities were seasonal, leading to periods of unemployment. Women and youth contributed through small informal activities, but their income was minimal and often went unrecognised in household finances.

BASELINE ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL AND SKILL TRAINING AMONG BENEFICIARIES

CHART 8: RESPONDENTS WHO ATTENDED OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES BEFORE THIS PROJECT (N=85)



As shown in chart 8, before the intervention, more than two-thirds of respondents (69%) reported not having attended any vocational or skills development courses, indicating that most beneficiaries lacked formal training or exposure to structured livelihood projects. Among those who had participated in such courses, the types of training varied and were not consistently documented; however, it was noted that several NGOs and community-based organisations had been active in these colonies over the years, providing support such as basic education, livelihood awareness sessions, and occasional vocational activities (e.g., tailoring) which likely contributed to this limited exposure.

Discussions with community members confirmed that, prior to the intervention, most residents had no access to vocational training and relied primarily on unskilled daily-wage work. Limited awareness, financial constraints, and social barriers, particularly for women, restricted participation in skill development activities before the project.

“ Before the project, I had never attended any vocational or skill training. I did not know where such opportunities existed, and no one had ever encouraged or informed us about them. Most of my time went into household responsibilities, and I had no exposure to learning new skills

-Priya Pawar, 26 years, Pandharpur

”



DELAYS

Mobilisation and sensitisation of colony residents on the four empowerment modules commenced in December 2020. However, the process was interrupted due to the COVID-19 lockdown and resumed in September 2021 after restrictions were lifted, extending the timeline until August 2023. Seed grant disbursement was delayed by approximately 6 months due to the pandemic, nationwide lockdown measures, and internal challenges within the colonies.

PROJECT SPECIFIC TRAININGS & LINKAGES WITH TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS





PRE-PROJECT PHASE

During the pre-project phase, essential groundwork was undertaken to ensure a smooth implementation. Staff recruitment was completed in late 2020, including the appointment of the Zonal Project Coordinator and Community Animators through a structured selection process involving representatives from S-ILF and APAL. Consultative meetings were organised with community and colony leaders to understand local conditions and finalise the implementation plan. Regular orientation and capacity-building sessions were conducted for project staff to strengthen their field engagement and monitoring. A baseline survey was conducted across all six colonies, covering 1,420 residents, to collect data on demographic, economic, and social indicators. This served as the Foundation for assessing the project's impact.



MOBILISATION AND SENSITISATION OF COLONY RESIDENTS ON EMPOWERMENT MODULES

To promote active community participation and empowerment, Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF), in partnership with Bajaj Auto Limited, implemented extensive mobilisation and sensitisation activities across the six project colonies.

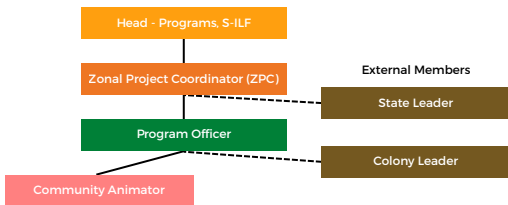
Community Animators (CAs), under the guidance of the Zonal Project Coordinator (ZPC) and S-ILF project staff, led these efforts through home visits, group meetings, and awareness sessions, ensuring that families affected by leprosy were informed and actively engaged in project activities.

As part of these efforts, S-ILF developed four empowerment training modules, which were translated into Marathi to facilitate understanding. These sessions focused on leadership, collective action, self-reliance, health practices, and gender equality. The involvement of colony leaders, SHGs, and state associations helped ensure broad participation, particularly among women and youth, thereby strengthening social cohesion and laying the Foundation for sustainable livelihood development.

A total of 22 training programs (each lasting 2 days) were conducted, reaching 521 residents across the six colonies.

TRAINING MODULE

- SHG management
- Colony Governance
- Health & Hygiene
- Gender Concepts & Practices

TABLE 1: TRAINING MODULES COVERED UNDER THE PROJECT

Source: implementation team



MARKET ASSESSMENT

A market assessment was conducted in Pandharpur, Miraj, and Nashik to identify viable livelihood options and local demand. In Pandharpur, preferred enterprises included juice stalls, grocery shops, vegetable vending, and construction-related work, with most competition located outside the colonies. In Miraj, high demand was observed for vegetable shops, beauty parlours, tailoring services, and food stalls. In Nashik, popular options comprised food stalls, grocery shops, clothing stores, mess services, and vegetable shops. Colony populations varied in size, averaging between 500 and 1,500 residents, including households of persons affected by leprosy and their families living together in these settlements. While competition existed both inside and outside the colonies, local shops were generally preferred for their quality, convenience, and flexibility in offering credit sales.



SELECTION OF BENEFICIARIES

The Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF) organised quarterly Project Selection Committee Meetings (PSCM) to identify and select suitable beneficiaries from the six leprosy colonies covered under the project. The PSCM comprised two external livelihood experts, representatives from APAL (Association of People Affected by Leprosy), and the S-ILF project team. Due to personal and health-related reasons, six beneficiaries were unable to continue in the project and were replaced by new beneficiaries from the same colonies. Out of the original 108 selected beneficiaries, 104 received project grants from S-ILF to start or strengthen their proposed livelihood activities.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WORKSHOP (EDP)

Entrepreneurship Development Workshops were conducted to strengthen the beneficiaries' business skills. The training covered business planning, procurement, pricing, customer management, and basic record-keeping. Orientation on the Colony Development Fund (CDF) was also included to promote collective financial management. The workshops were facilitated by the S-ILF training team with support from the APAL state and colony leaders. A total of 108 beneficiaries participated in the sessions, along with community leaders and animators involved in livelihood support.

Colony Development Fund (CDF)

The Colony Development Fund is a revolving community fund established under the Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation and the Bajaj Auto Limited livelihood project. Beneficiaries deposit a portion of their earnings into a common bank account, which is later used to help new families start livelihood activities. This system encourages financial responsibility and community ownership and ensures the sustainability of entrepreneurship initiatives within the colonies.



TELE-OPD FOR PATIENTS IN LEPROSY COLONIES

To ensure continued access to healthcare during the project period, tele-OPD services were introduced in the colonies of Ambewadi (Miraj), Indira Nagar, and Maruti Mandir Kushtharog Dharmashala (Pandharpur). These virtual consultations enabled residents to connect with doctors remotely and seek medical advice for general and leprosy-related health concerns. The initiative helped overcome mobility barriers and limited healthcare access, ensuring timely medical support and continuity of care for colony residents.



MONITORING AND HAND- HOLDING SUPPORT

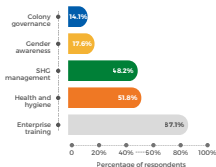
The project ensured continuous monitoring and hand-holding support throughout its duration, even during COVID-19 restrictions. The project team leveraged virtual platforms such as Zoom and other digital tools to maintain engagement with beneficiaries, colony leaders, and state representatives. Regular online meetings and follow-up sessions were organised to review progress, address challenges, and plan upcoming activities.

In addition to virtual engagement, the Zonal Project Coordinator (ZPC) and S-ILF staff conducted field visits to the colonies to support beneficiary selection, progress assessment, and on-the-ground support. Regular interactions with colony leaders, community animators, and APAL state leaders facilitated effective tracking of project implementation and resolution of emerging needs. Through these efforts, beneficiaries received continuous guidance on business management, health and hygiene practices, and overall livelihood improvement, ensuring effective project execution and sustained engagement despite external constraints.

POST-INTERVENTION SCENARIO

PARTICIPATION OF RESPONDENTS IN SENSITISATION TRAINING

CHART 9: PARTICIPATION OF RESPONDENTS IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRAINING PROGRAMS (N=85)



Through sustained mobilisation and sensitisation efforts by Community Animators, a significant level of participation was achieved among beneficiaries. As shown in Chart 9, participation was highest in enterprise training, with 87.1% of respondents reporting attendance, reflecting the programme's strong focus on livelihood and income-generation activities. This was followed by health and hygiene training (51.8%) and SHG management training (48.2%), indicating moderate engagement in health awareness and group-based financial and organisational capacity building. In comparison, participation in gender awareness (17.6%) and colony governance training (14.1%) was relatively low, suggesting that social and governance-related components reached fewer beneficiaries than enterprise-led interventions.

The trainings were conducted as common capacity-building sessions within the community. S-ILF developed four modules, SHG Management, Gender, Health & Hygiene, and Colony Governance, which were translated into Marathi for ease of understanding.

A total of 22 two-day training sessions were organised, reaching 521 participants from the colonies.

Source: Project Completion Report

Discussions with the field coordinator highlighted that the workshops were designed to be practical and need-based, covering topics such as SHG functioning, entrepreneurship skills, financial literacy, and health practices. The sessions were delivered in simple language using interactive methods to encourage participation, particularly among women and socially excluded groups. Regular follow-ups enabled beneficiaries to apply the learning in daily practice, contributing to improved confidence and active involvement within the community.

Community Animators echoed similar observations during discussions. They explained that sensitisation was carried out through regular group meetings, door-to-door engagement, and informal conversations, allowing new ideas to be introduced gradually and to clarify doubts. By repeatedly visiting households, reminding members about meetings, and creating a comfortable space for discussion, they encouraged participation, particularly among women, in training sessions.

“ During my visits and meetings, I observed that many families who initially hesitated to join community activities gradually started attending the sensitisation trainings. Women, especially, began participating in SHC sessions, enterprise discussions, and health awareness meetings once they felt comfortable and understood the purpose. With repeated interactions and simple explanations, more members started coming forward to ask questions, share their thoughts, and take an interest in the training. The change happened slowly, but participation has definitely increased over time.

-Sapna Nirbhavne

Chart 6 revealed that, when asked about their primary occupation prior to the project, more than half (57.6%) of respondents reported working as daily wage labourers, indicating that the majority were engaged in financially unstable, low-income employment. Another 22.4% were unemployed, reflecting the lack of livelihood opportunities. Additionally, about 4.7% of respondents were small vendors or shopkeepers, showing that only a limited number had prior experience in independent income-generating activities.

The colonies in Nashik were located in urban settings, while those in Pandharpur were semi-urban. In both locations, families and individuals affected by leprosy lived together in the same colony.

PARTICIPATION OF RESPONDENTS IN ENTERPRISE TRAINING

CHART 10: TRAINING TOPICS COVERED UNDER ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS (N=74)

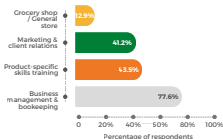


Chart 10 highlighted that among respondents who attended enterprise training (n=74), the majority reported gaining exposure to essential business management skills. Most participants indicated that the sessions covered core aspects such as expense planning and simple record-keeping, with 89.2% reporting training in business management and bookkeeping. About 50% of respondents noted receiving product-specific skills training, while 47.3% indicated that the training addressed marketing and customer relations. These findings suggest that the training was designed to strengthen both operational and market-oriented aspects of enterprise management, enabling beneficiaries to run their businesses more effectively.

Interactions with community members further these. Shobha Karsulakr, a woman SHG member from Nashik, shared that the enterprise training helped her understand how to manage a small business systematically.

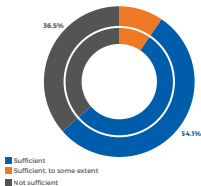
Prior to the project, she had never managed any business activity independently. She explained that the sessions taught her how to maintain simple accounts, handle daily transactions, and plan expenses. Additionally, she learned product-related skills and techniques for communicating with customers to build trust. Shobha mentioned that earlier she felt uncertain about managing a business on her own. However, after the training, she gained confidence and clarity, enabling her to operate her enterprise more independently.

From Daily Wages to Confident Enterprise

Shobha Karsulakr, a 52-year-old SHG member from Walmiknagar, Nashik, earlier worked as a daily-wage worker in allied services but had never managed any business activity on her own. After receiving enterprise training, she learned to maintain simple accounts, plan expenses, manage daily transactions, and communicate confidently with customers, as well as product-specific skills related to the services she provides. This helped her shift from irregular labour work to offering her allied services in a more organised and independent manner. Earlier, Shobha earned approximately Rs. 3,000-5,000 per month. After the intervention, her income increased to approximately Rs. 7,000-10,000 per month, along with savings of around Rs. 1,500 per month. Shobha shared that the training not only strengthened her business skills but also helped her overcome earlier hesitation and stigma, giving her greater confidence and independence.

CONTENT AND SATISFACTION WITH THE ENTERPRISE TRAINING

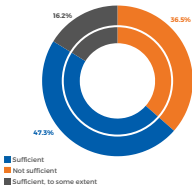
CHART 11: RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TRAINING DURATION ADEQUACY (N=74)



The enterprise training was conducted during the early phase of the project (2020-2021), a period significantly disrupted by COVID-19 restrictions and internal challenges within some colonies. Training and hand-holding support resumed gradually in coordination with APAL and colony committees, alongside the disbursement of seed grants and procurement support for business activities.

As shown in Charts 11 and 12, among the 74 respondents who had attended enterprise training, 63.5% felt the training duration was adequate, while 36.5% expressed a need for a longer duration.

CHART 12: RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TRAINING CONTENT ADEQUACY (N=74)



Similarly, 63.5% considered the training content sufficient, whereas 36.5% suggested it could be improved or expanded. It is important to note that the enterprise training was conducted during the initial phase of the project (2020-2021). Given the time elapsed, some respondents may not fully recall specific details or may require refresher support to apply the learnings consistently. This suggests that periodic follow-up training or on-field mentoring could further strengthen learning retention and improve the overall effectiveness of the intervention.

“ When the meetings first started, I was hesitant to join and speak. The Community Animator continued to visit and explain things simply, and gradually, I began attending regularly. Over time, I became more comfortable sharing my thoughts in the group. Now I feel more confident participating in discussions, and I no longer feel afraid to speak in front of others.

-Sahebrao Pandurang Charate

CHART 13: IMPROVEMENT IN RESPONDENTS' KNOWLEDGE AFTER ATTENDING TRAINING SESSIONS (N=74)

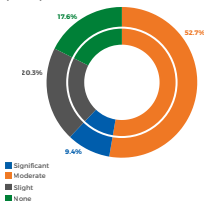
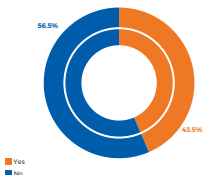
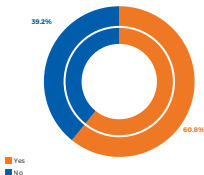


Chart 13 revealed that among 74 respondents who have taken the enterprise training, 52.7% reported a moderate improvement in their understanding after the enterprise development training, particularly in maintaining simple records, planning small expenses, and communicating with greater confidence. Participants noted that the sessions enabled them to organise activities more systematically and feel more comfortable contributing to group discussions. Since the training was conducted early in the project period, many expressed that refresher sessions would be beneficial for reinforcing learning and ensuring consistent application of these skills.

Importantly, while the improvement in business management skills was moderate, participants reported notable progress in their overall business performance, largely due to other key factors such as seed grant support, improved access to tools and materials, enhanced market opportunities, and increased confidence to start or expand enterprises.

CHART 14: AVAILABILITY OF FOLLOW-UP SESSIONS AFTER TRAINING (N=74)

As highlighted in chart 14, when asked about the availability of follow-up support after the training, 57% of respondents among 74 respondents who participated in the enterprise training confirmed that follow-up sessions were provided, indicating that many beneficiaries had access to continued guidance beyond the initial training. However, 43% expressed the need for more frequent follow-up sessions, suggesting that additional support could further strengthen the application of learning in daily practice.

CHART 15: OVERALL SATISFACTION LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS WITH THE TRAINING PROGRAM (N=74)

As shown in chart 15, among the 74 respondents who had attended enterprise training, 60.8% reported being satisfied with the project. This indicated that while a majority benefited from the training, there was scope to deepen and extend its duration to better align with participants' needs.

Insights from focus group discussions with beneficiaries reinforced this positive response. Participants shared that the business development training content was practical and easy to understand, and that the facilitators were supportive and approachable. They highlighted that the training environment encouraged active participants. They shared that the business development training content was practical and easy to understand, and that the facilitators were supportive and approachable.

**SENSITISATION TRAINING ON GENDER MODULE**

CHART 16: PROJECT BENEFICIARIES WHO RECEIVED FINANCIAL GRANTS (N=85)

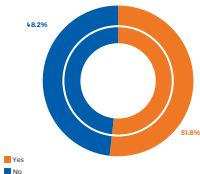


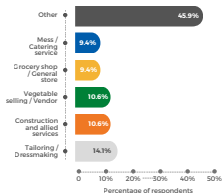
Chart 16 revealed that more than half of the respondents (51.8%) reported receiving financial assistance in the form of seed grants under the project to initiate or strengthen their livelihood activities. The average grant was approximately ₹ 37,572, with individual support ranging from ₹. 2,500 to ₹ 56,000, depending on the nature and scale of the enterprise. Among the 48.2% who did not receive a grant, the primary reasons cited were lack of interest in pursuing an enterprise.

Chart 16 revealed that more than half of the respondents (51.8%) reported receiving financial assistance in the form of seed grants under the project to initiate or strengthen their livelihood activities. The average grant was approximately ₹ 37,572, with individual support ranging from ₹. 2,500 to ₹ 56,000, depending on the nature and scale of the enterprise. Among the 48.2% who did not receive a grant, the primary reasons cited were lack of interest in pursuing an enterprise.

Insights from discussions with the regional manager indicated that beneficiary selection for seed funding was conducted through household-level assessments and consultations with local leaders. The process prioritised the inclusion of women, youth, and economically vulnerable families, as well as individuals motivated to participate actively in SHCs and livelihood training. The objective was to ensure equitable representation and to provide opportunities to those with both economic need and a demonstrated interest in entrepreneurship.

“ Before the training, I was unsure about how to manage a business. I had never tried to start one because I was sceptical about the complications involved. The trainers explained each step patiently and encouraged us to participate. I learned how to plan expenses, talk to customers, and keep simple accounts. Now I feel confident to run my shop and support my family better.

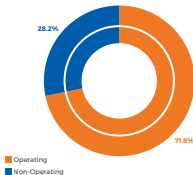
- Parsu Aivale, 33-year-old male, Indira Kushtha Vasahat, Pandharpur ”

CHART 17: TYPES OF ENTERPRISE RUN BY RESPONDENTS (N=85)

In chart 17, it is revealed that among the 85 respondents, 45.9% were engaged in small service or retail-based enterprises, such as beauty parlours, DJ and sound services, food or juice stalls, small clothing shops, and shoe repair work. Tailoring and dressmaking accounted for 14.1%, while 10.6% were involved in vegetable vending and another 10.6% in construction-related work or small contracting.

Additionally, 9.4% operated grocery or general stores, and 9.4% managed mess or catering services. Overall, beneficiaries selected practical and locally relevant livelihood options that required modest investment and could be conveniently managed within or near the colony.

Insights from focus group discussions reinforced these findings, as participants noted that the selected businesses aligned with local demand, required manageable levels of investment, and enabled families to build livelihood stability gradually.

CHART 18: CURRENT OPERATIONAL STATUS OF RESPONDENT ENTERPRISES (N=85)

As shown in chart 18, nearly three-fourths of respondents (71.8%, n=61) reported that their enterprises were currently operational, indicating that most businesses initiated under the project continued to operate. Among those not operating (28.2%, n=24), reasons cited during discussions included health issues, seasonal demand fluctuations, and temporary financial constraints.

**INTERVIEW WITH A BENEFICIARY VENDOR**

TABLE 2: ENTERPRISE TYPE VS CURRENT OPERATIONAL STATUS (N=61)

Enterprise Type	No. of Respondents Whose Enterprises Are Operational	Percentage of Respondents Whose Enterprises Are Operational
Beauty parlour / Salon	1	1.6
Construction and allied services (e.g., centring, contracting)	9	14.8
DJ & sound system	1	1.6
Food stall / Juice and cool drink cart	6	9.8
Grocery shop / General store	8	13.1
Mess / Catering service	8	13.1
Other	1	1.6
Retail shop (e.g. female clothier, miscellaneous retail)	4	6.6
Shoe Maker	2	3.3
Tailoring / Dressmaking	12	19.7
Vegetable selling / Vendor	9	14.8
Grand Total	61	100.0

Table 2 presents the distribution of respondents whose enterprises were operational at the time of the survey. Out of 61 respondents with active enterprises, the largest proportion was engaged in tailoring and dressmaking (19.7%), followed by construction and allied services (14.8%) and vegetable vending (14.8%). Grocery shops and catering/mess services each accounted for 13.1% of operational enterprises, while food stalls and Juice or cool drink carts represented 9.8%. Smaller proportions were observed in retail shops (6.6%), shoe making (3.3%), beauty parlours, DJ and sound systems, and other enterprises (each 1.6%).

Discussions with community leaders reinforced these findings. Bhalchandra Nirbhavane, a community leader from Nashik, shared that in their colony, approximately 65-70% of beneficiaries were actively running their enterprises. He noted that most individuals had effectively utilised the seed funding and training provided. At the same time, a smaller group continued to face challenges such as limited market access or difficulty sourcing materials. Overall, these insights suggested a strong rate of enterprise continuity, with the majority demonstrating sustained engagement and progress in their livelihood activities.

“ Working closely with these communities, I have seen a clear shift in how families manage their livelihoods. Beneficiaries are now more confident in planning their work, handling finances, and using their earnings more thoughtfully, which has strengthened both their enterprises and their sense of stability.

-Swapnil Jawhare, Field coordinator, Nashik



Beneficiaries echoed similar experiences during interviews. Many shared that once their enterprises became stable, they began reinvesting a portion of their earnings to strengthen operations. This included buying additional raw materials to maintain stock, introducing new products to meet customer demand, or making small improvements to their setup, such as acquiring basic equipment or enhancing display arrangements.



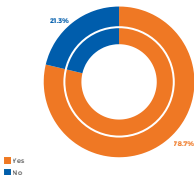
SHG FUNCTIONING AND FINANCIAL PRACTICES

As the project aimed to strengthen household livelihoods, the business development training and SHG formation worked hand in hand. While the enterprise training helped participants build skills in managing small businesses, SHGs provided the collective platform where these skills could be practised, reinforced, and supported financially. SHGs encouraged regular savings, small loans, and financial discipline, essential foundations for running and sustaining an enterprise.

DISCUSSION WITH BENEFICIARIES DURING THE COLONY VISIT AT NASHIK BY CEO AND OTHER SENIOR MEMBERS



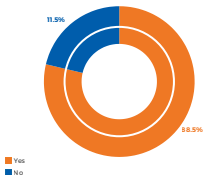
CHART 19: RESPONDENTS MAINTAINING RECORDS OF ENTERPRISE ACTIVITIES (N=61)



In terms of how they organise and manage their daily business activities, chart 19 showed that among 61 respondents with a currently operational enterprise, 78.7% reported maintaining basic records, typically including daily expense notes, customer payment entries, purchase or stock logs, and simple income records. This reflected an improved understanding of the importance of tracking expenses, income, and stock for effective enterprise management.

The remaining respondents did not maintain records, primarily due to low literacy levels or the perception that their business transactions were too small to document. This highlights the need for continued guidance on simple and accessible record-keeping methods.

CHART 20: RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE REINVESTED THEIR EARNINGS OR EXPANDED THEIR BUSINESSES (N=61)



As shown in Chart 20, among the 61 respondents whose enterprises are currently operational, the project supported not only the initiation of enterprises but also their gradual growth. A majority of beneficiaries began reinvesting their earnings to strengthen business activities. Nearly 88.5% (n=61) reported reinvesting a portion of their income or expanding their business in some capacity. Common reinvestment practices included purchasing additional raw materials, increasing product variety, or making small improvements to business infrastructure.



INTERACTION WITH A BENEFICIARY FAMILY

TABLE 3: BUSINESS REINVESTMENT VS ECONOMIC STATUS IMPROVEMENT (N=61)

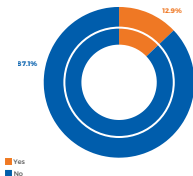
Reinvested/Expanded (n=54)	35 (64.8%)	18 (33.3%)	1 (1.9%)	54	98.1%
Did Not Reinvest (n=7)	0 (0%)	4 (57.1%)	3 (42.9%)	7	57.1%
TOTAL	35	22	4	61	93.4%

As shown in Table 3, findings revealed a strong link between reinvestment and improved economic outcomes. Of the 54 beneficiaries who reinvested their earnings, 98.1% reported improvement, while among the 7 beneficiaries who did not reinvest, only 57.1% showed improvement. This suggests that reinvesting income plays a critical role in transitioning from basic income generation to more stable and growth-oriented livelihoods.

Discussions with community leaders confirmed these observations. Across study locations, leaders noted that many entrepreneurs were gradually expanding their customer base and product range, demonstrating increased confidence and stability in business operations. This indicated a shift from subsistence-level income generation to sustained, growth-oriented livelihood practices.

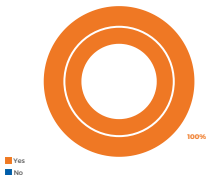


CHART 21: MEMBERSHIP OF RESPONDENTS OR FAMILY MEMBERS IN SHGS (N=85)



Among the surveyed respondents, chart 21 revealed that only 12.9% reported that they or their family members were part of a Self-Help Group (SHG), indicating that SHG participation remains limited and presents significant potential for expansion within the community.

CHART 22: SHGS WITH ACTIVE BANK ACCOUNTS LINKED TO THEM (N=11)



Among 11 respondents who were SHG members, all confirmed that their groups had active bank accounts and practised regular savings and internal lending (inter-lending). This reflects consistent financial participation and the strengthening of collective financial discipline and mutual support among members.

CHART 23: PRACTICE OF SAVINGS AND INTER-LOANING WITHIN SHGS (N=11)

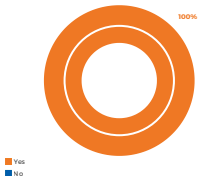


CHART 24: RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE BORROWED MONEY FROM THEIR SHGS (N=11)

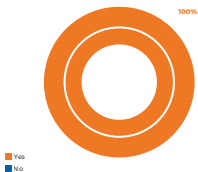
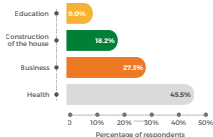


CHART 25: PURPOSE OF LOANS TAKEN FROM SHGS BY RESPONDENTS (N=11)



From charts 24 and 25, it has been found that 11 Respondents who had borrowed from SHGs reported that all members accessed loans when needed.

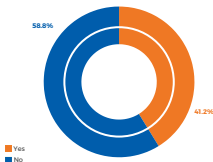
The primary reason for borrowing was health-related expenses, cited by 45.5% of respondents, highlighting the role of SHGs as an important support system during medical emergencies. Additionally, 27.3% borrowed to support business activities, while 18.2% used loans for house construction or repairs, demonstrating that SHGs contributed to meeting both livelihood and household needs.



USE OF COLONY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF)

The Colony Development Fund (CDF) played an important role in supporting the project's business development efforts. While the enterprise training equipped participants with the skills to manage and grow their businesses, the CDF provided a community-based financial mechanism through which they could reinvest in their enterprises and manage urgent needs without relying on high-interest borrowing. The section below outlines how the CDF was used and how it contributed to enterprise continuity and economic resilience.

CHART 26: EXISTENCE OF COLONY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF) IN RESPONDENT COLONIES (N=85)



As shown in chart 26, when asked about the presence of a Colony Development Fund in their communities, 41.2% of respondents confirmed that a CDF is presently active, indicating that the revolving fund mechanism has been established and is operational in a significant proportion of colonies.

CHART 27: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS CONTRIBUTING TO COLONY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF). (N=35)

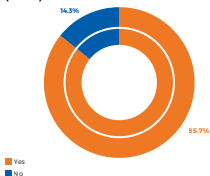
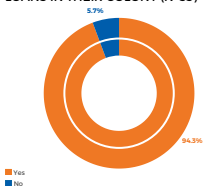


Chart 27 shows that approximately 85.7% of respondents who were aware of the Colony Development Fund (CDF) reported contributing savings to it, reflecting sustained engagement and a shared commitment to its continued operation. Data from the implementing agency confirmed that a CDF was established in all six colonies, with beneficiaries beginning instalment returns in October 2022. By March 2024, a total of ₹ 2,58,000 had been deposited across the colonies. In smaller colonies in Pandharpur, a joint CDF account was created. Early redistribution had begun, with ₹40,000 disbursed in Pandharpur and ₹30,000 in Ambewadi, while colonies in Nashik began selecting new beneficiaries. Although the CDF is operational, its regularity and scale are still evolving, requiring continued guidance to strengthen repayment discipline and community-led management.

(Source: Project Closure Report)

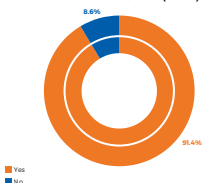
CHART 28: AWARENESS AMONG RESPONDENTS ABOUT NEW BENEFICIARIES RECEIVING CDF LOANS IN THEIR COLONY (N=35)



As reflected in chart 28, among 35 respondents who reported about Colony Development Fund (CDF), a very high proportion of respondents (94.3%) were aware that loans from the CDF had been provided to other members within the colony, indicating that the fund is not only active but is being effectively utilised to support new livelihood activities and extend benefits to additional households beyond the initial project cycle.

INDEPENDENT MANAGEMENT OF CDF

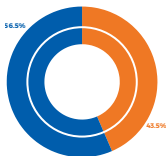
CHART 29: INDEPENDENT MANAGEMENT OF THE CDF BY SHGS OR COMMUNITY GROUPS (N=35)



As shown in chart 29, among the 35 respondents who reported on the Colony Development Fund (CDF), a large majority (91.4%) stated that Colony Development Fund Committees manage the fund formed within each colony. These committees typically include colony leaders, SHG representatives, and beneficiary members, who jointly handle repayments, maintain records, and make decisions on redistribution. This demonstrates a strong community ownership and internal capacity to operate the revolving fund without external dependence.



SASAKAWA TEAM AND SOULACE TEAM DURING FIELD VISIT

CHART 30: ACCESS TO LOANS OR CREDIT FROM THE CDF (N=85)

■ Yes
■ No

Regarding access to loans or credit from the CDF, chart 30 indicates that 43.5% of respondents reported accessing funds from it. This suggests that nearly half of the beneficiaries have already begun utilising the CDF for financial support, reinforcing its functional role in enabling livelihood continuity and expansion.

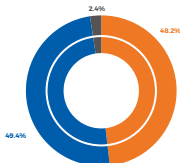
A majority of those who accessed the fund reported taking small to moderate loans ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹50,000, primarily for business setup or strengthening existing enterprises. Many noted that these funds were useful for purchasing stock and equipment, as well as for managing short-term financial needs, contributing to livelihood enhancement and improved household stability.



HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: USE OF TELE-OPD SERVICES

Alongside livelihood support, the project ensured continuity of essential healthcare for colony residents, many of whom faced mobility challenges and limited access to regular medical services. To address this, tele-OPD consultations were introduced, enabling beneficiaries to receive timely medical guidance and monitoring within their own communities.

This allowed beneficiaries to receive timely medical guidance and monitor their own communities, supporting the project's broader objective of improving both economic and health security for the community.

CHART 31: USAGE OF THE PROJECT'S TELE-OPD OR REMOTE MEDICAL CONSULTATION SERVICE BY RESPONDENTS (N=85)

■ No
■ Yes
■ Not aware of this service

As reflected in chart 31, nearly half of the respondents (48.2%) reported using tele-OPD or remote medical consultation services, demonstrating strong adoption and engagement with the health support provided under the project, particularly during periods when movement and direct access to healthcare were restricted.

CHART 32: RESPONDENTS WHO RECEIVED PROPER MEDICAL ADVICE FROM DOCTORS THROUGH TELE-OPD (N=41)

■ Yes
■ No

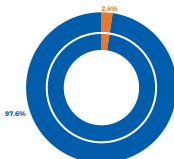
CHART 33: RESPONDENTS WHO HAD THEIR VITALS CHECKED BY A MEDICAL ASSISTANT (N=41)



■ Yes
■ No

As shown in charts 32 and 33, among the 41 respondents who used the project's tele-OPD or remote medical consultation services, all confirmed receiving appropriate medical advice from qualified doctors and reported that their basic health vitals were checked by the medical assistant during consultations. This underscores that the tele-OPD service was not only accessible but also effective in delivering reliable medical guidance and routine health monitoring, thereby ensuring continuity of care and early health management within the colonies.

CHART 34: RESPONDENTS WHO RECEIVED A PRESCRIPTION AFTER CONSULTATION (N=41)



■ Yes, received in proper format
■ Yes, received on plain paper

As indicated in chart 34, among the 41 respondents who received prescriptions after consultation, 97.6% were issued in the proper prescription format by the medical assistant, confirming adherence to clinical protocols and maintenance of documentation standards throughout the tele-OPD process.



KEY IMPACT

This chapter presents the key changes brought about by the projects across the economic, social, and skill-development dimensions of participating households. Using both quantitative findings and qualitative insights, the section highlights how the intervention influenced income levels, enterprise growth, household well-being, social inclusion, and beneficiaries' confidence and capacities. Together, these impacts reflect the progress achieved during the project period and provide a consolidated understanding of how the project has strengthened the lives and livelihoods of leprosy-affected families.

IMPROVED ECONOMIC STABILITY OF THE BENEFICIARIES

INCREASED INCOME OF THE BENEFICIARIES

CHART 35: AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME OF RESPONDENTS FROM BUSINESS (INR) (N=61)

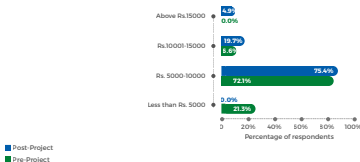
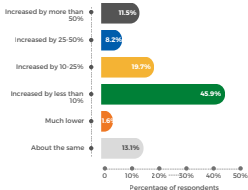


CHART 36: CHANGE IN INCOME LEVELS COMPARED TO BEFORE THE PROJECT(N=61)



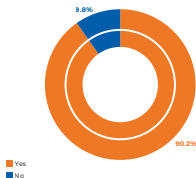
As reflected in charts 35 and 36, among the 61 respondents who are currently operating their enterprises, the intervention has led to a clear upward shift in the economic stability of participating households. Prior to the projects, most respondents were clustered in low-income brackets:

72.1% earned between ₹ 5,000 and ₹ 10,000 per month, and 21.3% earned less than ₹ 5,000 per month. Only a small proportion (6.6%) earned between ₹10,001 and ₹15,000, and none reported monthly earnings above ₹15,000, reflecting limited opportunities for income growth. Following the intervention, the income distribution shows a noticeable upward shift. The share of households earning between ₹10,001 and ₹15,000 rose to 19.7%, and for the first time, 4.9% of respondents moved into the above ₹15,000 income brackets. Importantly, no respondent remained in the lowest income band after the intervention, indicating a complete shift out of it. These changes suggest that the project contributed to enhanced earning capacity and greater financial stability for beneficiary households.

Further, chart 36 shows that, when asked about changes in income compared to pre-project, 45.9% reported an increase of around 10%, while 19.7% observed growth between 10% and 25%. Notably, 11.5% reported income growth of more than 50%, reflecting substantial financial progress for some households. Overall, these trends confirm a positive shift toward greater economic stability and enhanced earning capacity among participating families.

DIVERSIFICATION OF INCOME

CHART 37: BUSINESS DIVERSIFICATION OR EXPANSION OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS (N=61)



As shown in chart 37, among the 61 respondents who are currently operating their enterprises, the intervention has significantly supported business diversification and expansion among beneficiaries. A large majority (90.2%) of respondents reported that they have diversified or expanded their enterprises within the past six months. Examples include construction-related and electrical shop owners securing small contracts from local builders, and food stall owners adding new items to their menus. These trends demonstrate that beneficiaries are not only sustaining their enterprises but are also actively seeking opportunities to increase income, reduce risk, and strengthen their economic resilience.

CHART 38: PROFIT FROM THE BUSINESS REGULARLY (N=61)

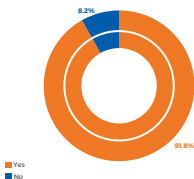
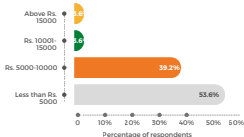


CHART 39: RESPONDENTS EARNING REGULAR PROFITS AND AVERAGE MONTHLY PROFIT EARNED (N=56)



As shown in charts 38 and 39, among the 61 respondents currently operating their enterprises, 91.8% reported regularly earning profits from their businesses, confirming that enterprises supported under the project are not only functional but also consistently generating income. Among those who were earning profits (n = 56), more than half (53.6%) earned less than ₹ 5,000 per month, while 39.2% earned between ₹ 5,000 and ₹ 10,000. A smaller proportion earned higher profits: 3.6% earned between ₹ 10,001 and ₹ 15,000, and another 3.6% earned above ₹ 15,000. This distribution shows that while most beneficiaries are earning modest but stable profits, a few enterprises are beginning to generate higher returns, thereby improving household financial stability.

Overall, the intervention has contributed to stronger and more resilient livelihood systems,

helping families move toward improved economic security and reduced financial dependence.

IMPROVEMENT IN HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC STATUS

CHART 40: LEVEL OF IMPROVEMENT IN HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC STATUS AFTER THE PROJECT (N=61)

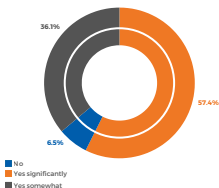
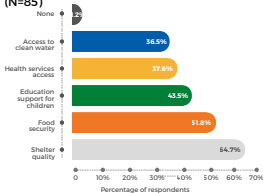


CHART 41: HOUSEHOLD ASSETS OR LIVING CONDITIONS IMPROVED SINCE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION (N=85)



As reflected in charts 40 and 41, the projectsme has resulted in a clear improvement in household economic conditions. Chart 40, based on the 61 respondents currently operating their enterprises, shows that 93.5% reported some level of improvement after the intervention, with 57.4% noting significant gains, indicating stronger financial security and stability at the household level.

These economic gains are further reflected in improvements in living conditions, as shown in Chart 41.

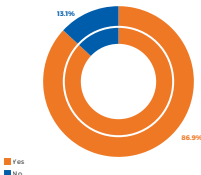
- 64.7% reported better shelter quality
- 51.8% noted improved food security
- 43.5% reported enhanced ability to support children's education
- 37.6% experienced better access to health services
- 36.5% saw improvements in access to clean water

Overall, these findings confirm that the intervention has strengthened household economic resilience, enabling families to manage daily expenses, withstand financial pressures, and plan for future needs.

IMPROVEMENT IN SOCIAL STATUS AND DIGNITY

For families affected by leprosy, achieving dignity and social acceptance had been critical, given their prolonged experience of stigma and exclusion. Strengthening their recognition and inclusion within the community restored confidence, respect, and a sense of belonging.

CHART 42: IMPROVEMENT IN SOCIAL STATUS OR DIGNITY IN THE COMMUNITY (N=85)



As shown in chart 42, the intervention

contributed to a significant improvement in the social status and dignity of leprosy-affected beneficiaries and their families. A substantial majority of respondents (86.9%) reported that their enhanced social standing and self-worth had improved within their communities following their participation in the project.

“ Before joining the program, I was mostly confined to the house and had no work of my own. There was very little contact with the community, and people would ignore us, as if we had no value. After joining the SHG and receiving training, I began earning and participating in group activities. Now, I go out, interact with others, and feel respected. People speak to us differently, and I feel more confident and included in the community.

- Tejaswini Jagdish Patil, 30 years, Walmiknagar, Nashik ”

“ Before starting my grocery shop, I worked as a daily wage labourer, and our household income was very limited and unstable. After receiving support to start my small general store, my income has become more consistent. Earlier, I earned around ₹. 3,000-₹. 5,000 per month, but now I earn approximately ₹. 7,000-₹. 10,000 per month. This increase has made a big difference at home. I can manage household expenses better and feel more confident in planning for the future.

-Priya Anil Pawar ”

CHART 43: REDUCTION IN SOCIAL STIGMA EXPERIENCED BY RESPONDENTS OR THEIR FAMILIES (N=85)

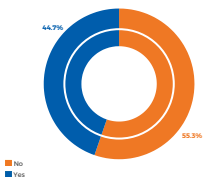
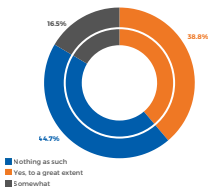


Chart 43 indicates that the programme has also contributed to a reduction in experiences of social stigma. Approximately 44.7% of respondents indicated a decline in stigma or discriminatory attitudes, signalling positive shifts in social perception. However, continued awareness efforts remained essential to reinforce acceptance further.

Discussions with the State Leader highlighted that consistent awareness initiatives, such as community meetings, health sensitisation sessions, and showcasing beneficiaries' livelihood activities, played a pivotal role in changing public perceptions. As beneficiaries engaged in income-generating roles, they were increasingly regarded as contributing members rather than dependents.

CHART 44: INCREASE IN ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONDENTS WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES (N=85)

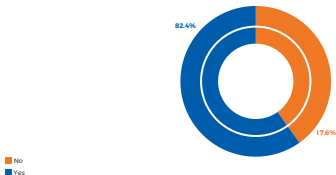


As reflected in chart 44, community acceptance also improved markedly. More than half of the respondents (55.5%) reported an increase in acceptance, while 38.8% noted a considerable improvement. This reflected growing social inclusion and recognition of beneficiaries as active contributors to household and community life.

Beneficiaries reported greater involvement in local activities and social interactions, as well as greater respect in daily life. Although stigma had not been eliminated, the project clearly facilitated a transition toward stronger inclusion, participation, and dignity for leprosy-affected families.

ENHANCEMENT OF SKILLS AND BUSINESS CAPACITY

CHART 45: INCREASE IN CONFIDENCE AMONG RESPONDENTS IN MANAGING THEIR BUSINESS AFTER TRAINING (N=74)



As shown in chart 45, among the 74 respondents who attended enterprise training, the project further strengthened beneficiaries' skills and business management capacities. Following livelihood and enterprise development training sessions, 82.4% of respondents reported increased confidence in managing their businesses. Beneficiaries cited improvements in handling daily operations, maintaining financial records, managing inventory, and engaging with customers. These enhanced competencies supported greater independence in enterprise management, reduced reliance on external assistance, and enabled informed business decision-making for sustained growth.

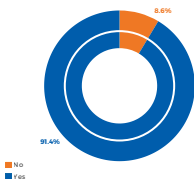
During focus group discussions, beneficiaries emphasised that their income levels had improved after initiating small-scale livelihood activities. Many enterprises, such as tailoring, grocery shops, vegetable cultivation, and poultry rearing, have been successfully established and sustained. These activities were considered practical and sustainable due to their low investment requirements and steady demand within and around the colonies.

“ Before the project, I did not know how to handle money or manage a business. During the enterprise training, I learned how to calculate costs, set prices, and maintain a simple record book. Now I run my small shop confidently, speak with customers, and make decisions on my own. Earlier, I would always depend on others for financial matters, but today I feel capable and respected in my family and community.

- Shobha, 52 years, Nashik



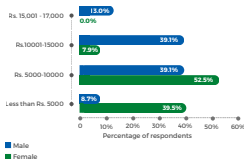
CHART 46: PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND MARGINALISED GROUPS IN CDF & LIVELIHOOD-RELATED DECISION MAKING (N=74)



As shown in chart 46, among the 74 respondents who had attended enterprise training, the intervention strengthened women's participation and decision-making roles within the community. A significant majority of respondents (91.4%) reported that women were actively involved in discussions related to the Colony Development Fund (CDF) and livelihood activities. This represented a marked shift from previously limited engagement to more shared leadership and responsibility. The increased visibility and voice of women in financial and community matters reflected growing confidence, recognition, and empowerment at both household and colony levels.

Interactions with community leaders and animators corroborated this change. They observed that women consistently attended meetings, expressed opinions, and participated in collective decision-making. Women also played active roles in enterprise management, hygiene awareness campaigns, and local initiatives. This collective engagement fostered enhanced leadership skills, stronger social inclusion, and a more participatory community environment.

CHART 47: GENDER VS INCOME RELATIONSHIP (N=61)



The chart presents a clear gender-based variation in income levels. Female respondents are predominantly concentrated in the lower income brackets, with 52.6% earning between ₹7,001-10,000 and 39.5% earning less than ₹7,000. This indicates that more than 90% of women fall below the ₹10,000 monthly income threshold. In contrast, male respondents are more evenly distributed across income categories and are comparatively better represented in higher income ranges. While 39.1% of men earn ₹7,001-10,000, an equal proportion (39.1%) earn ₹10,001-13,000, which is significantly higher than the share of women in the same category (7.9%). Additionally, 13% of male respondents fall within the highest income bracket presented (₹15,001-17,000), whereas no female respondents are represented in this range. Overall, the distribution suggests a pronounced gender gap in income, with women facing greater constraints in accessing higher-earning opportunities.

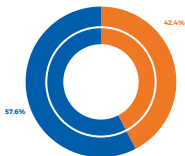
“ Before the project, I used to sell vegetables in a small way, without proper planning, and I earned only Rs. 3,000-Rs. 5,000 a month. I did not keep records, and I often incurred losses. After the training and support, I learned how to plan purchases, manage stock, and handle customers. Now I run my vegetable business more confidently and earn Rs. 7,000-Rs. 10,000 every month. My income has become more stable, and I can support my household better.

- Shobha, 52 years, Walmiknagar, Nashik



STRENGTHENING OF COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

CHART 48: IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS AFTER THE PROJECT (N=85)



■ No
■ Yes

As shown in Chart 47, the intervention played a significant role in reinforcing internal community systems and fostering stronger relationships among members. More than half of the respondents (57.6%) reported improved interaction and cooperation within the community following the project. This indicated a shift toward collective problem-solving, shared responsibility, and greater unity. Strengthened social ties also facilitated the smoother functioning of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Colony Development Fund (CDF) processes, and livelihood activities, contributing to a more cohesive and supportive community environment.

IMPROVED ACCESS TO HEALTH SUPPORT

The introduction of tele-OPD services significantly enhanced healthcare accessibility for leprosy-affected families. By enabling medical consultations, follow-ups, and basic health monitoring within the colonies, beneficiaries no longer needed to travel long distances or rely on external health facilities. This intervention supported early identification and timely management of health concerns, strengthened continuity of care, and improved overall well-being among households that previously faced barriers to regular medical support.

Interactions with community leaders highlighted that tele-OPD services encouraged residents to seek healthcare promptly. Beneficiaries reported greater comfort in consulting health professionals, improved confidence in managing their health, and overall satisfaction with the support received.

“ Before the tele-OPD service started, I would avoid going to the hospital because it meant taking leave, spending money on travel, and waiting for hours. Now, I can speak to the doctor from within the colony itself. Whenever I have a health concern, I get quick advice, and medicines are also prescribed properly. It has saved time, reduced stress, and made me feel more confident about managing my health. For me, this service has been a big support in my daily life.

- Satyabhama Mahapure, 55 years, Walmiknagar, Nashik

”

LINKAGES OF BENEFICIARIES WITH TECHNICAL INSTITUTION



06. IMPACT OF THE PROJECT FOR MULTIPLE LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Increased and more stable income enabled beneficiaries to manage their own livelihoods and reduce their dependence on daily wage labour.
- Improved savings behaviour and reinvestment of earnings strengthened financial security and confidence.
- Better access to healthcare through tele-OPD services contributed to improved individual well-being.



FAMILY LEVEL

- Families have seen a substantial increase in income, leading to an improved standard of living.
- Reduced financial burdens associated with medical expenses with access to healthcare schemes and contributed to overall family well-being.



COMMUNITY LEVEL

- Strengthened social cohesion through the formation and functioning of SHGs and the Colony Development Fund (CDF), fostering collaboration, mutual support, and collective decision-making among community members.
- Women have taken on leadership roles, contributing to community decision-making and enhancing gender equality.
- There has been a boost in economic activity, with increased enterprises and income generation.



STATE LEVEL

Contribution to local economic development through increased income and enterprise in the state through women aligning with state employability and gender equality goals.



NATIONAL LEVEL

- The projects aligned with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



- It aligns with the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) through the formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), promotion of savings, and skill-building for small businesses.
- The project reflects the goals of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY) by supporting micro-enterprises, income generation, and self-reliance among vulnerable households
- The project supports national efforts to reduce poverty and empower women, contributing to overall social and economic development and improved gender equality.

07. CASE STUDIES



CASE STUDY 1: HOMEMAKER TO BUSINESS OWNER: TEJASWINI'S STORY

Tejaswini Jagdish Patil, 30, from Walmiknagar colony, Nashik, lives in a family of nine members. Before joining the project, she was engaged only in household work and had no personal income. Because of the leprosy-related stigma faced by her family, their social interactions were limited, and community members often avoided them, affecting her confidence and sense of identity. Her situation began to change in 2020 when the Community Developer encouraged her to participate in the livelihood project. Motivated by a desire to do something meaningful and contribute to her household, she joined to start her own business. Tejaswini actively took part in SHG and enterprise development training sessions. Through these trainings, she learned how to handle customers, manage daily transactions, and make independent decisions about her business. The training process helped her develop confidence and a sense of ownership in her work.

With support from the project, she received seed funding of Rs. 43,000, which enabled her to establish a small grocery shop. Despite having no prior experience, she gradually learned how to operate and expand her business. Today, she runs the shop seven days a week and earns approximately Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000 per month. This has created a steady source of income for her household and improved their financial stability.

As her business grew, Tejaswini also began employing two helpers, offering them regular work and income. This has contributed to employment within the community while strengthening her role as a business owner. The shop is now well recognised, mainly through local word of mouth and informal digital channels. Her increased participation in economic and community activities has also improved her confidence and social acceptance.

Looking ahead, Tejaswini aspires to expand further and open two more grocery shops. She believes that with additional financial support and continued guidance, she will be able to scale her enterprise and further strengthen her family's livelihood.

“ CASE STUDY 2: STIGMA TO STABILITY: DHANAJI'S PATH TO A SUSTAINABLE INCOME

Dhanaji Maruti Raut, 45 years old and residing in Indira Kushta Vasahat, Pandharpur, lived with his family of five and previously worked as a daily labourer, earning around Rs. 8,000 per month. Due to visible skin ulcers and unhealed wounds linked to leprosy, he often faced social stigma. He was ignored within the community, which affected both his confidence and his opportunities for livelihood. At that time, labour and occasional small earnings were the only means of supporting his household.

He was introduced to the project through family acquaintances in 2020 and joined with the hope of rebuilding his identity and securing a stable income. Through self-care and SHG training sessions, he learned practical skills in managing money, pricing products, and interacting with customers. These trainings helped him gain confidence and prepared him to start an independent business.

With support from the project's seed grant, which provided him with Rs. 35,000, Dhanaji established his own juice centre at a location with regular customer footfall. Although he had only limited prior experience in this activity, he gradually strengthened his business operations. Today, he runs the shop daily and earns approximately Rs. 18,000 per month, with a profit margin of about 20-25%. During peak season, he also employs local helpers daily, creating livelihood opportunities within the community.

“ CASE STUDY 3: TELE-OPD: PRACTICAL HEALTHCARE FOR SUNIL

Sunil Kamble, a 41-year-old resident of Indira Kushta Vasahat, Pandharpur, had been living with recurring nerve pain and infections in his hands and feet for several years. Travelling to the district hospital was difficult and expensive, often requiring a full day away from work and additional transport and medicine costs. Because of this, he delayed treatment frequently and depended on painkillers purchased from local shops, which only provided temporary relief.

When Tele-OPD services were introduced under the project, Sunil was able to speak directly with a doctor without leaving the colony. The community animator helped him connect via phone, share his symptoms, and follow the doctor's instructions. He received appropriate medication through the support mechanism and was guided on self-care techniques for wound cleaning and foot protection. Within a few weeks, his pain reduced, and his infections were better controlled.

Sunil shared that having access to medical advice "at the doorstep" has made a significant difference. He no longer postpones treatment and feels more confident about managing his health. The regular check-ins and guidance have helped him avoid complications and continue his daily work without interruption. For him and many others in the colony, the Tele-OPD system has become a dependable and accessible source of healthcare support.

“ CASE STUDY 4: FROM DAILY WAGES TO A GROWING CONSTRUCTION ENTERPRISE

Dattatray Rama Ambe, 33, from Indira Kushta Vasahat, Pandharpur, previously worked as a daily wage labourer, earning between Rs. 5,000-Rs. 8,000 per month. The income was irregular and often insufficient to meet his family of five's needs, leading to frequent financial stress. There were times when he had to borrow money or delay essential expenses, which made day-to-day management difficult.

After enrolling in the project in 2020, Dattatray participated in training on basic bookkeeping, customer communication, and simple pricing practices. The training increased his understanding of how to manage work systematically and interact confidently with clients. He then received a grant of Rs. 55,000, which enabled him to purchase essential tools and equipment required to start his own small construction and centring service. With this support, Dattatray began taking local construction work contracts and renting out centring equipment, which ensured a steady demand for his services. He now maintains basic business records and communicates directly with customers regarding work requirements and payment terms. Over time, he has built a consistent customer base within nearby areas.

As a result, his income has increased to Rs. 15,000-Rs. 17,000 per month, reflecting more than a 50% growth from his earlier earnings. This combined support, including training, grant assistance, and access to the CDF, has helped stabilise his household finances, reduce dependency on irregular labour wages, and strengthen his confidence to sustain and grow the enterprise independently.

MONITORING & SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISION BY CEO AND OTHER SENIOR MEMBERS



08. CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES IN MARKET LINKAGES



Beneficiaries reported persistent difficulties marketing their products and services, with only 47.3% having received marketing training, leaving many without the skills to expand their customer base. Although businesses have begun to run more steadily, income levels remain modest: among profit-earning households, 53.6% earned less than ₹5,000 per month, 39.2% earned between ₹5,000 and ₹10,000, and just 3.6% earned above ₹10,000.

NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING



Despite progress, there remained a need to strengthen beneficiaries' enterprise management capacities. While many had initiated and sustained businesses, gaps persisted in areas such as pricing strategies, stock planning, bookkeeping, and market linkage development. Continued hand-holding and refresher training were considered essential to enable beneficiaries to manage operations independently and ensure long-term sustainability of their enterprises.

LOW PARTICIPATION IN SHGs



Participation in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) remained limited, with only 13% of respondents reporting that they or their family members were part of an SHG (Chart 21). This indicated that only a small proportion of households were engaged in collective savings, shared decision-making, or peer support mechanisms. The findings highlighted the need to expand SHG membership to promote financial discipline, strengthen mutual support within the community, and improve access to livelihood opportunities.

09.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY – SASAKAWA INDIA
LEPROSY FOUNDATION

STRENGTHEN MARKET LINKAGES AND ENTERPRISE GROWTH



The NGO can focus on enhancing market access to support the long-term sustainability of beneficiary livelihoods. This includes facilitating connections with local vendors, cooperatives, and digital marketplaces to expand their customer reach. Organising periodic product fairs, exposure visits, and enterprise showcases will further increase visibility and create new growth opportunities. Strengthening these market linkages can enable households to maintain more stable incomes and scale their businesses effectively.

ENHANCE CAPACITY BUILDING



The NGO can strengthen ongoing capacity-building efforts by offering regular refresher training for entrepreneurs, SHG members, and colony leaders. This can include reinforcing skills in bookkeeping, pricing, digital payments, and customer communication to improve enterprise efficiency further. Providing digital literacy training for colony leaders can support better record-keeping, communication, and governance. Enhanced leadership and financial literacy modules can help SHG leaders and community representatives manage group processes more transparently and make informed decisions that strengthen enterprise and community systems.

EXPAND SHG PARTICIPATION AND COLLECTIVE FINANCIAL SYSTEM



The implementing agency should focus on community mobilisation for SHG formation and strengthen hand-holding support for SHGs to improve participation, group functioning, and access to savings, credit, and relevant livelihood linkages.

STRENGTHEN MONITORING AND TRACKING OF ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE



The NGO can enhance ongoing support by establishing a simple, consistent system to monitor and track beneficiary enterprises' performance. This can include periodic check-ins, review of basic business records, and guidance on maintaining sales, expense, and profit logs. Regular monitoring can help identify challenges early, provide timely corrective support, and ensure that enterprises continue to grow steadily.

10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The project has laid a strong foundation for sustainability; however, readiness levels vary across colonies. Community ownership is emerging but remains uneven. While SHGs and Colony Development Funds (CDFs) are operational, their effectiveness depends on local leaders' confidence and capacity. Some groups demonstrate strong savings discipline and shared decision-making, while others still require external guidance to maintain records, resolve conflicts, and manage lending responsibly.

Positive behavioural changes are evident, such as reinvestment of earnings, increased participation of women in decision-making, and greater willingness to manage enterprise activities. However, these shifts are still stabilising and require continued mentoring to ensure they persist after external support reduces.

The project shows potential to transition toward self-sustenance. However, several areas need strengthening – particularly building robust market linkages to ensure consistent income flows and expanding SHG participation to include more households. Leadership structures within colonies, especially SHG leaders and Colony Development Committees, require ongoing guidance to maintain momentum, transparency, and shared accountability. Overall, the project has established a strong foundation for livelihoods and community ownership. However, periodic support and light hand-holding will be essential to keep enterprises stable and ensure community systems remain resilient in the long term.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH BENEFICIARIES AND FAMILY MEMBERS



11. CONCLUSION

The Promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods for 108 Leprosy-Affected Families program, supported by Bajaj Auto Limited and implemented by Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF), has played a transformative role in advancing economic empowerment and social inclusion among persons affected by leprosy and their families in Maharashtra. Implemented across six colonies in Solapur, Nashik, and Sangli since 2020, the project addressed longstanding challenges of stigma, limited livelihood opportunities, and social isolation. Through enterprise development training, seed capital support, SHG strengthening, and continuous mentoring, the initiative enabled families to start and sustain viable micro-enterprises adapted to local market conditions.

Collated data and field evidence demonstrate clear improvements in household income, financial security, and social participation among beneficiary families. Many who once depended on irregular daily wage labour or external support are now running small and stable enterprises such as grocery shops, tailoring units, food stalls, juice centres, vegetable vending, and service-based businesses. These livelihood activities have reduced dependency, enhanced resilience, and improved control over household financial decisions.

A notable change has been the increased participation and leadership of women. Women are now actively involved in SHCs, managing savings, handling business transactions, and taking part in community meetings. This shift has built confidence and recognition, strengthening their role in both household and colony decision-making and thereby empowering them. The presence of functioning enterprises has also contributed to reduced stigma and improved social interaction, helping restore dignity and a sense of belonging among persons affected by leprosy.

Looking ahead, the project's Foundation provides strong potential for continued progress. Strengthening market linkages, improving digital and financial literacy, and expanding access to government livelihood and credit schemes will support more robust enterprise growth. Regular refresher trainings and structured mentoring will also be important to ensure business sustainability and adaptability to changing market needs. Overall, this programmatic initiative has proved and demonstrated that with the right support skills, resources, and community engagement, persons affected by leprosy can lead self-reliant, dignified, and socially integrated lives.

ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers vehicles. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jammnal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted, innovative brand, having sold over 21 million motorcycles in 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio, including motorcycles, scooters, and autorickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs in both India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR contributes to education, health, environmental, and animal welfare projects to support the sustainable development of the community and the nation.



TRAINING OF STAFF AND APAL LEADERS

ABOUT NGO PARTNER: SASAKAWA-INDIA LEPROSY FOUNDATION (S-ILF)

Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation established in 2006, dedicated to the socio-economic empowerment and mainstreaming of persons affected by leprosy and their families in India. S-ILF works to eliminate stigma and discrimination associated with leprosy through livelihood promotion, education support, advocacy, and awareness-building initiatives. The Foundation focuses on enabling self-reliance and dignity by supporting entrepreneurship, vocational training, and skill development among residents of leprosy colonies. In partnership with corporate CSR projects, government bodies, and civil society organisations, S-ILF has implemented numerous community-based livelihood and capacity-building projects across multiple states, thereby fostering social inclusion and sustainable development for marginalised leprosy-affected communities.

DISCUSSION WITH BENEFICIARIES



ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

STUDY OF
STRENGTHENING RURAL
LIVELIHOODS FOR
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN THE
CENTRAL INDIAN
HIMALAYAN REGION

Implementing Partner:
Aarohi

Implementing Period:
Feb 2021 - Apr 2024

Assessment Period: Year 2025-26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 09
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04 - 06
	Key Impacts	07 - 08
	Community/Stakeholder Feedback	09
02	OECD Framework	10 - 12
03	Introduction	13 - 21
	Background and Need for the project	13
	Objectives of the Project	14
	Project Details	14
	Stakeholders & their role in the project	15
	Project Activities	16 - 20
	Timeline of the Project	21
04	Research Methodology	22 - 24
	Objectives of the Study	22
	Use of Mixed Method Approach	22
	Application of Qualitative Techniques	23
	Application of Quantitative Techniques	23
	Ensuring Triangulation	23
	Sampling Framework	23
	Standardised Framework for evaluation	23
	Research Design	24
	Key Stakeholders	24
	Study Tools	24
	Ethical Considerations	24
05	Key Findings	25 - 55
06	Impact Across Multiple Levels	56 - 58
07	Case Studies	59 - 60
08	Challenges	61
09	Recommendation	62
10	Sustainability Exit Readiness	63 - 64
11	Conclusion	65 - 66

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Community / Stakeholder Feedback
Table 2	Stakeholders & their role in the project

LIST OF CHARTS

Table Number	Table Name
Chart 1	Demographic Profile of Beneficiaries
Chart 2-3	Land Ownership and Agricultural Issues Prior to Project Implementation
Chart 4-7	Participation in Training or Capacity Building Sessions
Chart 8-9	Access to Inputs & Infrastructure
Chart 10-11	Polyhouse Infrastructure Support
Chart 12	Water Infrastructure Support
Chart 13-15	Organic Input Infrastructure
Chart 16	Irrigation Access and Water Availability
Chart 17-36	Key Impacts

ABBREVIATIONS

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CRC	Community Resource Centre
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FGD	Focus group discussion
FY	Financial Year
GI	Geographical Indication
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
IIM	Indian Institute of Management
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IVRI	Indian Veterinary Research Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PES	Payment-for-ecosystem-services
POPs	Package of Practices
RRP	Rural Resource Person
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG	Self-help group

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In collaboration with Bajaj Auto Limited, Aarohi launched a holistic, community-led intervention in the hill district of Uttarakhand, designed to strengthen rural incomes while preserving fragile mountain ecosystems. Built on strong grassroots institutions such as CBOs and a producer co-operative, the project integrates sustainable agriculture, value addition, market linkages, and natural resource management. By combining local knowledge with scientific practices and collective enterprise models, the initiative aims to create resilient, climate-smart, and market-oriented livelihoods for small and marginal farmers.



**FOCUS GROUP
DISCUSSION WITH SHG
MEMBERS**

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Strengthening rural livelihoods for sustainable development in Central Indian Himalayan Region



Implementing Agency

Aarohi



Location

30 villages in three development blocks of Nainital district (Uttarakhand)



Duration

Feb 2021 - Apr 2024



Assessment Location

Nainital (Dhari, Ramgarh and Okhalkanda blocks)



Total Budget

199 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total no. of Beneficiaries

2000 Farmers



Target Beneficiaries

Farmers and communities located in himalayan region



Primary Programs

Formation of CBOs, training and capacity building on livelihood development and sustainable agriculture, support in market linkage and govt. scheme linkage

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the livelihood creation and diversification pro implemented in 30 villages across the Dhari, Okhalkanda, and Ramgarh blocks of Nainital district. Specifically, the assessment aimed to:



Examine the extent to which the project improved the economic conditions of rural farmers through the introduction of sustainable agro-based models.



Assess the capacity-building efforts in enhancing beneficiaries' skills for sustainable livelihood diversification beyond traditional farming.



STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION DURING THE FIELD STUDY

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: TO CREATE RESILIENCE AMONG MARGINAL FARMERS AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRO MODELS WITH EFFICIENT SUPPLY CHAINS

ENHANCE: THE PROJECT STRENGTHENED AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCE AND PRODUCTION SYSTEMS



97.5%

of farmers adopting sustainable farming practices.



Irrigation access expanded significantly, with 72.4% receiving water tanks and 27.2% accessing polyhouse infrastructure for the first time.



Crop diversification increased markedly: finger millet rose from 46.7% to 76.8%, maize from 53.3% to 74.0%, pea cultivation from 33.1% to 72.4%, and tomato from 45.5% to 86.7%.



Market systems improved, with 95.4% confirming co-operative procurement and 84.2% regularly marketing produce through CRCs.

EMPOWER: INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND SKILLS IMPROVED SUBSTANTIALLY



A total of 91.3% became CBO members, and 80.8% participated in exposure visits.



82%

of beneficiaries attended training sessions, rating them very helpful.



Post-harvest capacities improved, as 100% learned sorting, 80.0% grading, and 68.6% packaging.



Food processing activities showed sustained participation across beneficiaries.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO DEMONSTRATE LOW-COST, APPROPRIATE COMBINATIONS OF CLIMATE-SMART INTERVENTIONS USING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ENHANCE: WATER SECURITY IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY



Irrigation access increased from 0% to 72.4%, and 79.6% reported improved water availability.



27.2% expansion in polyhouse cultivation is strengthening protected farming systems.

EMPOWER: ADOPTION OF LOW-COST SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES STRENGTHENED



Vermicompost full usage increasing from 12.4% to 21.0% and biochar usage rising from 39.6% to 68.1%.



62% found composting support helpful, reflecting strong beneficiary acceptance of organic input systems.



61.6% benefitted from technology dissemination, showing effective reach of knowledge transfer and practical adoption.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO DEVELOP ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP INTERVENTIONS LEADING TO CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ENHANCE: AGRO-HORTICULTURE EXPANDED



38.1% plant Aonla, 33.7% Lemon, and 33.4% Guava.



28.5% of people participated in Van Suraksha Samities.

EMPOWER: COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION STRENGTHENED**52.2%**

rate Van Suraksha Samities very effective .

**99.3%**

agreeing that collective ecosystem management improves environmental outcomes.

OBJECTIVE 4: TO CREATE A SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNITIES AND ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION

Enhance Institutional participation strengthened, with 91.3% CBO membership and 95.4% co-operative procurement.

**FRUIT PLANTATION
UNDER THE PROJECT**

KEY IMPACTS

IMPROVE: INCOME DISTRIBUTION SHIFTED POSITIVELY



Households earning below ₹25,000 annually reduced from 77.4% to 18.3%, showing a significant decline in vulnerable income groups.



35.3%
now earn above ₹35,000, reflecting stronger upward mobility.



Farming profit above ₹20,000 increased from 21.7% to 53.0%, indicating improved profitability.



33.1%
reported an income increase of at least 35%, highlighting substantial gains.



18.3%
reported income more than doubling, demonstrating transformative livelihood impact.

IMPROVE: CHEMICAL USE REDUCED SIGNIFICANTLY



Chemical fertiliser non-use increased from 36.5% to 66.9%.



Annual chemical expenditure above ₹10,000 reduced from 37.5% to 0%.



92.3%
of respondents strongly agreed that water tanks reduced input costs.



Crop yields doubled in key crops such as peas and capsicum.

IMPROVE: ORGANIC INPUT USE IMPROVED



Organic compost full usage increased from 59.1% to 66.3%.



Farmyard manure usage increased from 44.3% to 50.8%.



66.9% reported no chemical use post-intervention.



Empower Market linkage capacity improved, with 84.2% regularly marketing through CRCs, 62.5% strengthening market linkage skills, and 63.5% improving production-distribution coordination.



EXHIBITION ORGANIZED FOR SHOWCASING THE PRODUCTS

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Beneficiaries (Rural Farmers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families mentioned that their households have undergone a major change post the project. They are happy with the training provided, which has increased their knowledge, improved their agricultural practices, and, subsequently, increased their income. Farmers found market linkages very useful for better prices, and appreciated cooperative support in packaging, labelling, exhibitions, and using social media/WhatsApp for marketing.
Co-operative Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They observed a notable rise in community engagement, with more people actively participating in meetings and livelihood activities. They emphasised that their multiple initiatives such as collective procurement, standardised grading and packaging have contributed to improved efficiency and reduced wastage.
Panchayat Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They expressed their full and continued support for furthering the project activities. They also appreciated the work undertaken in the villages to date, which has improved the lives of community members.



PROCESSING RAW CHILLIES INTO POWDER BY COMMUNITY-DHARA CO-OPERATIVE

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The project is highly relevant to the socio-economic and agricultural realities identified in the baseline findings.

Prior to the intervention, all households reported monthly incomes below ₹3,000 and a high dependence on wage labour.

Agricultural constraints were severe, with 98.1% reporting low production, 79.9% lacking irrigation sources, and 65.3% facing market and transportation barriers.

Post-intervention, 72.4% farmers gained irrigation access, crop yields rose sharply across millet, maize, peas and capsicum, and 95.4% now sell produce through the cooperative, showing that production, irrigation, and market barriers were substantially reduced.

The intervention directly addressed these issues through irrigation infrastructure (water tanks), polyhouses, improved seeds and saplings, crop diversification, training, co-operative procurement, and value addition.

The project design clearly aligns with the pre-existing livelihood vulnerabilities documented in the study.



COHERENCE

The project aligns with national and global development priorities as explicitly stated in the report. It contributes to:



It also reflects alignment with the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM). The intervention integrates livelihood strengthening, environmental stewardship, and institutional development in a coherent framework.

**EFFECTIVENESS**

The project has been largely effective in achieving its stated objectives. Community participation was strong, with 91.3% CBO membership and high meeting attendance. 97.5% of respondents adopted sustainable farming practices. Irrigation access improved significantly, with 72.4% receiving water tanks and 79.6% reporting improved water availability. The adoption of polyhouses introduced protected cultivation to 27.2% of farmers.

Crop diversification outcomes were substantial. Finger millet increased from 46.7% to 76.8%, maize from 53.3% to 74.0%, pea from 33.1% to 72.4%, capsicum from 23.5% to 73.4%, and soya from 10.9% to 77.7%. Organic manure usage increased while chemical fertiliser use declined significantly.

Income outcomes were also positive: 33.1% reported at least a 35% increase in income, 22.3% reported almost doubling or more than doubling of income, and only 0.7% reported losses. Food processing activities witnessed higher engagement, indicating strong participation and growing involvement in value-added activities.

However, effectiveness was moderated by environmental unpredictability and early-stage brand development, as noted in the challenges section.

**EFFICIENCY**

The project demonstrates efficient use of institutional mechanisms and resources. Panchayats and Rural Resource Persons supported mobilisation and implementation, reducing administrative overhead and improving community ownership.

The co-operative model strengthened aggregation and procurement, with 95.4% confirming that the co-operative procures their produce.

Cost efficiency is visible at the household level: prior to the intervention, 93.2% spent more than ₹5,000 annually on chemical inputs; post-intervention, 80.7% spent less than ₹5,000 or nothing. Additionally, 92.3% strongly agreed that tank irrigation reduced input costs.



IMPACT

The programme has generated measurable economic, environmental, and institutional impacts.

Economically, there was clear upward income mobility and reduced dependence on wage labour. Diversification into vegetables, pulses, herbs, and agro-horti systems strengthened risk distribution. Food processing created an additional livelihood stream.

Environmentally, the non-use of chemical fertilisers increased from 36.5% to 66.9%. Organic compost usage increased, and community-led fire mitigation through Van Suraksha Samitis was perceived as effective by 100% of members. Collective action was strongly endorsed, with 99.3% agreeing that it improves environmental conditions.

Institutionally, strong CBO participation and co-operative functioning shifted communities from fragmented production to organised collective enterprise systems.

Socially, with improved incomes, infrastructure, and market access, migration pressures reduced as families felt more confident sustaining livelihoods locally.



SUSTAINABILITY

The project demonstrates promising sustainability supported by:

- High CBO participation
- Regular institutional meetings
- Co-operative procurement system
- Increased adoption of organic manure and reduced chemical dependence

However, sustainability risks remain. Branding and marketing are at a nascent stage, as documented under challenges. Environmental unpredictability continues to affect yields. Participation in certain interventions, such as vermicomposting and Van Suraksha Samities, remains limited to a smaller proportion of beneficiaries.

Continued technical handholding, branding strengthening, and market development will be essential to consolidate long-term gains.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

The rural hilly regions of Kumaon in the Central Himalayas are experiencing a deepening livelihood crisis due to the gradual erosion of viable income-generating opportunities. Traditionally, agrarian communities perceived farm-based activities as a last resort rather than a sustainable livelihood option. This shift is driven by multiple structural challenges, including frequent crop damage from wild animal attacks across all seasons, increased climatic variability, and recurring natural disasters. Together, these factors have significantly reduced agricultural productivity, confining farmers to subsistence-level farming and discouraging long-term investment in agriculture.

The lack of diversified, dependable livelihood options has accelerated the migration of rural youth to urban areas in search of employment and skill development. Over time, this migration has weakened local economies and disrupted traditional systems of self-reliance rooted in ancestral land ownership, cultivable resources, and indigenous cultural practices. As livelihood stress intensifies, many households resort to selling cultivable land for short-term financial relief to meet immediate daily needs. This distress-driven land sale further undermines long-term livelihood security and threatens the sustainability of rural ecosystems and community structures. Kumaon has emerged as one of the most affected regions, with persistent livelihood vulnerabilities pushing communities into cycles of economic instability and asset depletion.

In this context, a structured livelihood intervention was urgently required to restore confidence in agriculture as a sustainable and dignified source of income. Aarohi's agriculture-based livelihood initiative, supported by Bajaj Auto Limited, addresses this need by promoting awareness of modern and organic farming practices, strengthening supply chains, and enhancing the economic value of agricultural produce.



DISTRIBUTION OF RAINWATER HARVESTING TANKS TO THE BENEFICIARIES

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



To build resilience among marginal farmers and promote sustainable agro-models with efficient supply chains.



To demonstrate low-cost appropriate combinations of climate-smart interventions using science and technology.



To develop environmental stewardship interventions leading to conservation and sustainable development.



To create a symbiotic relationship between humans and their surrounding ecosystems through collective action.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Strengthening rural livelihoods for sustainable development in Central Indian Himalayan Region



Implementing Agency

Aarohi



Location

30 villages in three development blocks of Nainital district (Uttarakhand)



Total no. of Beneficiaries

2000 Farmers



Target Beneficiaries

Farmers and communities located in himalayan region



Primary Projects

Formation of CBOs, training and capacity building on livelihood development and sustainable agriculture, support in market linkage and govt. scheme linkage

STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE PROJECT

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Rural farmers	They are the primary participants in the project; collectivised into CBOs, engaged in livelihood training, applied their learnings on the farm, and managed a Co-operative established under the intervention.
Panchayat members	Supported in project outreach and selection of beneficiaries, and facilitated feedback loops for the project team.
Rural Resource Persons	Mobilised community members; supported the formation and functioning of SHCs/CBOs; and facilitated coordination between beneficiaries and the project implementation team.
Co-operative Officials	Responsible for the procurement and sale of agro-based products, and providing oversight during project operations.
Implementing Partner (Aarohi)	Responsible for overall project planning, implementation, monitoring, capacity-building activities, and sustained community engagement.
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Provided financial resources, strategic direction, and oversight to support effective implementation and achievement of project objectives.



MEETING WITH SHG MEMBERS DURING THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

PROJECT SETUP & BASELINE



Recruitment and Orientation of Project Staff.



Selection of communities for implementing planned intervention.



Baseline data forms development, collection, and compilation of a specific implementation plan

COMMUNITY MOBILISATION & INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CRCS, CBOS, CO-OPERATIVE, RPS)



Identification of impediments to profitable farming in all 30 villages.



Liaison with public representatives, government officials and development agencies in and around all 30 villages



Conducted awareness camps at all 3 Community Resource Centre (CRC) levels to facilitate the upcoming initiatives.



Establishment of 3 Community Resource Centres (CRCs).



Formation/adoption of Community-Based Organisations (CBOs).



Identification of RRP (Rural Resource Persons) in target villages.



Rapport between target communities and state bodies/agencies/financial institutions is built.



Co-operative is formed or adopted.



Handing over of activities to co-operative and CBOs and mentoring them as part of unassisted training.

AGRICULTURE & HORTICULTURE PROMOTION



Plantation of horticultural species in five hectares of land under the CRC villages.



Plantation of horticultural species under CRC villages.



Demonstration of spices, herbs, pulses, and millets.



Better yields from crops and better protection of crops are ensured.

INFRASTRUCTURE CREATION



Construction of Polyhouses and water harvesting tanks.



Establish the extraction of 1 essential oil unit.

ORGANIC & SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES

Initiating the process for organic certification for a 20-hectare area.



Demonstration of 60 units (household) of Vermi-composting.



Obtain organic certification from relevant agencies.



Facilitate symbiotic relations between humans and their surrounding ecosystems through the collective action of 30 CBOs and a Co-operative.



A community-based initiative has been started towards environmental protection.

CAPACITY BUILDING & SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Assisted capacity building sessions to build a better understanding of the technical expertise of groups/community people through sensitisation on scientific, commercial farming and its acceptance.



Capacity Building of CBOs on entrepreneurship through farm products for establishing a sustainable model.



Exposure visits for CBO members and active farmers were conducted as part of the capacity-building exercise.



Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and cooperatives have acquired entrepreneurial skills and are well-prepared to put them into practice.



The importance of statutory documentation is understood for a better income.



Farmers now better understand how to develop quality agro-products.



CBOs and cooperatives have been strengthened with skills in entrepreneurship, marketing, and product development.



Capacity building of CBOs and co-operatives on essential oil extraction, packaging, testing, packaging materials, costing, market research and meeting customer demand, etc.



Training on leadership and documentation.



Initiate activities and costs to work on identified gaps and conduct follow-up/need-based capacity building sessions and related exposure.

MARKET LINKAGES, BRANDING & ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT



Networking and liaison with the government/non-government agencies on scientific farming techniques and their implementation



Building marketing linkages to initiate effective marketing of agro products for all 3 CRCs.



Market research on the demands of hill farm products and identification of potential markets for sales at the State and National levels.



CBOs and co-operatives are able to sell their agricultural products.



Facilitate market research for 30 CBOs and 1 co-operative on the demands of hill farm products and potential markets for sales.



CBOs and co-operatives know the significance of branding for promotion and sales.



Facilitate 30 CBOs and co-operatives on marketing, branding, sales promotion activities, etc.



Analyse gaps in activities, networking relationships, marketing, branding, etc. from the end of 30 CBOs and Co-operatives.

REPLICATION, LEARNING & DOCUMENTATION



Possibilities of replication of the program are taking place.



Local resource mobilisation and the significance of research and development are understood by all villages in the 3 CRCs.



Map and document 1 agro-based inventory and case studies.



Database collection for impact assessment and lessons learnt.



Final evaluation and report submission.



Phase-out from the target communities.

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

Activities	Feb 2021 - Mar 2021	Apr 2021 - Sep 2021	Oct 2021 - Mar 2022	Apr 2022 - Sep 2022	Oct 2022 - Mar 2023	Apr 2023 - Sep 2023	Oct 2023 - Apr 2024
Period							
Project Setup & Baseline							
Community Mobilisation & Institutional Development (CRCs, CBOs, Co-operative, RPs)							
Agriculture & Horticulture Promotion							
Infrastructure Creation							
Organic & Sustainable Farming Practices							
Capacity Building & Skill Development							
Market Linkages, Branding & Enterprise Development							
Replication, Learning & Documentation							



**FRUIT SAPLINGS
DISTRIBUTION TO THE
BENEFICIARIES**

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Limited commissioned SoulAce to undertake an impact assessment of the community-based livelihood intervention program, implemented in collaboration with Aarohi across three development blocks in Nainital district, Uttarakhand.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of the study were:



To assess the livelihood conditions and income sources of beneficiaries residing in the project areas prior to the implementation of the project



To evaluate the extent of beneficiaries' satisfaction with the financial, technical, and capacity-building support provided under the project.



To assess the overall impact of the livelihood initiative on improving the economic status through the creation of diverse livelihood-generating activities.

USE OF MIXED-METHOD APPROACH

The evaluation adopted a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The qualitative component facilitated an in-depth exploration of the experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders, including rural farmers, self-help group (SHG)/Community Based Organisation (CBO) members, Panchayat leaders and project staff. This provided nuanced insights into the project's effectiveness. Concurrently, quantitative methods enabled the collection and analysis of numerical data from beneficiaries, offering statistical evidence and identifying trends. By leveraging both approaches, the study ensured robust and multi-dimensional findings, resulting in a holistic understanding of the project's impact.

APPLICATION OF QUALITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Qualitative methods were employed to capture real-life experiences, perceptions, and narratives of beneficiaries and stakeholders involved in project implementation. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions with farmers, CBO/SHG members, community leaders, and project staff facilitated a detailed examination of observed changes. These techniques provided insights into improvements in household economic conditions and into active participation in diverse agro-activities supported under the project. By documenting lived experiences, qualitative approaches offered a nuanced understanding of the project's role in enhancing livelihood opportunities, promoting self-reliance, and fostering social and financial empowerment within the rural communities of Uttarakhand.

APPLICATION OF QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Quantitative methods were applied to objectively measure the project's outcomes through structured surveys and questionnaires. These tools captured numerical data on key indicators from beneficiaries after the intervention, enabling the assessment of economic improvements and project effectiveness. Statistical analysis of this data provided evidence-based insights into the extent of change and the initiative's success.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

To strengthen the reliability and validity of findings, the study incorporated triangulation strategies. Data triangulation was achieved by collecting information from multiple sources, including field observations, beneficiary interviews, stakeholder interactions, and project staff feedback.

Methodological triangulation was implemented through diverse research methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. This cross-verification process mitigated potential biases and reinforced the credibility of the conclusions.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The study employed both random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Random purposive sampling is a hybrid approach that combines elements of purposive sampling and random sampling. While purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on specific characteristics or criteria (e.g., program participation) relevant to the research, random purposive sampling introduces a randomisation step to reduce bias and enhance the representativeness of the sample.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The assessment was guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring adherence to globally recognised standards. This approach provided a structured and credible basis for evaluating the project's relevance, effectiveness, and impact.



Image 1: OECD-DAC Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact, and Sustainability Framework

RESEARCH DESIGN

-  **Research design used:** Descriptive research design
-  **Sampling technique:** Random Purposive sampling
-  **Sample size:** 323 farmers
-  **Qualitative method used:** Semi-structured interviews, testimonials and focus group discussion (FGD) with beneficiaries along with key stakeholders

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

-  Rural Farmers
-  Self-help group (SHG)/Community-Based Organisation (CBO) members
-  Panchayat Members
-  Implementing Partner & project team

STUDY TOOLS

Structured questionnaires were developed for primary beneficiaries after reviewing project details for each focus area. Indicators were pre-defined prior to administering the surveys to ensure consistency and relevance. For secondary beneficiaries and stakeholders, a semi-structured questionnaire and a focus group discussion guide were designed. Stakeholders were identified across all focus areas, and semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with CBO members, Panchayat members and project staff to capture diverse perspectives.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The impact evaluation adhered to a rigorous ethical framework, ensuring that the study was conducted responsibly and in accordance with established research ethics. The rights and well-being of participants were prioritised throughout the process. Informed consent was obtained by providing comprehensive information about the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, enabling participants to make voluntary and informed decisions after their queries were addressed. Strict measures were implemented to maintain confidentiality and privacy. Data were securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel, and participant identities were protected through anonymisation and coding techniques. Participation was entirely voluntary, free from coercion or undue influence, underscoring respect for autonomy and individual choice. Throughout the study, participants were treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, and their well-being remained the highest priority, with appropriate support provided whenever required.

05. KEY FINDINGS



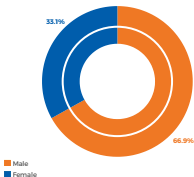
This section presents the key findings emerging from the assessment of the intervention across livelihood, climate resilience, institutional strengthening, and environmental sustainability dimensions. The findings are drawn from quantitative survey data collected from 323 respondents, supplemented by stakeholder interviews and institutional records.

The analysis examines changes between the pre- and post-intervention scenarios, focusing on measurable shifts in income distribution, farming profitability, crop diversification, irrigation access, adoption of climate-smart practices, institutional participation, and market linkages. Particular attention is given to percentage-based movements across categories to capture the scale and depth of transformation.

Collectively, these findings provide evidence of structural changes in production systems, cost patterns, market engagement, and community participation, providing a basis for understanding the project's broader economic and environmental impact.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF BENEFICIARIES

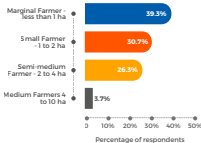
CHART 1: GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS (N= 323)



As shown in Chart 1, among the study respondents, approximately two-thirds (66.9%) were male, while the remaining were female.

LAND OWNERSHIP AND AGRICULTURAL ISSUES PRIOR TO PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

CHART 2: LAND OWNERSHIP OF THE RESPONDENTS (N= 323)



The data indicate that the majority of respondents belong to small- and marginal-landholding categories. A significant proportion (39.3%) are marginal farmers owning less than 1 hectare of land. This is followed by 30.7% who are small farmers with landholdings of 1-2 hectares.

Additionally, 26.3% fall under the semi-medium farmer category (2 to 4 hectares), while only 3.7% are medium farmers owning between 4 and 10 hectares.

Discussion with the Panchayat members revealed that they played an integral role in supporting the project, especially during the pre-project phase. They organised community meetings and made local announcements, which helped spread information quickly. Moreover, during beneficiary selection for interventions such as water tanks and polyhouses, the Panchayat applied criteria such as land availability, farmer interest, and vulnerability level as deciding factors. They also gave feedback to the implementation team, helping them adapt activities to local realities

CHART 3: PRE-PROJECT ISSUES FACED BY THE RESPONDENTS (N=323)

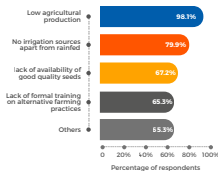


Chart 3 highlighted several agricultural issues faced by the respondents. A majority of them (98.1%) witnessed low agricultural production; more than 3/4th (79.9%) had no irrigation sources; more than 1/3 (36.7%) lacked good-quality seeds; and nearly 1/3 (31.7%) had no training in alternative farming practices.

Transportation issues, lack of market linkages, degraded land, and increased input costs constituted other reasons reported by 65.3% of them.

Interactions with members of community-based organisations revealed similar trends across different blocks/areas. Focussed group discussion with CBO members from Dhari Block underscored that while potato, cabbage, peas, and radish were mainly grown in the area, marketing remained a persistent challenge, with farmers struggling to secure fair prices. Similarly, CBO members from Okhalkanda block revealed that while crops like Mandua (finger millet), Jhangora (barnyard millet), Bhatt (black soybean), Gahat (horse gram), soybean and hemp (used in various sectors such as oil seeds, medicinal plants, etc.) were grown, farmers faced significant challenges in production and marketing. Moreover, water scarcity and crop damage by wild animals reduced yields. The absence of an organised marketing system meant that produce could not be sold in large quantities at fair prices.

The implementing agency reported that before the intervention, there was a high prevalence of common food crops cultivated through traditional methods, resulting in low yields. Farmers had limited access to improved varieties suitable for commercial cultivation and possessed little to no knowledge of advanced horticultural practices or climate-resilient crops. Adverse climatic conditions further intensified the need for immediate irrigation measures. CBO members also echoed these concerns and reported similar challenges.

PROJECT FLOW

PRE-INTERVENTION PHASE:

CHART: YEARS OF CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

The project began with a structured pre-intervention phase to establish strong institutional, community, and data foundations. Qualified project staff were recruited to ensure effective field-level implementation and coordination. This was followed by beneficiary selection based on predefined eligibility criteria, local consultations, and livelihood potential to ensure the inclusion of small and marginal farmers.

A comprehensive baseline survey was conducted to assess existing agricultural practices, income sources, resource availability, and skill levels. The baseline findings informed activity planning, crop selection, and capacity-building strategies.

Simultaneously, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) were formed and strengthened to act as grassroots institutions responsible for collective decision-making, aggregation of produce, implementation support, and long-term sustainability of project outcomes.

As reported by the implementing agency, through the project's efforts, a total of 34 CBOs were formed, with 577 farmers actively involved in the collective production and marketing of Agri-produce.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The project activities were closely aligned with the agreed annual plan and evolving community needs. The focus remained on achieving planned outputs while strengthening sustainability mechanisms to ensure continuity of results beyond project support.



Value Addition to Farm Produce

A strong emphasis was placed on value addition, moving beyond raw agricultural production. Farmers and CBO members were engaged in activities such as grading, sorting, and primary processing of farm produce. Regular orientations and demonstrations were conducted to enhance entrepreneurial skills and improve product quality. Product Diversification and Market-Ready Portfolio: The project successfully continued the core products while introducing diversification across almost every product category. This diversification helped reduce risk, improve market appeal, and cater to varying consumer preferences. Efforts were made to standardise products and prepare them for market readiness.



Branding, Packaging, and Marketing Development

The logo and brand presentation of value-added agro products were reworked to enhance visibility and professionalism. Both online and physical product catalogues were developed.



Market Linkages and Sales Channels

To support sustainability and income generation, the project established connections with local and external sales hubs, including markets outside Uttarakhand.

Three Community Resource Centres were established in the Ramgarh, Dhari, and Okhalkanda blocks to provide backward and forward marketing solutions to the community. A Cooperative named Dhara was established to ensure the forward linkages in the project.



Exposure to Scientific and Climate-Appropriate Farming Practices

Farmers were exposed to scientific farming techniques while consciously using local resources to ensure cost-effectiveness and ecological suitability. Inter-CBO exposure visits were organised to facilitate peer learning and practical understanding of techniques implemented at the local level.



Infrastructure Support and Improved Agricultural Output

Water storage tanks, irrigation pipes, vermi beds, and polyhouses were distributed, resulting in a notable increase in yield.



Expansion into Herb Cultivation and Agro-Horti Systems

Herb cultivation emerged as a new avenue for economic diversification, enabling farmers to utilise previously abandoned land. Herb plantation materials were distributed, marking a significant success. In parallel, the agro-horti system was strengthened through the distribution of high-quality fruit planting materials, including Indian gooseberry (Aonla), jackfruit, guava, and lemon, thereby contributing to environmental stewardship.



Capacity Building and Institutional Networking

Exposure visits and training were conducted with reputed institutions such as IVRI (ICAR) to strengthen livestock-related livelihood options; Jaivik Krishi evam Prashikshan Kendra, Ranikhet, for organic farming practices; and Vivekanand Parvatiya Krishi Anusandhan Sansthan (VPKAS, ICAR) for mountain-specific agricultural innovations. CBO members interacted with agricultural scientists, shared field-level challenges, and showcased value-added products for promotion.



Strengthening Market Research and Entrepreneurial Skills

A formal networking linkage with IIM Kashipur was established to support market research on the marketability of hill farm products. Regular orientations, exposure visits, and training on the Package of Practices (PoPs) for spices, herbs, fruits, and vegetables were conducted based on micro-climatic and rain-fed conditions, ensuring safe, quality, and sustainable production.



Strategic use of local resources

A key strength of the programme design was its strategic utilisation of local governance and community resources. Panchayats played an active role in community mobilisation, beneficiary identification, and grievance redressal, lending legitimacy to the process. The engagement of Rural Resource Persons (RRPs) ensured continuous field-level support, local problem-solving, and culturally appropriate communication. This design choice reduced dependency on external staff and strengthened community trust in the intervention.



Targeting and Beneficiary Selection

Beneficiary mobilisation was based on clear eligibility criteria, prioritising households with access to cultivable land and willingness to adopt improved practices. A transparent process of dialoguing with community members to shape groups and subsequently develop them as CBOs (Community-Based Organisations) was undertaken.



Monitoring & Evaluation

The proje incorporated baseline assessment as an integral component of its design, enabling measurement of changes in agricultural practices, productivity, and income. A structured monitoring system was implemented throughout the project lifecycle, allowing for tracking of outputs such as adoption of new crops, infrastructure utilisation, and cooperative performance. Continuous monitoring also supported evidence-based decision-making and mid-course corrections, enhancing overall programme effectiveness.

ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT DESIGN



Contextualisation

The livelihood project was designed to address persistent challenges faced by rural households, particularly low agricultural productivity, limited income opportunities, and high vulnerability to environmental and market risks. The intervention recognised that livelihood constraints were deeply rooted in localised ecological issues such as water scarcity and human-animal conflict, as well as weak institutional and market linkages.



Responsiveness to Localised Challenges

The intervention demonstrated a high degree of adaptability by responding directly to localised constraints like water scarcity, human-animal conflict, and low crop diversity and risk.



Promotion of Agro-Based Livelihood Solutions

The programme design moved beyond subsistence agriculture by encouraging crop diversification and value enhancement. The selection of high-value herbs alongside commonly grown vegetables reflected a risk-spreading strategy, allowing farmers to maintain household consumption needs while accessing premium markets. The provision of quality inputs, such as saplings and seeds, supported higher productivity and better-quality produce.



Market Orientation and Value Chain Integration

Unlike input-focused interventions, this project adopted a value-chain-oriented design. The cooperative's role in selling produce in the market created a structured pathway from production to procurement and sales. This design choice enhanced income stability and reduced farmers' exposure to market volatility and exploitative intermediaries.

INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT & CAPACITY BUILDING

This section presents a triangulated analysis of institutional engagement and capacity-building interventions, drawing on quantitative survey data (n=323) and qualitative insights from implementing agency personnel, community-based organisation members, cooperative representatives, and panchayat functionaries. The findings are organised across four areas: community mobilisation and awareness, institutional membership and governance, and capacity building and exposure. Each subsection synthesises quantitative patterns with on-ground narratives to present an evidence-based assessment of programme reach, participation trends, and institutional strengthening outcomes.

COMMUNITY MOBILISATION & AWARENESS

Community mobilisation forms the foundational layer of participatory development interventions, shaping awareness, inclusion, and sustained engagement. This section examines how the project generated initial awareness, leveraged institutional partnerships to mobilise beneficiaries, and addressed entry-level barriers to ensure inclusive participation across social groups.

AWARENESS CREATION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

All respondents (100%) reported receiving information about the project through village meetings conducted by the Aarohi team.

Field interviews corroborate the reliance on village meetings as the primary mechanism for awareness. The implementing agency reported conducting awareness project in collaboration with local panchayats, existing self-help groups (SHCs), and farmer groups to mobilise beneficiaries. Panchayat representatives confirmed that community meetings, local announcements, and referrals were the principal channels for spreading project information.

One CBO president noted that awareness was created through mobilisation efforts by the Panchayat, CBO, and Aarohi, who organised meetings and community interactions. This convergence of institutional actors, including agencies, local governance bodies, and existing community structures, ensured wide dissemination and reduced entry barriers.



Institutional Partnerships for Beneficiary Mobilisation

The implementing agency emphasised collaboration with panchayats and existing SHGs as critical for mobilising participants. Beneficiary selection was based on availability of land, capacity to maintain project assets (such as polyhouses and water tanks), and willingness to participate. Panchayat representatives confirmed their role in identifying potential beneficiaries and intervention sites, applying criteria such as land availability, farmer interest, and vulnerability. Selection processes involved community consultation to ensure transparency, with decisions made through acceptance in community meetings, as reported by one CBO member.

PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING OR CAPACITY-BUILDING SESSIONS

All respondents (100%) stated that they participated in training or capacity-building sessions under the project. No respondent reported non-participation.

The implementing agency reported prioritising women, with approximately 70% of community members participating. Panchayat representatives confirmed that the project actively encouraged participation of women, youth, and marginal farmers through targeted mobilisation efforts and by addressing initial doubts or resistance. CBO members indicated that women's participation has remained strong, and there is growing interest among youth to join, though their involvement is still limited.

CHART 4: MEMBERSHIP IN COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS (N=323)

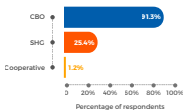


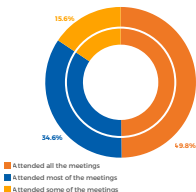
Chart 4 indicates a very high level of community-based organisation (CBO) membership, with 91.3% (295 out of 323 respondents) reporting that they are members of a CBO. This reflects strong community mobilisation and suggests that the project has successfully leveraged or strengthened existing grassroots institutions for outreach and implementation. In contrast, membership in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) stands at 25.4%.

The implementing agency reported creating 34 CBOs across 30 villages with approximately 570 farmer members. CBO members from different villages reported varying membership sizes: 16 members in Laxmi Ajivika SHG (Okhalkanda), 14 members in Nav Jagriti SHG (Sundarkhal), indicating village-level diversity in institutional scale. Membership has remained stable since formation, with CBO presidents noting that most members joined because they wanted collective support for farming, and that membership has remained stable since the formation of the group.

“As Gram Pradhan, I supported the project by organising village meetings and spreading awareness through local networks. We ensured that women, youth, and marginal farmers were encouraged to participate. Beneficiary selection for water tanks and polyhouses was done transparently, based on land availability, interest, and vulnerability. Coordination with Aarohi and CRC teams ensured that support reached those who genuinely needed it.

- Nirmala Jeena, Gram Pradhan,
Bairoli (Ramgarh)

CHART 5: ATTENDANCE IN CBO MONTHLY MEETINGS (N=295)



Among CBO members, meeting attendance was notably high: 49.8% attended all meetings, 34.6% attended most meetings, and only 15.6% attended some meetings, reflecting strong engagement, the relevance of discussions, and trust in the CBO structure. High attendance also indicates efficient leadership, accessible meeting schedules, and perceived benefits from participation.

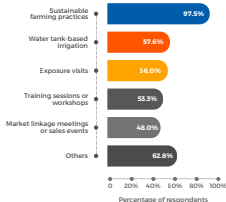
The implementing agency reported that CBOs conduct monthly meetings with an average attendance of 60%, while CBO members confirmed that meetings are held every month, sometimes even twice if necessary. Meetings are scheduled on fixed dates (e.g., 5th of every month) to ensure consistency. Community Resource Coordinators (CRCs) are responsible for managing meetings and communicating information to members. The cooperative representative noted that members have been proactive in attending meetings and training sessions, demonstrating voluntary involvement in processing, packaging, and market events.



CBO Formation, Governance, and Decision-Making

The implementing agency reported that CBOs were formed in community meetings, with rules and regulations created through discussions with community members. In larger groups, new roles and responsibilities were assigned, and competitions were organised to foster engagement. Decision-making processes follow collective discussion and mutual agreement, with all major decisions, such as profit reinvestment, product selection for value addition, and cooperative operations, made after proper discussion with all the members in monthly meetings. The cooperative representative confirmed that responsibilities are assigned through formal nomination and skill-based allocation, with roles rotated periodically to build capacity and avoid stagnation.

CHART 6: PARTICIPATION IN PROJECT ACTIVITIES (N=323)



Participation across project interventions was broad and multi-dimensional, indicating comprehensive outreach:

- Sustainable farming practices showed near-universal participation (97.5%), demonstrating that the core intervention has been widely adopted and accepted by the community.
- Water tank-based irrigation (57.6%) reflects moderate uptake
- Exposure visits (56.0%) and training/workshops on organic farming practices, value addition techniques, and digital marketing (53.3%) indicate that over half of the respondents engaged in experiential and capacity-building activities, which are critical for knowledge transfer and motivation.
- Market linkage activities (48.0%), while substantial, had comparatively lower participation.
- Additionally, 62.8% selected "others," which included sorting and grading, polyhouse cultivation, branding or marketing activities, nursery raising, food processing, packaging and labelling, composting, and essential oil extraction.

Respondents reported benefiting from access to new seeds, irrigation through water tanks, capacity-building and training support, increased income from collective farming practices, market linkages, access to polyhouses, and access to inputs such as manure, fertilisers, and vermicompost.

The implementing agency confirmed that it would provide training in organic farming, value addition, and digital literacy, alongside organising exposure visits and exhibitions. CBO members reported that approximately 25% of them received formal training in organic farming practices, value-addition techniques, and digital marketing. These trainings helped farmers understand how to improve crop quality and equipped them with skills in sorting, grading, processing, and packaging. The project team highlighted that farmers in the target areas were also regularly mentored, monitored, and capacitated through hands-on training by the project staff.

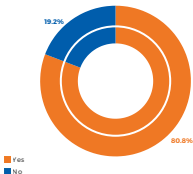
The implementing agency reported that over 40 products are currently being sold through the Dhara cooperative under the Theth Pahadi brand. Products include vegetables, herbs (rosemary, chamomile, oregano, peppermint), pulses, pickles, spices, jams, herbal powders, and essential oils. The cooperative plays a central role in aggregating produce, managing processing, branding, and marketing. CBO members confirmed their involvement in value-added activities, including cleaning, grading, drying, packaging, and labelling. The cooperative supports members through equipment provision, quality control, and branding assistance. Products are marketed through local, regional, and national channels, including institutional buyers, exhibitions, e-commerce platforms, and digital promotion through social media.

“ Before the intervention, my seasonal income was below ₹25,000. I was mainly dependent on traditional maize and pulse cultivation, and irrigation was very limited. After receiving support for a polyhouse and a water tank, I diversified into the cultivation of capsicum, peas, and tomatoes. I also shifted from chemical fertilisers to organic manure, which improved my soil and crop quality. Alongside farming, I became actively involved in sorting and packaging activities at the food processing unit. With better productivity and support from cooperative-led marketing, my seasonal income has now increased to around ₹55,000.

- Nirmala Jeena, Gram Pradhan, Bairoli (Ramgarh)



CHART 7: PARTICIPATION IN EXPOSURE VISITS (N=323)

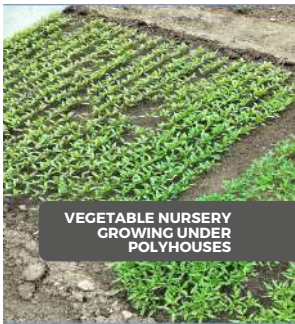


In Chart 7, 261 respondents (80.8%) reported attending an exposure visit, demonstrating that exposure-based activities were widely accessible and well received by beneficiaries.

Only 19.2% (62 respondents) did not participate, which can be attributed to factors such as time constraints, livelihood responsibilities or health issues.

A total of 12 training and capacity-building programs were organised for the project beneficiaries in Dhari, Ramgarh, and Okhalkanda.

CBO members reported participating in exposure visits to locations such as Hawalbagh and Almora, Army Camp Almora, Patwadangar, and G.B. Pant Kosi Katarmal. These visits focused on agriculture-related demonstrations, organic farming practices, and successful livelihood models. Members noted that exposure visits were particularly useful, as they provided concrete examples of improved practices and helped participants clearly understand how proper handling of produce improves quality standards, market acceptance, and production efficiency. The implementing agency explained that exposure visits were complemented by hands-on training, mentoring, and provision of climate-resilient seeds and saplings.



**VEGETABLE NURSERY
GROWING UNDER
POLYHOUSES**



Application of Skills and Behavioural Change

CBO members reported practical application of skills acquired through training and exposure visits. Members are actively engaged in cleaning, grading, drying, packaging, and labelling of value-added products such as pickles, spices, chutneys, and herbal items. The cooperative and implementing agency provide ongoing support in branding, equipment, and quality control, which has helped maintain standards and reach wider markets under the Dhara/Theth Pahadi brand. However, challenges persist in maintaining production consistency and quality, particularly when raw material supply fluctuates or when technical skills need refreshing through regular training.

The project team highlighted that, alongside exposure visits, farmers in the target areas were also regularly mentored, monitored, and capacitated through hands-on training by the project staff, and provided with climate-resilient seeds and saplings.



DHARA'S VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS

ACCESS TO INPUTS & INFRASTRUCTURE

Access to quality inputs and appropriate infrastructure constitutes a critical determinant of agricultural productivity, climate resilience, and livelihood sustainability in resource-constrained hill regions. This section triangulates quantitative survey data (n=323) with qualitative field evidence to assess the reach, quality, and utilisation of the project's inputs and infrastructure. The analysis examines seed and sapling distribution patterns, infrastructure access (polyhouses, water tanks, vermicompost beds), technical support systems, collective environmental institutions, and forward market linkages. Each sub-section synthesises quantitative findings with stakeholder narratives to evaluate immediate access outcomes, adoption patterns, ownership arrangements, and implications for long-term sustainability.



Seed Distribution and Seed Quality

The findings indicate that most respondents received small mixed seed kits under the project. These kits primarily consisted of leafy vegetables and legumes such as spinach, coriander, fenugreek, peas, beetroot, and lai. In most cases, the quantity distributed ranged between 50 and 250 grams per seed type.

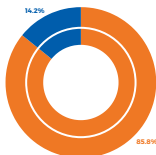
Types and Quantity of Seeds Distributed

A smaller group of beneficiaries reported receiving larger seed bundles, including peas (1 kg), garlic (1-5 kg), ragi (1 kg), maize (1 kg), and ginger (1-2 kg). However, a considerable number of respondents also stated that they did not receive any seeds.

In terms of crop types, mixed vegetable seed kits were the most common, with peas and leafy greens accounting for the majority of the distribution. Several respondents also reported receiving seeds of capsicum, chilli, tomato, garlic, ginger, ragi, and maize. A few beneficiaries mentioned fruit or tree crops such as amla (gooseberry) and lemon.

QUALITY OF SEEDS RECEIVED

CHART 8: QUALITY OF SEEDS RECEIVED (N=226)



■ All seeds were germinated successfully
■ Most seeds were spoiled or did not germinate

In Chart 8, a high proportion of respondents (85.8%) reported that all seeds germinated successfully, indicating that the quality of seeds supplied under the project was largely effective and reliable. However, 14.2% experienced poor germination or seed spoilage.

The implementing agency confirmed that seed selection was based on local availability, agronomic feasibility, and community preferences. CBO members noted that improved seed varieties were provided and that seeds were of improved quality, which increased production. One CBO member reported that after receiving improved seeds, some people also generated income by selling some of their produce even after self-consumption. The implementing agency explained that the project took farmers on exposure visits to government agencies and other institutions to demonstrate organic farming and successful seed management practices.

SHG and CBO members confirmed that the seeds provided were of improved quality, contributing to increased production. One member stated that improved-quality seeds were given, which increased production.

This has led people to generate income by selling some of their produce even after self-consumption. The implementing agency emphasised that climate-resilient seeds and saplings were provided, and that farmers were mentored and monitored regularly through hands-on training by project staff.



Sapling Distribution and Survival

Fruit tree plantation represents a long-term livelihood investment, providing nutritional diversity, income stability, and environmental benefits. This section examines the distribution patterns, species selection, survival rates, and adoption of fruit tree cultivation under the project.

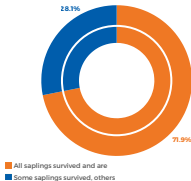
Quantity and Types of Saplings Distributed

Many respondents received saplings across different quantity ranges: 1-5 saplings for small distributions, 6-10 saplings for substantial numbers, and 11-15 saplings for the largest clusters, which were the most common. A smaller group received higher quantities in the 16-20 saplings range. Additionally, several beneficiaries received mixed fruit sapling sets (such as combinations of plum, apricot, guava, lemon, walnut, apple, and jackfruit).

The implementing agency reported providing support for fruit tree plantation as part of advanced agriculture practices and climate-smart interventions. CBO members confirmed that fruit trees were planted across several plots, involving multiple farmers and covering sizeable areas, thereby diversifying production and creating long-term livelihood opportunities. Panchayat representatives observed environmental improvements, including tree-planting drives, and noted that these contributed to sustainability.

CURRENT SURVIVAL STATUS OF SAPLINGS

CHART 9: CURRENT STATUS OF THE SAPLINGS (N=210)



Among those who received saplings, 71.9% reported that all saplings survived, reflecting good adaptation, appropriate species selection, and reasonably effective aftercare practices. However, 28.1% reported partial survival.

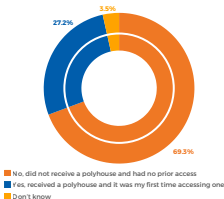
CBO members noted that training on fruit tree management was provided and that climate-smart practices, such as improved irrigation and organic composting, were introduced to support survival. The implementing agency confirmed that farmers received hands-on training and regular mentoring from project staff. However, members also highlighted persistent challenges from wild animal damage, noting that the threat posed by wild animals is very high, and recommended wire fencing as a critical need. Panchayat representatives confirmed that environmental improvements, such as tree planting and water management, were visible outcomes.

POLYHOUSE INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

Polyhouse farming refers to the cultivation of plants within a protected structure, typically covered with UV-stabilised polyethene. This method creates a controlled environment that optimises conditions for plant growth, allowing for year-round cultivation regardless of external weather conditions.

ACCESS TO POLYHOUSE INFRASTRUCTURE

CHART 10: RECEIPT OF POLYHOUSE (N=323)

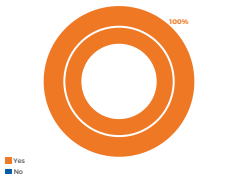


More than 1/4th (27.2%) of the respondents received a polyhouse and accessed this infrastructure for the first time, reflecting that the project played a critical role in introducing advanced agricultural infrastructure to first-time users. Coverage remained limited not only due to budgetary allocations but also because of strict selection criteria. Beneficiaries were chosen based on land/space availability, reliable irrigation sources, technical knowledge to operate a polyhouse, and demonstrated enthusiasm and motivation to adopt and maintain the facility.

The implementing agency reported that 90 polyhouses were constructed during the project period, with 74 remaining operational in target communities at project completion. Cultivation activities include vegetables and herbal crops. CBO members confirmed receiving training on polyhouse management and noted that polyhouse adoption has enabled consistent production across seasons, reducing dependence on external weather conditions. The implementing agency emphasised that polyhouse farming was introduced as part of climate-smart agriculture, with training in commercial vegetable production provided.

BENEFICIARY CONTRIBUTION AND OWNERSHIP

CHART 11: LAND CONTRIBUTION FOR POLYHOUSE (N=88)



All polyhouse beneficiaries (100%) contributed their own land, reflecting a high level of ownership and willingness to invest personal resources in project activities.

Most respondents reported growing peas, capsicum, and tomatoes in their polyhouses. A smaller number also cultivate beetroot, fenugreek, leafy greens (lai), ginger, garlic, and chilli, along with occasional crops like cabbage, cauliflower, and other herbs.

The implementing agency confirmed that beneficiary selection for infrastructure support, such as polyhouses, was based on land availability, the capacity to maintain the assets, and willingness to participate. Panchayat representatives noted that criteria such as land availability and farmer interest were applied during selection, with community consultation ensuring transparency. CBO members confirmed that land contributions were a prerequisite for receiving polyhouse support.

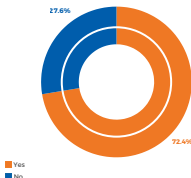
During the project period, 90 Polyhouses were constructed, and cultivation activities were undertaken in them. Under a polyhouse, farmers are cultivating vegetables and herbal crops. A total of 70 polyhouses are operational in the target communities.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

Water security is a critical constraint in rain-dependent hill agriculture, limiting crop choices, productivity, and year-round cultivation. This section assesses the distribution of water tanks, beneficiary contributions, utilisation patterns, and perceived effectiveness of water management support.

ACCESS TO WATER TANKS

CHART 12: RECEIPT OF WATER TANK (N=323)



Plastic water tanks were distributed to farmers to store water in vegetable nurseries as needed. A substantial proportion of respondents (72.4%) received a water tank for water storage, reflecting strong project emphasis on water security and climate resilience.

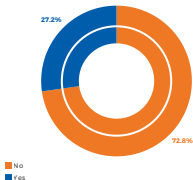
The implementing agency reported that a total of 428 water tanks were provided, along with pipes to facilitate irrigation in fields near houses. CBO members confirmed that farmers are using water from the project-constructed tanks to irrigate fields near their houses through pipes connected to the tanks. Panchayat representatives noted that water management support was critical to addressing pre-project challenges, as the water problem was very serious for some farmers.

ORGANIC INPUT INFRASTRUCTURE

Organic input generation through vermicompost and compost preparation reduces dependence on costly chemical fertilisers, improves soil health, and aligns with sustainable agriculture objectives. This section evaluates access to vermicompost infrastructure and the perceived effectiveness of Rural Resource Person (RRP) support across key technical domains.

ACCESS TO VERMICOMPOST BEDS

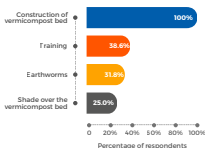
CHART 13: RECEIPT OF VERMICOMPOST BED (N=323)



Only 27.2% of respondents received a vermicompost bed, while 72.8% did not, indicating that organic input generation had a limited segment of beneficiaries.

The implementing agency reported providing training on organic farming, bio-fertilisers, and natural pest management. CBO members confirmed that the use of vermicompost and organic manure has reduced expenditure on chemical fertilisers and pesticides, thereby improving input costs.

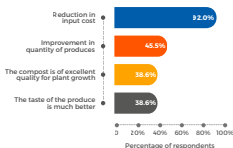
CHART 14: SUPPORT RECEIVED FOR VERMICOMPOST INSTALLATION (N=88)



The findings indicate that all beneficiaries who received a vermicompost unit (100%) were supported with the construction of the vermicompost bed, ensuring that basic infrastructure for organic manure production was universally established. In addition to infrastructure support, 38.6% of beneficiaries received training on vermicompost preparation and management, 31.8% received earthworms, and 25.0% received shade structures over the vermicompost beds.

While physical installation support was comprehensive, complementary technical guidance and input support were extended to a comparatively smaller proportion of beneficiaries. This indicates that although infrastructure creation was standardised, the level of technical and material support varied, suggesting scope to strengthen follow-up capacity-building to enhance the effective utilisation and long-term sustainability of vermicomposting practices.

CHART 15: BENEFITS OF USING VERMICOMPOST/ORGANIC MANURE (N=88)



Among the 88 respondents who received and are using vermicompost beds, the most prominently reported benefit was a reduction in input costs (92.0%), indicating that vermicomposting has significantly lowered expenditure on chemical fertilisers and other external inputs. Nearly half of the respondents (45.5%) observed an improvement in the quantity of produce, suggesting a positive effect on crop productivity. Additionally, 38.6% reported that the compost is of excellent quality for plant growth. In comparison, an equal proportion (38.6%) stated that the produce's taste improved, reflecting perceived qualitative improvements in crop output.

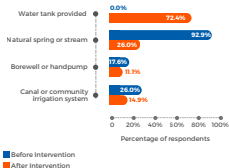
BENEFICIARIES DURING EXPOSURE VISITS



IRRIGATION ACCESS AND WATER AVAILABILITY

This section examines the status of irrigation sources prior to the intervention and assesses whether water availability improved following project support. The analysis highlights the baseline dependence on limited water sources and the perceived change after implementation. This section examines the status of irrigation sources prior to the intervention and assesses whether water availability improved following project support. The analysis highlights the baseline dependence on limited water sources and the perceived change after implementation.

CHART 16: IRRIGATION SOURCES BEFORE AND AFTER THE INTERVENTION (N=323)



The chart highlights a significant shift in irrigation sources following the intervention, indicating improved water access and reduced dependence on traditional water sources.



Pre-Intervention Scenario

Before the intervention, the primary source of irrigation was natural springs or streams, used by 92.9% of respondents. A smaller proportion relied on canal or community irrigation systems (26.0%) and borewells or handpumps (17.6%). Notably, none of the respondents (0.0%) had access to water tanks for irrigation prior to the intervention.

This suggests heavy dependence on natural and seasonal water sources, which are often vulnerable to climatic variability and irregular rainfall.



Post-Intervention Scenario

After the intervention, 72.4% of respondents reported using water tanks provided under the project, marking a substantial structural shift in irrigation infrastructure. At the same time, reliance on natural springs or streams declined sharply from 92.9% to 26.0%. Usage of canal or community irrigation systems reduced from 26.0% to 14.9%, while dependence on borewells or handpumps declined from 17.6% to 11.1%.

The findings indicate a transition from dependence on natural, less controlled water sources to more secure, managed irrigation systems via water tanks. This shift reflects improved water storage capacity, greater control over irrigation scheduling, and enhanced resilience to rainfall variability.

The increased access to water tanks likely contributed to improved crop productivity, diversification, and ultimately higher farm incomes observed in the post-intervention analysis.



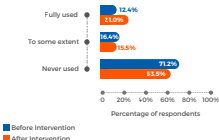
KEY IMPACT

ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE SOIL AND NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The intervention aimed to promote climate-resilient, sustainable agriculture by strengthening the use of organic inputs while reducing reliance on chemical fertilisers. The following analysis presents shifts in fertiliser and manure usage patterns before and after the intervention.

STRENGTHENING OF ORGANIC INPUT USE

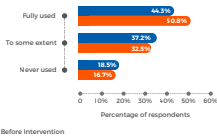
CHART 17: PRIMARY FERTILISER/MANURE USED-VERMICOMPOST



Overall, the findings indicate a gradual but consistent shift toward organic soil management practices across multiple input categories.

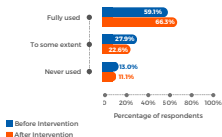
Vermicompost: The proportion of respondents who fully used vermicompost increased from 12.4% before the intervention to 21.0% after. At the same time, those who never used vermicompost declined from 71.2% to 63.5%, indicating growing adoption, though usage remains moderate.

CHART 18: PRIMARY FERTILISER/MANURE USED-FARMYARD MANURE



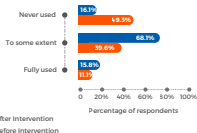
Farmyard Manure: Full usage increased from 44.3% to 50.8%, while non-usage declined slightly from 18.5% to 16.7%. This suggests reinforcement and strengthening of traditional organic practices through project support.

CHART 19: PRIMARY FERTILISER/MANURE USED-ORGANIC COMPOST



Organic Compost: Organic compost already had a relatively high baseline adoption, which further improved after the intervention. Full usage rose from 59.1% to 66.3%, and non-usage reduced from 13.0% to 11.1%, reflecting consolidation of compost-based nutrient management.

CHART 20: PRIMARY FERTILISER/MANURE USED- BIOCHAR USED BEFORE & AFTER INTERVENTION

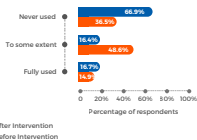


Biochar: Biochar shows one of the most notable shifts. Full usage increased from 11.1% to 15.8%, and usage "to some extent" increased sharply from 39.6% to 68.1%. Correspondingly, non-usage declined significantly from 49.3% to 16.1%. This suggests strong diffusion of biochar as a promoted soil amendment under the project.

Taken together, these trends demonstrate a clear movement toward diversified organic input adoption and improved soil health practices.

REDUCTION IN CHEMICAL FERTILISER DEPENDENCY

CHART 21: PRIMARY FERTILISER/MANURE USED- CHEMICAL FERTILISER - BEFORE AND AFTER INTERVENTION (N=323)



While full usage increased marginally from 14.9% to 16.7%, the proportion of respondents using chemical fertilisers "to some extent" dropped sharply from 48.6% to 16.4%. Most significantly, the percentage of respondents who never used chemical fertilisers increased from 36.5% before the intervention to 66.9% after.

This pattern suggests that many farmers who previously relied partially on chemical fertilisers have either reduced or discontinued their use, likely substituting them with organic alternatives such as compost, vermicompost, and biochar.

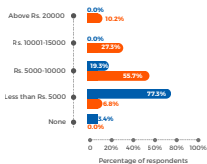
The combined findings indicate a progressive transition toward sustainable nutrient management practices. Increased adoption of organic inputs, alongside reduced reliance on chemical fertilisers, reflects behavioural change aligned with the project's objective of promoting environmentally sustainable, cost-effective agriculture.



PROCESSING & VALUE ADDITION UNDER THE PROJECT

REDUCTION IN ANNUAL EXPENDITURE ON CHEMICAL FERTILISERS AND PESTICIDES

CHART 22: ANNUAL EXPENDITURE ON CHEMICAL FERTILISER AND PESTICIDES- BEFORE AND AFTER USE OF ORGANIC MANURE OR VERMICOMPOST AND IPM (N=323)



■ After use of organic manure or vermicompost and IPM
 ■ Before use of organic manure or vermicompost and IPM

Prior to adopting organic and IPM practices, 93.2% of respondents were spending more than ₹5,000 annually on chemical fertilisers and pesticides. After adoption, 80.7% of respondents reported spending less than ₹5,000 or none at all, indicating a significant reduction in dependence on chemical inputs. This shift reflects the cost-effectiveness of organic and IPM-based farming systems.

“

Earlier, I earned less than ₹30,000 seasonally through subsistence farming and occasional wage labour. After attending training on vegetable cultivation and organic composting, I introduced cabbage and cauliflower into my cropping system and reduced chemical input use by adopting organic manure. I also participate in pickle and spice preparation at the processing unit, contributing to collective sales under the Dhara brand. My annual income has now increased to nearly ₹45,000, and I no longer depend on wage labour to sustain my household.

- Kamla Devi, Village Sundarkhal, Block Okhalkanda

”

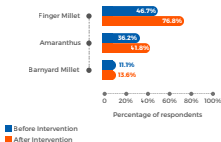
POLYHOUSE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES



CROP DIVERSIFICATION AND CHANGES IN CULTIVATION PATTERNS

The intervention aimed to promote diversification toward climate-resilient, high-value, and market-oriented crops. The following section presents changes in cultivation patterns across major crop groups.

CHART 23: CULTIVATION OF MILLETS - PRE AND POST-INTERVENTION



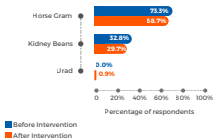
Millets

There is a clear increase in millet cultivation after the intervention.

- Finger Millet increased substantially from 46.7% to 76.8%, indicating strong promotion and adoption.
- Amaranthus showed a moderate increase from 36.2% to 41.8%.
- Barnyard Millet recorded a slight rise from 11.1% to 13.6%.

Overall, the data suggest strengthened millet promotion, particularly for finger millet and maize, which are important for both nutrition security and resilience.

CHART 24: CULTIVATION OF PULSES - PRE AND POST-INTERVENTION



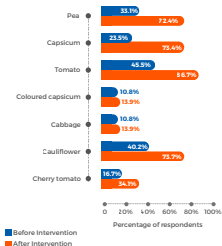
Pulses

The pulse cultivation pattern shows mixed trends.

- Horse Gram declined slightly from 73.7% to 68.7%, though it remains widely cultivated.
- Kidney Beans reduced marginally from 32.8% to 29.7%.
- Urad, which was not previously cultivated, emerged at only 0.9%.

These findings suggest that pulses remained stable overall, though not to the same extent as other crop categories.

CHART 25: CULTIVATION OF PULSES - PRE AND POST-INTERVENTION



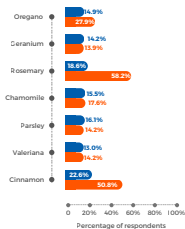
Vegetables

Vegetable cultivation is expanding widely, particularly of high-value crops.

- Pea increased from 33.1% to 72.4%.
- Capsicum rose sharply from 23.5% to 73.4%.
- Tomato expanded from 45.5% to 86.7%, showing near-universal uptake.
- Cauliflower increased from 40.2% to 73.7%.
- Cherry tomato doubled from 16.7% to 34.1%.
- Coloured capsicum and cabbage recorded smaller increases (10.8% to 13.9%).

Overall, vegetables demonstrate strong diversification towards market-linked and high-value crops, suggesting improved commercial orientation.

CHART 26: CULTIVATION OF HERBS - PRE AND POST-INTERVENTION



■ Before the intervention
■ After the intervention

Herbs

Herbal cultivation shows selective expansion.

- Rosemary increased substantially from 18.6% to 58.2%.
- Cinnamon more than doubled from 22.6% to 50.8%.
- Oregano increased from 14.9% to 27.9%.
- Chamomile and Valeriana showed marginal increases.
- Geranium and Parsley remained largely stable or slightly declined.

The data indicate growing interest in selected high-value herbs, particularly rosemary and cinnamon, though adoption remains crop-specific rather than uniform across all herbal varieties.

Soya cultivation increased dramatically from 10.9% before the intervention to 77.7% after, indicating strong adoption and possibly effective promotion of oilseed diversification under the project.

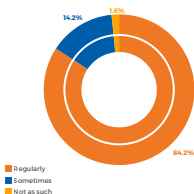
Maize cultivation also rose significantly from 53.3% to 74.0%, reflecting the expansion of cereal production.

The overall trend reflects significant crop diversification after the intervention, especially toward vegetables, oilseeds (soya), selected millets, and high-value herbs. While pulses remained relatively stable, there is strong evidence of a shift toward commercially viable and climate-resilient crops, aligning with the project's objective of enhancing productivity, income, and resilience.

18.6% of beneficiaries participated in essential oil extraction activities.

ACCESS TO MARKETING SUPPORT THROUGH COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE (CRC)

CHART 27: ABILITY TO MARKET PRODUCE WITH CRC (N=323)

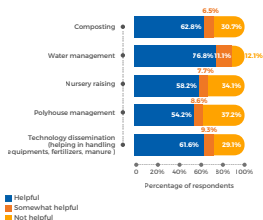


The findings indicate strong reliance on the Community Resource Centre (CRC) for marketing support. A substantial majority of respondents (84.2%) reported that they are able to market their products regularly with the help of the CRC. An additional 14.2% stated they receive support sometimes, while only 1.6% reported not receiving it.

These results suggest that the CRC has emerged as a central and functional platform for aggregation, coordination, and market access. The high proportion of regular users reflects effective institutional linkage and improved forward market integration for producers under the project.

PERCEIVED HELPFULNESS OF RRP SUPPORT

CHART 28: HELPFULNESS OF RRP SUPPORT (N=323)



The findings indicate that RRP support was generally perceived as beneficial, particularly in water management, where 76.8% of respondents rated the support as helpful, and only 12.1% considered it not helpful. This suggests that irrigation-related technical guidance was one of the strongest components of field-level assistance. Support in composting (62.8%) and technology dissemination (61.6%) was also positively rated by a majority of respondents. However, around 29–31% reported that these areas were not helpful, indicating scope for strengthening technical clarity or follow-up support. Nursery raising (58.2% helpful) and polyhouse management (54.2% helpful) received comparatively lower positive ratings, with 34.1% and 37.2%, respectively, reporting the support as not helpful. This suggests that more intensive or continuous technical handholding may be required in these relatively specialised practices.

The implementing agency reported that Resource Persons provided support in composting, water management, nursery development, and polyhouse operations. CBO members confirmed receiving technical guidance but noted that regular training and stronger infrastructure support are needed to ensure stable production and sustained market presence. The cooperative representative noted that challenges persist in maintaining production consistency and quality, suggesting that ongoing technical support is required beyond initial training.

“ I used to earn around ₹25,000-35,000 seasonally and faced frequent difficulties due to a lack of proper irrigation facilities. After gaining access to a water tank and a polyhouse, I diversified into coloured capsicum and peas. I discontinued chemical fertilisers and adopted organic compost practices. Exposure visits improved my understanding of markets and pricing. With these changes, my annual income has increased to approximately ₹55,000.

- Dinesh Singh, Village
Jhargaon, Block Ramgarh

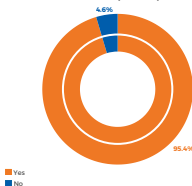


MARKET & ENTERPRISE INTEGRATION

SUPPLY CHAIN & FORWARD LINKAGES

Market access and value chain integration are critical for translating improved production into sustained income gains. This section examines the effectiveness of cooperative-led procurement systems, the frequency and quality of market linkage support, and the role of branding, digital platforms, and institutional maturity in ensuring forward linkage sustainability.

CHART 29: PRODUCE PROCUREMENT BY COOPERATIVE (N=323)



The majority (95.4%) of respondents confirmed that their produce is procured by the cooperative established under the project, indicating the central role of the cooperative as a reliable aggregation and procurement platform, improving market access.

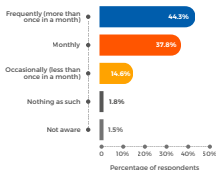
The cooperative president confirmed that procurement follows seasonal planning and agreed criteria, with farmers supplying both raw and semi-processed products.

Systems for sorting, grading, drying, packaging, and storage have been established, with thorough checks for maintaining consistent quality and hygiene. The cooperative has 29 value-added agro products in its product list, which are regularly produced and supplied. These products are exhibited in markets regularly to yield better income. The implementing agency reported that over 40 products are currently being sold through the Dhara cooperative under the Theth Pahadi brand, with all cooperative members receiving salaries and profits reinvested after mutual discussion in monthly meetings.

“ At the beginning of the intervention, most farmers were cultivating for subsistence with limited surplus for sale. Through structured crop planning, polyhouse cultivation, and cooperative-led aggregation, we have observed a gradual transition toward enterprise-based farming. Farmers are now participating in sorting, grading, and packaging, and their produce is being marketed collectively under the Dhara brand. This has strengthened both income stability and supply chain efficiency.

- Narendra Singh Bisht, Cluster Coordinator, Aarohi

CHART 30: SUPPORT IN ESTABLISHING MARKET LINKAGES (N=323)



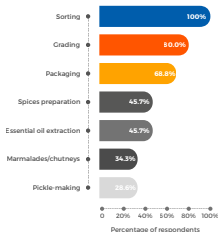
Almost half (44.3%) of the respondents reported that the project team helped their CBO establish market linkages frequently (more than once a month). In comparison, nearly 1/3 (37.8%) received support monthly, indicating regular and sustained engagement with markets. Only 14.6% experienced occasional support, while a very small fraction (3.3% combined) either received no support or were unaware of such efforts.

CBO members confirmed that the group is directly linked to the cooperative through the Dhara/Theth Pahadi brand, which supports their sales of both raw produce and value-added products. Members contribute their harvest collectively, and the cooperative manages packaging, labelling, and marketing to reach wider markets. The cooperative representative noted that products are marketed through local, regional, and national channels, including institutional buyers, exhibitions, e-commerce platforms, and digital promotion through social media. The implementing agency reported supporting marketing and branding of the Theth Pahadi brand, both online and offline, and registering 1,000 farmers on the DEHAT platform for sales.

PARTICIPATION IN FOOD PROCESSING UNITS: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND INCOME GENERATION

The findings indicate substantial engagement in food processing activities, with strong outcomes in skill acquisition and income generation.

CHART 31: SKILLS ACQUIRED THROUGH FOOD PROCESSING (N=35)



Among the 35 respondents who participated in food processing units, the majority reported learning foundational post-harvest and value-addition skills. The most widely acquired skill was sorting (100%), followed by grading (80%) and packaging (68.6%), reflecting strengthened quality control practices. A significant proportion gained skills in value-added product preparation, such as spice preparation (45.7%), essential oil extraction (45.7%), and marmalades/chutneys (34.3%). A smaller proportion (3.1%) reported exposure to pickle-making, indicating limited but emerging diversification into specialised processing activities.

Overall, the data suggest that the food processing unit has enhanced technical competencies across multiple stages of value addition.



Before the intervention, my annual income was below ₹25,000. Through capacity-building and collective farming initiatives, I adopted soybean and vegetable cultivation, using organic manure. I also contribute to preparing spices and seasonings at the food processing unit. With these activities, my annual income has increased to nearly ₹40,000.

-Hema Devi, Village Bhatrojkhana, Block Okhalkanda



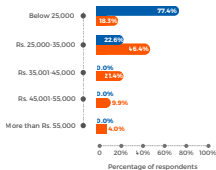
ECONOMIC & LIVELIHOOD OUTCOMES

Improvements in crop productivity form the foundation of the economic changes observed under the project. As documented earlier, most respondents reported a clear increase in yields after the intervention, with production levels moving from relatively low baselines (approximately 2-6 quintals per season) to significantly higher outputs (approximately 4-11 quintals), and in some cases up to 16 quintals. Crop-specific gains, such as peas doubling from 100 kg to 200 kg, capsicum increasing from 10 kg to 50 kg, and ragi rising from 50 kg to 70 kg or even 150 kg, indicate substantial improvements in output and production efficiency.

These productivity gains, combined with improved access to irrigation, quality inputs, diversification into higher-value crops, food processing, and market linkages through CRCs and cooperatives, are expected to translate into enhanced household earnings and farm profitability.

The following analysis, therefore, examines how these agricultural improvements are reflected in annual income levels and farming profits, providing a clearer picture of the project's economic impact at the household level.

CHART 32: ANNUAL INCOME: PRE- AND POST-INTERVENTION (N=323)



The chart shows a clear upward shift in the annual income distribution of respondents after the intervention.

Pre-Intervention Scenario

Before the intervention, a large majority of respondents (77.4%) earned below ₹25,000 annually, while the remaining 22.6% earned between ₹25,000 and ₹35,000 annually. No respondents reported incomes above ₹35,000, indicating a highly concentrated low-income profile across the sample.

Post-Intervention Scenario

After the intervention, the income distribution reflects significant diversification and upward mobility:

The proportion earning below ₹25,000 declined sharply from 77.4% to 18.3%. The largest share of respondents (46.4%) fell within the ₹25,000-35,000 bracket. A substantial segment (21.4%) moved into the ₹35,001-45,000 range. Additionally, 9.9% reported incomes between ₹45,001 and ₹55,000.

Notably, 4.0% of respondents earned more than ₹55,000 annually, a category that had no representation before the intervention.

The findings demonstrate a pronounced shift from lower-income brackets to middle- and higher-income categories.

While incomes below ₹25,000 dominated the baseline scenario, the post-intervention distribution shows that a majority of respondents now earn above ₹25,000, with nearly 35% crossing ₹35,000 annually.

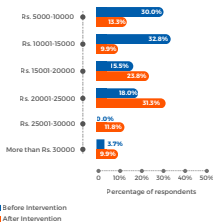
This transition reflects improved economic outcomes among beneficiaries and indicates income growth across multiple tiers rather than marginal gains within the same income bracket.



Before the intervention, my seasonal income was below ₹25,000, and I depended mainly on traditional maize and pulse cultivation with limited irrigation. After receiving support in the form of a polyhouse and a water tank, I diversified into capsicum, peas, and tomato cultivation. I also shifted from chemical fertilisers to organic manure. Alongside farming, I became involved in sorting and packaging activities at the food processing unit. With improved productivity and cooperative-led marketing support, my annual income has now increased to approximately ₹55,000.

-Bhawani Dutt, Village Lweshal, Block Ramgarh

CHART 33: PROFIT FROM FARMING: BEFORE AND AFTER INTERVENTION (N=323)



The chart reflects a clear upward shift in farming profitability following the intervention.

Pre-Intervention Scenario

Before the intervention, a majority of respondents were concentrated in the lower profit brackets. Specifically, 30.0% earned between ₹5,000-10,000 and 32.8% earned between ₹10,001-15,000. Together, nearly 63% of respondents were earning less than ₹15,000 annually from farming. Only 3.7% reported profits exceeding ₹30,000, and none were in the ₹25,001-30,000 category.

Post-Intervention Scenario

After the intervention, there is a visible shift toward higher profit categories: The proportion earning ₹5,000-10,000 declined from 30.0% to 13.3%. Those earning ₹10,001-15,000 decreased from 32.8% to 9.9%. The share earnings of ₹15,001-20,000 increased from 15.5% to 23.8%. A significant rise is observed in the ₹20,001-25,000 bracket, increasing from 18.0% to 31.3%. The ₹25,001-30,000 category, previously at 0%, now accounts for 11.8%. Respondents earning more than ₹30,000 increased from 3.7% to 9.9%.

The findings indicate a substantial redistribution from lower to middle and higher farming profit brackets. Earlier, most respondents were clustered below ₹15,000 in annual farming profit; post-intervention data show a strong concentration in the ₹20,000-30,000 range.

This shift suggests improved productivity, better market access, or cost efficiencies in farming practices, contributing to enhanced profitability among beneficiaries.



After the project, farmers in our village have reported higher income and better productivity.

Women and youth are now more actively involved in agriculture and decision-making processes. The initiative has strengthened community leadership and encouraged entrepreneurship at the village level.

-**Rekha Bisht, Gram Pradhan, Sundarkhal**



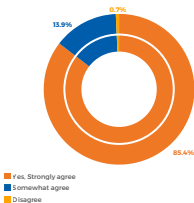
WATER TANK PROVIDED TO THE BENEFICIARY UNDER THE PROJECT

COLLECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AND FOREST PROTECTION INITIATIVES

The findings reflect strong community awareness regarding collective environmental management, alongside moderate institutional participation in forest protection mechanisms.

PERCEPTION OF COLLECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

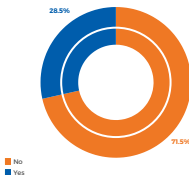
CHART 34: BELIEF IN COMMUNITY ACTION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT (N=323)



An overwhelming majority of respondents (85.4%) strongly agreed that working together as a community for activities such as tree planting, managing water sources, and proper waste disposal can lead to visible environmental improvements in the village. An additional 13.9% somewhat agreed, while only 0.7% disagreed. This indicates near-universal recognition of the importance of collective action in environmental conservation and suggests high receptiveness to community-led sustainability initiatives.

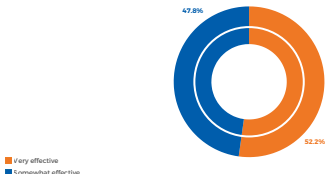
MEMBERSHIP IN VAN SURAKSHA SAMITIS

CHART 35: MEMBERSHIP IN VAN SURAKSHA COMMITTEES (N=323)



Only 28.5% of respondents reported being members of Van Suraksha Samitis, while 71.5% were not members.

According to organisational records, 33 Van Suraksha Samitis (Forest Protection Committees) were established under the Van Panchayats in the Dhari, Ramgarh, and Okhalkanda blocks for fire mitigation. CBO members reported that their collective environmental conservation activities included tree-planting drives, forest protection measures, and fire-prevention efforts. Panchayat representatives confirmed that Van Suraksha Samitis have played an active role in mitigating forest fires and that environmental improvements, such as tree planting and water management, are visible outcomes.

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF VAN SURAKSHA SAMITIES**CHART 36: EFFECTIVENESS OF VAN SURAKSHA SAMITIES (N=92)**

Among the 92 members of Van Suraksha Samities, perceptions of effectiveness are highly positive. 52.2% rated the committees as very effective, and 47.8% considered them somewhat effective. Notably, none of the members reported them as ineffective. Overall, the data indicate strong confidence in the functioning of Van Suraksha Samities among members, even though membership coverage across the broader community remains moderate.



06. IMPACT ACROSS MULTIPLE LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

At the individual beneficiary level, the project generated behavioural, economic, and capability-based changes:

Economic Empowerment

- Shift from highly vulnerable income levels (<₹3,000/month baseline) toward diversified and market-linked earnings.
- 33.1% reported at least a 35% income increase: 22.3% reported income almost doubling or more.
- Significant upward shift in farming profit categories (movement from ₹5,000-15,000 to ₹20,000-30,000 range).

Skill & Knowledge Enhancement

- Adoption of sustainable farming practices (97.5% participation).
- Skills gained in grading, sorting, packaging, food processing, and quality control.
- Exposure to scientific institutions (IVRI, VPKAS, Jaivik Krishi centres) enhanced technical confidence.

Cost Efficiency & Risk Reduction

- 80.7% now spend less than ₹5,000 or nothing on chemical inputs.
- Adoption of IPM, composting, and biochar reduced production costs.
- Polyhouse access mitigated climatic and wildlife risks.

Mindset Shift

- Transition from subsistence farming and wage dependence to market-oriented agro-entrepreneurship.
- Increased confidence, institutional engagement, and ownership (100% land contribution for polyhouses).



HOUSEHOLD / FAMILY LEVEL

At the household level, impacts extend beyond income to resilience and stability:

Income Stabilisation

- Diversification into vegetables, herbs, oilseeds, and food processing created multiple income streams.

Reduced Input Expenditure

- Chemical expenditure (>₹10,000 annually) eliminated.
- Water tanks reduced irrigation-related vulnerability (92.3% strongly agreed on cost reduction).

Improved Food & Nutritional Security

- Increased millet, vegetable, and horticulture cultivation.
- Agro-horti plantation (Aonla, lemon, guava) enhanced long-term food and nutritional resilience.

Reduced Livelihood Vulnerability

- Lower distress-driven migration.
- Reduced dependence on wage labour.

**COMMUNITY LEVEL**

The intervention significantly strengthened local institutional ecosystems:

Strong Grassroots Institutions

- 91.3% CBO membership.
- The cooperative procures 95.4% produce.
- Regular meeting participation (high governance engagement).

Market System Development

- Branding under "Theth Pahadi" and digital linkages (DEHAT platform).
- Regular market linkage support (82% frequent/monthly support).

Collective Environmental Action

- 99.3% believe collective action improves the environment.
- 33 Van Suraksha Samities established.
- 100% VSS members perceive fire mitigation as effective.

Infrastructure as Shared Community Assets

- 428 water tanks distributed.
- 90 polyhouses constructed.
- 3 Community Resource Centres are operational.

The programme shifted villages from fragmented individual farming systems toward cooperative-based, value-chain-integrated production ecosystems.

**STATE LEVEL**

The project contributes to broader state development priorities:

Alignment with Uttarakhand's Mountain Economy

- Promotes hill-specific crops (millets, herbs, spices).
- Encourages agro-horti systems suited to the Himalayan terrain.

Strengthening Farmer-Producer Ecosystems

- Cooperative-led aggregation supports rural enterprise models.
- Demonstrates replicable micro-value chain integration in hill districts.

Reducing Distress Migration

- Stabilised livelihoods reduce out-migration pressures in Nainital blocks (Dhari, Okhalkanda, Ramgarh).

Promoting Organic & Sustainable Hill Agriculture

- Supports Uttarakhand's organic farming vision.
- Reduces ecological degradation in fragile mountain zones.



NATIONAL-LEVEL

At a macro-policy level, the intervention aligns with and strengthens national priorities:

- SDG Alignment

Contributes to:

- SDG 1 - No Poverty
- SDG 2 - Zero Hunger
- SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption & Production
- SDG 13 - Climate Action
- SDG 15 - Life on Land

Convergence with National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)

- CBO strengthening and cooperative model support NRLM frameworks.
- Promotes women and community-led enterprises.

Model for Climate-Smart Mountain Agriculture

- Demonstrates scalable, low-cost irrigation and organic input systems.
- Provides a replicable model for other Himalayan states.

Sustainable Value Chain Integration

- Bridges production with branding, processing, and digital marketing.
- Reduces rural producer dependence on exploitative intermediaries.

07. CASE STUDIES



CASE STUDY 1

Name: Khashti Tiwari

From Subsistence Farming to Enterprise Growth: A Case from Lweshal, Ramgarh, Nainital

Before joining the project, I relied primarily on traditional farming practices and small-scale livestock rearing to support my household. While this ensured basic subsistence, productivity remained low, and income was limited. I had minimal exposure to improved agricultural techniques, value addition, or structured market linkages, and farming activities were carried out independently without organised enterprise planning.

My engagement with the Aarohi livelihood development project marked a significant turning point. After being informed about the project objectives, I was selected based on land availability and willingness to actively participate. The regular monthly meetings introduced under the project provided an opportunity to review progress, understand new practices, and plan cultivation activities more systematically.

Through the training sessions conducted by the Aarohi team, I learned improved cultivation methods, the use of organic manure, and techniques for selecting crops with greater market potential. I was also introduced to food processing and basic marketing practices, which enabled me to explore value addition to agricultural produce.

Under the project, I received infrastructure support, including a polyhouse and a water tank. These assets were installed with technical support from the project team, while my family contributed labour and now takes responsibility for their upkeep. The polyhouse has improved crop management and enabled better-quality produce year-round, while improved water access has strengthened cultivation reliability.

As a result of these interventions, my income has increased to approximately ₹7,000-10,000 per month through the sale of farm produce and value-added products. Beyond financial gains, participation in structured livelihood activities has strengthened my confidence and provided greater stability to my household. Farming is no longer limited to subsistence; it has become a more organised, market-oriented enterprise that consistently contributes to household income and long-term financial stability.



CASE STUDY 2

Name: Neeraj Melkani

A Journey Towards Sustainable Farming and Improved Livelihoods, Jalna Neelpani, Dhari, Nainital

Before joining the project, my livelihood depended entirely on traditional farming practices, says Neeraj Melkani, a CBO member from Jalna Neelpani village in Dhari Block. I followed age-old methods that relied heavily on rainfall and limited inputs, resulting in low crop yields and uncertainty. The lack of reliable irrigation facilities further compounded the challenges. Even when produce was available, selling it at a fair price was difficult due to poor market access and a lack of connections beyond local traders.

The situation began to change with the intervention of the NGO team, which introduced the project in our area and facilitated the formation of a CBO. I became a member of this organisation, which soon emerged as a platform for collective learning and action. Monthly meetings are held, during which all members discuss project-related activities, share experiences, and make decisions through collective consensus. This participatory approach has strengthened unity and transparency among farmers.

Through the project, I received training in sustainable and improved agricultural practices. I learned to adopt organic manure, use high-quality seeds, and cultivate high-value crops suited to local conditions. These practices not only improved soil health but also significantly increased productivity. In addition, I received support for nursery development, which helped ensure the timely availability of quality planting material.

The project also provided critical infrastructure support. I received access to a compost unit and a polyhouse, which I manage on a shared basis with other farmers. While we were not required to make a financial contribution for these facilities, we collectively take responsibility for their maintenance and proper use. The polyhouse has enabled better crop management and protection, leading to improved quality and yield.

One of the most impactful aspects of the project has been the support for market linkage. With guidance from the NGO team, I am now able to sell my produce at more stable, better prices, reducing my dependence on middlemen and local markets.

As a result of improved production and assured market access, my monthly agricultural income has increased by ₹10,000-15,000. This additional income has made a meaningful difference in supporting my family and managing household expenses. I am confident about continuing these practices for the future.

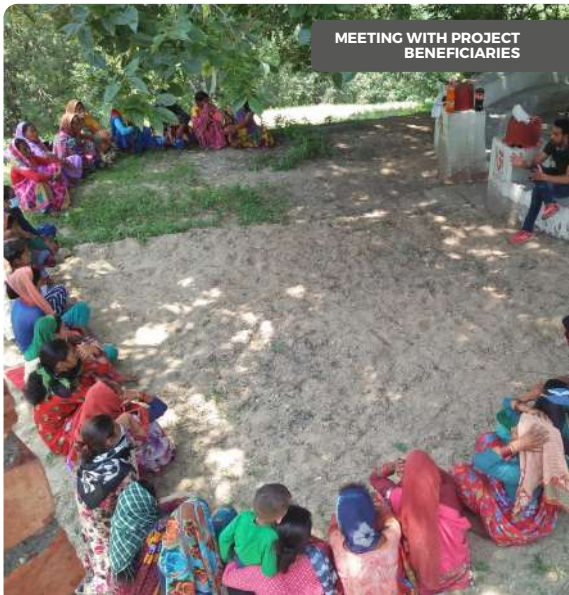
08. CHALLENGE

LIMITED COVERAGE OF KEY CLIMATE-SMART INTERVENTIONS

While adoption was strong among recipients, coverage remained limited:

- Only 27.2% received polyhouses.
- Only 27.2% received vermicompost beds.
- 36.2% did not plant fruit trees.
- 28.1% experienced partial sapling survival primarily due to high wild animal damage.

This indicates that critical climate-resilient and sustainability interventions have not yet reached a majority of beneficiaries.



MEETING WITH PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

09. RECOMMENDATION

FOR THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY – AAROHI

The programme should gradually expand high-impact interventions, such as polyhouses, vermicompost units, and fruit plantations, prioritising vulnerable and active farmers. To improve coverage without significantly increasing costs, cluster-based or shared infrastructure models (such as community polyhouses or compost hubs) can be introduced. In addition, experienced and successful farmers may be trained as community resource persons to guide others in activities such as organic manure preparation, polyhouse management, and crop diversification. This peer-learning approach can strengthen adoption, improve local technical support, and expand outreach in a sustainable, cost-effective manner.



10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The project demonstrates strong prospects for long-term sustainability, underpinned by institutional strength, behavioural change, and community-level asset ownership, while also presenting identifiable risks that require strategic mitigation.

Institutional sustainability is one of the project's most robust pillars. A very high proportion of beneficiaries are active members of Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), with regular meetings serving as platforms for collective decision-making, planning, and problem-solving. The presence of a functioning cooperative significantly strengthens this institutional framework. The cooperative procures agricultural produce from the participants, reflecting a high level of trust and integration between farmers and the collective marketing system. Furthermore, the cooperative's high turnover is a strong indicator of economic viability and market relevance, suggesting that the institutional mechanisms are not merely project-driven but have the potential to continue operating independently beyond the project period.

Behavioural sustainability is equally evident, particularly in the shift toward environmentally responsible farming practices. The proportion of farmers who reported "never using chemical fertilisers" increased substantially from, indicating a deep-rooted change in attitudes toward chemical inputs. Similarly, the use of organic compost has expanded. These shifts suggest that farmers are internalising sustainable agricultural practices not as externally imposed techniques but as preferred and economically sensible methods.

Asset sustainability is reinforced through the project's emphasis on beneficiary contribution and shared responsibility. Infrastructure such as polyhouses, compost units, and water storage systems is maintained locally, with beneficiaries contributing land, labour, or financial inputs. This shared ownership model promotes accountability, regular upkeep, and longer asset life, reducing dependence on external agencies for maintenance and repair.

Despite these strengths, certain sustainability challenges persist. Branding and marketing of value-added products remain at a relatively early stage, limiting the cooperative's ability to fully capture market value and expand its consumer base. Environmental unpredictability, such as climate variability, continues to affect production stability, posing risks to income continuity.

To sustain and scale the gains achieved, continued technical handholding, access to working capital for the cooperative, and focused investments in branding, packaging, and market development will be critical. Addressing these gaps will help consolidate the project's sustainability and strengthen its resilience against future economic and environmental shocks.



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND READINESS

The project shows strong readiness for long-term sustainability through clear coordination systems, experienced faculty, and well-established monitoring processes. Monthly case evaluations, logbook reviews, and regular feedback indicate that quality assurance is built into everyday operations. Software-based tracking and student coordinators who manage attendance and feedback further support smooth functioning. Additionally, many alumni have gone on to open their own practices and later returned as mentors, creating a self-sustaining cycle in which trained practitioners train future batches, reducing reliance on the founding team over time.



11. CONCLUSION

The findings of this impact assessment report indicate that the intervention has been largely successful in addressing the core livelihood challenges faced by rural households. By adopting a context-sensitive, community-driven approach, the project effectively addressed long-standing issues. Through strategic efforts, clear positive shifts in agricultural practices, including increased adoption of sustainable and diversified cropping systems, reduced dependence on chemical fertilisers and pesticides, and improved resilience to localised challenges such as water scarcity, can be seen. Investments in irrigation solutions, polyhouses, quality seeds, and saplings translated into improved yields and enhanced farm-level efficiency. The introduction of high-value crops and herbs, alongside traditional vegetables, enabled risk diversification and created new income opportunities for participating households.

Equally important was the project's emphasis on institutional and market linkages. The formation and strengthening of community-based organisations and cooperatives provided farmers with a collective platform for decision-making, value addition, and market engagement. This value-chain-oriented approach reduced farmers' exposure to exploitative intermediaries, improved price realisation, and contributed to more stable and predictable incomes.

Overall, the project has generated meaningful and sustainable livelihood outcomes by combining ecological sensitivity, institutional strengthening, and market integration. The results suggest that the model is both effective and scalable, with strong potential for replication in other rural contexts facing similar agro-ecological and market constraints. Continued focus on strengthening cooperative capacities, expanding market access, and sustaining post-project support mechanisms will be critical to amplifying these gains over the long term.



ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jammnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted and innovative brand, with over 21 million motorcycles sold in 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio, including motorcycles, scooters, and autorickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs in both India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR also contributes to education, health, environment, animal welfare projects, for the sustainable development of the community and the nation.

ABOUT NGO PARTNER: AAROHI

Established in 1992, Aarohi is a grassroots development organisation committed to improving the quality of life of rural and marginalised communities in the Himalayan region of Uttarakhand. Guided by a vision of self-reliant, resilient, and environmentally sustainable hill communities, Aarohi works to create inclusive livelihood opportunities while preserving local resources, knowledge systems, and ecological balance. Its activities span sustainable agriculture, horticulture, livestock development, food processing, value addition, and market linkage support. Through its integrated approach, Aarohi continues to nurture economically viable, socially inclusive, and environmentally responsible livelihood models, enabling rural communities to move from subsistence to sustainability.



**PROJECT TEAM
DURING FIELD VISIT**

ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by



SOULACE CONSULTING PVT. LTD.



THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

CONSTRUCTION OF
BAJAJ ADHYAPAN
SANKUL AT THE GOVT.
MEDICAL COLLEGE &
HOSPITAL,
AURANGABAD
(GMCHA)

Implementing Partner:
Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas
Sanstha

Implementation Year:
2021 - 2024

Assessment Year: 2025 - 2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 06
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04
	Key Impacts	04 - 05
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	06
02	OECD Framework	07 - 09
03	Introduction	10 - 13
	Background and Need for the Project	10
	Objectives of the Project	10
	Project Details	11
	Detailed Project Activities	12
	Timeline of the Project	12
	Delays	12
	Pre-project phase	13
	Construction phase	13
04	Research Methodology	14 - 16
	Objectives of the study	14
	Use of a mixed-methods approach	14
	Application of qualitative techniques	14
	Application of quantitative techniques	15
	Ensuring triangulation	15
	Sampling Framework	15
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	15
	Research Design	15
	Key Stakeholders	15
	Study Tools	16
	Ethical Considerations	16
05	Key Findings	17 - 29
06	Impact Across Multiple Levels	30
07	Case Studies	31 - 32
08	Challenges	33
09	Recommendation	34
10	Sustainability Exit Readiness	35
11	Conclusion	36 - 38

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Project Details
Table 2	Community/ Stakeholder Feedback

LIST OF CHARTS

Table Number	Table Name
Chart 1	Demographic profile of beneficiaries
Chart 2 to 12	Post-intervention scenario
Chart 13 to 16	Key Impacts

ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Air Conditioning
AV	Audio-Visual
CME	Continuing Medical Education
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GMCHA	Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad
HOD	Head of Department
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
FY	Financial Year
JBGVS	Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha
MBBS	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery
NMC	National Medical Commission
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PWD	Person with disability
RCC	Reinforced Cement Concrete
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG	Self-help group

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In partnership with Bajaj Auto Limited, the Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad (GMCHA) developed the Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul, a modern G+3 lecture theatre complex. The project was undertaken to address long-standing infrastructure constraints that had affected the smooth and efficient conduct of academic sessions. Before this intervention, the institution relied on a single 120-seat lecture hall. This limitation led to overcrowding, frequent scheduling conflicts, and restricted opportunities for interactive and participatory teaching. Inadequate lighting, poor ventilation and acoustics, and outdated seating arrangements further compounded these challenges. To overcome these issues, Bajaj Auto Limited, through Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBCVS), supported the construction of a fully equipped lecture complex. The new facility significantly expands seating capacity and incorporates advanced teaching technologies, as well as enhanced safety and accessibility features. It now offers a comfortable, student-centric learning environment suitable for long lectures, small-group instruction, and a wide range of academic activities.



INTERACTION WITH MBBS STUDENTS

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Construction of Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul



Implementing Agency

Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBCVS)



Location

Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad (GMCHA)



Duration

FY 2021-24



Assessment Location

Aurangabad, Maharashtra



Total Budget

1056 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Target Beneficiaries

Medical students



Primary Projects

Construction of a new G+3 Lecture Theatre Complex, including RCC structural works, water tanks, and essential civil finishing. Development of four lecture halls, each with a seating capacity of 250 students, addressing overcrowding and expanding teaching capacity.

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the Lecture Theatre Complex intervention implemented at Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad. Specifically, the evaluation aimed to:



Examine the extent to which the newly constructed lecture halls improved the overall teaching-learning environment for students and faculty.



Assess how the upgraded infrastructure, including seating, lighting, acoustics, ventilation, accessibility, and AV systems, enhanced classroom comfort, engagement, and academic delivery.



Review the sustainability, utilisation, and long-term readiness of the new lecture hall complex in supporting institutional growth, academic planning, and future expansion needs.

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE TEACHING-LEARNING CONDITIONS AND REDUCE OVERCROWDING



Four new lecture halls were constructed, each accommodating 250 students.



82.0% of the students reported the seating as very comfortable and student-friendly.



73.9% of the students rated lighting and visibility as excellent, while 23.3% rated it as good, noting only minor improvements needed.



69.6% of the students found the sound quality clear throughout; 27.7% reported mild difficulty in the back rows.



82.2% of the students stated that the upgraded facilities motivated them to attend classes more regularly.

OBJECTIVE 2: IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE THROUGH UPGRADED INFRASTRUCTURE



88.9% of the students agreed that the new halls significantly improved classroom learning quality.



89.3% of the students felt the ambience reflected a modern, professional academic environment.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHEN ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY, AND INCLUSIVITY



67.6% of the students reported adequate accessibility for students with disabilities, while 26.1% noted minor limitations and 6.3% indicated the need for further improvements.



98.8% of the students confirmed the availability of fire extinguishers; 58.5% reported they were in working condition, though some respondents were unsure of functionality.

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE TEACHING-LEARNING CONDITIONS AND REDUCE OVERCROWDING



The expansion from a single 120-seat hall to four lecture halls with a combined capacity exceeding 1,000 seats substantially improved classroom availability reducing overcrowding and easing long-standing scheduling challenges.



Improved seating comfort and visibility improved students' ability to sit through long medical lectures and stay focused.



Better acoustics and ambience empowered students to participate more actively and engage meaningfully during sessions.

OBJECTIVE 2: IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE THROUGH UPGRADED INFRASTRUCTURE



The enhanced infrastructure improved the overall learning environment, helping 84.2% of the students experience better concentration and clarity during lectures.



The modern ambience empowered students with a sense of professionalism, strengthening motivation and classroom engagement.



The expanded facilities enhanced the institution's ability to conduct tutorials, seminars, workshops, and interdisciplinary activities more effectively.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHEN ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY, AND INCLUSIVITY



Improved accessibility features enhanced inclusivity, allowing a wider range of students to navigate the space comfortably.



Strengthened safety measures improved students' sense of security and readiness during emergencies.



A more accessible and safer environment empowered students to attend classes confidently, contributing to an overall supportive academic atmosphere.

COMMUNITY/ STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
MBBS Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students reported that comfortable seating, improved lighting, and clear visibility supported better concentration during long lectures. • Many indicated that the modern ambience and spacious layout enhanced motivation and pride in attending classes. • Respondents also noted that improved sound clarity and audio-visual quality made lectures easier to follow.
Faculty members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents reported that the modern teaching aids, improved acoustics, and larger space have made lecture delivery smoother and more interactive. • They further noted that well-equipped and spacious halls expanded opportunities for seminars, group activities, and interdisciplinary sessions, contributing to higher student participation and more dynamic academic discussions.
Administrative staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents noted that the new lecture complex has significantly reduced scheduling conflicts, enabling multiple lectures to run simultaneously. • They also indicated that fire safety systems, lifts, and the overall building layout supported improved student flow management and event organisation.

LECTURE HALL CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE PROJECT



02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The construction of the new lecture hall complex at Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad, is highly relevant in addressing academic infrastructure constraints and capacity-related challenges faced by the institution. Before the intervention, the college experienced persistent issues, including overcrowded classrooms, limited seating capacity, inadequate acoustics, and suboptimal lighting, all of which affected the quality and effectiveness of medical education delivery. With an annual intake of 200 MBBS students and increasing classroom-hour requirements mandated by the National Medical Commission (NMC), the institution required modern, spacious, and technologically equipped lecture facilities. By providing four fully equipped lecture halls with a seating capacity of 250 each, the project directly responded to these needs. It strengthened the institution's ability to deliver structured, high-quality medical education at scale.



COHERENCE

The project showed strong alignment with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



**EFFECTIVENESS**

The project was effective in achieving its intended academic and operational outcomes. Lecture capacity expanded from a single 120-seat hall to four lecture halls seating 250 each, substantially reducing overcrowding and easing pressure on classroom scheduling. The ability to conduct four parallel lectures has largely eliminated earlier scheduling conflicts and improved timetable efficiency. Teaching and learning conditions improved through enhanced lighting, acoustics, seating comfort, and overall ambience, resulting in higher student attendance and classroom engagement. Faculty members reported smoother lecture delivery with fewer disruptions, supporting more effective instruction. The upgraded halls are also being actively utilised for seminars, workshops, Continuing Medical Education (CME) programmes, and government meetings, indicating broader academic and institutional use beyond routine teaching.

Some operational challenges remain, primarily inconsistent air-conditioning performance on upper floors and the need for additional accessible seating for students with disabilities, which slightly constrain overall effectiveness.

**EFFICIENCY**

The project used its resources optimally and kept construction moving despite several challenges, including delayed approvals, tender issues, and the COVID-19 lockdown. Good coordination between GMCHA, JBGVS, and the contractors helped avoid significant delays and ensured that each phase of work, civil construction, electrical fittings, HVAC installation, and safety systems, was completed in a planned manner. Timely decisions, like shifting damaged water and drainage lines and correcting structural designs, prevented additional costs later. Using standard materials, bulk procurement, and a structured workflow also helped maintain quality without overspending. Although AV equipment was installed separately by the college, this allowed CSR funds to focus on core construction.



IMPACT

The project delivered a substantial and positive impact on academic quality, student experience, and institutional reputation. The project resulted in significant improvements in academic quality and the overall classroom learning experience, with 88.9% of students reporting better learning outcomes. Student engagement improved notably, with 82.2% of respondents indicating higher motivation to attend classes regularly. The learning environment has been strengthened, with 89.3% of respondents reporting that the lecture halls reflect a modern and professional academic setting. At the institutional level, the upgraded infrastructure enabled GMCHA to host high-level government events, academic seminars, and collaborative projects that were previously not feasible. The project strengthened institutional preparedness for National Medical Commission (NMC) inspections and improved GMCHA's visibility within Maharashtra's medical education ecosystem.



SUSTAINABILITY

The long-term sustainability of the new lecture hall complex at GMCHA was supported by a well-constructed building and the institution's existing maintenance and management practices. The facility was maintained through routine cleaning services and periodic fire-safety inspections, which helped ensure baseline operational functionality. However, specific operational gaps affected sustained performance. Inconsistent air-conditioning on upper floors, intermittent audio-visual system issues, and the absence of designated accessible seating indicated the need for more structured maintenance planning and more precise accountability mechanisms. Strengthening preventive maintenance protocols, system monitoring, and accessibility provisions would further enhance the institution's capacity to operate and sustain the upgraded infrastructure independently in the long term.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad (GMCHA) is one of the oldest and largest medical institutions in the Marathwada region, catering to an increasing number of MBBS students each year. However, before the intervention, the college faced a significant shortage of adequate academic infrastructure. The existing lecture halls lacked sufficient space, were outdated in design, and could not accommodate the larger student group. With lecture halls accommodating only about 120 students, overcrowding, scheduling constraints, and compromised teaching quality were significant challenges for both students and faculty.

The lack of modern educational spaces equipped with up-to-date seating, acoustics, ventilation, and technological integration hindered effective teaching and learning. Additionally, the institution's capacity to host seminars, workshops, and conferences was restricted due to space limitations and the non-availability of fully equipped auditoriums. This not only affected academic delivery but also limited GMCHA's ability to conduct interdisciplinary programs, host external speakers, and improve its institutional visibility.

Recognising these challenges and the need for a modern, purpose-built academic space, Bajaj Auto Ltd., under its CSR implementing arm, Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBCVS), partnered with GMCHA to construct a state-of-the-art lecture theatre complex, Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul (Bajaj Block). The initiative aimed to strengthen medical education infrastructure, improve the learning environment, and support the college in meeting accreditation and regulatory standards. The goal of the project was to develop a modern, learner-focused G+3 lecture complex Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul featuring advanced teaching facilities, increased seating capacity, improved acoustics, safety systems, HVAC, lifts, and accessible infrastructure to enhance the overall teaching-learning environment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



To construct a modern four-hall lecture complex to address space shortages,



To enhance the teaching-learning environment through improved infrastructure and technology.

PROJECT DETAILS

**Title**

Construction of Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul

**Implementing Agency**

Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBCVVS)

**Location**

Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad (GMCHA)

**Target Beneficiaries**

Medical students

**Primary Programs**

Construction of a new G+3 Lecture Theatre Complex, including RCC structural works, water tanks, and essential civil finishing. Development of four lecture halls, each with a seating capacity of 250 students, addressing overcrowding and expanding teaching capacity.

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
MBBS Students	They are the primary beneficiaries of the project. They utilised the lecture halls for regular academic instruction, tutorials, examinations, and other learning activities.
Faculty Members	Conducted lectures, tutorials, seminars, CMEs, and academic sessions using the upgraded infrastructure.
GMCHA Administration	Facilitated approvals, coordinated space allocation, managed scheduling, and oversaw day-to-day operations and maintenance of the facility.
Implementing Partner (JBCVVS)	Responsible for project planning, construction oversight, coordination with contractors, quality control, and timely execution.
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Provided financial resources, strategic direction, and oversight to support the effective implementation and achievement of program objectives.

DETAILED PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Construction of a new G+3 Lecture Theatre Complex, including RCC structural works, water tanks, and essential civil finishing.



Development of four lecture halls, each with a seating capacity of 250 students, addressing overcrowding and expanding teaching capacity.



Upgraded interiors, including Kota stone flooring, acoustic panelling, improved lighting, and false ceilings to enhance comfort and sound quality.



Installation of key services, such as full electrification, sanitary fittings, water supply systems, and HVAC units for climate control.

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Phase					
Land Survey	■				
Utility Shifting	■				
Tender Contractor Selection		■			
Government Approvals (State,PWD,Municipal Corporation)	■	■			
Bhoomipujan		■			
Civil & structural work (RCC structure, deck slabs, plastering, painting, MEP, Flooring, HVAC, LIFT)		■	■	■	
Fire safety & building systems (fire protection, lifts, rainwater harvesting)				■	■
Establishment of 4 lecture halls					■
Handover and inauguration					■
Academic use: tutorilas, seminars, CMEs, large events					■

**The Gantt chart presents the phased implementation of project activities from July 2020 to March 2024, organised in six-month intervals*

DELAYS

The project faced significant delays due to late government approvals, tendering issues, and the second COVID-19 lockdown. Additional time was required for PWD technical sanctions, RCC design approvals, and shifting damaged water and drainage lines. After nearly two years of administrative hurdles, the site was handed over in November 2021. Construction progress later slowed due to the Ukraine war-related rise in steel, cement, and labour costs (a 60% increase), along with delays in securing a 180kW electrical connection and a water supply.

PRE-PROJECT PHASE

During the pre-project phase, essential groundwork activities were carried out to ensure the smooth execution of the Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul project at the Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad. The college first prepared the site by clearing the designated land area and coordinating with relevant government departments for approvals and technical sanctions. Since the land belonged to GMCHA, the initial groundwork included shifting water supply lines, drainage lines, and other utilities that passed through the site. During this phase, the project also underwent mandatory approvals from the Directorate of Health Services, PWD Aurangabad, and later PWD Navi Mumbai for RCC design verification. These approvals took considerable time and contributed to the delay in initiating actual construction work. Once the plans were finalised, Bajaj Auto Ltd., in collaboration with Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBCVS), completed a structured bidding and contractor selection process for civil works, electricals, HVAC, fire safety, and furniture installation.

CONSTRUCTION PHASE

The construction of the Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul involved a comprehensive set of engineering and infrastructure activities, implemented by specialised contractors under the supervision of the JBCVS and GMCHA authorities.

Key activities included:



CIVIL & STRUCTURAL WORK

A complete G+3 RCC structure was constructed, including the basement, underground water tank, and overhead tanks. All deck slabs were completed, followed by internal and external plastering and building painting.



FLOORING, WALLS & FINISHING

Kota stone flooring was laid across the building. Lecture halls received acoustical false ceilings and wall panelling to enhance sound quality.



MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL & PLUMBING WORK

The building was entirely equipped with wiring and lighting systems. Water supply pipelines, sanitary fittings, and washrooms were installed. The HVAC system for all four auditoriums was commissioned.



FIRE SAFETY & BUILDING SYSTEMS

A complete Fire Protection System, including alarms, sprinklers, and extinguishers, was activated. Two (15-person) lifts were installed, and a rainwater harvesting system was completed.



FURNISHING & EQUIPMENT

Furniture for all lecture halls and faculty rooms was installed. The college later added audio-visual equipment. Through these activities, the building's total constructed area reached 3101.75 sq. m, providing a modern academic facility fully compliant with safety and quality standards.

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Limited commissioned SoulAce to undertake an impact assessment of the newly constructed Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul (Bajaj Block) at Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad, developed in collaboration with Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBCVS).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of the study were:



To evaluate the extent of stakeholder satisfaction, including students, faculty, and administrators, with the design, facilities, and functionality of the newly constructed lecture theatre complex.



To assess the overall impact of the Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul on improving academic delivery, teaching-learning experience, scheduling efficiency, and institutional reputation.

USE OF A MIXED-METHODS APPROACH

The evaluation employed a comprehensive mixed-methods design that integrated qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative component enabled an in-depth exploration of experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders, including faculty members, administrators, and student representatives, providing nuanced insights into comfort, usability, accessibility, and the academic value of the new lecture halls. Concurrently, quantitative methods facilitated the collection and analysis of numerical data related to seating capacity, utilisation patterns, attendance, scheduling efficiency, and the frequency of academic activities. By leveraging both approaches, the study ensured robust, multidimensional findings, resulting in a holistic understanding of the program's impact.

APPLICATION OF QUALITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Qualitative methods were employed to capture real-life experiences, perceptions, and narratives of students, faculty members, and administrative staff using the new lecture halls. In-depth interviews and guided discussions with key stakeholders, including department heads, teaching staff, and student representatives, enabled a detailed examination of how the upgraded infrastructure influenced academic delivery. These techniques provided insights into improvements in the teaching-learning environment, including seating comfort, acoustics, lighting, accessibility features, and the use of audio-visual technology. By documenting user experiences, the qualitative approach offered a nuanced understanding of how the new lecture halls reduced overcrowding, improved scheduling efficiency, and supported smoother academic operations.

APPLICATION OF QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Quantitative methods were applied to objectively measure the project's outcomes through structured surveys and questionnaires. These tools captured numerical data on key indicators from beneficiaries' post-intervention, enabling the assessment of economic improvements and project effectiveness. Statistical analysis of this data provided evidence-based insights into the extent of change and the initiative's success.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

To strengthen the reliability and validity of findings, the study incorporated triangulation strategies. Data triangulation was achieved by collecting information from multiple sources, including field observations, beneficiary interviews, stakeholder interactions, and project staff feedback. Methodological triangulation was implemented through diverse research tools, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. This cross-verification process mitigated potential biases and reinforced the credibility of the conclusions.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The study employed both random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Random sampling ensured an unbiased and representative selection of participants. In contrast, purposive sampling targeted individuals and groups with specific roles and experience to provide in-depth insights relevant to the research objectives. Purposive sampling was used to identify key stakeholders associated with the Adhyapan Sankul, including faculty members, administrative staff, and student representatives, and random sampling was applied to select MBBS student respondents from this group.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The assessment was guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring adherence to globally recognised standards. This approach provided a structured and credible basis for evaluating the project's relevance, effectiveness, and impact.



RESEARCH DESIGN

- » **Research design used:**
Descriptive research design.
- » **Sampling technique:**
Random sampling and purposive sampling
- » **Sample size:**
253 students
- » **Qualitative method used:**
Semi-structured interviews, testimonials with beneficiaries, and key stakeholders

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Students
- Student representatives
- Department heads
- Implementing Partner & project team

STUDY TOOLS

Structured questionnaires were developed for primary beneficiaries after reviewing project details for each focus area. Indicators were pre-defined before administering the surveys to ensure consistency and relevance. For secondary beneficiaries and stakeholders, a semi-structured questionnaire was designed. Stakeholders were identified across all focus areas, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with faculty members, administrative staff, and project staff to capture diverse perspectives.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The impact evaluation adhered to a rigorous ethical framework, ensuring that the study was conducted responsibly and in accordance with established research ethics. The rights and well-being of participants were prioritised throughout the process. Informed consent was obtained by providing comprehensive information about the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, enabling participants to make voluntary and informed decisions after their queries were addressed. Strict measures were implemented to maintain confidentiality and privacy. Data were securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel, and participant identities were protected through anonymisation and coding techniques. Participation was entirely voluntary, free from coercion or undue influence, underscoring respect for autonomy and individual choice. Throughout the study, participants were treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, and their well-being remained the highest priority, with appropriate support provided whenever required.



**INTERACTION WITH MR.
WADEKAR (OS) GOVT
MEDICAL COLLEGE**

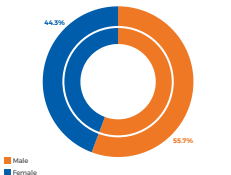
05. KEY FINDINGS

This chapter presents insights and analysis derived from students, faculty members, and administrative staff at Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad, to evaluate the overall outcomes of the Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul infrastructure enhancement project supported by Bajaj Auto Ltd. Drawing on primary survey data, stakeholder interviews, and field observations, the assessment examined the extent to which the newly constructed lecture theatre complex has improved the academic environment, strengthened teaching-learning processes, and addressed challenges related to space, comfort, and scheduling.

The evaluation focused on key dimensions, including academic infrastructure utilisation, learning environment quality, technological integration, accessibility, and stakeholder satisfaction. Data was collected through field surveys, structured interviews, student and faculty interactions, and observational assessments of the facility's usage patterns.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF BENEFICIARIES

CHART 1: GENDER-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT RESPONDENTS (N=253)



55.7% of the study respondents were male students, while the remaining 44.3% were female students, indicating a reasonably balanced gender representation in the sample.

This distribution underscored that feedback was collected from a diverse group of stakeholders, helping ensure that the findings reflect the experiences and views of both male and female participants.

BASELINE SITUATION BEFORE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Interactions with students, Heads of Departments, and other stakeholders revealed a clear picture of the pre-intervention situation before the construction of the Bajaj Adhyapan Sankul.

LIMITED LECTURE HALL CAPACITY



This was insufficient for the current MBBS intake of 200 students, leading to frequent overcrowding during lectures.



Before the new complex, the college had a single lecture hall seating about 120 students.



Students often experienced discomfort during longer sessions due to congestion and inadequate seating.

FREQUENT SCHEDULING CONFLICTS



Earlier, with only one large hall available, departments struggled to schedule lectures without clashes.



Departments had to frequently adjust or delay classes, affecting the overall flow of the timetable.

LIMITED ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES



Before the intervention, space limitations made it difficult to organize large-scale academic events or interdepartmental projects.



Even official projects could not be held because the infrastructure was inadequate for large gatherings.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSTRAINTS



The previous infrastructure lacked ramps, lifts, or dedicated seating arrangements for students with mobility challenges. This made it difficult for physically challenged students to reach or use the lecture spaces comfortably.

“ Earlier, accessibility was a major issue for students with mobility challenges. The old building lacked proper ramps or elevators, making it difficult for anyone who needed support to reach the lecture hall. There were no dedicated seating spaces in the front for such students either, which often made them depend on others for movement and seating adjustments.

– Roopali Shinde, 4th year MBBS student, GMCH Aurangabad ”

LIMITED SAFETY MEASURES



Older lecture halls were not equipped with proper fire safety systems such as smoke alarms, sprinklers, or extinguishers. This posed potential risks to students and staff in the event of emergencies.

SUBOPTIMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



Before the intervention, seating in the lecture halls was congested, leaving students with minimal space and comfort.



Ventilation in the classrooms was poor, making the environment hot and uncomfortable during long lectures.



Students often found it challenging to focus for long periods due to physical discomfort and cramped conditions.



The overall ambience of the earlier lecture halls did not support interactive teaching, group activities, or hybrid learning formats.

ESTABLISHMENT OF ACADEMIC FACILITIES

The project developed four fully functional lecture halls, each seating 250 students, significantly expanding the college's total teaching capacity. The enhanced space now allows GMCHA to conduct four lectures simultaneously, eliminating previous scheduling bottlenecks.

The new halls also support:



Tutorials and small group discussions



Seminars, workshops, CMEs



Large-scale academic and government events

STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION AND ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

Throughout implementation, continuous coordination occurred among the Nodal, GMCHA administration, JBGVS, and contractors. Departments were regularly updated on construction progress, space allocation, safety features, and utilisation guidelines.

POST-INTERVENTION SCENARIO

CHART 2: COMFORT LEVEL WITH SEATING AND OVERALL ARRANGEMENT IN NEW LECTURE HALLS

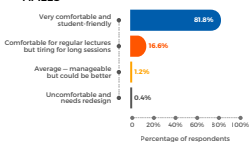


Chart 2 highlights very high levels of student comfort and satisfaction with the seating arrangements in the new lecture halls. 82.0% of the respondents reported that the halls offer a highly comfortable, student-friendly seating environment, reflecting strong appreciation for the improved design and spacious layout. 17.0% of the respondents felt that the seating was comfortable for regular lectures, though long sessions could still feel slightly tiring.

Overall, these responses indicated that the upgraded seating arrangements have significantly enhanced students' classroom experience.

“The new seating arrangement in lecture halls has greatly improved my comfort and focus during long lectures. The chairs are more comfortable and well-spaced, making it easier to stay engaged in class.

– Rutuja Kachyunde, 2nd year MBBS student, GMCH Aurangabad



CHART 3: RATING OF LIGHTING AND VISIBILITY (SCREEN/ BOARD) IN LECTURE HALLS

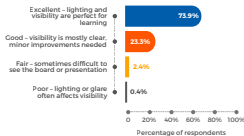


Chart 3 indicates that among the surveyed respondents, nearly three-fourths (73.9%) reported that the lighting and visibility in the newly constructed lecture halls are excellent and highly conducive to learning. 23.3% of the respondents rated the visibility as good, noting that while it is mostly clear, a few minor improvements, such as reducing screen glare, improving projector brightness, or ensuring more uniform lighting across the hall, could further enhance the viewing experience.

A few students who reported wanting improvement also acknowledged that when they sit farther away, their difficulty in viewing is partly due to their own vision. This overall feedback indicates that the upgraded lighting and visibility systems have mainly been successful in creating an effective learning environment.

Discussions with student representatives highlighted that the improved lighting system is one of the most noticeable enhancements in the new lecture halls. Students shared that the bright, evenly distributed lighting makes it significantly easier to follow lectures, read notes, and maintain concentration for more extended periods.

“The improved lighting and screen visibility have made a big difference for me. Earlier, I struggled to see the board from the back, but now the projection and brightness are clear from every corner of the hall.

– Tanmay Lad, 3rd year MBBS student, GMCH Aurangabad

SOUND QUALITY IN LECTURE HALLS

CHART 4: QUALITY OF ACOUSTICS (SOUND CLARITY) DURING LECTURES

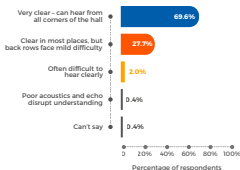


Chart 4 highlights that among the surveyed respondents, a majority reported a positive experience with the acoustics in the new lecture halls. 69.6% of the respondents stated that the sound quality was evident and could be heard easily from all corners of the hall, indicating that the upgraded microphone and speaker systems are functioning effectively. 27.7% of the respondents reported that the sound was clear in most areas, but the back rows faced mild difficulties, suggesting a minor scope for adjustment or calibration.

Overall, the feedback showed that the improved acoustic design has significantly enhanced students' listening comfort and lecture comprehension.

VENTILATION AND TEMPERATURE COMFORT

CHART 5: VENTILATION AND TEMPERATURE COMFORT IN LECTURE HALLS (N=253)

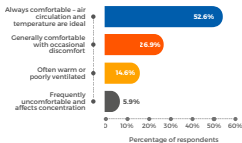


Chart 5 indicates that the newly constructed lecture halls noticeably improved ventilation and temperature comfort for students. 52.6% of the respondents shared that the air circulation and temperature within the halls are ideal, making the environment consistently comfortable during lectures. 26.9% of the respondents reported that the halls are generally relaxed, though they occasionally experience mild discomfort during longer sessions or peak hours. 14.6% of the respondents indicated that the halls often feel hot or inadequately ventilated, suggesting that certain areas, particularly the floors from the first to the fourth, may require further improvement in cooling systems.

Interactions with students confirmed that while the halls are spacious and well-ventilated, the cooling system is inconsistent. Class Representative Ganesh Tare highlighted that AC units on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd floors are malfunctioning, causing discomfort during afternoon sessions.

Students in the last few rows also reported that the ceiling fans do not work effectively, creating warm pockets in some regions of the hall. Discussions with the implementing agency indicated that, during the handover, the AC units were functioning well. The issue appeared to have developed subsequently, suggesting a maintenance-related concern.

Despite these concerns, students consistently acknowledged that the new halls are far better than the old ones. They noted that once the AC and airflow issues are resolved, the halls would provide an optimal environment for long-duration lectures.

ACCESSIBILITY AND CONVENIENCE OF LECTURE HALLS

CHART 6: ACCESSIBILITY AND CONVENIENCE OF LECTURE HALLS FOR ALL STUDENTS

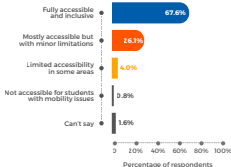


Chart 6 shows that over two-thirds of students (67.6%) found the new lecture halls accessible and inclusive, reflecting high satisfaction with the improvements. 26.1% of the respondents stated that the halls were accessible but still had a few minor limitations that could be improved.

These included uneven lighting in certain sections, occasional difficulty viewing the screen from the back rows, and minor audio clarity issues for students seated at the far ends of the hall.

CHART 7: AVAILABILITY OF RAMP FOR STUDENTS (N=253)

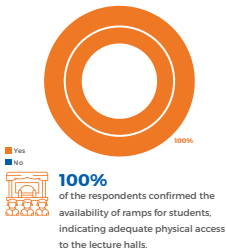


CHART 8: PROVISION OF SPECIFIC SEATING FOR STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES (N=253)

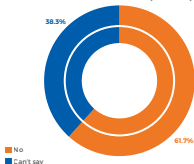


Chart 8 shows that 61.7% of the respondents reported the absence of dedicated seating for students with physical disabilities, pointing to a gap in inclusive planning within the lecture halls despite overall infrastructure improvements. 38.3% of the respondents stated that they were not aware of any such facility.

This finding emphasizes the importance of purpose-designed accessible seating arrangements, as students with physical disabilities represent about 2% of the total student population.

FIRE SAFETY IN LECTURE HALLS

CHART 9: AVAILABILITY OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS IN NEW LECTURE ROOMS

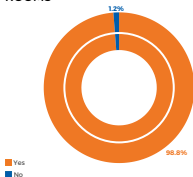


Chart 9 highlights that safety measures in the new lecture halls were well established and robust.



98.8%

of the respondents noted that fire extinguishers were available in the lecture rooms, indicating strong compliance with essential safety requirements and a visible effort to ensure student and faculty protection.

CHART 10: FUNCTIONALITY STATUS OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS IN LECTURE ROOMS

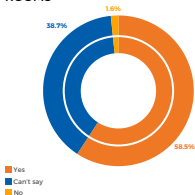


Chart 10 indicates that among those who reported having fire extinguishers (n = 250), more

than half (59.2%) stated that the fire extinguishers were functional and well-maintained, while 39.2% were unsure of their functionality. This suggested that although the infrastructure is in place, awareness and communication about safety procedures could be strengthened to ensure that all users are informed about emergency readiness.

Discussions with the administrative head, Dr Bharat Sonwane, reinforced these findings. He noted that the new lecture complex is equipped with a comprehensive fire protection system, including smoke alarms, water sprinklers, and fire extinguishers, all installed as part of the building's safety plan. He added that regular fire-safety equipment checks are conducted every three months, ensuring that the systems remain functional and up to date.

Students also mentioned that the presence of clearly placed fire extinguishers gave them a sense of security. However, many admitted they were not fully aware of how to use them or what to do in an emergency. This highlighted the need for brief orientation sessions or safety demonstrations to improve preparedness. Overall, the qualitative feedback reflected that fire safety provisions are strong, but increasing user awareness would help maximise the effectiveness of these systems.

AMBIENCE OF LECTURE HALLS

CHART 11: SATISFACTION WITH CLEANLINESS AND REGULAR MAINTENANCE OF LECTURE HALLS (N=253)

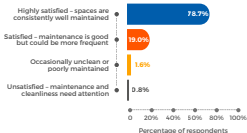


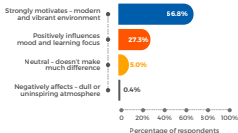
Chart 11 indicates that the ambience of the lecture halls is strongly influenced by factors such as cleanliness, upkeep, and regular maintenance. When students were asked about their satisfaction with the cleanliness and maintenance of the new lecture halls, more than three-fourths (78.7%) reported being highly satisfied, noting that the spaces are consistently well-maintained. This indicated that the improved environment has positively shaped their overall classroom experience.



19.0%

of the respondents felt that maintenance was generally good but believed that a few additional efforts, such as more frequent cleaning during peak usage or better upkeep after events, could further enhance the ambience.

CHART 12: INFLUENCE OF AMBIENCE (COLOUR, DESIGN, LAYOUT) ON MOTIVATION TO ATTEND CLASS (N=253)



66.8%

of the respondents reported strong motivation to attend lectures due to the modern ambience, including colour scheme, design, and layout.



27.3%

of the respondents noted that the ambience positively influences their mood and focus during learning, helping them stay attentive during sessions.



5.5%

of the respondents felt neutral, suggesting that ambience does not significantly affect their motivation.

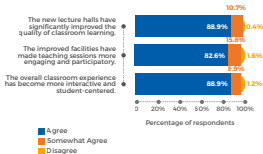
Overall, these responses indicated that the aesthetic improvements in the new lecture halls have had a meaningful impact on most students' motivation and classroom experience, creating a more inviting and engaging learning atmosphere.

Qualitative feedback from student interactions reinforced this positive sentiment. Students noted that the refreshed colour scheme, brighter lighting, and spacious layout make the halls feel welcoming and energising, contributing to a more enjoyable learning experience. Many noted that the well-designed environment creates a sense of seriousness and focus, encouraging them to participate more actively during lectures. Others appreciated that the organised and aesthetically pleasing space reduces distractions and helps them settle into the class more quickly.

KEY IMPACTS

IMPROVEMENT IN LEARNING QUALITY AND ENGAGEMENT

CHART 13: IMPACT ON LEARNING QUALITY AND ENGAGEMENT



Multiple answer question

The introduction of the new lecture halls has had a substantial positive impact on classroom learning.



88.9%

of the students agreed that the new facilities have significantly improved the overall quality of classroom learning, including how well students understand lectures, stay attentive, participate in discussions, and follow instructions without distractions.

This indicated that upgraded infrastructure has directly made classes easier to understand and more effective for both students and teachers.



82.6%

of the students reported that sessions have become more engaging and participatory, reflecting improvements in acoustics, lighting, and spacious seating.



88.9%

of the respondents agreed that the classroom experience has become more interactive and student-centred, indicating that the modern environment supports better faculty-student interaction.

Qualitative feedback from students confirmed the findings, noting that well-lit rooms, clear visibility, and organized seating enhance comfort and participation in lectures. Many reported improved ambience helped them maintain attention longer compared to the old halls.



Earlier, it was hard to stay focused in class because the rooms were dark and cramped.

However, in the new halls, the lighting is bright, and the seating is well arranged so that I can see the board clearly from anywhere.

It's much easier to follow what the teacher is explaining, and I find myself participating more in discussions. The ambience itself keeps me attentive for a longer time.

– Sujal Katte, 3rd year MBBS student, GMCH Aurangabad

“ The new lecture halls genuinely make a difference in how motivated I feel to attend classes. The bright lighting, clean design, and spacious layout create a positive atmosphere the moment we walk in. Earlier, the classrooms felt dull and cramped, but now the environment actually helps me stay focused and engaged throughout the lecture. It feels like a modern learning space, and that really boosts my interest in attending every session.

– Magesh Aure, 2nd year MBBS student, GMCH Aurangabad

“ Earlier, it was hard to stay focused in class because the rooms were dark and cramped. However, in the new halls, the lighting is bright, and the seating is well arranged so that I can see the board clearly from anywhere. It's much easier to follow what the teacher is explaining, and I find myself participating more in discussions. The ambience itself keeps me attentive for a longer time.

– Sujal Katte, 3rd year MBBS student, GMCH Aurangabad



IMPROVED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CONCENTRATION

CHART 14: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND FOCUS (N=253)



Multiple answer question

The improved infrastructure, including better lighting, organised seating, and enhanced acoustics, created a classroom setting that minimises distractions and helps students maintain concentration for longer durations.



84.2%

of the respondents agreed that the halls offer a conducive atmosphere for attentive learning, supported by cleaner surroundings, reduced noise, and a more organised layout that helps students stay focused during lectures.



89.3%

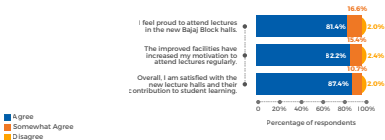
of the respondents acknowledged that the redesigned space contributes to a more polished and professional academic ambience, indicating that the infrastructure upgrade has successfully elevated the overall academic atmosphere.

Triangulating these findings with qualitative data from both students and the administrative team reinforced alignment in perceptions of the upgraded lecture halls. Students highlighted that the brighter lighting, improved visibility, and modern layout make the halls feel more professional and conducive to focused learning. They shared that the organised seating and well-designed ambience help them stay attentive for longer durations. Furthermore, students reported that the improved infrastructure has greatly strengthened the overall learning environment, which is especially important in a rigorous medical project where extensive coursework, long study hours, and an intense academic workload require a supportive, well-equipped learning space.

Administrative feedback echoed these observations. They noted that the enhanced lighting, acoustics, and design have positively influenced teaching delivery, allowing faculty to engage larger groups more effectively and maintain students' attention. Together, these perspectives indicated that the redesigned spaces were not only aesthetically superior but also elevated the academic environment, contributing to improved concentration, participation, and overall learning quality.

IMPROVED MOTIVATION OF STUDENTS

CHART 15: MOTIVATION AND EMOTIONAL CONNECTION (N=253)



Multiple answer question

Chart 15 shows that the upgraded lecture halls significantly increased students' motivation to attend classes. Many shared that the modern ambience, better comfort, and enhanced facilities make them look forward to lectures more than before.



81.4%

of the students reported feeling proud to attend lectures in the new Bajaj Block halls, and 82.2% noted that the upgraded facilities have increased their motivation to attend classes more regularly.

This reflected a positive shift in students' emotional connection with their academic environment, where the improved infrastructure is not only functional but also inspiring.



87.4%

of the students expressed overall satisfaction with the lecture halls and their contribution to better learning, indicating that the upgraded spaces have strengthened both students' academic confidence and their willingness to engage more actively in the learning process.



Before the new lecture halls were constructed, managing the timetable was one of our biggest challenges. With only a single hall that could not accommodate our full strength, departments constantly had to adjust or wait for their turn. It was very common for lectures to overlap or get delayed simply because we did not have enough space to run parallel classes. Coordinating sessions for different years was challenging, and at times, we had to compromise on ideal teaching hours. With the addition of the new lecture halls, the availability of space has significantly improved. We are now able to accommodate larger groups of students at once and conduct up to four lectures simultaneously in the new building. This has eased earlier capacity constraints, and departments no longer face challenges in managing parallel sessions or coordinating lecture timings.

-Dr. Bharat R. Sonwane, H.O.D. Pathology, GMCH Aurangabad



IMPACT ON INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND REPUTATION

CHART 16: INSTITUTIONAL VALUE ADDITION AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS (N=253)



Multiple answer question

Chart 16 highlights that the upgraded lecture complex significantly improved the institution's academic environment.



87.7%

of the respondents agreed that the project has dramatically enhanced the college's learning infrastructure, and 90.5% expressed a desire to see similar upgrades across other parts of the campus.

Faculty members, administrators, and students collectively noted that the new lecture complex has strengthened GMCHA's institutional reputation and improved its readiness for accreditation and inspection processes. They also highlighted that the modern facilities now allow the college to host high-level academic events, workshops, and government projects, an advancement that has noticeably elevated the college's overall standing.



The new lecture halls have completely changed the atmosphere of our college. The modern design, spacious layout, and upgraded facilities make the institute look far more professional and advanced. Even visitors and guest speakers often comment on how impressive the halls are. It definitely boosts our confidence and makes us proud to be part of a college that's improving its academic environment so much.

-Aditya Gadakh, 3rd year MBBS student, GMCH Aurangabad



SOULACE TEAM ALONG WITH THE PROJECT REPRESENTATIVE DURING THE FIELD VISIT

BAJAJ ADHYAPAN SANKUL



06. IMPACT ACROSS MULTIPLE LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Improved classroom comfort, visibility, and acoustics enhanced students' ability to concentrate during long lectures and improved overall learning quality.

Increased motivation to attend classes regularly strengthened academic engagement and participation. Increased motivation to attend classes regularly strengthened academic engagement and participation.



INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Expanded lecture capacity reduced overcrowding and eliminated scheduling conflicts, enabling the institution to conduct multiple parallel classes efficiently. Improved infrastructure supported a wider range of academic activities, including seminars, workshops, CMEs, and interdisciplinary sessions. Faculty experienced smoother lecture delivery and improved teaching effectiveness due to better infrastructure and reduced classroom disruptions. The availability of modern lecture halls fostered a more professional academic environment, supporting collaboration, knowledge exchange, and higher-quality academic discussions across departments.



STATE LEVEL

Strengthened medical education infrastructure contributed to capacity building in Maharashtra's public health education system by supporting the training of a larger number of medical students. Improved institutional facilities aligned with state priorities for strengthening public medical colleges and healthcare human resources.



NATIONAL LEVEL

The project supported national objectives related to quality medical education, healthcare workforce development, and infrastructure strengthening under regulatory frameworks such as the National Medical Commission (NMC).

07. CASE STUDIES

“ CASE STUDY 1: HOW IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE ELEVATED THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Raj Chavan, a third-year MBBS student at GMCH Aurangabad, has spent three years at the college and has witnessed the transition from the old lecture halls to the newly built ones. He recalls earlier classrooms as compact, dimly lit, and often uncomfortable during long lectures. Concentrating for extended hours was difficult, and poor sound clarity frequently disrupted the flow of learning.

The shift to the new lecture halls marked a clear turning point in his academic experience. Raj describes the new seating arrangement as extremely comfortable, allowing students to sit through sessions without the physical strain they previously felt. He shared that the bright lighting and clear visibility of screens and boards make a noticeable difference in understanding lectures and keeping pace with instructors.

One of the aspects he values most is the audio quality. According to him, lectures are now audible from any part of the hall, eliminating confusion and making it easier for him to follow the content. The upgraded AV system also supports better demonstrations and presentations, making sessions more engaging.

Raj finds the ventilation and temperature inside the halls consistently comfortable, something he rarely experienced in the older rooms. He also emphasised that accessibility has improved, with ramps and inclusive entryways allowing all students to navigate the space easily.

Reflecting on the broader impact, Raj believes the new halls have genuinely elevated the quality of learning. He feels that teaching has become more interactive, the classroom experiences more student-oriented, and the overall academic environment is more professional. In his view, this upgraded infrastructure has added significant value to the institution, and he hopes similar improvements are expanded across the campus.

“ CASE STUDY 2: CREATING A MORE SUPPORTIVE AND MOTIVATING LEARNING SPACE

Sarita Kendre, a third-year medical student, has spent all three years of her academic journey at this institution. Having attended lectures in both the old and new halls, she has observed a noticeable shift in the overall learning atmosphere. She recalls that earlier classrooms often felt dull and tiring, especially during long lectures when visibility and comfort were limited.

According to Sarita, the new lecture halls have transformed her everyday learning experience. She describes the seating as exceptionally comfortable, allowing her to remain attentive without the fatigue that the older halls often caused.

The enhanced lighting has also made a significant difference; she finds the screens and boards far clearer now, which helps her follow lectures with minimal strain. Cleanliness and regular maintenance were highlighted as key strengths in her feedback. She shared that the halls are well-maintained and consistently kept in good condition, creating a clean and hygienic environment. She also appreciated the clear sound system in the halls and noted that the lecturer's voice is clearly audible from any seating position, which helps her remain attentive during sessions. She further shared that the modern design and bright colours of the halls create a pleasant and motivating ambience. She feels that the improved appearance of the learning spaces naturally encourages students to attend sessions regularly and participate more actively in class.

LECTURE HALL CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE PROJECT



08. CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES IN FUNCTIONALITY



Although the lecture halls are functional and generally well-received, some operational issues remain. Students reported that the air-conditioning units on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors are not working properly, and that ceiling fans in the back rows work inconsistently. This reduces comfort during long academic sessions and shows the need for regular equipment checking and maintenance. A one-year Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) was provided at the time of handover, but it was not renewed afterwards.

LIMITED INCLUSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE FEATURES



Most students reported that there is no designated seating for persons with disabilities. At present, students with disabilities make up about 2% of the total student strength, in line with the prescribed reservation norms. However, the lecture halls lack clearly marked or dedicated seating for students who need mobility or physical support, limiting the inclusiveness of the learning environment.

WASH BASINS INSTALLED AS PART OF THE PROJECT



09. RECOMMENDATION

The Institution may consider integrating the lecture halls under its existing institutional maintenance or AMC arrangements for electrical and air-conditioning systems.

IMPROVE SEATING ACCESSIBILITY WITHOUT STRUCTURAL CHANGES



The institution may identify and clearly mark 2-3 accessible seating spaces in each hall for students with disabilities, and install simple, visible signage.

TOILET FOR GENTS CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE PROJECT



10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The upgraded lecture hall complex has created a strong foundation for long-term academic improvement at GMCHA. However, the level of sustainability depends on how effectively the institution continues to maintain, manage, and optimise the new infrastructure. While the building is fully functional, its long-term readiness relies on consistent upkeep, strengthened technical capacity, and clear responsibility-sharing among college departments.

The college has already put in place regular maintenance practices, with staff checking fire safety systems, cleanliness, and basic repairs. These efforts show an emerging sense of ownership among administrators and faculty. However, particular areas such as the functioning of AC systems on upper floors, occasional AV equipment issues, and incomplete accessible seating for students with disabilities indicate that continued monitoring and responsive repair systems are essential to prevent future deterioration.

For long-term readiness, GMCHA will need structured systems for equipment handling, preventive maintenance, and prompt issue reporting. This includes regular training for technical staff on AV systems, scheduled servicing of HVAC units, and clear protocols for room allocation and equipment use. Overall, the project has created durable, high-quality infrastructure with strong potential for sustained use. With consistent maintenance and a strengthened technical team, GMCHA is well-positioned to independently manage and maintain the upgraded academic environment in the years ahead.



11. CONCLUSION

The construction of the new lecture hall complex at Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad, supported by Bajaj Auto Ltd. and facilitated by JBCVVS, has significantly improved the institution's teaching and learning environment. The upgraded infrastructure has directly addressed long-standing constraints, including overcrowded classrooms, scheduling conflicts, inadequate lighting, poor acoustics, and limited accessibility. With four modern lecture halls, each accommodating up to 250 students, the college is now well-equipped to manage its current intake and deliver academic sessions with far greater efficiency.

Survey findings and qualitative discussions with students, faculty, and administrators clearly show enhanced comfort, better visibility, improved sound quality, and a more conducive learning atmosphere. The new facilities have also strengthened student engagement, increased motivation to attend classes, and supported more interactive, student-centred teaching practices. Faculty members reported improved teaching effectiveness, better classroom management, and greater satisfaction with the available technology and space.

Beyond daily teaching, the lecture halls have expanded the institution's capacity to host seminars, workshops, collaborative departmental events, and even high-level government projects, contributing to GMCHA's institutional visibility and readiness for accreditation and inspections. Students consistently expressed pride in studying in an upgraded academic environment and called for similar improvements across other parts of the campus.



CEREMONY MARKING THE AUSPICIOUS BEGINNING OF A NEW INSTITUTIONAL PROJECT

ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

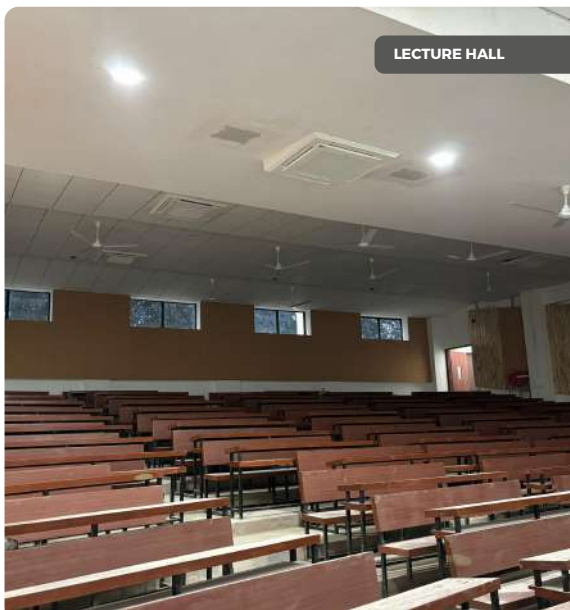
Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted, innovative brand, having sold over 21 million motorcycles in 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio, including motorcycles, scooters, and autorickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs in both India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over two crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR contributes to education, health, environmental, and animal welfare projects to support the sustainable development of the community and the nation.

A GLIMPSE OF CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS DURING THE PROJECT



ABOUT NGO PARTNER: JANKIDEVI BAJAJ GRAM VIKAS SANSTHA (JBGVS)

Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBGVS) is the development arm of the Bajaj Group, dedicated to improving the quality of life in rural and underserved communities through holistic, community-driven initiatives. The organisation works across key areas, including education, health, livelihoods, women's empowerment, environmental sustainability, and community infrastructure. With strong partnerships involving government agencies, corporate CSR programs, and local institutions, JBGVS implements sustainable, high-impact projects that promote self-reliance and inclusive growth. Its expertise in planning and executing large-scale development interventions has made JBGVS a trusted partner in strengthening public systems.



ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

TARGETING THE
HARD-CORE POOR
BY DEVELOPING
THEM AS
ENTREPRENEURS

**Bandhan-Konnagar Livelihood
Programme**

Implementing Partner:
Bandhan-Konnagar

Implementation Period:
Oct 2021 to Oct 2023

Assessment Period: Year 2025 - 2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 09
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04 - 06
	Key Impacts	07 - 09
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	09
02	OECD Framework	10 - 12
03	Introduction	13 - 17
	Background and Need for the Project	13-14
	Objectives of the Project	14
	Project Details	15
	Project activities	16 - 17
	Timeline of the project	17
04	Research Methodology	18 - 23
	Objectives of the Study	18
	Use of Mixed-Method Approach	19
	Use of Qualitative Approach	19
	Application of Quantitative Methods	19-10
	Ensuring Triangulation	20
	Sampling Framework	20
	Evaluation Framework: OECD-DAC Criteria	20
	OECD-DAC Evaluation Framework	21
	Research Design	21
	Key Stakeholders	21-22
	Study Tools	22
	Ethical Considerations	23
05	Key Findings	24- 46
06	Impact Across Different Levels	47- 49
07	Case studies	50
08	Challenge	51
09	Recommendation	52
10	Sustainability	53
10	Conclusion	54

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Community/Stakeholder Feedback
Table 2	Timeline of the Project

LIST OF CHARTS

Chart No.	Chart Title
Chart 1-4	Demographic and Household Profile
Chart 5-13	Household Economic & Living Conditions
Chart 14-18	Project Engagement and Training Participation
Chart 19	Enterprise Initiation, Selection and Motivation
Chart 20-22	Asset Support, Consumption Support and Utilisation
Chart 23-24	Mentoring and Coaching
Chart 25-26	Enterprise Operations, Business Practices and Performance
Chart 27-32	Changes in Income
Chart 33	Challenges: Initial, Current and Evolving Patterns
Chart 34	Future Aspirations

ABBREVIATIONS

ADSC	Ati Daridra Sahayak Committee (Village Committee)
APL	Above Poverty Line
BAL	Bajaj Auto Ltd.
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CB&ED	Confidence Building & Enterprise Development
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
KII	Key Informant Interview
LIC	Life Insurance Corporation
MIS	Management Information System
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PMSBY	Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PMJDY	Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana
REECIS	Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Coherence, Impact, Sustainability
SHG	Self-Help Group
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
THP	Targeting the Hard-core Poor Programme

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Targeting the Hard-core Poor by developing them as Entrepreneurs (THP) Programme was designed as a structured livelihood intervention to support ultra-poor women and their dependent families in Udham Singh Nagar district, Uttarakhand, in transitioning out of extreme poverty through sustainable self-employment. Funded by Bajaj Auto Ltd. and implemented by Bandhan-Konnagar, the programme adopted the internationally recognised Graduation Approach developed by BRAC, contextualised to suit the Indian socio-economic environment.

The programme supported 3,000 ultra-poor women in Udham Singh Nagar district, Uttarakhand. As per the impact assessment sample (n=341), 67.4% of respondents were widowed, divorced, or single, indicating a high concentration of women-headed and socially vulnerable households among the beneficiaries. These women were living in long-term poverty, with irregular daily wage labour, low and unstable incomes, food insecurity, and limited access to productive assets and formal financial services. Approximately 88.3% depended on daily wage labour, earning between ₹2,001 and ₹4,000 per month, and most households reported a total monthly income below ₹5,000.

Before the intervention, most women belonged to households below the poverty line (BPL). They were primarily engaged in daily survival activities, leaving little scope to explore or invest in independent livelihood options. Their financial instability meant that even small risks could threaten household survival, and decisions were often shaped by immediate needs rather than long-term planning. In several cases, social norms and family dynamics further limited their mobility and participation in economic activities. Given these realities, a one-time financial transfer would not have been sufficient; sustained handholding and phased support were essential to help them gradually build stable livelihoods.

To address these challenges, the programme implemented a structured 24-month Graduation Approach (October 2021–October 2023) that provided productive asset grants (₹10,001–₹15,000) and short-term consumption support (₹1,400 per month for three months). It also included enterprise and confidence-building training, regular mentoring, financial literacy and savings promotion, health and education awareness sessions, and structured graduation preparation.

The programme aimed to enable women to transition from insecure wage labour to stable self-employment, strengthen their capabilities and confidence, and sustainably move out of extreme poverty.



TRANSFERRING ASSET TO BENEFICIARY

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Targeting the Hard-core Poor by Developing Them as Entrepreneurs



Implementing Agency

Bandhan-Konnagar



Location

7 blocks of Udham Singh Nagar district, Uttarakhand (Kichha, Rudrapur, Bajpur, Gadarpur, Sitarganj, Kashipur, Dineshpur)



Duration

Oct 2021 to Oct 2023



Assessment Location

4 blocks of Udham Singh Nagar district, Uttarakhand (Rudrapur, Bajpur, Gadarpur, Sitarganj)



Total Budget

240 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total nos. of Beneficiaries

3000 ultra poor women and their families



Target Beneficiaries

Ultra poor women and their dependent families



Primary Programs

Confidence Building and Enterprise Development (CB&ED) training, Quarterly refresher trainings, assets transfer, mentoring support, linkages to govt. schemes

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The impact assessment aimed:



To evaluate how effective the Graduation Approach was in helping ultra-poor women move out of extreme poverty and build sustainable livelihoods.



To assess the programme's impact across multiple areas, including economic outcomes (income and assets), social outcomes (financial inclusion and skills), and human development outcomes (food security, housing, and child welfare).



To examine the quality and effectiveness of key programme interventions such as asset transfers, training, mentoring, and consumption support.



To understand beneficiaries' views on the value of the programme, how it helped them overcome challenges, and their future livelihood goals.



To assess the sustainability of programme outcomes by analysing enterprise performance, savings behaviour, readiness to access credit, and plans for expansion.

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

**100%**

of beneficiaries established enterprises after receiving asset and training support.

**97.9%**

operate their enterprises 6-7 days per week.

**94.7%**

maintain business records.

**95.6%**

rated mentoring as "very useful"

**50.1%**

report no current enterprise challenges.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE INCOME AND ASSET OWNERSHIP

**81.0%**

now earn above ₹10,000 per month (54.0% earn ₹10,001-₹15,000 and 27.0% earn above ₹15,000), compared to 94.4% who earned ₹4,000 or less per month before the intervention.

**93.5%**

own enterprise assets valued at over ₹23,000.

**99.0%**

reported an uplift from extreme poverty based on income and asset criteria.

**99.0%**

reported an uplift from extreme poverty, based on income and asset criteria.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY AND HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION**100%**

received consumption support during enterprise start-up.

**100%**

report access to two nutritious meals per day.

**93.8%**

report that income meets livelihood needs to a great extent.

OBJECTIVE 4: ENHANCE FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND SOCIAL SECURITY LINKAGES**100%**

opened and operate bank accounts.

**100%**

report regular savings.

**91.8%**

save through banks.

OBJECTIVE 5: IMPROVE HOUSEHOLD WELL-BEING**98.0%**

reported improvement in housing conditions.

**98.0%**

reported continued access to safe drinking water.

**100.0%**

of beneficiary groups reported that health awareness sessions were conducted.

OBJECTIVE 6: EMPOWER WOMEN SOCIALLY AND ASPIRATIONALLY**98.2%**

plan to expand their enterprises.

**76.0%**

are willing to take loans for expansion.

**ATI DARIDRA SAHAYAK
COMMITTEE MEETING**

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS



The programme enhanced livelihood stability, with most beneficiaries operating their enterprises regularly, indicating a transition from irregular wage labour to structured self-employment.



It strengthened beneficiaries' practical business management capacity through mentoring and continuous support.



It improved enterprise sustainability, with more than half of the beneficiaries reporting no operational constraints.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE INCOME AND ASSET OWNERSHIP



The programme substantially increased income levels, reflecting a clear shift from very low earnings to higher and more stable monthly incomes.



It enabled beneficiaries to accumulate productive assets beyond the defined graduation threshold.



It strengthened economic resilience, with most beneficiaries meeting the established poverty graduation benchmarks.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY AND HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION



The programme strengthened household food security, enabling families to maintain regular access to nutritious meals.



It improved households' ability to meet essential livelihood and consumption needs through increased income.

OBJECTIVE 4: ENHANCE FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND SOCIAL SECURITY LINKAGES

The programme strengthened financial inclusion by enabling beneficiaries to access and actively use formal banking services.



It fostered a culture of regular and structured savings among beneficiaries.

OBJECTIVE 5: IMPROVE HOUSEHOLD WELL-BEING

The programme contributed to improved housing conditions among beneficiary households.



It supported households in sustaining children's educational participation.



It strengthened overall household well-being and living standards beyond income improvements.

OBJECTIVE 6: EMPOWER WOMEN SOCIALLY AND ASPIRATIONALLY

The programme strengthened women's entrepreneurial aspirations and forward-looking business planning.



It enhanced financial confidence among beneficiaries to consider credit for enterprise growth.



It improved women's agency and participation in economic activities and decision-making.

OVERALL PROJECT IMPACT

The project enhanced sustainable livelihoods, empowered ultra-poor women economically and socially, and improved multidimensional household well-being. With 99.0% achieving defined graduation criteria and 93.5% surpassing asset thresholds, the intervention demonstrates strong alignment with the core objective of enabling women to graduate into financial and livelihood security.

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Key Feedback and Observations
Beneficiaries (Primary Participants)	Beneficiaries reported very high satisfaction with the project. Nearly all participants rated the CB&ED training and ongoing mentoring as highly useful and stated that the project helped them overcome initial challenges. All beneficiaries reported that their enterprises are currently profitable and that they have developed regular saving habits with active bank accounts. Most participants indicated that their income is now sufficient to meet household needs and expressed plans to expand their businesses.
Gram Panchayat Members	They observed improvements in income, employment, self-reliance, confidence, and cleanliness. They further noted better school attendance among children and positive behaviour changes within households. Beneficiaries are now seen as role models and mentors in the community. Implementation was smooth, with no challenges in beneficiary identification and strong community co-operation.
Programme Trainers / Field Staff	Trainers reported that all beneficiaries received enterprise assets and regularly attended refresher training. They also observed business expansion, better savings practices, noticeable improvements in housing, nutrition, education, and overall family well-being.
Community Members	Community members reported visible ripple effects, with others starting similar businesses after observing beneficiaries' success. Beneficiaries such as Supriya, Basanti, and Ruksana are recognised as successful entrepreneurs, trusted mentors, and role models in the community. There is a strong demand for similar programmes to continue in the area.

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The project demonstrates strong relevance to the socio-economic profile of the target population. Before the intervention, 94.4% of beneficiaries earned ₹4,000 or less per month, and 89.1% of households earned below ₹5,000 monthly, indicating extreme income vulnerability. Additionally, 88.3% relied on irregular daily wage labour, reflecting unstable livelihoods and the absence of productive assets.

The intervention design directly addressed these constraints through asset transfer, enterprise development training, mentoring, consumption support, and financial inclusion measures. The inclusion of temporary consumption support was particularly relevant, as it prevented distress sales of productive assets during enterprise establishment. Given the strong alignment between identified vulnerabilities and project components, the intervention was highly relevant to beneficiary needs.



COHERENCE

The project demonstrates strong internal and external coherence.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- **SDG 1 (No Poverty):** 99.0% of beneficiaries met income and asset graduation thresholds, contributing directly to poverty reduction.
- **SDG 5 (Gender Equality):** The project targeted ultra-poor women and enhanced their economic agency and decision-making capacity.
- **SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth):** 97.9% operate enterprises 6-7 days per week, reflecting transition to structured self-employment.
- **SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities):** The intervention specifically targeted marginalised women excluded from mainstream economic systems.



Alignment with National and State Programmes:

The intervention complements the Government of India's initiatives, such as:

- **National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM):** Focus on women's self-employment and financial inclusion.
- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY):** 100% bank account ownership supports financial inclusion goals.

- Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and other social security schemes.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission:** Safe water access (98.0%) reflects alignment with rural infrastructure improvements.

The project design complements, rather than duplicates, public welfare systems by strengthening economic self-reliance alongside social protection linkages.



EFFECTIVENESS

The programme achieved its intended objectives with strong measurable outcomes.

Income levels improved substantially. While 94.4% earned ₹4,000 or less before the intervention, 81.0% now earn above ₹10,000 per month. Asset ownership also increased significantly, with 93.5% now owning productive assets exceeding the defined graduation threshold of ₹23,000.

Enterprise sustainability indicators further demonstrate effectiveness: 97.9% of enterprises operate regularly, 94.7% maintain business records, and 95.6% rate mentoring as very useful. Additionally, 100% report regular savings and 100% report access to two nutritious meals per day.

The high percentage achievements across economic, financial, and consumption indicators confirm that the project effectively met its stated objectives.



EFFICIENCY

The intervention followed a structured, sequenced 24-month approach combining asset transfer, mentoring, training, and social protection linkage. Universal coverage of productive assets and consumption support (100%) indicates strong administrative implementation.

The procurement model balanced centralised quality control (57.5%) and beneficiary autonomy (41.3% self-procurement), demonstrating operational flexibility. Weekly mentoring and quarterly refresher trainings ensured continuous support rather than one-time intervention.

However, 35.2% of beneficiaries still report working capital constraints, suggesting that while enterprise establishment was efficient, scaling mechanisms such as credit linkage could be further strengthened. Therefore, efficiency is rated slightly below maximum.



IMPACT

The project generated a multidimensional impact across income, assets, food security, financial inclusion, and social empowerment.

Income transformation is significant, with the majority shifting from sub-₹4,000 earnings to above ₹10,000. Asset accumulation increased, with 93.5% of productive assets exceeding ₹23,000, 99.0% report upliftment from extreme poverty.

Food security improved to universal coverage (100%), and 98.0% reported housing improvements. Financial inclusion reached universal levels, with 100% holding bank accounts and practising savings. Forward-looking aspirations are strong, with 98.2% planning enterprise expansion and 76.0% willing to access loans for growth.

These findings indicate not only income enhancement but sustained economic mobility and increased confidence, reflecting a transformative impact.



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability prospects are strong, based on enterprise continuity and forward-planning indicators. Nearly all beneficiaries operate enterprises regularly (97.9%), maintain records (94.7%), and report savings behaviour (100%). The high expansion aspiration rate (98.2%) and willingness to take loans (76.0%) suggest business confidence and growth orientation. The integration into formal financial systems (100% bank accounts) strengthens institutional sustainability.

However, ongoing working capital constraints (35.2%) may influence future scaling if access to affordable credit remains limited. While core livelihoods appear stable, strengthening credit facilitation could further secure long-term sustainability.

Overall OECD-DAC Summary

The project demonstrates high relevance, strong coherence with SDGs and national priorities, strong effectiveness in achieving economic graduation, efficient implementation, transformational impact, and highly promising sustainability. The evidence suggests that the intervention successfully enabled ultra-poor women to transition from subsistence vulnerability to structured economic participation with forward-looking growth potential.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Extreme poverty in India continues to affect millions of households, even after many years of economic growth and government welfare project. The ultra-poor, who survive on very low incomes and lack productive assets, skills, and social support, have largely remained excluded from the benefits of development. These households face several interconnected challenges, including irregular daily-wage work, food insecurity, exclusion from formal financial systems, a lack of employable skills, and weak social networks that could help them improve their livelihoods.

In Udham Singh Nagar district of Uttarakhand, a large number of ultra-poor households survive on highly insecure livelihoods with no clear pathway out of poverty. Most depend on daily wage labour in agriculture and construction, earning ₹200-₹300 per day for only 10-15 days a month, which results in monthly household incomes below ₹5,000. These households typically own no productive assets, have no savings or access to formal banking, and possess very limited education or vocational skills. Women, especially widows and single mothers, face even greater vulnerability due to restricted mobility, social norms that limit women's economic participation, and the burden of being the sole earners and caregivers for their families.

Conventional welfare approaches have not been effective for this ultra-poor group. Food subsidies help reduce hunger but do not build income-generating capacity. Cash transfers provide short-term relief but are quickly spent when households have no assets to invest in. Microcredit projects assume stable income and existing business skills, which the ultra-poor lack. Similarly, Self-Help Group (SHG) models require regular savings and social confidence, conditions that ultra-poor women often cannot meet. As a result, the ultra-poor remain trapped in poverty across generations, even in areas where development is visible.

The Graduation Approach, first developed by BRAC in Bangladesh and later adapted in many countries, offers a proven alternative to these limitations. This approach recognises that ultra-poor households need multiple forms of support simultaneously. It combines productive asset grants to overcome capital shortages, temporary consumption support to prevent distress sales of assets during enterprise setup, intensive training to build business skills, regular mentoring to sustain motivation and solve problems, financial literacy to develop savings habits, and social linkages to connect households with government schemes and community support systems.

Bandhan, one of India's largest microfinance institutions with a strong rural presence, has implemented the Graduation Approach in several Indian states since 2006. Bandhan's experience has shown that ultra-poor women can successfully move from daily wage labour to sustainable self-employment when they receive properly sequenced support. Independent evaluations of Bandhan's programmes have reported graduation rates above 95.0%, with beneficiaries achieving stable incomes, increased assets, food security, and sustained exits from poverty even 5 years after programme completion.

In this context, Bajaj Auto Ltd., as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, partnered with Bandhan-Konnagar to implement the Targeting the Hard-core Poor (THP) Programme in Udham Singh Nagar district.

The project was designed to test and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Graduation Approach in the socio-economic conditions of Uttarakhand and to create sustainable livelihoods for 3,000 ultra-poor women across 480 villages in seven blocks.

The need for this project was based on the understanding that, without comprehensive and sequenced support, ultra-poor households would continue to remain trapped in poverty despite nearby economic opportunities. The project was intended to show that targeted graduation interventions can break intergenerational poverty more effectively than traditional welfare approaches and enable ultra-poor women and their families to achieve lasting economic stability.

Bajaj Auto Limited had funded the project till 31st March 2022 and from thereon as a strategic alignment, the project was taken over by Bajaj Finserv Limited.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The Targeting the Hard-core Poor Programme pursued the following objectives:



To bring economic, social, and aspirational change in the lives of ultra-poor and marginalised women.



To enable beneficiaries to achieve sustainable livelihood security through enterprise development.



To support beneficiaries in achieving minimum income and asset thresholds for graduation.



To promote financial inclusion through access to banking and social security systems.



To improve household-level well-being, including food security, housing, sanitation, and education.



To facilitate beneficiaries' graduation into mainstream economic and social systems.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Targeting the Hard-core Poor by Developing Them as Entrepreneurs



Implementing Agency

Bandhan Konnagar



Location

7 blocks of Udham Singh Nagar district, Uttarakhand (Kichha, Rudrapur, Bajpur, Gadarpur, Sitarganj, Kashipur, Dineshpur)



Total no. of Beneficiaries

3000 ultra poor women and their families



Target Beneficiaries

Ultra poor women and their dependent families



Primary Programs

Confidence Building and Enterprise Development (CB&ED) training, Quarterly refresher trainings, assets transfer, mentoring support, linkages to govt. schemes



**STAFF CAPACITY
BUILDING TRAINING**

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

The programme followed a sequenced implementation model that included the following key activities:



Ultra-poor women were identified and selected through a participatory community-based targeting process.



Adarsha Sahaya Committees (ADSCs) were formed at the village level to facilitate mobilisation and local monitoring.



Beneficiaries received Confidence Building and Enterprise Development (CB&ED) training to strengthen entrepreneurial skills and self-belief.



Productive assets were transferred for farm and non-farm enterprises based on individual livelihood planning.



Temporary consumption support was provided during the enterprise start-up phase to prevent distress sales of assets.



Weekly mentoring was conducted through group meetings and home visits to provide ongoing business guidance



Quarterly refresher trainings were organised to address operational challenges and reinforce enterprise management practices.



Financial literacy sessions were conducted, and beneficiaries were supported in opening bank accounts and adopting savings practices.



Linkages were facilitated with government social security schemes and welfare services.



Health and education awareness sessions were conducted to improve household-level well-being.



Graduation planning was undertaken to prepare beneficiaries for sustainable exit from programme support.

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

Year	October 2021 - March 2022	April 2022 - September 2022	Oct 2022 - March 2023	April 2023 - September 2023
Activities				
Beneficiary Identification & Selection				
Confidence Building & Enterprise Development (CB&ED) Training - 3 days				
Productive Asset Grants				
Consumption Support				
Weekly mentoring				
Quarterly refresher training				
Financial literacy sessions				
Linkages with government social security schemes				
Health & education awareness sessions				
Graduation planning				

BANDHAN

Targeting the Hardcore Poor (THP) Program

Implemented by : Bandhan - Konyak

Supported by : Bajaj Auto Ltd.

Elteeraj Branch, Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand

ATI DARIDRA SAHAYAK
COMMITTEE FORMATION MEETING

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This impact assessment study pursued the following objectives:



To assess the programme's impact on beneficiaries' income, enterprise assets, skills, financial inclusion, and overall well-being (including food security, housing, and children's needs).



To capture stakeholder perspectives (beneficiaries, Panchayat members, community members, and programme staff) on programme quality, usefulness, and outcomes.



To evaluate the effectiveness of key programme components, asset support, consumption support, training, mentoring, and financial literacy, and the changes observed from baseline to impact in confidence, capabilities, business practices, and entrepreneurial orientation.



To examine enterprise sustainability, including operational consistency, profitability, asset retention, and future expansion plans.



To analyse initial challenges faced by beneficiaries, how the programme addressed them, and any remaining gaps.



To determine the extent to which beneficiaries achieved graduation criteria, including income above ₹6,000 per month, enterprise assets above ₹23,000, access to two full meals daily, adequate housing and sanitation, and linkages to social security schemes.



To assess overall performance using OECD-DAC criteria (Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability) and generate lessons and recommendations for programme strengthening and scale-up.

USE OF MIXED-METHOD APPROACH

The study employed a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques:

- Quantitative survey of 341 beneficiaries using structured questionnaires to measure programme outputs, outcomes, and graduation indicators.
- Qualitative case studies of four beneficiaries (Nasreen Jahan, Rajani Devi, Rajrani, Sahana) to document detailed livelihood trajectories, household transformations, and lived experiences of poverty graduation.
- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Panchayat officials (Gram Pradhan, Deputy Head, Former Head, Ward Members) to understand community-level perspectives on programme implementation and impact.
- Key Informant Interviews with programme trainers (Bharat Pandit, Asgar Seikh) to assess training effectiveness, mentoring quality, and beneficiary skill development patterns.
- Review of programme documentation, including project completion report, MoU, beneficiary registers, training records, and monitoring data, to validate survey findings and contextualise results.
- Triangulation of quantitative survey data with qualitative narratives and programme documents to ensure validity, cross-verify findings, and generate a comprehensive impact assessment.

USE OF QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Qualitative data collection employed the following methods:

- In-Depth Case Studies: Detailed life history interviews with four beneficiaries documenting pre-programme poverty conditions, programme participation experiences, enterprise establishment processes, income and asset trajectories,

household transformations, and future aspirations. Case studies captured beneficiary voices, motivations, challenges, and subjective assessments of programme value.

- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Panchayat Officials: Semi-structured interviews with four Panchayat representatives (Gram Pradhan, Deputy Head, Former Head, Ward Member) covering: community mobilisation processes, beneficiary selection experiences, observed changes in beneficiaries, community perceptions of programme, and recommendations for improvement.
- Key Informant Interviews with Programme Trainers: Semi-structured interviews with two trainers covering: training content and delivery methods, beneficiary engagement and learning patterns, mentoring approaches and frequency, observed skill development and behavioural changes, income and asset growth patterns, and sustainability assessments.
- Document Review: Analysis of project completion report, MoU, training curricula, beneficiary databases, and monitoring records to understand programme design, implementation fidelity, coverage statistics, and reported outcomes.
- Field Observations: Direct observation of enterprise operations, household living conditions, and community dynamics during data collection visits to triangulate interview and survey data with ground realities.

APPLICATION OF QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Quantitative data collection employed a structured survey methodology:

Structured Questionnaire Survey: Administration of a standardised questionnaire to 341 beneficiaries covering 59 indicators across demographic profile, baseline economic conditions, programme participation, enterprise

establishment, income and assets, business practices, mentoring quality, savings behaviour, challenges, current outcomes, and future aspirations.

- Perception and Satisfaction Measures: Likert-scale and categorical questions assessing training usefulness, mentoring quality, challenge mitigation effectiveness, and subjective self-reliance perceptions.
- Multiple Response Questions: Capturing beneficiaries' multiple livelihood goals, training types attended, challenges faced, and assets created to allow comprehensive outcome profiling.
- Data Quality Protocols: Training of enumerators, pre-testing of questionnaire, spot-checks during data collection, and data validation during entry to ensure accuracy and consistency.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

To enhance the credibility and robustness of findings, triangulation was systematically applied. Data were collected from multiple sources, including beneficiary surveys, key informant interviews with Panchayat officials and trainers, and programme documentation. A combination of research tools, such as structured questionnaires, interviews, field observations, and document review, was used to cross-verify information. This approach minimised bias and strengthened the reliability of impact conclusions.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The study adopted a mixed sampling strategy combining random and purposive techniques. For the quantitative component, participants were selected through systematic random sampling, with every 9th beneficiary chosen from the database to achieve representation across project blocks. This sampling approach

ensured statistical validity at the 95.0% confidence level with a $\pm 5.0\%$ margin of error.

For qualitative data collection, purposive sampling was employed to select key informants based on their roles, experience, and direct involvement in programme delivery. This included Panchayat officials and programme trainers from the implementing agency. Case study subjects were purposively selected to illustrate varied livelihood trajectories, household challenges overcome, and transformations achieved through the programme.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: OECD-DAC CRITERIA

The research study applied the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring alignment with globally accepted standards and norms. This framework provided a robust, consistent method for evaluating the project's impact, thereby bolstering the credibility and relevance of the research findings. The six evaluation criteria were:



OECD-DAC EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

RELEVANCE Is the intervention doing the right things?	COHERENCE How well does the intervention fit?
EFFECTIVENESS Is the intervention achieving its objectives?	EFFICIENCY How well are resources being used?
IMPACT What difference does the intervention make?	SUSTAINABILITY Will the benefits last?

Source: OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation

RESEARCH DESIGN



Research Design

Descriptive, Cross-sectional



Sampling technique

Random and Purposive Sampling



Sample size

341



Qualitative method used





Semi-structured interviews, testimonials and focus group discussion (FGD) with beneficiaries along with key stakeholders.

The study employed a cross-sectional, post-programme evaluation design conducted in October-November 2023, immediately after programme completion. A retrospective baseline was used to enable before-and-after

comparisons. Quantitative data were collected through a survey of 341 beneficiaries (11.4% of 3,000), ensuring statistical validity. Qualitative methods included case studies, semi-structured interviews, and field observations with beneficiaries, Panchayat officials, and trainers. Comparative analysis of baseline and endline data, triangulation across multiple sources, and application of the OECD-DAC framework strengthened the reliability and comprehensiveness of findings.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The following stakeholders were engaged during the assessment:

- 
Primary Beneficiaries: 3,000 ultra-poor women who participated in the programme as direct recipients of assets, training, and support services; 341 surveyed for primary data collection
- 
Beneficiary Households: Family members of primary beneficiaries (estimated 12,000-15,000 individuals) who experienced indirect benefits, including improved food security, housing, and child welfare
- 
Gram Panchayat Officials: Elected representatives, including Gram Pradhans, Deputy Heads, Ward Members, and former office-bearers who facilitated beneficiary mobilisation and observed community-level changes; four officials interviewed
- 
Programme Trainers/Field Staff: Bandhan-Konnagar employees responsible for CB&ED training delivery, refresher training facilitation, weekly mentoring, and beneficiary monitoring; two trainers interviewed in detail

- » Ati Daridra Sahayak Committee (ADSC)
Members: Village-level committees formed to provide peer support, mobilisation assistance, and programme sustainability; perspectives captured through beneficiary and Panchayat interviews
- » Bandhan-Konnagar Management: Programme implementation staff, including branch managers, state-level coordinators, and senior management who designed and supervised programme delivery
- » Community Members (Non-Beneficiaries): Neighbouring households, local shopkeepers, and community leaders who observed programme implementation and beneficiary transformations; perspectives captured indirectly through Panchayat and trainer interviews
- » Funding Partners: Bajaj Auto Ltd. and Bajaj Finserv Ltd. as CSR funders with interest in programme outcomes, accountability, and replication potential

STUDY TOOLS

The assessment used multiple data collection tools to capture different aspects of programme implementation and impact. All tools were developed with Bandhan-Konnagar staff, pre-tested with non-sample beneficiaries, and refined to ensure clarity, cultural fit, and good data quality.

Tools used:

- » **Beneficiary Survey Questionnaire (59 questions):**
Covered profile, pre-intervention, participation, enterprise setup, asset support, business operations, mentoring/savings, challenges, and outcomes. Mostly closed-ended with
- » some rating scales and a few open questions.
- » **Case Study Interview Guide:**
In-depth life history interviews on pre-programme situation, programme experience, enterprise journey, income/assets/savings changes, challenges, confidence/social change, and future plans.
- » **Panchayat KII Guide:**
Interviews with Panchayat members on mobilisation, community feedback, observed changes, challenges, social security linkages, and suggestions.
- » **Trainer KII Guide:**
Interviews with trainers on training delivery, mentoring, learning patterns, skill and behaviour change, sustainability, strengths/gaps, and recommendations
- » **Document Review Checklist:**
Review of completion report, MoU, beneficiary records, training and monitoring data to validate and compare findings.
- » **Observation Protocol:**
Household/enterprise observations on business activity, living conditions, family dynamics, and local environment; recorded through notes and photos (with consent).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- » **Informed consent:** Purpose and process were explained; participation was voluntary, and people could withdraw at any time. Verbal consent was taken before all interviews
- » **Confidentiality:** Survey data were anonymised. Case studies used pseudonyms in drafts; real names were used only with clear consent. Data and recordings were stored securely with limited access.
- » **Do no harm:** Sensitive/traumatic questions were avoided. Enumerators were trained to pause/stop if anyone felt distressed. No incentives were given.
- » **Respect and dignity:** Interviews were scheduled at participants' convenience and preferred location, with cultural norms respected.
- » **Data protection:** Data was kept in password-protected files; only anonymised findings were shared publicly. Raw recordings/transcripts will be destroyed after reporting.
- » **Fair reporting:** Findings were reported honestly, including both positives and gaps; quotes were used carefully and in context.



**BENEFICIARY ENTERPRISE
SELECTION**

05. KEY FINDINGS

This chapter presents the comprehensive findings from the impact assessment of the Bandhan-Bajaj Targeting the Hard-core Poor Programme, synthesising data from 341 beneficiary surveys (11.4% sample of the universe), along with qualitative case studies and key informant interviews with Panchayat representatives and programme trainers. The findings are organised thematically to trace beneficiaries' journey from baseline poverty conditions through programme participation to graduation outcomes and future aspirations.

The assessment examines ten interconnected dimensions of programme impact: (1) demographic and household profiles; (2) pre-program living conditions; (3) pre-program individual economic status; (4) programme participation and training engagement; (5) enterprise initiation and asset utilisation; (6) enterprise performance and operations; (7) mentoring and savings behaviour; (8) challenges faced and addressed; and (9) current outcomes, graduation status, and (10) future plans. Each thematic area integrates quantitative survey data with qualitative insights from beneficiaries, community stakeholders, and programme implementers to provide a multi-dimensional understanding of programme processes and impacts.

This chapter uses a triangulation approach, cross-checking survey data with case studies, stakeholder feedback, and field observations to ensure accuracy and depth.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOUSEHOLD PROFILE

This section presents the demographic and household characteristics of programme beneficiaries, establishing the profile of the ultra-poor population targeted by the intervention. Understanding beneficiary demographics is critical for assessing programme relevance, identifying vulnerability factors, and contextualising subsequent findings on economic transformation and poverty graduation.

CHART 1: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFICIARIES (N=341)

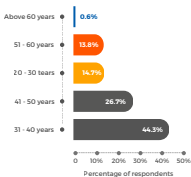


Chart 1 indicates that the beneficiary population is predominantly in productive age ranges, with 44.3% aged 31-40 years, followed by 26.7% aged 41-50 years. Younger beneficiaries aged 20-30 years comprise 14.7%, while those aged 51-60 years comprise 13.8%. Only 0.6% of beneficiaries are aged 60 or older. This age distribution indicates that the programme successfully targeted women in their prime working years who possess the physical capacity and motivation for entrepreneurship but lack the capital, skills, and opportunities to escape poverty through wage labour alone.

“ At my age, I thought I had no future, but the training gave me confidence that I could still build something. I have three children to support and no one else to help.

- **Nasreen Jahan (38 years, Adwa, Bajpur)** ”

“ After my divorce, I had nothing. This programme saw me as someone who could succeed.

- **Similarly, Rajani Devi (41 years, Bandiya, Rudrapur)** ”

Field observations showed that beneficiaries aged 31-50 demonstrated strong operational commitment, with most enterprises running 6-7 days per week. The concentration in this productive age group indicates strong potential for sustained livelihood gains and long-term returns on programme investment.

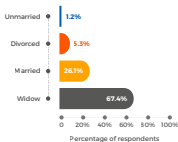
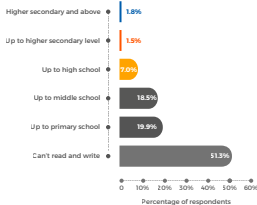
CHART 2: MARITAL STATUS OF BENEFICIARIES(N=341)


Chart 2 reveals that the overwhelming majority of beneficiaries, 67.4%, are widows, representing the programme's deliberate focus on women who lost their primary household breadwinners and face sole responsibility for family survival. An additional 26.1% are married, 5.3% are divorced, and 1.2% are unmarried. This marital status distribution underscores the programme's targeting precision: widowed and divorced women face compounded economic vulnerability due to social stigma, limited mobility, family opposition to income-generating activities, and complete household responsibility without partner support.

“ Widowed women have the most difficult situation. Society does not always support them, and they have to manage everything alone: food, children's education, and household expenses.

- Tahir Husain (Former Panchayat Head, Nandpur)


CHART 3: EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF BENEFICIARIES (N=341)


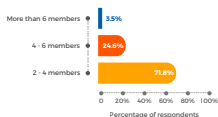
The survey highlights severe educational deprivation among beneficiaries: 51.3% were illiterate, 19.9% had primary education, and 18.5% had completed middle school, as shown in Chart 3. Only 7.0% completed high school, 1.5% reached higher secondary, and 1.8% had education beyond that. Overall, 89.7% lacked secondary education, indicating strong marginalisation from formal learning and limited access to formal employment.

Despite this, the programme successfully built enterprise capacity among women with low literacy levels. Even though 51.3% were illiterate, 66.3% adopted business record-keeping practices, and 100% achieved banking integration, demonstrating that practical training and mentoring can effectively build entrepreneurial skills regardless of formal education levels.

“ Many beneficiaries could not read or write when they joined. We taught them through practical demonstrations, visual materials, and repeated practice. Now they can calculate profits, negotiate with suppliers, and manage money effectively.

- Bharat Pandit and Asgar Seikh
(trainers)

CHART 4: HOUSEHOLD SIZE DISTRIBUTION (N=341)



According to Chart 4, 71.8% of beneficiary households have 2-4 members, 24.6% have 4-6 members, and 3.5% have more than 6 members. This distribution indicates that most beneficiary households are nuclear or small joint families rather than large extended households. The predominance of smaller households has both positive and negative implications: smaller families require less income for subsistence, but also have fewer potential earners to diversify household income sources.

PRE INTERVENTION STATUS

HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC AND LIVING CONDITIONS PRE-INTERVENTION

This section documents the pre-programme economic and living conditions of beneficiary households, establishing the depth of poverty and multi-dimensional deprivation that characterised beneficiaries' baseline status.

CHART 5: PRIMARY OCCUPATION OF HOUSEHOLD (PRE-INTERVENTION) (N=341)

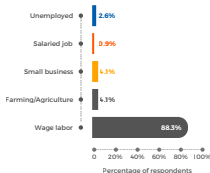


Chart 5 indicates that the overwhelming majority of beneficiary households (88.3%) depended on wage labour as their primary occupation at baseline, with only 4.1% engaged in farming/agriculture, 4.1% in small business, 0.9% in salaried jobs, and 2.6% (n=9) unemployed. This occupational profile reveals extreme economic precarity. Wage labour in rural Uttarakhand typically involves irregular agricultural or construction work at ₹200-₹300 per day for 10-15 days monthly, yielding insufficient and unstable household income. Qualitative evidence illustrates the precarity of wage labour dependence.

“ Work was available for 10-15 days in a month at the rate of ₹200-₹300 per day. Some months, we didn't even have that. There was no certainty about tomorrow's food.

- Saroj (41, Gadarpur)

“ As a daily wage labourer, if I didn't work, there was no income. If I were sick or it rained, my family went hungry.

- Sanjeeta (38, Gadarpur)

The high dependence on wage labour (88.3%) underscores the appropriateness of programme targeting. These households required a comprehensive intervention to address limited capital, skill gaps, and social barriers to transition out of poverty.

The program team confirmed that beneficiaries were selected through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises covering 72,639 households across 480 villages, using poverty scorecards to identify the poorest households characterised by daily labour dependence, food insecurity, and asset poverty.

CHART 6: NUMBER OF EARNING MEMBERS PER HOUSEHOLD (PRE-INTERVENTION) (N=341)

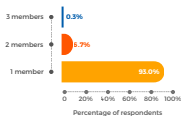


Chart 6 reveals extreme income concentration in the pre-intervention period, with 93.0% of households having only one earning member, 6.7% having two earning members, and 0.3% having three earning members. This dominance of single-earner households, combined with 88.3% dependence on wage labour, created acute economic vulnerability. When the sole earner's daily wage work was irregular or interrupted due to illness, adverse weather conditions, or lack of employment opportunities, the entire household faced an immediate risk to its survival and basic needs.



INTERACTION WITH THE BENEFICIARY DURING THE FIELD VISIT

CHART 7: APPROXIMATE MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME (PRE-INTERVENTION) (N=341)

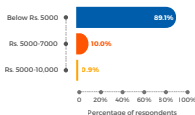


Chart 7 indicates that 89.1% of households earned below ₹5,000 per month, 10.0% earned between ₹5,000 and ₹7,000, and 0.9% earned between ₹7,000 and ₹10,000. This distribution reflects a high concentration of households in the lowest income bracket before programme participation.

At this level, household expenditure was largely directed toward immediate consumption needs, particularly food, with limited or no capacity for savings, asset accumulation, healthcare, housing improvements, or investment in children's education.

The income profile suggests that beneficiary households were experiencing acute economic vulnerability and had minimal resilience against financial shocks. The absence of surplus income significantly constrained opportunities for productive investment or upward economic mobility.

“ With ₹1,800 per month, we could barely afford two meals some days. There was no money for clothes, medicine, or children's school supplies. We lived hand-to-mouth with no hope of improvement.

- Sahana (40, Sitarganj)

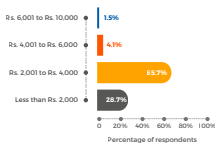


CHART 8: PRIMARY OCCUPATION OF INDIVIDUAL BENEFICIARY (PRE-INTERVENTION) (N=341)



Chart 8 reveals that 94.1% of individual beneficiaries were engaged in daily wage labour at baseline, with only 4.7% in farming/agriculture, 0.6% as shopkeepers, and 0.6% unemployed. This occupational distribution closely mirrors the household-level pattern (88.3% wage labour), indicating that beneficiaries themselves were the primary household earners engaged in precarious daily labour rather than being secondary earners in households with more stable primary breadwinners.

CHART 9: APPROXIMATE MONTHLY INDIVIDUAL INCOME (PRE-INTERVENTION) (N=341)



As per Chart 9, 28.7% of beneficiaries earned less than ₹2,000 monthly at baseline, while 65.7% earned ₹2,001-₹4,000, 4.1% earned ₹4,001-₹6,000, 1.5% earned ₹6,001-₹10,000, and 0.9% earned ₹10,001 and above.

This distribution shows that 94.4% of beneficiaries earned ₹4,000 or less per month, insufficient for household survival and leaving no surplus for savings, asset purchases, or investment.

“Earlier, I used to earn around ₹1,500 per month as a labourer. The income could only provide minimum support for my family's basic needs, and we had very limited options to improve our situation.”

- Aasha Devi (35, Gadarpur)

Field observations documented that beneficiaries at these income levels lacked any financial buffer. All earnings were immediately spent on food, with chronic indebtedness to local moneylenders for medical emergencies or festival expenses. The absence of savings and productive assets reflected the income insufficiency that trapped beneficiaries in poverty.

CHART 10: HOUSING CONDITION (PRE-INTERVENTION) (N=341)

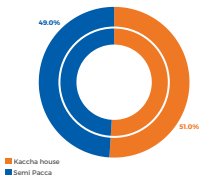


Chart 10 indicates that in the pre-intervention period, 51.0% of households lived in kaccha houses that were neither safe nor weather-resistant.

Only 49.0% reported living in semi-pucca houses that were moderately safe and provided some protection against adverse weather conditions. This highlights the high level of housing vulnerability among beneficiaries before the programme.

CHART 11: ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER (PRE-INTERVENTION) (N=341)

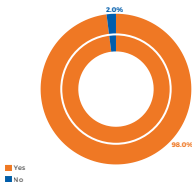


Chart 11 indicates that access to safe drinking water was already high before programme participation, with 98.0% of households reporting availability and only 2.0% lacking access. This suggests that basic water access was not a major constraint for the majority of beneficiaries before the intervention.

Field observations confirmed that water access generally relied on communal hand pumps or tube wells, requiring physical effort to draw and carry water to households rather than having individual household connections. Panchayat officials noted that government initiatives, such as the Jal Jeevan Mission, had strengthened rural water infrastructure, contributing to the high level of access observed before the programme.

CHART 12: HOUSEHOLD SANITATION FACILITIES (PRE-INTERVENTION) (N=341)

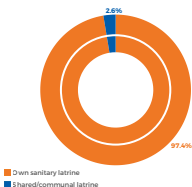


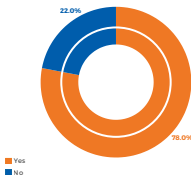
Chart 12 reveals that 97.4% of beneficiaries had access to their own sanitary latrines before intervention, while 2.6% relied on shared/communal latrines. Swachh Bharat Mission provided free or heavily subsidised latrine construction for Below Poverty Line (BPL) households, enabling even the poorest families to access sanitation infrastructure. Ultra-poor households can have toilets while remaining in extreme poverty due to income insufficiency, food insecurity, and lack of productive assets.

“Through the Swachh Bharat Mission, most families had already received toilets. However, having sanitation infrastructure did not guarantee stable income or food security. Our programme focused on income generation because that was the missing link; basic infrastructure existed, but sustainable livelihoods did not.

- Bharat Pandit (Trainer)



CHART 13: SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN (AGE 6-16) BEFORE INTERVENTION (N=341)



According to Chart 13, in the pre-intervention period, 78.0% of beneficiary households with school-age children reported that their children attended school, while 22.0% reported that their children did not attend school. Although the majority were enrolled, over one-fifth of children were out of school due to poverty-related constraints, such as the inability to afford school materials and the need to help with household work.

As noted by Mohammad Jakif (Deputy Head, Nakaha Panchayat), “Before the programme, some families couldn’t send children to school because they needed them to help with work or couldn’t afford basic school items. Education seemed like a luxury when food was uncertain.



BENEFICIARIES DURING THE FIELD STUDY

POST INTERVENTION

PROJECT ENGAGEMENT AND TRAINING PARTICIPATION

This section examines beneficiaries' pathways into the programme and their participation in training interventions that formed the foundation for entrepreneurial capability building. Understanding mobilisation channels, training attendance patterns, and perceived training usefulness is essential for assessing programme delivery effectiveness and the quality of beneficiary engagement.

CHART 14: SOURCE OF PROJECT AWARENESS (N=341)

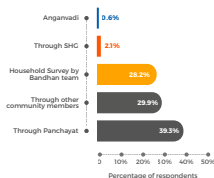


Chart 14 indicates that the largest proportion of beneficiaries came into contact with the Bandhan team through Panchayats (39.3%), highlighting the key role of local governance institutions in programme mobilisation. This was followed by referrals through other community members (29.9%) and household surveys conducted by the programme team (28.2%), reflecting strong community-based outreach and direct identification efforts.

The prominence of Panchayat officials (39.3%) as primary mobilisers reflects the programme's strategic partnership with local governance institutions.

Panchayat officials possess comprehensive knowledge of village poverty patterns, household compositions, and social dynamics, enabling targeted identification of the ultra-poor. Their involvement also generated community legitimacy, as beneficiary selections endorsed by elected representatives faced less contestation than those made by external organisations.

Qualitative evidence confirms the centrality of the Panchayat in mobilisation. Mohammad Jakif (Deputy Panchayat Head, Nakaha) explained: "We contacted people to organise community meetings to cooperate in the programme. We know our village families well, so we could identify those who needed help most urgently." Similarly, Ravindra Gangwar (Gram Pradhan, Bhanga) noted: "I helped organise community meetings for the programme. People trust Panchayat guidance, so our involvement brought credibility."

CHART 15: ATTENDANCE IN CONFIDENCE BUILDING & ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING (N=341)

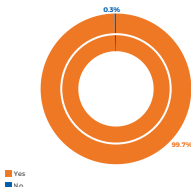


Chart 15 reveals near-universal training attendance: 99.7% of beneficiaries participated in Confidence Building & Enterprise Development (CB&ED) training.

This exceptional attendance rate indicates strong beneficiary motivation, effective scheduling aligned with women's availability, and programme credibility established during mobilisation. The CB&ED training, conducted over three days at programme entry, aimed to build entrepreneurial confidence, introduce basic business concepts, and prepare beneficiaries to select and manage micro-enterprises.

Trainers' observations highlighted the transformational impact of CB&ED training. Bharat Pandit and Asgar Seikh explained: "The CB&ED training was crucial for changing mindsets. Women who spent their lives as labourers didn't believe they could run businesses. We used role-playing, success stories from other beneficiaries, and practical exercises to build their confidence step by step. By the third day, they began imagining themselves as entrepreneurs."

Field observations documented CB&ED training content by reviewing training curricula and attendance registers. Sessions covered enterprise selection (identifying viable businesses based on local demand, beneficiary skills, and capital requirements), risk awareness (understanding common business challenges), self-belief building (recognising capabilities and overcoming fear of failure), and basic business planning (estimating costs, pricing products, managing inventory), the training combined classroom instruction with group discussions, fostering peer learning and a social support network.

CHART 16: ATTENDANCE IN QUARTERLY REFRESHER TRAININGS (N=341)



According to Chart 16, 100% of beneficiaries attended quarterly refresher training sessions conducted throughout the 24-month programme period. A total of four refresher sessions were held, covering asset management, business skills (pricing, customer relations, inventory), financial literacy, savings discipline, health awareness, and linkages to social security schemes. Universal attendance reflects strong beneficiary engagement and sustained commitment to capacity building.

This is particularly significant, as the training sessions were conducted after beneficiaries had started their enterprises, requiring time away from income-generating activities. Their continued participation indicates recognition of the long-term value of skill strengthening.

“ The first refresher focused on asset management, the second on customer relations and pricing, the third on financial literacy and savings, and the fourth on graduation preparation and business sustainability.

- Asgar Seikh (trainer)



Field observations noted that sessions were held in local community centres and scheduled at convenient times, ensuring accessibility and explaining the universal participation.

CHART 17: BENEFICIARIES' ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL TRAINING USEFULNESS (N=341)

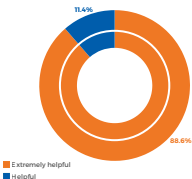


Chart 17 shows overwhelmingly positive beneficiary assessments of training quality, with 88.6% rating it "extremely helpful" and 11.6% rating it "helpful." This strong endorsement validates programme training design, delivery effectiveness, and relevance to beneficiaries' actual entrepreneurial challenges. The combination of high attendance (99.7% CB&ED, 100% refresher) and high satisfaction indicates exceptional training quality.

“ The training taught us customer handling-how to talk to customers respectfully, how to negotiate prices without losing profit. These skills I use every single day.

The respondents stated during group interaction ”

“ Training taught me pricing and managing money, how to calculate profit, how to know if my business is growing or losing. Without this knowledge, I would have failed.

-Rajani Devi ”

Field observations identified training effectiveness factors through direct observation of training sessions and interviews with trainers. Trainers employed participatory methods (role-plays, group exercises, peer learning) rather than lecture-only approaches, making content accessible to illiterate beneficiaries. The use of visual materials (pictures, product samples, demonstrations) reinforced verbal instruction. Trainers also provided individualised support, addressing specific questions about beneficiaries' chosen enterprises.

“ This programme is very good. People have learned a lot from it, and similar programmes should be implemented in every village." His feedback reinforces beneficiaries' positive experiences and shows that the training strengthened both women's skills and the community's trust in their entrepreneurial abilities.

-Sandeep Mandal (Ward Member, Khanpur). ”

ENTERPRISE INITIATION, SELECTION AND MOTIVATION

This section examines beneficiaries' enterprise establishment patterns, including initiation rates and enterprise type selection. Understanding what types of businesses beneficiaries chose and why illuminates the decision-making autonomy and market awareness that emerged through training interventions, as well as the programme's effectiveness in enabling diverse livelihood pathways suited to individual capabilities and local market conditions.

CHART 18: WHETHER BENEFICIARY STARTED AN ENTERPRISE (N=341)

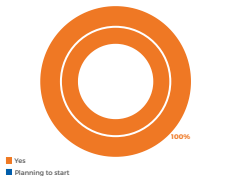


Chart 18 indicates 100% of beneficiaries successfully started enterprises following CB&ED training and asset transfer. This universal enterprise initiation rate demonstrates exceptional programme effectiveness in converting training participants into active entrepreneurs. The fact that 100% of beneficiaries previously engaged exclusively in wage labour with zero entrepreneurial experience successfully transitioned to business ownership represents a fundamental occupational transformation.

The universal initiation rate is particularly significant given the multiple barriers beneficiaries faced:

lack of business experience, illiteracy, social constraints on women's economic activity, and internalised self-doubt accumulated over decades of economic subordination.

“ By joining this programme, we have become self-reliant. Our economic condition has become stronger. I never imagined I could run my own shop, but the training and support gave me the courage to try.

-Sahana (40, Sitarganj)

Field observations documented that enterprise initiation typically occurred within 2-4 weeks after CB&ED training completion and asset receipt. Beneficiaries used this period to procure inventory (for trading enterprises), set up physical spaces (arranging shops or work areas), and begin customer outreach. The rapid transition from training to operations indicates that beneficiaries possessed immediate knowledge of market demand and confidence to commence business activities.



DURING BENEFICIARY ENTERPRISE SELECTION

ASSET SUPPORT, CONSUMPTION SUPPORT AND UTILISATION

This section examines the productive asset grants and consumption support that underpinned beneficiaries' enterprises. It analyses asset value, procurement, and utilisation to understand how capital support enabled ultra-poor women to transition from wage labourers to business owners. It also reviews how consumption support helped prevent distressed asset sales during the early stages of enterprise development.

CHART 19: VALUE OF ASSETS RECEIVED AT PROGRAMME ENTRY (N=341)

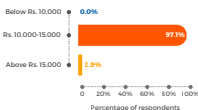


Chart 19 indicates 100% of beneficiaries received productive asset grants, confirming universal programme coverage and strong implementation effectiveness. For women who previously had no productive assets and limited access to formal credit, these grants represented their first opportunity to own income-generating capital.

Reported asset values ranged from ₹10,775 to ₹18,000, depending on enterprise requirements. However, 97.1% of beneficiaries received assets valued between ₹10,001 and ₹15,000, reflecting the programme's intended grant design. A smaller proportion reported asset values above ₹15,000 (2.9%). The concentration of grants within the ₹10,001-₹15,000 range indicates that this level of capital was generally sufficient to initiate small businesses in rural and peri-urban Uttarakhand. Beneficiaries used the support to establish enterprises, including grocery shops, vegetable stalls, and tailoring units.

Lower-value grants were typically associated with smaller or partial business setups.

Field observations further indicated that the asset transfer process followed structured quality controls. Beneficiaries selected enterprises during CB&ED training; field staff verified feasibility and capital needs; assets were procured through approved vendors or reimbursed upon self-procurement; and all transfers were formally documented with beneficiary signatures. This systematic process minimised misuse while maintaining beneficiary choice in enterprise selection.



We worked with CSC centres and Pragya centres to procure assets. For livestock enterprises, we connected beneficiaries with reliable animal sellers. For trading enterprises, we helped them purchase inventory from wholesale markets. Some beneficiaries wanted to choose their own suppliers, which we supported; they procured, and we reimbursed after verification.

-Trainer Bharat Pandit



PROJECT STAFF CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING

“ TYPES OF ENTERPRISES STARTED AFTER TRAINING

The majority of respondents established grocery shops, followed by a significant number engaged in beauty products sales, tailoring, and readymade garments businesses. A smaller proportion started fast-food stalls, tea stalls, footwear or crockery shops, and vegetable/fruit carts, indicating a strong preference for retail and small-scale service enterprises that provide steady local income opportunities.

Trainer observations confirmed the enterprise selection process. Bharat Pandit explained: "During CB&ED training, we discussed different enterprise options based on local demand, beneficiary skills, and capital requirements. We encouraged women to choose businesses they felt confident managing. Some chose grocery because they understood household goods, others chose livestock because they had experience in animal rearing, and others chose vegetables because of market access. The key was their choice, not our imposition."

Field observations revealed geographic patterns in enterprise selection. Villages near urban centres (Rudrapur, Kashipur) had higher concentrations of grocery stores and cosmetics shops serving peri-urban demand. Remote villages showed more livestock and agricultural trading enterprises aligned with rural economic activities. This geographic appropriateness validates beneficiaries' market awareness and entrepreneurial decision-making capabilities.



BENEFICIARY WITH HER ENTERPRISE

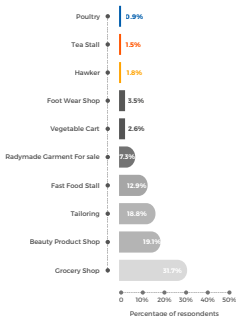
CHART 20: TYPES OF ENTERPRISES STARTED (N=341)


Chart 20 shows that most beneficiaries started grocery enterprises (31.7%), followed by beauty shops (19.1%) and tailoring (18.8%), highlighting these as the most preferred livelihood options. Smaller shares are seen in fast-food stalls (12.9%) and readymade garment shops (7.3%), while niche ventures like tea stalls, vegetable carts, footwear hawkers, and poultry each account for around 10.3%. Overall, the distribution reflects a strong move toward essential retail and service-based enterprises, with diversification into food and small-scale trade, demonstrating the programme's success in enabling sustainable, community-responsive livelihoods.

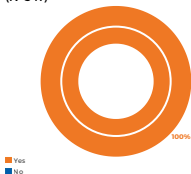
CHART 21: WHETHER BENEFICIARY RECEIVED CONSUMPTION SUPPORT (N=341)


Chart 21 confirms that 100% of beneficiaries (n=341) received consumption support, ensuring universal coverage of this critical safety net component. Each beneficiary received ₹1,400 per month for three months (₹4,200 total) during the enterprise start-up phase, when assets had been transferred but income generation had not yet stabilised. This support prevented the distress sale of productive assets and protected enterprise viability.

The universal provision reflects the Graduation Approach's recognition that asset transfers alone are insufficient if households cannot meet basic consumption needs. Consumption support enabled beneficiaries to sustain their families during the transition period, thereby reducing the risk of business failure from premature asset liquidation.



The cash support for three months was crucial. I could focus on building my business, knowing my family would eat. Without this, I would have been forced to sell my shop goods to feed my children, and the business would have failed before it started.

-Sushma Jotdar (38 years, Pulwant Nagar)



The project team further shared that payments were made via direct bank transfers (initially via cash disbursements) and verified through signed registers. The three-month duration aligned with typical micro-enterprise start-up cycles, by which time most beneficiaries began generating income.

MENTORING AND COACHING

This section examines the programme's mentoring and coaching support, which provided continuous capacity building beyond formal training sessions. It explores the duration of mentoring, key topics covered, and how these interventions strengthened beneficiaries' enterprise management and decision-making abilities.

CHART 22: DURATION OF MENTORING SUPPORT (N=341)

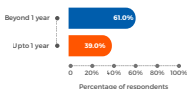


Chart 22 indicates sustained mentoring support beyond enterprise establishment, strengthening long-term business stability. A majority of beneficiaries (61.0%) reported receiving mentoring support for more than 1 year after starting their enterprises, while 39.0% received support for up to 1 year. This extended engagement suggests that the programme did not limit its role to asset transfer and initial training but ensured continued handholding during the critical growth phase.

The programme team shared that mentoring visits were conducted once a week. These regular visits helped track business progress closely and provided timely guidance whenever needed.

Most beneficiaries reported that mentoring support mainly focused on helping them select suitable enterprises, set up their businesses, procure raw materials, manage stock, and handle day-to-day operations. This reflects the programme's strong emphasis on providing practical, hands-on guidance to help women establish and sustain their enterprises effectively.

96.0% of beneficiaries rated mentoring as "very useful," 4.0% as "somewhat useful." This strong positive response indicates that mentoring provided practical and relevant support, contributing meaningfully to enterprise improvement and capacity building. Qualitative evidence highlights the practical value of mentoring support.

“ Weekly coaching addressed real-time business problems. If a beneficiary faced supplier issues, we helped negotiate. If sales were low, we discussed pricing or product variety. If family opposition emerged, we counselled on managing relationships. This practical support was critical for business survival.

As shared by one of the trainers ”

Community leaders also acknowledged the ongoing support.

“ The women consistently received support whenever they faced challenges.

-Ravindra Gangwar, Gram Pradhan of Bhanga ”

These testimonials reinforce beneficiaries' positive feedback and reflect the visibility and relevance of mentoring support at the community level.

CHART 23: CURRENT VALUE OF ENTERPRISE ASSETS (N=341)

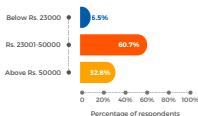


Chart 23 indicates strong asset accumulation among beneficiaries after programme participation. A significant 93.5% of respondents now report enterprise asset values above ₹23,000, demonstrating substantial growth from the initial grant levels. The largest share, 60.7%, falls within the ₹23,001-₹50,000 range, suggesting steady expansion and reinvestment in their enterprises. Notably, 32.8% of beneficiaries have assets valued above ₹50,000, reflecting higher levels of business growth and scaling.

Only 6.5% remain below the ₹23,000 threshold, indicating that very few beneficiaries have maintained asset levels close to the initial transfer value. Overall, the distribution shows clear upward movement in enterprise capital, suggesting that most beneficiaries have not only retained their assets but expanded them, reflecting improved business stability and capital accumulation over time.

ENTERPRISE OPERATIONS, BUSINESS PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE

This section examines how beneficiaries operate their enterprises daily, focusing on operational intensity, income generation, business record-keeping practices, profitability, and livelihood adequacy. Understanding these operational dimensions reveals whether enterprises function as viable, sustainable livelihoods or merely symbolic business activities generating insufficient income for poverty graduation.

CHART 24: NUMBER OF DAYS ENTERPRISE OPERATES PER WEEK (N=341)

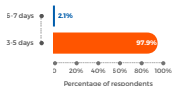


Chart 24 shows that 97.9% of beneficiaries (n=334) operate their enterprises 6-7 days per week indicating that these businesses serve as primary livelihoods rather than supplementary income sources. This high level of operational intensity reflects a strong commitment and reliance on enterprise income for household sustenance.

In discussions with the programme team, it was noted that enterprises such as grocery shops, cosmetics stores, and vegetable stalls typically require daily operations to maintain steady income and customer flow. As shared by the trainers, "Beneficiaries understand that regular operations build customer loyalty. If shops are closed irregularly, customers go elsewhere and may not return."

CHART 25: WHETHER BENEFICIARIES MAINTAIN BUSINESS RECORDS (N=341)

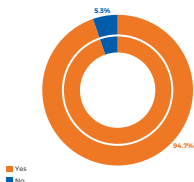


Chart 25 indicates 94.7% of beneficiaries reported maintaining business records, while only 5.3% did not. This very high record-keeping adoption rate is particularly significant given that 51.3% of beneficiaries are illiterate. The data suggests that beneficiaries either learned literacy skills through programme interventions, enlisted family members to assist with record maintenance, or developed simplified pictorial/symbolic systems suitable for illiterate business operators.

Most beneficiaries maintain basic business records to manage their enterprises. The stock register is the most commonly maintained document, followed by sales records and daily cash books.

This shows that beneficiaries are managing their businesses in an organised way and keeping track of their finances.

“ We introduced different types of records, such as daily registers, weekly registers, and basic notebooks. For women who could not read or write, we showed simple ways to track income and expenses using symbols or marks, or by asking their children for help. The focus was on helping them understand their business finances rather than maintaining perfect written records.

Trainers explained the record-keeping methods used for beneficiaries with limited literacy ”



BENEFICIARY ATTENDING GRADUATION TRAINING

IMPACT

This section examines the extent to which the programme achieved its intended economic and social outcomes. Using comparative pre-intervention and current data, the analysis evaluates changes in income levels, enterprise growth, financial inclusion, consumption security, and overall household well-being to assess progress toward poverty graduation.

CHANGES IN INCOME

CHART 26: APPROXIMATE MONTHLY INCOME OF RESPONDENT BEFORE JOINING THE PROGRAM

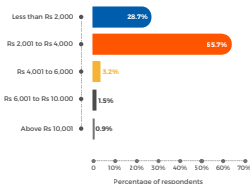
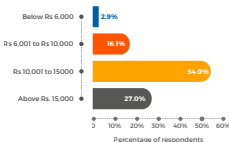


CHART 27: CURRENT INDIVIDUAL MONTHLY INCOME FROM ENTERPRISE



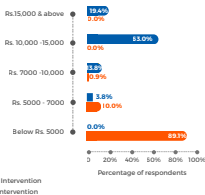
The comparison between pre-programme individual income and current enterprise income shows a substantial upward shift in earning levels.

Before joining the programme, 65.7% of respondents earned between ₹2,001 and ₹4,000 per month, and 28.7% earned less than ₹2,000 per month. Only 5.6% earned above ₹4,000, indicating that the vast majority were concentrated in very low-income brackets and dependent on irregular wage labour.

In contrast, current enterprise income levels reflect significant improvement. A majority, 54.0%, now earn between ₹10,001 and ₹15,000 per month, while 27.0% earn above ₹15,000 per month. Additionally, 16.1% fall within the ₹6,001-₹10,000 range, and only 2.9% remain below ₹6,000.

This comparison demonstrates a clear transition from low, subsistence-level earnings to higher, more stable income brackets. The sharp reduction in respondents earning below ₹4,000 and the concentration in the ₹10,000 and above categories indicate strong income growth and a successful transition from low-paid wage labour to sustainable self-employment.

CHART 28: PRE- AND POST-CHANGE IN HOUSEHOLD INCOME LEVEL (N=341)



The comparison between pre-programme and current household income levels shows a marked upward shift in economic status.

Before joining the programme, 89.1% of households earned below ₹5,000 per month, and only 0.9% reported incomes between ₹7,000 and ₹10,000. The income distribution was therefore heavily concentrated in the lowest bracket, indicating widespread income vulnerability and limited earning capacity.

In contrast, the current income distribution reflects significant improvement. No households are now reported in the below ₹5,000 category. A majority, 63.0%, earn between ₹10,000 and ₹15,000, while 19.4% earn ₹15,000 and above. Additionally, 13.8% fall within the ₹7,000-₹10,000 range, and 3.8% within the ₹5,000-₹7,000 range.

Overall, the comparison demonstrates a clear shift from low-income concentration to middle- and higher-income brackets. The substantial reduction in households in the lowest income category and the concentration in the ₹10,000 and above brackets indicate strengthened household earning capacity and improved economic stability following programme participation.

Most respondents shared that they are now able to save money regularly. Many have repaired or improved their homes, and some have purchased assets such as land, bicycles, or other items. Only a few reported not having yet created major assets, indicating overall improvement in household asset ownership.

CHART 29: WHETHER ENTERPRISE INCOME ADEQUATELY MEETS LIVELIHOOD NEEDS (N=341)

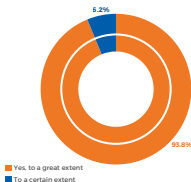


Chart 29 indicates that 93.8% of beneficiaries reported that their enterprise income meets their livelihood needs to a great extent, while 6.2% stated that it meets their livelihood needs to a certain extent. This high level of perceived adequacy suggests that enterprise earnings are sufficient to cover essential household expenses such as food, education, and healthcare, compared to the pre-intervention period when 89.1% of households earned below ₹5,000 per month.

The 93.8% adequacy rate reflects a clear shift toward improved economic security. The findings indicate that beneficiaries have moved from income instability during the pre-intervention phase to more stable and adequate livelihoods.

All respondents reported regularly saving money, reflecting improved financial stability and the capacity to generate surplus income from their enterprises.

Regarding savings channels, 91.8% deposit their savings in banks, while 4.6% use both Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and banks. Only a small proportion save at home (1.5%), use both home and formal institutions (1.5%), or invest in LIC policies (0.6%).

The dominance of bank-based savings suggests a significant shift toward formal financial systems, reduced reliance on informal methods, and strengthened financial security. Together, the findings reflect improved economic resilience and greater integration into formal financial services.

CHART 30: ACCESS TO TWO NUTRITIOUS MEALS PER DAY (FOOD SECURITY STATUS (N=341))

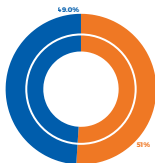


■ Yes
■ No

Chart 30 indicates that 100% of households now have access to two nutritious meals per day, reflecting full food security at the time of assessment.

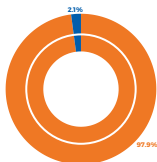
In comparison, during the pre-intervention period, 89.1% of households earned below ₹5,000 per month, limiting their consumption capacity. The current income distribution shows a clear upward shift, with the majority now earning above ₹10,000 per month. The improvement in enterprise and household income has directly contributed to strengthening food security and overall economic stability.

CHART 31: TYPE OF HOUSE



■ Kaccha house
■ Semi Pucca

CHART 32: IMPROVEMENT IN HOUSING CONDITION



■ Yes
■ No

Before the intervention, 51.0% of households lived in kaccha houses and 49.0% in semi-pucca houses, reflecting structurally vulnerable housing conditions.

Post-intervention findings indicate that 98.0% of beneficiaries reported improvements in their housing conditions after the enterprise was established. These improvements primarily included structural repairs, roof strengthening, cement flooring, wall reinforcement, toilet construction, and general house upgrading.

While not all households may have fully shifted to pucca housing, the near-universal reporting of improvements indicates that increased and stable enterprise income enabled beneficiaries to invest in safer, more durable living conditions.

Access to safe drinking water was already high before programme participation, with 98.0% of households reporting availability. This level of access remained consistent after the enterprise was established.

CHALLENGES: INITIAL, CURRENT AND EVOLVING PATTERNS

This section examines the obstacles beneficiaries faced at programme entry, the challenges they currently confront at programme completion, and how challenge patterns evolved as beneficiaries progressed from entrepreneurship novices to experienced business operators. Understanding this challenge's evolution illuminates both programme effectiveness in addressing initial barriers and the remaining constraints that require ongoing support or policy intervention for sustained livelihood security.

CHART 33: MAIN CHALLENGES DURING THE INITIAL PHASE

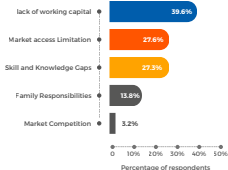
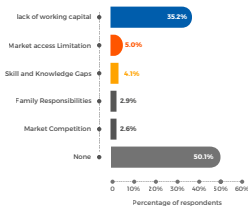


CHART 34: CURRENT CHALLENGES IN MANAGING OR EXPANDING THE ENTERPRISE



The comparison between initial and current challenges shows a significant reduction in operational constraints over time.

During the initial phase of the programme, the most reported challenge was a lack of working capital (39.6%), followed by market access limitations (27.6%) and skill and knowledge gaps (27.3%). Family responsibilities (11.7%) and market competition (3.2%) were also cited as barriers. These findings indicate that beneficiaries initially faced multiple structural and capability-related constraints while establishing their enterprises.

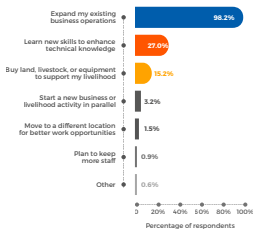
In contrast, current challenges reflect notable improvement. While lack of working capital remains a concern for 35.2% of beneficiaries, challenges related to market access (5.0%) and skill gaps (4.1%) have reduced substantially. Family-related constraints (2.9%) and market competition (2.6%) are also reported at much lower levels. Importantly, 50.1% of beneficiaries now report facing no challenges in managing or expanding their enterprises.

Overall, the comparison demonstrates that initial barriers related to skills, market linkage, and operational management have significantly declined, suggesting improved enterprise stabilisation. However, access to additional working capital remains the primary constraint to business expansion.

FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

This section presents beneficiaries' forward-looking aspirations. These indicators collectively reveal whether beneficiaries successfully transitioned from ultra-poverty to sustainable livelihoods that persist beyond the withdrawal of programme support.

CHART 35: FUTURE LIVELIHOOD ASPIRATIONS AND GROWTH PLANS (N=341)



The chart indicates strong future-oriented livelihood aspirations among beneficiaries. An overwhelming 98.2% expressed the goal of expanding their existing businesses over the next three years, reflecting confidence in enterprise sustainability and a desire for growth rather than mere subsistence.

In addition, 27.0% aim to learn new skills to strengthen their businesses, and 15.2% plan to invest in productive assets such as land or livestock. These aspirations suggest that beneficiaries are not only focused on maintaining their enterprises but are also planning for expansion, diversification, and long-term economic advancement.

Overall, the findings reflect a shift from survival-based livelihoods to growth-driven entrepreneurship, supported by increased confidence and forward-looking economic planning.



BENEFICIARY SELECTION SURVEY

06. IMPACT ACROSS DIFFERENT LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

At the individual level, the programme enabled a clear economic transition from irregular wage labour to structured self-employment. Before the intervention, 94.4% of beneficiaries earned ₹4,000 or less per month. Post-intervention, 81.0% earn above ₹10,000 per month, indicating substantial income enhancement.

Additionally, 93.5% now possess enterprise assets above ₹23,000, reflecting asset accumulation beyond the graduation threshold. Regular enterprise operations (97.9% operating 6-7 days per week) and 94.7% maintenance of business records indicate strengthened entrepreneurial capacity and financial management skills.

The programme also improved financial behaviour, with 100% reporting savings and 91.8% using formal banking channels. Aspirational confidence increased significantly, with 98.2% planning enterprise expansion and 76.0% willing to access credit for growth.



HOUSEHOLD LEVEL

At the household level, the intervention led to measurable improvements in income stability and living standards. Before the programme, 89.1% of households earned below ₹5,000 per month. Currently, 63.0% earn ₹10,000-₹15,000, and 19.4% earn above ₹15,000, indicating a strong upward shift in household income brackets.

Food security improved substantially, with 100% reporting access to two nutritious meals per day. Housing improvements were reported by 98.0% of households, reflecting the reinvestment of enterprise income into safer, more durable living conditions.

Educational participation among school-age children has been sustained, and immunisation coverage improved following health awareness sessions. Overall, household economic resilience and well-being strengthened beyond income gains alone.



COMMUNITY LEVEL

At the community level, the programme contributed to visible economic and social change. Panchayat members reported increased self-reliance, confidence, and economic activity among beneficiary women. Beneficiaries are now viewed as role models and informal mentors within their villages.

Community members observed replication effects, where other women initiated similar businesses after witnessing beneficiary success. The formation of Adarsha Sahaya Committees (ADSCs) strengthened peer support mechanisms and local accountability structures.

The visibility of women operating enterprises regularly has also contributed to shifting social norms regarding women's economic participation.



INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Institutionally, the programme strengthened integration with formal systems. Bank account ownership reached 100% of the beneficiaries were linked to government social security schemes.

The structured mentoring model, weekly follow-ups, and quarterly refresher trainings created a replicable implementation framework. The strong participation rates (99.7% CB&ED attendance and 100% refresher attendance) indicate high programme credibility and operational effectiveness.

The partnership model between CSR funding and grassroots implementation demonstrated effective coordination between private and community-level institutions.



STATE LEVEL

At the state level, the programme contributes to Uttarakhand's broader poverty-reduction and livelihood-enhancement goals. By enabling 3,000 ultra-poor women across 480 villages to transition into self-employment, the intervention supports rural economic diversification and reduces dependency on irregular wage labour.

The programme complements existing state and national initiatives such as NRLM, PMJDY, and social security schemes by strengthening income generation alongside welfare access. The demonstrated graduation rate (99.0% meeting defined criteria) provides an evidence-based model for scaling similar interventions within the state.



NATIONAL LEVEL

At the national level, the programme aligns with broader development goals of poverty reduction, women's economic empowerment, and financial inclusion. The structured Graduation Approach demonstrates that ultra-poor women, even with high illiteracy levels (51.3%), can achieve sustainable enterprise ownership when provided sequenced support.

The results contribute to national priorities related to poverty reduction, women's entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and livelihood security. The programme offers a scalable model that bridges welfare and economic empowerment, demonstrating how targeted asset transfers, combined with mentoring and financial inclusion, can lead to sustainable poverty graduation.



OVERALL MULTI-LEVEL

The intervention generated a layered impact across individual, household, community, institutional, state, and national levels. The strongest effects are observed at the individual and household levels through income enhancement, asset accumulation, food security, housing improvement, and financial inclusion. Community and institutional strengthening further reinforce sustainability, while state and national alignment position the programme as a replicable model for structured poverty graduation.



**BENEFICIARY ATTENDING
REFRESHER TRAINING**

07. CASE STUDIES

“ CASE STUDY 1: NASREEN JAHAN

Nasreen Jahan, 38, from Adwa village in Bajpur block of Udhm Singh Nagar, once depended on irregular agricultural wage labour to survive. As a single mother raising three children, she earned barely ₹1,500 per month. The family lived in a kaccha house with a leaking tin roof, often struggled to afford adequate food, and had no savings or productive assets. With no business experience and full responsibility for her children's survival, Nasreen felt trapped in poverty.

In 2021, she joined the programme and received a ₹13,000 asset grant to establish a fruit-and-vegetable stall. Along with the grant, she received support for consumption, business training, and regular mentoring. Over time, she gained confidence in pricing, customer handling, and stock management. Today, Nasreen earns between ₹15,000 and ₹18,000 per month. She has reinvested profits to expand her stock and purchased a cow to diversify her income. Her house has been upgraded from kaccha to pukka, her children attend school regularly, and the family now has stable access to food. Nasreen has moved from survival-based labour to stable entrepreneurship and now encourages other women to start businesses.

“ CASE STUDY 2: RAJANI DEVI

Rajani Devi, 41, from Bandiya village in Rudrapur block, faced economic hardship after her divorce. Supporting a three-member household, she worked as a daily wage labourer earning around ₹2,000 per month. Work was irregular, and food insecurity was common. The family lived in a poorly constructed house and had no savings or assets. Social stigma and limited economic options further restricted her opportunities.

Through the programme, Rajani received a ₹15,000 asset grant to open a grocery shop. With structured training and regular mentoring, she learned how to manage stock, calculate profits, and interact with customers. Her grocery shop now generates ₹12,000-₹16,000 per month. She further invested in dairy activities, increasing her total household income to over ₹29,000 per month. Rajani upgraded her housing, achieved full food security, and saves regularly. She has transitioned from insecure wage labour to diversified enterprise ownership and is now recognised in her village as a resource person for other women.

08. CHALLENGE

LIMITED WORKING CAPITAL FOR BUSINESS EXPANSION



Although enterprises are operational and income levels have improved, 35.2% of beneficiaries report a lack of working capital as a current constraint. While businesses are stable, scaling inventory, diversifying products, or handling seasonal demand fluctuations requires additional liquidity. Without adequate capital rotation, growth potential may slow.



**BENEFICIARY ASSET
FOLLOW UP VISIT BY
PROJECT STAFF**

09. RECOMMENDATION

STRENGTHEN BANK LINKAGES THROUGH EXISTING SCHEMES



Beneficiaries should be encouraged to leverage existing government-supported credit schemes such as MUDRA loans and NRLM-linked SHG bank credit. Since 100% already have bank accounts and savings habits, they are better positioned to access formal credit independently.



**BENEFICIARY WITH
HER ENTERPRISE**

10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The project demonstrates strong indicators of livelihood sustainability. A large majority of beneficiaries operate their enterprises regularly (97.9%), indicating business continuity beyond initial establishment. The fact that 94.7% maintain business records reflects improved financial management and operational discipline, which are essential for long-term viability.

Financial inclusion indicators further strengthen sustainability prospects. With 100% of beneficiaries holding bank accounts and reporting regular savings, households have developed structured financial habits. Additionally, 76.0% expressed willingness to access loans for enterprise expansion, and 98.2% plan to grow their businesses in the coming years. These findings suggest forward-looking economic behaviour rather than subsistence-level maintenance.

However, 35.2% still report working capital constraints, indicating that while core enterprises are stable, access to affordable credit will be critical for sustained growth and scaling. Overall, based on enterprise continuity, savings behaviour, asset accumulation, and expansion aspirations, the livelihoods established under the programme are likely to be sustainable.

The project's graduation benchmarks provide a structured framework for exit readiness. A significant 99.0% of beneficiaries meet the defined poverty graduation criteria based on income and asset thresholds. Furthermore, 93.5% own productive assets above ₹23,000, and 81.0% earn above ₹10,000 per month, indicating economic stability well beyond minimum thresholds.

Universal food security (100%), regular savings behaviour (100%), and formal financial integration demonstrate reduced vulnerability to short-term economic shocks. Beneficiaries are operating enterprises independently, maintaining records, and making reinvestment decisions without being dependent on the programme.

The high proportion of planning enterprise expansion (98.2%) suggests confidence in self-managed growth beyond programme support. Based on these indicators, beneficiaries demonstrate strong readiness for programme exit, with economic, financial, and operational capacities sufficiently strengthened to sustain livelihoods independently.

11. CONCLUSION

The project has generated substantial multidimensional impact, aligned with its core objective of enabling ultra-poor women to achieve sustainable livelihood security and graduate from extreme poverty. The transition from irregular wage labour and a monthly income below ₹4,000 to stable enterprise ownership, asset accumulation, and earnings above ₹10,000 for the majority reflects a significant economic transformation.

Beyond income enhancement, the intervention improved household food security, housing conditions, financial inclusion, and social empowerment. Universal savings behaviour, near-universal poverty graduation, and strong future business expansion aspirations indicate structural and psychological transformation among beneficiaries.

Overall, the evidence demonstrates that the project not only enhanced income and asset ownership but also empowered women with entrepreneurial capacity and improved household well-being. The high graduation rate and strong sustainability indicators suggest that the intervention has effectively positioned beneficiaries for long-term economic stability and upward mobility.



**INTERACTION WITH BENEFICIARY
DURING WEEKLY ENTERPRISE
ASSET FOLLOW UP VISIT**

ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Implementing Partner:
Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust

Implementation Year:
Jan 2020 - Mar 2024

Assessment Year: Year 2025 - 26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 10
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Project Coverage	04
	Key Findings and Key Impacts	05 - 09
	Community/Stakeholder Feedback	10
02	OECD Framework	11 - 12
03	Introduction	13 - 17
	Background and Need for the Project	13
	Objectives of the Project	13 - 14
	Project Details	14
	Stakeholder Roles in the Project	15
	Project Activities	15 - 16
	Timeline of the Project	16 - 17
04	Research Methodology	18 - 19
	Objectives of the Study	18
	Use of Mixed Method Approach	18
	Application of Quantitative Techniques	18
	Application of Qualitative Techniques	19
	Ensuring Triangulation	19
	Sampling Framework	19
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	19
	Study Design Summary	19
	Ethical Considerations	19
05	Key Findings	20 - 44
06	Impact at Various Levels	45 - 46
07	Case Studies	47 - 49
08	Challenges	50
09	Recommendations	51
10	Sustainability Exit Readiness	52 - 53
11	Conclusion	54 - 56

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	List of Abbreviations
Table 2	Project Coverage
Table 3	Community / Stakeholder Feedback
Table 4	Project Details
Table 5	Roles and Responsibilities of the Stakeholders
Table 6	Sampling Framework

LIST OF CHARTS

Table Number	Table Name
Chart 1 to 8	Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents
Chart 9 to 11	Pre-Intervention Enterprise Status and Challenges
Chart 12 to 21	Project Participation and Engagement Profile
Chart 22 to 39	Enterprise Support, Mentorship, Financial Access, and Market Linkages
Chart 40 to 48	Post-Intervention Enterprise Growth, Business Performance, and Satisfaction

ABBREVIATIONS

B2B	Business-to-Business
BAL	Bajaj Auto Limited
BIC	Business Idea Contest
BIG	Business Idea Generation
BPTF	Business Performance Tracking Form
BYST	Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EOL	Entrepreneur Online Learning
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY	Financial Year
GST	Goods and Services Tax
KYC	Know Your Customer
MIS	Management Information System
MMC	Mobile Mentor Clinic
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OBC	Other Backward Classes
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
SC/ST	Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribe
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STEP	Smart Training for Enterprise Planning
YEDP	Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In partnership with Bajaj Auto Limited, Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST) implemented the Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program (YEDP) in Pune, Aurangabad, and Wardha (Maharashtra); Udham Singh Nagar (Uttarakhand); and Sikar (Rajasthan). Extensive efforts to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem were carried out from Financial Year 2020 to Financial Year 2024 to address key challenges faced by first-generation entrepreneurs from economically marginalised backgrounds across five districts in three Indian states.

The project was designed to provide comprehensive end-to-end support to aspiring and existing micro-entrepreneurs through a structured pathway encompassing community mobilisation and counseling, practical entrepreneurship training delivered through both online and face-to-face modalities (EOL and STEP), credit facilitation through bankable proposal preparation and banking partnerships, and sustained one-on-one mentoring over two years. Additionally, the project created market-exposure opportunities through exhibitions, exchange visits, and networking events, while establishing performance-tracking systems to build disciplined business management practices.

COUNSELING AT OFFICE BY FINANCE OFFICER



PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program (BYST - YEDP)



Implementing Agency

Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST)



Location

Pune, Aurangabad, Wardha (Maharashtra); Udham Singh Nagar (Uttarakhand); Sikar (Rajasthan)



Duration

Jan 2020 - Mar 2024



Assessment Location

Pune



Total Budget

995 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total no. of Beneficiaries

8048 entrepreneurs



Target Beneficiaries

Youth entrepreneurs (18-35 years), early-stage and growth-stage entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and individuals from socially or economically disadvantaged groups



Primary Programs

Counseling & Mobilisation, Entrepreneurship Orientation Lab (EOL), STEP training, Credit Facilitation, One-to-One Mentoring (2 years), Mobile Mentor Clinics (MMC), BPTF tracking, Exhibitions & Market Linkages

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT



To assess the effectiveness of project activities and measure their impact on enterprise establishment, income generation, employment creation, and the strengthening of entrepreneurial skills.



To generate evidence-based insights to inform decisions on project continuation, potential geographic expansion, and operational improvements.



To document the project multidimensional impact, including changes in enterprise performance, household economic security, community recognition, and overall ecosystem strengthening.



To evaluate overall project performance using the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

TABLE 2: PROJECT COVERAGE

Beneficiary Metric	Count
Mentors inducted, trained, and accredited (including City & Guilds certification)	2,510
Entrepreneurs counselled	39,363
Entrepreneurs trained in entrepreneurship (EOL/STEP)	8,048
Entrepreneurs supported post-loan through mentoring	2,281
Training programmes conducted	323
Product display/exhibition opportunities organised	16
Total credit facilitated across districts	₹ 66.74 crore



KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE THE MOBILISATION AND ONBOARDING OF ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS

**43.1%**

of respondents who engaged with the project learned about BYST through posters, banners, or advertisements.

**77.1%**

of them connected through walk-in interviews.

**39,363**

aspiring entrepreneurs were counselled before onboarding.

**2281**

candidates were supported.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE PRACTICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING

**82.4%**

reported improved business knowledge. Among respondents who attended training, 50.7% chose online delivery, 31.0% attended face-to-face sessions, and 18.3% opted for blended modes.

**85%**

found one-to-one post-session discussions highly impactful.

OBJECTIVE 3: ENHANCE CREDIBILITY THROUGH CERTIFICATION

**90.5%**

of respondents received completion certificates.

**61.1%**

of those who received certificates used them to obtain bank loans, while 38.9% used them to secure business orders.

OBJECTIVE 4: IMPROVE ACCESS TO FINANCE AND CREDIT FACILITATION**80.4%**

of respondents who applied for credit successfully obtained bank loans.



Of them, 32.0% received loans of ₹2-5 lakh, 26.8% received loans of ₹5-10 lakh, and 19.0% received loans of more than ₹10 lakh.

**90.5%**

of them rated the facilitation as highly effective.

OBJECTIVE 5: EMPOWER ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH STRUCTURED MENTORING**96.1%**

of respondents were assigned mentors.

**62.6%**

of respondents interacted monthly.

**91.2%**

of respondents received Mobile Mentor Clinic visits, and 88.2% of them rated mentor solutions as highly useful.

OBJECTIVE 6: IMPROVE DATA-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE TRACKING**92.8%**

of respondents completed the BPTF, and 58.5% of them updated it monthly.

**77.8%**

of them found MMC support extremely helpful in completing the form.

OBJECTIVE 7: EMPOWER RESPONDENTS WITH MARKET ACCESS AND NETWORKS**64.4%**

of the respondents participated in exhibitions or fairs.

**40.5%**

of them built brand/vendor connections.

**72.6%**

of them secured consistent orders from these networks.

OBJECTIVE 8: IMPROVE ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH OUTCOMES

**54.2%**

of respondents now report annual turnover above ₹10 lakh, compared to 74.8% who reported turnover below ₹5 lakh before the intervention.

**11% to 30%**

Profit margins range

**97.7%**

of respondents adopted new marketing strategies.



Many enterprises expanded employment from 0-2 to 1-4 workers.

OBJECTIVE 9: ENHANCE RECOGNITION AND EMPOWER RESPONDENTS WITH CONFIDENCE

**96.7%**

of respondents experienced improved recognition in their communities.

**49.7%**

of respondents participated in Business Idea Contests, and 75.7% of them reported higher confidence after participation.

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE THE MOBILISATION AND ONBOARDING OF ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS



The project enhanced outreach effectiveness, creating a strong and consistent pipeline of motivated youth entering structured training and enterprise support.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE PRACTICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING



The training enhanced respondents' business readiness, strengthening planning, financial discipline, and marketing capabilities.

OBJECTIVE 3: ENHANCE CREDIBILITY THROUGH CERTIFICATION



Certification **enhances professional credibility**, builds buyer trust, and accelerates access to formal finance.

OBJECTIVE 4: IMPROVE ACCESS TO FINANCE AND CREDIT FACILITATION



Credit support **improved financial stability**, enabling smoother cash flow, timely procurement, and revenue expansion.

OBJECTIVE 5: EMPOWER ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH STRUCTURED MENTORING



Mentoring **empowered respondents** with stronger business routines, clearer decision-making, and practical problem-solving skills.

OBJECTIVE 6: IMPROVE DATA-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE TRACKING



Performance tracking improved respondents' ability to monitor sales, margins, and expenses, enabling more informed business decisions.

OBJECTIVE 7: EMPOWER RESPONDENTS WITH MARKET ACCESS AND NETWORKS

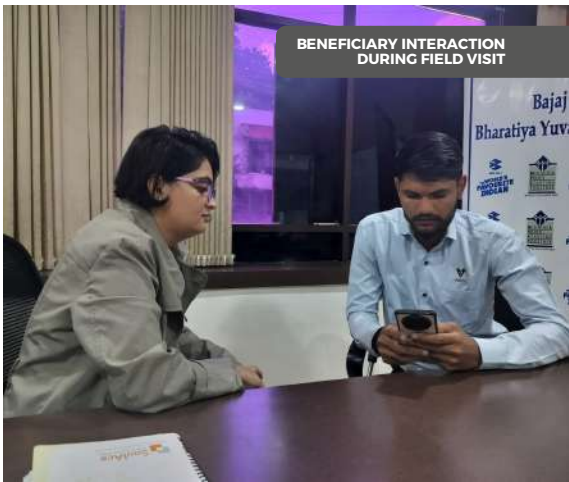
Market exposure enabled respondents to expand their customer base, secure repeat buyers, and strengthen product visibility.

OBJECTIVE 8: IMPROVE ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH OUTCOMES

The project **improved overall enterprise performance**, contributing to higher profitability, stronger resilience, and new job creation.

OBJECTIVE 9: ENHANCE RECOGNITION AND EMPOWER RESPONDENTS WITH CONFIDENCE

Respondents were **enhanced in social standing and empowered with greater confidence**, enabling them to engage more effectively with buyers, lenders, and market opportunities.



**BENEFICIARY INTERACTION
DURING FIELD VISIT**

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Entrepreneurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants attributed improvements in job planning, expense tracking, and cash flow management to structured mentoring support. Monthly revenues increased significantly, with several enterprises reporting income growth of up to threefold. Entrepreneurs also reported greater confidence in managing operations independently and increased recognition within their communities as reliable business owners.
Professional Mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentors observed that structured onboarding protocols, monthly meetings, and field visits effectively built mentee habits. Training webinars added valuable dimensions to mentoring capabilities. Exhibitions provided practical exposure. Weekly initial meetings and field visits revealed operational challenges more effectively than office discussions alone.
MSME Owner Mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSME mentors noted that monthly meetings and early on-site visits accelerated mentee progress. The project effectively cultivated first-generation entrepreneurs with stronger business ethics and bank linkages. Mobile Mentor Clinic visits provided practical, hands-on solutions to operational challenges. There is scope to strengthen further support through dedicated staffing and the establishment of local chapters.
Project Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff confirmed that the multi-stage selection process and blended training approach functioned effectively. Strong banking partnerships facilitated high levels of loan disbursement. Business Idea Generation forms were found to be user-friendly, and quarterly Mobile Mentor Clinic visits provided practical, hands-on support. There is scope to further strengthen program implementation by improving digital proficiency and defining roles more explicitly across functions.



**STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW
DURING FIELD STUDY**

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The project directly addressed authentic entrepreneurial development needs, including business planning capabilities, credit access constraints, marketing confidence deficits, and institutional knowledge gaps confronting the target population. It targeted first-generation youth from economically marginalised backgrounds, addressing structural barriers to enterprise establishment.



COHERENCE

Strong alignment with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The project also aligns with national initiatives, including Stand-Up India, Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana, and state-level MSME development schemes.



EFFECTIVENESS

Majority of project objectives achieved with high training completion, near-universal mentor assignment, substantial credit facilitation, and improved business outcomes. Performance variations were attributable to differential entry readiness levels and tracking compliance gaps among some participants.



EFFICIENCY

Resources were efficiently converted into results. Standardised loan documentation accelerated bank processing, and blended training optimised cost-effectiveness. Thin staffing levels, remote geography, and occasional delays in bank verification somewhat constrained efficiency.



IMPACT

Substantial enterprise growth demonstrated with employment expansion (from 0-2 to 1-4 staff), revenue advancement (majority crossing ₹10 lakh annual turnover), healthy profit margins (11-30% range), and strong community recognition gains (96.7% improvement). Tangible household economic security enhancement was evident across beneficiary families.



SUSTAINABILITY

Established practices, including monthly performance tracking, mentor review protocols, institutional bank linkages, and mentor forums, demonstrate strong sustainability foundations. Minor risks remain regarding mentor bandwidth in remote areas and standardisation of digital practices across all locations.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Across India, in districts such as Pune, Aurangabad, Wardha, Sikar, and Udham Singh Nagar, youth are increasingly aspiring to pursue entrepreneurship. However, first-generation entrepreneurs from economically marginalised and disadvantaged communities face significant structural barriers that limit their ability to turn entrepreneurial ideas into viable, sustainable businesses. These barriers include gaps in skills and experience, limited access to finance and resources, socio-cultural constraints, and weak institutional support systems.

Key challenges in entrepreneurial development include gaps in strategic business planning, financial management, and operational readiness. Many aspiring entrepreneurs lack structured approaches to revenue forecasting, expense management, cost control, and working capital planning. Knowledge gaps also persist around regulatory compliance, formal business registration, GST processes, banking requirements, and access to institutional credit.

Access to institutional credit remains limited for early-stage entrepreneurs who lack collateral, credit history, documented income, or professional networks. Limited confidence and skills in marketing, pricing, customer engagement, and market outreach further restrict market access and revenue growth. Family-level hesitation or resistance creates psychological pressure, reduces social support, and limits access to initial capital mobilisation.

Recognising these challenges, Bajaj Auto Limited partnered with Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust to provide an end-to-end pathway: awareness and counseling, practical entrepreneurship training (online and face-to-face), support in preparing bankable loan proposals, and two years of structured mentoring with periodic on-site visits. The project also created exposure through exhibitions, exchange visits, and simple go-to-market plans, while using monthly performance tracking to build habits. The aim was clear: help youth formalise their businesses, access credit on time, strengthen day-to-day management, and convert small enterprises into stable, job-creating units with better incomes and community recognition.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



To enable first-generation entrepreneurs and existing micro-enterprise owners to establish, formalise, and scale their businesses through integrated counseling, structured training, institutional credit facilitation, and sustained mentoring support.



To formalise micro-enterprises by guiding business registration, GST preparedness, basic compliance processes, KYC documentation, and the adoption of simple management information systems.



To enhance community recognition of young entrepreneurs by pairing skill development, finance access, and market exposure.



To improve access to institutional finance by supporting the preparation of bankable project proposals, financial documentation, and business plans, and by strengthening partnerships with formal lending institutions.



To strengthen the mentor ecosystem through structured recruitment, training, and certification processes, including internationally recognised City & Guilds accreditation.



To expand market access and networking opportunities through exhibitions, B2B networking events, exposure visits, and exchange projects.



To promote inclusive entrepreneurship by increasing participation of women and youth from SC, ST, and OBC communities.



To build digital and managerial capacities through training on basic finance tools, sales tracking, and operational management.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program (BYST - YEDP)



Implementing Agency

Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST)



Location

Pune, Aurangabad, Wardha (Maharashtra); Udham Singh Nagar (Uttarakhand); Sikar (Rajasthan)



Total no. of Beneficiaries

8048 entrepreneurs



Target Beneficiaries

Youth entrepreneurs (18-35 years), early-stage and growth-stage entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and individuals from socially or economically disadvantaged groups



Primary Programs

counseling & Mobilisation, Entrepreneurship Orientation Lab (EOL), STEP training, Credit Facilitation, One-to-One Mentoring (2 years), Mobile Mentor Clinics (MMC), BPTF tracking, Exhibitions & Market Linkages

TABLE 5: STAKEHOLDER ROLES IN THE PROJECT

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Provided financial support, strategic direction, and CSR oversight to ensure effective implementation, project scale-up, and monitoring of outcomes across districts.
Implementing Agency (Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust - BYST)	Led mobilisation, counseling, BIC processing, training, bank linkage, mentor allocation, MMC operations, BPTF tracking, and overall project delivery with coordination across banks, mentors, and field teams.
Professional Mentors & MSME Mentors	Provided structured one-to-one mentoring, monthly reviews, field visits through MMC, business troubleshooting, guidance on finance, operations, marketing, compliance, and confidence-building support.
BYST Field Teams / Program Staff	Managed entrepreneur mobilisation, documentation, training logistics, matching mentors with mentees, bank proposal facilitation, follow-up visits, MIS updates, monitoring, and weekly/monthly reporting.
Entrepreneurs / Respondents	Participated in training and mentoring, completed BPTF and documentation, implemented new business practices, applied for credit, engaged in exhibitions and networking, and strengthened enterprise operations.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Mobilised aspiring entrepreneurs through local partners, awareness campaigns, and media outreach; conducted structured counseling using Business Idea Contest(BIC) forms.



Delivered entrepreneurship training through online (EOL) and face-to-face (STEP) modalities, covering business planning, financial management, marketing, and compliance.



Provided one-to-one learner support and issued completion certificates after assessments.



Facilitated credit access by preparing bankable project proposals and linking participants to partner banks, including Bank of Maharashtra, Union Bank, IDBI, Indian Overseas Bank, and Bank of Baroda.



Recruited, trained, and accredited a mentor network (including City & Guilds certification) to provide sustained guidance.

Year	Jan 2020 - June 2024	July 2020 - Dec 2020	Jan 2021 - June 2021	July 2021 - Dec 2021	Jan 2022 - June 2022	July 2022 - Dec 2022	Jan 2023 - June 2023	July 2023 - Dec 2023	Jan 2024 - June 2024	July 2024 - Mar 2024
Activities										
Market exposure (exhibitions, industrial tours, exchange visits)										



**SKILL DEVELOPMENT
TRAINING**

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Limited commissioned SoulAce to conduct an independent study to assess the impact of the BYST Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program implemented across five districts in three states. The study aimed to evaluate project effectiveness, document participants' outcomes, and generate evidence-based insights for future programming decisions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY



To assess the effectiveness of project activities and measure their impact on enterprise establishment, income generation, employment creation, and skill strengthening.



To evaluate participant satisfaction with training, mentoring, and credit facilitation support provided under the project.



To document changes in enterprise performance, financial practices, and market access among beneficiaries.



To assess overall project performance using the OECD-DAC evaluation framework.

USE OF MIXED-METHODS APPROACH

The assessment adopted a mixed-methods approach integrating quantitative and qualitative research techniques. This combination enabled the collection of both numerical data and contextual insights, providing a comprehensive understanding of project outcomes and beneficiary experiences.

APPLICATION OF QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Structured questionnaires with closed-ended questions were administered to project beneficiaries to collect numerical data on key indicators, including training participation, credit access, enterprise performance metrics, and satisfaction levels. The survey instrument used multiple-choice and Likert-scale response options to enable statistical analysis and identification of patterns across the beneficiary population.

APPLICATION OF QUALITATIVE TECHNIQUES

In-depth interviews and group discussions were conducted with key stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, mentors (professional mentors and MSME owners), and project implementation staff. These interactions captured lived experiences, personal narratives, and contextual insights that complemented the quantitative findings. Testimonials were collected to document individual transformation journeys.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

To strengthen the reliability of findings, data triangulation was achieved by gathering information from multiple sources, including beneficiary responses, mentor observations, and project implementation staff. Methodological triangulation was employed through surveys, interviews, and document review. This approach enabled cross-verification of information and reduced potential biases inherent to any single method.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

Stratified random sampling was used to ensure representation from different project locations and beneficiary segments. For qualitative interactions, purposive sampling was employed to engage key stakeholders with relevant experience and insights.

State/Location	Districts	Sample Size
Maharashtra	Pune, Aurangabad, Wardha	218
Uttarakhand	Udham Singh Nagar	52
Rajasthan	Sikar	36

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The research study applied the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring alignment with globally accepted standards. This framework provided a robust, uniform method for evaluating project impact across six dimensions: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

STUDY DESIGN SUMMARY



Research design

Descriptive and interpretive



Sampling technique

Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling



Sample size

306 beneficiaries



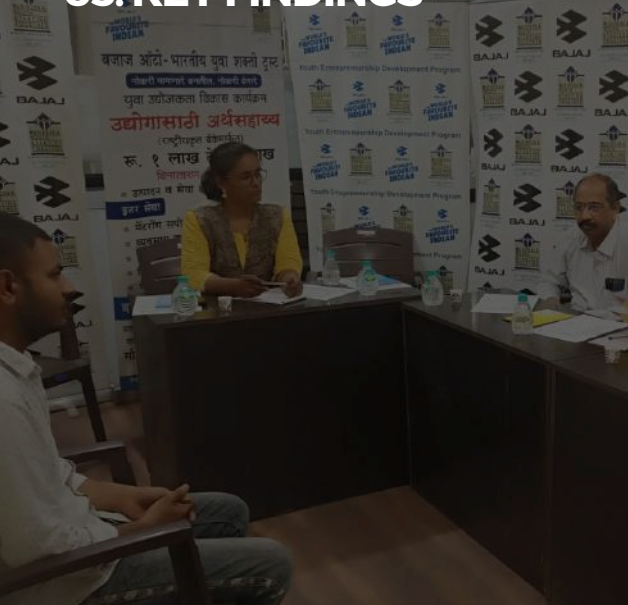
Qualitative methods

In-depth interviews, testimonials, and group discussions

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles. Informed consent was obtained from all participants after explaining the study objectives, procedures, and use of data. Confidentiality was maintained through secure data handling and anonymisation of individual responses. Participation was fully voluntary, and participants were treated with respect and dignity throughout the process.

05. KEY FINDINGS

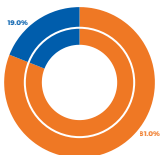


This chapter presents findings from the survey of 306 project beneficiaries and qualitative interactions with mentors and project staff. The analysis examines respondent demographics, pre-intervention status, project participation, and post-intervention outcomes to assess the overall impact of the BYST-YEDP intervention.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The demographic analysis reveals the composition of the beneficiary population supported under the project.

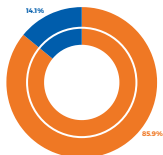
CHART 1: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS (N=306)



Male
Female

Graph 1 indicates that the majority of respondents (81.0%) were male, while females comprised 19.0% of the sample. This gender distribution reflects the broader patterns of entrepreneurship participation in the project locations. The project made deliberate efforts to include women entrepreneurs, though there remains scope to strengthen female participation in future cohorts.

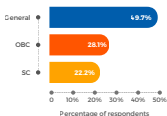
CHART 2: MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS (N=306)



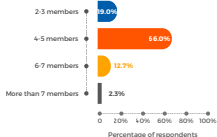
Married
Unmarried

Graph 2 shows that most respondents (85.9%) were married at the time of the survey, suggesting that family responsibilities and associated financial pressures may have motivated their entrepreneurial pursuits.

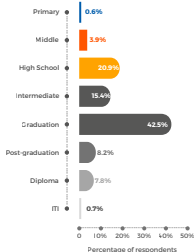


CHART 3: SOCIAL CATEGORY OF RESPONDENTS (N=306)

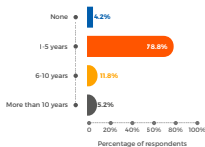
Graph 3 shows that, by social composition, nearly half of the respondents were from the General category (49.7%), followed by OBC (28.1%) and SC (22.2%). This distribution suggests that the program reached entrepreneurs from various social backgrounds.

CHART 4: NUMBER OF FAMILY MEMBERS (N=306)

Graph 4 shows that the majority (66.0%) of respondents lived in households of 4-5 members, indicating moderate family sizes typical of the project locations.

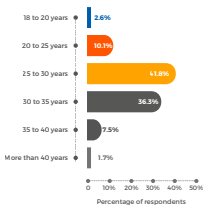
CHART 5: EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION (N=306)

Graph 5 shows that the cohort had moderate to high educational attainment, with 42.5% having completed graduation, 20.9% having completed high school (Class X), and 15.4% having completed intermediate education (Class XII). This educational profile suggests participants had foundational learning that could be built upon through entrepreneurship training.

CHART 6: WORK EXPERIENCE BEFORE JOINING BYST PROGRAM (N=306)

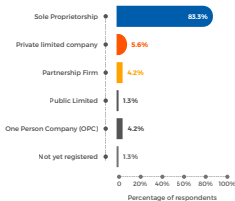
Graph 6 indicates that the majority of the respondents (78.8%) reported 1-5 years of prior work experience before joining the project, indicating that participants had some exposure to work environments before venturing into entrepreneurship.

CHART 7: AGE AT TIME OF JOINING (N=306)



Graph 7 shows the age profile at project entry, with a concentration in the 25-35 years range (41.8%), and representation across both younger and older age groups. This indicates that the project attracted entrepreneurs at various stages of their working lives.

CHART 8: TYPE OF ENTERPRISE REGISTRATION (N=306)



In terms of business structure, 83.3% of the respondents operated as sole proprietorships, with relatively few using more formal entities such as partnerships or private limited companies. The term 'One Person Company' (OPC) appearing in responses refers to a legal entity structure available for single-owner businesses under the Companies Act.



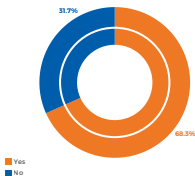
I studied commerce, but I truly understood financial concepts only after the BYST bookkeeping clinic. Once I started tracking my cash flow every week, I stopped guessing at prices and planned my purchases more effectively. This change directly improved my business.

-Bipin Kanade, Narhe; Gheun Taak (Services), Beneficiary



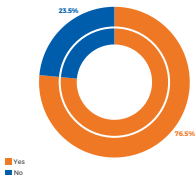
PRE-INTERVENTION STATUS

CHART 9: ENTERPRISE ESTABLISHMENT STATUS BEFORE JOINING (N=306)



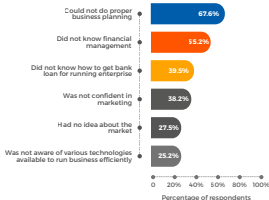
At entry, most respondents (68.3%) had already begun their enterprises, indicating that the project attracted entrepreneurs seeking to strengthen and scale existing operations rather than only those starting from scratch. The remaining 31.7% were at the ideation or pre-venture stage.

CHART 10: REGISTRATION STATUS BEFORE JOINING (N=306)



Graph 10 indicates that more than three-quarters (76.5%) of enterprises were formally registered before joining the project, while 23.5% remained unregistered or informal, indicating scope for support with formalisation.

CHART 11: CHALLENGES FACED BEFORE JOINING BYST-YEDP (N=306)



Graph 11 indicates that prior to joining the project, respondents faced clear capability gaps. Business planning was the most commonly reported challenge (67.6%), followed by financial management (55.2%), difficulties with bank loan processes (39.5%), low marketing confidence (38.2%), limited market awareness (27.5%), and gaps in basic technology know-how (25.2%).

These pre-intervention challenges significantly influenced the project's focus areas.

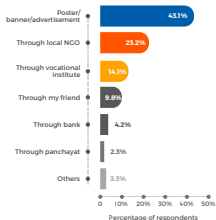
“ I had clients and skills, but I did not have a proper plan. Every month-end was stressful, and my pricing was random. The Business Idea Generation form and planning sessions helped me turn my hobby into a real business with clear targets.

-Sagar Dattatray Horkar,
Bibwewadi; Sagar Borkar
Photography (Services, OPC),
Beneficiary

PROJECT INTERVENTION

PROJECT AWARENESS AND ONBOARDING

CHART 12: SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT (N=306)



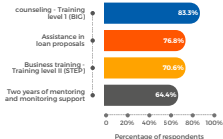
Graph 12 shows that most respondents learned about the project through posters, banners, and advertisements (43.1%), with additional outreach via local NGOs (23.2%) and vocational institutes (14.1%). Personal networks and formal institutions played a smaller role in project awareness.

CHART 13: MODES OF CONNECTION WITH BYST-YEDP TEAM (N=306)

Graph 13 indicates that a large majority of the respondents (77.1%) connected with the project through walk-in interviews at BYST centres, with fewer using phone calls or online forms. This suggests that direct, in-person engagement was the primary pathway into the project.

“ I saw a poster and visited the centre the same week. That day, I gained a clear understanding of accounts and credit. The first counseling session became a turning point that I still share with my team.

•Haridas Jadhav, Aurangabad;
Adhesive Tape Manufacturing,
Beneficiary

SUPPORT RECEIVED UNDER THE PROJECT**CHART 14: TYPES OF SUPPORT RECEIVED (N=306)**

Graph 14 shows that the respondents received comprehensive end-to-end support: 83.3% attended Level I counseling training, 76.8% received assistance with loan proposal preparation, 76.8% attended Level II advanced skills training, and 64.4% benefited from a 2-year mentorship program. This multi-pronged support approach addressed various aspects of entrepreneurial development.

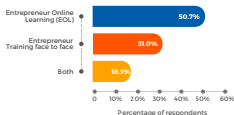
**ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TRAINING SESSION**

TRAINING DELIVERY AND PARTICIPATION

The Business Idea Contest (BIC) counseling process guided prospective entrepreneurs in exploring and identifying suitable business ideas based on their interests and capabilities. This structured approach helped shape general enquiries into viable business concepts.

The Entrepreneur Online Learning (EOL) project delivered training through online modules, while Smart Training for Enterprise Planning (STEP) provided face-to-face training. Both covered core business competencies, including market analysis, business planning, financial management, and entrepreneurship fundamentals.

CHART 15: TRAINING DELIVERY MODE (N=306)



Graph 15 indicates that half of the respondents (50.7%) participated in online training, about one-third (31.0%) chose face-to-face sessions, and the remainder (18.3%) opted for blended formats combining both modalities. This flexibility accommodated different learning preferences and geographic constraints.



**BENEFICIARY
COUNSELING**

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW REPORT: MENTOR OBSERVATIONS

This section summarises insights from Mr Ram Bende, a professional with TDA India and an MSME owner, with over 22 years of work experience and 12 years of association with the BYST-YEDP project.

IMPACT BEYOND NUMBERS

The impact of the project goes beyond numbers. Even though the number of entrepreneurs supported may seem limited, the change in their lives is significant. Participants grow from having business ideas to confidently managing enterprises. This change also improves their personal lives and influences their families and communities. The culture of mentoring plays a key role in creating this long-lasting impact.

MENTOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Building strong mentors was a core focus of the project. Around 350 mentors were recruited, trained, and onboarded over the implementation period. Mentors received nearly one year of hand-holding before taking full responsibility. Most mentors, aged 40 to 50, brought rich professional experience, which, along with structured training, helped them transition smoothly into mentoring roles.

CHALLENGES FACED BY ENTREPRENEURS

Most entrepreneurs joined the project with low confidence and limited access to support. They faced challenges in business planning, documentation, execution, and financial management. Many also needed emotional support and motivation. Over time, mentoring helped them move from uncertainty to confidence. Some businesses grew so much that entrepreneurs had to manage appointments carefully due to increased workload.

MENTORING STRUCTURE

Each entrepreneur was typically mentored for about two years, with monthly interactions and 12-15 in-person meetings per year. The first year focused on understanding processes and building trust. Over time, mentors provided deeper support in documentation, decision-making, and business strategy, while adapting to individual entrepreneur needs.

TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Mentor training began with a three-day offline program that included classroom instruction and field practice, followed by an assessment. Continuous learning was supported through weekly webinars and annual training requirements under the Mentor Development Program. These sessions strengthened both technical and mentoring skills.

VALUE OF EXHIBITIONS AND NETWORKING

Exhibitions and trade fairs helped entrepreneurs showcase products and build market connections. This platform helped mentors identify committed entrepreneurs and connect them with buyers and networks.

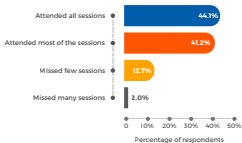
IMPORTANCE OF FIELD VISITS

On-site visits gave mentors deeper insight into real business operations. Many enterprises appeared small during office meetings but showed strong potential when seen in action. Field visits helped mentors identify on-ground challenges and made entrepreneurs feel recognised and motivated.

IMPROVEMENT IN ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT

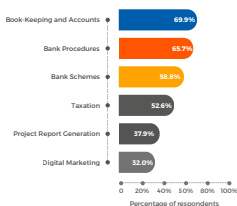
Entrepreneurs showed clear improvement across compliance, financial planning, cash flow management, workplace safety, and employee management. More businesses completed formal registration, showing increased professionalism. Even small steps- like hiring two or three employees were meaningful outcomes, reflecting steady progress toward sustainable business growth.

CHART 16: NUMBER OF SESSIONS ATTENDED (N=306)



Graph 16 shows high engagement with the training: 44.1% of respondents attended all sessions, and 41.2% attended most sessions, indicating a strong commitment to learning.

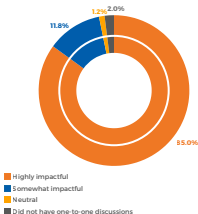


CHART 17: MOST IMPORTANT TRAINING MODULES (N=306)


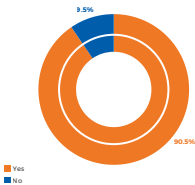
Graph 17 indicates that the respondents prioritised finance and banking modules as most valuable: Bookkeeping and Accounts (69.9%), Bank Procedures (65.7%), Bank Schemes (58.8%), and Taxation (52.6%). Project Report Generation and Digital Marketing drew comparatively lower interest, suggesting these may require enhanced delivery approaches.

“ The Business Idea Generation project helped me refine my idea, STEP (Smart Training for Enterprise Planning) training taught me about compliance, and regular mentoring kept me on track every month. This step-by-step support helped me move from an idea to a profitable business.

-**Akshada Suhas Hingepatil,**
Pune; Kadipatta Mahila Gruh
Udyog (Manufacturing),
Beneficiary


POST-SESSION SUPPORT AND CERTIFICATION
CHART 18: IMPACT OF ONE-TO-ONE DISCUSSIONS AFTER TRAINING (N=306)


As shown in Graph 18, post-session one-to-one discussions were highly valued, with 85% of respondents considering them highly impactful. These personalised interactions helped respondents convert theoretical concepts into practical steps for their own enterprises.

CHART 19: RECEIPT OF TRAINING COMPLETION CERTIFICATE (N=306)


As indicated in Graph 19, a large majority (90.5%) received training completion certificates. The 9.5% who did not receive certificates included those who had completed the training and were still awaiting their certificates.

“ The in-person sessions on bank loans helped me understand the process clearly. Looking at a real loan file showed me what was needed. I fixed my documents that same week.

-Manisha Babu Sakate, Hadapsar, New Ashirvad Hotel (Services), Beneficiary



QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW REPORT: PROFESSIONAL MENTOR OBSERVATIONS

This section summarises insights from Mr Mayur Palan, a professional mentor with over 35 years of experience and 12 years of association with the BYST-YEDP program.

DIVERSITY AMONG ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurs joined the program with very different levels of confidence and commitment. Some were unsure and exploratory, while others were highly serious or even over-enthusiastic and needed guidance to set realistic expectations. Because of this diversity, mentors could not follow a single approach. Instead, mentoring had to be flexible and personalised, based on individual motivation, learning style, and readiness.

ADAPTIVE MENTORING APPROACH

In the early stages, mentoring involved frequent interactions - often weekly to build trust, understand needs, and set clear expectations. As entrepreneurs became more stable and confident, the frequency of meetings was adjusted based on individual business needs. Early-stage enterprises required close support, while more established businesses benefited from periodic strategic guidance. This flexible approach ensured timely and relevant support.

ROLE OF EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions and trade fairs played an important role in the program. They helped mentors identify genuinely committed entrepreneurs while also giving participants real market exposure. These events allowed informal interactions, helping mentors assess seriousness and interest more effectively than formal interviews alone. Entrepreneurs also gained practical experience in customer interaction, product presentation, and networking.

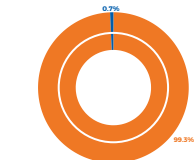
IMPORTANCE OF ON-SITE VISITS

On-site visits through Mentor Mobile Clinics provided deeper insights than office meetings. Seeing entrepreneurs in their actual work environment helped mentors understand operations, challenges, and resource use. These visits also boosted entrepreneurs' confidence, as they felt recognised and valued. Many enterprises that appeared small on paper showed strong potential when observed directly, reinforcing the importance of field visits and in-person interactions.

RETHINKING SUCCESS

Entrepreneurial success was not measured only by income or revenue growth. Greater value was seen in the journey, especially for first-generation entrepreneurs who started businesses without family support or prior experience. Observing their growth, confidence, and ability to overcome social and economic challenges highlighted the program's real impact. These personal and social transformations reflected the true success of sustained mentoring.

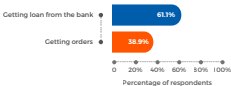
CHART 20: VALUE OF TRAINING CERTIFICATE TO ENTERPRISE GROWTH (N=277)



■ Yes
■ No

As shown in Graph 20, among respondents who received certificates, nearly all (99.3%) reported that the certificate supported their enterprise growth. The lower sample size (N=277) reflects only those respondents who received certificates and answered this follow-up question.

CHART 21: PERCEIVED VALUE OF CERTIFICATION AMONG PARTICIPANTS (N=275)



Graph 21 indicates that the certificates provided tangible value: 61.1% of respondents used them to obtain bank loans, while 38.9% used them to secure business orders. This demonstrates how project credentials translate into practical business benefits.

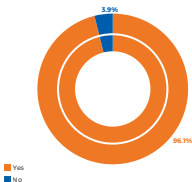
“ Keeping the certificate visible acts as a trust sign and helps us attract buyers more easily.

- **Bipin Kanade, Narhe; Services, Beneficiary** ”

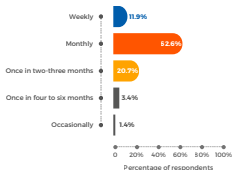
MENTORING SUPPORT

The project's mentoring model assigns each participant a trained mentor who provides ongoing guidance through regular interactions. Mentors are drawn from professional backgrounds and MSME ownership, bringing practical business experience to their guidance. The mentoring relationship typically spans two years, with interaction frequency varying based on the mentee's needs.

CHART 22: ASSIGNMENT OF MENTORS (N=306)



Graph 22 highlights that mentorship coverage was nearly universal, with 96.1% of respondents being assigned a mentor. As per the discussion with the implementing partner, the remaining 3.9% who did not receive the mentor may be due to an administrative error or COVID-related disruptions.

CHART 23: FREQUENCY OF MENTOR INTERACTIONS (N=294)


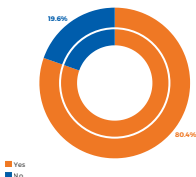
As shown in Graph 23, most beneficiaries (62.6%) interacted with their mentors monthly, while others met as needed. The variation in meeting frequency (11.9% weekly, 20.7% once in 4-6 months) reflects the project's adaptive approach: more intensive support during initial bonding and early enterprise stages, transitioning to flexible scheduling as mentees progress. The lower sample size (N=294) represents those who were assigned mentors and responded to this question.

“Regular monthly mentoring brought discipline to our pricing, cash flow, and follow-ups, especially after disbursal.

- Chandrashekhhar Girnale,
Waluj MIDC, Girnale
Engineering (Manufacturing),
Beneficiary

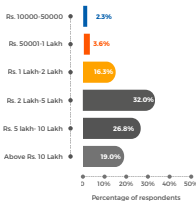
MENTOR OBSERVATIONS ON PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

Discussions with mentors revealed valuable insights about project functioning. Mentors observed that the structured onboarding process, which included approximately 1 year of hand-holding before assuming full mentoring responsibilities, effectively prepared them for their roles. Monthly meetings and field visits helped build consistent habits among mentees. The Mentor Development Program (MDP) provided ongoing skill enhancement, with mentors attending weekly webinars and completing specific annual training hours. Mentors noted that entrepreneurs who engaged consistently with the mentoring process showed marked improvements in confidence, business planning, and operational management.

CREDIT FACILITATION
CHART 24: ACCESS TO CASH CREDIT FROM BANK (N=306)


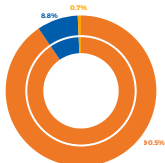
Graph 24 shows that a significant majority (80.4%) of beneficiaries accessed bank credit through the project's facilitation support. The remaining 19.6% either did not require credit, were still in the application process, or did not meet bank eligibility criteria.

CHART 25: AMOUNT OF LOAN AVAILED (N=246)



Graph 25 shows that among respondents who accessed credit, the largest share (32.0%) received ₹2-5 lakh, followed by ₹5-10 lakh (26.8%) and more than ₹10 lakh (19.0%). The sample size (N=246) includes only those respondents who accessed credit and reported their loan amounts.

CHART 26: USEFULNESS OF PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FACILITATION (N=306)



■ Extremely useful
■ Somewhat useful
■ Not so useful
■ Did not have one-to-one discussions

90.5% of respondents rated proposal development and loan processing facilitation as very effective, underscoring the project's strong support quality. The project's assistance in preparing project proposals, completing required documentation, and navigating bank procedures proved valuable in helping respondents secure credit.



ENTREPRENEUR EXCHANGE PROGRAM AT AURANGABAD

“ The proposal support gave my bank confidence, and I was able to secure ₹17.5 lakh credit. This helped me streamline production and strengthen my business operations.

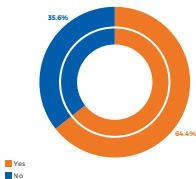
- **Rahul Vanjare, Fulgaon;**
Jidnya Polymers
(Manufacturing), Beneficiary.

”

MARKET ACCESS AND EXHIBITIONS

The project organised exhibitions and fairs to provide entrepreneurs with market exposure, networking opportunities, and platforms to showcase products and services. A total of 16 product display opportunities were organised under YEDP across the project locations.

CHART 27: PARTICIPATION IN EXHIBITIONS AND FAIRS (N=306)



Graph 27 shows that about two-thirds (64.4%) of respondents participated in exhibitions and fairs organised under the program, while 35.6% did not engage with these platforms. Non-participation was due to factors such as timing conflicts, geographic distance from event locations, concerns about product readiness, and lack of awareness of specific events.



MENTOR EXCHANGE PROGRAM

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW REPORT: DISTRICT-LEVEL MENTOR OBSERVATIONS

This section presents insights from **Mr Mahadev Gaikwad**, MSME owner at Sunita Enterprises, with 32 years of business experience and 17 years of association with the program.

MENTOR ONBOARDING PROCESS

The mentor onboarding process is well structured and provides clear training and guidance. It helps mentors understand their roles, responsibilities, and mentoring methods before working with entrepreneurs. This early preparation ensures consistent mentoring quality and enables mentors to support entrepreneurs effectively from the outset.

ENTREPRENEUR TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

Entrepreneurs join the program with very different levels of confidence and clarity. Some initially look for jobs rather than starting businesses, while others lack a clear business direction. One example highlights this change clearly: a youth who entered the program with very low confidence later grew so much that meetings had to be scheduled in advance. This shows the strong impact of mentoring. Most challenges entrepreneurs face stem from a lack of information and guidance, which the program addresses through structured mentoring.

MENTORSHIP AS PASSION

Mentorship is viewed not just as a responsibility, but as a rewarding activity. Mentors are motivated by the opportunity to help young people succeed. This personal commitment leads to regular engagement and genuine support for mentees. In addition to individual mentoring, awareness sessions are conducted to reach more people and identify potential entrepreneurs. Mentees usually receive monthly in-person visits, along with regular phone support between meetings, ensuring continuous guidance.

TRAINING PARTICIPATION

Mentor training is conducted through both offline and online modes. Initial training sessions were attended and provided essential knowledge and skills. However, attendance in later sessions declined due to time and other constraints. This highlights the need for more flexible training options to support ongoing mentor development.

EXHIBITION IMPACT: VIDNYAN JATRA

Participation in the Vidnyan Jatra exhibition was highly beneficial. It helped raise awareness of the program and enabled direct interaction with a wide range of people. Visitors found the information useful, leading to meaningful discussions on entrepreneurship. Such events help increase program visibility and identify potential entrepreneurs through direct engagement.

EXCHANGE VISITS AND LEARNING

Exchange visits to places such as Sambhajnagar and Wardha, lasting four days each, were very useful. These visits helped mentors connect with other teams and learn about different mentoring practices.

The exposure supported learning across regions and helped mentors improve their own mentoring approaches by understanding local contexts.

MENTOR MOBILE CLINIC APPROACH

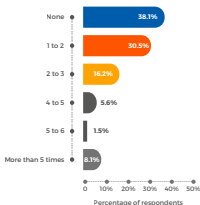
Material checking and inspection visits are an important part of mentoring. During the first five to six months, visits are more frequent as entrepreneurs need closer support. This early-stage guidance helps them build strong foundations. Over time, visit frequency is adjusted based on the entrepreneur's progress and needs.

“ One of my mentees, Manoj, who runs a kulfi business, made great progress with consistent guidance and was even nominated for the Pune Downtown Rotary Club Award. Seeing his growth has been one of the most rewarding parts of my mentoring experience.

- Mahadev Gaikwad, Mentor



CHART 28: REGIONAL EXHIBITION OPPORTUNITIES (N=197)



As shown in Graph 28, access to regional exhibitions varied: 31.4% of respondents received 3 or more opportunities, 30.5% received 1 or 2, and 38.1% received none. The sample size reflects only those who participated in exhibitions. The distribution of opportunities appears to have been influenced by factors such as enterprise readiness, product type, and the proximity of event locations to beneficiary areas.



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW

CHART 29: NATIONAL EXHIBITION OPPORTUNITIES IN NEW DELHI (SCOPE COMPLEX) (N=306)

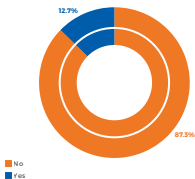
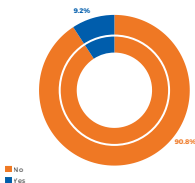
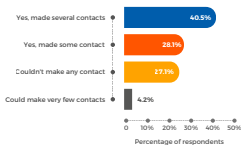


CHART 30: OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXHIBITION AT CHENNAI (N=306)



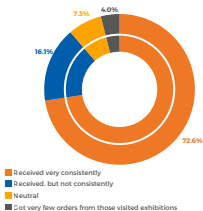
Both Graphs 29 and 30 show that national-level exposure remained limited: 87.3% did not participate in SCOPE (New Delhi), and 90.8% did not exhibit at Patrician College of Arts & Sciences, Chennai. These national platforms reached only a smaller group of beneficiaries who met readiness criteria and could manage travel logistics.

CHART 31: CONNECTIONS ESTABLISHED WITH BRANDS/VENDORS (N=306)



As shown in Graph 31, among those who participated in exhibitions, networking outcomes varied: 40.5% established multiple brand or vendor contacts, 28.1% made some contacts, and 27.1% did not establish new connections. This suggests that exhibitions were more effective for some entrepreneurs than others in building business relationships.

CHART 32: CONSISTENT ORDERS FROM NETWORKING CONTACTS (N=223)

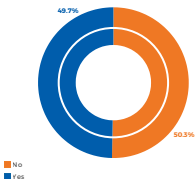


Graph 32 shows that among respondents who built contacts, 72.6% reported receiving consistent orders from their exhibition networking. This indicates that for those who actively engaged with the platform, exhibitions translated into tangible business outcomes. The sample size reflects only those who established contacts and responded to this question.

BUSINESS IDEA CONTESTS (BIC)

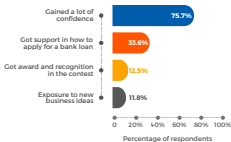
The Business Idea Contest (BIC) is a project activity designed to generate innovative business ideas from participants, with prize money serving as an incentive. Two BICs were organised during the project period (2020-2024), with contests typically running for one month.

CHART 33: PARTICIPATION IN BUSINESS IDEA CONTESTS (N=306)



As shown in Graph 33, around half of the respondents (49.7%) participated in Business Idea Contests, while 50.3% did not. The comparatively lower participation, relative to other project activities, reflects that BIC was a specialised event rather than a core project component, and only beneficiaries active during contest periods could participate.

CHART 34: KEY LEARNINGS FROM BIC PARTICIPATION (N=152)



As shown in Graph 34, among those who participated in BIC, gains were substantial: 75.7% reported higher confidence, 33.6% improved their understanding of bank loan procedures, 12.5% gained recognition or awards, and 11.8% were exposed to new business ideas. The sample size represents those who participated in BIC and responded to the benefits question.



The experience of pitching at the Business Idea Contest improved my confidence and sharpened my understanding of pricing. When I visited the bank the following week, I was able to explain my loan requirements more clearly, and the discussion progressed smoothly.

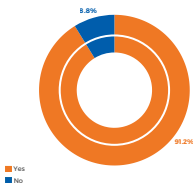
- Sachin Shripatrao
Chanakapure, Wardha; M/s
Sachin Tyres (Retail).
Beneficiary



MOBILE MENTOR CLINIC (MMC) SUPPORT

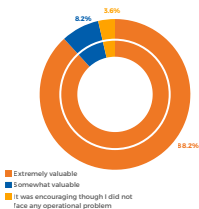
The Mobile Mentor Clinic (MMC) is a field-based mentoring approach that involves on-site visits by mentors to enterprise locations. This enables practical troubleshooting, operational guidance, and contextual support in actual business environments. A total of 10 MMC visits were conducted during the project period.

CHART 35: MMC VISITS RECEIVED (N=306)



As shown in Graph 35, strong field-level support was evident, with 91.2% of respondents receiving visits from Mobile Mentor Clinic mentors at their enterprise locations. These on-site visits allowed mentors to observe actual operations and provide context-specific guidance.

CHART 36: USEFULNESS OF MENTOR SOLUTIONS (N=279)



Graph 36 indicates that mentor support proved highly effective: 88.2% rated Mobile Mentor Clinic solutions as extremely valuable, with smaller shares finding them somewhat valuable or mainly encouraging. The sample size represents those who received MMC visits and responded to this question.

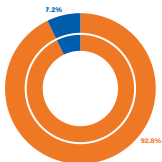
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE TRACKING

The Business Performance Tracking Form (BPTF) is a systematic monitoring tool that enables entrepreneurs to track monthly sales, expenses, inventory, and profitability metrics. Regular completion of BPTF supports data-informed business management and enables mentors to provide targeted guidance.



MENTOR MOBILE CLINIC PROGRAM

CHART 37: BPTF COMPLETION (N=306)



■ Yes
■ No

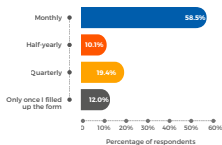
Graph 37 shows that performance tracking was widely adopted, with 92.8% of respondents completing the Business Performance Tracking Form. The 7.2% who did not complete BPTF included those who found the form difficult to maintain, had enterprises that were not yet operational, or faced time constraints.

The assessment team observed that the project lacks a structured system to track beneficiaries' business progress after the 24-month support cycle. As a result, year-on-year business growth, changes in income, business expansion and key operational challenges faced by supported entrepreneurs are not systematically captured.

“ The MMC visit helped remove a production bottleneck quickly by improving the layout and record-keeping. Monthly BPTF reviews now help us plan specific actions and track progress.

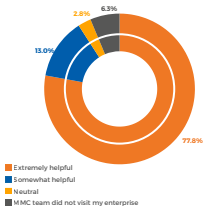
- Haridas Jadhav, Aurangabad;
Adhesive Tape Manufacturing
(Manufacturing), Beneficiary

CHART 38: FREQUENCY OF BPTF COMPLETION (N=284)



Graph 38 shows that among respondents who completed the BPTF, 58.5% did so monthly as recommended, indicating regular monitoring practices. Others completed the form less frequently, depending on their business cycles. The sample size includes only those respondents who completed the BPTF.

CHART 39: MMC SUPPORT FOR BPTF COMPLETION (N=284)

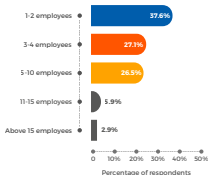


Notably, 77.8% found MMC assistance extremely helpful in completing BPTF and understanding business performance data, underscoring the role of field-based mentoring in sustaining data-led management practices.

POST-INTERVENTION IMPACT

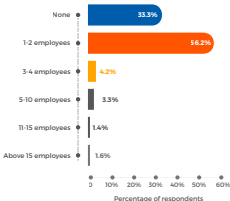
EMPLOYMENT GENERATION

CHART 40: NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES BEFORE JOINING BYST (N=306)



As shown in Graph 40, prior to the project, one-third of respondents had no employees (sole operators), and over half had only 1-2 employees. The majority operated as very small or solo enterprises at the time of joining.

CHART 41: CURRENT NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (N=306)

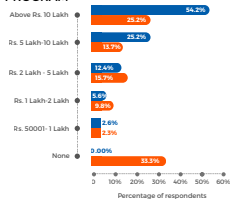


Currently, most enterprises still operate at a micro scale, but the share with 3-10 employees has risen markedly compared to pre-project levels, indicating early job creation and expanded capacity.

While growth is evident, the concentration in the 1-4 employee range suggests ongoing support on processes, hiring, and working-capital management will help translate momentum into sustained scaling.

REVENUE GROWTH

CHART 42: STRONG UPWARD SHIFT IN BUSINESS REVENUE POST-PROGRAM



■ After joining the BYST-YEDP program
■ Before joining the BYST-YEDP program

Graph 42 clearly demonstrates substantial improvements in enterprise turnover after respondents joined the BYST-YEDP project. Prior to the intervention, one-third of respondents (33.3%) reported having no annual turnover, indicating that many were either at the ideation stage or operating at very low capacity. After the project, this figure dropped to zero, showing that all respondents began generating revenue following their engagement with BYST.

A major shift is observed in the higher turnover categories. Before joining BYST, only 25.2% of respondents reported turnover above ₹10 lakh.

After the project, this increased sharply to 54.2%, highlighting a significant upward movement in enterprise earnings. Similarly, the proportion earning between ₹5-10 lakh doubled from 13.7% before the project to 25.2% after.

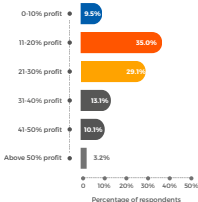
In the middle-income ranges, moderate but positive changes are evident.

The proportion of enterprises earning ₹2-5 lakh remained relatively stable (15.7% before and 12.4% after), suggesting that many in this bracket moved up to higher turnover categories. Lower turnover brackets (₹1-2 lakh and ₹50,001-1 lakh) saw reductions after the project, further indicating upward mobility.

Overall, the graph suggests that the BYST-YEDP project contributed to a clear and measurable improvement in enterprise financial performance, with a strong shift from low or no revenue to significantly higher turnover levels. The results reflect enhanced business capabilities, improved market access, and strengthened operational practices among respondents.

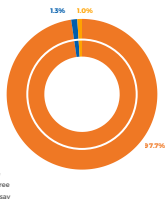
MARKETING AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

CHART 43: IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKETING STRATEGIES POST-TRAINING (N=306)



Nearly all respondents (97.7%) implemented marketing strategies and allocated budgets post-training, indicating strong adoption of business development practices learned through the project.

CHART 44: CURRENT PROFIT MARGIN (N=306)



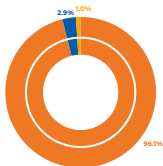
As shown in Graph 44, most enterprises reported moderate to healthy profit margins, with the largest share achieving 11-20% margins and a notable share reaching 21-30% or higher. This indicates sustainable business operations with adequate returns on investment.

“ Once we clearly understood our costs, we stopped taking loss-making orders and stabilised our margins at 15-20%. A small but regular digital marketing budget now generates steady leads rather than random enquiries.

- Manisha Bapu Sakate,
Hadapsar; New Ashirvad Hotel
(Services), Beneficiary ”

BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE AND RELATIONSHIPS

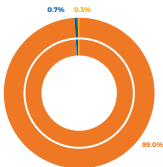
CHART 45: IMPACT ON UNDERSTANDING STAKEHOLDERS IN THE VALUE CHAIN (N=306)



■ Agree
■ Can't say
■ Disagree

Graph 45 indicates that a large majority (96.1%) agreed that mentoring improved their understanding of different stakeholders in the value chain, including suppliers, customers, and service providers and their ability to manage these relationships effectively.

CHART 46: IMPACT ON ENTERPRISE GROWTH AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (N=306)



■ Agree
■ Disagree
■ Can't say

Almost all participants acknowledged positive effects on both enterprise growth and personal development through the BYST project.

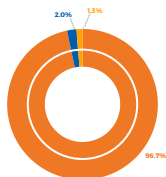
The combination of skill-building, access to credit, and sustained mentoring contributed to holistic entrepreneurial development.

“Setting clear supplier terms and credit days eased cash-flow pressure. Through mentoring, I learned to manage relationships more systematically and negotiate with clarity.”

- **Bhushan Ramesh Kohad,**
Wardha; Premier Tapes
(Manufacturing), Beneficiary”

SOCIAL RECOGNITION AND SATISFACTION

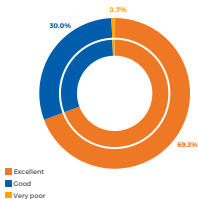
CHART 47: IMPROVEMENT IN SOCIAL STATUS/COMMUNITY RECOGNITION (N=306)



■ Improved
■ No change
■ Neutral

A large majority (96.7%) reported improved community recognition following project participation. Entrepreneurs noted that their status as established business owners enhanced their standing within families and communities, with buyers and peers viewing them as reliable business persons.

CHART 48: OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH PROGRAM SUPPORT (N=306)



As shown in Graph 48, satisfaction levels were high: 69.3% of respondents rated project support as excellent, 30.0% rated it as good, and only 0.7% reported dissatisfaction. This indicates that the project met the expectations for the vast majority of respondents.



As our results improved, we gained more recognition in the community. Buyers began trusting us faster, and regular referrals brought steady work. The overall support was timely and practical, from the start through follow-up stages.

- Akshada Suhas Hingepatil,
 Pune; Kadipatta Mahila Gruh
 Udyog (Manufacturing),
 Beneficiary



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW DURING FIELD VISIT

06. IMPACT AT VARIOUS LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The project strengthens individual entrepreneurs' capability and confidence by combining practical training, certificates, and sustained mentoring. A large majority reported improved business knowledge (82.4%) and found post-session one-to-one discussions highly impactful (85.0%). In comparison, near-universal mentor assignment (96.1%) and structured performance tracking (92.8% completing BPTF) helped build consistent business routines. These behaviour shifts translated into action on the ground—97.7% implemented marketing strategies, many enterprises moved into higher turnover brackets (including ₹10 lakh+ annually), and participants reported stronger decision-making around costs, pricing, and margins; Business Idea Contest participants also reported higher confidence (75.7%).



HOUSEHOLD LEVEL

BYST-YEDP contributes to household economic stability by enabling enterprises to access formal credit (80.4%) and improve revenues and margins over time, reducing financial uncertainty and strengthening the family's ability to meet recurring needs. The assessment explicitly notes that "tangible household economic security enhancement was evident across beneficiary families," reflecting how improved cash flow discipline, bank linkages, and growing turnover bands (including most reporting ₹10 lakh+ annual turnover) translate into more predictable household wellbeing.



COMMUNITY LEVEL

The project builds local trust in first-generation entrepreneurs and expands micro-enterprise-linked livelihoods. A large majority (96.7%) reported improved community recognition, and certification created visible credibility—38.9% used certificates to secure business orders, reinforcing buyer trust and repeat work. As enterprises stabilised and grew, early job creation emerged: the share of enterprises with 3-10 employees increased compared to pre-project levels, and market exposure platforms (exhibitions/fairs) helped many participants build vendor/customer networks that converted into consistent orders (72.6% among those who networked).



STATE LEVEL

At the state/ecosystem level, BYST-YEDP strengthens MSME and youth entrepreneurship pipelines across Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, and Rajasthan through a scalable model—mass counseling (39,363), large-scale training (8,048), an accredited mentor base (2,510), and institutional bank partnerships that enabled substantial credit flow (₹66.74 crore facilitated). This builds durable support infrastructure (mentors, bank linkages, tracking systems) and aligns with national/state entrepreneurship and MSME priorities (e.g., MUDRA, Stand-Up India), contributing to broader goals around decent work, skills, and inclusive growth.



NATIONAL LEVEL

Nationally, BYST-YEDP demonstrates a scalable, end-to-end entrepreneurship support model that strengthens India's MSME/first-generation entrepreneurship ecosystem—moving people from counseling to training, credit linkage, and sustained mentoring. The project built a large pipeline (39,363 counselled; 8,048 trained), created a certified mentor backbone (2,510 mentors), and enabled significant formal finance access (total credit facilitated: ₹66.74 crore) through structured proposal preparation and partnerships with multiple banks. It also aligns with key national entrepreneurship initiatives such as Stand-Up India and Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana, as well as relevant SDGs, positioning it as a replicable approach that can inform expansion and ecosystem strengthening beyond its current five-district footprint.



MENTOR MOBILE CLINIC PROGRAM

07. CASE STUDIES



CASE STUDY 1: MANISHA SAKAT – FROM STRUGGLE TO STRENGTH

Manisha Bapu Sakat, a 37-year-old entrepreneur from Hadapsar, Pune, has been running New Ashirvad Hotel since 2011. For the first seven years, she managed the business entirely on her own, operating an open-counter food service. She handled cooking, serving, accounts, procurement, and customer management without any staff support. Despite her commitment, she continued to face challenges related to scaling the business, stabilising finances, and finding reliable employees. These limitations kept the enterprise from growing, and the pressure of balancing long working hours with family responsibilities further strained it.

In 2022, her situation began to change when she came across a flyer about the BYST project. After connecting with the team, she was enrolled in the project and subsequently paired with mentor Ms Nanda, who began attending physical mentoring sessions twice a month. The mentoring process focused on strengthening her skills in marketing, customer acquisition, financial management, and overall business systems. Through the project's facilitation, she was also able to access credit support that had previously been difficult for her to obtain.

The combined impact of these interventions led to significant progress. Her monthly revenue increased from ₹1.5 lakh to ₹4.5 lakh, reflecting a threefold rise. Her team expanded from a solo operation to six employees, allowing her to delegate work more effectively. She also developed stronger financial tracking habits, improved cost control, and implemented better marketing strategies that increased customer engagement and repeat business.

Manisha expressed that consistent mentoring and her own determination had helped her overcome long-standing operational and financial difficulties. She indicated that the guidance she received played a central role in transforming her once-struggling open-counter business into a sustainable and growing enterprise.



CASE STUDY 2: RUPESH SHIVARKAR – FROM LOCAL ENTERPRISE TO GLOBAL RECOGNITION (INDIRECT SPEECH)

Rupesh Shivarkar, a 33-year-old entrepreneur from Loni Kalbho[SV1] r, Pune, established Microtech Polymers in 2019 after spending three years studying market opportunities during his employment. With an initial investment of ₹6 lakh, he began manufacturing specialised plastic products for tissue culture laboratories. The business showed early potential, but the onset of COVID-19 disrupted operations and created severe financial pressure. Production slowed, orders declined, and sustaining the enterprise independently became increasingly challenging.

Rupesh approached BYST in March 2022 for mentoring and credit facilitation. He was paired with mentor Mr Soumitra Chotikar, who provided structured guidance on strengthening marketing strategies, improving balance sheet management, planning capital requirements, and expanding professional networks. Regular in-person meetings helped him refine his operational approach and clarify how to scale the business sustainably.

The impact of this guidance soon became evident. Microtech Polymers' revenue grew from ₹35 lakh to ₹1.5 crore and further to ₹2.75 crore in 2024-2025, reflecting nearly an eight-fold increase. His workforce expanded from 3-4 employees to 10, enabling him to meet growing production demands. The business also expanded into global markets, with exports contributing 30-40% of total sales to countries including Uzbekistan, Oman, Indonesia, Venezuela, and Canada. This expansion strengthened the company's international presence and diversified its customer base.

Rupesh expressed that the mentoring and support he received from BYST had played a central role in helping him navigate the post-COVID crisis, stabilise operations, and eventually transition from a local manufacturer to an international supplier. His achievements were formally recognised when he received the Maharashtra Udyog Bhushan Puraskar (2024), marking a significant milestone in his entrepreneurial journey.



CASE STUDY 3: SATYAM SHITOLE – BUILDING A RELIABLE ELECTRICAL SERVICES ENTERPRISE

Satyam Shitole, a 29-year-old entrepreneur, founded Satyam Power Solutions in 2022, focusing on house wiring, JM modules, and electrical equipment services. He began his venture with limited financial resources but a strong determination to provide dependable electrical solutions within his community. Despite his technical skills, he initially faced challenges in professionalising his operations, expanding his customer base, and managing business finances effectively.

His progress accelerated after he connected with the BYST project and began receiving structured mentoring support. Through regular engagement with his mentor, Satyam was guided in streamlining day-to-day operations, strengthening his marketing efforts, and adopting a methodical approach to client communication. The support also helped him improve financial management and resource planning, areas in which he previously lacked confidence.

As a result of this intervention, Satyam established a strong, trusted reputation for electrical services in his locality. His improved marketing strategies enabled him to reach new clients while building stronger relationships with existing ones. He also adopted more systematic business practices, which enhanced both service delivery and operational reliability. Over time, his confidence in managing accounts, planning expenses, and organising workflow grew significantly.

Satyam shared that the ongoing mentorship played a central role in helping him transition from working as an aspiring electrician to operating as a structured and confident business owner. He noted that he now runs a proper enterprise with clear goals, improved systems, and professional practices that support long-term growth.

08. CHALLENGES

Program Implementation Challenges

The following challenges were identified through survey findings, mentor observations, and project team feedback:

UNEVEN ACCESS TO MARKET EXPOSURE PLATFORMS



While 64.4% of beneficiaries participated in exhibitions and fairs, 35.6% did not access these platforms. Among participants in regional events, 38.1% reported receiving no regional-level opportunities. National-level exposure remained limited, with over 85% not participating in major national exhibitions—this uneven access limited market networking opportunities for a significant portion of beneficiaries.

LIMITED FEMALE PARTICIPATION



Female participation currently stands at 19% of total beneficiaries. While the project has achieved strong outreach overall, women entrepreneurs remain underrepresented. This indicates potential access, awareness, mobility, or confidence-related barriers affecting women across rural, peri-urban, and urban settings.

MENTORING AND MONITORING IN ACTION



09. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the assessment findings, the following recommendations are proposed for project strengthening:

STRENGTHEN MARKET ACCESS PLATFORMS



Expand exhibition and fair opportunities to increase access for beneficiaries who currently do not participate (35.6%). Develop a tiered market-access pathway with clear readiness criteria for progression from local to regional to national platforms. Strengthen pre-exhibition preparation support and post-exhibition follow-up mechanisms to help beneficiaries convert contacts into sustained business orders.

STRENGTHEN WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION



Develop a Women Entrepreneurship Acceleration Strategy within the existing credit-linked model, focusing on targeted mobilisation, flexible hybrid training and mentoring support, and priority credit facilitation with enhanced documentation assistance to reduce entry barriers for women-led enterprises across rural, peri-urban, and urban settings.



TEAM GET-TOGETHER

10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS



SUSTAINABILITY VISION

The project aims to anchor entrepreneurial support in local institutions, establish routine management practices, and develop market linkages that enable beneficiaries to continue progressing without continuous external hand-holding. In the BYST-YEDP model, project support is provided for a defined period (typically two years of mentoring), after which enterprises are expected to operate independently with access to established networks and systems.



INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORING

District mentor forums with quarterly peer case discussions can sustain mentoring cadence after active project support concludes. Bank partnerships with designated nodal officers, standardised loan documentation processes, and clear escalation pathways enable continued credit access. Local NGOs and training institutes with defined outreach, venue, and follow-up roles maintain pipeline development.



OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS THAT ENDURE

The monthly review rhythm established through BPTF submissions, mentor reviews, and action planning can be maintained independently by beneficiaries. Simple MIS tools for lead tracking, loan pipelines, training attendance, and exhibition outcomes can be locally owned. Standard operating procedures for onboarding, readiness screening, mentoring cadence, and post-disbursal coaching have been documented and serve as a guide for ongoing operations.



MARKET ACCESS BEYOND PROGRAM PERIOD

The tiered exhibition pathway from local to regional to national platforms, with readiness scoring and event preparation support, can continue after project exit. Shared vendor and brand directories with contact protocols sustain B2B matchmaking and support ongoing networking opportunities.



EXIT READINESS INDICATORS

- **Coverage and cadence:** At least 90.0% of active enterprises submitting monthly tracking for 3 consecutive quarters, with at least 80.0% receiving timely mentor reviews
- **Credit discipline:** At least 90.0% of loaned enterprises are current on repayments for two consecutive quarters with documented plans
- **Market linkage:** At least 60.0% of market-ready enterprises maintain two or more institutional buyer linkages or repeat B2B orders
- **Formalisation:** At least 70.0% of eligible enterprises completing registrations, GST where applicable, and maintaining simple books
- **Local ownership:** District mentor forums meeting quarterly with recorded minutes and action logs; escalation mechanisms functioning within defined timelines



SUSTAINABILITY RISKS AND MITIGATION

Key risks include mentor bandwidth constraints in remote areas and uneven standardisation of digital practices. Mitigation strategies include quarterly mentor refreshers, simple digital SOPs, and graduated market access pathways. Light-touch post-exit support through quarterly online clinics for finance and unit economics, and annual state-of-entrepreneurship meetups, can maintain momentum.



BANKER'S MEET DURING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

11. CONCLUSION

The BYST Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program, supported by Bajaj Auto Limited, has demonstrated meaningful impact in strengthening early-stage and growing micro-enterprises across five districts in Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, and Rajasthan. Through its structured pathway of counseling, practical training, credit facilitation, and sustained mentoring, the project has enabled first-generation entrepreneurs to establish, formalise, and scale their businesses.

The assessment findings indicate substantial positive outcomes across multiple dimensions. Enterprise performance has improved significantly, with the majority of beneficiaries now reporting annual turnover above ₹10 lakh, healthy profit margins in the 11-30% range, and employment expansion from solo operations to 1-4 staff. Credit access was successfully facilitated for 80.4% of beneficiaries, with a total of ₹66.74 crore disbursed across districts. Training completion was high, with 90.5% receiving certificates that translated into tangible benefits, including loan approvals and business orders.

The mentoring component emerged as a critical success factor, with 96.1% of beneficiaries assigned mentors and 88.2% rating mentor solutions as highly useful. Mobile Mentor Clinic visits provided practical, on-ground support that helped entrepreneurs address operational challenges in their actual business environments. The Business Performance Tracking Form institutionalised data-led management practices, enabling regular monitoring and targeted improvement actions.

Community recognition improved for 96.7% of beneficiaries, reflecting enhanced social standing and buyer trust. Overall satisfaction was high, with 99.3% rating project support as excellent or good. Qualitative evidence from mentors and beneficiaries consistently highlighted the value of structured guidance, practical skill development, and sustained hand-holding through critical early-stage phases.

Areas for continued attention include strengthening market access platforms (currently accessed by 64.4%), improving consistency of mentoring engagement, addressing persistent technology skill gaps, and increasing women's participation (currently 19%). The project's sustainability foundations—including mentor forums, bank partnerships, and tracking systems—provide a basis for continued benefits beyond active project support.

The project demonstrates that, with appropriate support that combines skills development, credit access, mentoring, and market exposure, first-generation entrepreneurs from economically marginalised backgrounds can build viable, growing enterprises that create jobs, generate income, and contribute to community economic development. The comprehensive BYST-YEDP model offers a replicable approach for entrepreneurship development interventions targeting similar populations.

ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted, innovative brand, having sold over 21 million motorcycles across 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio, including motorcycles, scooters, and auto-rickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs in both India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge.

In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR also contributes to education, health, environment, and animal welfare projects for the sustainable development of the community and the nation.



ABOUT IMPLEMENTING PARTNER: BHARATIYA YUVA SHAKTI TRUST (BYST)

Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST) is a not-for-profit organisation that enables disadvantaged youth to become successful first-generation entrepreneurs through a structured pathway of counseling, entrepreneur training, one-to-one professional mentoring, and credit facilitation. Co-founded in 1992 and backed by an accredited Mentor Development Program (City & Guilds, UK), BYST combines a nationwide mentor network with strong bank partnerships to help young founders formalise, access finance, and grow sustainable enterprises. Under the Bajaj Auto-BYST Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program (YEDP), BYST delivers a blended digital and field model focused on practical skills, disciplined business management, job creation, and community-level impact.



ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

RESEARCH PROGRAM ON
FINANCIAL SECTOR AND
SUB-NATIONAL
ECONOMIC REFORMS

Implementing Partner:
Centre for Social and Economic
Progress (CSEP)

Implementation Year:
Sept. 2021 - Mar. 2024

Assessment Year: Year 2025 - 26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 09
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04 - 06
	Key Impacts	07 - 08
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	09
02	OECD Framework	10 - 12
03	Introduction	13 - 16
	Background and Need for the Project	13
	Objectives of the Project	14
	Project Details	14
	Stakeholders and their Profile	15
	Project Activities	15 - 16
04	Research Methodology	17 - 18
	Objectives of the Impact Assessment Study	17
	Use of Qualitative Approach	17
	Sampling Framework	17
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	18
	Research Design	18
	Key Stakeholders	18
	Study Tools	18
	Ethical Considerations	18
05	Key Findings	19 - 32
06	Impact at Various Levels	33
07	Sustainability Exit Readiness	34
08	Conclusion	35 - 37

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Community / Stakeholder Feedback
Table 2	Stakeholder and their Role
Table 3	Media Paltforms
Table 4	Opinion Editorials
Table 5	Website Viewership
Table 6	Event Type
Table 7	National & International Partnerships and Policy Engagements

ABBREVIATIONS

BAL	Bajaj Auto Limited
BIIC	Brookings Institution India Centre
CEEW	Council on Energy, Environment and Water
CSEP	Centre for Social and Economic Progress
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FY	Financial Year
ICRIER	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
REECIS	Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact, and Sustainability
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
NPAs	Non-Performing Assets
MoEFCC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
CAG	Comptroller and Auditor General (of India)
CGA	Controller General of Accounts
LT-LEDS	Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategy
COP / COP26	Conference of the Parties (26th session)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
PFM	Public Financial Management

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In partnership with Bajaj Auto Limited, the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) implemented a multi-thematic policy research programme aimed at supporting evidence-based policymaking across areas of national importance. The project focused on generating robust, independent research on economic growth, financial sector reform, public finance, climate change and sustainability, energy transition, and sub-national development. It was designed to address gaps in timely, context-specific policy analysis and to strengthen the availability of high-quality evidence to inform reform-oriented policy discussions in India.

The project integrated research development with systematic policy engagement and public outreach to strengthen linkages between evidence and policy decision-making. Key components included preparing agenda-setting research outputs, internal peer-review and quality assurance mechanisms, structured engagement with policymakers through policy dialogues and targeted consultations, and wide dissemination through publications, seminars, media outreach, and digital platforms. By embedding these activities within CSEP's regular institutional processes, the initiative sought to strengthen evidence-informed policy discourse, enhance public access to policy research, and support sustained engagement on India's long-term development challenges.

DISCUSSION WITH MS SHRUTI GUPTA RESEARCH ASSOCIATE



PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Research Program on Financial Sector and Sub-National Economic Reforms



Implementing Agency

Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP)



Location

PAN India



Duration

Sept. 2021 - Mar. 2024



Assessment Location

New Delhi



Total Budget

500 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Target Beneficiaries

Researchers



Primary Programs

Undertook high-quality policy research across key themes, including human capital development, climate change and sustainability, financial sector reforms, and sub-national economic growth.

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment was to examine the effectiveness and outcomes of the project in strengthening policy research, engagement, and dissemination systems. Specifically, the assessment aimed to:



Examine how the project supported the generation of robust, policy-relevant research papers across key thematic areas, including economic growth, climate transition, public finance, and governance.



Assess whether the project has strengthened research processes, improved engagement with policymakers, and enhanced public dissemination of evidence to inform policymaking and public discourse.



MR. SHISHIR GUPTA
SENIOR FELLOW AT CSEP

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: STRENGTHENING POLICY-RELEVANT RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE GENERATION



The project supported the development of independent, policy-relevant research across six core thematic areas: economic growth, public finance, climate change, energy transition, critical minerals, and state-level development.



During the project period, CSEP produced an average of 24–26 major publications annually, including working papers, policy briefs, books, discussion papers, and analytical blogs.



By FY 2024-25, cumulative research outputs reached approximately 125 publications, many of which were developed or substantially advanced during the project period.



The project improved the depth and thematic coverage of research in public finance and macroeconomic governance through focused studies on non-performing assets (NPAs), off-budget borrowings, public financial management and state-level economic growth.



The project supported a significant expansion of institutional research capacity, with the number of scholars increasing from approximately 30–35 to nearly 100 during the project period.



Researchers reported that continuity of support enabled multi-year research cycles, including data collection, internal review, revision, and follow-up studies, instead of one-time research outputs.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENABLING AGENDA-SETTING RESEARCH IN EMERGING POLICY AREAS



The project supported early-stage research across at least four emerging policy domains—critical minerals, energy transition, climate policy, and public financial management—in advance of formal policy demand.



In the critical minerals stream, the project supported analytical work covering four key dimensions:

- Mineral criticality
- Demand projections for green technologies
- Royalty and fiscal regimes, and
- Supply-chain and import vulnerability



The climate and energy portfolio included research across three core analytical areas—Net-Zero transition pathways, non-price climate policy instruments, and power-sector emissions analysis—and supported the development of at least one dedicated analytical tool (Carbon Tracker) to monitor electricity generation and emissions intensity.



Researchers reported that research outputs and preliminary findings were shared with policy stakeholders at multiple early engagement points, prior to the drafting of formal policy documents, indicating systematic use of evidence at the agenda-setting stage.



The programme enabled researchers to undertake high-risk and forward-looking research themes that were not yet embedded in formal government research priorities, thereby expanding the organisation's portfolio into emerging policy areas.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHENING POLICY ENGAGEMENT AND ADVISORY INTERACTIONS



The project enabled sustained advisory engagement across at least four priority policy domains—critical minerals, climate policy, fiscal governance, and state-level growth—through structured interactions involving senior CSEP fellows, advisory council members, industry experts, academic specialists, and mid-to-senior government officials.



Policy engagement was undertaken with at least seven central and state public institutions, including the Ministry of Mines, NITI Aayog, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), and select state governments.



Research findings and draft analyses were shared with at least three key central policy institutions—the Ministry of Finance, NITI Aayog, and sectoral ministries (Mines and MoEFCC)—through closed-door briefings, the circulation of draft papers, and advisory discussions, enabling early-stage policy feedback.



The project facilitated policy engagement through multiple formats, including policy seminars, expert panels, parliamentary and professional forums, LinkedIn-based professional outreach and structured post-event follow-ups, enabling iterative engagement during early policy windows.



Major public and policy-facing events typically engaged 150–200 participants each, including senior policymakers, researchers, industry experts, and civil society representatives.

OBJECTIVE 4: STRENGTHENING KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS



The project disseminated research through multiple formats, including seminars, workshops, policy dialogues, media engagement and digital platforms, ensuring broad public and professional outreach.



Research outputs were disseminated through at least seven major national newspapers (The Hindu, Indian Express, Times of India, Economic Times, Business Standard, Hindustan Times, and Financial Express) and broadcast and digital platforms, including NDTV, ET Now, and other national English news channels.



To improve accessibility for non-English audiences, select climate and Net-Zero research outputs were translated into two regional languages (Hindi and Tamil) and disseminated through Hindi media interviews, summaries in Dainik Bhaskar and adapted regional-language policy briefs.

**MR. YASSER NAQVI ASSOCIATE
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AT CSEP**



KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: STRENGTHENING POLICY-RELEVANT RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE GENERATION



The project empowered the development of CSEP's institutional research capacity by more than doubling the number of in-house scholars, enabling the organisation to pursue parallel, multi-disciplinary and deeper research agendas across economic growth, public finance, climate change, energy transition, and sub-national development.



It improved research productivity and sustainability by establishing stable, multi-year research cycles and strengthening internal review and quality assurance processes.



The strengthened research systems and expanded teams supported the development of CSEP's ability to generate timely, high-quality, and policy-relevant evidence, positioning the organisation to contribute more effectively to national and state-level policy discussions beyond the project period.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENABLING AGENDA-SETTING RESEARCH IN EMERGING POLICY AREAS



The project contributed to early policy engagement across at least five major public institutions, including the Ministry of Mines, NITI Aayog, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, and selected state governments, supporting policy discussions in critical minerals, green transition, climate policy, public financial management and state-level growth reforms.



Analytical inputs supported internal policy deliberations within at least five central policy and oversight bodies—NITI Aayog, the Ministry of Finance, the Cabinet Secretariat, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), and parliamentary policy forums—demonstrating institutional reach across multiple tiers of policymaking.



The agenda-setting role translated into a documented national-level policy outcome, through direct analytical contributions that informed the Government of India's first official "List of Critical Minerals" (2023).



This represents a clear, traceable pathway from project-supported research to a formal national policy framework in a new, strategically important policy area, demonstrating the project's effectiveness in shaping early policy direction in emerging sectors.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHENING POLICY ENGAGEMENT AND ADVISORY INTERACTIONS



The project strengthened the use of independent research as a policy input across at least seven government institutions, supporting internal policy discussions and reform-oriented dialogue in critical minerals, climate policy, fiscal governance, and state-level growth.



Through repeated and multi-format engagement, the project expanded the reach of research outputs beyond formal publications and enabled iterative exchanges between researchers and policymakers across multiple engagement cycles.



Formal citation of project-supported research in the Ministry of Mines' Critical Minerals Report (2023) demonstrates a verifiable pathway from research outputs to government documentation.

OBJECTIVE 4: STRENGTHENING KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS



The project ensured that 100 per cent of research outputs were placed in the public domain, improving public access to policy-relevant evidence.



The scale of outreach—2,000+ direct policy stakeholders, 18,000+ mailing subscribers, 43,000+ social media followers and 10,000+ video subscribers—substantially expanded the visibility of research among policymakers, academics, civil society organisations, industry representatives, and the media.

The assessment showed that the project made a meaningful contribution to strengthening India's policy research and evidence ecosystem. By combining robust research with active policy engagement and wide dissemination, the project improved the availability, relevance, and use of policy evidence. Strong internal systems and timely, agenda-setting research helped create a solid foundation for continued policy influence beyond the project period.



COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Senior Research Fellows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior fellows highlighted that the project enabled deeper, agenda-setting research across growth, climate, public finance, and governance. They noted that continuous funding enabled iterative research and early engagement with policy institutions, thereby strengthening the relevance and credibility of the outputs.
Policy Engagement and Communications Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The communications team reported that structured dissemination strategies, including seminars, media engagement, and digital platforms, improved the reach and uptake of research. Translation of research into accessible formats and regional languages supported wider public and stakeholder engagement.
Program administration and HR teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They noted that the Bajaj-supported project enabled CSEP to operate as a high-functioning policy research institution rather than a standalone project unit. They noted that the funding supported independent, multi-disciplinary research studies across economics, manufacturing, minerals, energy, climate change, and education, with beneficiaries extending beyond direct recipients to policymakers, ministries, industry, researchers, civil society, and the media.
Implementing team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of research development, policy engagement, and public dissemination strengthened institutional positioning beyond the grant period. They noted that partnerships with national and international institutions supported sustained collaboration and long-term research continuity.

DISCUSSION ON ANCHORING CHANGE DURING THE CONFERENCE AT CSEP



02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The project was highly relevant in addressing critical policy challenges facing India's economic growth, human development, and climate transition. At a time of widening regional disparities, rising environmental risks and financial sector stress, there was a clear need for independent, evidence-based research to inform reform-oriented policymaking. The project responded directly to these needs by generating timely analysis on economic growth, public finance, financial sector stability, climate change, energy transition, and sub-national development. By focusing on agenda-setting research and early-stage policy dialogue, the project aligned closely with the priorities of policymakers, research institutions, and the broader public. Its emphasis on independent analysis, public-interest research, and open dissemination ensured relevance to government institutions, civil society, industry stakeholders, and academic communities alike.



COHERENCE

The project showed strong alignment with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



EFFECTIVENESS

The project was highly effective in delivering its planned research, policy engagement, and dissemination objectives, with timely, policy-relevant outputs aligned to decision-maker needs and supported by strong internal review, policy dialogue, and dissemination systems. The rating reflects overall strong performance, with a small deduction recognising limits to attribution and the longer timeframes required for some policy outcomes to materialise fully.



EFFICIENCY

The project utilised financial, human, and technical resources efficiently to deliver research, policy engagement, and dissemination outputs within the grant period. A combination of in-person activities and digital formats, including webinars, virtual seminars, and online policy dialogues, enabled continuity of research and engagement while optimising costs. Integration of research activities within routine institutional workflows, supported by structured project tracking and regular internal reviews, facilitated execution of publications, policy engagement, and outreach activities, contributing to overall operational efficiency.



IMPACT

- » Stakeholders confirmed that the project enabled sustained, high-volume production of policy-relevant research, with approximately 24-26 publications developed annually and an estimated 125 cumulative publications by FY 2024-25, covering economic growth, climate transition, public finance, financial sector reform, and governance.
- » The project strengthened institutional research capacity during a phase of expansion, with the research team growing from approximately 30-35 scholars to close to 100, supporting deeper and more diverse research agendas across multiple policy domains.
- » The project supported agenda-setting research with visible policy impact, including direct contribution to the Government of India's first official "List of Critical Minerals" (2023), demonstrating influence on national policy frameworks in emerging areas of strategic importance.
- » Policy engagement and dissemination were significantly strengthened through regular seminars, workshops, and dialogues, with major public and policy-facing events typically engaging 150-200 participants, including senior policymakers, academics, industry experts, and civil society representatives.
- » Public access and outreach were enhanced through a strong dissemination ecosystem, including a targeted outreach list of over 2,000 stakeholders, an institutional mailing database of 18,000+ contacts, and a digital presence reaching 67,000+ followers across platforms, including over 43,000 followers on X (formerly Twitter) and approximately 10,000 YouTube subscribers.
- » Researchers and early-career scholars reported improved analytical capacity, confidence in policy engagement, and increased participation in collaborative research, publications, and advisory discussions at national and international levels.



SUSTAINABILITY

The project has embedded core research, policy engagement, and dissemination systems into CSEP's regular institutional operations, enabling continued work across economic growth, climate transition, public finance, and governance beyond the grant period. Sustainability is supported by established internal review processes, a trained pool of researchers, ongoing national and international collaborations, diversified funding sources, and strong dissemination platforms. While limited staff strength places pressure on teams during periods of expansion, institutional ownership, structured workflows, and stable core systems support continuity without reliance on project-specific arrangements.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Despite over three decades of economic reforms, India continues to face structural challenges that constrain inclusive and sustainable growth. Economic slowdown, inadequate creation of productive employment, weak human capital outcomes, widening inter-state disparities, and rising environmental stress threaten long-term development gains. While some states have achieved near-developed outcomes in health and education, many others lag significantly, with recent national data showing stagnation or deterioration in nutrition and health indicators, particularly for women and children. At the same time, climate change and pollution are already undermining health, agricultural productivity, and livelihoods, especially among vulnerable rural and urban populations. These challenges are further compounded by financial-sector stress and uneven institutional capacity across states, which limit investment and job creation.

In response to these challenges, the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP), with the support of Bajaj Auto Limited, proposed a research programme focused on the financial sector and sub-national economic reforms. The project aims to strengthen policy research in India by generating clear, evidence-based insights on how economic growth, human development, climate change, and state-level governance are linked. The initiative has focused on practical research in areas such as health financing, climate impacts on agriculture and livelihoods, financial sector stability, and state-level growth strategies. It is designed to bring together experts from different fields, produce India-relevant data and analysis, and translate research findings into actionable policy recommendations through regular engagement with policymakers and stakeholders.

The overall objective of the project is to support inclusive and sustainable growth by strengthening evidence-based policymaking, improving human development outcomes, and helping India better manage climate and financial risks. The initiative also built long-term research capacity and contributed useful, solution-oriented knowledge to government, civil society, and the wider development community.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



To generate evidence-based policy research that supports inclusive and sustainable economic growth in India.



To strengthen human capital development by examining public spending, service delivery models, and state capacity.



To assess the economic and social impacts of climate change and identify policy pathways for climate-resilient growth.



To analyse the role of state governments and the financial sector in driving growth, reducing regional disparities, and enabling job creation.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Research Program on Financial Sector and Sub-National Economic Reforms



Implementing Agency

Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP)



Location

PAN India



Target Beneficiaries

Researchers



Primary Programs

Undertook high-quality policy research across key themes, including human capital development, climate change and sustainability, financial sector reforms, and sub-national economic growth



SEMINAR FOR MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE AT CSEP

STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLE

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Researchers and Scholars (CSEP faculty and affiliates)	Conducted independent, evidence-based research across focus areas including human capital, climate change, financial sector reforms, and sub-national growth; authored papers, reports, and policy recommendations.
Implementing Agency- CSEP	Led project design and implementation; conducted research; organised and facilitated policy seminars, roundtables, and stakeholder consultations, along with dissemination activities; ensured research quality, independence, and governance.
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Provided financial support and strategic oversight to enable the execution of the research project and associated engagement activities.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Undertook high-quality policy research across key themes, including human capital development, climate change and sustainability, financial sector reforms, and sub-national economic growth.



Developed white papers and analytical studies on drivers of health outcomes, health and financial risk protection, and the political economy of low public spending on health.



Conducted sector-specific research on climate change impacts, including effects on high-value agriculture, livestock production, government finances, equity, and the energy transition.



Analysed state-level growth patterns, including drivers of regional disparities, state growth models, and the role of industrial clusters.



Examined financial sector constraints to growth, including the impact of non-performing assets on investment and employment.



Documented voices from civil society, capturing experiences, leadership lessons, and the evolving role of citizen action in India's development journey.



Organised convenings and roundtable discussions with policymakers and stakeholders to share research findings.



Disseminated research outputs through publications, public seminars, and media engagement.



04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Ltd. commissioned SoulAce to undertake an impact assessment of the research programme on the financial sector and sub-national economic reforms implemented by the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP).

OBJECTIVES OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

The primary objectives of the study were:



To assess CSEP's policy research capacity and project implementation under the research project on the financial sector and sub-national economic reforms.



To assess the overall impact of the project on evidence-based policymaking and policy discourse.

USE OF QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The evaluation adopted a qualitative research approach to understand the outcomes and impact of the research project on the financial sector and sub-national economic reforms implemented by CSEP. The qualitative assessment enabled an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders, including researchers and programme staff associated with the initiative. This approach helped capture insights on research capacity strengthening, policy engagement, and the use of evidence in policy discussions. By focusing on stakeholder perspectives, the study generated context-specific insights that informed an overall assessment of the project's impact.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The study employed purposive sampling techniques to select participants associated with the research programme on the financial sector and sub-national economic reforms implemented by CSEP. Participants were selected based on their roles and involvement in the project, including researchers and project staff. This approach enabled the collection of insights from individuals with direct experience of the initiative, in line with the study objectives.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The assessment was guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring adherence to globally recognised standards. This approach provided a structured and credible basis for evaluating the program's relevance, effectiveness, and impact.



RESEARCH DESIGN



Research design used

Descriptive research design



Sampling technique

Purposive sampling



Sample size

10 Stakeholders



Qualitative method used

Semi-structured interviews, testimonials of the key stakeholders

KEY STAKEHOLDERS



Researchers and scholars



Project staff



Implementing Partner & project team

STUDY TOOLS

Semi-structured interview guides were developed for key stakeholders following a review of project documents and intervention components. Indicators were defined in advance to ensure alignment with the study objectives.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The impact evaluation adhered to a rigorous ethical framework, ensuring that the study was conducted responsibly and in accordance with established research ethics. The rights and well-being of participants were prioritised throughout the process. Informed consent was obtained by providing comprehensive information about the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, enabling participants to make voluntary and informed decisions after their queries were addressed. Strict measures were implemented to maintain confidentiality and privacy. Data were securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel, and participant identities were protected through anonymisation and coding techniques. Participation was entirely voluntary, free from coercion or undue influence, underscoring respect for autonomy and individual choice. Throughout the study, participants were treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, and their well-being remained the highest priority, with appropriate support provided whenever required.

05. KEY FINDINGS



MANAGING PUBLIC FINANCES

IN A NEW GLOBAL ERA

INDIA'S EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES



Anoop Singh

This chapter presents insights from interactions with key stakeholders associated with the CSEP research programme on the financial sector and sub-national economic reforms. Based on qualitative interviews and stakeholder consultations, the assessment examined how the project strengthened research capacity, supported policy engagement, and contributed to evidence-based policymaking.

EXPANSION OF HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AT CSEP

The project placed a strong emphasis on strengthening human resource capacity at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) by expanding and supporting a multi-disciplinary team of researchers working across economic growth, public finance, climate change, energy transition, and sub-national governance. The initiative focused on building a sustained pipeline of policy researchers by engaging early-career researchers, research associates, fellows, and senior scholars, while also creating opportunities for mentoring, skill development, and long-term institutional association.

Qualitative discussions with researchers, project staff, and senior leadership indicated that the project contributed to a gradual but meaningful strengthening of human resource capacity at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP). Stakeholders highlighted that the project enabled the institution to engage researchers at different career stages, including early-career research associates, fellows, and senior scholars, across thematic areas such as climate policy, public finance, state-level growth, and critical minerals.

Discussions with stakeholders indicated that the project coincided with a critical phase of institutional expansion at the CSEP, as the organisation transitioned to a fully independent Indian policy think tank. Discussions with the stakeholders highlighted that CSEP's research strength expanded significantly during and following the project period.



Expansion of Research Team and Research Capacity

Mr. Shishir Gupta, Senior Research Fellow, stated that the institution had transitioned from around 30-35 scholars to close to 100, and that the foundation for this expansion was laid during the project period. He further noted that this growth enabled CSEP to deepen its research capability, support multiple thematic areas simultaneously, and move towards a more stable and sustainable research structure.

Leadership interviews further highlighted that this growth in research staff was supported by a parallel expansion in the organisation's programme scale and institutional credibility.

Mr. Yasser Ammar Naqvi, Associate Director-Development, noted that "I feel deeply grateful to Bajaj Auto for the CSR support provided to the Centre for Social and Economic Progress. The funding came at a crucial time and played an important role in building the organisation's institutional and research capacity, enabling us to expand our team and strengthen policy-oriented research."



Growth in Annual Programme Budget

He further added that the Centre for Social and Economic Progress's annual project budget increased from approximately ₹10 crore in 2021 to over ₹25 crore, reflecting a significant expansion in the organisation's operational and research capacity during the project period. In addition, researchers highlighted that structured mentoring, internal peer reviews and regular research discussions helped integrate new researchers and strengthen policy research skills. These inputs indicate that the project supported institutional scale and stability by enabling CSEP to expand and consolidate its research teams, thereby strengthening its ability to undertake sustained, multi-year policy research.



ENABLING EARLY-STAGE RESEARCH IN EMERGING POLICY AREAS



Agenda-setting Research in Critical Minerals

The project enabled early-stage research on critical minerals and non-fuel mining at a time when these issues had not yet gained prominence in India's policy discourse. Stakeholders highlighted that the project allowed the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) to initiate research in this area well before it became a national policy priority.

Mr. Shishir Gupta, Senior Research Fellow, who led research on minerals and mining, noted that "the initiative on non-fuel minerals and critical minerals was launched in September 2019, when no other institution was doing green transition-related work in this space." During the project period, CSEP developed several working papers examining mineral criticality, demand projections for green technologies, and royalty regimes. This body of research was subsequently cited in the Ministry of Mines' Critical Minerals Report (2023).

Reflecting on the policy relevance of this work, Mr. Shishir Gupta further observed that the revised edition in 2023 led to the Government of India's first official list of 30 critical minerals, which was directly influenced by CSEP's work. These findings indicate that the project supported agenda-setting research that contributed to shaping India's emerging policy framework on critical minerals.



Climate Change and Net Zero Research

The project also enabled sustained research on India's climate transition, including work on Net Zero 2070 pathways and non-price climate policy instruments. Interviewed researchers highlighted that this research focused on assessing the economic feasibility and equity implications of India's climate commitments at a stage when these issues were still under active debate.

Mr. Utkarsh Patel, Research Fellow, shared that "the study provided an economic rationale showing the 2070 target as fair and feasible, especially when compared with the historical emissions of developed countries." He also highlighted the development of the Carbon Tracker tool alongside this research, noting that it served as an important data resource supporting ongoing policy analysis and discussions.

In addition to climate and sustainability research, the project supported studies on public finance and macroeconomic governance, including research on non-performing assets (NPAs), off-budget borrowings, public financial management, and state-level economic growth. Ms. Shruti Gupta, Research Associate, noted that although direct attribution in policy documents was not always evident, these studies contributed to policy discussions on fiscal transparency, financial stability, and economic resilience.

Altogether, stakeholder interactions indicated that the project enabled CSEP to generate timely, high-risk, and early-stage research across multiple emerging policy areas, positioning the institution to provide evidence ahead of formal policy demand.



Early-Stage Research on Public Health Financing and Health Outcomes

The project also enabled early-stage research on public health financing and health outcomes at a time when questions around low public spending on health and financial risk protection were gaining urgency but lacked sustained policy-focused analysis. Stakeholders noted that this work focused on understanding structural drivers of low health allocations, the political economy of health spending, and the implications for equity and household financial vulnerability.

Ms. Shruti Gupta, Research Associate, noted during interviews that research under the programme examined public expenditure patterns and fiscal design issues affecting health outcomes. She highlighted that “the work on public finance helped unpack why health continues to receive low priority in budgetary allocations and how financing structures affect outcomes on the ground.” This research contributed to internal policy discussions and helped frame health financing as a macroeconomic and governance issue rather than only a sectoral concern.

Stakeholders emphasised that positioning health within broader public finance and economic reform debates was critical, particularly given rising out-of-pocket expenditures and unequal access to healthcare across states. While direct policy attribution was not always visible, interviewees noted that this agenda-setting research strengthened CSEP’s ability to engage on health-related policy questions from a systemic and fiscal perspective.

DISCUSSION WITH DR. RAJESH CHADHA, SENIOR FELLOW AT CSEP



RESEARCH OUTPUTS AND KNOWLEDGE GENERATION



Scope and Continuity of Research Outputs

Stakeholder interviews and administrative inputs indicated that the project supported sustained and high-volume development of policy-relevant research outputs at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress across multiple thematic areas, including economic growth, financial sector stability, public finance, climate change, minerals and mining, and civil society. Stakeholders noted that the availability of stable institutional support enabled continuity in research production and reduced reliance on short-term, project-specific outputs.

Researchers highlighted that continuity of support allowed them to undertake iterative research cycles involving data collection, internal review, revision, and follow-on studies, rather than treating each output as a standalone exercise. Ms. Shruti Gupta, Research Associate, noted that “having continuity meant we could revisit datasets, refine arguments, and build on earlier work instead of producing one-off papers.” She further emphasised that this process enabled research teams to deepen their analysis over time and respond more effectively to feedback from internal reviews and policy discussions. Interview inputs consistently indicated that this iterative approach strengthened both the depth and consistency of research outputs, while also improving their relevance to ongoing policy debates.

Key research outputs generated or advanced during the project period, as cited by stakeholders, included books, working papers, policy briefs, and analytical reports across multiple thematic areas. Flagship outputs referred to during interviews included:

- *Anchoring Change: 75 Years of Grassroots Interventions That Made a Difference (book)*
- *India's Growth Recipe: Globally Competitive Large Firms (book)*
- *Commodity Price Shocks and NPAs in the Indian Banking Sector (working paper)*
- *Nature and Implications of Off-Budget Borrowings in India (working paper)*
- *Mineral Royalty Rates: A Policy Review (policy paper)*
- *Getting to Net Zero: An Approach for India at COP-26 (policy report)*

“ CSEP produces around 24 to 26 publications every year, including working papers, books, and policy briefs. By FY 2024–25, our cumulative research outputs were approximately 125 publications, many of which were produced or progressed during the project period. These outputs include working papers, policy briefs, books, discussion papers, and blogs.

- Mr. Manmeet Ahuja, Director – Administration



RESEARCH QUALITY, REVIEW PROCESSES, AND METHODOLOGICAL RIGOUR

Stakeholders consistently highlighted the role of structured internal review systems in maintaining research quality and credibility at CSEP. Interviews indicated that the organisation follows a multi-stage review process for its research outputs, including internal peer review, senior fellow oversight, and presentation at seminars prior to final publication.

Mr. Shishir Gupta, Senior Research Fellow, described the process as "Internal Review 1, followed by Internal Review 2, then an external-facing seminar or discussion, only after which the paper is finalised and published." He further emphasised that this layered review structure was critical to ensuring analytical robustness and institutional accountability, particularly for research addressing complex and sensitive policy issues.

Junior researchers, including Mr. Utkarsh Patel, highlighted that repeated feedback cycles improved methodological rigour and analytical clarity. He noted that "the review process helped strengthen both the technical analysis and how findings were framed for policy audiences," adding that exposure to multiple rounds of critique enhanced researchers' confidence in engaging with policymakers and external experts. Interviewees consistently reported that these systems ensured consistency and quality despite increasing output volumes.

Innovation in Knowledge Products – Carbon Tracker

Stakeholders highlighted the development of the Carbon Tracker as an example of innovation in knowledge products during the project period. The tool was developed to monitor electricity generation and emissions intensity, enabling continuous, data-driven analysis rather than reliance on periodic static reports.

Interview inputs indicated that the Carbon Tracker supported ongoing engagement in climate and energy policy discussions by providing regularly updated insights. Stakeholders noted that such tools complemented traditional publications by enhancing accessibility and allowing for more timely policy-relevant analysis. This example reflected the use of analytical tools to complement conventional research outputs.

POLICY ENGAGEMENT AND UPTAKE



Formal Policy References and Citations

Formal policy uptake was most evident in CSEP's research on critical minerals. Stakeholder interviews confirmed that this body of work was cited in the Ministry of Mines' official Critical Minerals Report (June 2023), establishing a visible linkage between CSEP's research outputs and government policy documents.

Reflecting on this engagement, Mr. Shishir Gupta, Senior Research Fellow, noted that "the latest report on Critical Minerals for India released by the Ministry of Mines cites the research conducted at CSEP." He further emphasised that this citation reflected several years of sustained research and engagement, rather than the influence of a single publication. Interviewees highlighted that such formal citations are relatively rare in policy research and usually emerge after prolonged credibility-building and alignment with policy priorities.

Researchers also noted that while similar influence pathways existed in other thematic areas, formal attribution in public documents was not always visible due to the nature of policy processes and internal government use of research.



Our research findings were actively shared through policy seminars and high-level briefings with government stakeholders. The paper on state-level growth was presented at the Ministry of Finance in North Block to the Chief Economic Adviser and senior officials. In another instance, the CEO of NITI Aayog, Mr. Subramanian, requested 30 copies of the state-growth paper for circulation among senior officials, indicating strong policy interest in the work. We also shared insights directly with state governments; for example, a policy note was sent to the Chief Minister of Punjab, who forwarded it to the Chief Secretary for consideration.

- Mr. Shishir Gupta, Senior Research Fellow



Discussion with the researchers also highlighted that, while direct attribution was not always evident, certain policy developments were closely aligned with CSEP's research recommendations. One such example cited was the introduction of an "Extra Statement" on expenditure transparency in the Union Budget by the Ministry of Finance. They emphasised that although this change was not formally attributed to CSEP's study, it reflected themes and recommendations advanced through the institution's work on public financial management (PFM).

Stakeholder evidence indicates that CSEP's research contributed to bringing public financial management into mainstream policy discussions, an area previously viewed as technical and low visibility, by framing it as a core governance and transparency issue.



Informal Policy Engagement and Advisory Interactions

Stakeholder interviews indicated that, beyond formal citations, CSEP's policy engagement occurred primarily through informal and advisory interactions embedded within ongoing policy processes. Interviewees emphasised that research findings were often shared at an early or exploratory stage, contributing to internal policy thinking rather than immediate public documentation.

As part of the project's climate and energy research, Mr. Utkarsh Patel, Research Fellow, highlighted the role of analytical tools in supporting policy engagement. He noted that the Carbon Tracker, developed during the project period, enabled real-time analysis of electricity generation by source and emissions intensity. The availability of continuously updated India-specific data was described as supporting advisory discussions by allowing policymakers to engage with evidence beyond static research outputs.



The Carbon Tracker developed under the project served as a data-based reference point, supporting discussions on electricity generation by source and emissions intensity. Research insights were further communicated to broader audiences through television and digital media. Engagements included discussions on platforms such as ET Now and NDTV, as well as appearances by Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia on multiple national English news channels.

- Mr. Utkarsh Patel, Research Fellow



Media platforms such as LinkedIn were highlighted as an important channel for informal policy engagement. Researchers used LinkedIn to share emerging research insights, analytical threads, and policy-relevant observations.

Platform	Followers
LinkedIn	67,318
Twitter (X)	43,577



MEDIA AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

OPINION EDITORIALS

Year	No. of Opinion Editorials
2021	51
2022	119
2023	130
Total	300

WEBSITE VIEWERSHIP

Year	Website Views
2021	366,125
2022	412,000
2023	564,592

“ This engagement was supported by CSEP’s wider outreach ecosystem, including personalised engagement with over 2,000 key stakeholders, an email database of more than 18,000 contacts, and a social media following of approximately 67,000 across platforms. She further noted that CSEP’s digital presence includes approximately 10,000 YouTube subscribers and over 43,000 followers on X (formerly Twitter). These platforms enabled wider engagement with research and supported agenda-framing discussions beyond formal policy channels.

- Ms. Aruna Bose, Associate Director - Communications





Convenings and Structured Policy Dialogue

During the project period, CSEP organised and participated in a series of structured convenings, seminars, and policy dialogues that enabled direct interaction between researchers and policy stakeholders. These engagements focused on research areas such as state-level economic growth, public finance and fiscal transparency, climate policy, and Net Zero pathways, critical minerals, and financial sector stability.

Type of Event		Type of Event
Seminars		4
Conferences		4
Advisory Council Meetings	Minerals Advisory Council	6
	Climate Change Advisory Council	2

Mr. Yasser Ammar Naqvi, Associate Director - Development, highlighted that structured engagement was a core part of the project's approach, noting that "research findings were regularly shared through conferences, seminars, and collaborative forums to ensure they informed policy dialogue and decision-making." He further emphasised that initiatives such as the India-Asia Engagement Series (2023) played a key role in bringing together policymakers and experts from across Asia to discuss shared economic and governance challenges.

CSEP also collaborated with international financial institutions through two seminars with the World Bank and a joint seminar with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to Mr. Naqvi, these engagements helped position CSEP's research within broader global policy discussions and enabled exchange with senior international experts.

Based on documented government citations and formal policy uptake, at least three major national-level policy decisions or policy processes have been directly informed, discussed, or shaped by CSEP research during the reporting period.

- The Ministry of Mines, in its June 2023 report Critical Minerals for India, cited CSEP's study Assessing the Criticality of Minerals for India (2023). The Ministry subsequently held a series of deliberations with CSEP, which contributed to the official identification of 30 critical minerals for India.
- The CSEP "Working Paper" Getting to Net Zero: An Approach for India at CoP-26, authored by Montek Singh Ahluwalia and Utkarsh Patel, informed India's negotiating position at COP26, shaping policy discussions on climate commitments and transition pathways.
- India's LT-LEDs submission drew directly from Dr. Rahul Tongia's scholarship, including Future of Coal in India: Smooth Transition or Bumpy Road Ahead? (2020), reflecting direct uptake of CSEP research in an official Government of India submission.

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Academic and policy collaborations formed another important component of these engagements. CSEP worked with institutions such as Columbia University (SIPA), the London School of Economics, UC Davis, and Potsdam University, as well as Indian think tanks including CEEW and IISD. In addition, research discussions involved government ministries such as Mines, Steel, and Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, supporting alignment of research with sectoral policy priorities.

National & International Partnerships and Policy Engagements
Institution / Ministry
NITI Aayog (Government of India)
Ministry of Mines (Government of India)
Ministry of Steel (Government of India)
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (Government of India)
Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) (Indian Think Tank)
International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) (Government of India)
Columbia University SIPA, United States
London School of Economics, United Kingdom
University of California, Davis, United States
University of Potsdam, Germany
United Nations Development Programme (UN agency)

MONITORING AND SUPERVISION

Reflecting on internal processes that supported these engagements, Mr. Naqvi noted that regular monthly meetings with the President, along with Advisory Council oversight and editorial review, ensured that research presented at such forums met quality standards and was policy ready.



Elevated Debt Levels and Interest Payments amid High Inflation

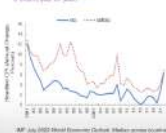
Surge in Global Debt Burden

(Percent of global GDP)



Headline Inflation

(Percent, year on year)



IMPACT



Enhanced Evidence Base for India's Green Transition

The project played a catalytic role in strengthening policy-relevant evidence on critical minerals required for India's green transition. Through early and systematic analysis of minerals essential to renewable energy, electric mobility, defence manufacturing, and energy storage, the research generated timely insights into the strategic importance of lithium, cobalt, nickel, and rare earth elements in enabling low-carbon technologies.

This work was undertaken ahead of national policy attention on critical minerals and helped position the issue within policy discussions on India's green transition. The research directly contributed to informing the Government of India's first List of Critical Minerals, released in June-July 2023, indicating a clear pathway from project-supported research to national-level policy action.



Strengthened Government Engagement and Reform-Oriented Dialogue

The project strengthened engagement with government institutions by positioning research as an input into reform-oriented dialogue, rather than as a post-hoc evaluation. CSEP's work on critical minerals was discussed with the Ministry of Mines reform committee, where CSEP was the only research institution invited to provide analytical inputs. Engagements also extended to NITI Aayog, and other policy bodies involved in coordinating industrial policy and energy transition strategies.

Reflecting on this engagement, Mr. Shishir Gupta, Senior Research Fellow, noted that the research was used at an agenda-setting stage, stating that "the work fed into discussions much before any formal policy document was drafted, helping frame how critical minerals were being viewed within government." He emphasised that such early engagement allowed evidence to shape priorities and sequencing, rather than merely commenting on decisions already taken.

Similarly, Dr. Rajesh Chadha, Senior Research Fellow, highlighted that research outputs were frequently shared during early stages of policy formulation, informing internal thinking and issue framing. He noted that "many of these discussions happen before anything is public, where research is used to test ideas and narrow down policy options." This mode of engagement was described as particularly important in emerging policy areas such as critical minerals, where evidence helps define the policy problem itself.

These interactions strengthened the role of independent research in informing government discussions on mineral security and industrial strategy. While this influence was not always visible in public documents, stakeholders indicated that the research contributed to internal deliberations and reform-oriented policy thinking.

The project also contributed to capacity building among early-career researchers by expanding their exposure to interdisciplinary research across economics, sustainability, and governance. Engagement with external institutions and senior scholars strengthened researchers' ability to work across datasets, methodologies, and policy contexts, improving their readiness to contribute to complex, multi-stakeholder research initiatives.



Improved Public Access to Policy Research

The project strengthened public access to policy research by ensuring that all outputs were freely available in the public domain. Research was conducted in the public interest, without lobbying, and focused on supporting balanced policy thinking that considers economic growth alongside equity, sustainability, and the needs of vulnerable communities.

By making research openly accessible, the project helped improve the quality of public discussion and policy debate. Findings were available not only to government institutions but also to researchers, civil society organisations, industry stakeholders, the media, and the wider public, enabling broader understanding and use of evidence.

“ These collaborations helped position CSEP’s work at the intersection of global evidence and Indian policy realities. Joint seminars and research exchanges with institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF strengthened the credibility and policy relevance of our outputs. They allowed our research to be stress-tested against international experience while remaining firmly grounded in India’s development priorities.

- Mr. Yasser Ammar Naqvi, Associate Director - Development



“ As a research institution, we have consciously aimed to make our datasets and research outputs publicly available, so that they function as a public good and can be used widely by other researchers, policymakers, and civil society. Several of our papers were also translated into regional languages, including Hindi, to ensure wider access and reach beyond English-speaking audiences.

- Mr. Shishir Gupta, Senior Fellow



“ One of the key lessons from this work is the importance of presenting complex research in a simple, policy-relevant way. We also learned that constructive critique—clearly stating both the problem and the solution, without assigning blame—leads to more meaningful and productive policy dialogue.

- Mr. Lavish Bhandari, President



06. IMPACT AT VARIOUS LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Enhanced policy research and analytical skills among researchers and early-career scholars through mentorship, exposure to complex datasets, and participation in multi-year research projects.
- Improved ability to present evidence in policy-relevant formats and engage with senior policymakers and the public.
- Increased academic output, including contributions to working papers, policy briefs, seminars, and collaborative research.



INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

- Strengthened institutional capacity for independent, interdisciplinary policy research across growth, climate change, public finance, and governance.
- Improved internal research systems, including peer review, data management, and dissemination processes.
- Enhanced institutional credibility and ability to sustain long-term research agendas beyond individual projects.



NATIONAL LEVEL

The program aligned with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



- Enhanced the national evidence base on sustainable growth, climate transition, and institutional reform.
- Supported informed policy discourse aligned with India's long-term development priorities.
- Contributed to transparency and accountability through open access to publicly available research outputs.

07. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The project has established core research, engagement, and dissemination systems that support continuity beyond the grant period. Key functions such as multi-year research projects, internal peer-review mechanisms, policy engagement platforms, and structured dissemination processes are now embedded within CSEP's regular institutional operations. Senior research leadership indicated that these systems continue to support ongoing work across growth, climate transition, public finance, and governance without dependence on project-specific arrangements.

Sustainability is further reinforced through long-standing partnerships with Indian and global institutions, including academic universities, international organisations, and peer think tanks, which continue to support collaborative research, joint seminars, and co-authored outputs. A strengthened cadre of trained researchers, diversified funding from multiple CSR, foundation, and institutional sources, and established communication channels together ensure the continuity of research activities and sustained policy engagement.

Overall, the project contributed to a durable shift in how policy research is generated, reviewed, and engaged within India. By strengthening institutional capacity, supporting agenda-setting research, and embedding evidence into policy dialogue and public discourse, the initiative moved beyond short-term outputs to create lasting research and engagement systems. These changes position the institution to continue contributing to informed policymaking, public-interest research, and long-term national priorities well beyond the project period.



08. CONCLUSION

The project played a significant role in strengthening India's policy research ecosystem by enhancing institutional capacity, supporting agenda-setting research, and deepening engagement with policymakers across key reform areas. Through sustained investment in human resources, internal research systems, and dissemination mechanisms, the initiative enabled the production of robust, policy-relevant research on economic growth, climate transition, public finance, financial sector reform, and sub-national development.

Evidence from stakeholder interactions and project documentation indicates measurable improvements in researcher capacity and institutional functioning. Researchers demonstrated stronger analytical capability, improved confidence in engaging with policy stakeholders, and greater effectiveness in presenting complex findings in formats suited to policy deliberation. The availability of stable institutional support facilitated multi-year research projects, iterative analysis, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The project also strengthened research dissemination and collaboration through seminars, policy dialogues, publications, and digital platforms, expanding the reach of evidence to government institutions, academia, civil society, industry stakeholders, and the wider public. Open access to research outputs reinforced the public-interest orientation of the work and supported more informed policy debate. Overall, the project established systems and capacities that enable continued contribution to evidence-informed policymaking and long-term national priorities beyond the project period.

SEMINAR FOCUSED ON MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE AT CSEP



ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted and innovative brand with over 21 million motorcycles sold in over 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio that includes motorcycles, scooters, and auto-rickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs both in India and international markets. It is also India's No.1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR also contributes to education, health, environment, animal welfare projects, for the sustainable development of the community and the nation.

SOULACE TEAM WITH MR LAVISH BHANDARI, PRESIDENT AT CSEP



ABOUT NGO PARTNER: CENTRE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS (CSEP)

The Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) is a not-for-profit, public policy research think tank based in New Delhi. It is registered as a company limited by shares and not for profit, under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 1956. It began operations in 2013 as the Brookings Institution India Centre (BIIC), an overseas centre of the Brookings Institution, one of the world's oldest and premier think tanks. In September 2020, BIIC was renamed CSEP Research Foundation. CSEP (formerly BIIC) has a 7-year track record of scholarship and policy impact, particularly in human capital development and sustainability. As a medium-sized research institution, senior scholars are national or international leaders in their domains and have a track record of both scholarship and government service or engagement. The President, Dr. Rakesh Mohan, was previously the Government of India's Chief Economic Advisor, Secretary, Ministry of Finance, ED on the board of the IMF, and Deputy Governor of the RBI. Distinguished Fellows include the Chairman, Vikram Singh Mehta, former Chairman of Shell India and Montek Singh Ahluwalia, former Chairman of the Planning Commission (a cabinet rank position). CSEP publishes books, reports and policy recommendations that feed into policymaking and inform the public discourse. In the areas of Human Capital Development, Growth, and Sustainability, CSEP has developed tools and published impactful research.



MR UTKARSH PATEL
RESEARCH FELLOW AT CSEP

ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

SATYAMEVA JAYATE
WATER CUP PHASE - 2

Implementing Partner:
Paani Foundation

Implementation Year:
Dec 2019 - March 2023

Assessment Year: Year 2025-26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 10
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04 - 07
	Key Impacts	08 - 09
	Community/Stakeholder Feedback	10
02	OECD Framework	11 - 13
03	Introduction	14 - 19
	Background and Need for the Project	14
	Objectives of the Project	15
	Project Details	15 - 16
	Detailed Project Activities	17 - 18
	Timeline of the Project	19
04	Research Methodology	20 - 23
	Purpose of the Impact Assessment Study	20
	Use of Mixed Method Approach	20 - 21
	Application of Quantitative Techniques	21
	Ensuring Triangulation	21
	Sampling Framework	21
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	21
	Research Design	22
	Key Stakeholders Consulted	22
	Study Tools	22 - 23
	Ethical Considerations	23
05	Key Findings	24 - 61
06	Impact Across Different Levels	62 - 64
07	Case Studies	65 - 66
08	Challenges	67
09	Recommendations	68 - 69
10	Sustainability Exit Readiness	70 - 71
11	Conclusion	72 - 73

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Community / Stakeholders Feedback
Table 2	Stakeholder Type and Role in Project
Table 3	Year-wise Activity Status

LIST OF CHARTS

Table Number	Table Name
Chart 1-9	Demographic Profile of the Respondents
Chart 10	Village Water Planning and Resource Management
Chart 11-13	Environmental and Plantation related Interventions
Chart 14-19	Digital Exposure and Access
Chart 20-23	Change Over Time: Pre-and Post-Intervention Scenario
Chart 24-27	Agricultural Productivity and Farm-level Outcomes
Chart 28-37	Key Impact

ABBREVIATIONS

ATMA	Agricultural Technology Management Agency
BAKSY	Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Krushi Swavalamban Yojana
BBF	Broad Bed Furrow
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DSS	Digital Sheti Shala
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPO	Farmer-Producer Organisation
ITI	Industrial Training Institute
JBCVS	Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha
KVK	Krishi Vigyan Kendra
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMSA	National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PMKSY	Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG	Self-Help Group
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Satyameva Jayate Water Cup - Phase 2 initiative was implemented in drought-prone regions of Maharashtra to strengthen community-led water conservation and climate-resilient agriculture. In partnership with Bajaj Auto Limited, Paani Foundation implemented the initiative, mobilising village communities to adopt structured water budgeting, collective planning, and sustainable natural resource management practices in response to recurring droughts and increasing climate variability.

Implementation coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted planned activities. Despite these constraints, the programme adapted through decentralised engagement, residential trainings conducted in phases, and expanded use of digital advisory platforms, including the Digital Sheti Shala, which was introduced as an adaptive measure during COVID-19 when residential trainings could not be held.

The intervention combined residential training, field-based capacity building, and digital advisory systems to promote scientific water management, crop planning, improved soil health, and enhanced agronomic practices. Through the Water Cup and Farmer Cup platforms, farmers engaged in group-based decision-making, joint labour practices, and collective input procurement, contributing to greater coordination and cost efficiencies. Digital tools, including the Farmer Cup mobile application, Digital Sheti Shala sessions, and Village X-Ray reports, supported data-informed agricultural planning and strengthened access to technical guidance.

Findings from the assessment indicate widespread adoption of village water budgeting, improved alignment of cropping decisions with water availability, and continued participation in collective farming systems. Respondents also reported improvements in crop performance following the adoption of improved practices, along with active participation in plantation drives and soil improvement measures. Increased engagement of women and sustained involvement in group meetings reflect strengthened community institutions.

Overall, the programme demonstrates progress in embedding water-linked agricultural planning, ecological restoration, and collective action mechanisms within participating villages, thereby enhancing resilience in water-stressed rural contexts.



WOMEN FARMERS WORKING TOGETHER

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Satyameva Jayate Water Cup Phase 2



Implementing Agency

Paani Foundation



Location

39 talukas across Maharashtra
(18 districts)



Duration

Dec 2019 - March 2023



Assessment Location

Beed, Satara, Amravati, Aurangabad,
Nandurbar and Washim districts



Total Budget

100 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total nos. of Beneficiaries

39005 farmers



Target Beneficiaries

Villagers from Water Cup villages (944 villages nominated), Farmers, labourers, women SHGs, students, and migrant workers



Primary Programs

Village water budget, Digital shetishala training, residential farmer training, sapling plantation, sustainable farming practices, collective farming

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the Paani Foundation Water Cup and Farmer Cup initiatives, across selected drought-prone villages in Maharashtra. Specifically, the assessment aimed to:



Examine the extent to which the programme strengthened water conservation practices and improved farm-level productivity and income stability among participating farmers.



Assess the role of capacity-building efforts, including training, digital tools, and on-ground handholding, in enhancing farmers' skills related to water management, sustainable farming, and collective action.



Review the sustainability of community-led water management systems, collective farming practices, and behavioural changes promoted under the programme.



SAPLING GATHERED FOR DISTRIBUTION

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND WATER MANAGEMENT



98.5%

of respondents reported that the Village Water Budget is available in their village, compared to 49.5% earlier, and 93.7% found it very helpful for crop planning and land-use decisions.



87.6%

farmers used the Village X-Ray Report for scientific farm planning.



Adoption of improved practices increased: BBF sowing (79%), seed treatment (65.2%), and a sharp rise in organic pest management (Dashparni Ark, Neem spray).



Crop yield improved: farmers producing 11-20 quintals increased from 4.9% to 32.1%, and 21-40 quintals from 0.8% to 6.5%.



Rainfall dependency reduced from 42.1% to 28.8%; drip irrigation increased from 15.1% to 31.8%.



Rabi and summer cropping increased, indicating better water utilisation.

OBJECTIVE 2: EMPOWER FARMERS THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION AND DIGITAL INCLUSION



96.0%

of respondents reported forming or joining Gats (farmer groups) as part of collective farming initiatives.



97.8%

of respondents reported practicing Irjik (joint labour) through collaborative farm activities.



86.7%

of respondents reported attending residential trainings to strengthen their agricultural knowledge and skills.

**99.6%**

of respondents reported participating in Digital Sheti Shala sessions for digital and technical learning.

**94.0%**

of respondents reported owning smartphones, enabling access to digital advisory services.

**89.8%**

of respondents reported regularly using the Farmer Cup mobile application for farm-related information and planning.

**99.9%**

of respondents reported participating in group meetings, compared to 49.9% earlier, reflecting stronger collective participation.

**95.6%**

of groups reported having formal leadership structures to support organised group functioning; 26.7% of the leadership positions in farmer groups are held by women.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVE FARM ECONOMICS AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME STABILITY

REDUCED INPUT COST

**64.5%**

of respondents reported spending below ₹5,000 on farm inputs, compared to 37.4% earlier.

**5.9%**

of respondents reported spending above ₹15,000 on farm inputs, compared to 18.9% earlier, reflecting a significant reduction in high cultivation costs.

INCREASED CROP SALES INCOME

**23.1%**

of respondents reported earning below ₹30,000 from crop sales, compared to 44.5% earlier.

**8.1%**

of respondents reported earning above ₹2,00,000 from crop sales, compared to 1.1% earlier.

INCREASED NET PROFIT PER ACRE

**25.2%**

of respondents reported net profit below ₹30,000 per acre, compared to 60.3% earlier.

**19.9%**

of respondents reported net profit in the ₹60,001-₹1,00,000 category, compared to 5.9% earlier.

INCREASED ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**29.5%**

of households reported annual income below ₹60,000, compared to 51.8% earlier.

**23.8%**

of households reported annual income in the ₹1,20,001-₹2,40,000 category, compared to 8.3% earlier.

QUALITY OF LIFE

**91.9%**

of respondents reported an improved standard of living.

**47.8%**

of respondents reported better access to education for their family members.

**38.7%**

of respondents reported reduced stress and improved health.

OBJECTIVE 4: STRENGTHEN SOIL HEALTH AND EXPAND GREEN COVER THROUGH PLANTATION DRIVES

**91.7%**

of respondents reported participating in sapling plantation drives as part of community-led ecological restoration efforts.

**82.9%**

of respondents reported improvements in soil quality following programme interventions.

**57.6%**

of plantation activities were undertaken on common lands, while 24.7% were carried out on private farmlands.

OBJECTIVE 5: STRENGTHENING PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

**97.8%**

of respondents reported practicing joint labour (Irjik), reflecting strong community collaboration in farm operations.

**92.6%**

of respondents reported increased participation of women in group activities and community initiatives.

**90.8%**

of respondents reported continued engagement in collective farming and community-led agricultural activities.

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND WATER MANAGEMENT



Enhanced production per acre among respondents through the adoption of scientific and climate-resilient agricultural practices.



Strengthened local water governance, contributing to reduced vulnerability to drought and rainfall variability.



Improved cropping intensity and crop diversification, supporting more sustainable and efficient use of land and water resources.



Greater shift towards data-driven farm planning, supported by tools such as the Village Water Budget and Village X-Ray Report.

OBJECTIVE 2: EMPOWER FARMERS THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION AND DIGITAL INCLUSION



Strengthened collective action among respondents through farmer groups (Gats) and joint labour practices (Irijik), contributing to improved coordination and reduced individual farming risks.



Enhanced confidence, leadership, and inclusive participation among respondents, with increased involvement of women in leadership roles within farmer groups.



Strengthened institutional functioning of farmer groups, supported by formal leadership structures and regular group meetings.



Improved digital inclusion and data-informed decision-making, enabled through smartphone ownership and the use of digital platforms such as the Farmer Cup application and Digital Sheti Shala sessions.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVE FARM ECONOMICS AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME STABILITY

Lower cultivation costs and improved use of farm inputs enabled farmers to manage their farming activities more efficiently.



Higher crop sales and improved productivity contributed to increased profits per acre for participating farmers.



Improved farm income translated into higher annual household earnings for many farming families.



Better financial stability contributed to improvements in overall living conditions, including greater access to education and reduced financial stress.

OBJECTIVE 4: STRENGTHEN SOIL HEALTH AND EXPAND GREEN COVER THROUGH PLANTATION DRIVES

Improved soil health and water retention capacity were reported by respondents, contributing to stronger ecological sustainability.



Enhanced soil structure, reduced soil erosion, and increased green cover were observed, strengthening ecological resilience in drought-prone regions.

OBJECTIVE 5: PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT & COLLECTIVE ACTION

Stronger social cohesion and shared accountability were observed among respondents through sustained community participation.



Increased participation of women strengthened inclusive leadership and decision-making within farmer groups.



Community-driven collaboration reinforced local ownership and strengthened the sustainability of programme interventions.

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDERS FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback Reported
Water Cup Participants (Village Community & Farmers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants reported improved awareness regarding water conservation and village-level water planning. Many shared that water budgeting and well-measurement practices supported better crop planning decisions. Some reported improved water availability for agriculture and reduced dependency on external water sources. Participants noted that collective water conservation activities strengthened coordination within the village
Farmer Cup Beneficiaries (Farmer Group Members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers reported adoption of practices such as BBF sowing, seed treatment, natural pest management, and water budgeting. Many shared that joint labour (Irijik) and bulk input purchases helped reduce certain cultivation costs. Some reported improvements in crop yield and better planning of farm activities. Several farmers noted that participation in group meetings improved discussion and collective decision-making.
Women Farmer Groups (Mahila Gats)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women reported increased participation in meetings and farming-related discussions. Many shared that group activities improved their confidence and involvement in farm planning. Some noted that collective work reduced individual workload and encouraged shared responsibility.
Gram Panchayat Representatives / Sarpanch / Panchayat Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives reported improved coordination between farmers and local institutions. Some observed better participation in Gram Sabha discussions related to water planning and agriculture. They noted gradual improvements in structured farm planning and group engagement.
App Mitraks / Digital Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> App Mitraks reported that farmers increasingly sought support for using the Farmer Cup app and accessing Digital Sheti Shala sessions. Some women and youth began using digital tools more independently over time. Network issues and limited digital skills were reported as ongoing challenges.
Trainers / Field Coordinators / Agronomists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainers reported good participation in residential and field-based training sessions. Many farmers adopted at least some of the recommended practices following demonstrations and advisory support. Continuous follow-up was noted as important for sustained adoption.
Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) / Input Dealers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FPO representatives reported that collective purchases supported cost savings in certain inputs. Input dealers observed increased awareness among farmers regarding safe and planned input use.
Non-Participant Farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-participants acknowledged observing changes in farming practices among participating groups. Some expressed interest in joining future cycles after seeing outcomes in neighbouring farms

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The project was introduced in a context of recurrent droughts, erratic rainfall, rising input costs, fragmented landholdings, and unstable farm incomes in rural Maharashtra. Many farmers relied heavily on rainfall, practised monocropping, faced labour shortages, and lacked structured water planning or collective systems. These challenges created both economic vulnerability and ecological stress, highlighting the need for a structured, climate-resilient, and community-driven agricultural model.

- Before intervention, 50.5% villages had no formal water budget, limiting scientific crop planning.
- High rainfall dependency (42.1%) increased vulnerability to climate variability.
- Farmers operated individually, leading to high input costs and labour burdens.

The project is highly relevant, as it directly addresses water insecurity, production inefficiencies, labour constraints, and income instability by integrating water governance, collective action (Gat formation), joint labour, and scientific farming practices into a coherent rural development model.



COHERENCE

The project operates within a policy ecosystem focused on climate-resilient agriculture, water governance, enhanced farmer incomes, and rural institutional strengthening. Its design – integrating water budgeting, collective farming, digital advisory, and cost optimisation – complements national agricultural reforms and Maharashtra's state-level water and environmental initiatives, ensuring alignment rather than duplication.

SDG Alignment

The initiative contributes directly to:



National & Rural Programme Alignment

The programme complements and strengthens:

- **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) & Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Krushi Swavalamban Yojana** - through improved irrigation access and micro-irrigation adoption.
- **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)** - climate-smart farming practices.
- **Digital Agriculture Mission / Digital India** - high smartphone ownership (94%) and app usage (89.8%).
- **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)** - collective action through Gats (96% participation).
- **ATMA & KVK systems** - integration with extension advisory and DSS.
- **Maharashtra Jalyukt Shivar Abhiyan & Majhi Vasundhara Campaign** - water conservation and ecological restoration.

The programme demonstrates strong vertical coherence (SDCs-National-State policies) and horizontal coherence (Panchayats, FPOs, extension systems), positioning it as a policy-aligned rural transformation model.



EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness evaluates the extent to which programme objectives – enhancing production, strengthening institutions, and improving income stability – were achieved.

- Water Budget availability increased from 49.5% to 98.5%.
- Yield shift: 11-20 quintals increased from 4.9% to 32.1%.
- Rainfall dependency reduced from 42.1% to 28.8%; drip irrigation doubled (15.1% to 31.8%).
- 96% formed Gats; 97.8% practiced joint labour.

The programme substantially achieved its objectives in water governance, production enhancement, and collective empowerment.



EFFICIENCY

Efficiency examines how well resources were utilised to generate measurable improvements in productivity and cost optimisation.

- Farmers spending above ₹15,000 per acre reduced from 18.9% to 5.9%.
- Farmers below ₹5,000 increased from 37.4% to 64.5%.
- 89.8% regularly used the Farmer Cup app.

Collective procurement, digital advisory, and improved practices significantly enhanced cost efficiency and resource optimisation.



IMPACT

Impact assesses broader livelihood, income, and social outcomes beyond immediate farm-level improvements.

- Profit below ₹30,000 reduced from 60.3% to 25.2%.
- ₹60,001-₹1,00,000 profit increased from 5.9% to 19.9%.
- Households earning below ₹60,000 reduced from 51.8% to 29.5%.
- 91.9% reported an improved standard of living.

Reduced input cost + increased production → increased net profit → increased annual income → improved quality of life.



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability evaluates whether institutional systems and economic gains are likely to continue beyond programme facilitation.

- 95.6% groups have formal leadership structures.
- Near-universal participation in group meetings post-intervention.
- Digital penetration and structured water governance support long-term continuity.
- 29.5% households remain in the lowest income bracket, indicating scope for further deepening.

Institutional sustainability is strong; economic gains are significant but require continued scaling for vulnerable groups.

Overall OECD Score: 4.5 / 5 - High Development Effectiveness with Strong Policy Coherence



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

Index: 5 Points - Very High ; 4 Points - High ; 3 Points - Moderate ; 2 Points - Low ; 1 Point - Very Low

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Recurring droughts and increasing climate variability have placed significant pressure on rural livelihoods in the drought-prone regions of Maharashtra, where agriculture remains highly dependent on the availability and effective management of water resources. In the absence of sustainable water management and collective planning, these conditions often lead to declining agricultural productivity, rising input costs, unstable farm incomes, and increased vulnerability of farming communities to climate-related risks.

To address these challenges, the Water Cup initiative, implemented by Paani Foundation with funding support from Bajaj Auto Ltd., was introduced as a large-scale community mobilisation programme aimed at combating drought through water conservation and watershed development. The initiative encourages villages to undertake collective water conservation activities based on Village Water Budgets, enabling communities to assess water availability and plan water use more sustainably. Through active participation of villagers and collaboration with local institutions such as the Gram Panchayat, the programme seeks to strengthen groundwater recharge and promote shared responsibility for water resource management.

Building on the improved water availability created through the Water Cup, the Farmer Cup was subsequently introduced to support farmers in using conserved water more efficiently to enhance agricultural productivity and livelihoods. The programme promotes collective farming through farmer groups (Gats), encourages the adoption of improved agronomic practices, and supports climate-resilient farming methods. Farmers receive capacity-building support through residential and digital training programmes covering improved farming practices, natural and residue-free agriculture, cost reduction strategies, and group governance. Continuous field-level support from trained facilitators, along with digital advisory platforms such as Digital Sheti Shala sessions, mobile applications, and Village X-Ray reports, enables farmers to adopt improved practices and make informed decisions related to crop planning, input use, and water management.

The project is further complemented by the Samruddha Gaon Spardha, launched by Paani Foundation in 2020 following the Water Cup. While villages created over 550 billion litres of water storage between 2016 and 2019, increased water availability also led in some cases to over-extraction and the cultivation of water-intensive crops, highlighting that water conservation alone cannot fully drought-proof villages. In response, the initiative encourages communities to move beyond conservation towards sustainable agriculture, improved livelihoods, and ecological restoration, linking water security with better farming practices and collective participation to strengthen long-term economic and environmental sustainability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



Enhance Sustainable Agricultural Production and Water Management



Strengthen Soil Health and Expand Green Cover through Plantation Drives.



Empower Farmers through Collective Action and Digital Inclusion.



People's Movement & Collective Action.



Improve Farm Economics and Household Income Stability.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Satyameva Jayate water Cup Phase - 2



Implementing Agency

Paani Foundation



Location

Maharashtra across 39 talukas



Total no. of Beneficiaries

39005 farmers



Target Beneficiaries

Villagers from Water Cup villages (944 villages nominated), Farmers, labourers, women SHCs, students, and migrant workers



Primary Programs

Village water budget, Digital shetishala training, residential farmer training, sapling plantation, sustainable farming practices, collective farming

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Ltd)	Provided financial resources, strategic guidance, and programme oversight to ensure effective implementation and achievement of intended outcomes.
Implementing Agency (Paani Foundation)	Designed and executed Water Cup and Farmer Cup interventions. Conducted residential and digital capacity-building programmes. Facilitated water budgeting, well measurement, crop planning, ecological restoration, and farmer collective formation. Enabled MGNREGA convergence during COVID-19 to sustain watershed works and rural employment.
Farmer Cup Beneficiaries (Farmer Group Members)	Adopted improved agronomic practices, including BBF sowing, seed treatment, natural pest management, and scientific water budgeting. Participated in collective labour (Irjik), bulk input procurement, structured group meetings, and revenue tracking.
Women Farmer Groups (Mahila Gats)	Engaged in farm planning discussions, group cultivation activities, collective input decisions, and participation in Digital Sheti Shala. Contributed to household-level agricultural decision-making and collective resilience.
Gram Panchayat Representatives / Sarpanch / Panchayat Members	Facilitated community mobilisation, supported Gram Sabha discussions on water planning and agriculture, enabled coordination with local government schemes, and supported MGNREGA convergence.
Facilitators/ Trainers	Delivered residential training sessions, conducted on-field demonstrations, supported technical planning (water budgeting, crop surveys), and ensured follow-up for adoption of practices.
App Mitraks / Digital Volunteers	Assisted farmers in accessing the Farmer Cup app and Digital Sheti Shala modules. Supported data entry (well measurements, crop surveys) and improved digital inclusion among women and youth.
Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) / Input Dealers	Supported collective input procurement, facilitated access to quality seeds and agri-inputs, and interacted with farmer groups regarding best-use practices.
Non-Participant Farmers (men and Women Separate groups)	Observed and informally validated visible changes in farming practices, water availability, and income improvements within participating villages.

DETAILED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

CAPACITY BUILDING & TRAINING PROJECT



A structured Training of Trainers (ToT) model was implemented through a 4-day residential programme, resulting in the certification of 107 Social and Technical Trainers.



3-day residential training programs were conducted under the Farmer Cup Initiative, to empower farmers with the skills and mindset to start on the path towards prosperity.



One-day offline congregation trainings were conducted across 39 talukas, engaging 6,024 villagers from 778 villages.



Digital Sheti Shala and online technical modules were implemented, achieving over 46,000 registrations and ensuring large-scale knowledge dissemination.

WATER MANAGEMENT & DATA-LED PLANNING



Groundwater monitoring and water-use planning were institutionalised at the village level. Well measurements were conducted in 734 villages, covering 7,359 unique wells measured 18,649 times.



Crop surveys were completed in 600 villages, leading to the generation of Village Water-Use "X-Ray Reports." These reports enabled evidence-based crop planning and strengthened water budgeting practices.



Data-driven dashboards and monitoring systems were operationalised at village and taluka levels to enhance accountability and decision-making.

COMMUNITY MOBILISATION & PARTICIPATION



A total of 944 villages across 39 talukas and 18 districts actively participated in Samruddha Gaon Spardha.



Village-level committees and volunteer networks were formed and strengthened to drive collective action.



Structured Shramdaan (voluntary labour) activities were conducted, supported by technical supervision and layout marking of water conservation structures, ensuring quality implementation and community ownership.

ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION OUTCOMES



Large-scale ecological restoration activities were implemented across participating regions with over 2,00,000 saplings planted across 39 talukas.



Protected grasslands were developed in 568 villages, supported by community-led monitoring and protection systems.

FARMER LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT



1,516 farmer collectives were formed to promote group-based scientific agriculture under the Farmer Cup initiative.



Structured crop planning, collective input procurement, cost accounting, and market linkage systems were operationalised, strengthening farm-level financial viability.

ADAPTIVE RESPONSE DURING COVID-19



During lockdown periods, digital training systems were scaled to maintain programme continuity.



Farm-to-home market linkages were facilitated to sustain farmer incomes.



Watershed and soil conservation activities were implemented through MGNREGA-approved works, enabling wage-based employment for rural households while sustaining village-level natural resource management efforts.

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

The project implemented by Paani Foundation was carried out between 2019 and 2023. From 2019 to 2022, activities under Samruddha Gaon Spardha focused on village-level water budgeting, well measurement, crop surveys, ecological restoration, and structured community engagement. In 2022, the Satyamev Jayate Water Cup was launched and continued through 2023. During this period, residential farmer training programmes were conducted, farmer collectives were formed, and collective agricultural practices were implemented. Digital Sheti Shala and online modules were operational during the implementation phase, starting from 2021, to ensure continued farmer engagement.

YEAR-WISE ACTIVITY STATUS

Activities	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Preparatory Training for Samruddha Gaon Spardha					
Village Water Budgeting & Planning					
Well Measurement & Monitoring					
Crop Survey & Water "X-Ray" Reports					
Ecological Restoration (Plantation & Grasslands)					
Digital Sheti Shala					
Farmer Cup					
Residential Farmer Trainings					
Formation of Farmer Collectives					



**WORKING TOGETHER FOR
SAPLING PLANTATION
ACTIVITY**

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Ltd engaged SoulAce to conduct an impact assessment to evaluate the outcomes of its community-led initiatives- Water Cup and Farmer Cup, implemented across selected villages in Maharashtra, by Paani Foundation. The assessment aimed to understand the programme's effectiveness in strengthening water conservation, improving farm practices, enhancing livelihoods, and building community-led resilience to drought and climate change.

PURPOSE OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

The primary objectives of the impact assessment were:



To assess the pre-intervention status of water availability, farming practices, collective action, and livelihood conditions of participating farmers and villages prior to engagement with the Water Cup and Farmer Cup initiatives.



To evaluate the extent of participation, adoption of practices, and satisfaction of beneficiaries with training support, digital tools, collective farming approaches, and water management interventions promoted under the programme.



To assess the overall impact of the initiatives on water conservation outcomes, agricultural productivity, cost efficiency, farm income, and household well-being.



To understand how the programme contributed to building a people's movement focused on water conservation, water management, and ecological balance at the village level.

USE OF MIXED-METHOD APPROACH

A mixed-method research approach was adopted to capture both measurable outcomes and lived experiences of beneficiaries:

- Quantitative and qualitative methods were combined to assess changes in water management practices, farming outcomes, income levels, and community behaviour.
- Qualitative inputs were gathered through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with farmers, farmer group leaders, Paani Foundation trainers, village volunteers, village leaders and other key stakeholders. These interactions captured perceptions, behavioural change, and collective dynamics.

- Quantitative data were collected through structured surveys administered to participating farmers and households, providing statistical evidence of change.
- The integration of both methods ensured a comprehensive and balanced understanding of programme outcomes and impact.

APPLICATION OF QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES

- Structured questionnaires and surveys were used to collect numerical data from beneficiary farmers.
- Quantitative tools generated measurable evidence on indicators, including adoption of improved farming practices, use of water budgets, collective farming practices, cost savings, income changes, and quality-of-life improvements.
- The data enabled objective assessment of pre- and post-intervention outcomes.
- Statistical analysis supported validation of programme effectiveness.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

To enhance the credibility and robustness of findings, triangulation was systematically applied. Data were collected from multiple sources, including farmers, farmer group leaders, trainers, programme staff, and field observations. A combination of research tools - surveys, interviews, FGDs, and review of programme records was used to cross-verify information. This approach minimised bias and strengthened the reliability of impact conclusions.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

A combination of random sampling and purposive sampling techniques was adopted. Random sampling was used to select beneficiary farmers for quantitative surveys, ensuring representativeness across villages and farmer groups. Purposive sampling was applied to identify key informants such as farmer group leaders, Paani Foundation trainers, digital facilitators, and community volunteers for qualitative discussions, based on their role and programme involvement. This blended sampling approach ensured both statistical validity and depth of insights.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The research study applied the OECD-DAC framework for evaluation, ensuring alignment with globally accepted standards and norms. This framework offered a strong and uniform method to evaluate the project's impact, bolstering the credibility and pertinence of the research findings.



RESEARCH DESIGN

- » Research Design Used: Descriptive research design
- » Sampling Technique: Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling
- » Sample Size: 720
- » Qualitative Methods Used: Semi-structured interviews, testimonials, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with farmers, farmer group members, and key stakeholders

KEY STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED



Project Participants / Beneficiaries

Village-level participants and farmers engaged under Samruddha Gaon Spardha and the Satyamev Jayate Water Cup, including members of farmer collectives, women farmer groups (Mahila Gats), and water governance volunteers. Participants were involved in water budgeting, well measurement, crop planning, ecological restoration, and collective farming practices.



Implementation Team Staff

Programme leadership, cluster coordinators, field facilitators, trainers, and digital support teams from Paani Foundation are responsible for programme design, residential training delivery, Digital Sheti Shala implementation, monitoring of well measurements and crop surveys, facilitation of farmer collectives, and coordination of ecological restoration activities.



Village Institutions & Local Governance Representatives

Gram Panchayat members, Sarpanch representatives, and local village leaders who participated in Gram Sabha discussions, supported village water planning processes, and facilitated coordination with local government mechanisms, including MCNREGA convergence where applicable.



Digital Volunteers / App Mitras

Local youth and community volunteers are supporting farmers in accessing the Farmer Cup app, Digital Sheti Shala sessions, and online training modules.



Market & Institutional Linkages

Farmer-Producer Organisations (FPOs) and input dealers facilitated collective input purchases and supported farmer groups in adopting improved agricultural practices.

STUDY TOOLS

Structured Questionnaires:

Structured questionnaires were developed for participating farmers to capture data across key focus areas, including water conservation practices, farming methods, collective action, digital adoption, cost savings, income changes, and quality of life. Indicators were clearly defined prior to survey administration to ensure consistent and comparable responses.

Semi-Structured Interviews:

Semi-structured interview schedules and focus group discussion guides were developed for secondary stakeholders, including farmer group leaders, trainers, community volunteers, and project staff. Stakeholders were identified across programme components such as Water Cup activities, Farmer Cup training, digital interventions, and collective farming practices. Semi-structured interviews and FGDs were conducted to capture qualitative insights on programme implementation, behavioural change, community mobilisation, and sustainability of outcomes.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation followed a strong ethical framework, prioritising the rights and well-being of all participants.



Informed consent was obtained after the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits were clearly explained.



Confidentiality and privacy were ensured through secure data storage and anonymisation or coding of participant information.



Participation was entirely voluntary, with no coercion or pressure, respecting each participant's autonomy and choice.



All participants were treated with dignity and fairness, and support was provided whenever needed to safeguard their well-being.



**BENEFICIARY
FARMER GROUP**

05. KEY FINDINGS

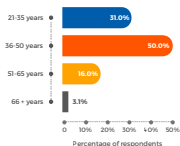


This chapter presents insights and analysis from participating farmers and community members across selected villages in Maharashtra to evaluate the overall outcomes of the Paani Foundation Water Cup and Farmer Cup initiatives, based on primary survey data and field observations. The chapter examines how the programme has strengthened water conservation practices, improved farming efficiency, enhanced income stability, and built community resilience to drought and climate variability.

The assessment focused on key dimensions, including the demographic and socio-economic profiles of farmers, pre-intervention water availability and farming practices, participation in training and collective activities, adoption of improved agricultural methods, and post-intervention changes in income, costs, and quality of life. Data were collected through structured field surveys, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions with farmers, farmer group leaders, Paani Foundation trainers, and village-level facilitators to develop a comprehensive understanding of the programme's impact, effectiveness, and contribution to building a people's movement for water conservation, water management, and ecological balance.

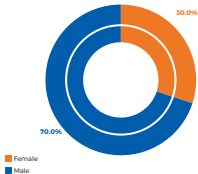
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

CHART 1: AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=720)



The age-wise profile of respondents shows participation across a wide range of age groups, with 50% in the 36-50 years category, followed by 31% in the 21-35 years category. About 16% belonged to the 51-65 years age group, while 3.1% were aged 66 years and above. This distribution indicates that the study captured inputs from participants across different age brackets, providing a balanced understanding of programme impacts across generations.

CHART 2: GENDER-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=720)

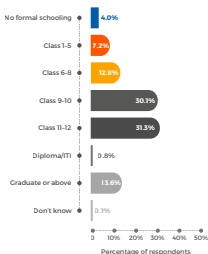


The gender-wise proportion of the study indicates that 70% of the respondents were men and 30% were women.

Notably, the initiative made deliberate efforts to encourage women's participation, particularly women who were not previously involved in such farming or collective activities. Hence, their presence indicates improved inclusion and reflects their increased involvement alongside male participants in programme-related activities.

A total of 720 respondents participated in the study across six districts. The highest participation was recorded from Satara, followed by Beed and Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar. Comparatively fewer respondents were from Amrawati, Washim, and Kaij.

CHART 3: EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=720)



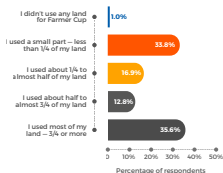
The respondents represented a diverse range of educational backgrounds, with the majority having completed formal schooling.

A significant share had studied up to secondary and higher secondary levels, with 30.1% completing Class 9-10 and 31.3% completing Class 11-12. Around 13.6% had pursued graduation or higher qualifications. A smaller proportion had partial schooling up to the middle level, while only 4.0% reported having no formal education.

PROJECT-INTERVENTION

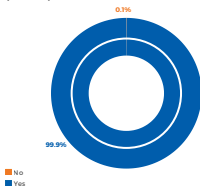
Programme Participation, Exposure and Institutional Processes

CHART 4: EXTENT OF LAND UTILISATION FOR FARMER CUP ACTIVITIES (N=720)



The findings indicate strong engagement of farmers in Farmer Cup activities, with 35.6% reporting that they used most of their land for programme-related cultivation. A comparable 33.8% allocated a small portion of their land, reflecting partial but active participation. Additionally, 16.9% used about one-fourth to nearly half of their land, while 12.8% dedicated around half of their land to Farmer Cup activities. Overall, the distribution reflects meaningful integration of programme practices into regular farming systems.

CHART 5: VILLAGE PARTICIPATION IN SAMRUDDHA GAON SPARDHA (N=720)

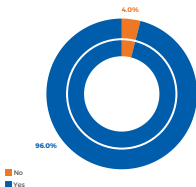


Samruddha Gaon Spardha is a statewide competition launched by Paani Foundation in 2020 to inspire villages to move beyond water conservation and adopt community-led water management, ecological restoration, and collective farming practices. Chart 5 shows near-universal village-level participation, with communities actively engaging in the initiative, reflecting strong interest, commitment, and collaboration in adopting collective farming approaches and undertaking activities focused on sustainable agriculture and overall village development.



COLLECTIVE LABOUR BY FARMERS

CHART 6: PARTICIPATION IN FORMATION OR JOINING OF 'GAT' (N=720)

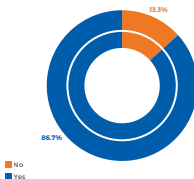


Participation in the formation or joining of farmer groups (Gat) was exceptionally high, indicating strong acceptance of collective farming approaches encouraged through the programme.

A vast majority of respondents (96.0%) reported that they had formed or joined a Gat. This reflects a strong inclination toward collective action, shared decision-making, and peer learning, highlighting the relevance and effectiveness of group-based interventions at the community level.

RESIDENTIAL TRAINING PROJECT

CHART 7: ATTENDANCE IN RESIDENTIAL TRAINING PROGRAMS (N=720)



Attendance in residential training programs was notably high, reflecting strong interest among farmers in structured, immersive learning opportunities offered through the programme.

A large majority of respondents, 86.7%, reported attending residential training programs. This high level of participation indicates farmers' willingness to invest time in gaining practical knowledge, peer learning, and exposure to new ideas that support improvements in farming practices and decision-making.

A smaller share of respondents, 13.3%, did not attend residential training programs.



FARMER GROUP PURCHASING AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

“Our farmer group was formed gradually through awareness meetings, regular farm-level discussions, and continuous guidance from Paani Foundation. Initially, farmers were hesitant to work together, but step by step, trust was built through consistent interaction, exposure to success stories from nearby villages, and strong support from field staff. Gram Sabha meetings facilitated by the Panchayat and Paani Foundation played an important role in motivating farmers, women, and youth to participate in trainings and collective planning under the Farmer Cup programme.

The COVID-19 period created major challenges for our group, including reduced participation, labour shortages, and income loss. Meetings were delayed due to health concerns, but Paani Foundation's support through small-group interactions, Digital Sheti Shala sessions, and guidance videos helped us restart activities safely. Training programmes, printed materials, phone-based advisory, and access to tools proved especially useful in improving daily farming decisions. Farmers began adopting key practices such as seed treatment, BBF sowing, natural pest management, safety equipment use, and water budgeting, which led to improved crop productivity and better per-acre profitability.

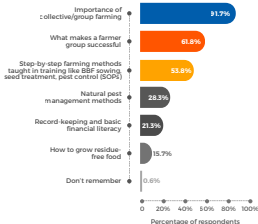
Many members shifted from monocropping to multi-cropping based on water availability and expert guidance, resulting in reduced risk, improved soil health, and more stable incomes. Collective actions such as bulk input purchase and joint labour worked well, although regular digital record-keeping remained a challenge for some members due to limited skills and network issues. Women actively participated in meetings, trainings, and decision-making, supported by flexible timings and encouragement from the group. Winning the First Prize at the state level in Farmer Cup 2022 was a major motivation for our group and inspired other farmers and youth in the village. Going forward, we plan to strengthen group meetings, create a savings fund, and manage shared tools, while continuing to seek expert guidance, improved digital access, and financial support to sustain our progress.”

-Sagar Sanya Shanaware, Nimantrak (Gat Leader), Ramrajya Farmer Group, Kulangana village, Amravati District, Maharashtra



FARMERS LEARNING FROM
SHETISHALA APP

CHART 8: TRAINING TOPICS RECALLED FROM RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS (N=623)



Participants who attended the residential training programs were able to recall a wide range of topics, reflecting strong retention of key messages related to collective action, farming improvement, and long-term sustainability.



IMPORTANCE OF COLLECTIVE OR GROUP FARMING (91.7%)

An overwhelming 91.7% of respondents recalled sessions on the importance of collective or group farming. This indicates that the core message of working together, sharing responsibility, and strengthening unity among farmers was clearly communicated and strongly internalised during the training.



WHAT MAKES A FARMER GROUP SUCCESSFUL (61.8%)

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (61.8%) remembered learning about the factors that contribute to a successful farmer group. This included aspects such as coordination, trust, shared responsibility, and collective decision-making, highlighting the emphasis placed on building strong and functional groups.



STEP-BY-STEP FARMING PRACTICES AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (53.8%)

More than half of the participants (53.8%) recalled structured, step-by-step guidance on improved farming practices taught during the training. This suggests that practical demonstrations and clear explanations helped farmers retain knowledge related to improving on-field performance.



NATURAL PEST MANAGEMENT METHODS (28.3%)

Around 28.3% of respondents specifically recalled learning about natural pest management methods. While recalled by a smaller proportion, this still reflects growing awareness of alternatives to chemical inputs and interest in environmentally friendly practices.



RECORD-KEEPING AND BASIC FINANCIAL LITERACY (21.3%)

About 21.3% of participants remembered sessions focused on record-keeping and basic financial literacy. This indicates that a segment of farmers began associating improved farming not only with field practices but also with better planning, tracking, and financial awareness.



RESIDUE-FREE FOOD PRODUCTION (15.7%)

Nearly 15.7% of respondents recalled discussions on growing residue-free food. This reflects emerging awareness around food safety, health, and sustainable production, even though it was not the primary focus for all participants.

“ As a trainer with Paani Foundation in Warud, Amravati, I have been involved in organising and delivering residential trainings, field schools, Gram Sabha mobilisations, and Digital Sheti Shala sessions under initiatives such as the Samruddha Gaon Spardha, Farmer Cup, and Group Farming Premier. The trainings reached young and middle-aged farmers, including smallholders, with women accounting for 40-50% of participants, and were encouraged through targeted mobilisation, personal outreach, and flexible timings, while youth were engaged by highlighting practical, cost-saving, and safe farming practices. Farmer selection was done through village meetings and group discussions, focusing on willingness to adopt SOPs and ensuring inclusion. Farmers found seed treatment, BBF sowing, natural pest management, soil health practices, and water budgeting most useful, with concepts covered digitally and hands-on practices delivered in the field using videos, guides, and demonstrations. Despite challenges such as tool shortages, labour constraints, weather issues, time pressure, and resistance to changing traditional practices, which were further intensified during COVID-19, many farmers adopted recommended SOPs, shifted to water-efficient and mixed cropping, formed collectives for shared labour and bulk input purchases, and used village water budgets for crop planning. Ongoing support through DSS and field advisors, along with regular feedback, helped improve training delivery, and some trainees received Farmer Cup recognition, motivating others. In one village, complete adoption of seed treatment and BBF sowing nearly doubled yields and inspired neighbouring farmers, clearly showing the impact of practical, locally relevant training.

- Kalyani Chatrapatirao Wadaskar, Trainer, Paani Foundation



**SHETISHALA TRAINING
DURING THE PROJECT PERIOD**

VILLAGE WATER PLANNING AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

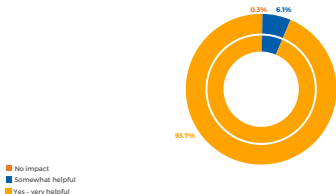
VILLAGE WATER BUDGET

A village water budget is a systematic plan that tracks the availability, usage, and allocation of water resources within a village. It helps communities plan irrigation, crop patterns, and other water-dependent activities efficiently, ensuring sustainable use of water and minimising shortages, especially in drought-prone areas.

The preparation of the village water budget is undertaken entirely by the Paani Foundation team. The programme provides full technical guidance and facilitation to ensure that the water budgeting process is carried out systematically across all project villages.

This reflects strong institutional ownership and structured implementation by the program team, ensuring consistency, technical accuracy, and effective planning for sustainable water resource management.

CHART 9: USEFULNESS OF THE VILLAGE WATER BUDGET IN CROP AND LAND-USE DECISIONS



The responses indicate that the village water budget has played a highly meaningful role in guiding farming and land-use decisions at the village level. An overwhelming 93.7% of respondents reported that it was very helpful in making decisions related to crop selection and land use. Farmers shared that a clear understanding of available water enabled them to plan cropping patterns more realistically, avoid over-extraction, and align land use with actual water availability.

From Drought to Success: How Collaboration Transformed Farming

“ Our journey began in 2018 during a severe drought. We met the Paani Foundation team and joined the Water Cup Spardha, then later we participated in the Farmer Cup. Six of us, including three men and three women, attended residential training at Ambejogai, which inspired us to form the Sangarsh Mirchi Gat and Aandata Mahila Shetkari Gat in Chincholi. Initially, there was little trust among villagers; no one wanted to work without pay, and economic challenges made it difficult. But the training built our confidence, and step by step, we brought the group together.

Today, our Gat has 42 members with 30 men and 12 women. Women actively participate in leadership, financial decisions, market purchases, and fieldwork, while young members contribute ideas and take initiative. Working together on each other's fields saves labour costs and strengthens our bonds. We follow modern practices: BBF sowing, drip irrigation, Dashparni Ark and Neem Ark, seed germination tests, reduced pesticide use, and organic farming. About 50-75% of our produce has been lab-tested for residue-free certification. Using the village water budget, we now plan irrigation, crop rotation, and land use more efficiently, conserving water, improving yields, and making better decisions for all our crops. Digital Sheti Shala sessions every Tuesday help us share crop photos and get expert guidance. Not everyone has a smartphone, but shared devices and an App Mitrak (Digital facilitator) ensure access. Financially, collective input purchases give discounts up to 75%, and joint labour eliminates costs, improves crop quality, and allows better sales. Savings are now contributed to a group fund. Investments like a BBF mulching machine have improved efficiency, and organic vegetables and fruits grown for our household have improved nutrition and health.

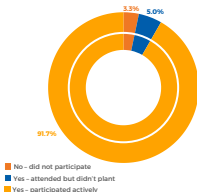
Our members have stronger bonds, coordinate better, and actively participate in village events. We attend Gram Sabha meetings and encourage others to form Gats. Recognition has followed our efforts, and we won First Prize in the Water Cup Spardha at the Taluka level and also participated in the Farmer Cup. Looking ahead, we will continue weekly meetings for crop planning, collective purchases, and fund savings, ensuring cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and sustainable growth for all members

- Sangarsh Mirchi Gat & Aandata Mahila Shetkari Gat Group, Phulambri, Chincholi, Sambhajinagar, Aurangabad



ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANTATION-RELATED INTERVENTIONS

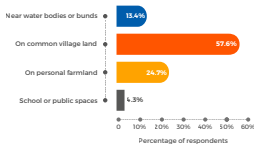
CHART 10: PARTICIPATION IN SAPLING PLANTATION DRIVE (N=720)



Participation in sapling-planting drives was notably high among respondents, reflecting strong community engagement in the environmental and greening initiatives promoted by the programme.

A substantial 91.7% of respondents reported active participation in the sapling plantation drive. These participants were directly involved in planting saplings, indicating widespread ownership of tree plantation efforts and a strong commitment to improving local green cover and environmental sustainability.

CHART 11: LOCATION OF SAPLING PLANTATION (N=696)



Sapling plantation activities were carried out across a range of locations within villages, reflecting a balanced approach to environmental improvement that combined ecological needs with community and individual priorities.



ON COMMON VILLAGE LAND (57.6%)

57.6% of respondents reported that the majority of saplings were planted on common village land. This highlights a collective focus on improving village-level green cover and ensuring that the benefits of plantation, such as shade, soil stability, and environmental improvement, are accessible to all residents.



ON PERSONAL FARMLAND (24.7%)

Nearly one-fourth of the respondents (24.7%) planted saplings on their personal farmland. This indicates farmers' willingness to integrate tree plantation within their own agricultural landscapes, supporting long-term soil health, boundary protection, and diversified farm resources.



NEAR WATER BODIES OR BUNDS (13.4%)

About 13.4% of respondents reported planting saplings near water bodies or bunds. Plantation in these areas contributes to soil conservation, reduces erosion, and helps strengthen natural water-retention structures, aligning plantation efforts with water and land management objectives.



SCHOOL OR PUBLIC SPACES (4.3%)

A smaller proportion, 4.3%, planted saplings in schools or other public spaces. While limited in number, these plantations play an important role in raising awareness among children and the wider community and fostering environmental responsibility in shared public spaces.



Participating in the sapling plantation drive was a truly meaningful experience for my family and me. Earlier, we never fully understood how small actions like planting trees could contribute to long-term environmental sustainability. Through this initiative, we learned about the importance of native species, soil conservation, and regular maintenance to ensure healthy growth. Being part of the plantation activity gave us a sense of ownership and responsibility toward our surroundings.

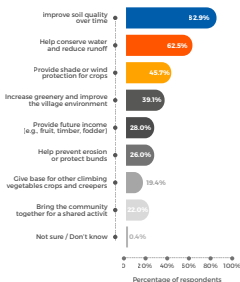
"Today, whenever I see the saplings growing along our village road, I feel proud that we have contributed to creating a greener and healthier environment for future generations. This drive has not only improved the landscape of our village but has also strengthened community participation and environmental awareness among us.

- Mr. Rameshwar Pandit, Chincholi Nakib Village, Phulambri Block, Sambhaji Nagar District



GROUP OF FARMERS PURCHASING AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

CHART 12: LONG-TERM BENEFITS OF PLANTATION DRIVE (N=696)



Participants identified multiple long-term benefits from the sapling-planting drive, reflecting both environmental and livelihood outcomes expected to strengthen village sustainability over time.

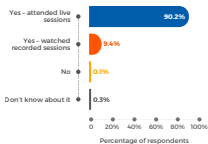
The findings reflect a strong understanding among participants regarding the long-term environmental benefits of the plantation drive. A majority of respondents identified improvement in soil quality (82.9%) and water conservation through reduced runoff (62.5%) as key benefits. Many also recognised the role of plantations in providing shade and wind protection (45.7%) and increasing greenery (39.1%).

These responses indicate that beneficiaries clearly understand the ecological and agricultural value of plantation activities. The high level of awareness around soil health and water conservation particularly highlights the programme's effectiveness in building environmental knowledge alongside practical implementation.



DIGITAL EXPOSURE AND ACCESS

CHART 13: PARTICIPATION IN DIGITAL SHETI SHALA SESSIONS



Participation in Digital Sheti Shala sessions was found to be extremely high among Farmer Cup participants, indicating strong acceptance of digital learning platforms for agricultural capacity building. This format was not part of the original design but evolved during COVID-19 as a substitute for residential training.



ATTENDED LIVE SESSIONS (90.2%)

An overwhelming majority of respondents (90.2%) reported attending live Digital Sheti Shala sessions. This high level of participation reflects strong interest among farmers in interactive learning, direct engagement with trainers, and timely access to agricultural guidance.



WATCHED RECORDED SESSIONS (9.4%)

Nearly one-tenth of respondents (9.4%) accessed the sessions through recorded videos. This highlights the usefulness of flexible, on-demand learning options for farmers who may not always be able to join live sessions due to time or connectivity constraints.

Overall, with 99.6% of respondents participating either through live or recorded sessions, the findings demonstrate near-universal engagement with Digital Sheti Shala as a key learning component of the Farmer Cup initiative.



“ Digital and field-based Sheti Shala sessions were conducted regularly, covering topics such as soil testing, BBF sowing, pest management, water planning, and organic techniques. The Gram Panchayat supported these efforts by promoting the sessions, facilitating arrangements, and encouraging inclusive participation, including women, small farmers, tenant farmers, and tribal households. As a result, visible improvements were observed in farming practices, including better germination, systematic field operations, improved water management, reduced labour costs, and healthier crop growth.

The programme also strengthened coordination between the Panchayat, Self-Help Groups, Farmer Producer Organisations, and government agricultural services. Farmers became more confident, cooperative, and open to adopting new techniques, with increased participation from youth and women. Overall, the Farmer Cup contributed to improved livelihoods, reduced stress, better time management, and enhanced family well-being. Many of these changes, such as collective planning, regular group meetings, and efficient use of tools, are expected to continue into future seasons, supporting long-term sustainability at the village level.

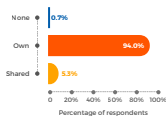
- **Nirku B. Virsam Dahikar Sarpanch, Kulangana Gram Panchayat, Amravati district, Maharashtra** ”

“ As a digital volunteer, my role is to support farmers in using the Farmer Cup app and participating in Digital Sheti Shala sessions. Many farmers face challenges such as slow internet connectivity, poor quality phones, or limited data access, so I assist them with offline processes, hotspot sharing, and app updates. It is encouraging to see that some women are now confidently using the app on their own.

While most farmers can understand advisory content, accessing support for government schemes can be difficult, especially during peak working hours. A local helpline, a simpler app interface, and step-by-step video guidance would further strengthen farmers' digital experience.

- **Vinod Dinkar Katkar, App Mitrak / Digital Volunteer, Varud Village, Taluka Khatav, Satara, Maharashtra** ”

CHART 14: ACCESS TO SMARTPHONES FOR FARM OR GROUP ACTIVITIES



Access to smartphones among farmer groups was widespread, enabling smooth communication, coordination, and the use of digital learning tools for farm and group activities.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (94.0%) reported owning a smartphone. This high level of ownership indicates strong digital readiness among farmers, allowing them to access training content, advisories, and group communication platforms with ease.

About 5.3% of respondents relied on shared smartphones within their household or group. While smaller in proportion, this suggests that collective access helped ensure inclusion of members who did not own personal devices.

“ I regularly support farmers in my village to use the Farmer Cup application for crop planning, group registration, and accessing training information. Many elderly farmers and first-time users hesitate to use smartphones due to fear of making mistakes or limited digital skills. By guiding them step by step, preparing phones in advance, and explaining features in simple language, I have helped them use the app with confidence. I have also supported farmer groups with collective registrations, enabled access to Digital Sheti Shala videos, and assisted farmers in connecting with buyers through the platform. Over time, more women and group members have started using the app independently. Being able to help people overcome their hesitation and use digital tools on their own has been a rewarding responsibility for me. It has strengthened my connection with the farming community. I believe the app could become even easier to use if it included a simple Marathi interface, offline access, short crop videos, weather alerts, an easy help button, group activity features, and photo-based pest identification, which would reduce the need for constant support and allow farmers to navigate it on their own.

- Trjoram Hiwaruji Shelake, App Mitrak, Motha Village, Chikhaldara, Amrawati

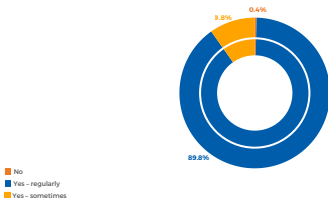


“ I've been organising for farmers for years. Participation is diverse, with 75% of participants being women. Youth and women are always enthusiastic. We tailor the training to each village, using local examples and videos. Farmers learn quickly and almost all adopt recommended practices such as Broad Bed Furrow sowing, natural pest management, shared labour, and bulk purchases. Many have even started multi-cropping and orchard cultivation. Many farmers practice organic farming, though certification is still pending. It's incredible to see how training makes farmers confident and improves their daily practices without much external help.

- Mohan Laxman Mali, Field School Coordinator, Varud, Taluka Khatav, Satara



CHART 15: USAGE OF FARMER CUP MOBILE APP



The findings indicate high adoption and regular usage of the Farmer Cup mobile application among participating farmers, reflecting strong acceptance of digital tools for agricultural learning, coordination, and decision-making.



REGULAR USAGE OF FARMER CUP APP (89.8%)

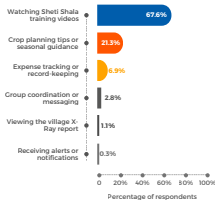
An overwhelming majority of respondents (89.8%) reported using the Farmer Cup mobile application regularly. This high level of engagement highlights the app's relevance and usability in supporting daily farming activities, accessing advisories, tracking tasks, and staying connected with programme initiatives.

“ As an App Mitrak in Sawanga village, I support farmers, women, and groups in using the Farmer Cup app for registration, crop planning, accessing Digital Sheti Shala content, and connecting with buyers through farm-to-home sales. Most people in the village are aware of the app and its purpose, and many now use it to receive updates and advice. However, older farmers often hesitate due to fear of making mistakes, low digital skills, and difficulty using smartphones. I regularly help older farmers, new users, and less digitally confident members with basic navigation, data entry, and understanding messages, while several women have now started using the app independently to watch videos, check updates, and complete registrations. Common challenges include poor network connectivity, outdated phones with low storage, and confusion during group registration when entering land, crop, and member details, which creates fear of incorrect submission. To overcome this, I assist by completing steps offline in advance, updating apps, saving links, and guiding collectives step by step to ensure a smooth registration process. I also help farmers access advisory videos, track registrations and usage, and address privacy concerns related to shared phone use and personal data. While most digital support sessions are helpful, timing sometimes clashes with farming or household work, especially for women and older farmers. Based on field experience, simpler Marathi interfaces, offline access, short crop-stage videos, weather and pest alerts, easy help buttons, group features, and photo-based pest identification would greatly improve independent app usage and reduce the need for constant support.

- **Milind Madhukarrao Hande, App Mitrak, Sawanga Village, Warud, Amravati**



CHART 16: FEATURES OF FARMER CUP MOBILE APP UTILISED



Farmers using the Farmer Cup mobile application engaged with multiple features, with training content emerging as the most widely used component, followed by planning and record-keeping tools.



WATCHING SHETI SHALA TRAINING VIDEOS (67.6%)

Over two-thirds of app users (67.6%) reported watching Sheti Shala training videos through the application. This indicates a strong preference for video-based learning and highlights the app's effectiveness as a digital extension of on-ground training efforts.



CROP PLANNING TIPS OR SEASONAL GUIDANCE (21.3%)

About 21.3% of respondents used the app to access crop planning tips or seasonal guidance. This suggests that a significant share of farmers relied on the app for informed decision-making related to crop selection, timing, and seasonal practices.



EXPENSE TRACKING OR RECORD-KEEPING (6.9%)

Nearly 6.9% of app users reported using the expense tracking or record-keeping features. While adoption remains limited, this indicates emerging awareness of the importance of financial tracking for farm management.



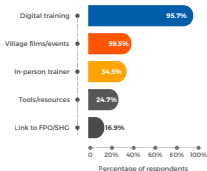
The Farmer Cup brought a positive and lasting change to our village by building unity among farmers and encouraging the adoption of scientific and sustainable farming practices. Through this program, farmers became more confident, cooperative, and open to learning new methods, such as BBF sowing, soil testing, water budgeting, and residue-free farming, leading to better crop health, improved yields, and reduced input costs. Group activities and collective planning strengthened coordination, reduced labour stress, and helped farmers manage their work more efficiently. Women, youth, small farmers, and tribal households participated actively, creating a more inclusive and motivated farming community. The use of digital training and advisory support improved access to timely information and better decision-making. Overall, the program improved productivity, reduced stress, strengthened village-level cooperation, and enhanced the quality of life for farming families, leaving behind strong systems and habits that are likely to continue in the coming seasons.

- Mayatai K. Sonagoti, Sarpanch, Sawanga Village (Warud, Amravati)



**DISCUSSION WITH BENEFICIARIES
DURING THE FIELD VISIT**

CHART 17: SUPPORT RECEIVED THROUGH FARMER CUP PROJECT



Farmer groups reported receiving a wide range of support through the Farmer Cup programme, indicating a strong mix of learning platforms, on-ground guidance, and institutional linkages that strengthened collective functioning and farm-level decision-making.



DIGITAL TRAINING (95.7%)

An overwhelming majority of respondents (95.7%) reported receiving digital training support. This highlights the central role of digital platforms in knowledge dissemination, enabling farmers to access timely information, training content, and guidance, even across distances and during challenging periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic.



VILLAGE FILMS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS (39.5%)

Nearly two-fifths of the farmer groups (39.5%) benefited from village films and community-based events. These platforms helped reinforce learning in an engaging, relatable way, encouraged peer learning, and strengthened collective motivation within villages.



IN-PERSON TRAINER SUPPORT (34.5%)

About 34.5% of respondents received support from in-person trainers. This reflects the continued importance of face-to-face guidance for clarifying doubts, building trust, and providing context-specific advice that complements digital learning.



ACCESS TO TOOLS AND RESOURCES (24.7%)

Close to one-fourth of the farmer groups (24.7%) reported receiving tools or resources. This support helped translate learning into practice by enabling farmers to apply improved methods more effectively on the ground. These tools included knowledge resources such as audio-visual aids, direct connection with agricultural scientists, and access to the Farmer Cup app, which together strengthened farmers' ability to apply training insights, seek timely guidance, and adopt improved practices with confidence.



LINKAGES WITH FARMER-PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS OR SELF-HELP GROUPS (16.9%)

Around 16.9% of respondents were supported through linkages with Farmer-Producer Organisations (FPOs) or Self-Help Groups (SHGs). These linkages contributed to stronger collective structures, improved access to markets or inputs, and greater long-term sustainability of farmer groups.

“ Farmers usually contact me with questions related to pest attacks, crop diseases, or weather conditions. I make it a priority to respond within five minutes so they can take timely action. At times, some farmers do not immediately follow the advice, often due to a lack of awareness or uncertainty. By working closely with field trainers, we ensure that the guidance provided is clear, practical, and easy to implement. The combination of field-based training and helpline support enables farmers to make informed decisions and plan their farming activities more effectively.

- **Dhanaji Hanmant Jathar, Helpline Agronomist, Varud, Taluka Khatav, Satara**

”

“ Participation in the Farmer Cup programme strengthened our group unity and transformed the way we farm and work together. With support from Paani Foundation and the Gram Panchayat, we adopted improved practices, including BBF sowing, seed treatment, natural pest management, and SOP-based farming. Joint labour (Irjij), bulk input purchase, and shared tools reduced costs and helped complete farm work on time. Regular use of Digital Sheti Shala videos and training materials improved understanding and uniform adoption of improved methods across the group. Group savings, collective selling, and mutual support reduced financial stress and improved household well-being. We also received 1st prize at the taluka level in Shivshakti Farmer Cup, with an award of ₹1 lakh in the year 2023, and the recognition boosted our confidence and motivation, and we also understood that collective action and improved farming techniques can deliver increased livelihood outcomes.

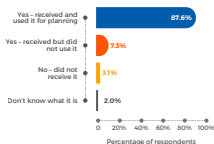
- **Shivshakti Farmer Cup Group, Kulangana Village, Amravati**

”



ORGANIC MANURE STORED FOR THE AGRICULTURAL USE

CHART 18: USE OF VILLAGE X-RAY REPORT FOR FARM PLANNING



The Village X-Ray Report emerged as a widely received and practically applied planning tool among farmers, indicating strong uptake of data-driven decision-making practices.

A large majority of respondents (87.6%) reported receiving the Village X-Ray Report and actively using it for farm planning. This high level of utilisation suggests that farmers found the report relevant and actionable, enabling them to make informed decisions on crop selection, water use, and seasonal planning.

A small proportion of respondents (7.3%) reported receiving the Village X-Ray Report but not using it for farm planning, indicating a limited gap between access to the information and its effective application. Further, 5.1% of respondents reported either not receiving the Village X-Ray Report or being unaware of it. Overall, the findings indicate that the Village X-Ray Report is widely adopted and valued, supporting systematic farm planning and enabling farmers to use localised information to make more informed agricultural decision.

Village X-Ray Report is a data-based diagnostic report prepared after conducting well measurements, borewell census, and crop surveys in the village. It analyses water availability, irrigation patterns, and crop water demand to assess the overall 'water health' of the village. The report helps the community prepare a scientific water budget and make informed decisions on crop planning and sustainable water management.

“ The Village X-Ray Report helped us clearly understand the status of our village's ground and surface water, and how much we were using for crops. Earlier, we made farming decisions based on experience, but now we plan our crops according to water availability. This has reduced uncertainty and improved our confidence in seasonal planning.

- Mrs. Sunita Jadhav, Farmer, Parner Village, Nandurbar

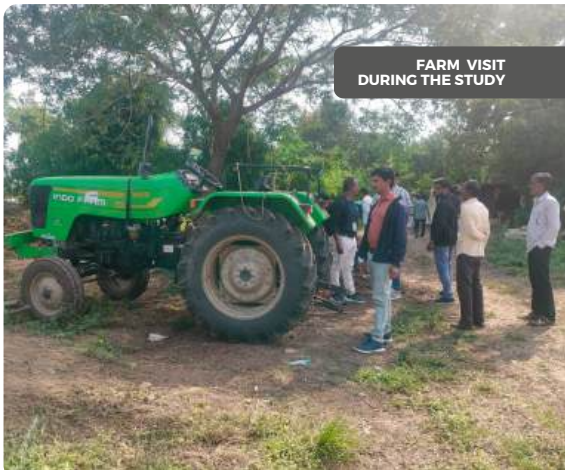


“ Farmer Cup aligns very well with our advisories and climate-smart practices. Participants adopt seed testing, Broad Bed Furrow / Raised Furrow, and natural pest management more than non-participants. Digital Decision Support System (DSS) data can be integrated into our extension services. While some smallholders, tenant farmers, and tribal households remain unreached, joint demos, tool libraries, soil testing, and awareness of crop insurance can scale this impact. Minor policy tweaks could make uptake even faster.

- **D. L. Mohite, Government Extension / Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) / Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA), Varud, Taluka Khatav, Satara** ”

“ Farmer Cup participants ask more questions about safe pest management, Broad Bed Furrow tools, and ways to save costs. Combined purchases work best for the farmers and help strengthen safe, economical input use. I notice a real curiosity and willingness to try new methods among them.

- **Vrushabh Shahaji Mandave, Input Dealer / Group Member, Varud, Taluka Khatav, Satara** ”



CHANGE OVER TIME: PRE- AND POST- INTERVENTION SCENARIO

ADOPTION OF IMPROVED FARMING PRACTICES

CHART 19: CHANGES IN AVAILABILITY OF VILLAGE WATER BUDGET AMONG FARMER CUP PARTICIPANTS



Participation in the Farmer Cup programme was strongly associated with a substantial improvement in the availability of village-level water budgeting, reflecting a shift towards more planned and informed water management practices. Water budgeting was introduced during the Water Cup but not formalised. It became a full-fledged, institutionalised practice during the Farmer Cup, leading to near-universal adoption across villages. A comparison of the situation before and after programme participation highlights a near-universal adoption of water budgeting across villages.



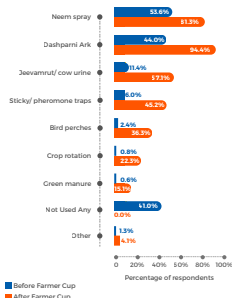
NO WATER BUDGET (BEFORE: 50.5%, AFTER: 1.5%)

Before the Farmer Cup, just over half of the respondents reported that their village did not have a water budget, indicating limited planning and a weak understanding of water availability and usage. After programme participation, this proportion declined sharply by 49 percentage points, showing that the absence of water budgeting was largely addressed through the intervention.

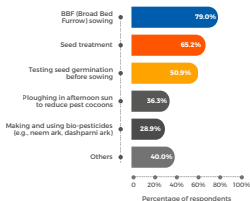


WATER BUDGET AVAILABLE (BEFORE: 49.5%, AFTER: 98.5%)

The proportion of respondents reporting the availability of a village water budget increased dramatically by 49 percentage points in the post-intervention period. With nearly all villages now having a water budget, this shift reflects strengthened collective planning, improved awareness of water resources, and greater capacity to align crop choices and water use with actual availability.

CHART 20: TYPES OF ORGANIC PEST MANAGEMENT METHODS USED


Participation in the Farmer Cup training programs led to a marked increase in the adoption of organic pest management methods. The proportion of farmers not using any method dropped from 41.0% before the intervention to 0% after, indicating widespread uptake. Traditional practices such as neem spray (53.6% to 81.3%) and Dashparni Ark (44.0% to 94.4%) saw substantial growth, while newer techniques like sticky/pheromone traps (6.0% to 45.2%) and bird perches (2.4% to 36.3%) gained significant traction. Crop rotation and green manure, though less common earlier, also rose notably. Overall, the findings highlight a strong shift toward diversified, eco-friendly pest management practices following participation in the Farmer Cup.

CHART 21: FARMING PRACTICES ADOPTED AFTER FARMER CUP TRAINING


Following participation in the Farmer Cup residential training programs, respondents reported adopting a range of improved farming practices, indicating a strong translation of learning into on-field action.



BBF (BROAD BED FURROW) SOWING (79.0%)

A large majority of respondents (79.0%) reported adopting BBF sowing after the training. This high uptake reflects strong confidence in the practice and suggests that farmers found it practical, relevant, and beneficial for managing crops under varying field conditions.



SEED TREATMENT (65.2%)

Around 65.2% of respondents adopted seed treatment practices post-training. This indicates increased awareness of the importance of protecting crops at the early growth stage and reducing risks associated with pests and diseases.



TESTING SEED GERMINATION BEFORE SOWING (50.9%)

Just over half of the participants (50.9%) began testing seed germination before sowing. This shift highlights a growing emphasis on planning and preparedness, helping farmers avoid losses due to poor seed quality.



PLOUGHING IN AFTERNOON SUN TO REDUCE PEST COCOONS (36.3%)

About 36.3% of respondents reported adopting afternoon ploughing as a preventive measure against pest cocoons. This suggests that a significant proportion of farmers incorporated simple, preventive actions into their routine farm practices.



MAKING AND USING BIO-PESTICIDES (28.9%)

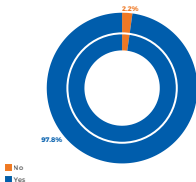
Nearly 28.9% of respondents started making and using bio-pesticides such as neem ark and dashparni ark. While adoption was moderate, it reflects a growing shift towards environmentally friendly and low-cost pest management approaches.



OTHER FARMING PRACTICES (40.0%)

Around 40.0% of respondents reported adopting other improved practices beyond those listed. This indicates that farmers adapted training and learning to their local contexts and experimented with additional methods suited to their specific needs.

CHART 22: PRACTICE OF IRJIK (JOINT LABOUR) IN COLLECTIVE FARMING



PRACTICE OF IRJIK (JOINT LABOUR) IN COLLECTIVE FARMING

Participation in the Farmer Cup programme corresponded with a strong adoption of Irjik (joint labour) as a collective farming practice, reflecting high levels of cooperation and mutual support among farmers.



PRACTISED IRJIK (97.8%)

An overwhelming majority of respondents (97.8%) reported practising Irjik in their farming activities. This indicates widespread acceptance of joint labour, highlighting trust, coordination, and a shared willingness among farmers to support each other during critical agricultural operations.

Overall, the high prevalence of Irjik practice demonstrates the strength of collective farming approaches promoted through the programme, contributing to improved cooperation, reduced individual labour burden, and more efficient farm operations.

“ Our journey began with just 13 women in Chitra Nakshtra Mahila Gat, guided by Paani Foundation and our Sarpanch. Initially, forming the group was not easy - our families didn't support us, and we had little idea how to organise. But with weekly meetings, field discussions, and Irjik (joint labour), we slowly learned to plan together, share responsibilities, and coordinate our work.

Through group activities, we adopted better farming and organic methods. We also learned that record-keeping and digital sessions helped us analyse our fields, get expert advice, and apply scientific methods. Even young women under 35 became actively involved, assisting with ideas, smartphones, and farm documentation.

Working together brought real financial benefits. We saved ₹40 per bag on cotton seeds and ₹50 per bag on fertilisers. Joint labour helped reduce harvesting, spraying, and weeding costs. Crop quality improved, and we even began contributing to a group fund. Participation in Gram Sabha meetings for water planning motivated others in the village to join or form their own Gats.

The most memorable moment was when we won Second Prize at the State Level in Farmer Cup 2022, receiving ₹10 lakh. The village welcomed us with a musical band and a rally featuring MLAs, MPs, and public figures. We shared the prize among Gat members, bought a calf, and reinvested in farming tools and household needs. This recognition was more than an award; it gave us confidence, respect, and a sense of accomplishment. Our families now support us, and our health and nutrition have also improved since we adopted organic farming methods. Our group has shown that when women come together, support each other, and adopt new practices, it not only improves farming but transforms lives.

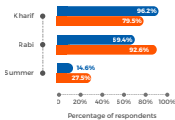
- **Chitra Nakshtra Mahila Farmer Group, Khultabad, Golegaon, Sambhaji Nagar, Aurangabad**

“ Our journey as a group has truly strengthened our confidence, unity, and livelihood. Working together has allowed us to share responsibilities, support one another, and achieve better results in our farming. By collaborating, we have reduced costs, increased our income, and improved the quality of our produce. The group has also encouraged active participation from women and youth, giving them more responsibility and recognition in the village. This has boosted motivation, enhanced leadership, and created a sense of equality and respect within families. Our collective efforts were recognised when we won the 2nd prize at the taluka-level Farmer Cup 2022, with an award of ₹5 lakh. This recognition not only gave us visibility but also inspired more members of the community to engage and contribute. The support and encouragement from the group have truly transformed the way we farm, live, and plan for the future.

- **Pragati Vijay Farmer Group, Manglurpir, Nagi Village, Washim**

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND FARM-LEVEL OUTCOMES

CHART 23: CHANGES IN CROPPING SEASONS PRACTICED BY PARTICIPANTS



■ Before Farmer Cup
■ After Farmer Cup

The programme influenced farmers' adoption of cropping seasons, leading to diversification and improved utilisation of agricultural land across the year. A comparison of cropping seasons before and after the intervention highlights shifts towards more balanced, multi-season farming practices.

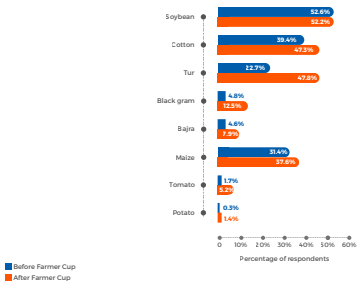
The comparison of seasonal cropping patterns shows a significant shift after participation in the Farmer Cup. Rabi cultivation increased substantially from 69.4% before the intervention to 92.6% after, indicating improved confidence and capacity for winter cropping, likely supported by better water planning and advisory services.

Similarly, summer cropping nearly doubled, rising from 14.6% to 27.5%, suggesting improved water availability and better seasonal planning.

While Kharif cultivation shows a marginal decline (from 96.2% to 79.5%), it remains a dominant season. The overall trend indicates diversification across seasons rather than dependence on a single cropping period.

These shifts reflect improved agricultural planning and more strategic use of water resources following the Farmer Cup intervention.

CHART 24: CHANGES IN MAIN CROPS CULTIVATED BY PARTICIPANTS



Participation in the programme influenced cropping patterns, leading to increased diversification and greater adoption of select crops over time. A comparison of pre- and post-intervention data shows measurable shifts in crop choices, indicating changing farmer preferences and growing confidence in diversified and improved farming practices.

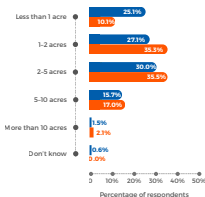
Participation in the programme influenced cropping patterns, leading to increased diversification and greater adoption of select crops over time. A comparison of pre- and post-intervention data shows measurable shifts in crop choices, indicating changing farmer preferences and growing confidence in diversified and improved farming practices. The comparison of cropping patterns before and after the Farmer Cup shows noticeable increases in Tur (from 22.7% to 47.8%), Cotton (from 39.4% to 47.3%), Maize (from 31.4% to 37.6%), and Black gram (from 4.8% to 12.5%). Soybean cultivation remained largely stable, while minor crops such as Bajra, Tomato, and Potato showed relatively small changes. In the period following the Farmer Cup, farmers were also encouraged to diversify into newer crops such as chia seeds and fruits, reflecting experimentation beyond traditional staples. At the same time, demand for crops such as soybeans, cotton, and tur appeared to soften, suggesting evolving market dynamics and farmers' responsiveness to advisory support and emerging opportunities. Overall, the findings suggest that participation in the Farmer Cup has influenced cropping decisions, encouraging diversification, experimentation, and more strategic crop selection aligned with improved planning and advisory services.

“ The Farmer Cup, brought to us by the Paani Foundation, really changed how our village comes together. We had 2 women's groups and 4 men's groups participating, and events like workshops, torch relays, and film screenings made farmers curious and eager to join. Even during COVID-19, despite difficulties in mobilising people, everyone had a fair chance to participate, including women, small farmers, tenant farmers, and tribal households. After the program, I saw real changes: production costs went down, yields went up, water was saved, and labour challenges eased. Farmers now organise meetings on their own, adjust cropping based on water levels, and even disputes over dams have reduced. The program has improved incomes, allowed families to educate their children, build homes, and brought real happiness to the village.

- Raghoba Maruti Bhujbal, Panchayat Member, Varud, Taluka Khatav, Satara



CHART 25: SHIFTS IN OPERATIONAL LAND UNDER CULTIVATION: BEFORE AND AFTER FARMER CUP



■ Before Farmer Cup
■ After Farmer Cup

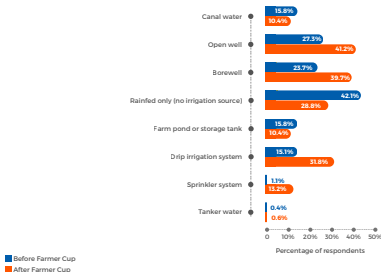
Participation in the programme corresponded with changes in effective landholding patterns, reflecting improved land utilisation, consolidation, and more productive management of agricultural land. A comparison of pre- and post-intervention data highlights shifts towards more viable landholding categories and increased clarity in farm asset awareness.

The comparison shows a shift in the distribution of operational land under cultivation after participation in the Farmer Cup. The proportion of farmers cultivating less than 1 acre declined (from 25.1% to 10.1%), while the share of farmers cultivating 1-2 acres and 2-5 acres increased. The 5-10-acre category also showed a moderate rise. The increase in landholding size was largely driven by higher productivity and income gains from Farmer Cup activities, such as joint labour, while, in some cases, the collective utilisation of award funds as revolving resources also enabled smallholders to expand their cultivated area.

These changes suggest improved utilisation of cultivable land, possibly through leasing additional land, better planning, or more efficient management of the land available. Rather than indicating a change in ownership, the findings reflect an increase in the area actively cultivated by farmers after programme engagement.

Overall, the results point toward enhanced farming confidence and improved operational land management following participation in the Farmer Cup.

CHART 26: CHANGES IN ACCESS TO IRRIGATION FACILITIES AMONG PARTICIPANTS



Participation in the programme corresponded with improved access to diverse irrigation sources, supporting more reliable and productive farming practices. A comparison of irrigation sources before and after the intervention highlights a shift away from rain-dependent systems towards locally managed and water-efficient irrigation solutions.

The comparison shows a clear improvement in access to irrigation facilities after participation in the Farmer Cup. The proportion of farmers dependent only on rainfall declined significantly (from 42.1% to 28.8%), indicating reduced vulnerability to monsoon variability.

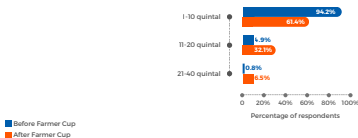
Access to open wells increased (from 27.3% to 41.2%) and borewell usage also rose (from 23.7% to 39.7%), suggesting improved groundwater utilisation. Notably, the adoption of drip irrigation systems more than doubled (from 15.1% to 31.8%), reflecting a shift toward efficient water management practices. Similarly, the use of sprinkler systems increased substantially. Farm pond usage declined as it required cultivable land space, while schemes like PMKSY and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Krushi Swavalamban Yojana supported the construction of open wells and borewells, making groundwater access more feasible.

Overall, the findings suggest enhanced water access, improved irrigation infrastructure, and greater adoption of efficient irrigation technologies following the Farmer Cup intervention, contributing to more resilient and planned agriculture.

KEY IMPACT

The Farmer Cup initiative led to significant improvements in structured water governance, sustainable farming practices, and collective agricultural planning across participating villages. High adoption of village water budgeting, improved crop planning aligned with water availability, and widespread participation in farmer groups reflect strengthened community resilience and institutional capacity. Together, these changes have contributed to enhanced agricultural productivity, ecological restoration, and more stable rural livelihoods.

CHART 27: CHANGES IN CROP YIELD PER ACRE AMONG FARMER CUP PARTICIPANTS



Participation in the Farmer Cup programme corresponded with a notable improvement in crop productivity per acre, indicating a shift from low-yield outcomes towards more efficient and productive farming. The comparison indicates a clear improvement in crop productivity following participation in the Farmer Cup. Before the intervention, the majority of farmers (94.2%) were producing up to 10 quintals per acre. After the intervention, this proportion declined to 61.4%, reflecting a gradual shift toward higher yield categories. The share of farmers producing 11-20 quintals increased significantly (from 4.9% to 32.1%), while those achieving 21-40 quintals also rose (from 0.8% to 6.5%).

At the same time, a considerable proportion of farmers still remain within the 10-quintal range, indicating continued scope for productivity enhancement. While yield adequacy varies depending on crop type and growing conditions, the upward movement across categories demonstrates positive progress and highlights strong potential to further improve yields through sustained technical guidance, efficient input use, and crop-specific planning in the coming seasons.



FROM COST OPTIMISATION TO PROFIT IMPROVEMENT

CHART 28: CHANGES IN INPUT COST PER ACRE AMONG FARMER CUP PARTICIPANTS

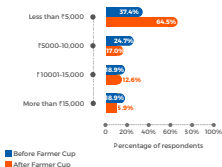


CHART 29: CHANGES IN CROP SALES INCOME AMONG FARMER CUP PARTICIPANTS

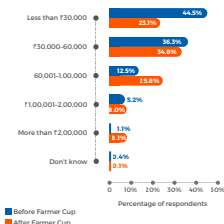
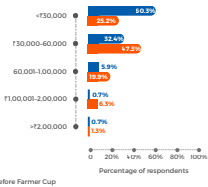


CHART 30: CHANGES IN NET PROFIT PER ACRE AMONG FARMER CUP PARTICIPANTS



REDUCTION IN INPUT COST

A clear downward shift in cultivation costs is observed after participation in the Farmer Cup. The proportion of farmers spending more than ₹15,000 per acre declined significantly from 18.9% to 5.9%, while those operating at less than ₹5,000 per acre increased sharply from 37.4% to 64.5%. This indicates improved input optimisation, better planning, and greater cost efficiency in farm operations.



IMPROVEMENT IN CROP SALES INCOME

Crop sales income shows a strong upward shift across higher brackets. Farmers earning less than ₹30,000 reduced from 44.5% to 23.1%, while the ₹60,001-₹1,00,000 category increased from 12.5% to 25.8%. The ₹1,00,001-₹2,00,000 bracket rose from 5.2% to 9.0%, and earnings above ₹2,00,000 increased notably from 1.1% to 8.1%. These shifts indicate improved productivity, better crop planning, and stronger market realisation, with more farmers moving into higher sales categories.



INCREASE IN NET PROFIT PER ACRE

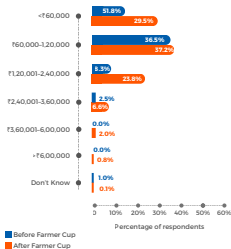
The combined effect of lower costs and higher sales is reflected in profit growth. The proportion of farmers earning less than ₹30,000 profit per acre declined sharply from 60.3% to 25.2%, while those in the ₹30,000-₹60,000 bracket increased from 32.4% to 47.3%, and the ₹60,001-₹1,00,000 category rose from 5.9% to 19.9%. This indicates a substantial upward shift in farm-level profitability.



INTEGRATED ECONOMIC OUTCOME

The three indicators demonstrate a coherent economic pathway. Reduced input costs improved production efficiency, higher crop sales increased revenue, and the interaction of both resulted in stronger net profits. The consistency across cost, sales, and profit trends confirms that the programme has contributed to measurable and sustained farm-level economic strengthening.

CHART 31: SHIFTS IN ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOLLOWING FARMER CUP PARTICIPATION



Participation in the Farmer Cup programme corresponded with a notable improvement in household annual income levels

reflecting enhanced economic resilience among participating farmers.

The data shows a clear upward shift in household income levels after participation in the Farmer Cup. Before the intervention, 51.8% of households were earning less than ₹60,000 annually. After the intervention, this proportion declined significantly to 29.5%, indicating that a substantial number of families moved out of the lowest income bracket.

A notable increase is seen in the ₹1,20,001-₹2,40,000 category, which rose from 8.3% to 23.8%. Similarly, the ₹2,40,001-₹3,60,000 bracket increased from 2.5% to 6.6%. The ₹60,000-₹1,20,000 group remained relatively stable (36.5% to 37.2%), suggesting that income improvements extended into stronger middle-income levels rather than remaining marginal. However, nearly one-third of households (29.5%) still fall within the lowest income category, indicating that while the programme has contributed to upward mobility, continued support is needed to ensure more households transition into higher and more stable income brackets.



VEGETABLE FARMING

“ What began as a few conversations among farmers slowly grew into the Parivartan Farmer Group. In the early days, working together felt unfamiliar, and the COVID period made coordination even more challenging. With continued support from Paani Foundation and encouragement through Gram Sabha discussions, trust was gradually built among farmers. Digital Sheti Shala sessions, field guidance, and shared demonstrations helped farmers turn new ideas into practical action on their fields. As confidence grew, farmers began adopting improved practices such as better sowing methods, seed treatment, natural pest management, and crop planning based on water availability. Many moved away from risky single-crop farming to more balanced cropping patterns. Women became active contributors as meetings became more inclusive and convenient. Collective efforts like bulk input purchases, joint labour, and shared planning helped reduce costs and brought clarity to everyday farm decisions. Winning First Prize at the State-level Farmer Cup 2022, along with a cash award of 25 lakh, marked a major milestone for the group. The recognition strengthened farmers' confidence, earned respect within the village, and inspired youth and neighbouring groups to improve their farming practices.

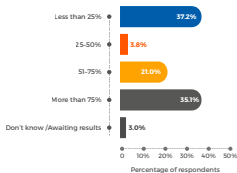
- Amit Babarav Thakare, Nimantrak, Parivartan Farmer Group, Wathoda Village (Warud, Amravati)

CHART 32: CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION IN GROUP MEETINGS AND DECISION-MAKING AMONG FARMER CUP PARTICIPANTS



Participation in the Farmer Cup programme corresponded with a significant shift in farmers' engagement in group meetings and collective decision-making. A comparison of participation levels before and after the intervention highlights a strong move from limited involvement towards near-universal participation, indicating strengthened collective functioning and community ownership.

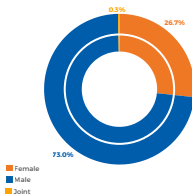
Before the programme, just over half of the respondents (50.1%) reported that they did not participate in group meetings or decision-making processes. After the Farmer Cup, this proportion declined sharply to 0.1%, reflecting an almost complete elimination of non-participation. This change indicates that previously disengaged farmers became actively involved in collective forums.

CHART 33: SHARE OF PRODUCE CERTIFIED AS RESIDUE-FREE


The findings indicate a gradual shift toward residue-free cultivation. While 35.1% of farmers reported that more than 75% of their produce is certified as residue-free, and 21.0% reported certification between 51-75%, a significant proportion (37.2%) still have less than 25% of their produce meeting residue-free standards. This reflects uneven adoption of safer cultivation practices.

Continued monitoring of soil, water, and input practices will be essential to ensure sustained compliance and environmental integrity.

Residue-Free Certificates are issued to confirm that agricultural produce has been tested and found free from harmful pesticide residues beyond permissible limits. It reflects the adoption of safe and responsible farming practices by participating farmers. The certification enhances product quality, builds market credibility, and promotes consumer trust in sustainably grown produce.

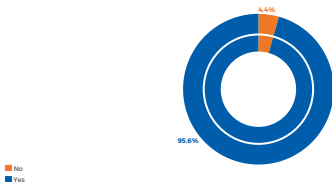
CHART 34: LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE OF FARMER GROUPS


Assessment of the leadership structure of farmer groups practising Irjik (joint labour) highlights the gender composition of leadership roles within these collectives.

The leadership structure of farmer groups remains predominantly male-driven, with 73.0% of leadership positions held by men. Women account for 26.7% of leadership roles, indicating meaningful but still limited representation. Joint leadership arrangements are minimal, suggesting that shared decision-making models are not widely practised.

While the presence of women leaders reflects some progress toward gender inclusion, the overall distribution highlights continued gender imbalance in leadership positions. Strengthening women's participation in leadership roles could further enhance inclusivity, decision-making diversity, and equitable representation within farmer groups.

CHART 35: PRESENCE OF LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE IN FARMER GROUPS



The majority of farmer groups were found to have a defined leadership structure, indicating strong organisational capacity and effective group functioning within the programme.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (95.6%) reported the presence of a formal leadership structure within their farmer groups. This high level of organisational clarity suggests well-established roles and responsibilities, enabling effective coordination, decision-making, and implementation of programme-supported activities.



Our Annapurna Mahila Farmer Cup Gat in Sawanga village was formed through village meetings when we realised that working alone was limiting our progress. Initial hesitation and coordination challenges were overcome through joint labour (Irjrik), which helped us complete farm work on time and better understand practices like BBF sowing and seed treatment. Today, our group of 12 women works like a family, sharing responsibilities, resolving issues through discussion, and actively participating in decision-making and leadership despite household constraints. With support from Paani Foundation, we adopted natural farming practices such as Jeevamrut, Dashparni Ark, mulching, mixed cropping, and reduced chemical use, and accessed Digital Sheti Shala trainings through smartphones. We benefited from bulk input purchases, reduced labour costs, informal savings, improved yields, and better crop quality, and also attempted residue-free cotton certification. Gram Sabha discussions strengthened our focus on water management. Our group won 1st prize at the taluka level in Farmer Cup 5, receiving an award of ₹5 lakh, and earlier, our Gram Panchayat secured 1st prize of ₹10 lakh in the Water Cup (2016) for overall performance and community participation. Winning first prize at the taluka level in Farmer Cup 5 and receiving recognition for our coordination and women-led efforts boosted our confidence, respect within families, and visibility in the village. Going forward, we are committed to continuing regular meetings, joint labour, savings, shared tools, and collective crop planning, and we have already inspired and supported the formation of women farmer groups in 10 other villages.

- Annapurna Mahila Farmer Cup Group, Sawanga (Warud, Amravati)



“ Our farmer producer group started by gathering local farmers and having detailed discussions. Every member attended training that included residential, digital, and webinars. The Gram Sabha (village council) meetings really motivated women, youth, and farmers to speak up and take part. With guidance from Paani Foundation, we adopted seed treatment, Broad Bed Furrow (BBF) sowing, and natural pest management. Farmers even moved from single cropping to multi-cropping, which increased productivity and income. Women actively participate in meetings and fieldwork, and bulk buying and joint labour (Irjick) have saved costs. Our village ranked 17th in the state in the Majhi Vasundhara (My Earth) campaign. Looking ahead, we plan to continue crop planning, building a group fund, and managing tools collectively, while seeking support for seeds and marketing skills.

- **Chaitanya Nandkumar Joshi, Farmer Producer Organisation Head, Bhairavnath Shetkari Gat, Varud, Taluka Khatav, Satara** ”

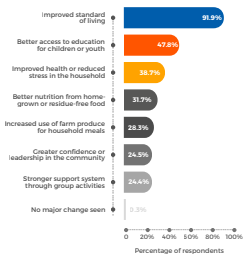
“ Our village first learned about the Farmer Cup from the Paani Foundation coordinator. Kiraksal participated in the Samruddha Gaon (Prosperous Village) competition, with 27 farmers joining the Farmer Cup. Farmers came together through workshops, torch relays, PowerPoint presentations, and film screenings. The main challenge was recording diverse cropping patterns and rainfall in the app. COVID-19 also made mobilisation harder, but there were no mistrust or rumours in the village.

The Panchayat helped by spreading information via announcements and WhatsApp. After the program, we saw real changes: production costs decreased, yields increased, water was saved, labour problems were reduced, and everyone, from women to small and tribal farmers, had equal opportunity to participate. Paani Foundation's guidance and government agricultural advice were the most useful support. Even without external help next season, we believe farmers will continue organising meetings, trying new crops, and managing labour efficiently.

The program also improved quality of life: higher incomes supported children's education, helped build houses, reduced disputes over water, and brought happiness to families. Farmers began measuring well water levels to plan crops and changed cropping patterns when water was low. Study tours and group activities further strengthened cooperation and learning.

- **Amol Aappa Katkar, Panchayat Member, Kiraksal Village, Satara** ”

CHART 36: IMPROVEMENT IN QUALITY OF LIFE DUE TO INCREASED INCOME OR REDUCED COSTS



Enhanced income levels and reduced farming costs under the Farmer Cup programme have translated into meaningful improvements in the overall quality of life for participating households, extending beyond the farm to social and household well-being.

The findings reflect significant improvements in overall quality of life following increased income and reduced cultivation costs. A substantial 91.9% of respondents reported an improved standard of living, marking the most prominent change. Nearly half (47.8%) indicated better access to education for children or youth, highlighting meaningful household-level progress linked to improved financial capacity.

Health and well-being have also improved, with 38.7% reporting reduced stress or better health within the household. Improvements in food security and nutrition are reflected in 31.7% reporting better nutrition from home-grown or residue-free food and 28.3% noting increased use of farm produce for household consumption.

In addition to economic gains, social empowerment is evident, with 24.5% experiencing greater confidence or leadership in the community and 24.4% reporting a stronger support system through group activities.

Overall, the major changes are most strongly reflected in enhanced living standards, improved educational access, and better household well-being, demonstrating that economic improvements have translated into tangible and multi-dimensional quality-of-life gains.

06. IMPACT ACROSS DIFFERENT LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Farmers transitioned from traditional, rainfall-dependent practices to scientific, water-aligned, climate-resilient agriculture, leading to improved productivity, confidence, and decision-making capacity.

Improved Knowledge & Skills

- Adoption of scientific farming practices such as BBF sowing (79%), seed treatment (65.2%) and germination testing (50.9%).
- 94.9% farmers adopted at least one improved practice post-training.
- 87.6% used Village X-Ray Reports for farm planning.
- 93.7% found the Village Water Budget very helpful in crop planning.

Behavioural Change

- Shift from experience-based farming to data-driven planning.
- Strong adoption of organic pest management (Dashparni Ark 94.4%, Neem Spray 81.3%).
- 97.8% adopted Irjik (joint labour), reflecting willingness to collaborate.

Increased Productivity

- Farmers producing 11-20 quintals increased from 4.9% to 32.1%.
- Higher category yields (21-40 quintals) increased significantly.

Digital Empowerment

- 94% smartphone ownership.
- 89.8% regular use of the Farmer Cup app.
- 99.6% participation in Digital Sheti Shala sessions.



HOUSEHOLD LEVEL

The programme enhanced economic security, reduced financial stress, improved education access, strengthened women's role in decision-making, and contributed to better overall family well-being.

Increased Income Stability

- Households earning below ₹60,000 reduced from 51.8% to 29.5%.
- The income category for ₹1,20,001-₹2,40,000 increased from 8.3% to 23.8%.
- Net profit per acre in the ₹60,001-₹1,00,000 category increased from 5.9% to 19.9%.

Reduced Input Costs

Farmers spending below ₹5,000 increased from 37.4% to 64.5%.

Improved Quality of Life

- 47.8% reported better access to education.
- 38.7% reported reduced stress and better health.

Women's Empowerment

- 92.6% reported increased women's participation.
- 26.7% women in leadership roles within Gats.
- Women are involved in financial decisions, crop planning, and digital usage.



COMMUNITY LEVEL

Villages transitioned toward structured, water-conscious agricultural systems with strong collective institutions, improved ecological assets, and enhanced social cohesion.

Institutional Strengthening

- 96% formed or joined farmer groups (Gats).
- 90.8% continue collective farming.
- Near-universal participation in group meetings.

Water Governance Institutionalised

- Water budgeting increased from 49.5% to 98.5%.
- Collective crop planning aligned with water availability.

Ecological Restoration

- 91.7% participated in plantation drives.
- 82.9% reported improved soil quality.
- Plantation on common lands (57.6%) strengthened shared assets.
- 2,00,000+ saplings planted across talukas.

Social Cohesion

- Joint labour (97.8%) strengthened trust.
- Increased Gram Sabha participation.
- Strengthened coordination between Panchayat, SHCs, FPOs, and farmer groups.



STATE LEVEL

The programme demonstrated a scalable model for drought mitigation, water governance, and climate-resilient agriculture across Maharashtra's water-stressed regions.

Large-Scale Mobilisation

- 944 villages across 39 talukas.
- 18 districts covered.
- 1,516 farmer collectives formed.
- 46,000+ Digital Sheti Shala registrations.

Convergence with Government Systems

- Alignment with watershed management schemes.
- MGNREGA convergence during COVID-19.
- Integration with agriculture extension systems (KVKs, ATMA).
- Irrigation support through schemes like PMKSY and BAKSY.

Climate Resilience Building

- Reduced rainfall dependency (42.1% to 28.8%).
- Drip irrigation increased (15.1% to 31.8%).
- Increased Rabi and summer cropping.

Strengthening of Rural Institutions

- Institutionalised water budgeting at the village scale.
- Strengthened Panchayat-level planning.



NATIONAL LEVEL

The initiative provides a replicable, community-led model for climate-resilient agriculture and water governance that can inform drought mitigation strategies across India.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals Priorities

Contributes to SDG 1 (No Poverty)

SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)

SDG 5 (Gender Equality)

SDG 6 (Clean Water & Sanitation)

SDG 13 (Climate Action)

SDG 15 (Life on Land)



Model for Community-Led Climate Action

Demonstrates an integrated approach linking:

- Water conservation
- Agricultural productivity
- Digital agriculture
- Women's leadership
- Ecological restoration

07. CASE STUDIES

“ CASE STUDY 1: FROM CHEMICALS TO ORGANIC CONFIDENCE - KAIVALYA FARMING CUP, MOTHA, CHIKHALDARA, AMRAVATI

Before joining the Farmer Cup programme, members of the Motha Organic Farming Group practised conventional chemical farming on their 4-acre plots. Farming was increasingly difficult due to frequent pest attacks, rising costs of fertilisers and pesticides, poor soil health, and unstable yields. Soybean cultivation required heavy seed input (40-60 kg per acre) yet returns remained low. With no strong farmer group or collective support system in the village, farmers struggled individually, facing financial stress and declining confidence in agriculture.

The turning point came when Paani Foundation introduced the Farmer Cup training and mobilised farmers into groups. Motivated by structured sessions and peer encouragement, the group decided to shift towards SOP-based organic farming. They learned practices such as Broad Bed Furrow sowing, seed treatment protocols, preparation of Dashpani Ark and neem extracts, and making S-9 compost. Collective labour (Irjik), water budgeting, and digital tools like the Farmer Cup app and Village X-Ray reports further strengthened planning and execution.

The impact was transformative. Seed requirement for soybean dropped by half with token sowing machines, while yields rose by 30-40%. Organic pest management reduced input costs and improved crop health. Diversification into chia seed, finger millet, and vegetables brought higher market value and new income streams. Group activities such as shared compost preparation and bulk input procurement lowered expenses, while collective marketing improved selling prices. Overall, farmers reported more stable and higher incomes compared to earlier years.

Beyond economics, the quality of life improved. Families consumed healthier organic food, reducing medical expenses. Women became active in preparing organic extracts, and youth supported digital learning and advisory use. Farming decisions became joint family efforts, boosting confidence and resilience. The group's collective strength not only reduced costs and risks but also fostered a sense of pride and sustainability in farming.



CASE STUDY 2: COLLECTIVE STRENGTH BRINGS PROSPERITY - MAHADEV GOROBA DALVI, KEJ, BEED

Mahadev Goroba Dalvi, a 50-year-old farmer from Chandan Sawargaon in Kej Taluka, Beed district, had long relied on traditional soybean farming across his 16 acres. Despite hard work, his income was modest and unstable. High input costs, frequent pest attacks, and limited knowledge of scientific practices left him struggling to sustain his farm. With no farmer group to lean on, decisions were made alone, often leading to financial stress and dependence on borrowed money.

His journey changed when he encountered Paani Foundation's Farmer Cup training. Demonstrations on pest management, insect identification, and allied farming opportunities inspired him to join the Bhumiputra Farmer Group. Through collective farming practices and structured guidance from Paani Foundation, Mahadev adopted SOP-based practices such as Broad Bed Furrow sowing, seed treatment, natural pest management, water budgeting, and residue-free methods. He also began record-keeping and embraced collective labour (Irjlik), which reduced costs and improved efficiency.

The results were striking. Soybean yields rose from 8-9 quintals per acre to 14-15 quintals, nearly doubling his income. Collective input purchases saved money on seeds and fertilisers, while natural pest management eliminated pesticide expenses. Joint labour reduced harvesting and spraying costs, and diversification into saffron mango introduced a high-value crop with long-term income potential. Group marketing further improved selling prices, proving that collective action could deliver both productivity and profitability.

Beyond financial gains, Mahadev's quality of life improved significantly. Farming no longer relied on loans, and savings brought peace of mind. His family became more involved – women prepared organic extracts, while youth supported digital tools like the Farmer Cup app and Digital Sheti Shala. As a group leader, Mahadev now operates the app, hosts meetings at his agricultural service centre, and mentors fellow farmers. He reflects that the Farmer Cup has given him confidence, stability, and joy in farming, and urges others to join, adopt SOPs, and embrace collective strength for a more secure future.

08. CHALLENGES

While Farmer Cup initiatives have demonstrated strong mobilisation, high adoption rates, and measurable improvements in water governance and farming practices, the assessment also highlights a few gaps.

These challenges do not undermine programme success but indicate areas where deeper institutionalisation, financial strengthening, and system refinement are required. Addressing these issues will help transition the programme from strong implementation performance to long-term, self-sustaining rural transformation

CHALLENGE 1: CONTINUED DEPENDENCE ON EXTERNAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR WATER BUDGETING



Although 98.5% of villages reported availability of a village water budget, 63.8% stated that it was prepared with direct support from Paani Foundation trainers. This indicates that while adoption is nearly universal, independent technical ownership at the village level remains limited. Without the internal capacity to update and interpret water budgets annually, long-term sustainability may weaken once external facilitation reduces.

CHALLENGE 2: LIMITED DEPTH OF DIGITAL AND FINANCIAL UTILISATION



While digital adoption is high (89.8% regular app usage and 90.2% participation in Digital Sheti Shala), functional usage remains limited. Only 21.3% used crop planning features, and just 6.9% used expense tracking tools. This suggests that digital engagement is largely video-based rather than decision-support or profitability-driven. Additionally, App Mitraks highlighted challenges related to interface complexity, language barriers in navigation (limited Marathi support) and the need for more practical, short videos to support independent use.



**WATER SOURCE
FOR IRRIGATION**

09. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are designed to address the identified structural gaps in a logical, practical, and scalable manner. Each recommendation builds on existing programme strengths such as collective mobilisation, digital adoption, and water planning systems. By strengthening institutional ownership, financial literacy, digital usability, and market integration, Paani Foundation can consolidate its impact and enhance long-term sustainability across participating villages.

RECOMMENDATION 1: VILLAGE WATER GOVERNANCE STRENGTHENING MODEL

Paani Foundation can gradually transition from preparation to capacity transfer by:



Training 2-3 local "Village Water Resource Persons" per village.



Conducting annual refresher workshops led by trained village members.



Introducing simplified Marathi-based water budgeting templates.



Making independent preparation of water budgets a criterion for advanced programme recognition or awards.

This will institutionalise water planning at the community level and reduce external dependency over time.

RECOMMENDATION 2: DIGITAL USABILITY & FARM PROFITABILITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

As mentioned in the Challenges, despite high digital usage, some app features like crop planning and expense tracking tools are not thoroughly utilized, therefore Paani Foundation can strengthen practical usage by:



Introducing a simplified per-acre cost and profit calculator within the app.



Making expense tracking mandatory for Cat-level performance reviews.

Improving financial literacy and digital decision-making will help farmers transition from improved practices to measurable profitability gains.



**DIGITAL TRAINING SESSION
WITH BENEFICIARIES**

10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

SUSTAINABILITY

The programme demonstrates encouraging signs of sustainability, particularly in behavioural adoption, institutional formation, and integration of planning systems at the village level. The widespread availability of village water budgets (98.5%) and their continued use for crop planning (93.7%) indicate that water governance practices have moved beyond one-time training inputs and are being embedded in local decision-making processes.

High continuation rates of collective farming practices (90.8%), adoption of joint labour (97.8%), and collective input procurement (97.0%) suggest that group-based efficiencies are being internalised by farmer groups. Digital systems also support sustainability. With 95.7% receiving digital training and 89.8% regularly using the application, advisory access appears to be sustained beyond physical training interventions. The continued use of tools such as the Village X-Ray Report (87.6%) indicates integration of data-informed planning into routine agricultural practices.

Ecological sustainability is reflected in reported soil quality improvements (82.9%) and high participation in plantation drives (91.7%). However, long-term ecological impact will depend on consistent monitoring of plantation survival and groundwater trends over multiple seasons.

Overall, sustainability is supported by strong adoption and institutional participation, with future resilience depending on continued local ownership and convergence with formal governance systems.

EXIT READINESS

The programme demonstrates moderate to strong exit readiness, particularly at the behavioural and group-functioning level. The near-universal participation in group meetings (99.9%) and high engagement in farmer groups (96.0%) indicate that community platforms are active and functional. Continued reliance on advisory support (88.6%) suggests that technical guidance structures are still valued but may require gradual transition planning to ensure independent functioning.

Digital platforms provide an additional layer of continuity, enabling advisory access without intensive on-ground supervision. However, strengthening local leadership capacities, especially among women and second-line leaders, would further enhance decentralised ownership.

For full exit readiness, the following factors would be important:

- Institutionalisation of water budgeting within Panchayat systems
- Strengthened financial and record-keeping systems within Gats
- Clear linkages with government schemes and extension services
- Periodic refresher mechanisms are managed locally

In summary, the programme shows foundations for continuity, with community systems largely functional. A phased transition approach, focused on institutional embedding and local leadership strengthening, would further enhance long-term exit readiness while maintaining programme gains.



11. CONCLUSION

The Satyameva Jayate Water Cup and Farmer Cup initiatives, supported by Bajaj Auto Limited and implemented by Paani Foundation, have played a significant role in advancing community-led water governance, climate-resilient agriculture, and ecological restoration across rural Maharashtra. Implemented in drought-prone and climate-vulnerable regions, the programme was designed to address recurring water scarcity, unsustainable agricultural practices, and weakening ecological balance through collective action and structured capacity building. By integrating water conservation, water budgeting, agronomic improvement, digital advisory systems, and community mobilisation, the initiative sought to create a sustained people's movement rather than a time-bound intervention.

The assessment indicates that participating villages have increasingly adopted structured water planning practices and linked them to crop decision-making processes. Collective farming mechanisms, joint labour systems, and group-based input procurement have supported improvements in efficiency and coordination at the village level. Digital tools, including advisory applications and diagnostic planning reports, have contributed to informed agricultural practices and wider access to knowledge resources. Ecological efforts such as sapling plantation and soil health promotion have further strengthened awareness around environmental stewardship.

While certain planned components were moderated due to external disruptions, the initiative has contributed to reinforcing institutional processes, strengthening participation in group decision-making, and promoting more disciplined water-use practices. Implementation during periods of disruption required adaptability, and some planned activities were not fully realised. While the initiative achieved considerable mobilisation and visibility, long-term impact will depend on sustained institutional embedding of water governance systems, structured ecological and productivity tracking, and deeper convergence with government frameworks.

Overall, the programme reflects meaningful progress toward fostering collective ownership of water conservation, management, and ecological balance, with a foundation in place for continued strengthening and long-term sustainability.



**FIELD STUDY DURING
THE PROJECT**

ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted and innovative brand with over 21 million motorcycles sold in over 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio that includes motorcycles, scooters, and auto-rickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs both in India and international markets. It is also India's No.1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj Auto Limited came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR also contributes to education, health, environment, animal welfare projects, for the sustainable development of the community and the nation.

ABOUT NGO PARTNER: PAANI FOUNDATION

Paani Foundation is a non-profit organisation founded in 2016 with the mission to make rural Maharashtra drought-free and prosperous by empowering communities to manage water and agriculture sustainably. It mobilises and trains villagers in watershed management, scientific farming, and community action, and drives large-scale participation through competitions like the Satyamev Jayate Water Cup and Farmer Cup, where villages collectively implement water conservation and climate-resilient practices. The foundation's approach emphasises collective action, local ownership, and science-based planning to boost water availability, improve livelihoods, and strengthen rural resilience against drought.



ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

RENOVATION OF
VINOBA'S PAUNAR
ASHRAM

Implementing Partner:
Brahma Vidya Mandir

Implementation Year:
March 2020 - June 2023

Assessment Year: Year 2025 - 26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 08
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04 - 05
	Key Impacts	06 - 07
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	08
02	OECD Framework	09 - 11
03	Introduction	12 - 16
	Background and Need for the Project	12
	Objectives of the Project	13
	Project Overview & Stakeholder role	13
	Project Details	13 - 14
	Stakeholder Roles	14
	Project Activities	15 - 16
04	Research Methodology	17 - 19
	Purpose of the Impact Assessment Study	17
	Mixed Method Research Approach	17
	Use of Quantitative Methods	18
	Use of Qualitative Methods	18
	Ensuring Triangulation	18
	Sampling Framework	18
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	19
	Research Design	19
	Key Stakeholders	19
	Study Tools	19
	Ethical Considerations	19
05	Key Findings	20 - 29
06	Impact of the Project Across Multiple Levels	30 - 31
07	Challenges	32 - 33
08	Recommendations	34 - 35
09	Sustainability Exit Readiness	36
10	Conclusion	37 - 39

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Physical Verification Summary of Restoration Outputs

LIST OF CHARTS

Table Number	Table Name
Chart 1-2	Respondent Profile
Chart 3-4	Purpose And Nature of Visit
Chart 5	Perception Of Heritage Preservation and Structural Safety
Chart 6	Quality Of Spiritual and Meditation Infrastructure
Chart 7	Educational Engagement and Learning Outcomes
Chart 8	Impact Of Visit on Spiritual and Educational Behaviour

ABBREVIATIONS

A.C	Asbestos Cement
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GI	Galvanised Iron
KII	Key Informant Interview
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Mild Steel
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Paramdham Ashram, established by Acharya Vinoba Bhave in 1934 at Paunar in Wardha, is a nationally significant heritage site associated with India's freedom movement and Gandhian philosophy. It was the place from where the Bhoodan and Gramdan movements began and where the philosophy of Brahma Vidya took shape. The Ashram continues to function as a living spiritual and educational community, housing 28 sisters and attracting 40,000 to 50,000 visitors annually.

By 2019, the Ashram's ageing buildings had deteriorated severely, with damaged roofing, weakened supports, and monsoon-related water leakage posing serious safety risks and threatening heritage integrity. Through the intervention of JBCVS, which focused on safety-critical structural stabilisation through replacement of wooden roof supports with Mild Steel (MS) structures, installation of powder-coated roofing sheets, and construction of a compound wall to improve boundary security. The completed interventions addressed the most immediate structural vulnerabilities, ensuring the building remains safe and usable and preserving the Ashram's identity as a living heritage site.



COW SHED

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Renovation of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram



Implementing Agency

Brahma Vidya Mandir



Location

Paunar, Wardha, Maharashtra



Duration

March 2020 - June 2023



Assessment Location

Paunar, Wardha, Maharashtra



Total Budget

150 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total nos. of Beneficiaries

28 Residents, 50,000+ visitors (approx.)



Target Beneficiaries

Ashram residents (28 sisters), heritage visitors, students, scholars, spiritual seekers (50,000+ annual visitors)



Primary Programs

Replacement of wooden roof, replacement/repair of doors and windows, painting of the building, construction of new toilets and construction of new gaushala

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The impact assessment aimed:



To evaluate the effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability of the restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram.



To document the structural improvements achieved and assess the quality of heritage preservation.



To examine the project's contribution to institutional continuity and the transmission of Gandhian-Vinoba values.



To identify implementation challenges encountered during the restoration process.



To provide evidence-based recommendations to sustain restoration outcomes and strengthen future heritage conservation initiatives.

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: TO RESTORE AND PRESERVE THE HERITAGE INFRASTRUCTURE OF PARAMDHAM PAUNAR ASHRAM BY ADDRESSING CRITICAL STRUCTURAL DETERIORATION AND ENSURING LONG-TERM STRUCTURAL SAFETY.

Enhance



Replacement of deteriorated wooden roof supports with Mild Steel structures eliminated monsoon water leakage.



The installation of powder-coated roofing sheets improved structural stability and weather resistance.



100% of surveyed visitors agreed that the heritage structures were well preserved and safe.



Boundary wall construction strengthened the physical security of the premises.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO ENHANCE FUNCTIONAL HABITABILITY BY IMPROVING FACILITIES FOR MEDITATION, PRAYER, AND RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION FOR THE WOMEN RESIDENTS DEDICATED TO VINOBA BHAVE'S VISION.

Empower



Elimination of roof leakage improved residential comfort and safety for the 28 resident sisters.



Daily prayer, meditation, and agricultural routines continued uninterrupted.



100% of visitors accessed meditation/prayer spaces and found them conducive.



Stabilised infrastructure reduced structural anxiety during monsoon periods.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO STRENGTHEN THE ASHRAM'S CAPACITY AS A LIVING HERITAGE SITE BY IMPROVING VISITOR AMENITIES AND ENABLING VALUE-BASED LEARNING FOR STUDENTS, SCHOLARS, AND SPIRITUAL SEEKERS.

Improve



90%

of visitors reported learning about Vinoba Bhave as their primary purpose.



100%

agreed that educational displays were engaging and informative.



Visitors reported a positive overall experience and access to key facilities.



Structural stabilisation supported organised visitor engagement and project hosting.

OBJECTIVE 4: TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED TRANSMISSION OF THE GANDHIAN-VINOBA PHILOSOPHY THROUGH SUSTAINED SPIRITUAL PRACTICE, EDUCATION, AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.

Empower & Improve



100%

of respondents reported increased awareness of Vinoba Bhave's contributions.



All visitors indicated spiritual or educational benefit from the visit.



Annual awareness programmes continued without structural risk.



The Ashram maintained high recognition as a heritage site worth visiting.

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: TO RESTORE AND PRESERVE THE HERITAGE INFRASTRUCTURE OF PARAMDHAM PAUNAR ASHRAM BY ADDRESSING CRITICAL STRUCTURAL DETERIORATION AND ENSURING LONG-TERM STRUCTURAL SAFETY.

Enhance



Secured long-term structural integrity of 85-year-old heritage buildings.



Reduced risk of environmental degradation and emergency repair requirements.



Strengthened public confidence in the Ashram's safety and preservation standards.



Safeguarded a nationally significant heritage site from further deterioration.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO ENHANCE FUNCTIONAL HABITABILITY BY IMPROVING FACILITIES FOR MEDITATION, PRAYER, AND RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION FOR THE WOMEN RESIDENTS DEDICATED TO VINOBA BHAVE'S VISION.

Empower



Strengthened dignified and secure living conditions for resident women.



Sustained uninterrupted spiritual practice and collective discipline.



Reinforced the Ashram's role as a functioning spiritual community rather than a static monument.



Enabled safe and organised continuation of daily institutional life.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO STRENGTHEN THE ASHRAM'S CAPACITY AS A LIVING HERITAGE SITE BY IMPROVING VISITOR AMENITIES AND ENABLING VALUE-BASED LEARNING FOR STUDENTS, SCHOLARS, AND SPIRITUAL SEEKERS.

Improve



Enhanced educational outreach across diverse visitor groups.



Strengthened the Ashram's identity as a value-based learning centre.



Improved perception of the site as organised, safe, and heritage-worthy.



Sustained experiential learning through preserved infrastructure.

OBJECTIVE 4: TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED TRANSMISSION OF THE GANDHIAN-VINOBA PHILOSOPHY THROUGH SUSTAINED SPIRITUAL PRACTICE, EDUCATION, AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.

Empower & Improve



Strengthened transmission of the Gandhian-Vinoba philosophy across generations.



Reinforced the Ashram's role as a living custodian of national values.



Sustained public engagement with India's freedom movement legacy.



Preserved the Ashram as an active platform for spiritual reflection and philosophical learning.

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Ashram Coordinator	The restoration improved safety and comfort by eliminating roof leakage and securing the farmland. The repaired structures supported the continuation of daily Ashram activities and enhanced visitor confidence. The executed works addressed the most critical structural needs.
Implementing Agency	The collaboration with Bajaj Auto CSR was smooth and cooperative. The project prioritised critical safety issues. The restoration contributed to the preservation of Vinoba Bhave's legacy and the Ashram's long-term functionality.

The restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram represents a significant intervention in heritage conservation, institutional continuity, and cultural transmission. The project succeeded in addressing the most critical structural vulnerabilities, ensuring the safety and functionality of the Ashram, and preserving a nationally significant heritage site. The restoration enabled the Ashram to continue operating as a living institution, fulfilling its mission of spiritual practice, education, and community engagement. The project underscores the importance of heritage conservation not merely as an exercise in infrastructure development, but as a commitment to sustaining the values, traditions and institutional ecosystems that embody India's cultural and philosophical heritage.



DAIRY ROOM

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

The restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram was assessed against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria to determine the quality, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the intervention. This assessment framework evaluates the project across six dimensions: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability. Each criterion was rated on a five-star scale based on evidence gathered through stakeholder interviews, field observations, and site verification.



RELEVANCE

The restoration directly addressed critical structural deterioration that threatened the safety, habitability, and heritage integrity of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram. Roof stabilisation and boundary protection responded to clearly identified risks, including monsoon leakage and environmental vulnerability. The intervention aligned strongly with the Ashram's institutional mission as a living spiritual and educational centre and supported sustained public engagement with the Gandhian-Vinoba philosophy. Visitor survey findings, including 90% educational motivation and 100% recognition of preservation and safety, validated contextual relevance. The project design was fully aligned with heritage conservation needs and institutional priorities, justifying the highest rating.



COHERENCE

The restoration demonstrated strong internal and external coherence. Internally, the intervention aligned with Bajaj Auto Limited's CSR priorities in heritage preservation and community welfare, while complementing the Ashram's institutional mission of spiritual practice, value-based education, and the transmission of Gandhian philosophy. Externally, the project aligned with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) through the protection of cultural heritage and SDG 4 (Quality Education) by sustaining value-based learning and educational engagement. The intervention also supported national priorities related to cultural heritage conservation and the preservation of the Gandhian legacy within India's broader cultural and freedom movement heritage initiatives. However, limited integration with complementary infrastructure schemes and the absence of formal policy linkage documentation moderate the rating slightly.



**EFFECTIVENESS**

The intervention successfully eliminated water leakage, stabilised roof structures, strengthened boundary security, and restored functional use of prayer and meditation spaces. Quantitative findings showed 100% agreement on preservation and safety, and 85% agreement on structural functionality. Educational and spiritual engagement indicators were uniformly positive. However, incomplete auxiliary works, including door and window repairs, toilet upgrades, and Gauthala construction, limited comprehensive infrastructural enhancement. While core objectives related to safety and continuity were achieved, partial scope execution constrained full functional readiness, justifying a strong but not perfect effectiveness rating.

**EFFICIENCY**

The project demonstrated prioritised allocation of resources toward safety-critical interventions under constrained conditions. Roof stabilisation and boundary protection were completed and validated through physical verification. However, COVID-related delays led to partial execution of the planned auxiliary works. While adaptive management ensured that critical structural vulnerabilities were addressed, the incomplete scope indicated moderate efficiency gaps in adherence to the timeline and in the comprehensiveness of the delivery. The intervention achieved substantive structural outcomes, but with partial implementation of the original plan, supporting a mid-range efficiency rating.

**IMPACT**

The restoration strengthened structural safety, enhanced residential comfort, supported uninterrupted spiritual practice, and reinforced educational engagement. All surveyed visitors reported spiritual or educational benefit, and 100% acknowledged increased awareness of Vinoba Bhave's contributions. The Ashram continued to function as a living heritage site serving a cross-section of society. However, impact measurement relied primarily on perception-based indicators rather than longitudinal behavioural tracking. While immediate and institutional impacts were strong and well-validated, the absence of long-term outcome monitoring limited a full impact assessment, justifying a high but not maximum rating.



SUSTAINABILITY

The restoration reinforced institutional continuity through strengthened structural integrity, improved environmental security, and sustained daily spiritual and educational activities. The Ashram remained operational, attracting 40,000-50,000 annual visitors and continuing its annual awareness programme. Strong custodianship and community ownership supported long-term viability. However, the absence of a formal preventive maintenance system and a dedicated funding framework for maintenance posed a moderate future risk. While institutional commitment was strong, structured sustainability mechanisms were not yet formalised, supporting a high but not perfect sustainability rating.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Paramdham Ashram, established by Acharya Vinoba Bhave in 1934 at Paunar in Wardha, is a nationally significant heritage site linked to India's freedom movement and Gandhian philosophy. It was from this Ashram that Vinoba Bhave initiated the Bhoodan and Gramdan movements in 1951, and where Brahma Vidya, emphasising collective spiritual practice and women's spiritual freedom, emerged in 1958. The Ashram remains a living community, home to 28 sisters from diverse backgrounds, and serves as a centre for spiritual practice, value-based education, and public engagement, attracting 40,000 to 50,000 visitors annually.

By 2019, the Ashram's 85-year-old buildings had severely deteriorated due to ageing, environmental exposure, and a lack of systematic maintenance. Cracked roofing sheets, termite-infested wooden supports, wall fissures, and monsoon-related water leakage posed serious safety risks, damaged interiors, and threatened the preservation of artefacts and documents. Without intervention, the Ashram faced structural failure, loss of heritage integrity, and disruption of its residential, spiritual, and educational functions.

Heritage loses value if it cannot be inhabited, experienced, and transmitted. Paunar Ashram's significance lies in its continued function as a living spiritual and educational institution rather than as a static monument. The restoration was therefore conceived as a strategic intervention to sustain a lived heritage ecosystem, ensuring functional continuity alongside heritage preservation so that the Ashram could continue to inspire, educate, and transmit Gandhian-Vinoba values through ongoing use and engagement.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The project was designed to restore and preserve the heritage infrastructure of Paramdham Paunar Ashram while strengthening its continued function as a living spiritual and educational institution. In alignment with this overarching purpose, the key objectives of the project were as follows:



To restore and preserve the heritage infrastructure of Paramdham Paunar Ashram by addressing critical structural deterioration and ensuring long-term structural safety.



To enhance functional habitability by improving facilities for meditation, prayer, and residential accommodation for the women residents dedicated to Vinoba Bhave's vision.



To strengthen the Ashram's capacity as a living heritage site by improving visitor amenities and enabling value-based learning for students, scholars, and spiritual seekers.



To ensure the continued transmission of the Gandhian-Vinoba philosophy through sustained spiritual practice, education, and public engagement.

PROJECT OVERVIEW & STAKEHOLDER ROLES

The restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram was implemented through a collaborative partnership involving Bajaj Auto Limited as the donor, Brahma Vidya Mandir as the implementing partner, and specialised contractors as technical enablers. This chapter provides an overview of the project's key parameters and defines the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the restoration process.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Renovation of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram



Implementing Agency

Brahma Vidya Mandir



Location

Paunar, Wardha, Maharashtra



Total no. of Beneficiaries

28 Residents, 50,000+ visitors (approx.)



Target Beneficiaries

Ashram residents (28 sisters), heritage visitors, students, scholars, spiritual seekers (50,000+ annual visitors)



Primary Programs

Replacement of wooden roof, replacement/repair of doors and windows, painting of the building, construction of new toilets and construction of new gaushala

STAKEHOLDER ROLES

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Implementing Institution (Brahma Vidya Mandir)	Served as the primary implementing partner, managing project execution, contractor coordination, and financial disbursement. Conducted field assessments and prepared technical specifications for restoration activities. Coordinated with the Ashram Coordinator to ensure alignment with institutional needs. Monitored the quality of construction work and ensured compliance with heritage conservation principles. Submitted progress reports, financial statements, and documentation to the donor.
Ashram Coordinator	Provided institutional ownership and guidance throughout the restoration process. Led by Shri Gautam Bajaj, coordinators identified priority structural needs and ensured that restoration work aligned with the Ashram's heritage character and functional requirements. Facilitated access to heritage buildings and supported decision-making on technical interventions. Ensured continuity of daily Ashram operations during construction activities. Committed to long-term maintenance and sustainability of restored structures beyond project completion.

The collaborative governance model employed in the restoration of Paunar Ashram demonstrated the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder partnerships in heritage conservation. The clear delineation of roles and responsibilities ensured coordinated execution, alignment with institutional priorities, and sustained commitment to preserving the Ashram's heritage integrity and functional continuity.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram was structured around five thematic activity clusters designed to address critical structural vulnerabilities, enhance heritage preservation, and ensure the Ashram's continued functionality as a living heritage site. The intervention logic prioritised structural conservation, habitability upgrades, visitor infrastructure, functional continuity, and support systems.

STRUCTURAL CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE BUILDINGS



Replacement of wooden roof supports with MS (Mild Steel) roof supports fixed in concrete beams to ensure structural stability and eliminate termite infestation risks.



Replacement of deteriorated A.C sheets and galvanised sheets with TATA powder-coated sheets to prevent water leakage, enhance durability, and protect heritage buildings from environmental degradation.

UPGRADATION OF HABITABILITY AND SAFETY



Replacement and repairs of doors and windows to improve security, privacy, and functional usability of residential and visitor spaces.



Painting all buildings, both externally and internally, to enhance aesthetic appeal, protect surfaces from weathering, and improve the overall ambience of the heritage site.

VISITOR AND RESIDENT INFRASTRUCTURE



Construction of new buildings by demolishing old ones to expand residential capacity and improve the functional organisation of the Ashram premises.

FUNCTIONAL CONTINUITY OF ASHRAM LIFE



Creation of a better place for meditation, prayer, and stay arrangements for all the women who spent their whole life with Vinobaji, ensuring their comfort, dignity, and spiritual well-being.



Provision of amenities for visitors, especially for children, to learn about Shri Vinobaji's life and build people's movement to build the nation, supporting the Ashram's educational and cultural transmission mission.

SANITATION AND GAUSHALA INFRASTRUCTURE RECONSTRUCTION



Demolition of all existing toilets and construction of new toilets to improve hygiene standards, visitor comfort, and functional accessibility.



Construction of a new Gaushala (4000 sq. ft) by demolition of the existing Gaushala, with all equipment and compound wall, to support the Ashram's agricultural and self-reliant traditions rooted in Gandhian values.

These activity clusters formed the intervention logic of the restoration project, designed to address structural vulnerabilities, enhance institutional capacity, and sustain the Ashram's role as a living heritage site dedicated to spiritual practice, education, and the transmission of Gandhian-Vinoba values. The activities were prioritised based on urgency, safety considerations, and alignment with the Ashram's heritage character and functional needs.



GAUTAM KAKA'S ROOM & PRESS ROOM

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

PURPOSE OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

The impact assessment study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability of the restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram. The assessment sought:



To evaluate the effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability of the restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram.



To document the structural improvements achieved through the restoration and assess the quality of heritage preservation.



To examine the project's contribution to institutional continuity and the transmission of Gandhian-Vinoba values.



To identify implementation constraints encountered during the implementation process and the current operational issues.



To provide evidence-based recommendations for sustaining restoration outcomes and strengthening future heritage conservation initiatives.

MIXED-METHOD RESEARCH APPROACH

The impact assessment adopted a mixed-method approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative evidence to enable systematic triangulation and a comprehensive evaluation of the restoration outcomes. Given the heritage and institutional nature of the intervention, this approach was essential to assess not only structural improvements but also functional continuity, visitor perception, and institutional resilience. Qualitative insights were derived from stakeholder interviews, field observations, and on-site verification. At the same time, quantitative data were collected through a structured visitor survey to capture perception-based indicators related to preservation, safety, spiritual engagement, and educational impact. This integrated methodology ensured that numerical findings were contextualised through stakeholder narratives and on-site validation, strengthening the analytical robustness and credibility of the assessment.

USE OF QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

The quantitative component of the impact assessment was conducted through a structured visitor survey to Vinoba's Paunar Ashram. A standardised questionnaire was used to capture demographic information, purpose of visit, access to facilities, and perception-based indicators related to heritage preservation, structural safety, meditation and prayer infrastructure, educational engagement, maintenance standards, and overall visitor experience.

The survey primarily employed closed-ended questions, including Likert-scale statements, to assess visitor perceptions of post-restoration conditions. The collected responses were analysed to generate frequency distributions and percentage-based summaries, enabling measurable assessment of preservation outcomes, functional readiness, spiritual engagement, and awareness enhancement. The quantitative findings provided structured numerical evidence to validate and complement qualitative insights derived from stakeholder interviews and physical verification.

USE OF QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The impact assessment employed a qualitative research approach to capture the depth, context, and nuances of the restoration's outcomes. Qualitative methods enabled the research team to understand stakeholder perspectives, institutional experiences, and the lived reality of heritage preservation at Paunar Ashram. The approach prioritised in-depth stakeholder interactions, physical site verification, and contextual analysis over numerical quantification, recognising that the value of heritage conservation lies in its contribution to institutional continuity, cultural transmission, and community well-being rather than in quantifiable outputs alone.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

Triangulation was ensured through the convergence of multiple data sources, including key informant interviews with the Ashram Coordinator and implementing agency, physical site observations, photographic documentation, and review of project records. The research team cross-verified findings across different stakeholder perspectives to ensure credibility and reduce bias. Physical verification of completed works validated stakeholder reports, whilst institutional records provided contextual depth. This multi-source approach strengthened the reliability of the assessment findings and ensured that conclusions were grounded in corroborated evidence.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The sampling framework adopted a random approach, selecting visitors to the Ashram and key stakeholders based on their direct involvement in and knowledge of the restoration project. Respondents included the Ashram Coordinator and the implementing agency representative. The purposive selection ensured that the assessment captured perspectives from stakeholders with direct involvement in and familiarity with the project, while physical site verification provided independent validation of reported improvements.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The assessment was structured around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, providing a standardised framework for evaluating project quality and impact. The six criteria-Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability - enabled systematic analysis of the project's alignment with stakeholder needs, achievement of intended outcomes, resource utilisation, and long-term viability. This framework ensured that the assessment met international standards for development evaluation whilst maintaining sensitivity to the specific context of heritage conservation and institutional continuity at Paunar Ashram.



RESEARCH DESIGN



Research design used

Descriptive research design



Sampling technique

Random sampling



Sample size

20



Qualitative method used

Semi-structured interviews, testimonials of the key stakeholders

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The following stakeholders were engaged during the assessment:

- » Mr. Gautam Bajaj, Ashram Coordinator and Leader, Brahma Vidya Mandir
- » Mr. Bhupendra Lohiya, Accountant, Brahma Vidya Mandir

STUDY TOOLS

The following tools were utilised to collect data:

- » Structured Participant Survey Questionnaire for the visitors
- » Semi-structured Interview Schedules for the Ashram Coordinator and the Implementing Agency
- » Observation Schedule for physical verification of completed works

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The assessment adhered to ethical research principles, including informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for stakeholder dignity. Respondents were informed of the study's purpose and their right to decline participation or withdraw at any time. Interview data was managed confidentially, with identifying information used only where explicitly permitted by respondents. The research team-maintained neutrality and objectivity throughout the assessment, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected stakeholder perspectives without bias or misrepresentation.

05. KEY FINDINGS

This chapter presents the key findings of the impact assessment of the restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram, examining structural safety, functional usability, heritage preservation, visitor experience, and institutional continuity.

The analysis draws on a mixed-method approach. Qualitative evidence was derived from stakeholder interviews, field observations, and physical site verification. This was complemented by a structured visitor survey (n=20) capturing demographic details, access to facilities, and perception-based indicators related to preservation, spiritual infrastructure, educational engagement, safety standards, and overall experience.

Quantitative findings are interpreted alongside qualitative evidence to enable triangulation and strengthen analytical credibility. The chapter is organised thematically to reflect the core domains of impact and provide an integrated assessment of the Ashram's post-restoration readiness and continued functioning as a living heritage site.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

CHART 1: AGE GROUP DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS

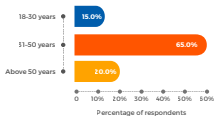
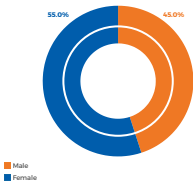


CHART 2: GENDER-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS



The majority of surveyed visitors (65%) belonged to the 31-50 years age group, followed by those aged 50+ (20%) and those aged 18-30 (15%). In terms of gender, female visitors accounted for 55% of the sample, while male visitors accounted for 45%.

PURPOSE AND NATURE OF VISIT

CHART 3: PURPOSE OF VISIT TO THE ASHRAM (N=20)

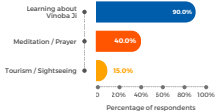


Chart 3 presents the primary purposes cited by respondents for visiting the Ashram. Learning about Vinoba Ji was cited by 90% of respondents, meditation/prayer by 40%, and tourism/sightseeing by 15%. Respondents were permitted to select multiple purposes.

The dominant educational purpose (90%) corroborated qualitative evidence from the Ashram Coordinator, who confirmed that the Ashram received over 50,000 annual visitors, including students, scholars, and spiritual devotees.

The secondary emphasis on meditation and prayer (40%) aligned with qualitative findings that confirmed the functional use of prayer and meditation spaces, although no formal meditation programmes were conducted beyond annual events. The minimal tourism-oriented visitation (15%) suggested that the Ashram's identity remained rooted in spiritual and educational engagement rather than recreational heritage tourism.

CHART 4: ACCESS TO SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AT THE ASHRAM (N=20)

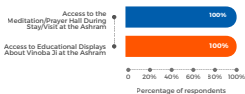


Chart 4 presents respondents' access to meditation/prayer halls and educational displays. All respondents (100%) confirmed access to both facilities during their visit.

This finding corroborated qualitative evidence that the Ashram's core spiritual and educational infrastructure remained accessible and functional despite incomplete auxiliary works. Site verification notes recorded that prayer spaces and educational displays were maintained and organised to accommodate visitor groups. The Ashram Coordinator's account confirmed that routine activities, including prayer and educational engagement, continued uninterrupted post-restoration, which aligned with the universal access reported by survey respondents.

PARTICIPATION IN WORKSHOPS

Ashram Coordinator noted that no regular workshops or events were conducted except for the annual three-day awareness programme, which served as a key platform for disseminating Vinoba Bhav's teachings through lectures and community engagement. The survey was conducted outside this annual programme period, which explains the respondents' lack of event participation. This convergence indicated that whilst the Ashram maintained an active educational presence through visitation and exhibitions, its event-based engagement was limited to a single annual programme rather than continuous programming.

PERCEPTION OF HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND STRUCTURAL SAFETY

CHART 5: PRESERVATION, FUNCTIONALITY, AND SAFETY OF THE ASHRAM'S HERITAGE STRUCTURES (N=20)

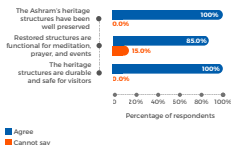


Chart 5 presents respondents' perceptions regarding preservation, functionality, and safety of the Ashram's heritage structures. All respondents (100%) agreed that the heritage structures had been well preserved and were durable and safe for visitors. A majority (85%) agreed that the restored structures were functional for meditation, prayer, and events.

The unanimous perception of preservation and safety strongly aligned with qualitative evidence. Field observations confirmed that the 2851 Sq.m. replaced roof structures were intact, uniformly covered, and free from visible damage, cracks, rust, or broken sheets. The Ashram Coordinator reported that persistent monsoon leakage had been eliminated, stabilising residential and prayer spaces. The implementing partner confirmed that structural interventions prioritised roof stabilisation and boundary security to mitigate immediate safety risks. The quantitative perception of preservation, therefore, reflected visible structural improvement validated through site verification.

Qualitative findings documented that door and window repairs, painting, toilet upgrades, and full Gaushala construction remained incomplete. While core structural integrity had been restored, auxiliary works affecting comfort and aesthetic readiness were pending. The Ashram Coordinator acknowledged that while the completed interventions addressed the most critical structural risks, the absence of door and window repairs, painting, and toilet upgrades limited improvements in visitor comfort, hygiene, and the overall ambience of the heritage site. He noted that these gaps constrained functional enhancement beyond core residential and prayer spaces, even though safety and basic habitability had been ensured. The implementing partner, Mr. Bhupendra Lohiya, explained that COVID-related delays necessitated a reduction in scope, with priority given to safety-critical interventions such as roof repairs and boundary protection.

Together, these accounts indicated that the partial execution of planned activities hindered the comprehensive revitalisation of the Ashram, particularly in terms of hygiene, comfort, and aesthetic improvements. At the same time, the focus on structural stabilisation over auxiliary works demonstrated a risk-based approach to heritage conservation under constrained resources.

“ Due to COVID-related delays, we focused on the most important safety works like roof repair and boundary protection. These activities were necessary to keep the Ashram safe and functional, even though some planned works could not be completed.

- Mr. Bhupendra Lohiya, Project Coordinator, Brahma Vidya Mandir

ENHANCED BOUNDARY SECURITY AND PREMISES ORGANISATION

The Ashram Coordinator, Mr. Gautam Bajaj, confirmed that the construction of the compound wall reduced disturbances from stray animals that had previously disrupted farming activities within the Ashram premises. The 100% perception of safety and maintenance standards may therefore indirectly reflect a broader sense of environmental security resulting from both roof stabilisation and boundary protection.

He noted that securing the farm area improved cleanliness and orderliness, enabling more effective management of agricultural operations and reducing the need for continuous monitoring. The implementing partner, Mr. Bhupendra Lohiya, corroborated that the compound wall was undertaken to stabilise and secure the Ashram premises as part of the project's safety-focused interventions. Together, these accounts reflected that the intervention strengthened physical security and improved functional efficiency across the Ashram ecosystem.

The construction of the compound wall enhanced the Ashram's functional autonomy by protecting its agricultural resources and reducing external disturbances, thereby supporting independent day-to-day operations and reinforcing the principle of self-reliance central to the Ashram's institutional identity.

The integrated evidence indicated strong convergence on structural preservation and safety outcomes, with partial divergence on complete functional readiness due to unfinished auxiliary components.



“ The compound wall work helped in reducing disturbance from outside animals in the farm area. This has made it easier to manage farming activities and keep the Ashram premises cleaner and more orderly.

- Mr. Gautam Bajaj, Ashram Coordinator, Vinoba's Paunar Ashram

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PARTIAL SCOPE EXECUTION AND INCOMPLETE INTERVENTIONS

To systematically validate the extent of execution across planned components, a structured physical verification was conducted using an observation checklist. The table below presents the status of planned outputs based on on-site inspection and site verification notes.



PHYSICAL VERIFICATION SUMMARY OF RESTORATION OUTPUTS

S. No.	Output Indicator	Planned Scope	Observed Status	Remarks / Analytical Note
1	Roof Replacement (Wood → MS)	Replacement of wooden supports with MS structures	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roof structures were stable, safe, and free from Visible leakage. No cracks, rust, or damage observed.
2	Roofing Sheet Replacement (A.C./GI → Powder-Coated)	Installation of new powder-coated sheets	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sheets appeared intact and uniformly installed; Full building coverage confirmed.
3	Doors and Windows Repairs	Repair/replacement of doors and windows	Not Executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No repairs undertaken except roof work; doors and Windows remained in their previous condition.
4	Painting (Internal & External)	Painting of buildings	Not Executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No painting work observed.
5	Construction of New Buildings	Construction of additional usable structures	Not Executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No new buildings were constructed; instead, a Compound wall was built around the farmland.
6	Toilet Renovation / Reconstruction	Demolition and reconstruction of toilets	Not Executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No toilet-related work carried out.
7	Construction of New Gaushala	New Gaushala construction	Partially Executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roofing completed; side wall raised by 3 feet; no Further construction undertaken.
8	Minor Structural Repairs	Minor structural repairs in residential units	Partially Executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor repairs are required in two houses.



The physical verification findings indicated that safety-critical structural interventions, including roof replacement and roofing sheet installation, were fully executed and structurally sound. In contrast, auxiliary components such as door and window repairs, painting, toilet reconstruction, and new building construction remained unexecuted, while Gashala construction was only partially completed.

This pattern reflected a prioritisation of structural stabilisation over aesthetic and comfort-related enhancements. The distinction between completed structural works and pending auxiliary components provided important context for interpreting visitor perceptions, particularly the divergence between unanimous agreement on preservation and safety and partial agreement on complete functional readiness.

“ The buildings of the Ashram are well preserved and feel safe to move around. I did not notice any maintenance issues during my visit. The overall condition shows that proper care has been taken.

- Sudhir Dadarao Bhagat,
Visitor, Washim



PERCEPTION OF HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND STRUCTURAL SAFETY

CHART 6: ADEQUACY AND QUALITY OF MEDITATION AND PRAYER FACILITIES (N=20)

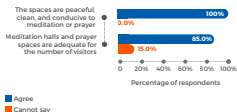


Chart 6 presents respondents' perception of meditation and prayer infrastructure. The majority (85%) agreed that meditation halls and prayer spaces were adequate for the number of visitors. All respondents (100%) agreed that the spaces were peaceful, clean, and conducive to meditation or prayer.

The high agreement on conduciveness aligned with qualitative findings that renovated spaces were orderly, structurally stable, and safe for occupancy. The Ashram Coordinator confirmed that the elimination of roof leakage significantly improved residential comfort and created a safer environment for daily spiritual activities. Field observations corroborated that repaired structures supported uninterrupted prayer, meditation, and community engagement.

The triangulated findings, therefore, indicated strong alignment between perceived spiritual conduciveness and qualitative accounts of improved comfort and safety, alongside partial limitations in auxiliary infrastructure.

“ During and after the renovation work, our daily activities like prayer, meditation, and farm work continued without interruption. The repaired roof and secure premises helped us execute our routines in a safe and organised manner.

- Mr. Gautam Bajaj, Ashram Coordinator, Vinoba's Paunar Ashram

EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

CHART 7: EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AT THE ASHRAM (N=20)

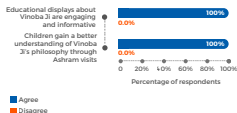


Chart 7 presents respondents' perceptions of educational infrastructure and learning outcomes. All respondents (100%) agreed that educational displays about Vinoba Ji were engaging and informative, and that children gained a better understanding of Vinoba Ji's philosophy through Ashram visits.

These findings strongly aligned with qualitative evidence. The Ashram Coordinator confirmed continued hosting of over 50,000 visitors annually and the conduct of the annual three-day awareness programme in November, which serves as a platform for disseminating Vinoba Bhave's teachings. Field observations documented maintained educational displays and organised visitor spaces conducive to learning and engagement. The restoration ensured that structural safety supported continued educational use without disruption.

Notably, all respondents reported that they did not participate in workshops or organised events during their visit. Qualitative evidence indicated that educational engagement at the Ashram is primarily facilitated through open-access displays, experiential learning, and annual programmes rather than through continuous workshop-based programming. The absence of workshop participation, therefore, reflected the institutional model of engagement rather than project deficiency.

The convergence between quantitative perceptions of educational benefit and qualitative documentation of institutional continuity indicated that structural stabilisation successfully supported the Ashram's role as a living educational and spiritual heritage site

“ I visited the Ashram mainly to learn about Vinoba Bhave, and I was able to understand his life and philosophy clearly. The educational displays were helpful, and seeing the idol from the Vakataka period was a special experience for me.

- Maya Vilas Yerne, Visitor, Ralegaon

IMPACT OF VISIT ON SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

CHART 8: IMPACT OF THE VISIT ON PROMOTION, AND LEARNING (N=20)

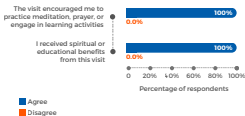


Chart 8 presents respondents' perceptions of behavioural encouragement and the spiritual benefits derived from their visit. All respondents (100%) agreed that the visit encouraged them to practice meditation or prayer, or to engage in learning activities, and that they received spiritual or educational benefits from the visit.

This unanimous perception reflected strong visitor engagement with the Ashram's spiritual and educational mission. However, this finding must be interpreted with analytical caution. Perceptions of encouragement and benefit were self-reported and reflected visitor sentiment at the time of survey administration, rather than documented behavioural change over time. Qualitative accounts confirmed that the Ashram functioned as a space for spiritual reflection and heritage learning, but no follow-up mechanisms existed to track sustained behavioural transformation among visitors.

The alignment between perceived encouragement and actual spiritual infrastructure quality suggested that the restoration supported the Ashram's core function of facilitating spiritual and educational engagement, even in the absence of formalised programming or sustained visitor follow-up.



The meditation hall was peaceful and clean. The environment felt safe and calm, which made it easy to focus on prayer and meditation. The restored structures look well-maintained and comfortable for visitors.

- Kshitij Shrinivas, Visitor, Thane



SHED OVER WATER STATION



OVERALL VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Qualitative notes from the survey administration recorded that visitors reported a very positive experience at the Ashram, with many stating that their objective of learning about Vinoba Bhave was successfully achieved. Several respondents highlighted gaining information about Vinoba Ji and viewing the Vakataka-period idol as key highlights of their visit.

This qualitative observation aligned with quantitative findings that demonstrated high satisfaction across heritage preservation (100%), spiritual infrastructure quality (100%), and educational engagement (100%). The convergence indicated that the restoration successfully preserved the Ashram's institutional identity and visitor appeal, despite incomplete auxiliary interventions.

However, the divergence between high visitor satisfaction and qualitative evidence of incomplete door, window, painting, and toilet work suggested that visitor expectations aligned with the Ashram's spiritual and heritage identity rather than with infrastructural luxury. Visitors appeared to prioritise authenticity, safety, and educational access over aesthetic perfection or modern amenities, which was consistent with the Ashram's ethos of simplicity and self-reliance.

“ The Ashram participated in giving inputs and approvals so that the work matched its needs. Coordination with the Ashram and Bajaj Auto CSR team was smooth, and decisions were taken keeping safety and heritage value in mind.

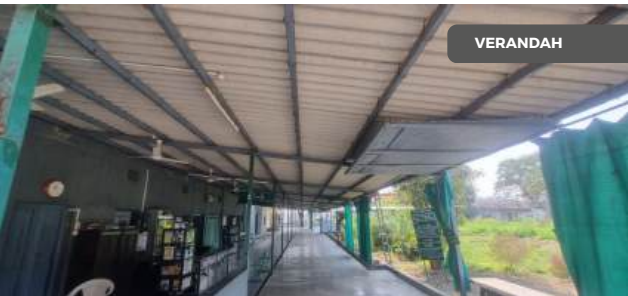
- Mr. Bhubendra Lohiya, Project Coordinator, Brahma Vidya Mandir

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“ My overall experience at the Ashram was very positive. The visit increased my respect for Vinoba Bhave's work. The place is organised, clean, and worth visiting for learning and spiritual reflection.

- Shubham Manohar Hood, Visitor, Ner

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VERANDAH

06. IMPACT CREATED AT MULTIPLE LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

At the individual level, the restoration strengthened visitors' spiritual engagement, safety perception, and educational awareness.

- 100% of respondents agreed that the heritage structures were well preserved and safe, reinforcing individual confidence in occupying the space.
- 100% reported receiving spiritual or educational benefit from their visit.
- 100% stated that the visit encouraged meditation, prayer, or learning engagement.
- 100% agreed that educational displays improved understanding of Vinoba Bhave's philosophy.

Qualitative interviews further confirmed that Ashram residents experienced improved residential comfort due to the elimination of water leakage and enhanced structural stability. The intervention, therefore, enhanced personal spiritual experience, individual learning outcomes, a psychological sense of safety, and dignified living conditions for resident sisters.

The Ashram's improved infrastructure directly supported individual-level spiritual reflection and the internalisation of values.



COMMUNITY LEVEL

At the community level, the restoration reinforced the Ashram's functioning as a living spiritual and educational ecosystem serving a diverse cross-section of society, including students, scholars, devotees, and residents.

Roof stabilisation ensured uninterrupted prayer, meditation, and agricultural routines, thereby sustaining the daily rhythm of collective spiritual practice. The construction of the compound wall reduced external disturbances and strengthened farm management, enhancing operational discipline and institutional self-reliance.

Quantitative findings indicated universal access to prayer halls and educational displays, confirming functional continuity of spiritual and learning spaces. The continuation of annual awareness programmes without structural risk further demonstrated the Ashram's capacity to host collective educational and spiritual engagements.

Together, these outcomes strengthened community stability, shared spiritual practice, agricultural continuity, organised visitor engagement, and inclusive value-based learning opportunities. The restoration, therefore, enabled the Ashram to function not merely as a preserved heritage structure but also as an active community institution that facilitated spiritual reflection and educational attainment across different segments of society.



STATE LEVEL

At the state level, the restoration contributed to the preservation of Maharashtra's cultural and Gandhian heritage.

- The Ashram continued to attract 40,000-50,000 visitors annually.
- Educational exposure to Vinoba Bhave's philosophy remained uninterrupted.
- Visitor recognition of the Ashram as a heritage site worth visiting stood at 100%.

The intervention prevented structural degradation of an 85-year-old heritage institution central to the Bhoodan movement. By stabilising the site, the project preserved: a key Gandhian landmark in Wardha district, a functioning centre of value-based learning, and a recognised cultural site within Maharashtra.

The Ashram remained an active node of philosophical and spiritual heritage within the state's cultural landscape.



NATIONAL LEVEL

At the national level, the restoration safeguarded a historically significant site linked to India's freedom movement and Gandhian thought.

- The Ashram remained a functioning centre for the dissemination of Vinoba Bhave's philosophy.
- 100% of surveyed visitors reported increased awareness of Vinoba Bhave's contributions.
- Educational displays and experiential learning continued without interruption.

The intervention ensured institutional continuity of Gandhian-Vinoba philosophy, the legacy of the Bhoodan and Gramdan movements, and women-led spiritual collectivism (Brahma Vidya tradition)

By preserving structural integrity and enabling continued public access, the project strengthened national heritage preservation, the transmission of values, and philosophical continuity.

07. CHALLENGES

The restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram encountered several operational, technical, and contextual challenges that constrained the full realisation of the project's intended scope. This chapter documents the challenges faced during implementation, based on stakeholder interviews and field observations, whilst acknowledging the limitations that affected the comprehensiveness of the restoration outcomes.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND IMPLEMENTATION DELAYS



Interactions with the Ashram Coordinator indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant delays in project implementation, preventing completion within the original timeline. The coordinator stated that, due to COVID-19, the work was not completed on time. The implementing partner confirmed that pandemic-related disruptions, including supply chain interruptions and restrictions on labour mobility, constrained the timely procurement of materials and execution of planned activities. These delays necessitated adjustments to the project timeline. They contributed to the reduction in scope, as the implementing agency had to prioritise critical interventions that could be completed within the available time and resources.

MATERIAL PROCUREMENT AND LOGISTICAL CONSTRAINTS



The implementing agency reported that material procurement delays posed significant logistical challenges during the restoration. Responses from the implementing partner suggested that the timely availability of construction materials, particularly specialised roofing sheets, and structural components, was constrained by supply chain disruptions and pandemic-related restrictions. These procurement challenges extended the implementation timeline and required the project team to prioritise activities based on material availability, resulting in phased, partial completion of the planned works.

LIMITED MANPOWER AND TECHNICAL CAPACITY

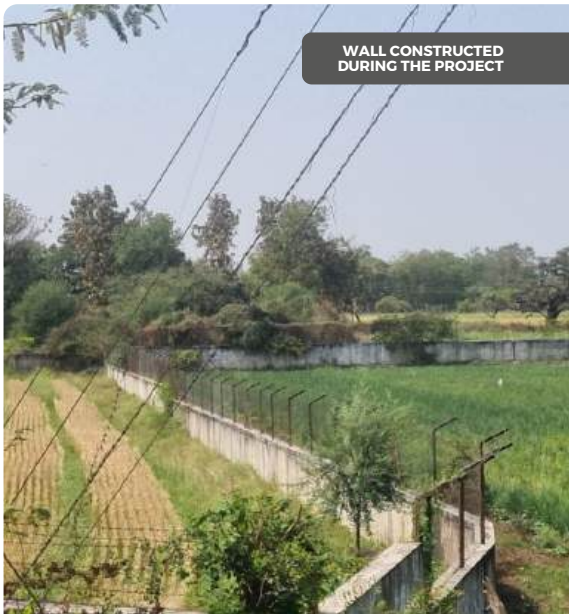


Based on stakeholder interviews, limited manpower emerged as a challenge that slowed the implementation pace. The implementing agency confirmed that the availability of skilled labour for heritage restoration work was constrained, particularly during the pandemic period when labour mobility was restricted. The reliance on specialised craftsmanship for heritage-sensitive restoration activities necessitated careful selection and supervision of contractors, thereby extending the implementation timeline and limiting the breadth of activities that could be executed simultaneously.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESTORATION PROJECT



The partial execution of planned activities constrained the comprehensiveness of the restoration, limiting improvements in hygiene, visitor comfort, and aesthetic appeal. Field observations confirmed that the absence of door and window repairs, painting, and toilet renovations reduced the overall quality of visitor experience and residential comfort. The incomplete development of visitor facilities, including stay arrangements and the Gaushala, constrained the Ashram's capacity to expand its accommodation offerings and deepen visitor engagement through immersive spiritual experiences.



**WALL CONSTRUCTED
DURING THE PROJECT**

08. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the challenges and limitations identified during the restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen the Ashram's sustainability, functionality, and capacity for heritage preservation. These recommendations address preventive maintenance, documentation of restoration learnings, visitor management, and knowledge archiving to ensure the long-term continuity of the Ashram as a living heritage site.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE



The Ashram may consider constituting a resolute maintenance committee responsible for periodic inspection and upkeep of roof structures, with clearly defined roles and accountability to ensure timely identification and rectification of potential issues.



It would be beneficial to earmark a dedicated annual maintenance budget for the roof, compound wall, and boundary structures, enabling routine maintenance and minor repairs to be undertaken proactively and sustaining long-term safety and functionality.



The Ashram could explore phased completion of pending activities, including door and window repairs, painting, and toilet renovations, through incremental budget allocations or partnership arrangements.

DOCUMENTATION OF RESTORATION LEARNINGS



The Ashram and implementing partners may consider documenting the technical specifications, materials used, and methodologies employed during the restoration to create a reference resource for future heritage conservation efforts.



It would be valuable to archive photographic records of the restoration process, including before-and-after comparisons, to preserve visual evidence of the intervention and inform future planning.



The Ashram may explore learning from best practices adopted in other heritage conservation projects across India, particularly in areas such as preventive maintenance systems, visitor flow management, structural monitoring protocols, and conservation-sensitive material use. Adapting relevant and contextually appropriate practices could strengthen long-term sustainability and institutional resilience.



09. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The restoration demonstrated moderate sustainability, supported by continued institutional ownership and the ongoing use of the Ashram for spiritual, educational, residential, and agricultural activities. Leadership by the Ashram custodians and resident sisters ensured that the restored structures were actively utilised and integrated into daily operations, while the critical interventions reduced immediate structural risks and reliance on emergency repairs.

From an exit readiness perspective, the project transitioned operational responsibility fully to the Ashram, which continued to function independently following completion of the works. However, the absence of a formally constituted maintenance committee and a dedicated funding mechanism for routine upkeep limited the long-term robustness of sustainability. While the Ashram possessed strong institutional commitment and cultural relevance, future sustainability would depend on establishing a structured maintenance governance framework, including committee-based oversight and earmarked funds for periodic repairs and preventive maintenance.

Overall, the project exited with a functional heritage ecosystem under institutional ownership, but with moderate sustainability and exit readiness due to the need for strengthened maintenance systems and financial planning.



10. CONCLUSION

The restoration of Vinoba's Paunar Ashram achieved substantive progress in heritage preservation by addressing critical structural vulnerabilities. The replacement of wooden roof supports with MS structures and the installation of powder-coated roofing sheets across 2851 square metres successfully eliminated water leakage and stabilised heritage buildings. The restoration approach retained the heritage character by preserving the original layout and visual simplicity characteristic of Vinoba Bhave's architectural philosophy, ensuring that the site remains a credible embodiment of nationally significant cultural and spiritual values.

The restoration contributed to the revitalisation of the Ashram as a living institution by improving the residential comfort of the 28 resident sisters, supporting daily spiritual and agricultural routines, and strengthening the Ashram's institutional capacity for long-term sustainability. The custodianship model, led by Shri Gautam Bajaj and supported by resident sisters, demonstrated sustained institutional commitment. The Ashram's continued engagement of over 50,000 annual visitors and the hosting of educational programmes underscored its capacity to function as a living heritage site that embodies collective spiritual practice and self-reliant living.

The restoration reinforced the Ashram's role as a platform for the transmission of Gandhian-Vinoba values by enhancing visitor experience and supporting educational engagement. The continuation of the annual three-day awareness programme and the availability of educational materials enabled the Ashram to function as a centre for value-based education. The project's impact extended across individual, community, state, and national levels, reinforcing the Ashram's role as a custodian of Gandhian-Vinoba values and sustaining it as a living heritage institution capable of promoting the principles of simplicity, self-reliance, and people-centred social transformation for future generations.



**COW SHED
CONSTRUCTION**

ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted and innovative brand with over 21 million motorcycles sold in over 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio that includes motorcycles, scooters, and auto-rickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs both in India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR also contributes to education, health, environment, animal welfare projects, for the sustainable development of the community and the nation.

**WALL CONSTRUCTED
DURING THE PROJECT**



ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

Brahma Vidya Mandir, located in Paunar, Wardha, Maharashtra, serves as the coordinating institution of Paramdham Ashram, established by Acharya Vinoba Bhave in 1934. The organisation operates under the Coordinatorship model led by Shri Gautam Bajaj, who joined Vinoba Bhave's 1951 padayatra at the age of 13 and remained associated with the Ashram for over six decades, assuming responsibility for its preservation and continued functioning following Vinoba Bhave's passing. Brahma Vidya Mandir is dedicated to preserving the spiritual, educational, and social mission of the Ashram, which was conceived as a centre for self-realisation, community living, and the promotion of value-based social transformation. The organisation maintains the traditions established by Vinoba Bhave, including the emphasis on women's spiritual emancipation, collective spiritual practice, and the principles of the Bhoodan and Gramdan movements. The Ashram currently houses 28 sisters from different states of India and one from Japan, who live together without distinction of caste, creed, language, religion, or nationality, embodying the Ashram's commitment to inclusive community living. Brahma Vidya Mandir facilitates educational engagement and visitor projects, welcoming over 50,000 annual visitors, including students, scholars, and spiritual seekers who come to learn about Vinoba Bhave's philosophy and the Gandhian way of life. The organisation conducts an annual three-day awareness programme from 15th to 17th November, featuring lectures and community gatherings that disseminate the teachings of Vinoba Bhave.



**SHED CONSTRUCTED
UNDER THE PROJECT**

ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

RENEWAL AND
UPGRADATION OF
BAJAJ CENTRE FOR
TRANSLATIONAL
CANCER RESEARCH
(B-CTCR)

Implemented By:
Prashanti Cancer Care Mission
(PCCM)

Implementation Year:
Mar 2021 - Mar 2024

Assessment Year: Year 2025 - 26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 07
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings & Impact	04 - 07
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	07
02	OECD Framework	08 - 10
03	Introduction	11 - 15
	Background and Need For the Project	11
	Objectives of the Project	12
	Project Details	12 - 13
	Project Activities	14
	Timeline of the project	15
04	Research Methodology	16 - 18
	Objectives of the Impact Assessment Study	16
	Use of Qualitative Approach	16
	Ensuring Triangulation	17
	Sampling Framework	17
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	17
	Research Design	17
	Key Stakeholders	17
	Study Tools	18
	Ethical Considerations	18
05	Key Findings	19 - 29
06	Impact Across Multiple Levels	30 - 31
07	Sustainability Exit Readiness	32
08	Conclusion	33 - 34

ABBREVIATIONS

BAL	Bajaj Auto Limited
B-CTCR	Bajaj Centre for Translational Cancer Research
CBE	Clinical Breast Examination
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTCR	Centre for Translational Cancer Research
DSIR	Department of Scientific and Industrial Research
FY	Financial Year
HR	Human Resources
ICGA	International Conference on Global Advancesurces
NPCDCS	National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke
OBHS	Orchids Breast Health Centre
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCCM	Prashanti Cancer Care Mission
PROM	Patient-Reported Outcome Measure
PSCM	Project Selection Committee Meetings
REECIS	Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact, and Sustainability
RT-PCR	Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIRO	Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TNBC	Triple negative breast cancer
UEA	University of East Anglia

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In partnership with Bajaj Auto Limited, the Prashanti Cancer Care Mission (PCCM), in collaboration with the Centre for Translational Cancer Research (CTCR), implemented a multi-component program aimed at strengthening clinical care, translational research, and capacity building in breast cancer management, with a particular focus on Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC), a type of breast cancer that does not respond to common hormone or HER2-targeted treatments. The program sought to address gaps in research infrastructure, skilled human resources, and patient-centric care pathways in the Indian cancer care context.

The project integrated clinical service delivery with research and academic training to create a coordinated and patient-centred approach to breast cancer care. Key components included the expansion of biobanking and digitised data systems, the institutionalisation of genetic counselling, nutrition and psycho-oncological support, and the delivery of structured training for clinicians and researchers. Knowledge sharing and academic exchange were further supported through national and international dissemination activities conducted via the BreastGlobal platform. Through this integrated approach, the initiative sought to strengthen evidence-based clinical practice, enhance patient experience and quality of care, and establish sustainable research and training systems that are embedded within routine institutional processes.



**BIOBANK WORKSHOP
2025**

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Renewal and upgradation of Centre for translational cancer research (B-CTCR)



Implementing Agency

Prashanti Cancer Care Mission



Location

Pune



Duration

Mar 2021 - Mar 2024



Assessment Location

Pune



Total Budget

585 lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total nos. of Beneficiaries

Clinical trainees - 3444; Patients - 17,277



Target Beneficiaries

Breast cancer patients, clinicians, clinical researchers, trainees



Primary Programs

Strengthen and expand B-CTCR teams via onboarding of young onco-clinicians and basic scientists, undertake community-based breast cancer research programs in early detection and screening

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment was to examine the program's effectiveness and its outcomes in strengthening cancer care and research systems. Specifically, the assessment aimed to:



Examine how the program strengthened patient-centric clinical care and service delivery.



Assess improvements in institutional research capacity, training systems, and knowledge dissemination.



**BIOBANK WORKSHOP
2025**

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: STRENGTHEN CLINICAL RESEARCH AND TRANSLATIONAL CAPACITY WITH A FOCUS ON TRIPLE-NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER (TNBC)



Clinicians and researchers identified Triple-Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) as a priority subtype, accounting for approximately 20–22% of breast cancer cases and characterised by limited targeted treatment options.



The program enabled the use of biobank samples, genetic clinic data, molecular biology tools, and image banks for TNBC-focused research.



Discussions with program stakeholders indicated that patient data capture systems recorded approximately 13,000 data points per patient, enabling longitudinal and translational analysis.

OBJECTIVE 2: BUILDING HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND CONTRIBUTING TO WIDER CANCER DISCOURSE



The program trained clinical researchers across multiple levels, including interns, fellows, postgraduate students, and clinical recruits.



Senior leadership team noted that academic dissemination was anchored through BreastGlobal, which recorded 2,506 registered members, and facilitated engagement through multiple conferences, webinars, masterclasses, and hands-on workshops, reaching hundreds of participants per academic event.



Senior leadership reported a steady increase in publications under the BreastGlobal Journal, with 6 manuscripts under review in 2021–22, 2 publications completed and 5 under review in 2022–23, and 3 publications completed with 8 under review in 2023–24.



Trainees reported strong mentorship support for ethics approvals, grant writing, data analysis, and manuscript development.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHENING PATIENT-CENTRED CLINICAL CARE AND SERVICE DELIVERY



Stakeholder discussions confirmed that CTCR-supported services facilitated large-scale access to diagnostics and treatment.



Approximately 2,500 mammography procedures, 2,500 sonography screenings, and 3,000 biopsies were conducted through CTCR-supported services.



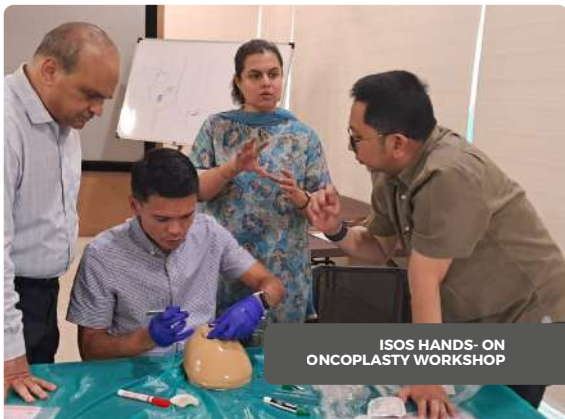
Clinical care included around 400 surgeries, approximately 6,000 chemotherapy cycles, and nearly 15,000 instances of medicine support across different stages of treatment.



Over 1,500 genetic counselling sessions, 4,500+ nutrition counselling engagements, and 4,000+ psycho-oncological counselling sessions were delivered.



At least 20 community outreach and awareness camps per year were conducted, combining awareness talks and clinical breast examinations (CBEs).



**ISOS HANDS- ON
ONCOPLASTY WORKSHOP**

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: STRENGTHEN CLINICAL RESEARCH AND TRANSLATIONAL CAPACITY WITH A FOCUS ON TRIPLE-NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER (TNBC)



Improved linkage between clinical decision-making and research inquiry in TNBC care.



Enhanced the ability of researchers to translate patient-level data into studies, publications, and guideline contributions.



Strengthened researcher capacity to integrate patient experience, counselling insights, and biological data into evidence-based outputs.

OBJECTIVE 2: BUILDING HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND CONTRIBUTING TO WIDER CANCER DISCOURSE



Improved research confidence, productivity, and career progression among trainees and early-career researchers.



Increased participation of clinicians and researchers in national and international collaborations and academic forums.



Strengthened contribution to national and global cancer discourse through data-driven research, publications, and interdisciplinary partnerships.



Senior research leadership highlighted that collaborations with the University of East Anglia, Medgenomics, ACTREC-TMC, Tata Memorial Hospital, Jehangir Hospital, and IISER Pune advanced multi-institutional research, enabled joint studies, and streamlined ethics and data-sharing coordination.



Senior leadership reported sustained academic engagement across conferences, webinars, workshops, and masterclasses, including a virtual ICGA conference (700+ registrations), seven BreastGlobal webinars, an ISOS-UEA-BreastGlobal workshop (50+ participants), two webinars in 2022-23 (250+ and 600+ registrations), and four 2023-24 masterclasses (500-600 registrations each).

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHENING PATIENT-CENTRED CLINICAL CARE AND SERVICE DELIVERY



Improved access to timely diagnostics and treatment contributed to continuity of care across the patient pathway.



Oncoplastic surgical approaches supported improved patient quality of life, with clinicians reporting comparable oncological outcomes alongside better psychological well-being and post-surgical body-image outcomes for patients.

The study showed that the program has made a substantive contribution to strengthening breast cancer care, research, and training systems. By integrating clinical services with translational research, academic dissemination, and patient-centric support services, the program improved access to care, enhanced quality of life for patients, and built sustainable institutional capacity. The alignment of comprehensive service delivery, rigorous training systems, and proactive knowledge dissemination established the program as a scalable and sustainable model for promoting evidence-based cancer care and research in India.

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDERS FEEDBACK

Stakeholder group	Feedback
Clinical researchers and trainees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees reported that hands-on exposure to patient data, genetic clinics, and biobank resources strengthened their understanding of translational research. Translational research helps move scientific discoveries into real-world medical practice. • Several noted that mentorship and structured guidance improved their confidence in research design, ethics submissions, and publication writing. • Researchers highlighted that engagement with patients shifted their perspective from purely laboratory-based work to patient-centric, evidence-driven research.
Clinicians and faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinicians observed that academic platforms and case-based discussions improved clinical decision-making, particularly in oncoplasty and TNBC management. • They highlighted that access to genetic and molecular data supported more informed treatment planning and follow-up. • Faculty noted increased interest among clinicians in research participation and interdisciplinary collaboration.
Program administration and HR teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative teams reported that formalised SOPs, data workflows, and project tracking systems improved coordination across clinical, research, and training functions.
Implementing team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leadership noted that integration of clinical services, research infrastructure, and academic dissemination strengthened institutional capacity beyond the grant period. • They highlighted that platforms such as BreastGlobal enabled sustained engagement with national and international clinical communities.

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The program was highly relevant in addressing key gaps in breast cancer care and research in India. Breast cancer management in many settings continues to face challenges related to limited access to specialised training, fragmented care pathways, and weak integration of research with clinical practice, particularly for complex subtypes such as Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC). The program responded directly to these needs by strengthening clinical and translational research capacity, improving access to diagnostics and treatment support, institutionalising genetic counselling, and expanding training in oncoplasty and patient-centric care. By linking service delivery with research, training, and academic dissemination, the program aligned well with national cancer priorities and the practical needs of clinicians, researchers, and patients.



COHERENCE

The program showed strong alignment with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- SDG 3: Good health and well-being
- SDG 4: Quality education
- SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure



The program also reflected strong coherence with national initiatives:

- National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS)
- National Cancer Grid

**EFFECTIVENESS**

The program was largely effective in delivering its planned clinical, research, and capacity-building activities. Training programs in oncoplasty, translational research, genetics, and patient-centric care reached a wide range of clinicians and researchers through workshops, masterclasses, observerships, and digital platforms. Stakeholder discussions confirmed that participants were able to apply acquired knowledge in clinical practice, research design, data management, and publication processes. The integration of genetic counselling, biobanking, and standardised data workflows supported the effective execution of TNBC-focused research and improved the linkage between clinical care and research activities. While disruptions due to COVID-19 and staff turnover affected timelines in early phases, adaptive coordination, mentorship, and administrative support ensured that core program objectives were achieved.

**EFFICIENCY**

The program utilised financial, human, and technical resources efficiently to deliver clinical services, training, and research outputs within the grant period. Infrastructure such as biobanking facilities, digital platforms, and standardised data systems was used across clinical care, research, and training functions, avoiding parallel systems and reducing duplication of effort. The combination of in-person activities and digital formats (webinars, virtual conferences, online mentoring) allowed the program to maintain continuity. Use of project tracking tools and integration of research activities within routine clinical workflows supported the execution of training, publications, and patient services, contributing to overall operational efficiency.

**IMPACT**

Stakeholders confirmed that the program enabled large-scale delivery of diagnostic and treatment services, including approximately 2,500 mammography procedures, 2,500 sonography screenings, and around 3,000 biopsies, supporting timely clinical decision-making and initiation of treatment.

Discussions indicated that breast cancer treatment services reached a substantial number of patients, with around 400 surgeries, approximately 6,000 chemotherapy cycles, and nearly 15,000 instances of medicine support provided, contributing to continuity of care across different stages of breast cancer management.

Integrated counselling and support services strengthened patient-centred care, with over 1,500 genetic counselling sessions and screenings, more than 4,500 nutrition counselling engagements, and over 4,000 psychological counselling sessions, supporting treatment understanding, adherence, and overall patient experience.

Clinicians reported improved quality-of-life outcomes among patients undergoing breast-conserving oncoplastic procedures, with comparable oncological outcomes and better psychological well-being and post-surgical body-image satisfaction compared to mastectomy-focused approaches.

Strengthened translational research execution, as the institutionalisation of genetic counselling, biobank-linked data, and standardised documentation supported Triple-Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) focused studies, publications, and guideline contributions.

Enhanced researcher capacity and collaboration, with trainees and early-career researchers reporting increased confidence, research productivity, and participation in national and international collaborative studies.



SUSTAINABILITY

The program has embedded core clinical, research, and training systems such as biobanking, genetic counselling, standardised data workflows, SOP-led research processes, and academic platforms into routine institutional operations. Senior research leadership confirmed that these systems continue to support TNBC-focused research, publications, and patient-centric care beyond the grant period. Sustainability is reinforced through ongoing national and international partnerships (including IISER Pune, ACTREC-TMC, Tata Memorial Hospital, the University of East Anglia, and Medgenomics), a trained pool of clinical researchers, diversified funding sources, and continued dissemination via BreastGlobal platform and the BreastGlobal Journal. While staff retention remains a consideration, institutional ownership and structured mentorship support continuity.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Although significant advances have been made in cancer diagnosis and treatment in India, breast cancer continues to pose a major public health challenge. The incidence of breast cancer is steadily rising, with approximately 1.65 lakh new cases diagnosed annually, and the average age of onset is now between 42 and 44 years (ICMR-National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP)). Despite medical progress, a large proportion of cases are still detected at advanced stages due to low awareness, social stigma, inadequate screening practices, and limited access to early diagnostic facilities. These challenges disproportionately affect women from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, leading to delayed treatment, adverse health outcomes, and increased physical, emotional, and financial burden on families.

In response to this critical challenge, Prashanti Cancer Care Mission (PCCM), with the support of Bajaj Auto Limited, strengthened its breast cancer research and care ecosystem through the establishment and expansion of the Centre for Translational Cancer Research (CTCR) in Pune. The initiative emphasised improving the delivery of affordable, high-quality cancer care for Indian patients by undertaking high-impact research relevant to the local context. The intervention focused on building integrated clinical and translational research capabilities to address gaps in early detection, population-specific breast cancer research, and evidence-based clinical management. It was designed to foster multidisciplinary research, generate Indian patient-centric data, and facilitate the translation of research findings into improved clinical practice.

The overarching objective of the program was to strengthen research capacity, enhance quality of care and clinical outcomes for women with breast cancer, and contribute relevant scientific evidence to the wider clinical and research community. The initiative also aims to expand CTCR's activities by enabling high-impact breast cancer research and structured training through improved infrastructure and strengthened human resources.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



To strengthen breast cancer research and care capacity through the establishment and expansion of the CTCR in Pune.



To integrate translational research with patient-centric clinical services to generate evidence that supports clinical management of breast cancer.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Renewal and upgradation of Centre for translational cancer research (B-CTCR)



Implementing Agency

Prashanti Cancer Care Mission



Location

Pune



Total no. of Beneficiaries

Clinical trainees - 3444; Patients - 17,277



Target Beneficiaries

Breast cancer patients, clinicians, clinical researchers, trainees



Primary Programs

Strengthen and expand B-CTCR teams via onboarding of young onco-clinicians and basic scientists, undertake community-based breast cancer research programs in early detection and screening

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Clinical researchers	Engaged in clinical and translational research activities; participated in training programs, data collection, analysis, publications, and interdisciplinary collaborations.
Senior clinicians and faculty	Provided clinical leadership; supervised surgeries, counselling services, and research projects; mentored trainees; and contributed to protocol development and academic outputs.
Program administration and HR teams	Coordinated staffing, training schedules, documentation, SOP implementation, project tracking, and compliance with ethical and administrative requirements.
Implementing Agency (PCCM)	Led program design, implementation, research governance, training delivery, data management, partnerships, and academic dissemination.
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Provided financial support, strategic guidance, and oversight to enable strengthening of clinical, research, and training capacities under the program.



**BIOBANK WORKSHOP 2025
PROJECT TEAM**

PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Strengthened breast cancer research and care services through the establishment and expansion of the CTCR in Pune.



Developed integrated clinical and translational research programs focused on early detection, diagnosis, and management of breast cancer.



Expanded breast oncoplasty training programs for surgeons through structured courses, workshops, and international collaborations.



Established and strengthened clinical databases, biobanks, genetic registries, and imaging repositories for breast cancer research.



Undertook focused research on triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) using molecular biology, genomics, and bioinformatics approaches.



Recruited and trained multidisciplinary teams of clinicians, researchers, and early-career scientists to support long-term breast cancer research.



Conducted community-based breast cancer awareness, early detection, and screening initiatives in low-resource settings.



Expanded physical and office infrastructure to support research teams, training activities, and collaborative workflows.

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

The program was operationalised from March 2021 to strengthen breast cancer care, clinical research, and translational research capacity. PCCM functioned as the implementing organisation responsible for governance, research oversight, SOP ownership, and academic dissemination, while CTCR managed staffing and day-to-day execution. Clinical services were delivered through Orchids Breast Health Hospital, with support from Jehangir Hospital.

Phase	2021	2022	2023	2024
Period				
Initiation & Setup - MoU signed, team expanded, infrastructure upgraded, BreastGlobal launched, first conference				
Scaling - IEC approvals, RT-PCR training, BreastGlobal Journal release, research expansion				
Consolidation - Mentorship, partnerships, reinforced, BreastGlobal webinars & journal, observerships				
Clinical Outputs (Total) - 2,824 mammograms, 4,029 ultrasound scans (sonography), 497 biopsies, 633 surgeries, 3,582 chemo cycles, 5,730 patients supported				
Research Outputs (Cumulative) - 33 projects, 13 patient-centric studies, 30 manuscripts, 2 book chapters, 35 posters				

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Limited commissioned SoulAce to undertake an impact assessment of the renewal and upgradation of the Bajaj Centre for Translational Cancer Research (B-CTCR) implemented in Pune, Maharashtra.

OBJECTIVES OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

The primary objectives of the study were:



To assess the status of breast cancer research, clinical services, and institutional capacity at the B-CTCR prior to the renewal and upgradation initiative.



To evaluate stakeholder satisfaction with the infrastructure, research support, training, and capacity-building interventions implemented under the program.



To assess the overall impact of the renewal and upgradation of B-CTCR on strengthening translational breast cancer research, clinical integration, and knowledge generation relevant to the Indian context.

USE OF QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The evaluation adopted a qualitative research approach to understand the outcomes and impact of the renewal and upgradation of the B-CTCR. The qualitative component enabled an in-depth exploration of experiences, perceptions, and insights of key stakeholders, including clinicians, researchers, and program staff associated with B-CTCR. This approach provided a nuanced understanding of institutional strengthening, research capacity enhancement, and integration of research with clinical practice. By focusing on stakeholder narratives and experiential evidence, the study generated rich, context-specific insights, contributing to a holistic understanding of the program's impact.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

To strengthen the reliability and validity of findings, the study incorporated triangulation strategies. Data triangulation was achieved by collecting information from multiple sources, including field observations, beneficiary interviews, stakeholder interactions, and project staff feedback. Methodological triangulation was implemented through the use of diverse research tools such as surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. This cross-verification process mitigated potential biases and reinforced the credibility of the conclusions.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The study employed purposive sampling techniques to select participants associated with the renewal and upgradation of the B-CTCR. Six respondents were selected based on their roles and involvement in the programme, including clinicians, researchers, and project staff. This approach enabled the collection of information from respondents with direct experience of the intervention, in line with the study objectives.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The assessment was guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring adherence to globally recognised standards. This approach provided a structured and credible basis for evaluating the program's relevance, effectiveness, and impact.



RESEARCH DESIGN



A cross-sectional assessment design was used to capture programme outcomes at a defined point following completion of the intervention.



Data were collected across programme delivery locations in Pune.



A purposive sampling approach was used, and findings were analysed by programme pathway and level of professional experience.



Qualitative method used: Semi-structured interviews, testimonials of the key stakeholders

KEY STAKEHOLDERS



Clinicians: Genetic Data Coordinator and an Oncological Clinical Psychologist, were interviewed as part of the study.



Researchers: Cancer Genetics Researcher and a Senior Scientist, were interviewed for the assessment.



Admin: A representative from CTCR administration, namely the HR and Admin Manager, was interviewed.



Implementing Partner & project team: Representative from the implementing agency, the Head of Research and Senior Scientist, were interviewed for the assessment.

STUDY TOOLS

Semi-structured interview guides were developed for key stakeholders after reviewing project documents and intervention components. Indicators were defined in advance to ensure alignment with the study objectives.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The impact evaluation adhered to a rigorous ethical framework, ensuring that the study was conducted responsibly and in accordance with established research ethics. The rights and well-being of participants were prioritised throughout the process. Informed consent was obtained by providing comprehensive information about the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, enabling participants to make voluntary and informed decisions after their queries were addressed.

Strict measures were implemented to maintain confidentiality and privacy. Data were securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel, and participant identities were protected through anonymisation and coding techniques. Participation was entirely voluntary, free from coercion or undue influence, underscoring respect for autonomy and individual choice. Throughout the study, participants were treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, and their well-being remained the highest priority, with appropriate support provided whenever required.



ISOS HANDS- ON ONCOPLASTY WORKSHOP

05. KEY FINDINGS



This chapter presents insights from interactions with key stakeholders involved in the B-CTCR and the impact of the renewal and upgradation initiative. Drawing on qualitative data from interviews and stakeholder consultations, the assessment examined the extent to which the intervention strengthened institutional capacity, enhanced translational research capabilities, and supported the integration of research into clinical practice.

KEY FINDINGS



EXPANSION OF HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY FOR CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The program placed a strong emphasis on strengthening human resource capacity by onboarding and training clinical researchers across multiple academic and professional levels, including clinical recruits, interns, fellows, and postgraduate students. The initiative aimed to create a sustained pipeline of trained personnel to support long-term clinical and translational research.

According to stakeholder inputs, the year-wise enrolment of clinical researchers under the program was as follows:

Year	Enrolment details
2021-22	The programme enrolled 12 individuals, consisting of 2 MSc interns and 10 clinical researchers.
2022-23	A cohort of 12 trainees joined the programme, including 3 clinical recruits, 2 MSc interns, and 4 oncoplasty fellows who underwent clinical research training.
2023-24	Enrolment increased to 19 participants, including clinical researchers, 2 international interns, 4 national interns, 1 MSc student, and 4 MSc thesis students who were mentored.

Alongside the enrolment activities, one PhD thesis and two MSc theses were carried out during FY 2022-23.

The enrolment data reflect participation from clinical recruits, postgraduate trainees, fellows, and interns, creating a strong cohort of developing clinical researchers. This strengthened institutional capacity for ongoing clinical and translational research.

“During the 2021-2024 period, the program delivered several structured clinical research training activities. These efforts have resulted in more than 14 researchers currently in training, representing an emerging group of professionals who are being prepared to contribute to future clinical and translational research initiatives.

•Aditya Kamthe, HR and Admin Manager



IMPACT: ENHANCED HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY FOR CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The project enhanced human resource capacity by systematically onboarding and training clinical researchers, postgraduate students, fellows, and interns across successive years. This multi-level engagement increased the availability of trained staff for clinical and research activities that translate research to patient care and strengthened the institution's readiness to carry out long-term research programs.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING

The project strengthened institutional infrastructure and systems to support clinical and patient-focused research activities. As part of this effort, the biobank was expanded to include additional datasets, including Transonic data, thereby increasing its value for translational research. Transonic data are measurements of blood flow used in clinical and research studies.

Interactions with Dr Sneha Joshi (Head of Research and Senior Scientist) indicated that, prior to the intervention, research, training, and documentation systems were being developed and formalised as program activities expanded. During the intervention period, the Head of Research noted that focused investments were made to strengthen these systems, including expanding the biobank with additional datasets, such as Transonic data, which enhanced the depth and usability of patient information for translational research, particularly in TNBC-focused studies.

Inputs from clinical researchers and trainees indicate that access to organised clinical databases, biobank resources, and clearly defined data workflows directly supported their research engagement. Clinical researchers described that structured documentation systems and standardised data collection processes enabled smoother participation in proposal development, ethics submissions, data analysis, and publication writing, helping them transition from isolated or lab-based work to patient-centric translational research.

Discussions with HR and administrative functions indicated that formalising SOP repositories, HR guidelines, and workflow protocols improved role clarity and consistency across teams. Aditya Kamthe (HR and admin officer) noted that defined SOPs for data handling, project execution, and staffing strengthened accountability and coordination across clinical, research, and administrative units. The introduction of project management and tracking systems further supported task and timeline monitoring when multiple activities were implemented concurrently.

“Before these developments, there was no dedicated office space, IT assets, or structured project infrastructure available for research activities, which made coordination and documentation challenging. The infrastructure and systems introduced under the program helped organise workflows, improved communication across teams, and strengthened documentation practices, making it easier to implement research and training activities effectively.”

•Dr Sneha Joshi, Head of Research





STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND BREAST ONCOPLASTY TRAINING PROGRAM

The Breast Oncoplasty Training Programme under B-CTCR was designed with the expectation of addressing a critical gap in breast cancer surgical practice in India, where mastectomy continued to be the dominant approach despite growing global evidence supporting breast conservation and oncoplastic techniques. The programme aimed to build structured, high-quality training opportunities for surgeons and clinicians, enable exposure to contemporary oncoplastic principles, and promote patient-centric surgical decision-making without compromising oncological safety. A further expectation was to create a scalable training ecosystem that could extend beyond Pune through national and international collaborations, while anchoring training within the Indian clinical context.

Interviews with clinical trainees indicate that the training programme provided exposure to contemporary oncoplastic principles through a combination of formal coursework, webinars, masterclasses, and hands-on workshops. Trainees consistently reported that participation improved their understanding of breast-conserving and reconstructive options and expanded their clinical perspective beyond conventional mastectomy-centric approaches. Respondents identified oncoplasty techniques as a key area of skill acquisition and noted that the training content was directly relevant to their clinical practice.

The respondent further highlighted that exposure to structured research practices and a supportive work culture strengthened both clinical insight and research skills, emphasising that timely guidance, accessibility of the team, and ongoing mentorship created an enabling environment for learning and application in practice.

Senior clinicians and faculty interviews suggest that the programme's emphasis on case-based discussions, live surgical demonstrations, and interaction with international experts contributed to improved surgical planning and execution. Respondents highlighted that exposure to global best practices, alongside discussions on adapting techniques to patient anatomy and healthcare settings, supported the development of context-appropriate surgical approaches.



INTERVIEW WITH DR SNEHA JOSHI DURING FIELD VISIT

Based on the discussion with Dr Sneha Joshi, engaged clinicians through conferences, workshops, observerships, and academic training activities during the project period. The year-wise details are presented below.

Year	Activity	The number of clinicians who attended
2021-22	BreastGlobal Members	2500
2022-23	Hands-on Oncoplasty Workshop	70
2022-23	Surgery Observership Programme (Stryker)	4
2022-23	RT-PCR Module 1 & early Module 2	311
2023-24	BreastGlobal Masterclasses/Webinars (oncoplasty-focused)	1600+
2023-24	"Essential Oncoplastic Techniques" Hands-on Workshop	25

Discussions with Dr Sneha Joshi indicate that during the early phase (2021-22), the programme prioritised wide outreach and awareness through virtual platforms and professional networks, as reflected in high registration and membership numbers. In subsequent years, the focus expanded to include structured, in-person capacity-building activities such as hands-on workshops and surgery observerships. Alongside these, academic and research-oriented training modules and conferences continued to engage a large number of clinicians nationally and internationally. This phased approach reflects a progression from broad outreach to skill-oriented training under the Breast Oncoplasty Training Programme.



ACADEMIC AND DIGITAL LEARNING

Discussions with the Head of Research and Senior Scientist indicate that academic and digital learning were deliberate strategies to extend training beyond physical classrooms and support continuous engagement across clinicians and researchers. As part of this approach, platforms such as BreastGlobal, along with webinars, masterclasses, virtual conferences, a surgical video library, and curated training materials, supported the delivery of structured academic content in breast cancer management, oncoplasty, genetics, and translational research.

Inputs from clinical researchers and trainees confirm that these digital and academic formats were actively used and perceived as relevant to their work. Christina Mathew (a genetics data coordinator) reported participating in BreastGlobal webinars and RT-PCR modules and noted that digital learning helped her understand patient-centric research and data management practices, particularly in genetic and preventive clinics. She highlighted that exposure to webinars, structured modules, and access to research support enabled her to transition into clinical research despite having no prior clinical background, and contributed to improved confidence and research productivity, including published outputs.

Participants noted webinars and lectures, case-based discussions, and the RT-PCR Translational Training Course for Physicians as the most effective training formats under the program.

These formats were perceived as useful for strengthening conceptual understanding and linking research learning to clinical practice.



RESEARCH EXECUTION WITH FOCUS ON TNBC AND PATIENT-CENTRIC OUTCOMES

Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) is an aggressive subtype of breast cancer that does not express estrogen, progesterone, or HER2 receptors. As clinicians and researchers noted during interviews, this makes TNBC particularly challenging to treat because there are no targeted therapies available, and treatment options are limited largely to chemotherapy. Stakeholders highlighted that TNBC accounts for approximately 20-22% of breast cancer cases in the Indian context, making it a priority area for research.

Clinicians and researchers emphasised that TNBC requires deeper genetic, molecular, and patient-level investigation to understand disease behaviour and treatment response. Interviews indicated that the program's focus on TNBC enabled researchers to work with genetic data, molecular biology tools, image banks, and biobank samples, while remaining closely connected to patient pathways.

Discussions with clinicians involved in TNBC care and research indicated that the program's TNBC focus helped bridge clinical decision-making and research inquiry. Clinicians noted that access to genetic profiles, molecular data, and biobank samples enabled a better understanding of disease aggressiveness, recurrence risk, and treatment response variability among TNBC patients. They also highlighted that engagement with research teams led to more detailed documentation of patient histories, counselling inputs, and follow-up outcomes, which informed both clinical management and ongoing research questions.

Inputs from the implementing agency and clinical researchers indicate that genetic counselling was institutionalised as an integral component of both clinical care and translational research under the PCCM-CTCR program. According to Dr Sneha Joshi, Head of Research and Senior Scientist, genetic counselling was formally embedded within clinical workflows and SOPs and linked to the central research database, which captures approximately 13,000 data points per patient. Genetic clinic data were used alongside biobank samples, molecular biology tools, and image banks to support TNBC-focused research, particularly in the absence of targeted therapies for this subtype.

Clinical researchers and trainees reported active engagement with genetic clinics and preventive clinics, noting that participation in Genetic Counselling Awareness Programs strengthened their understanding of hereditary risk, ethical considerations, and patient communication.

Senior clinical researchers supervising genetic counselling sessions emphasised that exposure to counselling activities shifted their perspective from laboratory-based research to patient-facing, evidence-based care. They reported using insights from genetic counselling to design research studies, interpret test results in clinical contexts, and mentor junior researchers. Genetic counselling was also linked to interdisciplinary collaborations, including studies with ACTREC-TMC and Tata Memorial Hospital, further strengthening translational relevance.

From a service delivery perspective, clinicians and the implementing agency noted that genetic counselling was generally well accepted by patients, though uptake varied. Program leadership and clinical staff reported that approximately 70% of patients benefited from treatment and counselling services, while around 30% declined genetic or allied counselling due to personal preference or perceived relevance. Clinicians involved in patient care further observed that integrating genetic counselling with nutrition and psycho-oncological support contributed to more holistic and patient-centric care pathways.

Evidence from stakeholders and trainees indicates that genetic counselling under the program functioned not only as a clinical support service but also as a critical research input, strengthening TNBC-focused studies, enhancing researcher capacity, informing publications and guidelines, and reinforcing the linkage between patient experience and translational research outcomes.



INTER-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND TRAINING ON TRADITIONAL MEDICINE IN CANCER CARE

Interdisciplinary research engagement under the PCCM-CTCR program included a comparative study of traditional medicine practices, conducted with active involvement from a Senior Cancer Genetics Researcher. One of the researchers also reported participating in a collaborative study with the PRANA team that examined the outcomes of homeopathic treatment in comparison with standard cancer care. Together, these initiatives brought oncology researchers and practitioners from different medical systems into a shared research framework to systematically assess patient outcomes.

The researcher highlighted that working across disciplines required adapting research design, ethical considerations, and outcome assessment methods to ensure scientific rigour. Exposure to this collaboration provided insight into how patients integrate traditional medicine alongside conventional treatment and underscored the importance of evaluating such practices through evidence-based research. The experience also strengthened skills in interdisciplinary collaboration and patient-responsive research design.

“Being associated with the PRANA collaboration exposed me to an interdisciplinary approach where traditional medicine practices were examined alongside standard cancer care. This experience helped me understand how patients navigate multiple treatment systems and reinforced the importance of studying such practices through structured, evidence-based research rather than assumptions.

-Dr Rupa Mishra, Cancer Genetics and Senior Scientist





KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION, PARTNERSHIPS, AND CONTRIBUTION TO WIDER CANCER DISCOURSE

The program placed strong emphasis on disseminating knowledge, building partnerships, and contributing to national and global discourse on cancer research. This was achieved through a combination of academic platforms, publications, conferences, collaborations, and data-driven research outputs.

Interactions with program administration and senior research leadership indicated that the BreastGlobal platform served as the primary vehicle for academic dissemination and collaboration, with 2,506 registered members during the assessment period. Administrative tracking further indicated that in 2021-22, the ICGA Virtual Conference recorded 700+ registrations, alongside seven BreastGlobal webinars.

Administrative and research leadership inputs confirmed that dissemination efforts expanded in 2022-23, including:

- The ISOS-UEA-BreastGlobal hands-on workshop was held in Pune, with 50+ registered participants.
- The Stage IV NED webinar, with 250+ attendees.
- The Inherited Breast Cancer webinar had 600+ registrations.

In 2023-24, senior research leadership noted the conduct of four online masterclasses focusing on oncoplastic techniques and surgical quality, each attracting 500-600 registrations, reflecting sustained engagement from the clinical community.

Interactions with the Head of Research and administrative teams were also documented in publication outputs under the Breast Global Journal, which is registered and managed by PCCM. Records indicated that six manuscripts were under review in 2021-22, two publications were completed in 2022-23 with five under review, and three publications were completed in 2023-24 with eight under review. These outputs were supported by administrative coordination for manuscript tracking, peer review, and compliance processes.

Senior research leadership further reported that the program facilitated multiple national and international collaborations, including with the University of East Anglia (UK), Medgenomics (USA), ACTREC-TMC, Tata Memorial Hospital, Jehangir Hospital, and IISER Pune. Administrative oversight enabled coordination of joint studies, ethics processes, and data-sharing arrangements across these institutions.

Interactions with clinical trainees and early-career researchers indicated that participation in publications and academic dissemination was a key professional benefit of the program. Trainees reported that structured mentorship, access to curated datasets, and guidance on ethics, analysis, and manuscript writing enabled them to contribute to peer-reviewed publications and conference outputs, opportunities that were largely unavailable to them before joining the program.

KEY IMPACT



IMPROVED SURGICAL PRACTICE AND CLINICAL DECISION-MAKING

The Breast Oncoplasty Training Programme improved clinicians' orientation towards breast-conserving and oncoplastic surgical approaches, supporting a shift away from predominantly mastectomy-centred practices. Exposure to contemporary oncoplastic principles supported surgical decisions that prioritise oncological safety while also considering breast shape, symmetry, and patient quality of life after surgery.

Surgical capacity was strengthened through a combination of wide academic outreach and focused, skill-based training. This approach supported both broader awareness of oncoplastic concepts and deeper technical competence among clinicians positioned to apply these skills in practice. By contextualising international best practices within local clinical settings, the programme enhanced the relevance and applicability of the training and increased clinician confidence in offering patient-centred surgical options.

“CTCR enhanced my research capacity through strong mentorship and consistent guidance. I joined the program without a prior clinical background, and the support from senior mentors helped me adapt and gradually build the skills required for clinical research. Structured training and continuous encouragement increased my confidence and strengthened my understanding of research practices.

-Vishesh Raju Lulla, Clinical Research Trainee



“After completing the Master's in Oncoplasty through CTCR, I began applying reconstructive techniques alongside mastectomy in my practice. The training encouraged wider exploration and adoption of oncoplastic procedures, helping integrate reconstructive approaches into routine breast cancer surgery.

-Dr Rupa Mishra, Cancer genetics and Senior scientist





ENHANCED ACCESS TO TRAINING AND RESEARCH CAPACITY

The project enhanced access to structured training and continuous learning opportunities for clinicians and researchers beyond physical training environments. Webinars, masterclasses, virtual conferences, and digital training resources supported sustained engagement and reduced reliance on in-person formats alone.

Discussions with senior research leadership, including Dr Sneha Joshi, and administrative staff indicated that these platforms strengthened researcher readiness and participation in clinical and implementation research, particularly among early-career researchers without prior clinical exposure. Participants reported improved confidence, a clearer understanding of patient-centric research processes and data workflows, and increased ability to contribute to research outputs, including publications.

Key participation figures highlighted during discussions included:

- 250-600 participants per major webinar or virtual academic session
- 1,600+ registrations across masterclasses conducted during 2023-24
- 14+ clinical researchers engaged through structured training and research support during the project period



STRENGTHENED CLINICAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PATIENT-CENTRED CARE

The program strengthened access to breast cancer diagnostics, treatment, and patient-centred care through clinical services, enabling continuity of care across multiple stages of treatment. Discussions with program stakeholders indicated that these services supported timely diagnosis, referral, and treatment for a large number of patients during the project period.

This impact was reflected in the scale of services delivered, as reported during discussions with CTCR administrative staff, clinical teams, and program leadership:

- Approximately 2,500 mammography procedures and 2,500 sonography screenings were conducted.
- Around 3,000 biopsies support diagnostic confirmation.
- About 400 surgeries and approximately 6,000 chemotherapy cycles delivered.
- Nearly 15,000 instances of medicine support provided to patients.

Stakeholders indicated that patient-centred support services were strengthened through the integration of counselling and supportive care within routine clinical pathways. This helped address both medical and psychosocial needs of patients across different stages of care.

“Before joining CTCR, I had no prior exposure to research. The program had a positive impact by building my basic research understanding and confidence. While I did not receive international exposure, the training strengthened skills that support my professional growth. It also improved my ability to communicate effectively with patients and their families, which has been particularly valuable in clinical settings.

-Christina Mathew, Genetics, Data Coordinator





REPORTED PATIENT-SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS INCLUDED

Over 1,500 genetic counselling sessions and screenings, integrating hereditary risk assessment into care pathways

- More than 4,500 patients are receiving nutrition counselling with structured follow-up support
- Over 4,000 patients are accessing psychological counselling to address treatment-related distress, anxiety, and body-image concerns.

Discussions also confirmed sustained community outreach, with at least 20 outreach camps conducted annually, comprising awareness sessions and clinical breast examinations. CTCR contributed trained staff, educational content, and screening tools, supporting early detection and referral into clinical care pathways.



STRENGTHENED KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION AND RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT

The program strengthened knowledge dissemination and engagement with national and global cancer research discourse through sustained academic activity and collaborative platforms. Stakeholder discussions confirmed that structured use of the BreastGlobal platform, conferences, webinars, masterclasses, and the BreastGlobal Journal expanded the reach of clinical and research outputs, enabling continuous exchange among clinicians, researchers, and institutions.

The availability of curated patient datasets and coordinated publication support enhanced research productivity and visibility. Senior research leadership, including Dr Sneha Joshi, reported that approximately 60-65% of patient datasets were captured, with 300 complete records out of 500 patients available for analysis, supporting evidence generation for publications, presentations, and guideline development.

At the researcher level, mentorship and institutional support strengthened participation in academic dissemination. Early-career researchers reported that guidance on ethics approvals, data management, and manuscript development helped them build confidence and contribute to research outputs, including publications. Senior researchers, in turn, noted that institutional support for grant writing, study design, and collaborative engagement enabled leadership of multi-institutional studies and sustained research dissemination. These efforts strengthened interdisciplinary engagement and facilitated participation in research spanning genomics, patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs), AI-based diagnostics, and comparative cancer care models.

“I received strong handholding from the team, especially as my background was primarily laboratory-based and clinical exposure was new to me. The team supported me in drafting an international grant proposal and guided me through the research and publication processes. This helped me initiate my own project, develop an evidence-based research approach, and understand patient perspectives more deeply. I have since contributed to multiple publications and collaborative studies.

-Dr Rupa Mishra, Cancer genetics and Senior scientist



06. IMPACT ACROSS MULTIPLE LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Enhanced clinical competence and research capacity among clinicians and early-career researchers through structured mentorship, exposure to patient-linked datasets, and support for ethics, analysis, and publication.
- Improved confidence in clinical decision-making, particularly in breast conservation, oncoplastic surgery, genetic counselling, and patient-centric care pathways.
- Improved patient experience through clearer communication on diagnosis, treatment options, genetic risk, and follow-up care, and greater alignment of clinical decisions with patient preferences.
- Increased academic productivity, including participation in peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, grant applications, and guideline-related contributions.



FAMILY LEVEL

- Improved quality of care through integrated oncoplastic surgery, genetic counselling, nutrition, and psycho-oncological support. Genetic counselling strengthened risk assessment, treatment planning, and patient understanding of hereditary implications.
- Better-informed treatment decisions among patients who opted for counselling services contribute to improved acceptance of care and overall well-being.



INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

- Strengthened institutional capacity for clinical and translational research through expanded biobank resources, structured data systems, and formalised SOPs.
- Development of a multidisciplinary community of clinicians and researchers engaged through platforms such as BreastGlobal, supporting knowledge exchange and collaboration.
- Improved continuity between clinical care, research execution, and academic dissemination within the institution.



STATE LEVEL

- Contribution to regional capacity building in breast cancer care and research through training programs, workshops, and collaborations with hospitals and academic institutions in Maharashtra.
- Support to state-level cancer care priorities by strengthening early detection, surgical quality, and translational research capabilities.



NATIONAL LEVEL

- The program aligned with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):
SDG 3: Good health and well-being
SDG 4: Quality education
SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- It aligns with the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS), which supports NPCDCS goals by improving cancer care pathways, early risk identification (genetic counselling), and integration of preventive and clinical services.
- The project reflects the goals of the National Cancer Grid, which contributes to the emphasis on standardised cancer care, evidence generation, training, and multi-institutional research collaboration.

DISCUSSION DURING STRYKER S2S PROGRAM



07. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The project has established core clinical, research, and training systems that support continuity beyond the grant period. Key functions, including biobanking, genetic counselling, standardised data workflows, SOP-driven research processes, and academic training platforms, are now embedded within routine institutional operations. Senior research leadership noted that these systems are actively used by clinicians and researchers, enabling ongoing TNBC-focused research, publications, and patient-centric care without reliance on project-specific arrangements.

Sustainability is further reinforced through institutional and academic partnerships with national and international organisations such as IISER Pune, ACTREC-TMC, Tata Memorial Hospital, the University of East Anglia, and Medgenomics, which continue to support joint studies, data sharing, and co-authored outputs. In parallel, a trained cadre of clinical researchers, diversified funding through multiple CSR, government, and international grants, and continued dissemination via BreastGlobal and the BreastGlobal Journal strengthen long-term viability. Overall, the project demonstrates readiness for sustained operation, with future support best directed towards talent retention, advanced data systems, and strategic research expansion rather than foundational system-building.



SOULACE TEAM WITH PCCM-CTCR TEAM

08. CONCLUSION

The project has played a significant role in strengthening clinical, translational, and academic capacity in breast cancer research and care, with a particular emphasis on oncoplasty, genetic counselling, and Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC). Through structured training programs, development of research infrastructure, and closer integration of clinical services with research workflows, the program addressed key gaps in surgical practice, patient-centric research, and evidence generation within the Indian context.

Evidence gathered from stakeholder interactions, trainee testimonials, and program records indicates a clear enhancement in clinicians' and researchers' capacities. Clinical researchers and trainees reported enhanced competencies in patient-facing research, genetic counselling, data management, and evidence-based decision-making. Access to organised clinical databases, biobank resources, and standardised SOPs enabled more consistent engagement in proposal development, ethics processes, publications, and interdisciplinary research. The Breast Oncoplasty Training Programme expanded exposure to breast-conserving and reconstructive techniques, contributing to a gradual shift away from mastectomy-centric approaches and supporting more patient-centred surgical care.

The project also strengthened knowledge dissemination and collaboration through the BreastGlobal platform, academic events, and publication outputs, facilitating national and international partnerships and enabling early-career researchers to contribute to peer-reviewed publications (research articles reviewed by experts to ensure accuracy, reliability, and scientific quality before publication) and to guideline discussions. The institutionalisation of genetic counselling within clinical and research workflows further reinforced translational relevance, linking patient experience with research inquiry and supporting TNBC-focused studies in the absence of targeted therapies.



ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheeler vehicles. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jammnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted, innovative brand, having sold over 21 million motorcycles in 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio, including motorcycles, scooters, and autorickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs in both India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelling its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR contributes to education, health, environmental, and animal welfare projects to support the sustainable development of the community and the nation.

ABOUT NGO PARTNER: PRASHANTI CANCER CARE MISSION (PCCM)

Prashanti Cancer Care Mission (PCCM) is a registered, public charitable trust (established in 2000) in Pune with the goal of providing affordable medical treatment and rehabilitation to underprivileged cancer patients and their families. Since 2009, PCCM has also established Orchids Breast Health Centre (OBHC), a 'Centre of Affordable Excellence for Breast Care', with a team of Oncosurgeons, Radiologists, Medical & Radiation Oncologists, Clinical Scientists, Physicians, Nursing and Medical staff, and patient counsellors. OBHC is equipped with Digital Mammography, Automated Ultrasound, Precision Biopsy devices, and an in-house chemotherapy day-care unit. The comprehensive services offered at OBHC include Cancer Screening & Diagnostics, Breast Oncoplastic Surgery Unit, Chemotherapy Day-care Facility, Patient Rehabilitation, Counselling, Pink Ribbon Support Groups, Community Outreach, Translational Research, and Medical Education & Training. PCCM has been recognised with a Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (SIRO) status by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. PCCM is also a member of the ICMR-National Cancer Grid of India Research Consortium and the National Cancer Registry of India. The translational cancer research at PCCM is overseen by a CDSCO-accredited Independent Ethics Committee in accordance with ICMR 2017 guidelines.

ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
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IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

PROVIDING HEALTHCARE
TO TRIBAL AND RURAL
COMMUNITIES OF
GADCHIROLI

Implementing Partner:
SEARCH Hospital
Gadchiroli, Maharashtra

Implementation Year:
Mar. 2021 - May 2024

Assessment Year: Year 2025-26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 07
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04
	Key Impacts	05 - 06
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	07
02	OECD Framework	08 - 11
03	Introduction	12 - 16
	Background and Need of the Project	12
	Objectives of the Project	13
	Project Details	13 - 14
	Project Activities	15
	Timeline	16
04	Research Methodology	17 - 21
	Objectives of the Impact Assessment	17
	Why was the Assessment Conducted	18
	Study Design	19
	Data Collection Methods	19
	Ensuring Triangulation	19
	Sampling Framework	19 - 20
	Evaluation Framework for Evaluation	20
	Research Design	20
	Sample Size and Justification	20
	Stakeholder Engagement	20
	Ethical Considerations	21
05	Key Findings	22 - 55
06	Impact at Various Levels	56 - 57
07	Case Studies	58 - 59
08	Challenges	60
09	Recommendations	61
10	Sustainability Exit Readiness	62 - 63
11	Conclusion	64 - 66

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Community / Stakeholder Feedback
Table 2	Stakeholder Type and Role in the Programme
Table 3	Project Timeline

LIST OF CHARTS

Table Number	Table Name
Chart 1 to 8	Demographic and Professional Profile of Participants
Chart 9 to 19	Accessibility and Utilisation of Search Hospital Services
Chart 20 to 21	Equity and Financial Support Measures
Chart 22 to 27	Patient Experience and Quality of Care
Chart 28 to 31	Community Outreach and Support Systems
Chart 32 to 36	Change in Health Seeking Behaviour
Chart 37 to 39	Financial Burden and Coping Mechanisms
Chart 40 to 41	Current Healthcare Utilisation Landscape
Chart 42	Challenges and Barriers Faced in Searching for Hospital Services

ABBREVIATIONS

ADP	Aspirational Districts Programme
ANC	Antenatal Care
CHC	Community Health Centre
CHW	Community Health Worker
EKG	Electrocardiogram
EMR	Electronic Medical Records
IPD	Inpatient Department
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
KII	Key Informant Interview
MHD	Mental Health Department
MIS	Management Information System
MI	Myocardial Infarction
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
NABL	National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories
NHM	National Health Mission
OBC	Other Backward Class
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
OPD	Outpatient Department
PHC	Primary Health Centre
R.M.O.	Resident Medical Officer
RMNCH+A	Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health
RTPCR	Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction
SHG	Self-Help Group
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TB	Tuberculosis
VHW	Village Health Worker

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The project "Providing Healthcare to Tribal & Rural Communities of Gadchiroli" supports the ongoing operations of the SEARCH Hospital, a key healthcare provider serving over 2,500 villages in a predominantly tribal, underserved region. During the intervention period, the hospital delivered 1.23 lakh OPD consultations, 4,105 inpatient admissions, 1,886 surgeries, 2.28 lakh laboratory tests, and 15,536 imaging services, ensuring consistent access to essential medical care, even as public and private services remain limited. Outpatient, inpatient, emergency and diagnostic services were provided regularly, while surgical camps were conducted periodically as part of the hospital's operational model. Beneficiary feedback indicated high satisfaction with the treatment experience. The project's strengths include its culturally sensitive service environment, strong engagement through community health workers, and family-inclusive care practices that help reduce hesitation among tribal communities. Overall, the project has contributed significantly to accessible, affordable healthcare in Gadchiroli, while demonstrating that long-term system strengthening and resource stability remain essential.



PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Providing Healthcare to Tribal and Rural Communities of Gadchiroli



Implementing Agency

SEARCH Hospital



Location

Chatgaon, Dhanora, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra, India



Duration

Mar. 2021 - May 2024



Assessment Location

Gadchiroli, Maharashtra



Total Budget

363 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total nos. of Beneficiaries

373,879 individuals



Target Beneficiaries

Tribal and Rural Communities of Gadchiroli



Primary Programs

Affordable and free OPD, IPD, surgeries and lab services and empower local youth by train them as nursing and laboratory assistant

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The assessment was undertaken with the following objectives:



To assess the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, coherence, impact, and sustainability of the interventions implemented by SEARCH Hospital.



To examine the extent to which the project improved access to high-quality and affordable healthcare for tribal and rural populations.



To understand beneficiary experiences across OPD, IPD, surgery, diagnostics, ambulance services, and community-level engagement.



INTERACTION WITH A NURSE DURING A FIELD VISIT

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE OUTPATIENT PRIMARY AND SPECIALIST CARE IN SELECTED AREAS

**91.1%**

of respondents accessed OPD services, indicating strong uptake of outpatient and specialist care.

**64.2%**

reported clear communication from doctors, 62.4% were satisfied with hospital cleanliness, and 76.3% felt privacy was maintained during care.

**76.8%**

of respondents reported no experience of discrimination, reflecting an inclusive and patient-friendly care environment for tribal and rural populations.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE INPATIENT CARE FOR SELECTED AILMENTS



Patients consistently highlighted supportive staff behaviour and attentive care during inpatient stays.

OBJECTIVE 3: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE AND HIGH-QUALITY LABORATORY AND IMAGING SERVICES

**80.3%**

of respondents reported that all required services, including laboratory and diagnostic tests, were available at the hospital.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE AMBULANCE SERVICES FOR TRANSPORTING CRITICAL PATIENTS

**18.4%**

of respondents reported using ambulance services, primarily during emergencies.

OBJECTIVE 5: EMPOWER LOCAL YOUTH BY TRAINING THEM AS NURSING AND LABORATORY ASSISTANTS

**35.3%**

of respondents acknowledged that youth or women from their own villages were working at SEARCH Hospital.

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE OUTPATIENT PRIMARY AND SPECIALIST CARE IN SELECTED AREAS



0% to 56.3%

Increase in preference for formal outpatient care at SEARCH Hospital.



Improved patient experience due to better communication, hygiene, privacy, and non-discriminatory care practices.



39.5%

of respondents now seek early care, compared to 27.6%, reflecting a positive behavioural change.



Reduced dependence on informal providers, with traditional healer use declining (**27.4%** → **11.1%**) and a significant rise in people choosing not to visit quacks increased (**10.3%** → **48.4%**).



Strengthened trust and acceptability of formal healthcare services in underserved communities.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE INPATIENT CARE FOR SELECTED AILMENTS



Improved access to essential inpatient services contributed to better recovery outcomes and continuity of care for patients requiring hospital admission.

OBJECTIVE 3: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE AND HIGH-QUALITY LABORATORY AND IMAGING SERVICES



Enhanced confidence in SEARCH Hospital as a comprehensive, one-stop healthcare facility, reducing referrals to multiple centres and improving affordability, continuity, and timeliness of care.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE AMBULANCE SERVICES FOR TRANSPORTING CRITICAL PATIENTS

Improved emergency response and timely transport of critical patients to SEARCH Hospital or district hospitals, strengthening emergency care access across tribal and non-tribal villages.

OBJECTIVE 5: EMPOWER LOCAL YOUTH BY TRAINING THEM AS NURSING AND LABORATORY ASSISTANTS

Increased community ownership, trust, and acceptability of services as locally trained youth became part of the healthcare workforce and service delivery system.

**DISCUSSION WITH A PATIENT
DURING FIELD VISIT**

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Hospital Staff	SEARCH has made healthcare more affordable and accessible for poor and tribal families through low-cost OPD/IPD services, diagnostics, surgeries, and medicines.
Doctors	Community trust and early healthcare-seeking behaviour have improved due to respectful treatment, ambulance availability, and service quality.
FGD Participants	The financial burden of medicines, diagnostics, and hospital stays has reduced considerably, with SEARCH providing support that many patients would not have been able to meet independently.

The project significantly enhanced access to affordable, high-quality healthcare, with over 91% of respondents availing OPD services and 80.3% confirming the availability of comprehensive diagnostic support. Trust in formal healthcare improved markedly, reflected in a shift from 0% to 56.3% in hospital preference and reduced reliance on traditional healers. Patient experience strengthened through clear communication, improved hygiene, privacy, and non-discriminatory care. Emergency response also improved, with timely ambulance support benefiting critical patients. The project further boosted community ownership by training local youth, while overall out-of-pocket costs reduced substantially, directly contributing to increased early care-seeking and enhanced health outcomes across underserved communities.



INTERACTION WITH A PATIENT'S FAMILY

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The programme is deeply attuned to the ground-level healthcare realities of Gadchiroli's tribal and rural population. With a physician-to-population ratio of roughly 1:5,032, which is far worse than India's average and over 36% of the district's population being tribal, the need for an accessible, culturally sensitive healthcare institution is acute. SEARCH fills a critical vacuum by providing multi-specialty OPD, IPD, surgical, diagnostic, and emergency services across 2,500+ villages where no comparable facility exists. The programme's design, rooted in decades of community health research by its founders, directly mirrors the disease burden (malaria, anaemia, snakebite, musculoskeletal conditions) and care-seeking barriers (distance, cost, cultural distrust of formal systems) that define this region.



COHERENCE

The programme's internal design demonstrates strong synergy: outpatient consultations, inpatient care, surgical camps, laboratory diagnostics, imaging services, ambulance transport, and community health worker outreach function as an integrated continuum of care. Each component reinforces the others. CHWs generate referrals that feed into OPD; diagnostics support clinical decision-making for IPD and surgery; and ambulance services close the last-mile gap for emergency patients. Externally, the programme aligns substantively with India's national development priorities and global commitments.

ALIGNMENT WITH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being: The programme directly advances multiple targets under SDG 3. By providing affordable primary, specialist, and surgical care to an underserved tribal population, it contributes to Target 3.8 (achieving universal health coverage and financial risk protection). The dramatic reduction in out-of-pocket expenses, from 33.9% paying >₹2,000 to 0%, and the rise in households that did not require distress financing (21.6% to 58.2%) reflect concrete progress on financial protection. The hospital's management of conditions like malaria, tuberculosis, and snakebite addresses Target 3.3 (combating communicable diseases). Its de-addiction guidance and mental health OPD services contribute to Target 3.5 (prevention and treatment of substance abuse).

The deployment of community health workers and local youth as trained health staff advances to Target 3.c (strengthening the health workforce in underserved settings).

SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities: By exclusively targeting tribal and rural populations in one of India's most underdeveloped districts, the programme addresses the structural inequalities that drive health disparities. Free services for tribal patients and subsidised care for rural communities (72.1% received financial support) directly reduce economic barriers. The absence of discrimination reported by 76.8% of respondents, along with a culturally sensitive care environment, helps overcome social barriers that often deter marginalised groups from accessing formal healthcare.

ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP): Gadchiroli is one of the 112 districts identified under NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme, which was launched in 2018 to fast-track inclusive development in India's most lagging districts. Health and Nutrition carry the highest weightage among the ADP's five thematic pillars. SEARCH's work, improving service availability, strengthening local health workforce capacity, reducing maternal and child health gaps, and expanding diagnostic access, directly reinforces the ADP's core objective of bringing health outcomes in aspirational districts closer to the national average. The programme's community-linked model, which trains and deploys local youth as health workers, also echoes the ADP's emphasis on community ownership and convergence of government and civil society efforts.

National Health Mission (NHM): The NHM envisions universal access to equitable, affordable, and quality healthcare, with particular attention to rural, tribal, and underserved populations. SEARCH's programme directly complements this vision by operating in an area where government PHCs and CHCs face acute staffing shortages and infrastructure limitations.



EFFECTIVENESS

The programme delivered substantial outputs during 2021-24: over 1.23 lakh OPD consultations, 4,105 inpatient admissions, 1,886 surgeries, 2.28 lakh laboratory tests, and 15,536 imaging services. On the demand side, 91.1% of surveyed beneficiaries accessed OPD services, and 75.5% received same-day care upon arrival. Patient satisfaction indicators were strong, 98.5% were satisfied with clinical examinations, 99.5% with the availability of medicine, and 97.2% rated staff behaviour as polite and respectful. However, 42.6% of patients waited over 2 hours due to a daily OPD patient load of 250-300, with limited staff. Additionally, 19.2% reported the unavailability of certain services (notably maternity care and advanced diagnostics such as MRI and angiography), requiring external referrals. These operational constraints moderate the overall effectiveness score.



EFFICIENCY

With a total project outlay of ₹363 lakhs over three years, the programme served 3,73,879 beneficiaries, translating to an approximate per-beneficiary cost that reflects prudent resource use. The consolidation of OPD, IPD, surgery, laboratory, imaging, and ambulance services at a single location eliminates the need for patients to navigate multiple facilities, reducing both time and cost. 78.4% of beneficiaries perceived treatment costs as fair, and 80.3% found all required services available on-site. However, the programme's dependence on periodic specialist camps (rather than continuous specialist availability) creates intermittent service gaps. Staff shortages across clinical, nursing, and paramedical cadres place sustained pressure on the existing workforce during peak hours and emergencies, occasionally affecting throughout and care continuity.



IMPACT

The programme has catalysed measurable shifts in health-seeking behaviour, financial protection, and community trust. Confidence in seeking timely treatment rose sharply; those "always confident to seek care" increased from 7.9% to 61.3%. Reliance on informal providers declined substantially; traditional healer visits fell from 27.4% to 11.1%, and the share of respondents who stopped visiting unqualified practitioners rose from 10.3% to 48.4%. Financial impact was equally significant, with high out-of-pocket expenses (>₹2,000 per episode) dropping from 33.9% to 0%. In comparison, the proportion of households that never needed to borrow or sell assets for treatment rose from 21.6% to 58.2%. At the institutional level, SEARCH emerged as the preferred healthcare provider for 56.3% of respondents (up from 0% pre-intervention), reflecting deep community-level transformation.



SUSTAINABILITY

The programme benefits from several sustainability enablers: SEARCH's unbroken presence in Gadchiroli since 1985, a functioning community health worker network reaching tribal villages with regular home visits (40.8% of households reported recent CHW contact), and the employment of local youth in nursing and laboratory roles (35.3% of respondents confirmed village-level recruitment). However, recurring operational expenses remain heavily dependent on CSR funding, with no documented cost-recovery or revenue-generation strategy. Formal government integration (such as cost-sharing arrangements, staff deployment, or public-private partnership agreements) remains limited. Community ownership, while culturally strong, has not yet translated into structured governance, leaving long-term institutional viability contingent on continued donor commitment.

Overall Assessment: The SEARCH Hospital programme in Gadchiroli has made meaningful, measurable contributions to improving healthcare access and outcomes for tribal and rural communities. Across the six OECD-DAC criteria, the project scores highest on relevance (5/5), reflecting its deep alignment with community needs and epidemiological realities. Coherence (4/5) is strong, with clear linkages to SDG 3 (Good Health & Well-being), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme, and the NHM's RMNCH+A strategy. Impact (4/5) is notable, with demonstrated behavioural shifts and financial protection gains. Effectiveness and efficiency (each 3.5/5) and sustainability (3/5) reflect solid operational foundations but highlight the need for continued investment in staffing, specialist infrastructure, formal government partnerships, and long-term financial planning to secure the programme's enduring value.



Index: 5 Points - Very High ; 4 Points - High ; 3 Points - Moderate ; 2 Points - Low ; 1 Point - Very Low

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED OF THE PROJECT

Gadchiroli is among India's Aspirational Districts, marked by severe poverty, rugged terrain, and limited access to healthcare and other basic facilities. The health problems of tribal communities in Gadchiroli have two critical aspects: access to care and the seeking of care. Delivering healthcare to these populations is challenging due to their scattered settlements in forest and hilly areas, poor transportation and telecommunication systems, and understaffed government health centres. There is also a general lack of understanding of tribal health needs and an absence of culturally sensitive approaches in existing systems.

In addition to inadequate infrastructure, the health-seeking behaviour among tribal people remains significantly low due to deep-rooted cultural barriers. Many community members are dissatisfied with formal government health institutions and continue to rely on traditional healers, as illnesses are often perceived as manifestations of evil spirits. Consequently, health-seeking among tribal groups is restricted by cultural, social, and economic constraints.

Government welfare and development schemes are often designed and implemented without adequate participation from tribal communities. Policymakers and program managers often lack familiarity with the local population's customs, beliefs, and priorities, leading to limited ownership and poor outcomes. This disconnect has been a significant reason for the limited success of government interventions in Gadchiroli.

Gadchiroli, one of the most underdeveloped districts in India, lacks reliable healthcare facilities in both the government and private sectors. The population faces severe financial barriers to accessing medical care, and the unavailability of trained human resources and health professionals.

Within this context, the SEARCH Hospital is supported by Bajaj Auto Limited. Aimed to serve as the reliable, culturally sensitive, and accessible health institution for thousands of tribal and rural families, bridging the systemic gap by offering affordable, quality care that respects local traditions while introducing scientific medical practices. The hospital aimed to demonstrate its responsiveness to community needs by conducting regular specialist OPDs and surgical camps, including spine, plastic, gynaecological, urological, ENT, and general surgeries.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

Overall Objective

To provide preventive, promotive, and curative primary as well as selected secondary level healthcare to tribal and rural people in the selected area of Gadchiroli district and to strengthen SEARCH's capacity.

Specific Objectives



Provide affordable outpatient primary care and specialist care in selected areas.



Provide affordable inpatient care for selected ailments.



Provide affordable surgical care at SEARCH Hospital.



To provide affordable and high-quality laboratory and imaging services.



To provide affordable ambulance services to transport severe patients to the SEARCH Hospital or district hospital for patients from 45 tribal villages and 39 non-tribal villages in the field area of SEARCH and other nearby villages.



To empower local youth by training them as nursing and laboratory assistants.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Providing Healthcare to Tribal and Rural Communities of Gadchiroli



Implementing Agency

SEARCH Hospital



Location

Gadchiroli, Maharashtra



Total no. of Beneficiaries

373,879 individuals



Target Beneficiaries

Tribal and Rural Communities of Gadchiroli



Primary Programs

Affordable and free OPD, IPD, surgeries and lab services and empower local youth by train them as nursing and laboratory assistant

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Programme
Implementing Agency / Hospital Management	Overall hospital management and operations; staff recruitment and retention; coordination of speciality clinics and consultants; monitoring OPD/IPD capacity; ambulance management; data tracking through EMR, Excel, and registers; financial oversight and donor coordination
Doctors (Clinical & Speciality Care)	Provide OPD and IPD clinical care; manage high OPD load (250-300 patients/day); conduct and oversee surgeries and surgery camps; handle medical emergencies (snakebite, malaria, accidents, MI, maternal cases); utilise diagnostic services; counsel patients and families; identify service gaps such as staff and equipment shortages.
Nursing Staff	Day-to-day patient care in OPD and IPD; support surgeries and emergency care; assist in counselling and patient comfort; manage patient flow during high footfall; report staff shortages and equipment gaps affecting service delivery.
Nurse Assistants / Paramedical Staff	Assist nurses and doctors with patient care; support admissions, procedures, and routine hospital operations; and highlight the need for additional staff and equipment.
Community Health Workers (CHWs) / Arogyadoots	Conduct weekly household visits; identify poor and tribal patients; mobilise patients for OPD, IPD, and surgery camps; support follow-up after discharge; act as a link between community and hospital; travel extensively (2-3 days per visit cycle)
Data Management & Administrative Support	Compile OPD, IPD, surgery, diagnostic, and ambulance data; maintain records using EMR, Excel sheets, and registers; support reporting and internal monitoring.
Patients (Tribal & Rural Communities)	Primary beneficiaries of services: access free or subsidised treatment; participate in feedback mechanisms; utilise ambulance, diagnostic, and inpatient services; report improved access, affordability, and trust in SEARCH Hospital

PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Provided Outpatient Department (OPD) services across multiple specialities.



Offered ambulance and emergency transportation services.



Delivered inpatient care and managed patients requiring hospitalisation.



Carried out community outreach through Village Health Workers and Arogyadoots.



Conducted general, gynaecological, spine, and other specialist surgeries.



Implemented health awareness and behaviour change activities in villages.



Organised periodic specialist medical and surgical camps.



Ran de-addiction guidance sessions and structured follow-up programmes.



Provided laboratory diagnostic services for routine and advanced tests.



Trained local youth in nursing and laboratory assistant roles.



Delivered imaging services such as X-ray and ECG.



Supported patient follow-up through community health workers.



Provided patient support services, including medicines and basic care assistance.



INTERACTION WITH HOSPITAL NURSE

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

During the project period, SEARCH hospital's services ran steadily from March 2021 to March 2024, with one significant disruption during the second wave of COVID-19 (March-June 2021). At that time, outpatient consultations, inpatient admissions, and all elective surgeries and specialist camps were halted, as patients avoided hospitalisation and the hospital operated with limited staff. The only services that expanded were COVID-specific care, such as RT-PCR testing, NABL-accredited diagnostics, isolation wards, and oxygen support. By September 2021, as the second wave subsided, routine hospital services restarted and continued without further pandemic-related interruptions through March 2024.

Year	2021		2022		2023		2024	
Activities								
Outpatient Department (OPD) services								
Inpatient care (IPD)								
Surgeries (general, gynaecological, spine, specialist)								
Periodic specialist medical & surgical camps								
Laboratory diagnostic services								
Imaging services (X-ray, ECG)								
Ambulance & emergency transport								
Community outreach (Village Health Workers, Arogyadoots)								
Health awareness & behaviour change activities								
De-addiction counselling & follow-up								
Youth training (nursing, lab assistants)								
Patient follow-up through CHWs								
Patient support services (medicines, basic care assistance)								

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted for the evaluation, detailing the overall design, data collection processes, sampling strategies, and ethical protocols followed during the study. It explains how evidence was systematically gathered from individuals, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders to ensure a rigorous and credible assessment of the SEARCH initiative. By clearly presenting the methodological framework, this chapter establishes the basis for the findings, the robustness of the data, and the reliability of the conclusions drawn in subsequent sections.

OBJECTIVES OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The primary objectives of this Impact Assessment were to systematically evaluate the outcomes, effectiveness, and overall value created by the project interventions. The assessment aimed:



To determine the extent to which the project achieved its intended outputs and outcomes.



To measure quantitative and qualitative changes experienced by beneficiaries.



To assess improvements in knowledge, accessibility, behaviour, or well-being attributable to the project scope.



To identify strengths, gaps, and areas requiring further improvement.



To generate evidence to inform future programme planning, scaling, and refinement.

WHY WAS THE ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED

The assessment was undertaken to provide an evidence-based understanding of the project's performance, relevance, and impact. Specifically, it sought to:



PATIENTS WAITING FOR CONSULTATION IN THE HOSPITAL


STUDY DESIGN

A **mixed-methods approach** was selected to strengthen the robustness of findings by combining numerical trends with field experiences. This integration enabled triangulation of insights, improving the validity and reliability of conclusions.



DATA COLLECTION METHODS


Information was gathered using multiple tools to capture perspectives from beneficiaries, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders.


Quantitative Tools

-  **Individual Level Structured Questionnaires:** Administered systematically to ensure consistency across all respondents and captured several indicators, including patient experience, service utilisation patterns, accessibility challenges, satisfaction levels, and perceived health changes.

Qualitative Tools

-  **Key Informant Interviews (KIs):** Conducted with doctors, programme staff, and other hospital staff.
-  **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Held with villagers, Self-Help Group (SHG) members, including men, women, and youth, to understand perceptions, behavioural changes, and barriers to healthcare access.
-  **Case Studies:** Documented to highlight individual treatment pathways, experiences with SEARCH services, and observable impact on health and well-being.

-  **Observations:** Non-participatory assessments of facility conditions, patient flow, OPD processes, staff-patient interactions, cleanliness, and related areas.

-  **Document Review:** Examination of project-related documents, hospital records, MIS datasets, and relevant programme guidelines.

ENSURING TRIANGULATION

Triangulation enhanced the reliability of findings by drawing data from multiple sources: beneficiaries, stakeholders, project staff, and field observations and using mixed methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, allowed cross-verification of information and minimised bias, resulting in a credible and well-substantiated assessment.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

This study adopted a mixed sampling approach, combining random sampling and purposive sampling, in alignment with the objectives of the project evaluation.

Random sampling was used for the beneficiary survey to ensure that respondents were selected without bias and that the sample was representative of tribal and rural populations accessing SEARCH Hospital services. This approach allowed for a reliable quantitative assessment of service utilisation, access, affordability, and patient experience.

Purposive sampling was applied for key informant interviews (KIs), hospital staff interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs), where specific stakeholders—such as doctors, nursing staff, hospital administrators, Community Health Workers (Arogyadoots), and community representatives—were deliberately selected based on their roles, experience, and direct involvement in program implementation and service delivery.

This enabled the study to capture in-depth operational insights and contextual understanding that could not be obtained through random sampling alone.

Together, this combined approach ensured both statistical representativeness and rich qualitative insights, strengthening the overall robustness of the project evaluation.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The research study applied the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring alignment with globally accepted standards and norms. This framework provided a robust, consistent method for evaluating the project's impact, thereby bolstering the credibility and relevance of the research findings.



RESEARCH DESIGN



Research design used

Descriptive research design



Sampling technique

Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling



Qualitative method used

Semi-structured interviews, testimonials and focus group discussion (FGD) with beneficiaries along with key stakeholders

SAMPLE SIZE AND JUSTIFICATION



Sample size

380+ individual respondents



Structured Questionnaire

380 participants completed the questionnaire, providing a robust, representative sample of SEARCH service users across diverse demographic and socio-economic groups



KIIs

Conducted with key clinical staff and other relevant personnel



FGDs

Conducted with distinct respondent groups (men, women, youth, SHGs, villagers)



Case Studies & Observations

Case Studies & Observations

This sample size ensured representation, qualitative data saturation, and reliable analysis.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Mobilisation and scheduling of interviews with hospital staff, implementation staff and community members were facilitated smoothly, ensuring that all interactions were conducted at mutually convenient times. This approach enabled respondents to feel comfortable, participate voluntarily, and engage meaningfully throughout the process.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All evaluation activities adhered to standard ethical guidelines:



INFORMED CONSENT

Sought verbally before surveys, KIIs, and FGDs.



CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

No personal identifiers were disclosed or stored.



VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Respondents could opt out at any stage.



SENSITIVITY

Careful handling of topics related to illness, stigma, mental health, addiction, and finances.



DATA ACCURACY

Enumerators recorded responses faithfully without leading or influencing participants.

LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Limitations

- » Limited recall of past treatment history by some respondents.
- » Seasonal migration affects household availability.

Mitigation Measure

- » Probing and triangulation with available records.
- » Replacement sampling within the same strata.

Deviations from Planned Methodology

- » No deviations. All planned data collection methods were completed as intended.

05. KEY FINDINGS

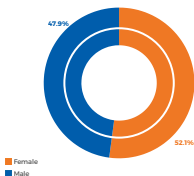


This chapter presents a detailed summary of the evaluation's principal results, combining quantitative metrics and qualitative insights derived from respondents and secondary data. It highlights progress across core intervention areas, including outpatient care, inpatient services, surgeries, lab diagnostics, and imaging and also explores changes in health-seeking behaviours, financial access, and patient satisfaction. The findings reflect both the programme's successes and areas for improvement, offering a holistic view of its impact on the tribal and rural communities it serves.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND PROFESSIONAL PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

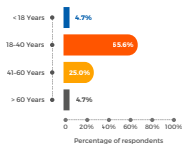
The respondent group presents a broadly representative cross-section of the project community, with a near-balanced gender mix, a predominance of young and economically active adults, and participation from diverse social categories. It reflects mainly married individuals from moderately educated, agrarian, and low-income households, typically comprising 3-5 members, thereby providing a robust and contextually relevant base for interpreting the assessment findings.

CHART 1: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

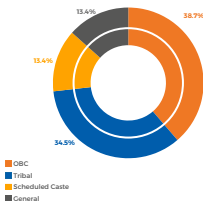


A balanced gender distribution was maintained among respondents to ensure equitable representation of perspectives from both male and female participants. Of the respondents, 52.1% were females and 47.9% were males. This nearly balanced representation helped capture diverse perspectives and experiences, thereby strengthening the assessment's inclusivity and reliability.

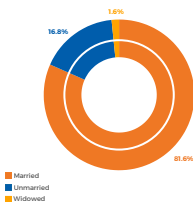
CHART 2: AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)



The majority of respondents (65.6%) belonged to the 18-40 age group, indicating a predominantly young, economically active population. About one-fourth (25.0%) of the respondents were in the 41-60 years category, while 4.7% each were below 18 years and above 60 years of age. This distribution reflects a good mix of youth, adult and elderly representation, ensuring that the perspectives of different age groups are captured in the assessment.

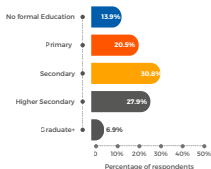
CHART 3: SOCIAL CATEGORY OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

The distribution of respondents across social groups shows that 38.7% belonged to the Other Backwards Classes (OBC) category. Tribal communities accounted for 34.5%, while Scheduled Caste and General category respondents each accounted for 13.4%. The representation across different social groups highlights the project's outreach among diverse community segments, including marginalised and vulnerable populations.

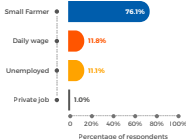
CHART 4: MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

The majority of respondents (81.6%) were married, followed by 16.8% who were unmarried and a small proportion (1.6%) who were widowed.

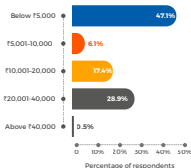
The predominance of married respondents suggests that the study primarily captured perspectives from individuals with family responsibilities.

CHART 5: EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

The educational profile of respondents indicates that the majority have attained education only up to the secondary (30.8%) or higher secondary (27.9%) level. In comparison, 20.5% have only primary education, and 13.9% have no formal education. Taken together, this suggests that nearly 90% of respondents have education levels at or below senior secondary, reflecting limited exposure to higher education and broader informational or professional horizons. Only 6.9% are graduates or above, underscoring constrained access to advanced knowledge and formal systems. This educational composition reflects the socio-economic context of the communities served and highlights the importance of SEARCH Hospital's role in providing guided, accessible, and trust-based healthcare services for populations with limited formal education and health system literacy.

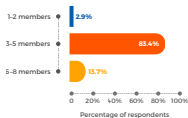
CHART 6: PRIMARY OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

The occupational profile of respondents indicates that the majority (76.1%) were small farmers, followed by 11.8% engaged in daily wage labour and 11.1% who were unemployed. A small proportion (1.0%) were employed in private jobs. This distribution reflects the predominantly agrarian and economically modest background of the respondents, underscoring the relevance of accessible, affordable healthcare to support their well-being and reduce health-related expenses.

CHART 7: MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

The income profile of respondents shows that nearly half (47.1%) of households earned less than ₹5,000 per month, indicating a predominantly low-income population. Around 6.1% reported a monthly income of ₹5,001-10,000, while 17.4% reported a monthly income of ₹10,001-20,000. About 28.9% of households had an income of ₹20,001 or more, and only

0.5% had an income of ₹ 40,001 or more. The results show that many respondents come from economically vulnerable backgrounds, underscoring the need for accessible, affordable healthcare services for low-income families in the project area.

CHART 8: HOUSEHOLD SIZE OF THE RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

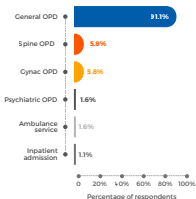
The majority of respondents (83.4%) reported having 3-5 members in their household, while 13.7% had larger families with 6-8 members. A small proportion (2.9%) lived in smaller households with only 1-2 members. This distribution indicates that most households in the project area are of moderate size.

**SOULACE TEAM INTERACTING WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

ACCESSIBILITY & UTILISATION OF SEARCH HOSPITAL SERVICES

The accessibility and utilisation patterns of SEARCH Hospital indicate firm community reliance on its outpatient and diagnostic services, with most patients visiting for general OPD consultations and returning multiple times per year. While the majority report that required services, medicines, and referral support are available and reasonably accessible, the data also point to specific operational issues, such as long in-facility waiting times and occasional affordability concerns, that require targeted attention to further improve service efficiency and the patient experience.

CHART 9: PRIMARY REASON FOR VISITING SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



**Multiple answers applicable*

Respondents reported a range of reasons for visiting SEARCH Hospital, reflecting the diversity of healthcare services utilised under the project. The majority (91.1%) visited the general outpatient department (OPD), highlighting the central role of primary care in meeting community health needs.

Speciality services such as the Spine OPD and Gynaecology OPD each accounted for 5.8% of visits, indicating that specific health concerns are increasingly being addressed. About 1.6% of respondents accessed the Psychiatric OPD, reflecting growing awareness and acceptance of mental health care. In comparison, another 1.6% utilised ambulance services, demonstrating the hospital's role in providing emergency transport and timely medical response. While most respondents sought OPD consultations, a small proportion (1.1%) sought inpatient admission, indicating the facility also catered to patients requiring hospital-based care.

Across all departments, staff reported routinely managing a broad spectrum of cases in both tribal and non-tribal communities. According to Dr Bhalavi, Dr Pendam, and Dr Patidar, the most commonly treated conditions include low back pain, anaemia, joint pain, dermatological issues such as scabies, and general ailments such as fever and body pain. The doctors also highlighted noticeable differences in illness patterns between tribal and non-tribal patients. Tribal patients, in particular, were observed to seek care much later, often arriving with advanced stages of illness due to delayed healthcare-seeking behaviour.

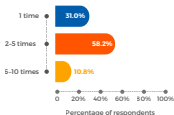
“Earlier, high treatment costs often made it difficult for me to seek medical care on time. However, my experience at SEARCH Hospital has been very different. The services here are affordable, and I received timely care without any financial stress. I travelled a long distance to reach the hospital, but the entire process from registration to consultation was smooth and well-organised. I was attended to quickly, and the staff were respectful, patient, and supportive throughout my visit. The doctors explained my condition clearly, and the treatment given was effective. The availability of medicines within the hospital reduced the need to seek external pharmacies.

During my visit, I also used inpatient services, and I found the wards clean, comfortable, and well-maintained. The hospital environment felt safe, and the staff ensured proper follow-up and guidance. This experience has increased my trust in SEARCH Hospital, and I now prefer coming here whenever my family needs treatment.

-**Padmqker Jairam Motghare, a daily-wage worker, Chatgaon**

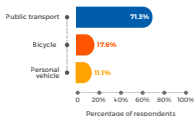
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CHART 10: FREQUENCY OF VISITS TO SEARCH HOSPITAL IN THE PAST YEAR (N= 380)

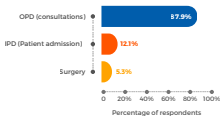


Respondents reported varying frequencies of visits to SEARCH Hospital over the past year. A majority (58.2%) visited 2-5 times, indicating regular engagement with the hospital's services. About 31.0% of respondents visited only once, while a smaller proportion (10.8%) visited 6-10 times, reflecting ongoing care for chronic or recurring health needs.

CHART 11: MODES OF TRANSPORTATION USED BY RESPONDENTS TO REACH SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Respondents reported using various modes of transportation to reach SEARCH Hospital. The majority (71.3%) travelled by public transport, highlighting the hospital's accessibility for people from different villages. Around 17.6% of respondents used bicycles, while 11.1% arrived in personal vehicles, reflecting the community's diverse transport options.

CHART 12: PRIMARY OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

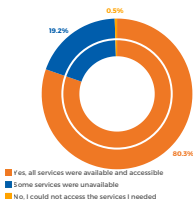
**Multiple answers applicable*

The majority of respondents (87.9%) availed outpatient consultations (OPD) during their visit, reflecting the hospital's central role in providing primary and speciality care. About 12.1% of respondents utilised inpatient services (IPD), while a smaller proportion (5.3%) underwent surgical procedures, indicating the hospital's capacity to provide comprehensive care ranging from routine consultations to specialised treatments.

SEARCH Hospital experiences consistently high patient load, with doctors reporting an OPD footfall of 250-300 patients per day across departments. Despite this volume, both OPD and IPD services function in a structured and efficient manner. While services continue to function in a structured manner, doctors and nursing staff highlighted that the high patient volume places pressure on the existing workforce, occasionally contributing to longer waiting times and increased workload during peak OPD hours and emergencies. Senior nursing staff, including Ms Varsha Luke and Ms Nalanda Walde, highlighted the systematic processes that support service delivery—ranging from patient registration and documentation to counselling and continuous monitoring. Staff members involved in admissions, such as Varsha, Nalanda, and Meena, also play a critical role in ensuring smooth patient flow, providing surgical assistance, coordinating with the pharmacy and laboratory, and facilitating transitions between OPD and IPD care.

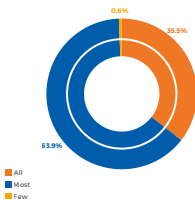
Emergency and critical care form another key component of the hospital's service delivery. Doctors reported regularly treating severe and time-sensitive conditions such as snakebites, malaria, strokes, road accidents, myocardial infarctions, and acute infections. ICU nurse Dipak Patale further described his responsibilities in stabilising emergency cases, managing critical care needs, and supporting mental health patients within the MHD unit. All healthcare providers agreed that the hospital is well-equipped to handle emergencies, supported by reliable diagnostic facilities including X-ray, ECC, ultrasound, blood tests, and imaging services, enabling timely diagnosis and effective intervention. However, interviews with doctors and nursing staff indicate that certain advanced diagnostic and interventional facilities are not available on-site, requiring referrals to other hospitals for selected procedures.

CHART 13: ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES DURING THE VISIT TO SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Most respondents (80.3%) reported that all required healthcare services were available and accessible during their visit to SEARCH Hospital, indicating strong coverage of routine and essential services. However, 19.2% of respondents reported that certain services were not available. Further review indicates that the services reported as unavailable include the delivery ward and maternity facilities. In addition, doctors noted the non-availability of advanced diagnostic and interventional services such as MRI and angiography, which necessitate referral to other facilities for specific cases. Overall, while SEARCH Hospital meets the healthcare needs of most patients, gaps remain in maternity care and advanced diagnostics.

CHART 14: AVAILABILITY OF MEDICINES AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)

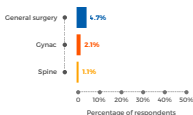


The majority of respondents reported receiving most of the medicines during their visit to SEARCH Hospital. About 35.5% reported receiving all prescribed medicines, while 63.9% received most of them. A tiny proportion (0.6%) received few medicines, indicating that the hospital maintains a reasonably good supply of essential drugs, though not the full range at all times.

“ At SEARCH Hospital, most of the medicines are available at the pharmacy itself and at a price my family can manage, so I can complete the full course of treatment without running to multiple shops or worrying about the expense

- Sayali Kumiti, Villager,
Pandhasala village ”

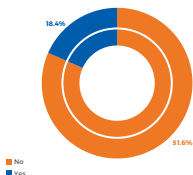
CHART 15: TYPES OF SURGERIES PERFORMED AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 20)



**Multiple answers applicable*

Among respondents who underwent surgery at SEARCH Hospital, the majority (4.7%) received general surgical procedures. Gynaecological surgeries accounted for 2.1%, while spine surgeries accounted for 1.1% of respondents, reflecting the hospital's capacity to provide both general and specialised surgical care.

CHART 16: UTILISATION OF AMBULANCE SERVICES AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Most respondents (81.6%) did not use the ambulance services, while 18.4% did. This indicates that the ambulance service is primarily utilised for emergency purposes, ensuring that patients in critical conditions or from remote areas receive timely and safe transport to the hospital.

“None of us in my family have needed the SEARCH ambulance so far, but around 10-12 families from our village have used it in emergencies. They say it reaches quickly and has been a big help during serious [HI] cases, so we feel reassured knowing this service is available if we ever need it.

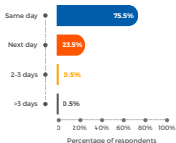
- Kavitha Madu, Villager, Khutgaon village

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PATIENTS WAITING FOR CONSULTATION

CHART 17: DURATION BETWEEN SEEKING APPOINTMENT AND RECEIVING SERVICES AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Most respondents (75.5%) received care on the same day they sought an appointment, demonstrating the hospital's efficiency in providing timely medical services. About 23.5% received services the next day.

“ Earlier, I depended mostly on private clinics and government hospitals, but reaching them took time and effort. Because of distance and access issues, I often postponed treatment, even for stomach-related problems. After SEARCH Hospital became available, reaching the facility became much easier. When I visited for gastric issues, the consultation, medicines, and tests were available in one place. This reduced repeated visits and delays. Now, I am able to seek care earlier instead of waiting for the condition to worsen.

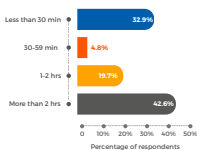
- Vinayak Patruji Ambade, Small Farmer, Chatgaon village

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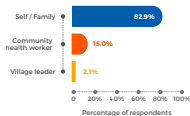
SOULACE TEAM WITH DR. ADITYA

CHART 18: WAITING TIME AT SEARCH HOSPITAL ONCE AT THE FACILITY (N= 380)



Respondents reported varying waiting times at SEARCH Hospital after arriving for services. A significant proportion (42.6%) waited for more than 2 hours, while 32.9% were attended to within 30 minutes. Additionally, 19.7% waited 1-2 hours, and 4.8% waited 30-59 minutes. Implementing agency inputs indicate that the hospital manages a high daily OPD footfall of approximately 250-300 patients, which places pressure on service delivery. In addition, doctors reported occasional delays in consultations due to staff shortages, particularly during peak hours, resulting in longer waiting times for some patients.

CHART 19: REFERRAL SOURCES TO SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



The majority of respondents (82.9%) reported that they came to SEARCH Hospital on their own or were referred by family members. About 15.0% of respondents were referred by community health workers, reflecting the important role of local health personnel in guiding patients to the hospital. Village leaders referred a small proportion (2.1%).



EQUITY AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT MEASURES

CHART 20: AVAILABILITY OF FREE SERVICES FOR TRIBAL RESPONDENTS AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 131)



■ Yes
■ No

Among tribal respondents, 100% reported that all services were free during their visit to SEARCH Hospital. This suggests that the hospital provides substantial financial support to tribal patients.

Although treatment services at SEARCH Hospital are provided free of cost for tribal patients, all first-time visitors are required to pay a nominal registration fee of ₹25-35, irrespective of their social category.

“ SEARCH Hospital has been an excellent support to our community, especially for tribal families like mine. Many services and medicines are provided for free or at very low cost, which helps us get the care we need, worrying less about money.

- Suhani Fating, Villager,
Sawargaon village



CHART 21: SUBSIDY OR SUPPORT PROVIDED TO RURAL RESPONDENTS AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 249)



■ Yes
■ No

Among the non-tribal respondents, 100% reported receiving a subsidy or financial support during their visit to SEARCH Hospital. This indicates that the hospital provides significant support to non-tribal patients, helping improve affordability and access to healthcare services.

“ In the past, hospital admission meant high expenses and borrowing money from others. For breathing-related problems, I would delay going to the hospital due to fear of costs. At SEARCH Hospital, I was admitted for two days. Most services were available at the hospital itself, which reduced outside expenses. My travel distance was also shorter compared to earlier hospitals. This made hospitalisation possible without financial stress.

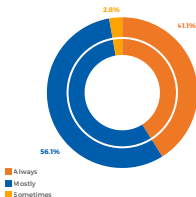
- Devendra Fating, Small
Farmer, Kurkheda village



PATIENT EXPERIENCE AND QUALITY OF CARE

Patients' experiences at SEARCH Hospital point to a generally positive, respectful care environment, with staff politeness, clear communication with doctors, and attentive nursing support emerging as key strengths. Most respondents are satisfied with medical treatment, facilities, medicines, cleanliness, and privacy. However, a smaller proportion highlight areas such as procedures and complete symptom relief where continued improvements and follow-up support are still needed.

CHART 22: BEHAVIOUR OF STAFF AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



The majority of respondents reported positive experiences with hospital staff, with 97.2% stating that staff were always or mostly polite and respectful. Only a small proportion (2.8%) reported such behaviour only sometimes, indicating overall high levels of staff professionalism and patient-friendly conduct.

“ Working at SEARCH, even in a short span of eight months, has allowed me to care for patients during their most critical moments. Whether in the ICU or the casualty department, I strive to support patients and their families with compassion and clarity. Although staff and equipment shortages create challenges, the training and guidance I receive have helped me grow professionally. SEARCH has made healthcare more affordable and accessible for tribal and poor communities, and I feel proud to contribute to this mission.

- Mr. Dipak Nurban Patale, Staff Nurse - ICU, Casualty & MHD, SEARCH Hospital ”

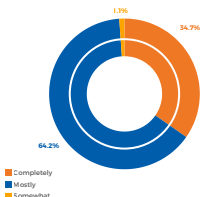


“ Before, I often faced challenges in accessing treatment, such as long distances, high costs, and even unpleasant experiences at private healthcare institutions. There were times when I had to delay or skip treatment simply because the nearest services were either too far or unaffordable. I had also experienced discriminatory behaviour earlier, which made visiting health facilities stressful. At SEARCH Hospital, my experience has been entirely different. Even though I travel more than 20 km to reach the hospital, I do so because I trust the quality of care. The staff have always treated me with respect, and I feel heard and valued during every visit. The doctors and nurses explain things clearly, and the services are affordable, which has significantly reduced the burden on my family. During one of my visits, I required both OPD consultation and inpatient care. The wards were clean, the staff were attentive, and the environment felt safe and supportive. I also received all the required medicines at the hospital itself, which made the process easier. Though the waiting time was slightly long on some days, the overall experience and quality of treatment make it worthwhile. Today, I prefer SEARCH Hospital for all my healthcare needs, and I encourage others in my village to seek treatment here as well. The hospital has restored my trust in accessing timely and respectful healthcare.

- Pradip Chudhari, Small Farmer, Chatgoan

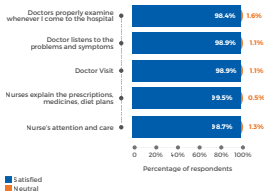


CHART 23: EASE OF UNDERSTANDING DOCTORS' EXPLANATIONS AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Most respondents found the doctors' communication straightforward to understand. About 34.7% reported it was simple and completely understandable, while 64.2% said it was understandable primarily. A tiny proportion (1.1%) found it somewhat understandable, indicating that the hospital ensures effective communication between doctors and patients.

CHART 24: QUALITY OF MEDICAL CARE AND PATIENT INTERACTION AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Respondents generally reported a significantly good level of satisfaction with the quality of medical care and patient interactions at SEARCH Hospital. Both doctors and nurses were perceived as attentive, communicative, and thorough in their care, ensuring that patients' needs and concerns were addressed effectively.



Doctors Properly Examine Patients During Visits

An overwhelming 98.5% of respondents reported being satisfied with the way doctors examine patients during visits, while only 1.6% were neutral, indicating that examinations are generally thorough and meet patient expectations.



Doctors Listen to Patients' Problems and Symptoms

Nearly all respondents (98.9%) reported being satisfied with doctors' attentiveness to their problems and symptoms, with only 1.1% expressing a neutral response, reflecting effective and responsive patient-doctor communication.



Satisfaction with Doctor Visits

Overall satisfaction with doctor visits was extremely high, with 98.9% of respondents being satisfied, and only 1.1% neutral, suggesting strong patient confidence in the quality of consultations.

NURSES EXPLAIN PRESCRIPTIONS, MEDICINES, AND DIET PLANS

A large majority (99.5%) of respondents were satisfied with how nurses explained prescriptions, medicines, and diet plans, while 0.5% were neutral, highlighting clear and effective communication by nursing staff.



Nurses' Attention and Care Provided to Patients

Most respondents (98.7%) reported being satisfied with the attention and care provided by nurses, with just 1.3% neutral, indicating a high level of perceived attentiveness and patient-centred care.



Working at SEARCH has been a deeply fulfilling journey. Over the past seven years, I have seen firsthand how timely care and early diagnosis can change the lives of tribal and rural women. During the COVID-19 years, our team served entire villages without pause, and witnessing patients recover because of our collective efforts has been incredibly rewarding. Although we face challenges like staff shortages and equipment limitations, the trust patients place in us motivates me every day. SEARCH has strengthened community health in a meaningful way, and I am proud to be a part of this mission-driven work.

- Dr. Mayuri Pendam,
Gynaecologist, SEARCH
Hospital



I feel much more confident about seeking care in SEARCH Hospital. The doctors and nurses here treat me well, explain my problems clearly, and I am satisfied with the overall services, so I now prefer to depend on this hospital for my health needs.

- Sangita Yadav Selote, Daily
Wage Labour, Pandhasala
village

“ During my hospital stay, the doctors visited regularly and explained the treatment process to my family. The nurses were attentive and responded whenever assistance was required. Their behaviour and communication made it easier for us to manage the illness and continue treatment without confusion.

- **Devrav Kodap, Small Farmer, Kurkheda village**

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“ With three years of service, I work as a Nurse Assistant in both IPD and OPD, handling daily tasks related to admissions, surgeries, pharmacy, and the lab. I support patients and their families by helping with counselling, explaining procedures, and ensuring their comfort throughout treatment. In my work, I often face challenges such as staff shortages and equipment gaps. However, SEARCH has offered opportunities to improve my skills. Additionally, ongoing guidance from doctors strengthens my ability to deliver better patient care. I ensure that patients are treated with dignity and privacy by maintaining confidentiality and involving their families whenever required. In my view, SEARCH has improved healthcare for poor and tribal patients by reducing costs, improving access, and lowering the need for referrals to outside cities, including for OPD, IPD, surgeries, and diagnostics. I have never refused to attend to any patient. Additional support, such as increased bed availability during high patient load and improved management of complex cases, would help me perform my role more effectively.

- **Meena Ravindra Bhusari, Nurse Assistant**

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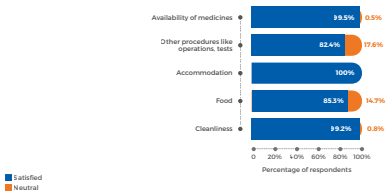
“ At SEARCH Hospital, the doctor examined me properly and asked detailed questions about my symptoms instead of rushing through the consultation. The problem was explained in simple language, and I was told what medicines to take and when to return if needed. This helped me understand my illness better and follow the treatment correctly.

- **Chandulal Somaji Sakhre, Small Farmer, Chatgaon village**

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CHART 25: AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF HOSPITAL FACILITIES AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Respondents generally expressed satisfaction with the availability and quality of hospital facilities at SEARCH Hospital. Most services, including medicines, procedures, accommodation, food, and cleanliness, were perceived as meeting patient expectations, though some areas showed scope for further improvement.



INTERACTION WITH A PATIENT AND THEIR FAMILY

AVAILABILITY OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL PROCEDURES

The availability of medicines was rated very positively, with 99.5% of respondents reporting satisfaction, indicating a dependable supply of essential drugs. Satisfaction with other medical procedures, including operations and diagnostic tests, was also high (82.4% satisfied); however, a notable 17.6% of respondents expressed neutral views, suggesting perceived gaps, delays, or limitations in access to certain procedures, such as maternity facilities, MRI, and angiography, as reported by doctors and respondents. This points to scope for strengthening procedural capacity during periods of high demand.

PATIENT AMENITIES: ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD

Patient amenities received largely positive feedback. All respondents who availed accommodation services (100%) reported satisfaction, indicating that inpatient facilities are adequate and well-maintained. Satisfaction with hospital food was comparatively lower, with 85.3% satisfied and 14.7% neutral, suggesting that while food services meet basic expectations, there is room for improvement to better align with patient preferences and comfort needs.



Hospital Cleanliness and Hygiene

Hospital cleanliness emerged as a strong area of performance, with 99.2% of respondents expressing satisfaction and only a negligible proportion reporting neutral views. This reflects effective sanitation practices, well-maintained wards, and a consistently clean hospital environment. High satisfaction with cleanliness contributes positively to patient comfort, infection control, and overall trust in hospital services.

“ During my admission, the ward was clean and well-maintained. The beds, toilets, and common areas were regularly cleaned, and basic facilities like food and drinking water were provided on time. Having these facilities available helped me focus on recovery without additional stress.

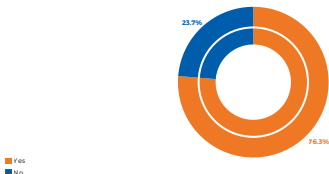
- Tarabai Nilkanth Titirmare, Small Farmer, Sawargaon village



FAMILY MEMBERS WAITING IN THE HOSPITAL WAITING AREA

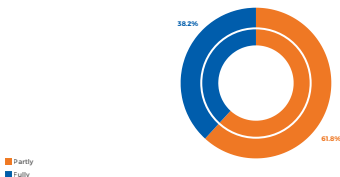


CHART 26: MAINTENANCE OF PRIVACY DURING CONSULTATION/PROCEDURE AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Most respondents (76.3%) felt that their privacy was maintained during consultations or procedures at SEARCH Hospital. In addition, field observations indicated that privacy is generally well maintained across service areas. However, 23.7% of respondents reported scope for improvement, suggesting that while privacy practices are largely in place, further strengthening could help ensure a consistently private experience for all patients.

CHART 27: PERCEIVED IMPROVEMENT IN HEALTH AFTER TREATMENT AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



A majority of respondents (61.8%) reported only partial improvement in their health after treatment at SEARCH Hospital, while 38.2% reported full improvement. This indicates that while the hospital contributes positively to patient health, many patients may require continued care, follow-up visits, or additional, specific, or individualised interventions to achieve full recovery.

“ Because of high treatment costs, I used to delay going for care, but at SEARCH Hospital, I feel comfortable coming even when I need admission. The staff always maintain my privacy during consultations and treatment, speaks respectfully, and makes sure my personal issues are not discussed in front of others. I am delighted with the way my dignity is protected here, and I would definitely recommend this hospital to others

- Mangala Ramesh Gedam, Small Farmer, Khutgaon village



“ During my recent admission at SEARCH Hospital, I experienced a level of care and comfort that I had not received in any other healthcare facility before. I was hospitalised due to breathing trouble and stayed at the hospital for two days for treatment and recovery. Earlier, I often had to travel more than 20 km for treatment and sometimes delayed seeking care due to high treatment costs, but accessing SEARCH Hospital reduced both my travel distance to 11-20 km and my overall treatment expenses to less than ₹500. I reached the hospital by public transport, and the visit was planned with my family's support.

The hospital environment was spotless, and the staff maintained a calm and supportive atmosphere throughout my stay. I was attended to within 30 minutes of arrival and admitted for inpatient treatment; although the doctor consultation happened the next day, the nursing staff ensured continuous care and attention. I was particularly impressed with the quality of food and accommodation provided. The meals were simple, nutritious, and well-timed, which made recovery easier. The inpatient ward was well maintained, and the staff ensured patients were comfortable and attended to promptly.

The doctors took the time to explain my condition clearly, and the nurses were attentive and consistently helpful. Every service I needed, from diagnostics to medicines, was available at the hospital, which reduced the stress of running around for different tests or supplies. I have now completely recovered and am very satisfied with the doctors, nurses, cleanliness, food, accommodation, and overall services. The overall experience made me feel genuinely cared for, and I left the hospital with a strong sense of trust and confidence in its service.

- Sravan Menga Narote, Small Farmer, Dudhmala village

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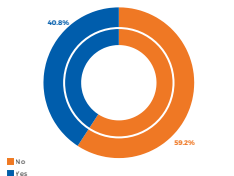


OPEN AREA OUTSIDE THE
HOSPITAL PREMISES

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Community engagement with SEARCH is visible through home visits, local staffing, and awareness activities, though coverage remains partial. Around two-fifths of households report recent visits from community health workers and participation of village youth and women as health staff, and over half have attended health or de-addiction sessions, indicating a growing but still uneven outreach presence across the project area.

CHART 28: HOME VISITS BY SEARCH COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS (N= 380)

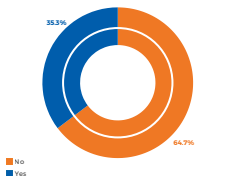


In the past six months, 40.8% of respondents reported that a SEARCH community health worker visited their home, while 59.2% did not receive any visit. This indicates that home visits by community health workers have been carried out for a portion of the population.

“ The Community Health Workers regularly inform us about available services at SEARCH and guide families on when to seek care. Their follow-ups and reminders have helped my family become more aware and confident about taking timely action during illness.

- Madu, Villager, Sawargaon village

CHART 29: PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH AND WOMEN FROM THE VILLAGE AS HEALTH STAFF AT SEARCH (N= 380)

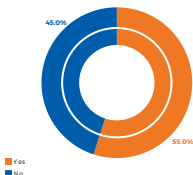


About 35.3% of respondents reported that youth or women from their village are involved as health staff at SEARCH. In comparison, 64.7% said there was no such participation. This indicates that some local community members are engaged in health services, contributing to the hospital's outreach and connection with the villagers.

Local youth and women are recruited based on community needs through public advertisements such as newspapers. Candidates undergo a selection process involving examinations, bedside practical assessments, and interviews, with special emphasis on the performance of local Gadchiroli candidates. Training is conducted on campus 1-2 times a month, where recruits stay for 6-12 months to gain skills and knowledge. Their performance is continuously evaluated during training, and upon successful completion, they are promoted to higher ranks or positions in health roles.

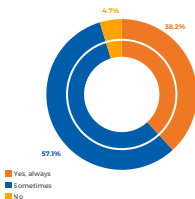
- Dr. Ashwin N. Raghawar, Hospital Admin

CHART 30: PARTICIPATION IN SEARCH HEALTH OR DE-ADDICTION AWARENESS SESSIONS (N= 380)



About 55.0% of respondents reported that they or their family members had attended a health or de-addiction awareness session conducted by SEARCH. In comparison, 45.0% had not participated in a health or de-addiction awareness session. This indicates that a significant portion of individuals and families have participated in awareness and educational initiatives organised by the hospital.

CHART 31: AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS IN RESPONDENTS' AREAS (N= 380)



Respondents reported varying availability of community health workers in their areas. About 38.2% said they are always available, 57.1% said they are sometimes available, and 4.7% said they are not available. This indicates that community health workers are present in the areas, though their availability may vary.

All the women in our village came together after the awareness sessions and decided to work for the complete prohibition of alcohol in the village. By supporting each other and speaking to families and local sellers, we have started changing people's attitudes towards drinking and making our village a safer place for everyone.

- Sunandhabhai Cedam, Villager, Pandhasala village

IMPACT CREATED – PRE VS POST-INTERVENTION

The intervention has led to marked shifts in how families seek and finance healthcare, with clear improvements in timely care-seeking, preference for formal facilities such as SEARCH Hospital, reduced dependence on quacks, and lower incidence of catastrophic medical spending. At the same time, distance-related access constraints and financial strain persist for some households, underscoring the need for continued support and complementary system-level strengthening.

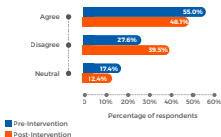
RESIDENTIAL QUATERS FOR HOSPITAL STAFF



CHANGE IN HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

Since the project began, communities have moved from essentially delaying care and relying on government hospitals, traditional healers, or nearby private clinics to seeking treatment earlier and preferring to use SEARCH Hospital.

CHART 32: EARLY VS. DELAYED HEALTHCARE-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR (N= 380)



The data reflect a clear improvement in healthcare-seeking behaviour among respondents after the project intervention. With better access to affordable, high-quality healthcare services, more individuals are seeking medical attention earlier rather than waiting for their condition to worsen.



Healthcare-Seeking Before the Project

Before the project, 55.0% of respondents agreed that they sought healthcare services only when seriously ill. In comparison, 27.6% disagreed that they sought healthcare services only when seriously ill. This shows that over half the population delayed seeking care, likely due to limited access, cost, or lack of awareness. About 17.4% remained neutral, suggesting irregular or uncertain healthcare-seeking practices.



Healthcare-Seeking Behaviour After the Project

Post-intervention, the percentage of respondents who sought care only when seriously ill declined from 55.0% to 48.1%. Meanwhile, the share of respondents who reported seeking care before their condition became serious increased from 27.6% to 39.5%, and neutral responses dropped from 17.4% to 12.4%. These changes collectively indicate a stronger awareness of preventive healthcare and a shift towards timely medical consultation among the community.

SOULACE TEAM INTERACTING WITH A DOCTOR AT THE HOSPITAL



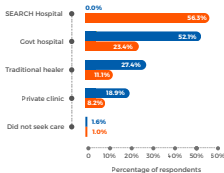


I mainly visited private clinics or the government hospital for treatment. However, access barriers often forced me to skip or delay seeking care. Despite needing medical attention, the long distance and lack of transport made it difficult to get timely services. After accessing services at SEARCH Hospital, I have been able to receive OPD consultations more easily and on the same day. I now feel more satisfied with the staffs behaviour, the cleanliness, and the overall quality of services. Most of the care I needed was available, and the treatment provided was good. Although travel remains a challenge, I still visit PHC/CHC facilities from time to time. However, I now prefer coming to SEARCH whenever possible because of the better experience and reliability. SEARCH has helped reduce my delays in treatment. It has provided a dependable option for affordable and accessible healthcare for my family and me.

· Shashikala Ramdas Madavi, Daily wage labourer, Chatgaon



CHART 33: CHANGE IN TYPE OF HEALTH FACILITY MOST FREQUENTLY VISITED (N=380)



■ Pre-Intervention
■ Post-Intervention

The data shows a significant shift in the types of healthcare facilities respondents preferred after the project's implementation. The increased accessibility of the SEARCH Hospital demonstrates improved community trust and reliance on the institution's high-quality healthcare services.



Healthcare Facility Preference Before the Project

Before the intervention, more than half of the respondents (52.1%) reported visiting government hospitals for treatment. In comparison, 27.4% relied on traditional healers and 18.9% visited private clinics. This pattern reflects limited availability, overcrowding, and service gaps within government healthcare institutions, particularly for diagnostics, specialist care, and timely treatment. Inadequate convergence between community-level services and higher-level facilities, along with constraints on accessibility and affordability, contributed to fragmented healthcare-seeking behaviour and continued reliance on informal care options.



Healthcare Facility Preference After the Project

Following the project's implementation, a clear behavioural shift is observed, with 56.3% of respondents identifying SEARCH Hospital as their primary healthcare provider.

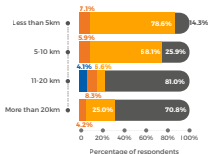
This shift indicates growing trust in the hospital's affordable, high-quality services and in the consistent medical support provided by the SEARCH Hospital team. Concurrently, reliance on government hospitals declined sharply from 52.1% to 23.4%, visits to traditional healers reduced from 27.4% to 11.1%, and use of private clinics reduced from 18.9% to 8.2%. The marginal reduction in those not seeking care (from 1.6% to 1.0%) further suggests improved access and confidence in formal healthcare. Overall, the findings demonstrate that SEARCH Hospital has emerged as a reliable, accessible, and affordable healthcare institution, effectively addressing earlier service gaps and strengthening community reliance on formal medical care.

“Earlier, I frequently visited quacks or traditional healers because government facilities were far and private clinics were costly. Treatment often started late, and follow-ups were irregular. After visiting SEARCH Hospital for general illness, I started depending less on informal providers. Having doctors, medicines, and diagnostics at one location made it easier to complete treatment without switching between facilities.

- Gajanan Meshram, Small Farmer, Sawargaon village



CHART 34: CHANGE IN AVERAGE DISTANCE TRAVELLED FOR TREATMENT (N= 380)



■ Post- Intervention: Less than 5km
 ■ Post- Intervention: 5-10 km
 ■ Post- Intervention: 11-20 km
 ■ Post- Intervention: More than 20km

The cross-tabulation shows a clear shift in where respondents go for treatment after the intervention, with movement both from shorter to longer distances and from longer to shorter distances, depending on proximity to SEARCH Hospital.

Among those who earlier travelled less than 5 km, 78.6% now travel 11-20 km, and 14.3% travel more than 20 km, with no respondents continuing to travel within 5 km. Similarly, among respondents who earlier travelled 5-10 km, 68.1% have shifted to 11-20 km and 25.9% to more than 20 km. In contrast, only 5.9% remain within the same distance range, indicating a substantial shift towards more extended travel for preferred care.

At the same time, some respondents show a reverse shift. Among those who earlier travelled more than 20 km, 25.0% now travel 11-20 km, 4.2% travel 5-10 km, and 70.8% continue to travel long distances. Similarly, among respondents who earlier travelled 11-20 km, 4.1% now travel less than 5 km and 8.3% travel 5-10 km.

However, a majority (81.0%) have moved to more than 20 km.

The cross-tabulation shows a clear shift in treatment-seeking behaviour after the intervention, with a large proportion of respondents moving from shorter to longer travel distances, indicating a growing preference for SEARCH Hospital over nearby facilities.

Most respondents who earlier travelled less than 10 km are now travelling 11-20 km or more than 20 km, reflecting their willingness to bypass closer options for better-quality and more reliable care. At the same time, a smaller group that previously travelled longer distances has shifted to shorter distances post-intervention, as SEARCH Hospital is located closer to their residences. Overall, the intervention has increased the hospital's reach to a broader population while also reducing the travel burden for households near SEARCH Hospital.

“ As a small farmer with a modest household income, accessing timely and affordable healthcare has always been a challenge. Earlier, I often relied on government hospitals or even local quacks because travelling long distances for treatment was difficult. Many times, I had to delay or skip seeking care simply due to access barriers.

After coming to SEARCH Hospital, my experience has changed significantly. I now feel more confident about seeking treatment, and the affordability of services has dramatically reduced my financial burden. The staff are mostly polite, the doctors communicate clearly, and the overall quality of services, including OPD and IPD care, medicines, and cleanliness, has been consistently high. Although I still face long travel hours, the assurance of receiving proper medical care makes the journey worth it.

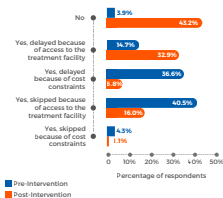
SEARCH has become a trusted healthcare support for my family and me, and I would recommend the hospital to others in my community.

- Mangesh Atala, Small Tribal Farmer, Chatgaon village



ICU ENTRANCE AREA
AT THE HOSPITAL

CHART 35: COMPARISON OF HEALTHCARE DELAYS AND AVOIDANCE DUE TO COST AND ACCESS FACTORS (N= 380)



The data show a significant improvement in healthcare-seeking behaviour after the project intervention, with fewer respondents delaying or skipping treatment due to cost constraints. However, access-related barriers continue to pose a challenge for some respondents, likely due to the remote and dispersed nature of the project area.



Barriers to Healthcare Before the Project

Before the intervention, only 3.9% of respondents reported not delaying or skipping treatment. A large share delayed or skipped healthcare due to access and cost issues - 14.7% postponed due to poor access, 36.6% delayed due to cost constraints, 40.5% skipped care due to access difficulties, and 4.3% skipped due to cost barriers. These figures highlight the limited reach and affordability of healthcare services before the project.



Barriers to Healthcare After the Project

Following the project, the proportion of respondents who did not delay or skip treatment rose sharply from 3.9% to 43.2%, reflecting improved accessibility and affordability of healthcare services. Those who delayed treatment due to access barriers increased from 14.7% to 32.9%, indicating that while awareness and willingness to seek care have improved, physical access remains a constraint for many living in remote areas. In contrast, those who delayed or skipped care due to cost constraints decreased significantly (delayed: 36.6% → 6.8%, skipped: 4.3% → 1.1%), and those who skipped care due to access barriers also decreased from 40.5% to 16.0%. Overall, the findings suggest that the project has successfully minimised cost-related barriers. However, continued efforts are needed to further improve physical access to healthcare facilities.



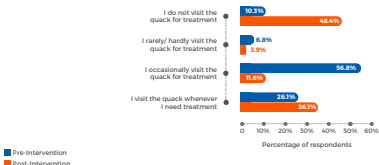
I mostly depended on private clinics and government hospitals, and I often had to delay treatment because of distance and access issues. Even for routine illnesses, all health facilities were far and difficult to reach. I visited SEARCH Hospital for gastro-related health issues, which were causing discomfort and affecting my daily routine.

After the SEARCH Hospital became available, it was much easier for me to access treatment. During my visit, I received consultation, medicines, and necessary tests for my gastro-related condition, and the overall treatment experience was satisfactory. Although I still access PHC or CHC services occasionally, depending on convenience, SEARCH has become a reliable option for me because of its consistent service delivery and easier accessibility. This improved access has made it easier for me to seek healthcare in a timely and regular manner.

- Chandulal Somaji Sakhre, Small Farmer, Pandhasala village



CHART 36: REDUCED DEPENDENCY ON QUACKS FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT (N=380)



The data indicate a mixed trend in respondents' reliance on non-formal healthcare providers ("quacks") following the project intervention. While a significant number of respondents have moved away from such practices, a parallel rise in those who continue to rely heavily on them suggests that this form of treatment remains preferred by certain sections of the population.



Dependence on Quacks Before the Project

Before the intervention, a majority (56.8%) of respondents reported occasionally visiting quacks for treatment. In comparison, 26.1% reported visiting quacks whenever they needed treatment, indicating firm reliance on local providers. Only 10.3% of respondents said they did not visit quacks, and 6.8% reported visiting them rarely or hardly at all.



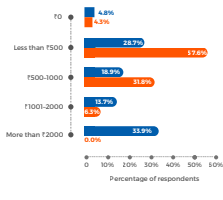
Dependence on Quacks After the Project

Following the intervention, the proportion of respondents who did not visit quacks increased substantially from 10.3% to 48.4%, indicating an apparent decline in reliance on local providers among nearly half of respondents. Those who occasionally visited quacks declined sharply from 56.8% to 11.6%, and those who rarely visited fell slightly from 6.8% to 3.9%. However, the percentage of respondents who visited quacks whenever they needed treatment rose from 26.1% to 36.1%, suggesting that while many have shifted to institutional healthcare, some continue to depend on quacks.

FINANCIAL BURDEN AND COPING MECHANISMS

The project has substantially reduced very high out-of-pocket medical expenses and the need for many households to resort to borrowing or asset sales for treatment. However, regular spending on care remains common. This suggests improved financial protection for a sizeable share of families, alongside others who still face recurrent healthcare costs.

CHART 37: CHANGE IN AVERAGE OUT-OF-POCKET MEDICAL EXPENSES PER TREATMENT (N= 380)



The data indicate a shift in the pattern of healthcare spending among respondents following the project intervention. While medical expenses have decreased, a significant proportion of respondents continue to bear regular treatment costs, reflecting persistent financial pressure despite improved service availability.



Medical Expenses Before the Project

Before the project, out-of-pocket treatment costs were relatively high. About 33.9% of respondents spent more than ₹2000 per treatment, indicating a significant financial burden. Additionally, 13.7% incurred expenses between ₹1001-2000, and 18.9% spent ₹500-1000. Only 28.7% reported expenses of less than ₹500, while a tiny proportion (4.8%) incurred no cost. Overall, the pre-intervention scenario shows high, often unaffordable, treatment costs for a large share of respondents.



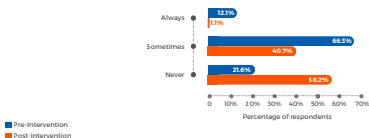
Medical Expenses After the Project

Post-intervention, there is a clear shift towards lower expenditure brackets. A majority of respondents (57.6%) reported spending less than ₹500 per treatment, and 31.8% incurred costs in the ₹500-1000 range. Importantly, no respondents reported expenses exceeding ₹2000, and the proportion spending ₹1001-2000 declined to 6.3%. The share of respondents reporting zero expenditure remained almost unchanged (4.3%).

Despite the overall reduction in out-of-pocket expenditures, the chart indicates that some treatment-related costs persist even after the intervention. Field-level insights suggest that treatment is provided free of cost to tribal patients. In contrast, non-tribal respondents are required to pay a minimal fee for consultation and medicines. In addition, several respondents reported the total cost incurred for a particular disease episode, even when the condition was initially diagnosed or partially treated at other healthcare facilities before seeking care at SEARCH Hospital. Many respondents were unable to segregate expenses incurred across different healthcare facilities. They therefore reported an approximate cumulative amount for the entire course of treatment. As a result, the post-intervention expenses reported in the survey, in some cases, reflect aggregated treatment costs rather than costs incurred exclusively at SEARCH Hospital.

Overall, the findings suggest that the intervention has significantly reduced the financial burden of healthcare. At the same time, limited residual costs are attributable to nominal user charges for non-tribal patients, minimal medication costs, and reporting practices for prior treatment at other facilities.

CHART 38: CHANGE IN INSTANCES OF BORROWING, SELLING ASSETS, OR TAKING LOANS FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT(N= 380)



The data show a clear, positive shift in how households cope with medical expenses after the project intervention. A significantly higher proportion of respondents no longer need to borrow money or sell assets for treatment. At the same time, those who previously relied on such coping mechanisms, whether occasionally or regularly, have reduced considerably.

Before the Project: Before the project intervention, a large proportion of households faced significant financial strain while seeking medical treatment. 12.1% of respondents reported that they always had to borrow money, sell assets, or take loans to afford healthcare. An additional 66.3% reported sometimes relying on borrowing and asset liquidation as common strategies for managing treatment expenses. Only 21.6% of respondents reported never needing to borrow or sell assets, highlighting the high level of out-of-pocket burden and financial vulnerability before the intervention.

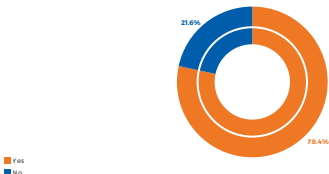
After the Project: Following the intervention, the reliance on borrowing or selling assets for treatment reduced substantially. The proportion of respondents who always needed to take such measures dropped drastically from 12.1% to 1.1%, showing a significant decline in severe financial hardship. Those who sometimes relied on borrowing also decreased from 66.3% to 40.7%, reflecting reduced financial pressure. Meanwhile, the share of respondents who never needed to borrow or sell assets increased sharply from 21.6% to 58.2%, suggesting that improved affordability and access to care significantly minimised the need for distress financing.

“ Earlier, medical treatment meant borrowing money or postponing care until funds were available. After accessing services at SEARCH Hospital, out-of-pocket expenses were reduced for consultations and medicines. This lowered the need to take loans or sell assets for routine healthcare.

· Mangesh Atala, Small Farmer, Pandhasala village

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CHART 39: PERCEPTION OF FAIRNESS IN THE COST OF SERVICES AT SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



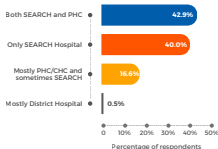
A majority of respondents (78.4%) felt that the cost of services at SEARCH Hospital was fair, indicating satisfaction with the affordability of healthcare provided. About 21.6% of respondents felt otherwise, suggesting that while most perceive the services as reasonably priced, a small segment considers the costs higher than expected.



INTERACTION WITH A PATIENT'S FAMILY AT THE HOSPITAL

CURRENT HEALTHCARE UTILISATION LANDSCAPE

CHART 40: CURRENT HEALTHCARE SEEKING PATTERNS OF RESPONDENTS (N= 380)

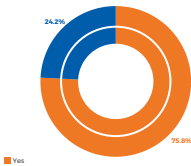


Respondents reported diverse patterns in seeking healthcare. About 42.9% visit both SEARCH Hospital and PHC, while 40.0% rely only on SEARCH Hospital for their healthcare needs. Around 16.6% primarily visit PHC/CHC and occasionally go to SEARCH, and a tiny proportion (0.5%) mostly use the District Hospital. This indicates that SEARCH Hospital is one of the primary healthcare providers for a significant portion of the population, alongside other local health facilities.

“ For repeated health issues, I used to move between PHC, private clinics, and sometimes avoid care altogether due to distance. SEARCH Hospital provided a fixed place where I could return when symptoms reappeared. Even though I still use PHC services occasionally, SEARCH has become a dependable option for continued care.

- Niruta Petkule, Small Farmer, Khutgaon village

CHART 41: VISIT TO OTHER HEALTHCARE FACILITIES FOR THE SAME ILLNESS (N= 380)

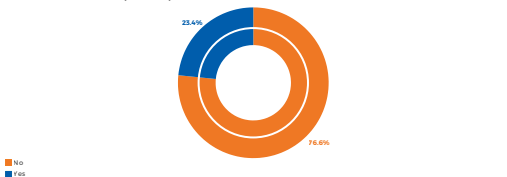


Most respondents (75.8%) reported visiting another healthcare facility for the same illness, while 24.2% did not. This indicates that a large proportion of patients seek multiple consultations, reflecting the hospital's role as a preferred or referral facility for continued or specialised care.



CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS FACED IN SEARCHING FOR HOSPITAL SERVICES

CHART 42: LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL BARRIERS EXPERIENCED DURING VISITS TO SEARCH HOSPITAL (N= 380)



Most respondents (76.6%) reported not encountering any language or cultural barriers during their visits to SEARCH Hospital, while 23.4% did. This indicates that the hospital is generally effective in communicating and interacting with patients from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

“ I am delighted with the treatment and services here. The doctors, nurses and other staff make an effort to speak in a way I can understand, repeat things patiently when there is any language difficulty, and ensure that nothing important is missed in communication.

- Devaji Surjagade, Small Farmer, Kurkheda village



INTERACTION WITH THE PATIENT'S FAMILY AT THE WAITING AREA



06. IMPACT AT VARIOUS LEVELS



IMPACT AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The project enabled notable improvements in individual health-seeking behaviour, financial protection, and patient experience. A significant shift towards early care-seeking was observed, with respondents seeking treatment before illness became serious, increasing from 27.6% to 39.5%. Individuals also reported a substantial reduction in very high medical expenses, with expenses above ₹2,000 falling from 33.9% to 0%, and an increase in utilisation of low-cost care (₹0-₹500) from 28.7% to 57.6%, following the availability of free consultations, affordable diagnostics, and medicines. Patient experience indicators also strengthened—64.2% reported clear communication, 76.3% felt privacy was maintained, and 76.8% reported no discrimination—contributing to higher personal comfort and confidence in using the facility.



IMPACT AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

At the community level, the project contributed to visible behavioural shifts and strengthened collective trust in formal healthcare. Dependence on informal providers reduced markedly, with traditional healer use declining from 27.4% to 11.1%, and the proportion of people choosing not to visit the quacks increasing from 10.3% to 48.4%, indicating improved community-wide adoption of scientific medical care. The community also experienced enhanced emergency preparedness, with 18.4% utilising ambulance services for timely transport during critical situations, improving the collective ability to respond to emergencies effectively. Social acceptance of care improved as community members perceived SEARCH as highly supportive, affordable, and respectful, as reflected in FGD accounts describing reduced treatment costs, better outcomes, and enhanced dignity in care for poor and tribal families.



IMPACT AT THE STATE LEVEL (DISTRICT HEALTH ECOSYSTEM STRENGTHENING)

At the state level, particularly within Gadchiroli district, the intervention strengthened the functional healthcare ecosystem by expanding service depth, continuity, and geographic reach.

The hospital delivered 1.23 lakh OPD consultations, 4,105 inpatient admissions, 1,886 surgeries, 2.28 lakh laboratory tests, and 15,536 imaging services, indicating substantial secondary-level service capacity within a resource-constrained district. With 75.5% of patients receiving care on the same day and structured integration of OPD, IPD, surgery, diagnostics, and emergency transport under one facility, the project improved operational efficiency and referral continuity at the district level.

Further, the programme demonstrated expanded geographic coverage across 2,500+ villages, strengthening healthcare penetration in remote tribal areas. The consistent management of high-risk conditions such as snakebites, malaria, strokes, road accidents, and cardiac emergencies reflects enhanced district-level clinical response capacity. Overall, the intervention improved institutional throughput, service integration, and district healthcare responsiveness.



IMPACT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL (DEMONSTRATION OF AN INTEGRATED RURAL HEALTHCARE MODEL)

At the national level, the project demonstrates a scalable rural healthcare delivery model that integrates affordability, cultural sensitivity, and multi-tiered services within a single institutional framework.

The programme successfully reached 3,73,879 beneficiaries, showing the viability of sustained large-scale service delivery in underserved tribal geographies. Importantly, 76.8% of respondents reported no experience of discrimination, and 64.2% reported clear communication with doctors, indicating institutional practices that promote inclusive and patient-centred care, critical for strengthening public trust in formal systems nationally.

The model combines preventive outreach (CHW visits reported by 40.8% of households), awareness generation (55.0% participation in health/de-addiction sessions), and facility-based curative care, reflecting a continuum-of-care architecture aligned with national rural health strengthening priorities.

Thus, beyond service outputs, the project contributes evidence that an integrated, community-linked hospital model can improve institutional credibility, inclusive service delivery, and sustained utilisation in hard-to-reach rural populations, offering policy-relevant lessons for national replication.



07. CASE STUDIES

“ CASE STUDY 1: OVERCOMING SUBSTANCE ABUSE- THE TRANSFORMATION OF DOMAJI SHIVKUMARJI GEDAM

Domaji Shivkumarji Gedam, a 35-year-old resident of Ambeshivani village in Gadchiroli district, had long struggled with addictions to alcohol, tobacco, and kharra (chewing tobacco). In his community, substance use was widespread - most working men consumed alcohol regularly, and local gatherings or social events commonly involved drinking. This environment reinforced unhealthy habits, and despite repeated appeals from his family and fellow villagers, Domaji found it challenging to break free. Over the years, his addictions began to seriously affect his health, household dynamics, and relationships. Recognising the worsening situation, villagers encouraged him to join a de-addiction programme conducted by SEARCH Hospital, Chatgaon. SEARCH had been organising special guidance camps in villages around Gadchiroli, including Ambeshivani. Although initially uncertain, Domaji agreed to attend the camp. With structured guidance on lifestyle changes, diet, daily routines, and substance withdrawal, he slowly began to regain control over his habits. Following the camp, he was advised to visit the de-addiction guidance centre at SEARCH Hospital once every month for twelve months. Domaji showed strong commitment, attending regularly and adhering to the recommended practices. Over time, his dependence on addictive substances reduced significantly. His health improved, and, importantly, his family, once distressed by his behaviour, was now reconciled and had resumed their support.

Today, Domaji has fully overcome his addictions. He has regained physical strength, mental stability, and a harmonious family life. He maintains a disciplined, purpose-driven routine and expresses deep gratitude to the team at SEARCH Hospital. He acknowledges that their compassionate, inclusive, and welfare-oriented approach, free of considerations of caste, status, or background, played a pivotal role in transforming his life. Their intervention not only enabled his recovery but also helped him reclaim dignity and well-being.

“ CASE STUDY 1: A STRUGGLE FOR TIMELY TREATMENT - THE EXPERIENCE OF SHASHIKANT MAHADEV KAWLE

Shashikant Mahadev Kawle, a 35-year-old farmer from Navagaon village in Manpur district of Chhattisgarh, lives with his mother, wife, and two children. His family depends entirely on agriculture for their livelihood, with the harvest providing both food grains and limited income for yearly household needs. Navagaon is geographically remote, 35 km from the taluka headquarters, about 160 km from the district centre, and nearly 235 km from Gadchiroli, making reliable healthcare difficult to access. For several days, Shashikant suffered from severe stomach pain. He first sought local, small-scale private treatments, including traditional remedies, but none provided relief. He then visited government and private hospitals in Manpur. The government hospital's treatment was unsatisfactory, and private hospitals informed him that an appendix operation would cost ₹30,000-₹35,000, an amount he could not afford.

During a discussion in his village, people advised him to visit the SEARCH Hospital in Satgaon, Gadchiroli district, known for treating patients from distant areas with positive outcomes. Acting on this suggestion, he travelled to the hospital with his wife. After registering in the OPD and consulting the doctor, he was advised to undergo immediate admission. Within a few days, he underwent a successful appendix surgery. He was later instructed to take a short-term rest at home. Today, Shashikant has completely recovered. His total expense was only ₹4,000-₹5,000, making the treatment far more affordable than the options available near his home. He expresses deep appreciation for the high-quality care at SEARCH Hospital, regular visits by doctors and nurses, clean and peaceful surroundings, and well-organised patient facilities, including food and accommodation. The hospital's supportive environment and efficient system significantly contributed to his recovery and overall well-being.



STAFF ASSEMBLY AT THE HOSPITAL

08. CHALLENGES

STAFF SHORTAGES IN THE CONTEXT OF HIGH PATIENT LOAD



Across interviews, staff shortage emerged as the most consistently reported operational challenge at SEARCH Hospital. All interviewed doctors and hospital nursing staff respondents highlighted that the existing workforce is stretched due to the high daily patient load of approximately 250-300 OPD patients. Respondents noted that while services continue to function effectively, the gap between patient volume and available human resources occasionally leads to longer waiting times and increased workload pressure, particularly during peak hours and emergencies.

EQUIPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRAINTS DURING PEAK DEMAND



In addition to staffing gaps, all doctors and hospital staff interviewed reported limitations in equipment and infrastructure. Respondents explained that while routine diagnostics and treatments are generally well supported, equipment constraints, such as MRI machines, become more pronounced during periods of high patient inflow or emergencies. These limitations primarily affect the speed and efficiency of service delivery, rather than the overall availability of care.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PRESSURE AND UNEVEN IMMEDIATE ACCESS



Operational pressure in emergency response was reported through administrative and community-level interactions. Hospital administration noted that multiple emergency calls are often received at the same time, particularly for critical conditions such as snakebite and accidents, which create challenges in managing and prioritising simultaneous responses.

Village-level discussions further indicated that while ambulance services are available and used by some families, others continue to rely on nearby Primary Health Centres (PHCs) for initial care. This suggests that immediate access to hospital-based emergency services is not uniform across all villages, especially during urgent situations.

09. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the feedback shared by patients, staff, and community members, a few areas of enhancement can further strengthen the effectiveness, accessibility, and patient experience at SEARCH Hospital:

STRENGTHENING HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND MOTIVATION



Improve staff motivation and retention by ensuring competitive and timely remuneration for senior medical leadership across departments.



Consider training and engaging local youth in nursing, physiotherapy, and allied health roles to build a sustainable local workforce.



Initiate capacity-building and skill-enhancement training for existing health workers to improve service quality and efficiency.



Explore collaborating with nursing schools and training institutes to place nursing interns in clinical support roles, helping address short-term staffing gaps while providing hands-on learning opportunities.

ENHANCING DIAGNOSTIC AND TREATMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

It is recommended to strengthen hospital infrastructure by providing critical diagnostic and treatment equipment that is currently unavailable, such as MRI and angiography facilities. Availability of these services within the hospital would reduce the need for patients to travel to other hospitals, lower out-of-pocket expenses, and improve continuity of care for patients requiring advanced diagnostics and interventions.

STRENGTHENING EMERGENCY AND REFERRAL SUPPORT THROUGH AMBULANCE DEPLOYMENT

It is recommended to deploy additional ambulance support to strengthen emergency response capacity, particularly during peak emergencies. Enhanced ambulance availability would support timely transport during medical emergencies and enable safe referrals when patients need to be transferred due to the non-availability of specialised equipment or services beyond the hospital's current scope.

10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The SEARCH Hospital plays a critical role in delivering essential healthcare services to tribal and rural populations in Gadchiroli. Given the region's weak public health infrastructure, high cultural barriers to care-seeking, and chronic human resource shortages, the sustainability of SEARCH's services is central to ensuring uninterrupted healthcare access. Based on the available project documentation, the hospital demonstrates several elements that contribute to functional sustainability.

SUSTAINABILITY STRENGTHS



SERVICE CONTINUITY AND OPERATIONAL STABILITY

SEARCH has maintained uninterrupted delivery of outpatient, inpatient, surgical, laboratory and imaging services, despite geographic and socio-economic constraints. The hospital handles over 30,000+ patients annually and conducts specialist OPDs and surgical camps, reflecting consistent demand and operational resilience.



EMBEDDED COMMUNITY HEALTH ECOSYSTEM

The hospital benefits from a strong network of Village Health Workers (VHWs) and community-based programmes across several villages. These workers regularly generate referrals, disseminate health information, and facilitate follow-up, creating a community-linked service platform that enhances the sustainability of service utilisation.



DONOR DIVERSIFICATION AND MULTI-SOURCE FUNDING

Multiple funding partners, including H T Parekh Foundation and other philanthropic sources, support hospital operations, speciality services, and expansions. This diversification reduces dependence on a single source and contributes to financial sustainability, although long-term self-sufficiency remains limited.



INSTITUTIONAL EXPERIENCE AND TECHNICAL CAPACITY

SEARCH's long-standing presence since 1985, combined with its multidisciplinary teams, has strengthened internal capacity and maintained a reliable staffing pipeline, even amid district-level workforce shortages.

CURRENT GAPS IN LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Despite strong service delivery, several systemic gaps limit long-term sustainability:



Dependence on donor funding for recurring expenses and specialist camps.



Limited government integration, such as cost-sharing, staff deployment, or formalised public-private service agreements.



Community ownership remains informal, with community acceptance but not active participation in governance or financing.



Heavy reliance on visiting specialists makes certain services vulnerable to fluctuations in the availability of human resources.

These factors collectively indicate that the hospital cannot yet be sustained independently without external support.



INTERACTION WITH A HOSPITAL STAFF

11. CONCLUSION

The assessment indicates that the project has made steady contributions towards improving access to basic healthcare services, especially for communities living in remote and tribal areas. Many respondents noted that they are now more aware of available services and experience fewer challenges in seeking routine and specialised care. These observations point to gradual improvements in service utilisation, clearer care pathways, and a more supportive patient experience within the hospital and community settings. The project's work has also contributed to broader aspects of community well-being. Reducing logistical and financial barriers to healthcare has helped households manage common illnesses more effectively and seek care with greater confidence. Regular engagement of community members with trained staff, outreach activities, and awareness efforts has encouraged more frequent use of formal health facilities, which is essential in areas where distance, traditional myths, limited resources, or unfamiliarity with available services have traditionally delayed health-seeking. Maintaining and strengthening these developments will require ongoing efforts to improve service quality and expand the reach of care. Continued coordination with public health facilities, along with attention to identified needs, can help address the remaining challenges. With incremental improvements in these areas, the initiative can continue to support meaningful progress in health access and community well-being over time.



**SOULACE TEAM INTERACTING
WITH ADMIN STAFF**

ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted, innovative brand, having sold over 21 million motorcycles in 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio, including motorcycles, scooters, and autorickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs in both India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR contributes to education, health, environmental, and animal welfare projects to support the sustainable development of the community and the nation.



PATIENTS WAITING FOR CONSULTATION

ABOUT NGO PARTNER

SEARCH (Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health) is a pioneering public health organisation founded by Dr Abhay and Rani Bang, who are recognised nationally and internationally for their evidence-based work in tribal and rural health. The organisation is known for its innovations in maternal, child, and tribal health, as well as for strengthening public health systems through rigorous field research. Its community-driven approach spanning healthcare delivery, health education, de-addiction programmes, youth and women empowerment, and large-scale rural outreach reflects SEARCH's long-standing commitment to ensuring that healthcare and knowledge reach even the most underserved populations.



ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by



SOULACE CONSULTING PVT. LTD.



THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

HOSTELS AND
RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS
AT SHIKSHA MANDAL'S
BAJAJ INSTITUTE OF
TECHNOLOGY IN
WARDHA,
MAHARASHTRA

Implementing Partner:
Shiksha Mandal

Implementation Year:
Oct 2020 - March 2024

Assessment Year: 2025 - 26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 08
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	BIT Wardha Infrastructure Project - Funding Structure & Cost	04
	Responsibilities	
	Key Findings & Impact	05 - 07
02	OECD Framework	08 - 09
03	Introduction	10 - 13
	Background and Need of the Project	10
	Objectives of the Project	11
	Project Details	11
	Stakeholder Type	12
	Project Activities	13
	Timeline of the Project	13
04	Research Methodology	14 - 16
	Objectives of the Study	14
	Definition of Research	14
	Application of Qualitative Techniques	15
	Standardised Framework for Evaluation	15
	Design Snapshot	15
	Research Design	15
	Upholding Research Ethics	16
05	Key Findings	17 - 26
06	Impact Across Multiple Levels	27
07	Challenges	28
08	Recommendations	29
09	Sustainability Exit Readiness	30 - 31
10	Conclusion	32 - 33

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	BIT Wardha Infrastructure Project - Funding Structure & Cost Responsibilities
Table 2	Community / Stakeholders Feedback
Table 3	Stakeholder Type and Role in Project
Table 4	BIT Wardha - Asset Summary (Based on observations by the field team)
Table 5	Stakeholder Collaboration and Project Management Effectiveness Grid
Table 6	Before and After Living
Table 7	Maintenance Standards
Table 8	Safety and Security
Table 9	Academic Impact
Table 11	Campus Engagement
Table 12	Inclusion and Access
Table 13	Satisfaction Dashboard

ABBREVIATIONS

AMC	Annual Maintenance Contract
BAL	Bajaj Auto Limited
BIT	Bajaj Institute of Technology (Wardha)
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DPR	Detailed Project Report
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY	Financial Year
HOD	Head of Department
ID	Identification (ID-based entry)
INR/₹	Indian Rupee
ISP	Internet Service Provider
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LED	Light-Emitting Diode (lighting)
MAHADBT	Maharashtra Direct Benefit Transfer (Aaple Sarkar DBT portal).
MEP	Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SM	Shiksha Mandal
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TOR	Terms of Reference
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WI-FI	Wireless Fidelity (wireless internet)

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Hostels and Residential Quarters at Shiksha Mandal's Bajaj Institute of Technology (BIT), Wardha, were designed to address the lack of safe, sanitary, and affordable housing for students, particularly those from rural and low-income backgrounds. These students from vulnerable sections of society previously had to rely on overcrowded, expensive private lodgings.

Bajaj Auto Limited invested ₹17 crore in the project, which included building hostels for boys and girls as well as a multipurpose hall on campus. Shiksha Mandal and BIT took over responsibility for the overall management and regular maintenance of these facilities. The project aims to reduce commute time and costs by combining living and learning on a single, secure campus, improve attendance and retention, strengthen mentoring and co-curricular engagement, and make technical education more accessible and equitable, especially for first-generation and economically vulnerable students.



**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION
WITH STUDENTS**

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Hostels and Residential Quarters at Shiksha Mandal's Bajaj Institute of Technology in Wardha, Maharashtra



Implementing Agency

Shiksha Mandal



Location

Wardha, Maharashtra



Duration

Oct 2020 - Mar 2024



Assessment Location

Wardha



Total Budget

1700 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total nos. of Beneficiaries

240 students



Target Beneficiaries

Engineering students, especially from rural and low-income households



Primary Programs

Boys' Hostel, Girls' Hostel, Multipurpose Hall, Internal Roads & Lighting, Residential Quarters

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT



To assess the effectiveness of organisational activities and measure their impact.



To conduct impact evaluations that generate meaningful insights while considering resource availability and decision-making timelines for the intervention.



To analyse the impact of social investments in project on beneficiaries and society.



To make evidence-based decisions for implementation, identify challenges, and ensure project continuity, scalability, sustainability, and efficiency.

INTERVIEW WITH HOSTEL WARDEN AND STAFF



BIT WARDHA INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT - FUNDING STRUCTURE & COST RESPONSIBILITIES

Cost category	Funding source	What it covers	Nature	Notes
Capital Expenditure	Bajaj Group	Hostels (Boys & Girls); hostel setup & equipment (gas connections, exhaust fans); water systems (availability, purifiers); internal amenities (bathrooms, flooring, fire safety systems, drainage); Multipurpose Hall (incl. dining & shared-use space)	One-time	Utilised for core infrastructure to make facilities structurally and functionally ready.
Recurring Operational Costs	Shiksha Mandal & BIT College	Food provision; security services; housekeeping & cleaning; Maintenance is overseen by the in-house Maintenance Committee (Civil Engg. as lead); escalation and ticketing are coordinated through this committee.	Ongoing/recurring	Funded from institutional resources and annual budgets.
Partially Shared Costs	Bajaj Group + Shiksha Mandal/BIT (shared)	Internal roads; street lighting	One-time with periodic upkeep	Capital creation is supported jointly; later maintenance falls under institutional O&M.

HOSTEL BUILDING



KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE SAFE, HYGIENIC, AND AFFORDABLE ON-CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION



Two hostels (boys and girls) have been completed and handed over, with 120 double-sharing rooms (60 per hostel) now fully operational with attached bathrooms.



Core utilities such as potable water, sanitation, and electricity are functioning properly; housekeeping and security staff are in place, along with anti-ragging measures.



High utilisation with near-full occupancy; residents reported improved cleanliness, comfort, and service reliability.



Improved punctuality and class attendance due to on-campus proximity.

OBJECTIVE 2: EXPAND EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR RURAL/LOW-INCOME STUDENTS THROUGH FAIR ALLOCATION



According to the Chairman and Principal, the hostel facility has enabled greater access for rural and low-income students, thereby reducing the financial burden on their families.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHEN STUDENT WELL-BEING AND CAMPUS LIFE THROUGH PROXIMITY AND A MULTIPURPOSE HALL



Multipurpose Hall constructed and actively used for inductions, cultural events, sports, and co-curricular activities.



Increased use of the library, labs, sports facilities, and hall during both day and evening hours.

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE SAFE, HYGIENIC, AND AFFORDABLE ON-CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION



Improved academic performance, reflected in stronger internal assessments and project submissions.



Absenteeism has reduced significantly as students no longer travel from distant locations, resulting in a 15-20% increase in attendance and retention and improved academic continuity.

OBJECTIVE 2: EXPAND EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR RURAL/LOW-INCOME STUDENTS THROUGH FAIR ALLOCATION



Enhanced access to higher education for underserved students.



Strengthened socio-economic inclusion, enabling students from disadvantaged backgrounds to continue their education without interruption.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHEN STUDENT WELL-BEING AND CAMPUS LIFE THROUGH PROXIMITY AND A MULTIPURPOSE HALL



Increased student participation in cultural, sports, and co-curricular activities, contributing to holistic development.



More vibrant campus engagement and a stronger sense of student community.



Students experienced improved well-being and motivation due to consistent access to campus amenities.

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDERS FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Boys' and girls' hostel students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students reported that shifting to the on-campus hostel provided them with cleaner, more spacious rooms, attached bathrooms, and reliable access to electricity, water, and study spaces. They noted feeling safer, saving significant time on their commute, and finding it easier to attend classes, use the library and laboratories, and participate in campus activities. Many also shared that the affordable hostel fees have made higher education more accessible for rural and low-income families.
Hostel wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wardens shared that the new hostels are functional and student-friendly from day one, with good ventilation, reliable utilities, and well-furnished rooms. They observed that daily housekeeping keeps corridors, toilets, and dining areas clean, security is strong, and students are generally satisfied with the living environment and basic services.
Chairman, Shiksha Mandal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chairman emphasised that the project has set a new direction for BIT Wardha. He noted that the hostels and multipurpose hall have together strengthened access, teaching, and campus life.
Principal, BIT Wardha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal shared that residential facilities and the multipurpose hall are fully utilised, resulting in a 15-20% increase in attendance among hostel residents. He observed that students now stay longer in labs and the library, participate more in campus activities, and that demand for hostel seats exceeds capacity, signalling strong acceptance of the project.

RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS FOR FACULTY



02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

This project fosters a vibrant, student-focused campus at BIT Wardha. The new hostels and multipurpose hall provide safe and comfortable spaces on campus, helping students focus on their studies and participate more actively in campus life. The availability of double-sharing rooms with attached bathrooms and secure entry is directly relevant to students' daily well-being and overall development. The initiative supports BIT's goals of improving attendance, strengthening mentoring, and building an active campus community, while also aligning with Bajaj Auto Ltd.'s CSR priorities in education, inclusion, and reliable infrastructure.



COHERENCE

The initiative demonstrates strong internal and external coherence by aligning:

- SDG 4 - Quality Education
- SDG 5 - Gender Equality
- SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure



Nationally, the project aligns with:

- Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) aligns with the project because it supports the construction of hostels for Scheduled Caste students—especially girls to improve access and retention in post-secondary education.
- Construction of Hostels for OBC Boys & Girls (Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment) aligns directly with this objective, as it funds residential hostels that enable Other Backwards Classes students to pursue higher education in safe, affordable settings.
- Hostels for ST Boys & Girls (Ministry of Tribal Affairs) support the creation of hostels for Scheduled Tribe students at the college and university levels, advancing access and continuity in education.

**EFFECTIVENESS**

The project has delivered the planned outputs efficiently and achieved the intended outcomes. Core infrastructure, including the hostels and the multipurpose hall, has been completed, fully occupied, and is actively used, with student hostels operating at maximum capacity. Reported attendance increases of about 15-20 per cent among hostel residents, along with improved punctuality and greater use of the library, laboratories, and sports facilities, demonstrate the effectiveness of the residential ecosystem as an academic catalyst. Student testimonials consistently highlight improved living conditions, a safer environment, and stronger mentoring relationships as key benefits of on-campus residence.

**EFFICIENCY**

The project demonstrates strong efficiency in capital deployment, role clarity, and asset utilisation. Bajaj Group's one-time investment of ₹17 crore in core infrastructure, combined with Shiksha Mandal/BIT's responsibility for recurring O&M costs, represents a clear and efficient division of financial responsibilities. Structured planning, competitive tendering, and regular joint reviews supported timely construction and handover, while high occupancy and enhanced facility utilisation indicate that the built assets are not underused.

**IMPACT**

The intervention is already generating meaningful positive impact at both the student and institutional levels. On-campus residence has reduced commute time and costs, improved attendance and continuity of learning, and increased participation in co-curricular activities, particularly for students from rural and economically weaker backgrounds. At the institutional level, the hostel facility has strengthened student support systems and campus operations by enabling better student monitoring, improved utilisation of residential infrastructure, and smoother coordination of academic and co-curricular activities.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

The project has strong prospects for sustainability and exit-readiness, provided the remaining operational issues are addressed. Ownership and O&M responsibilities rest entirely with Shiksha Mandal/BIT, with in-house maintenance structures, wardens, and institutional budgets already covering security, utilities, and housekeeping. The continuation of need-based scholarships, transparent allocation criteria, and high demand for hostel seats support both the social and financial sustainability of the residential ecosystem. Sustainability will be further reinforced by strengthening digital and safety systems (Wi-Fi, CCTV), improving the approach road and lighting for the girls' hostel, and institutionalising dashboards and grievance mechanisms.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Despite the steady growth of enrolment at Bajaj Institute of Technology (BIT), Wardha, a large proportion of students – particularly those from rural and low-income families – were compelled to live in rented rooms and private hostels around the campus. These arrangements were often overcrowded, expensive, and poorly serviced, with unreliable water, sanitation, and electricity. Students routinely lost productive hours to daily commutes, unsafe late-evening travel, and the effort required to manage basic living conditions and for many first-generation learners, and young women in particular, safety concerns, distance, and the lack of a supportive study environment acted as barriers to sustained participation in technical education, leading to unnecessary stress, absenteeism, and increased risk of dropout.

Recognising that access to quality technical education depends not only on classrooms and labs but also on safe, affordable, functional housing, Shiksha Mandal, with support from Bajaj Auto Limited, launched a comprehensive residential development project at BIT Wardha. The project targeted these related challenges by creating purpose-built boys' and girls' hostels, a multipurpose hall, improved core utilities, and enhanced campus access. Its primary goal was to integrate learning and living within a secure campus, reduce commuting and costs, increase attendance and retention, and foster a more equitable, supportive student environment.



**FACULTY RESIDENTIAL
QUARTERS CONSTRUCTED
UNDER THE PROJECT**

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT



Provide safe, hygienic, and affordable on-campus accommodation (double-sharing rooms with attached bathrooms) for students.



Expand equitable access to higher education for rural/low-income students through fair allocation.



Strengthen student well-being and campus life via proximity to facilities and a multipurpose hall for co-/extra-curricular engagement.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Hostels and Residential Quarters at Shiksha Mandal's Bajaj Institute of Technology in Wardha, Maharashtra



Implementing Agency

Shiksha Mandal



Location

Wardha, Maharashtra



Total no. of Beneficiaries

240 students



Target Beneficiaries

Engineering students, especially from rural and low-income households



Primary Programs

Boys' Hostel, Girls' Hostel, Multipurpose Hall, Internal Roads & Lighting, Residential Quarters

Stakeholder Type	Role in the Project
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Funded the one-time capital expenditure of ₹17 crore for constructing the boys' hostel, girls' hostel, and multipurpose hall. Provided strategic guidance and CSR oversight to ensure the project met education and inclusion objectives.
Implementing Agency (Shiksha Mandal, Wardha)	Led planning, coordination, operations, and maintenance of residential facilities. Managed wardens, housekeeping, security, utilities, and student support services. Ensured allocation criteria, safety measures, grievance processes, and maintenance systems functioned effectively.
BIT College Administration	Monitored daily functioning of hostels, supervised wardens, coordinated with the Maintenance Committee, ensured academic residential integration, and facilitated student access to labs, library, and events.
Maintenance Committee (Chaired by the Civil Engineering department)	Oversaw repair, facilities upkeep, and preventive maintenance for hostels and the multipurpose hall. Managed ticketing/escalation for repairs, supervised plumbing/electrical upkeep, and coordinated vendor support.
Hostel Wardens	Ensured discipline, safety, daily operations, and student welfare. Maintained registers, monitored housekeeping, coordinated with security staff, and acted as the first point of contact for grievances.
Students (Hostel Residents)	Utilised hostel facilities responsibly, adhered to rules, participated in academic and co-curricular activities, reported service gaps, and contributed to peer-learning and community building.
Security & Housekeeping Teams	Maintained 24*7 security, entry monitoring, and cleanliness of rooms, corridors, bathrooms, and dining areas. Ensured hygiene standards and safe residential conditions.
BIT Multipurpose Hall Management	Managed scheduling and use of the hall for academic, cultural, sports, and community events; coordinated maintenance and ensured availability for student activities.



FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS

PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Constructed the core infrastructure - including boys' and girls' hostels and the multipurpose hall-and made these facilities operational through formal handovers.

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

Year	Oct 2020 - Dec 2020	Jan 2021 - June 2021	July 2021 - Dec 2021	Jan 2022 - June 2022	July 2022 - Dec 2022	Jan 2023 - June 2023	July 2023 - Dec 2023	Jan 2024 - Mar 2024
Project Initiation								
Approval from Town planning department								
Contract signed with M/s Harshal Buildcon								
Construction of Girls hostel								
Construction of Boys hostel								
Construction of Multipurpose hall								

**The Gantt chart presents the phased implementation of Project activities from Oct 2020 to March 2024, organised in six-month intervals.*

04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bajaj Auto Ltd. commissioned SoulAce to assess the impact of the Hostels & Multipurpose Hall at Shiksha Mandal's BIT, Wardha program. SoulAce will evaluate project effectiveness and impact on beneficiaries, generate actionable insights within resource/timeline realities, and inform evidence-based decisions for continuity, scalability, sustainability, and efficiency (OECD-DAC aligned).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of the study were:



To assess the effectiveness of organisational activities and measure their impact.



To conduct impact evaluations that generate meaningful insights while considering resource availability and decision-making timelines for the intervention.



To analyse the impact of social investments in projects and projects on beneficiaries and society.



To make evidence-based decisions for implementation, identify challenges, and ensure project continuity, scalability, sustainability, and efficiency.

DEFINITION OF RESEARCH

Social science research refers to the systematic activity of gaining new understanding by following scientific principles and methods to minimise bias and subjectivity. The defining characteristics of scientific research are objectivity, ethical neutrality, reliability, testability, and transparency. The identification of the research problem provides the starting point for the research, which is then defined and refined through a thorough review of the literature on the problem or through deliberations with research experts and knowledgeable others in the subject matter of interest. Thus, we need to delimit the research problem into a 'measurable problem and formulate objectives, make decisions on the research design, sample design, type of research instruments for collecting the data, and how these data can be edited, coded, classified, tabulated, and interpreted so that findings and conclusions can be reached.

Every research project needs a proper methodology to anticipate potential problems in the process and guide it in the right direction without losing focus.

APPLICATION OF QUALITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Qualitative research can only uncover enriched and hidden information that may not be evident on the surface. The qualitative approach is distinguished by deeper probing and flexibility, and it can yield massive amounts of data that were not anticipated at the outset of the research. Qualitative techniques, including interviews with key stakeholders and community members, were adopted to better understand the problem.

To ensure accuracy and a diverse participant pool, a mix of semi-structured interviews, open-ended interviews, and Focus Group discussions (FGDs) engaged essential project stakeholders, including the students residing in the newly constructed hostels (boys' and girls' blocks; 1st-2nd year residents), hostel wardens, and hostel administration. These qualitative inputs provided more profound insights into project effectiveness, significant barriers, challenges, and areas for enhancement.

STANDARDISED FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

The research study applied the OECD-DAC evaluation framework, ensuring alignment with globally accepted standards and norms. This framework provided a robust, consistent method for evaluating the project's impact, thereby bolstering the credibility and relevance of the research findings.



DESIGN SNAPSHOT



Name of the project

Hostels and residential quarters at Shiksha Mandal's Bajaj Institute of Technology.



Implementing organisation

Shiksha Mandal



Research Design

Descriptive and Interpretive research design



Sample Size

50



Qualitative Methods used

Key Interviews, Testimonials and Focus Group Discussion

RESEARCH DESIGN



Boys' students (FGD participants)



Girls' students (FGD participants)



Hostel warden



Chairman



Principal



Associate Professor (faculty resident)

UPHOLDING RESEARCH ETHICS

The impact assessment study upheld a robust framework of research ethics principles throughout its process.



INFORMED CONSENT

Participants made informed decisions after understanding the study goals, risks, and benefits.



CONFIDENTIALITY

Participant information was guarded securely, establishing a foundation of trust



DATA SECURITY AND ANONYMITY

Rigorous measures ensured participant data remained private and untraceable.



NON-MALEFICENCE

Participant well-being was safeguarded, with no harm caused by the research.



INTEGRITY

Research maintained high credibility through sincere and transparent practices.



JUSTICE

Equitable treatment prevailed, free from biases or stereotypes, promoting fairness.



05. KEY FINDINGS



This qualitative report synthesises insights from a focus group discussion with key stakeholders involved in this program. It examines physical facilities, maintenance and cleanliness, safety and security, academic and social impacts, and inclusion for students from rural/low-income backgrounds. Alongside areas of strong performance, the report surfaces critical gaps and concludes with actionable, within-scope recommendations to strengthen operations and student well-being.

FROM PLAN TO IMPACT: BOARD INSIGHTS ON EXECUTION AND OVERSIGHT

This report presents insights from Mr. Sanjay Bhargav, Chairman of Shiksha Mandal's Board, regarding a comprehensive infrastructure development project undertaken at Bajaj Institute of Technology (BIT), Wardha. The project, executed with a total investment of ₹26 crores, delivered residential and academic facilities, including girls' and boys' hostels, as well as a multipurpose hall. Out of the total budget, the Bajaj Auto Limited funded ₹17 crores, which financed student hostel facilities and the multipurpose hall.



PROJECT SCOPE AND DELIVERY

The project advanced through several phases: structured consultations, needs assessment, technical site surveys, DPR preparation with designs and costings, and statutory clearances. It included competitive tendering and staged construction, including Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing (MEP) installations. The project concluded with testing, commissioning, and formal handover. The final steps included as-built documentation, warranties, and initial post-handover support to resolve early issues.



GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

A predictable coordination system linked Shiksha Mandal and BIT through periodic joint reviews, structured monthly progress reporting, formal feedback loops, and joint site inspections that doubled as real-time decision forums. All decisions and revisions were recorded through official channels, ensuring institutional memory and accountability. Transparency was reinforced through standardised monthly/quarterly formats, fund utilisation summaries with supporting documentation, periodic audits, and open access to project documents and updates for stakeholders.



INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERED AND UTILISATION

Core assets were completed and are in active use. Two hostels, each comprising 120 rooms, accommodate 240 students. The multipurpose hall has been commissioned as a central venue for academic, cultural, and social activities.



ACCESS AND INCLUSIVITY

Residential access is based on merit, financial need, and practical considerations. Hostel fees are ₹25,000 a year. Student selection considers academics, need, commute, study year, application verification, and seat availability. Eligibility is need-based. Scholarships are reserved for economically vulnerable students with income certificates or MahaDBT applications.



CAMPUS LIFE AND ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

The multipurpose hall serves as a central venue for seminars, workshops, lectures, festivals, inter-college events, and outreach activities, bringing them all under one roof. As shared by the Principal, this has encouraged participation, strengthened community bonding, and improved visibility.



ACADEMIC VISIBILITY

During the discussion with the leadership, the Chairman reported that the upgraded infrastructure has enhanced academic visibility through conferences and collaborations.



STATUS OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND ESSENTIAL FACILITIES

This section presents the institutional perspective on the newly constructed hostel infrastructure at the Bajaj Institute of Technology, Wardha, as articulated by the Chairperson, Mr Sanjay Bhargav, and the Principal, Dr Narendra Kanhe. It synthesises their observations on the completion, operationalisation, and impact of the hostel facilities and the multipurpose hall, offering a comprehensive view of the project from the institutional leadership's standpoint.

“ This project has been transformative for BIT Wardha. The addition of student hostels and a multipurpose hall, supported by careful planning and consistent oversight, has simultaneously strengthened access, learning, and campus life. The impact is evident in increased classroom attendance, more vibrant activities, and families choosing BIT with greater confidence.

-Sanjay Bhargav, Chairman, Shiksha Mandal.



BIT WARDHA - ASSET SUMMARY (BASED ON OBSERVATIONS BY THE FIELD TEAM)

Asset / Component	Capacity / Specification	Construction Status	Handover	Allocation / Occupancy	Amenities & Utilities	Safety & Compliance	Notes/ Next Steps
Boys' Hostel	120 students	Completed	Completed	Allotted, operating at full capacity	Electricity, water, and sanitation: operational; Fire safety: in place	Fire safety operational; stormwater drainage completed	Landscaping & paver blocks progressing; parking available
Girls' Hostel	120 students	Completed	Completed	Allotted, operating at full capacity	Electricity, water, and sanitation: operational; Fire safety: in place	Fire safety operational; stormwater drainage completed	Landscaping & paver blocks progressing; parking available
Multipurpose Hall	Flexible community venue	Completed	Completed	Scheduling system in place (institutional + student access)	Power, lighting, and sanitation: operational	Compliant for gatherings (as per description)	Active utilisation: induction, sports, co-curricular, student meets
External Works - Internal Roads & Lighting	Campus access & safety	Completed	Completed	Operational	Campus lighting operational	Improves evening safety & access	Monitor maintenance
External Works - Entrance Gate	Perimeter & security	Completed	Completed	Functional	-	Supports boundary and access control	-

“Our new hostels, staff quarters, and multipurpose hall have moved from plans to fully functional spaces that are positively influencing learning every day. Hostel residents are attending classes more regularly, by an estimated 15 to 20 per cent, spending more time in the labs and library, and participating more actively in campus life. The multipurpose hall has emerged as a central hub for academic, cultural, and student-led activities. We ensured transparency throughout construction, engaged stakeholders, and now manage upkeep through an in-house Maintenance Committee led by the Civil Engineering department, which helps maintain quality. Demand now exceeds capacity, which is encouraging; our next priority is to sustain these standards and plan a phased expansion so that more students can benefit.”

-Dr. Narendra Kanhe, Principal, BIT Wardha

BIT WARDHA – SNAPSHOT OPERATIONAL READINESS MATRIX

Asset / Component	Construction	Handover	Allocated / In Use	Utilities (Power/Water /Sanitation)	Safety (Fire/Drainage)	Access & Circulation (Roads/Lighting/Gate)	Active Utilisation (Acad./Co-curricular)
Boys' Hostel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Girls' Hostel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multipurpose Hall	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
External - Roads & Lighting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

“The newly constructed hostel has been functional and student-friendly from the very first day. Consistent electricity and water supply, good sanitation, and accessible common spaces make daily routines smooth and manageable. The rooms are spacious, well-lit, and furnished, with attached bathrooms that support privacy and hygiene. Maintenance staff are adequate, and the orientation sessions have helped residents use the facilities responsibly. Safety protocols are in place, and the overall environment feels secure.”

-Nayana Jagyasi, Hostel Warden

ATTENDANCE, RETENTION AND STUDENT WELL-BEING



PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This section explains what has changed for students after moving from off-campus to on-campus residential life, how these changes are reflected, what mechanisms enabled them, and the likely longer-term effects on academic outcomes and institutional cohesion.



ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMIC PRESENCE

Attendance rises by an estimated 15% to 20% among hostel students relative to their earlier off-campus routines. The shift reflects a qualitative broadening of academic presence. Students are now visibly present across the entire instructional arc - lectures, tutorials, practical classes, and project sessions. Students reported that the proximity of the hostel has saved commuting time, allowing them to return to their rooms between sessions, and has made it convenient to attend classes, labs, and campus programs, even for evening sessions, without worrying about travel or safety. The result is more continuous and regular classroom participation. However, the girls' hostel approach road remains unpaved, and street lighting is inadequate, creating safety and mobility concerns, especially after dark.



CO-CURRICULAR ENGAGEMENT AND BELONGING

The frequency of participation in sports, activity-based clubs, induction activities, and hall events has shifted from occasional to regular, as events are organised centrally on campus and scheduled in advance. Convenience is a critical factor: students integrate co-curricular activities into their daily routines when venues are within walking distance, and timetables are not restricted by transport schedules, rather than viewing them as exceptions. Staff observations of multipurpose hall usage confirm increased evening activity and more frequent peer-led activities.



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT UTILISATION

Library use expands from time-bound, early departures to longer evening sessions and flexible study blocks. Sports and gym activities move from occasional, well-planned outings to integrated morning-evening routines, reinforcing well-being and concentration. Peer relationships extend beyond class hours into informal learning and mentoring in the hostel. Together, these changes increase access hours, deepen practice, and improve the cadence of feedback, which are the bedrock foundations for sustained learning.



EQUITY AND WELL-BEING IMPLICATIONS

On-campus living reduces the challenges posed by long travel distances, unsafe late commuting, and shared off-campus rooms that restrict study time. The hostel schedule and round-the-clock access to core facilities ensure more equitable conditions for academic engagement among students who previously had to divide their limited time between travelling and coursework.

“ Living in the hostel has helped save time. Since the hostel and college are on the same campus, we get more time to study and participate in academic activities. This has also made it easier to attend projects. The multipurpose hall provides space for various activities and also serves as a place where we all can sit and eat together.

•Pranjal Wanjari, 3rd year student

”

“ Earlier, when we were staying in private hostels and rented rooms outside campus, 3-4 students used to live in one room, and bathrooms were far away with no cleanliness. In the new hostel, all these facilities are available, including attached bathrooms, clean rooms, and only two students per room. It's a big improvement.

•Prerana Bharat Pande, 3rd year student

”

“ The new hostel represents a significant improvement. Better ventilation and lighting, attached bathrooms, and adequate study space have transformed daily living for our students. Utilities are reliable, rooms are well furnished, and common areas, such as the dining hall and multipurpose hall, are clean and fully usable. We currently have 120 residents across 60 rooms, and the single- and double-occupancy arrangements are functioning smoothly. Security is strong, with a maintained register and six guards on duty, and the anti-ragging cell is active.

•Sham Dhanaraj Bhadade, Hostel Warden

”



ENTRANCE OF THE HOSTEL

STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS GRID

Stakeholder or Practice	Role in the Project	Contribution to Fit for Purpose Design	Governance and Delivery Effect
Faculty members	Participated in planning discussions.	Grounded facility choices in real teaching and learning needs.	Reduced mismatch between design and daily use.
Heads of departments	Brought disciplinary and student workflow insights.	Shaped labs, halls, and spaces for specific academic activities.	Improved utilisation and academic relevance.
Principal and institutional leadership	Ensured alignment with strategic goals.	Balanced infrastructure scope with long-term vision.	Clear priorities and timely decisions.
Chairman, project managers, contractors, civil engineers	Conducted regular reviews on scope, budget, timelines, and quality.	Integrated technical feasibility with institutional needs.	Predictable execution and quality assurance.
Escalation protocols	Provided clear pathways to resolve issues.	Prevented minor issues from causing delays.	Maintained schedule integrity.

BIT Wardha has successfully developed its residential and academic facilities, resulting in improved attendance, engagement, and retention. Strong stakeholder alignment and systematic project management have ensured that the facilities address actual academic needs. Now, with maintenance systems in place, the emphasis shifts to sustaining quality and monitoring results. However, strategic capacity expansion and continued support through scholarships can further improve the project's impact while maintaining a vibrant residential learning environment.

THE SOULACE TEAM IN DISCUSSION WITH A BOARD MEMBER



EXPLORING ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY FOR ACCOMMODATION THROUGH FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS

The focus group discussion was conducted with 55 male and female students from first and second year programs to understand their experiences with the newly constructed hostel facility. Prior to moving into this accommodation, these students had been residing in private hostels or rented rooms approximately 1 kilometre from campus, paying around ₹25,000 per month in rent. The discussion aimed to assess how well the new hostel met their expectations and to identify areas requiring improvement.

BEFORE AND AFTER LIVING

Domain	Before, off-campus	After, on-campus
Room occupancy	Three to four in a single room	Two in a room
Bathroom access	Shared and distant from rooms	Attached bathrooms
Cleanliness	Irregular and often poor	Regular and well-maintained
Electricity and water	Frequent shortages and power cuts	Consistent supply
Study environment	Cramped with limited storage	Study tables and adequate storage

“Earlier, three or four of us squeezed into one rented room, and the bathrooms were far and dirty. Now it's two persons per room, clean washrooms, and proper ventilation. I finally have sound sleep and study better.

-Gaurav Pawan Jayaswal, 3rd year student



MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Area or Process	Responsibility	Frequency or Standard	Oversight
Student rooms	Students	Ongoing personal upkeep	Self supervision
Common areas	Housekeeping staff	Daily routine cleaning	Supervisors monitor standards
Toilets and bathrooms	Housekeeping staff	Once or twice daily	Checks to prevent odour and blockage
Kitchen corridors and dining hall	Housekeeping staff	Before and after meals	Food safety and hygiene emphasis

“Housekeeping keeps corridors, toilets, and the dining area clean every day; we manage our own rooms. Overall hygiene is way better than in the rented place I stayed outside campus.”

-Ganesh Raju Kamdi, 3rd year student

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Measure	Operational Status	Student Perception
Security guards	Active and visible	Safe and comfortable
Anti-ragging cell	Established and available	No incidents reported
CCTV surveillance	Installed but not functional	Gap identified for action

“CCTV isn't working yet, but the guard presence makes me feel safe. Visitor entries are checked.”

-Vedant Avinash Khopre, 2nd year student

ACADEMIC IMPACT

Pathway	Immediate Effect	Access Enabler
Structured routines	Improved focus on studies	Residential proximity
Peer learning and group work	Collaborative projects and discussions	Quiet hours and study spaces

“Living on campus has eliminated my commute. I reach the labs on time now, and my attendance has improved.”

-Krishna Devarao Katankar, 3rd-year student

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

Domain	Change Observed	Reason
Event participation	Higher attendance at evening events and clubs	No commute and ease of return
Community building	Group participation and stronger peer ties	Living with peers enables spontaneous involvement
Teamwork and leadership	Improved teamwork and informal leadership	Shared activities and competitions

“The multipurpose hall changed my social life. I eat with friends, join club meetings, and actually stay back for activities.”

-Digvijay Sanjay Gade, 1st year student

INCLUSION AND ACCESS

Aspect	Contribution
Rural and remote access	Affordable residence opens pathways for underserved students
Socio-economic diversity	Brings together students from varied backgrounds and strengthens campus diversity

“ I come from a rural area, and the hostel fees are much more affordable than private rentals. Getting a hostel seat has made higher education possible for me.

-Mansha L. Waghmare, 1st-year student

SATISFACTION DASHBOARD

Parameter	Satisfaction Level
Room quality and amenities	High
Cleanliness and hygiene	High
Safety and security	High
Availability of washrooms	High
Access to common areas	High

“ I would mark most things 'satisfied' - rooms, hygiene, staff behaviour. 'Moderately satisfied' with maintenance. Grievance redressal is 'not satisfied' because we do not know the process or timelines.

-Rutuja V. Lohat, 3rd year student

The shift to on-campus living has markedly improved daily life and learning. Students now share larger two-person rooms with attached bathrooms, consistent power and water, cleaner spaces, and proper study furniture. A structured maintenance system keeps common areas, dining spaces, and washrooms clean and hygienic, while security guards and an active anti-ragging cell ensure safety. The CCTV system must now be fully activated to complete the safety framework. Proximity to libraries and laboratories strengthens focus, punctuality, and peer learning, and makes evening events and clubs easy to join, deepening community ties and informal leadership. Affordable residence also expands access for rural and low-income students, enriching diversity. Finally, satisfaction is high across room quality, cleanliness, safety, washroom availability, and access to common areas.

06. IMPACT ACROSS MULTIPLE LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Safe, upgraded hostel accommodation has improved students' on-campus facilities and overall learning experience.
- Proximity to campus resources allows students to attend lectures, tutorials, labs, and evening sessions without transport constraints, improving academic continuity.
- Students report stronger performance in internal assessments due to more consistent classroom participation and the ability to iterate between instruction, practice, and clarification.



FAMILY LEVEL

Hostel provision lowers the financial burden of private rentals (previously around ₹25,000 per month), making education more affordable for rural and first-generation households.



COMMUNITY LEVEL

- Hostel facilities foster peer learning, group study, and participation in co-curricular activities, strengthening social cohesion among students.
- Improved safety measures (guards, fire safety, drainage) and structured living environments contribute to discipline, punctuality, and collective responsibility.



INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

- Residential proximity strengthens academic engagement and campus vibrancy, aligning with the institution's holistic student development goals.



NATIONAL LEVEL

- The project contributes to SDG 4: Quality Education by improving access and continuity for rural and first-generation students.
- It supports SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities by enabling marginalised students to participate in higher education through scholarships and residence.
- Infrastructure expansion reflects national priorities on inclusive education and student safety, aligning with policy emphasis on equitable access to higher education.

07. CHALLENGES



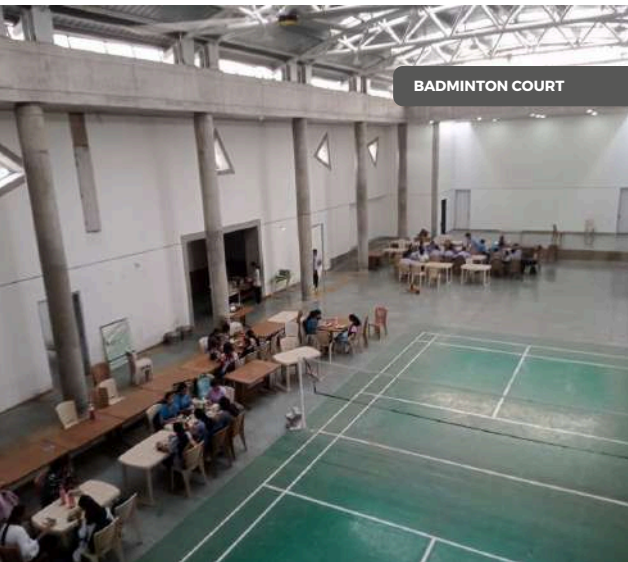
Security systems

Students and staff noted that CCTV cameras are installed but non-functional; no repair timeline has been shared, creating a monitoring gap despite guards being present.



Girls' hostel approach & lighting

Observations by Field team and FGDs with girl students noted that the access road remains unsealed and street lighting is inadequate, creating safety and mobility concerns, especially after dark.



BADMINTON COURT

08. RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggested actions to further strengthen the Initiative's effectiveness, sustainability, and impact:

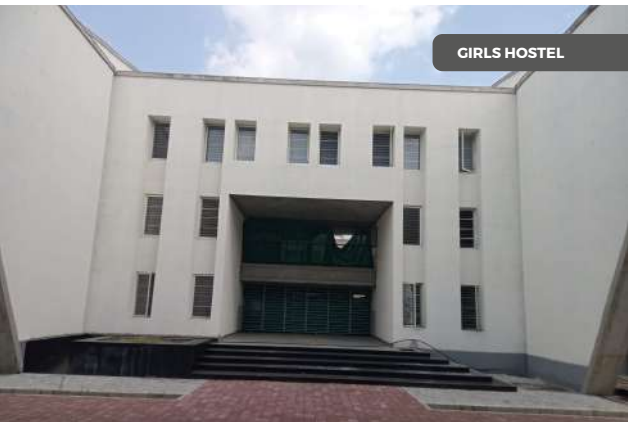


Commissioning and testing the existing CCTV system could strengthen campus safety. Developing a monitoring protocol, standardising storage retention (at least 30 days), documenting incident-response steps, and installing signage may further enhance security procedures.



Including the girls' hostel approach road in the campus works plan and installing street lighting with sensors/timers for dusk-to-dawn operation may significantly improve safety. A safety walk after implementation could help identify and address any remaining blind spots.

GIRLS HOSTEL



09. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS



OWNERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

Shiksha Mandal/BIT can continue hostel and multipurpose hall operations within the current scope, displaying a QR helpline, on-call trades list, and escalation matrix in residential areas. A brief hostel policy document can cover internet use, CCTV retention, quiet hours, anti-ragging, and grievance steps.



OPERATIONS & FINANCE

The institution can budget annually for security, housekeeping, utilities, preventive maintenance, and AMCs using current lines. Need-based scholarships can continue with published criteria and timelines verified through income certificates and MahaDBT.



DIGITAL & SAFETY SYSTEMS

Student Wi-Fi can be activated via a captive portal (a webpage that requires students to log in before using the internet) with fundamental bandwidth limits and only the necessary additional access points. The CCTV system can be commissioned with signage, a simple response Standard Operating Procedure (SOP: step-by-step incident instructions), and at least thirty days of data retention. The approach road to the girls' hostel can be improved by cementing or installing paver blocks, and by installing dusk-to-dawn lighting. All corners, including blind spots, should be covered by CCTV surveillance.



PEOPLE & CAPACITY

Wardens can operate with clear Terms of Reference (TORs: documents specifying responsibilities) and duty rosters and can receive short quarterly refreshers. Student committees for cleanliness, events, and safety can support day-to-day ownership. Guards, housekeeping, and IT staff can receive brief, on-site first-response training.



ENVIRONMENT

The team can schedule pre-monsoon desilting of stormwater lines and routine water-quality checks. They can maintain LEDs and continue waste segregation and hygiene audits in hostels and the hall.



MONITORING & LEARNING

A monthly one-page dashboard can report key indicators, including occupancy, waitlists, AMC compliance, Wi-Fi and CCTV uptime, housekeeping audit scores, grievance turnaround time, and safety incidents. The Principal and Chairman can review and act within existing roles.



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND READINESS

The project shows strong readiness for long-term sustainability through clear coordination systems, experienced faculty, and well-established monitoring processes. Monthly case evaluations, logbook reviews, and regular feedback indicate that quality assurance is built into everyday operations. Software-based tracking and student coordinators who manage attendance and feedback further support smooth functioning. Additionally, many alumni have gone on to open their own practices and later returned as mentors, creating a self-sustaining cycle in which trained practitioners train future batches, reducing reliance on the founding team over time.

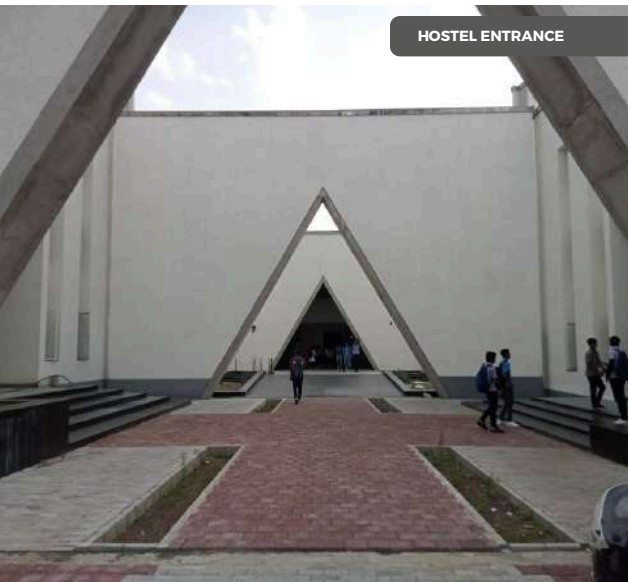
HOSTEL BUILDING CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE PROJECT



10. CONCLUSION

The new residential infrastructure at BIT Wardha hostels and the multipurpose hall has created a safer, cleaner, and more welcoming home on campus, helping students attend more regularly, study together, and feel part of a lively community. Access has widened for rural and low-income learners, and the institute's goodwill has grown. To build on this strong foundation, several targeted improvements are recommended: enabling internet access, activating CCTV, streamlining grievance redressal, and improving the girls' hostel approach and lighting. With an in-house Maintenance Committee already in place and O&M (including security) institution-funded, making escalation steps visible and updates regular will keep daily operations smooth. With these small, achievable steps over the next few months, the project can continue to blossom, sustaining equity, learning, and well-being in the long term.

HOSTEL ENTRANCE



ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted, innovative brand, having sold over 21 million motorcycles in 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio, including motorcycles, scooters, and autorickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs in both India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions to the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting a commitment to serving society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR contributes to education, health, environmental, and animal welfare projects to support the sustainable development of the community and the nation.

ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTING PARTNER: SHIKSHA MANDAL

Shiksha Mandal, a respected education trust, is the implementation partner tasked with planning, operating, and maintaining the hostels and residential quarters at BIT Wardha. The institution delivers student-centred, affordable, and safe on-campus housing to raise attendance, retention, academic achievement, mentoring, and campus life. Through systematic housekeeping, security measures, and student support systems, Shiksha Mandal emphasises operational rigour and inclusive access, especially for rural and economically disadvantaged students.



BOYS HOSTEL

ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by





THE WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
INDIAN

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

ADVANCED HOMEOPATHIC PRACTITIONER TRAINING PROGRAMME

Implementing Partner:
The Other Song Homeopathic
Academy LLP

Implementation Year:
Jul 2022 - Dec 2024

Assessment Year: 2025-26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Abbreviations	01
01	Executive Summary	02 - 09
	Project Background	02
	Project Details	03
	Purpose of the Assessment	03
	Key Findings	04 - 06
	Key Impacts	07 - 08
	Community Stakeholder Feedback	09
02	OECD Framework	10 - 12
03	Introduction	13 - 20
	Background and Need of the Project	13
	Objectives of the Project	14
	Project Details	15 - 16
	Detailed Project Activities	17 - 19
	Timeline of the Project	20
04	Research Methodology	21 - 25
	Purpose of the Impact Assessment Study	21
	Mixed Method Research Approach	22
	Quantitative Methods	22
	Qualitative Methods	22
	Data Triangulation	22
	Sampling Framework	23
	Evaluation Framework	23
	Research Design	23
	Key Stakeholders Consulted	23 - 24
	Study Tools and Instrument	24
	Ethical Considerations	25
05	Key Findings	26 - 53
06	Impact of the Program Across Multiple Levels	54
07	Case Studies	55 - 57
08	Challenge	58
09	Recommendation	59
10	Sustainability Exit Readiness	60 - 61
11	Conclusion	62 - 64

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Table Name
Table 1	Project Details
Table 2	Community / Stakeholder Feedback

LIST OF CHARTS

Table Number	Table Name
Chart 1 to 6	Demographic and Professional Profile of Participants
Chart 7 to 12	Program Participation Profile
Chart 13 to 28	Learning Inputs and Exposure Received (Program Components)
Chart 29 to 48	Key Impacts

ABBREVIATIONS

BHMS	Bachelor of Homoeopathic Medicine and Surgery
CME	Continuing Medical Education
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FCAH	Fellowship Course in Advanced Homoeopathy
IDI	In-Depth Interview
INR	Indian Rupees
JBCVS	Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha
KII	Key Informant Interview
LLP	Limited Liability Partnership
MD	Doctor of Medicine (Homoeopathy)
MUHS	Maharashtra University of Health Sciences
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
OPD	Out-Patient Department
OSHA	The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy
PG-FHPC	Post Graduate Fellowship in Homoeopathic Practice and Care
TOS	The Other Song (Homoeopathy Clinic)
WISE	Wellness, Insight, Sensation, Empowerment

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The homoeopathy sector in India faces a critical gap between academic training and practical clinical competence. While homoeopathic medical colleges across the country produce thousands of Bachelor of Homoeopathic Medicine and Surgery (BHMS) graduates annually, many practitioners struggle to translate theoretical knowledge into effective patient care. This mismatch becomes clear in different ways: limited confidence in prescribing, inadequate case-taking skills, and insufficient exposure to contemporary homoeopathic methodologies. Female practitioners, particularly those returning to practice after career breaks, face additional barriers, including a lack of mentorship and limited access to continuing professional development opportunities.

In response to these challenges, The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy (OSHA), in partnership with Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBCVS), launched a comprehensive capacity-building intervention from July 2022 to December 2024. The project aimed to bridge the theory-practice gap through structured advanced training programs that integrate classical homoeopathic principles with contemporary approaches, including the Sensation Method, Superclass framework, and the Five-Finger approach pioneered by Dr Rajan Sankaran. The intervention was designed to serve a diverse cohort of learners from recent graduates and interns to experienced practitioners through four distinct program pathways: Gurukul (advanced practitioner program), Master's (intensive 6-month residential training), MUHS Fellowship courses, and PRANA (awareness and skill-building seminars).



ONGOING LECTURE AT THE ACADEMY

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Advanced Homeopathic Practitioner Training Programme



Implementing Agency

The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy (OSHA)



Location

Pan-India



Duration

Jul 2022 - Dec 2024



Assessment Location

Mumbai & Pune



Total Budget

INR 189.43 Lakhs



Assessment Period

Year 2025-26



Total nos. of Beneficiaries

2180 students & practitioner



Target Beneficiaries

Homeopathic students, interns, young homeopathic practitioners, and experienced practitioners



Primary Programs

Gurukul, Master's, MUHS Fellowship, PRANA

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

Bajaj Auto Limited commissioned the impact assessment to:



Evaluate program effectiveness in enhancing clinical competence and professional confidence among homeopathic practitioners across different experience levels.



Assess learning outcomes, including knowledge acquisition, skill development in case-taking, repertorisation, and integration of advanced methodologies.



Measure post-program impact on clinical practice indicators, including patient numbers, treatment outcomes, and adoption of contemporary approaches.



Document stakeholder feedback from learners, faculty, mentors, and implementing partners to identify strengths and areas for improvement.



Analyse program delivery mechanisms, including mentorship quality, digital tool accessibility, retreat effectiveness, and hybrid (online-offline) learning models.



Generate evidence-based recommendations for program refinement, scalability, and sustainability.



Apply OECD-DAC evaluation framework (Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability) to provide a structured assessment aligned with international development standards.

KEY FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE FOUNDATIONAL HOMOEOPATHIC KNOWLEDGE

**92.2%**

of respondents reported that their understanding of basic principles strengthened after the program

**80.3%**

of Gurukul respondents showed marked improvement in their knowledge of Materia Medica and Repertory.

**88.9%**

successfully applied advanced concepts, including the Sensation Method and Superclass.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP ADVANCED CLINICAL REASONING SKILLS

**95.6%**

of respondents reported increased patient numbers after training.

**86.7%**

observed better treatment outcomes.

**91.1%**

expressed greater confidence in prescribing.

**98.9%**

of learners demonstrated improved case analysis and clinical decision-making abilities.

OBJECTIVE 3: FACILITATE THE ADOPTION OF CONTEMPORARY HOMOEOPATHIC METHODOLOGIES

**80.0%**

of respondents actively use advanced methods and/or software in their practice.

**100%**

of MUHS Fellowship participants successfully integrated advanced approaches.



Learners successfully incorporated the Sensation Method, Superclass framework, and Five-Finger approach into routine case-taking and remedy selection.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROVIDE PERSONALISED MENTORSHIP AND SKILL REFINEMENT



An average of 4-5 mentoring interactions per learner per month in Gurukul.



Mentor-to-mentee ratios of 1:3-4 in the Master's program and 1:7 in MUHS programs.

**90%**

of participants rated the mentorship quality as excellent or very good, citing individualised support in case analysis and remedy differentiation; this high rating reflects regular, meaningful mentor interactions and structured formats such as one-to-one and small-group sessions that strengthened clinical confidence.

OBJECTIVE 5: CREATE IMMERSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

**100%**

of Gurukul and Master's respondents attended mandatory residential retreats.

**32.8%**

of respondents participated in offline-only mode, 54.4% in online-only mode, and the remainder in blended formats.

OBJECTIVE 6: BUILD PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS AND PROMOTE PEER LEARNING

**100%**

of respondents confirmed that the program facilitated connections with fellow practitioners for peer learning.

**66.7%**

would definitely recommend the program, while 31.1% would probably recommend it.

OBJECTIVE 7: EMPOWER MARGINALISED AND UNDERSERVED PRACTITIONERS**74.4%**

of respondents were female.



The program successfully supported women re-entering practice after career breaks and practitioners from rural areas with limited access to advanced training.

OBJECTIVE 8: ENSURE PROGRAM SATISFACTION AND CONTINUATION INTENT**100%**

of respondents expressed satisfaction with the program.

**97.8%**

expressed willingness to continue with advanced courses, alongside strong recommendation rates (97.8%) and high completion across all pathways.

**72.8%**

of respondents, who now intend to pursue advanced training, while 27.2% plan to focus on strengthening their clinical practice.

**GRADUATION CEREMONY**

KEY IMPACTS

OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE FOUNDATIONAL HOMOEOPATHIC KNOWLEDGE



Strengthened clinical competence among practitioners, contributing to more accurate case-taking, analytical depth, and consistency in homoeopathic practice over time.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP ADVANCED CLINICAL REASONING SKILLS



Clinical competencies improved measurably, resulting in better patient care and more stable, long-term practice outcomes.

OBJECTIVE 3: FACILITATE THE ADOPTION OF CONTEMPORARY HOMOEOPATHIC METHODOLOGIES



Strengthened systematic case management and improved the quality and consistency of patient care due to regular use of modern homoeopathic methods in everyday practice

OBJECTIVE 4: PROVIDE PERSONALISED MENTORSHIP AND SKILL REFINEMENT



Mentorship led to lasting improvements in practitioners' clinical competence and confidence, strengthening their ability to deliver quality care independently.

OBJECTIVE 5: CREATE IMMERSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE LEARNING EXPERIENCES



Enhanced access and improved hands-on learning by ensuring all participants engaged in immersive retreats supported by flexible online, offline, and blended formats.

OBJECTIVE 6: BUILD PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS AND PROMOTE PEER LEARNING



Stronger professional networks that enable ongoing learning, peer support, and collective growth in homoeopathic practice.

OBJECTIVE 7: EMPOWER MARGINALISED AND UNDERSERVED PRACTITIONERS

Greater inclusion of women and underserved practitioners, leading to a more balanced and resilient homeopathic workforce.

OBJECTIVE 8: ENSURE PROGRAM SATISFACTION AND CONTINUATION INTENT

Continued engagement in improving training, supporting the long-term strength of the homeopathic learning ecosystem.



**CERTIFICATE
DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY**

COMMUNITY / STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Stakeholder Group	Feedback
Learners (Students and Practitioners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners reported greater confidence in prescribing, case management, and handling complex cases, supported by improved case-taking skills and better patient interactions. They experienced a stronger understanding of core homoeopathic foundations (Materia Medica, Repertory, Organon) along with successful use of advanced methods like the Sensation Method, Superclass, and Five-Finger approach in daily practice. Many noted better clinical outcomes and increased patient numbers, with several successfully starting or strengthening their independent practice.
Faculty and Mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty observed great improvement in students' clinical thinking, including better understanding of rubrics, Materia Medica, remedy differentiation, and effective use of advanced methods like the Sensation Method. Students showed consistent application of learning in real practice, becoming more confident, presenting higher-quality cases, and integrating theory with clinical work more effectively. Many learners successfully transitioned into independent practice, with faculty noting sharper decision-making and overall professional growth. Alumni continued to stay engaged with mentors for case discussions and guidance, reflecting sustained learning and the long-term impact of the training.
Implementing Agency Staff and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff observed significant improvement in learners' case-taking, analysis skills, and use of advanced techniques such as WISE processes, the Five-Finger method, and Superclasses, supported by high-quality mentorship and individualised guidance. The programs led to successful learner outcomes, including strong completion rates, active alumni engagement, and graduates taking on mentoring and teaching roles—especially supporting female practitioners returning to practice. Leadership highlighted effective coordination between OSHA and TOS, enabling smooth program delivery, strong operational support, and consistent integration of digital tools and learning resources. The initiatives contributed to greater visibility and expansion of high-quality homoeopathic education, strengthening the academy's reputation and building a robust, long-term alumni network.

02. OECD FRAMEWORK



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability



RELEVANCE

The program demonstrates exceptional alignment with identified sectoral needs and beneficiary priorities. The homoeopathy sector's documented gap between academic training and clinical competence, affecting both recent graduates and experienced practitioners, was directly addressed through the program's multi-tiered design. The offering of four distinct pathways (Curukul, Master's, MUHS, PRANA) ensured relevance across diverse learner profiles, from interns seeking foundational strengthening to senior practitioners pursuing advanced skill refinement. The learners' high willingness to continue the programme (97.8%) and the 100% satisfaction rate clearly indicate the strong relevance of the programme to their needs. Furthermore, the program's emphasis on gender inclusion (74.4% female participation) and support for practitioners from rural and underserved areas aligns with broader equity objectives in health workforce development.



COHERENCE

The program showed strong coherence in design and alignment with national priorities and global development goals. It followed a clear learning pathway from basic principles to advanced homoeopathic methods, combining theory, demonstrations, mentorship, and clinical practice.

The initiative aligned with AYUSH's education goals, Skill India's focus on skill development, and Digital India through tools like Synergy Software. Partnership with MUHS ensured integration with formal medical education.

The program supported key SDGs: improving practitioner competence (SDG 3), strengthening quality education (SDG 4), empowering women with high female participation (SDG 5), enabling decent work and livelihoods (SDG 8), and reducing inequalities by reaching practitioners in tier-2 and tier-3 cities (SDG 10).





EFFECTIVENESS

The program achieved substantial success in meeting its stated objectives, with quantitative indicators demonstrating strong outcomes: 95.6% of participants reported increased patient numbers, 91.1% expressed greater prescribing confidence, and 86.7% observed better treatment outcomes. Knowledge enhancement was evident across all program components: 92.2% reported strengthened foundations in fundamental principles, 80.3% of Gurukul participants showed marked improvement in Materia Medica and Repertory knowledge, and 88.9% successfully applied advanced methodologies. However, minor effectiveness gaps were noted in specific areas: dropout rates in some Master's batches, challenges in motivating full commitment from busy practitioners in Gurukul, and the need for longer-duration PRANA courses to ensure depth of learning. These minor issues highlight opportunities to improve effectiveness for every learner.



EFFICIENCY

The program demonstrated strong efficiency by combining online and offline training, enabling a more expansive reach while managing costs. Gurukul conducted about 60 mostly online sessions each year, supported by a few in-person and residential sessions. The Master's course delivered 250 intensive residential sessions over six months, helping participants build skills quickly. MUHS Fellowship maintained efficiency with 72 sessions annually and a strong 1:7 mentor-student ratio.

Faculty resources were optimised through shared masterclasses, live demonstrations, and personalised mentoring. Digital tools and shared infrastructure between OSHA and TOS helped reduce repeated effort and improve resource use.

However, residential programs demanded significant time from working practitioners; some participants dropped out due to scheduling issues, and shorter courses needed more outreach. Overall, the program used its resources well, with a few challenges preventing a perfect score.



IMPACT

The program generated a significant positive impact across multiple dimensions. At the individual level, transformational change was evident in enhanced clinical confidence (91.1%), improved patient care quality (86.7% reporting better outcomes), and professional practice expansion (95.6% reporting increased patient numbers). Female practitioners, particularly those re-entering after career breaks, reported renewed professional identity and economic empowerment through establishing clinical practice. At the systemic level, the program contributed to homoeopathic ecosystem strengthening through: (a) creation of a trained cadre capable of mentoring future practitioners, (b) demonstration of successful integration

between classical and contemporary homoeopathic approaches, and (c) establishment of replicable models for continuing professional development. The potential long-term impact is underscored by 97.8% of participants expressing intent to pursue advanced training and by high rates of alumni engagement in teaching and mentoring roles. Positive side effects included better networks, improved peer learning, and a wider reach of Dr Sankaran's methods in India.



SUSTAINABILITY

The program established multiple mechanisms to support long-term sustainability. At the institutional level, partnerships with MUHS and integration with university-recognised fellowship programs ensure continuity beyond project timelines. The development of digital learning infrastructure (video libraries, software licenses, online platforms) creates enduring assets accessible to future cohorts. Alumni engagement through WhatsApp groups, follow-up seminars, and case discussion forums fosters ongoing learning communities. The empowerment of program graduates as mentors and educators generates a self-sustaining cycle of knowledge transfer. However, sustainability faces certain risks: (a) financial dependency on donor funding for program operations, making cost-recovery solutions necessary; (b) reliance on key individuals (particularly Dr. Sankaran and core faculty) for program quality, requiring leadership planning and faculty training; (c) need for ongoing technology maintenance and content updates to maintain relevance; and (d) ongoing community engagement needed to ensure the program stays demand-driven. Reducing these risks through diverse funding, stronger faculty capacity, and better beneficiary engagement is essential for long-term sustainability.

Overall Assessment: The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy's Advanced Practitioner Training Programme represents a high-quality, evidence-based intervention that effectively addresses critical gaps in India's homoeopathic workforce development. The program's strong performance across all OECD-DAC criteria, particularly its exceptional relevance, coherence, and impact, demonstrates alignment with international standards for development programming. The achievement of 100% combined satisfaction, 97.8% continuation intent, and measurable improvements in clinical practice indicators validates the program's effectiveness. It establishes it as a replicable model for professional capacity-building in the complementary and alternative medicine sectors. Continued refinement of efficiency mechanisms and sustainability strategies will further enhance the program's long-term contribution to strengthening homoeopathic healthcare delivery across India.



Relevance



Coherence



Effectiveness



Efficiency



Impact



Sustainability

03. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND NEED OF THE PROJECT

Homoeopathy, as an alternative medicine, has witnessed substantial growth in India over the past several decades, with an expanding pool of qualified practitioners graduating from accredited institutions each year. However, field assessments and stakeholder feedback indicate an ongoing gap between theory and practice, which undermines clinical effectiveness and confidence among homoeopaths, especially in the early years after graduation. As per qualitative insights gathered during the needs assessment phase, many BHMS and MD (Homoeopathy) graduates report inadequate exposure to complex case management, limited understanding of advanced methodologies, and insufficient opportunities for personalised mentorship during their academic training.

The traditional homoeopathic curriculum covers core subjects such as Materia Medica, Repertory, and Organon, but it often does not align well with modern clinical practices. This creates a gap between what practitioners learn in classrooms and what they encounter in real clinical settings, where patients present with complex symptoms, chronic illnesses are common, and diagnoses require careful, nuanced thinking. Practitioners, particularly in their early years of practice, often find it difficult to take precise cases, select remedies, identify miasms (deep-rooted, underlying disease tendencies that can be inherited or developed over time), and manage follow-ups, resulting in poor treatment outcomes and lower confidence in treatment decisions.

Furthermore, high-quality continuing medical education (CME) remains hard to access for many, especially rural practitioners, women re-entering practice, and those with limited financial resources. Many practitioners lack exposure to internationally recognised methodologies such as Dr Rajan Sankaran's Sensation Method, Kingdom Classification, Superclass frameworks, and the WISE (Wellness, Insight, Sensation, Empowerment) processes, all of which have demonstrated clinical efficacy in addressing complex, difficult-to-cure cases.

Recognising these systemic gaps, Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBGVS), in partnership with The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy (OSHA), conceptualised a multi-pathway Advanced Homoeopathic Practitioner Training Programme to bridge the competency deficit through structured, mentor-led, experiential learning. The program follows a hybrid model combining online learning, hands-on clinical sessions, live case demos, personal mentorship, and digital tools to build knowledge and skills together. The initiative specifically targets mid-career practitioners, recent graduates, and professionals from underserved regions, with an explicit focus on empowering women homoeopaths and expanding access to marginalised communities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The Advanced Homoeopathic Practitioner Training Programme comprises four distinct learning pathways - Gurukul, Master's Course, MUHS Fellowship Programmes, and PRANA Outreach Activities, each designed to address specific learner profiles and competency development needs. According to project documents and stakeholder consultations, the collective objectives of the programs are as follows:



To strengthen both basic and advanced homoeopathic knowledge and clinical skills among practitioners and students.



To bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world clinical practice through hands-on training, case-based learning, and mentorship.



To build confidence in case-taking, analysis, remedy selection, and management of acute and chronic cases.



To introduce and apply modern and advanced homoeopathic practice models across different clinical settings.



To support early-career practitioners and students with structured guidance, mentoring, and practical exposure.



To promote holistic, ethical, and evidence-based patient care with empathy and professional integrity.



To expand access to quality homoeopathic education through institutional, community-based, and regional outreach, especially in underserved areas.

Collectively, these objectives align with the broader goal of strengthening the homoeopathic practice ecosystem in India by developing a cadre of clinically competent, ethically grounded, and pedagogically informed practitioners capable of delivering high-quality patient care, mentoring future generations, and advancing the professional standing of homoeopathy as a credible system of medicine.

PROJECT DETAILS



Title

Advanced Homeopathic Practitioner Training Programme



Implementing Agency

The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy (OSHA)



Location

Pan-India



Total no. of Beneficiaries

2180 students & practitioner



Target Beneficiaries

Homeopathic students, interns, Homeopathic young practitioners, and experienced practitioners



Primary Programs

Gurukul, Master's, MUHS Fellowship, PRANA



Stakeholder Type	Role in the Programme
Corporate Partner (Bajaj Auto Limited)	Provided financial resources, strategic guidance, and programme oversight to ensure effective implementation and achievement of intended outcomes.
Implementing Agency (The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy)	Led planning and execution of training programmes, coordinated faculty and mentors, delivered sessions and workshops, managed learner enrolment and assessments, provided digital tools and learning materials, and maintained MIS and reporting.
Faculty & Mentors	Delivered academic and clinical sessions, guided learners through structured mentorship, reviewed case submissions, supported integration of advanced homoeopathic methods, and tracked learner progress across all programme components.
Learners / Participants (Practitioners and Students)	Attended training sessions consistently, completed coursework and assignments, submitted cases, participated in mentoring activities, applied new knowledge in clinical practice settings, engaged in peer-learning forums, and provided feedback to strengthen the programme.
TOS Clinic & Peripheral Centres	Offered practical clinical exposure, facilitated supervised case-taking and case analysis, provided live case demonstrations, supported rotational postings for trainees, and ensured adherence to ethical and confidential patient management.
Primary Programs	Managed scheduling, logistics, communication, digital platforms, attendance tracking, and documentation, and ensured smooth organisation of workshops, retreats, assessments, and learning events.



CELEBRATION AT THE OTHER SONG ACADEMY

DETAILED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The intervention included a wide range of learning and hands-on practice activities:

GURUKUL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (DURATION - 9 MONTHS)



Monthly live case-taking sessions conducted by Dr Rajan Sankaran, where participants observed advanced diagnosis and prescription methods.



One-to-one mentoring sessions (60 minutes per learner every month) focusing on case analysis, remedy selection, and clinical decision-making.



Access to Sankaran Masterclass video modules covering core homoeopathy concepts, including philosophy, Materia Medica, repertory, the Sensation Method, kingdom classification, and the Superclass framework.



Two residential in-person programs are held in Mumbai, each lasting 7 days, providing hands-on case observation and direct interaction with faculty members.



Monthly case submission and review, where learners submitted their own cases and received detailed evaluation and feedback.



A 3-day residential WISE retreat (Wellness, Insight, Sensation, Empowerment) focused on building self-awareness and improving therapeutic presence.



Synergy Homoeopathic Software licenses are provided to all participants to support case analysis and clinical practice.

MASTER'S COURSE ACTIVITIES (DURATION - 6 MONTHS)



250 training sessions conducted (Monday to Friday, 9 AM-5 PM), combining classroom learning with practical application.



Weekly clinical observation sessions at The Other Song Clinic and nearby peripheral health centres.



Bi-monthly mentoring sessions in small groups (3-4 learners per mentor) focused on individual learning needs and progress.



Monthly case-solving assessments to evaluate skills in repertory use, miasm (root cause or background pattern behind recurring or long-term health problems) identification, remedy selection, and posology.



34-36 live case sessions where learners observed real-time patient interactions and clinical decision-making.



3-4 video-based case discussions each month, with detailed explanation and analysis.



Journey within workshop, which is designed to develop self-awareness, empathy, and a strong healer identity.



Rotational clinical postings that provided hands-on experience in managing patients.

MUHS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (DURATION - 1 YEAR)



72 training sessions are conducted per batch across the academic year.



Topic-wise case discussions that linked theory with practical clinical application.



Mentor-led sessions with a 1:7 mentor-to-mentee ratio for focused guidance and support.



Access to Synergy Software and Sankaran Masterclass learning modules.



Recorded case presentations supported by expert explanations and commentary.



Training for University examinations, along with research methodology support.

PRANA ACTIVITIES (EVENT-BASED PROGRAM)



8 different courses and events are conducted, including Practical Training in Classical Homoeopathy, Five-Finger Method International Seminar, and introductory workshops.



College visit sessions were conducted at JIMS Homoeopathic Medical College (Hyderabad), Anantrao Homoeopathic Medical College (Alephata), and other institutions.



Live case demonstrations showing the use of classical repertory-based analysis and the Sensation Method in practice.



One-year online mentorship program with live case sessions held every two weeks.



Seminar series led by Dr. Rajan Sankaran, Dr.Saptarishi Banerjee, and other senior homoeopathy practitioners.

CROSS-PROGRAM SUPPORT ACTIVITIES



Digital learning support, including online portals, recorded videos and access to e-libraries.



Distribution of learning materials, including textbooks, Hindi Materia Medica series, and reference charts.



Awareness and outreach activities are carried out through social media, college visits, and practitioner networks.



Post-program alumni engagement through WhatsApp groups, follow-up seminars, and case discussion forums.

TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

The timeline shows that the Curukul and MUHS Fellowship programmes were conducted continuously during the project period, from 2022 to 2024. The Master's programme commenced in 2024, while PRANA was active from 2023. Curukul, Master's, and PRANA programmes are still ongoing beyond the project period.

Year	2022	2023	2024
Activities			
Curukul			
Master's			
MUHS Fellowship			
PRANA			



04. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter defines the methodological framework, data collection method, and analytical procedures applied to assess the impact of the Advanced Homoeopathic Practitioner Training Programme implemented by The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy (OSHA) in partnership with Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBCVS). The assessment adopts a rigorous mixed-methods approach aligned with OECD-DAC evaluation standards, integrating quantitative outcome measurement with qualitative contextual inquiry to ensure comprehensive, evidence-based findings.

PURPOSE OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY



To assess the effectiveness of the Advanced Homoeopathic Practitioner Training Programme in enhancing clinical competencies, knowledge uptake, and professional confidence among participating homoeopaths.



To evaluate learner outcomes across demographic profiles, program pathways, and geographic contexts, disaggregating findings by gender, age, educational qualification, and years of practice experience.



To measure the extent of integration and application of advanced methodologies (Sensation Method, Superclass frameworks, Five-Finger Method, WISE processes) into routine clinical practice post-intervention.



To document changes in practice patterns, patient management approaches, and treatment outcomes as reported by program participants.



To analyse the quality, accessibility, and utilisation of learning inputs provided through the program, including Sankaran Masterclass modules, live case sessions, mentoring interactions, digital tools, and retreat experiences.



To assess program delivery mechanisms, stakeholder coordination, and operational efficiency through the lens of faculty, mentors, and implementing agency staff.



To evaluate the program against OECD-DAC criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact, and Sustainability.

MIXED-METHOD RESEARCH APPROACH

The impact assessment used a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data to allow thorough triangulation and a well-rounded understanding of the program's results. This approach follows established evaluation best practices, especially for complex educational programs where understanding learning processes, behaviour change, and context is as important as measuring outcomes.

QUALITATIVE METHODS

- » Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIs) with implementing agency leadership, program coordinators, and administrative staff from OSHA and TOS across Gurukul, Master's, MUHS, and PRANA pathways.
- » In-depth interviews (IDIs) with faculty members and mentors (including Dr Rajan Sankaran's mentorship team, teaching faculty, and clinical supervisors) to assess teaching effectiveness, learner progress observations, and pedagogical challenges.
- » Case study documentation capturing individual learner journeys, professional transformation narratives, and critical incidents that illustrate program impact.
- » Review of program implementation documents, including quarterly progress reports, session calendars, attendance logs, mentoring records, assessment tools, and curriculum materials.
- » Analysis of learner logbooks, case submission records, and evaluation feedback forms maintained by the implementing agency.

QUANTITATIVE METHODS

- » Structured questionnaire survey administered to program participants (N=180) covering demographic characteristics, program participation profiles, learning inputs received, skill development outcomes, clinical application patterns, and satisfaction indicators.
- » Closed-ended Likert scale items measuring self-reported competency gains, confidence levels, frequency of advanced methodology application, and post-program professional impact.
- » Descriptive statistical analysis (frequency distributions, percentages) to identify patterns, trends, and correlations across learner subgroups and program pathways.
- » Pre-post comparison indicators derived from retrospective self-assessment questions on knowledge, skills, and practice patterns, collected before and after program participation.

DATA TRIANGULATION

Data triangulation was systematically employed to enhance the validity, reliability, and interpretive depth of findings. Quantitative survey responses were cross-verified with qualitative interview insights, program implementation documents, and case study narratives to identify convergence, divergence, and contextual explanations for observed patterns. For instance, high satisfaction scores reported in the survey were corroborated through faculty testimonials describing visible learner progression, implementing agency records documenting consistent attendance and engagement, and case studies illustrating professional transformation. This multi-source verification approach strengthened confidence in the robustness of conclusions drawn.

SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The study adopted a dual sampling strategy combining stratified random sampling for quantitative data collection and purposive sampling for qualitative inquiries. For the quantitative component, participants were stratified by program type, and a random sample of 180 learners was selected from those who completed their respective pathways during the assessment period (Gurukul batches, Master's cohorts, MUHS fellowship students, and PRANA attendees). This sampling approach ensured balanced representation across program types, geographic locations, and learner profiles, while reducing selection bias and supporting reliable analysis.

For qualitative data collection, purposive sampling was employed to select key informants based on their roles, experience, and depth of involvement in program delivery. This included implementing agency coordinators overseeing each program pathway, faculty members with extensive teaching engagement, mentors providing individualised guidance, and learners representing diverse demographic and professional profiles. Case study subjects were purposively selected to illustrate varied trajectories of professional growth, challenges overcome, and post-program career transitions.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK OECD-DAC CRITERIA

The assessment was structured around the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation framework, which provides internationally recognised criteria for assessing development interventions. The six evaluation criteria employed were:



RESEARCH DESIGN

- » Cross-sectional assessment design capturing program outcomes at a defined point following intervention completion.
- » Multi-site data collection covering program delivery locations in Mumbai, Pune, and extended outreach geographies.
- » Retrospective cohort approach enabling pre-post comparison through structured recall and self-assessment instruments.
- » Stratified analysis by program pathway (Gurukul, Master's, MUHS, PRANA), demographic subgroups (gender, age, qualification), and professional experience levels.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED



Program Participants/Learners

BHMS- and MD (Homoeopathy)- qualified practitioners enrolled across the Gurukul, Master's, MUHS Fellowship, and PRANA pathways (N=180 survey respondents).



Faculty and Mentors

Teaching faculty, clinical supervisors, and individualised mentors associated with OSHA

and TOS, including Dr Rajan Sankaran's core mentorship team (Dr Sarah Coutinho, Dr Kyle Wulfsohn), and specialist faculty members (Dr Amrita Hede, Dr Manish Yadav, Dr Prajakta Vaidhyan).



Implementing Agency Staff

Program coordinators, administrative personnel, and operational managers from The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy (OSHA) and The Other Song Homoeopathy Clinic (TOS), responsible for Gurukul (Dr Rajan Sankaran team), Master's (Dr Pallavi Mahadeshwar, Dr Gayatri Gambhir), MUHS (Dr Rakesh M. Mehta), and PRANA (Dr Shrikant Talari).



Funding Partner Representatives

Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBGVS) leadership and program monitoring personnel.



University and External Stakeholders

Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) examiners and affiliated institution representatives.

STUDY TOOLS AND INSTRUMENT

Data collection instruments were specifically designed to capture multi-dimensional aspects of program implementation and outcomes. All tools underwent expert review and pilot testing to ensure contextual appropriateness, linguistic clarity, and validity. The study tools deployed included:

Structured Participant Survey Questionnaire

A comprehensive tool covering demographic profile, program participation patterns, learning inputs accessed, self-assessed competency development, clinical application frequency,

post-program professional changes, satisfaction ratings, and recommendations. Response formats included multiple-choice, Likert scales, and open-ended items.

Key Informant Interview (KII) Guide for Implementing Agency Staff

Semi-structured protocol exploring program design rationale, implementation processes, coordination mechanisms, learner progress monitoring, challenges encountered, and sustainability planning.

In-Depth Interview (IDI) Guide for Faculty and Mentors

Semi-structured interview schedule assessing teaching methodologies, learner engagement observations, competency progression patterns, pedagogical effectiveness, and recommendations for program enhancement.

Case Study Template

Structured narrative framework capturing learner background, pre-program situation, intervention exposure, post-program outcomes, direct testimonials, and impact summary.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS



INFORMED CONSENT

All participants (survey respondents, interview subjects, case study individuals) were provided with clear information about the study purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage without consequences. Written or verbal consent was obtained before data collection.



CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

Personal identifiers were protected through anonymisation in data analysis and reporting. Individual responses were treated as confidential, with only aggregated findings presented in the assessment report.



DO NO HARM PRINCIPLE

Interview protocols and survey instruments were designed to avoid questions or topics that could cause participants psychological distress or discomfort.



DATA SECURITY

All collected data (hard copies and digital files) were stored securely, with access restricted to the evaluation team to prevent unauthorised disclosure.



RESPECT FOR STAKEHOLDER TIME

Data collection schedules were coordinated to minimise disruption to program activities, clinical responsibilities, and respondents' personal commitments.



TRANSPARENCY AND FEEDBACK

Preliminary findings were shared with implementing agency leadership and funding partner representatives to ensure factual accuracy and provide opportunities for clarification before finalisation.



NON-EXPLOITATION

No financial or other incentives were provided that could unduly influence participation or responses, ensuring voluntary engagement based on genuine willingness to contribute to program learning.



CERTIFICATE DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY

05. KEY FINDINGS



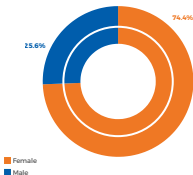
This chapter presents comprehensive findings from 180 participants enrolled in Gurukul, Master's, MUHS Fellowship, and PRANA programs. The analysis triangulates quantitative survey data with qualitative interviews of faculty, mentors, implementing agency staff, participant testimonials, and program document review. All data interpretations use percentages throughout for clarity and accessibility. Testimonials are included to illustrate participants' experiences and the program's impact.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND PROFESSIONAL PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

This section profiles participants across demographic and professional dimensions to assess program reach and target population alignment.

GENDER DISTRIBUTION

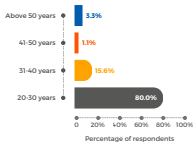
CHART 1: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS



The data in Chart 1 show that women learning homoeopathy accounted for 74.4% of the total participants surveyed, while men accounted for 25.6%. This gender distribution was validated through interviews with implementing staff. Dr Pallavi Mahadeshwar, Master's Course Administrator, explained that programs successfully reached female practitioners who experienced career interruptions due to family responsibilities.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

CHART 2: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS

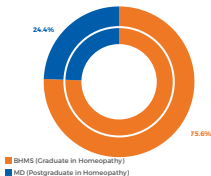


The Chart 2 indicates that the participants were mostly young adults, with 80.0% in the 20-30 age range. 15.6% aged 31-40 years, and only 4.4% above 40 years.

Dr Shrikant Talari explained that college visits mostly draw recent graduates and final-year students, which explains the high numbers from these groups. Gurukul mentors added that they are also trying to engage mid-career practitioners who want to learn advanced practices. The predominance of participants in their twenties indicates programs successfully captured early-career practitioners at critical junctures when foundational skill-building creates maximum long-term professional impact.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

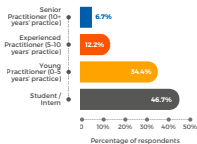
CHART 3: EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS



The Chart 3 implies that three-quarters (75.6%) of the participants held BHMS degrees, and 24.4% had completed MD programs. During interactions with faculty members, it was shared that BHMS graduates wanted programs that would help them connect academic learning to clinical practice. Dr Rakesh Mehta, the coordinator of the MUHS fellowship programs, said he hoped these courses would help more homoeopaths continue in practice and serve the community.

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL ROLE

CHART 4: CURRENT PROFESSIONAL ROLE OF PARTICIPANTS

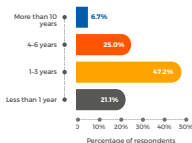


The Chart 4 indicates that students and interns accounted for 46.7% of participants, young practitioners for 34.4%, experienced practitioners for 12.2%, and senior practitioners for 6.7%.

Together, students and young practitioners accounted for 81.1% of the total enrolment. Implementing agency staff noted that this distribution aligned well with the program's objective of strengthening foundational competencies among early-career homoeopaths. The lower participation of experienced and senior practitioners suggests a need for targeted outreach or the development of specialised advanced tracks to engage these groups more effectively.

YEARS OF CLINICAL EXPERIENCE IN HOMOEOPATHY

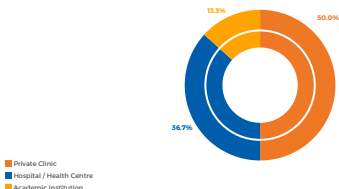
CHART 5: YEARS OF CLINICAL EXPERIENCE



The Chart 5 shows that nearly half (47.2%) had 1-3 years of experience, 25.0% had 4-6 years, 21.1% had less than 1 year, and 6.7% had more than 10 years. Combined, 68.3% had less than 3 years of experience. This distribution confirmed programs predominantly served early-career practitioners seeking foundational and intermediate skill enhancement. Insights from mentors indicated that participants with 1-3 years' experience showed the greatest receptivity to new methodologies, as they were actively shaping their practice patterns.

TYPE OF PRACTICE / WORK SETTING

CHART 6: TYPE OF PRACTICE / WORK SETTING



Half of the respondents (50.0%), as shown in Chart 6, work in private clinics, 36.7% in hospitals or health centres, and 13.3% in academic institutions. The high proportion in private clinics reflects the common pathways for homoeopathic learners, as many students and interns are attached to private clinics as interns under senior doctors, trainees in peripheral OPDs, or assistants in private practice settings while completing their studies or early training. Discussion with stakeholders revealed that private practitioners particularly valued programs that provided peer learning opportunities and mentorship support, which were often absent in isolated solo-practice environments. Hospital-based practitioners sought advanced clinical skills to manage complex cases, while academicians aimed to enhance teaching capabilities.



PROGRAM PARTICIPATION PROFILE

This section examines information sources, programs participants enrolled in, their mode of participation, and engagement levels.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

CHART 7: SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRAMS

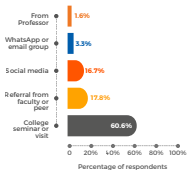
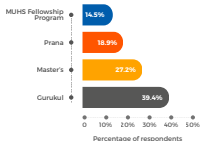


Chart 7 implies that college seminars and visits were identified as the main outreach channel, engaging 60.6% of participants. Faculty or peer referrals accounted for 17.8%, social media for 16.7%, WhatsApp/email groups for 3.3%, and direct interaction with Dr Sankaran for 1.6%. According to Dr Shrikant Talari, structured college visits with live case demonstrations proved the most effective at driving enrollments. The comparatively lower response from social media suggests the need to strengthen digital outreach efforts for younger audiences.

PROGRAM-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS

CHART 8: PROGRAM ENROLLMENT DISTRIBUTION



From the above Chart 8, it is interpreted that a large section of participants (39.4%, N=71) enrolled in the Gurukul program, followed by the Master's program at 27.2%(N=49), PRANA at 18.9% and MUHS Fellowship at 14.5%(N=26). The Gurukul program, known for its year-long intensive training and direct mentorship from Dr Sankaran, emerged as the preferred option. The six-month Master's program drew practitioners seeking a shorter yet clinically focused course. The PRANA program (18.9%, N=34), based on seminars, mainly drew college students and interns looking for an introductory exposure to Sankaran's methods.

During 2022-2024, a total of 2,180 learners were enrolled across Gurukul, MUHS, Master's, and PRANA programs. 2,179 learners completed their respective courses, reflecting consistently high retention across programs. Gurukul, MUHS, and PRANA achieved 100% completion, while the Master's program recorded 72 completions out of 73 enrollments. Overall, the programs achieved an exceptional completion rate of 99.95%.

MODE OF PARTICIPATION

CHART 9: MODE OF PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

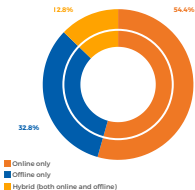


Chart 9 denotes that among participants, 54.4% attended only online, 32.8% attended only offline, and 12.8% used hybrid mode. Offline and hybrid learners showed stronger engagement and better skill development because of hands-on practice and direct mentorship. This indicates that hybrid models can offer a good balance between accessibility and effective learning.

CONVENIENCE OF COURSE DELIVERY METHOD

CHART 10: CONVENIENCE OF DELIVERY METHOD

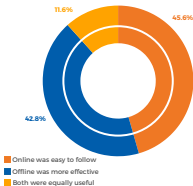


Chart 10 indicates that participants were nearly split on delivery preferences, with 45.6% finding online delivery convenient, 42.8% preferring

offline delivery for effectiveness, and 11.6% finding both equally useful. Discussion with the stakeholders revealed that online participants valued flexibility in balancing work and learning, while offline participants emphasised the benefits of hands-on clinical training. Several participants from the Master's course shared that online sessions helped them learn the basics, while offline clinical sessions helped them practice. This shows that combining both methods improves learning.

NUMBER OF SESSIONS ATTENDED

CHART 11: SESSION ATTENDANCE DURING PROGRAM

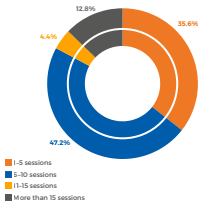
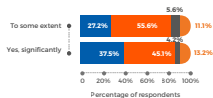


Chart 11 shows that nearly half of the participants (47.2%) attended 6-10 sessions, 35.6% attended 1-5 sessions, and 17.2% attended more than 10 sessions. The distribution reflects varying program durations, with Curukul and Master's requiring higher attendance compared to PRANA's seminar-based format.

CHART 12: IMPROVEMENT IN HANDLING COMPLEX CASES BY NUMBER OF SESSIONS ATTENDED



■ 1-5 ■ 5-10 ■ 11-15 ■ More than 15

Chart 12 shows that participants who attended 10+ sessions showed markedly improved case analysis skills and greater confidence in applying advanced methodologies, suggesting that session frequency positively correlates with learning outcomes.

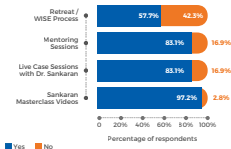


LEARNING INPUTS AND EXPOSURE RECEIVED (PROGRAM COMPONENTS)

This section examines the specific learning materials, digital tools, mentoring inputs, and training components participants received across different programs.

ACCESS TO GURUKUL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

CHART 13: ACCESS TO KEY GURUKUL COMPONENTS (N=71)



The Chart 13 indicates that among the Gurukul participants (39.4% of total participants), 97.2% accessed Sankaran Masterclass videos, 83.1% participated in live case sessions with Dr Sankaran, 83.1% received mentoring sessions and 57.7% attended retreat/WISE process workshops. The Gurukul mentors and participants confirmed universal access to all four key program components during their interaction with the field team. Records from the implementing agency showed that all learners used the Sankaran Masterclass videos. They also attended structured monthly live case sessions, which included 12 online sessions and intensive in-person sessions. Learners received regular mentoring, with 4-5 interactions per month and a student-mentor ratio of 14:3.

The program also included a mandatory residential retreat that integrated the WISE process. Participants also shared that the live case sessions were highly interactive and the mentoring support was well coordinated.



CERTIFICATE DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY

“ I was part of the first Gurukul batch, which included a one-year course followed by a one-year extension. The coordination with the mentors and the Gurukul/TOS team was excellent. We had regular meetings, discussed challenges, and received strong support. We used several methods, such as the Sensation Method, Superclass, Five-Finger Method, Materia Medica, and Repertory.

The classes were very interactive, with live discussions, group learning, and presentations of my own video cases. I also brought patients for live case-taking during offline sessions. The course helped me improve my case-taking skills, better understand remedies, and use Repertory and Superclass more effectively. Overall, the program strengthened my clinical skills, helped me connect theory with practice, and supported both my personal and professional growth.

-Dr Prajakta Shantanu Vaidhyan (Gurukul Participant)



IMPROVEMENT IN BASIC KNOWLEDGE THROUGH GURUKUL

CHART 14: IMPROVEMENT IN BASIC KNOWLEDGE THROUGH GURUKUL (N=71)

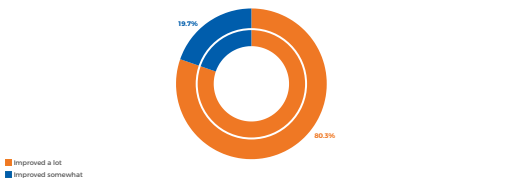
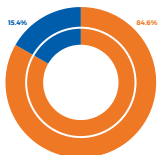


Chart 14 shows that among Gurukul participants, 80.3% reported significant improvement in their basic understanding of the Materia Medica and Repertory, while 19.7% reported moderate improvement. There were no reports of participants experiencing no improvement. Insights shared by Gurukul mentors highlighted substantial progress in students' case-taking and case-analysis abilities, as well as increased use of advanced methods, including the WISE processes, the Five-Finger Method, and Superclass.

Dr. Sunita Gandhi, a Gurukul participant, shared that she made notable progress in case-taking, remedy differentiation, and the use of tools such as the Repertory and Superclass. She noted that the learning was much clearer than in regular academic classes and highlighted that regular mentoring, monthly case reviews, logbook checks, and personalised feedback played a key role in steadily strengthening her clinical skills.

MUHS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ENROLLMENT

CHART 15: MUHS FELLOWSHIP COURSE DISTRIBUTION (N=26)

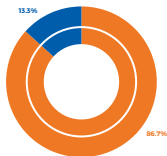


■ Fellowship in Advanced Homoeopathy (FCAH)
■ Fellowship in Psychiatry & Counselling (PG-FHPC)

The Chart 15 indicates that among the MUHS Fellowship participants in the sample (13.3% of all respondents), 84.6% were enrolled in the FCAH program, while 15.4% were pursuing PG-FHPC. According to Dr Rakesh M. Mehta, Fellowship Course Coordinator, the higher uptake of FCAH was largely due to its emphasis on advanced clinical methodologies relevant across diverse practice settings. However, records from the implementing agency showed that both courses consistently maintained strong enrollment, with FCAH batches enrolling 24-40 learners and PG-FHPC batches enrolling 31-32 learners during the same period. Both programs offered university-recognised certification, strengthening participants' professional credentials and expanding their career opportunities.

ACCESS TO SYNERGY HOMOEOPATHIC SOFTWARE

CHART 16: SYNERGY SOFTWARE ACCESS

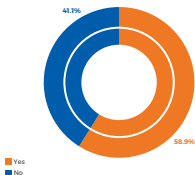


■ Yes
■ No

The above Chart 16 indicates that a substantial majority of participants (86.7%) had access to Synergy Homoeopathic Software, while 13.3% did not. Software access varied across program types. Records from the implementing agency showed that learners in the Gurukul, Master's, and MUHS Fellowship programs received individual software licenses along with portal registration. A MUHS Fellowship graduate shared that they were provided with complimentary one-year access to Synergy software and Masterclass modules, which soon became integral to their clinical practice. However, participants in the PRANA program were introduced to digital tools primarily through demonstration sessions rather than through individual access. This widespread access (86.7%) reflects a strong commitment to integrating digital tools and preparing learners for modern, technology-enabled homoeopathic practice.

ACCESS TO MASTERCLASS LEARNING MODULES

CHART 17: MASTERCLASS LEARNING MODULE ACCESS



Over half of the participants (58.9%) accessed the Masterclass learning modules, while 41.1% did not. Interviews with the implementing agency revealed that the Sankaran Masterclass modules were provided to learners in the Gurukul, Master's, and MUHS Fellowship programs as part of their core learning resources. Program coordinators also confirmed that participants in these programs received portal registration and access credentials for Masterclass content along with their software licenses.

Gurukul participants who completed all Masterclass modules reported gaining a comprehensive understanding of Sankaran's Sensation Method, kingdom classifications, and miasmatic concepts, highlighting the modules' effectiveness as a strong foundational learning tool.

MUHS FELLOWSHIP INTEGRATION OF ADVANCED APPROACHES

CHART 18: INTEGRATION OF ADVANCED APPROACHES IN MUHS (N=26)



All MUHS Fellowship participants (100%) reported successfully integrating advanced approaches such as the Sensation Method and Superclass concepts into their clinical practice. Dr Rakesh Mehta, Deputy Director, Fellowship Courses dept, TOS, explained that the MUHS curriculum was specifically designed to bridge classical homoeopathic foundations with contemporary methodologies, ensuring that graduates developed both traditional competencies and modern analytical skills. University examiners further noted that MUHS graduates demonstrated a more holistic and nuanced understanding of cases than those from conventional postgraduate programs, thereby validating the effectiveness of the integrated curriculum.

“ Completing the Fellowship Course in Advanced Homoeopathy (FCAH) at The Other Song was one of the most enriching experiences of my professional journey. The complimentary one-year access to the Synergy Homoeopathic Repertory and Dr Sankaran’s Masterclass strengthened my learning and shaped my clinical approach.

The Synergy Software became a regular part of my practice because it was easy to use and helped bring clarity and accuracy to my case work. The Masterclass sessions offered deep insights and a more holistic way of understanding patients. The course effectively connected classical principles with modern methods.

-Dr Reshma Dhamnaskar, FCAH Graduate

”

REGULAR USE OF SOFTWARE TOOLS IN DAILY PRACTICE

CHART 19: FREQUENCY OF SOFTWARE TOOL USAGE (N=156 WITH ACCESS)

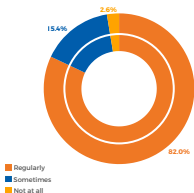


Chart 19 shows that among participants who had access to the software (86.7% of all respondents), 82.0% reported using it regularly, 15.4% used it occasionally, and only 2.6% did not use it at all. This high level of regular usage reflects strong adoption of the software and its integration into routine clinical practice. A MUHS Fellowship graduate shared that the Synergy software brought clarity and precision to case analysis by enabling systematic and organised exploration of remedies and repertories.

Those who did not use the software generally preferred traditional book-based methods, though even they acknowledged the usefulness of digital tools for managing complex cases.

PRANA COURSE AND SEMINAR ATTENDANCE

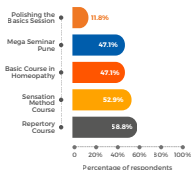
CHART 20: PRANA COURSE ATTENDANCE (N=34)



All participants who enrolled in the PRANA program (100%) confirmed they attended its courses or seminars. This high attendance rate indicates active participation from every enrolled learner.

TYPES OF PRANA ACTIVITIES ATTENDED

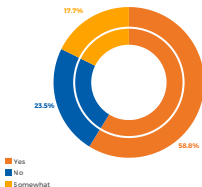
CHART 21: PRANA ACTIVITIES ATTENDED (MULTIPLE RESPONSE, N=34)



As shown in Chart 21 above, among PRANA participants, 58.8% attended Repertory courses, 52.9% attended Sensation Method courses, 47.1% joined Basic Homoeopathy sessions, 47.1% participated in the Pune Mega Seminar, and 11.8% took part in Strengthening the Basics course. A considerable number of learners engaged in more than one activity. During discussions with stakeholders and a review of the training records, it was revealed that the Repertory and Sensation Method courses drew the highest interest, as students were eager to build practical skills that could be applied directly in clinical settings. With 47.1% attendance, the Pune Mega Seminar stood out as a key event led by Dr Sankaran, covering the Five-Finger Method and Superclass concepts in depth.

PRANA IMPACT ON PRACTICAL REPERTORY USE

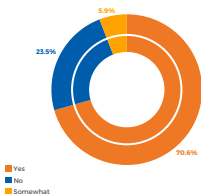
CHART 22: UNDERSTANDING PRACTICAL USE OF REPERTORY THROUGH PRANA (N=34)



Among PRANA participants, 58.8% reported significant improvement in their understanding of practical repertory use, 17.7% reported some improvement, and 23.5% experienced minimal or no improvement. Overall, 76.5% showed at least some progress in learning. Dr Shrikant Talari, in charge of PRANA, noted that learners gained a clearer understanding of the remedy-selection process, including identifying key symptoms, narrowing remedy groups, and differentiating remedies through live case sessions. Participants with minimal or no improvement primarily attended single seminars without follow-up practice, highlighting the need for ongoing engagement beyond one-time events for effective skill development.

PRANA IMPACT ON LEARNING SENSATION AND SUPERCLASS METHODS

CHART 23: LEARNING SENSATION & SUPERCLASS METHOD THROUGH PRANA (N=34)



Among PRANA participants, 70.6% successfully learnt the Sensation and Superclass methods, 5.9% reported partial learning, and 23.5% indicated that their learning outcome was limited. In total, 76.5% showed notable learning progress. PRANA's sessions aimed to support students and early practitioners in building confidence and deepening their understanding of homeopathic principles during their formative years. The 70.6% learning rate suggests that PRANA served as an effective introduction to Dr Sankaran's methodologies.

ACCESS TO ADVANCED MASTER'S PROGRAM COMPONENTS

CHART 24: KEY COMPONENTS IN ADVANCED MASTER'S PROGRAM (N=49)

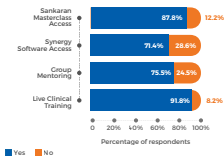
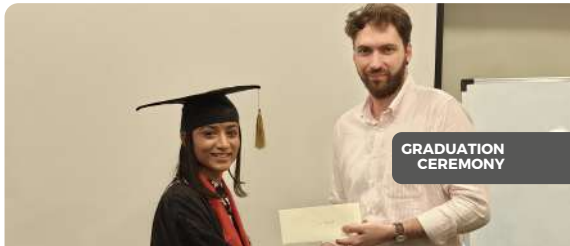


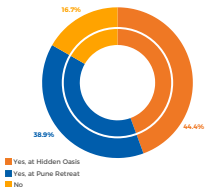
Chart 24 illustrates that among the Master's participants (27.2% of the total respondents), 91.8% received live clinical training, 87.8% accessed the Sankaran Masterclass, 75.5% participated in group mentoring, and 100% received access to the Synergy Software. Dr Pallavi Mahadeshwar explained that the six-month Master's format placed strong emphasis on hands-on clinical exposure through rotational OPD sessions, which accounted for the high live clinical training access rate (91.8%). Participants used digital tools according to their individual learning preferences. The integration of clinical training, theoretical inputs, mentoring support, and digital resources created a comprehensive learning ecosystem that simultaneously addressed multiple skill dimensions.



GRADUATION CEREMONY

ATTENDANCE AT RESIDENTIAL WORKSHOPS

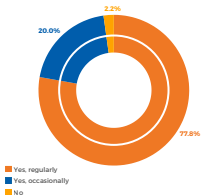
CHART 25: RESIDENTIAL WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE



Among the Master's participants (27.2% of the total respondents), 91.8% received live clinical training, 87.8% accessed the Sankaran Masterclass, 75.5% participated in group mentoring, and 100% received access to the Synergy Software. According to Dr Pallavi Mahadeshwar, Master's Course Administrator, the six-month offline format included weekly Saturday clinical sessions supported by rotational OPD exposure throughout the program, providing sustained hands-on experience in patient management. This intensive clinical structure likely contributed to the high live clinical training access rate (91.8%). The integration of clinical training, theoretical inputs, mentoring support, and digital resources created a comprehensive learning ecosystem that simultaneously addressed multiple skill dimensions.

RECEIPT OF LEARNING MATERIALS AND TOOLS

CHART 26: FREQUENCY OF LEARNING MATERIALS RECEPTION



The vast majority of participants (77.8%) reported receiving learning materials regularly, 20.0% received them occasionally, and only 2.2% did not receive any materials. The high rate of material receipt reflects the program's efficiency and its strong systems for timely resource distribution.



BENEFICIARY INTERACTION

ENGAGEMENT WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING TOOLS AND MODULES

CHART 27: TOOLS AND MODULES ENGAGED WITH

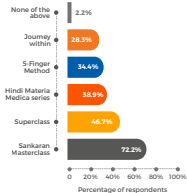
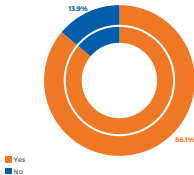


Chart 27 describes that Sankaran Masterclass recorded the highest engagement at 72.2%, followed by Superclass at 46.7%, Hindi Materia Medica at 38.9%, the Five-Finger Method at 34.4%, and the Journey within workshops at 28.3%.

The strong preference for the Masterclass reflects its foundational role across programs. Stakeholder discussions indicated that language did not hinder participation, as English was used predominantly and translations were provided when required. The comparatively lower engagement with the Journey within workshops (28.3%) was attributed to their self-development focus, which demands sustained personal commitment beyond clinical skill-building. However, mentors emphasised that these workshops are essential for cultivating holistic practitioner development.

COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL VISIT ATTENDANCE

CHART 28: COLLEGE/HOSPITAL VISIT PARTICIPATION



An overwhelming 86.1% attended college or hospital visits, while 13.9% did not. Interviews with the implementing agency revealed that these visits served dual purposes: offering participants exposure to institutional practice settings and supporting outreach efforts to recruit new learners. Jacinta Joseph, TOS Administrator, noted that college visits significantly influenced enrollment decisions as prospective students witnessed real-time applications of homoeopathy. The 86.1% participation rate demonstrates the effective integration of experiential learning, community engagement, and program sustainability through grassroots outreach.

KEY IMPACTS

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND SKILL ENHANCEMENT

This section examines the skills and knowledge participants developed through the program, including foundational strengthening and advanced application of concepts.

STRENGTHENING FOUNDATION IN BASIC HOMOEOPATHIC PRINCIPLES

CHART 29: STRENGTHENING OF
FOUNDATION IN BASIC PRINCIPLES

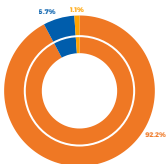
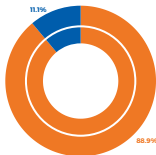


Chart 29 shows that 92.2% strengthened their foundation in basic principles, 6.7% achieved moderate strengthening, and 1.1% reported no improvement. This exceptional success rate validates program design prioritising systematic basics revision before introducing advanced concepts. The faculty members indicated that learners showed evident progress in rubrics, materia medica, application of the sensation method, confidence, and clinical understanding. The near-universal improvement (98.9%) demonstrates the effectiveness of programs in building solid foundations regardless of participants' experience levels.

ABILITY TO APPLY ADVANCED CONCEPTS (SENSATION/SUPERCLASS)

CHART 30: APPLICATION OF
ADVANCED CONCEPTS



A substantial 88.9% of respondents developed the ability to apply advanced concepts such as Sensation and Superclass methods, while 11.1% achieved partial ability. Remarkably, no participant reported an inability to apply these concepts, indicating 100% achieved at least some competency. Those reporting partial application (11.1%) mainly needed more practice cases and mentoring to solidify their understanding, highlighting the need for post-program follow-up support and alumni networks for ongoing skill development.

“ The program greatly improved my confidence in running my clinic. I learned how to understand patients from their own perspective and gained a much clearer sense of what a holistic approach truly means in homoeopathy. The Sensation Method was completely new to me, and it changed the way I think about cases. Earlier, I used a more diagnostic, disease-focused approach, but now I can view patients in a more complete and interconnected way.

Homoeopathy encourages us to understand the person as a whole, and the training helped me apply this principle much more clearly in my practice. Learning with Dr. Sankaran strengthened this mindset and reminded us to remain unprejudiced observers throughout case-taking. Overall, it has been excellent training.

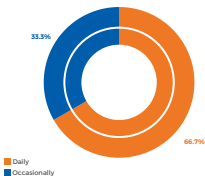
-Dr Samiksha Dattatraya Sandbhor, Master's Course Graduate

APPLICATION OF LEARNING IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

This section assesses how participants apply program learnings in their daily clinical work, including the frequency of application, handling complex cases, and improvements in case analysis.

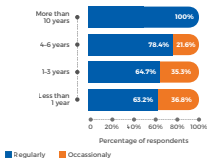
FREQUENCY OF APPLYING COURSE LEARNING IN PRACTICE

CHART 31: APPLICATION FREQUENCY IN DAILY PRACTICE



As shown in Chart 31, two-thirds of respondents (66.7%) reported applying their course learnings daily, while 33.3% applied them occasionally. The high daily application rate reflects strong integration of program concepts into routine clinical practice. This pattern indicates that the learning is both practically relevant and immediately useful for casework, enabling practitioners to consistently incorporate new methods into their day-to-day prescribing.

CHART 32: IMPACT OF EXPERIENCE ON REGULAR USE OF COURSE LEARNINGS

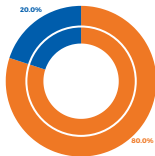


Among practitioners with less than 1 year of experience, 63.2% regularly apply what they have learnt, indicating that many begin using the methods early in their careers. In the 1-3 years group, 64.7% use the learning regularly, indicating that about two-thirds of early-career practitioners have already made these methods part of their routine practice.

Among those with 4–6 years of experience, regular application rises to 78.4%, suggesting that confidence and consistency increase with more clinical exposure. For practitioners with more than 10 years of experience, all respondents (100%) apply the learning regularly, showing complete integration of the methods into their daily prescribing.

IMPROVED ABILITY TO HANDLE COMPLEX OR DIFFICULT CASES

CHART 33: IMPROVEMENT IN HANDLING COMPLEX CASES

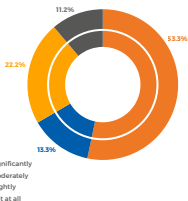


■ Yes, significantly
■ To some extent

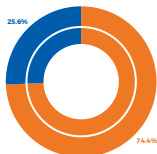
An impressive 80.0% reported significant improvement in handling complex cases, and 20% reported moderate improvement. This remarkable success rate reflects the program's core objective of equipping practitioners with advanced analytical frameworks for challenging cases. Dr Amrita Hede observed clear progress in learners' application of the Sensation Method, as well as improvements in their understanding of rubrics and materia medica.

IMPROVEMENT IN ABILITY TO ANALYSE AND PRESENT CASES

CHART 34: IMPROVEMENT IN CASE ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION



The above Chart 34 indicates that over half (53.3%) showed significant case-analysis improvement, 13.3% moderate improvement, 22.2% slight improvement, and 11.1% no or minimal improvement. Those showing significant improvement (53.3%) typically completed longer programs with regular case submissions and mentoring. This distribution indicates the importance of regular case-based learning and feedback mechanisms for developing analytical proficiency.

APPLICATION OF PROGRAM CONCEPTS IN CLINICAL PRACTICE**CHART 35: REGULARITY OF CONCEPT APPLICATION**

■ Yes, regularly
■ Yes, occasionally

Three-quarters (74.4%) regularly apply program concepts in practice, while 25.6% apply them occasionally. The 100% combined application rate (with no participants reporting non-application) demonstrates the program's content's universal relevance and practical usefulness. This distribution indicates that programs successfully equipped participants with tools applicable across diverse clinical scenarios rather than just theoretical knowledge.

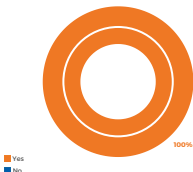


PEER LEARNING, MENTORSHIP, AND SUPPORT EXPERIENCE

This section examines participants' experiences with peer networking, mentorship, feedback mechanisms, and a sense of inclusion and support within learning communities.

CONNECTION WITH OTHER PRACTITIONERS FOR PEER LEARNING

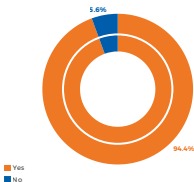
CHART 36: PEER LEARNING NETWORK FORMATION



All participants (100%) reported connecting with other practitioners for peer learning. This universal networking outcome was validated through field observations of active participant interactions during programs. The 100% peer networking rate demonstrates programs' effectiveness in building professional communities that extend beyond formal program duration, providing sustained support systems for isolated practitioners.

ATTENDANCE AT FOLLOW-UP SESSIONS AND SEMINARS

CHART 37: FOLLOW-UP SESSION ATTENDANCE AFTER MAIN COURSE



An overwhelming 94.4% attended follow-up sessions after completing the main courses, while only 5.6% did not. This exceptional follow-up rate indicates strong participant engagement and the perceived value of continued learning opportunities. According to the implementing agency, follow-up management improved steadily, reflecting a stronger understanding of both theory and clinical practice, as well as increased engagement in program activities.



GRADUATION CEREMONY

FREQUENCY OF INTERACTION WITH FACULTY OR MENTORS

CHART 38: FREQUENCY OF INTERACTION WITH FACULTY OR MENTORS

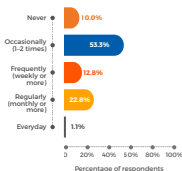
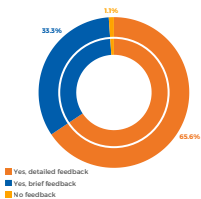


Chart 38 shows that the interaction patterns varied widely: 53.3% had occasional interactions (1-2 times), 22.8% had regular interactions (monthly), 12.8% had frequent interactions (weekly+), 1.1% had daily interactions, and 10.0% had never interacted. The diverse distribution reflects varying program structures and participant needs. Gurukul and Master's participants with structured mentoring reported regular/frequent interactions, while PRANA seminar attendees had occasional interactions during events.

RECEIPT OF FEEDBACK ON CASEWORK OR LEARNING PROGRESS

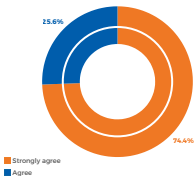
CHART 39: FEEDBACK ON CASEWORK AND LEARNING PROGRESS



Nearly two-thirds (65.6%) received detailed feedback, followed by 33.3% of participants who received brief feedback. Combined, 98.9% received at least some feedback. This exceptional feedback provision rate demonstrates a strong mentoring process. Detailed feedback typically included written case evaluations with specific improvement suggestions, while brief feedback consisted of verbal comments during group sessions. Based on qualitative information from Gurukul, students also shared verbal feedback during mentoring sessions, reporting significant improvement in case-taking and analysis. Interactive group activities, including live case discussions, provided constructive feedback and effectively addressed individual gaps.

FEELING INCLUDED AND SUPPORTED DURING PROGRAM

CHART 40: SENSE OF INCLUSION AND SUPPORT

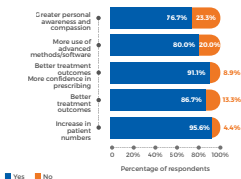


All participants (100%) felt included and supported, with 74.4% strongly agreeing and 25.6% agreeing. This universal positive experience validates programs' commitment to inclusive learning environments. Interviews revealed deliberate attention to participant diversity, with Hindi Materia Medica resources supporting vernacular learners, scholarships assisting economically disadvantaged participants, and flexible online/offline options accommodating geographic constraints.

POST-PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL IMPACT

This section examines tangible professional and personal changes participants experienced after program completion, including practice growth, treatment outcomes, confidence levels, adoption of methodologies, and personal development.

CHART 41: OVERALL PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL IMPACT AFTER COURSE COMPLETION



INCREASE IN PATIENT NUMBERS AFTER COURSE COMPLETION

Chart 41 indicates an overwhelming 95.6% experienced increased patient numbers after program completion. This exceptional practice growth rate demonstrates the impact of programs on professional success and reputation. Enhanced confidence enabled them to accept complex cases, expanding their practice scope. The program is not only improving clinical skills but also helping practitioners grow their income and patient base.



BETTER TREATMENT OUTCOMES AFTER COURSE COMPLETION

Chart 41 shows that 86.7% achieved better treatment outcomes. The high rate of improvement in outcomes validates the

program's effectiveness in enhancing clinical competency. Qualitative data attributed better outcomes to improved case analysis, accurate selection of remedies, and appropriate posology. Faculty members noted that improvements appeared gradually as participants gained more experience using the new methods. They suggested that continued monitoring may show further progress among recent graduates.



INCREASED CONFIDENCE IN PRESCRIBING

A large majority (91.1%) of participants reported increased confidence in prescribing, as shown in Chart 41. This shows that the programs not only built technical skills but also boosted participants' self-belief. Many explained that mentoring support helped validate their clinical reasoning. With greater confidence, they began taking on challenging cases that they previously avoided due to self-doubt.



The course taught me how to ask better questions, take cases more effectively, and handle different types of patients across age groups. The practical experience improved my skills and increased my confidence. Seeing good results in patients was especially encouraging.

Attending peripheral clinical sessions also helped me overcome my fear of travelling alone to unfamiliar places. I now feel more confident while managing my cases and learning through each one.

**- Dr. Reshma Dhamnskar,
Master's Graduate**



INCREASED USE OF ADVANCED METHODS AND SOFTWARE

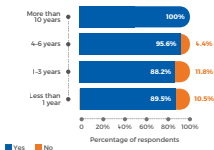
As indicated in Chart 41, 80.0% increased their use of advanced methods and software, while 20.0% did not. The 4:1 ratio of increased to non-increased usage demonstrates successful adoption of the technology and methodology. The implementing team explained that the participants integrated Synergy Software for repertorization, applied the Sensation Method systematically, and utilised Superclass concepts for remedy differentiation.



GREATER PERSONAL AWARENESS AND COMPASSION

76.7% of participants reported greater personal awareness and compassion, while 23.3% did not. This substantial personal development rate reflects the program's holistic approach that goes beyond technical competency. The mentor observed that students not only adopted advanced techniques, such as WISE processes for case-taking and the Five-Finger Method/Superclass for analysis, but also developed greater personal awareness in applying these methods effectively. This finding validates investment in personal development programming alongside clinical skill training.

CHART 42: IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM ON PRESCRIBING CONFIDENCE ACROSS EXPERIENCE LEVELS



Less experienced practitioners show great improvements: 88.2% of those with 1-3 years of experience and 89.5% of those with less than 1 year feel more confident. This suggests the programs help beginners build confidence quickly, especially when they still depend on clear, structured methods.

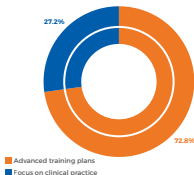
Mid-level practitioners (4-6 years) show the highest confidence boost at 95.6%. Senior practitioners with more than 10 years of experience also report a 100% improvement in confidence, showing that even very experienced doctors benefited from the training.

FUTURE ASPIRATIONS AND CAREER DIRECTION

This section examines how programs influenced participants' future career plans and their preferences for continued professional development.

PROGRAM INFLUENCE ON FUTURE CAREER PLANS IN HOMOEOPATHY

CHART 43: INFLUENCE ON FUTURE



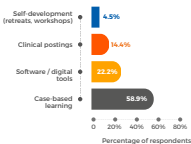
All participants (100%) reported that programs influenced their plans, with 72.8% planning advanced training and 27.2% feeling more committed to clinical practice. This widespread influence shows that the programs effectively shape participants' career paths. The pattern indicates that the programs encourage both continued learning and committed clinical practice, supporting different career paths aligned with individual goals.



CERTIFICATE DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY

PREFERRED TYPE OF FUTURE TRAINING

CHART 44: FUTURE TRAINING PREFERENCES

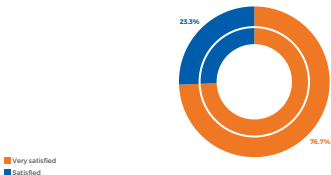


Case-based learning was the most preferred method, as indicated in Graph 4.41, with 58.9% of participants, indicating a strong interest in practical skill-building. Software and digital tools were chosen by 22.2% of respondents, indicating increasing acceptance of technology in homoeopathic practice. Clinical postings (14.4%) show a need for supervised hands-on experience, while self-development (4.5%) received the least preference, suggesting participants are currently more focused on clinical skills.

SATISFACTION, RECOMMENDATION, AND CONTINUATION INTENT

This section assesses overall participant satisfaction, likelihood of recommending programs to others, and interest in advanced continuation courses.

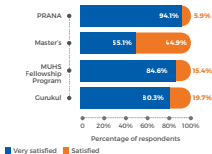
CHART 45: OVERALL SATISFACTION LEVEL



All participants (100%) reported satisfaction, with 76.7% very satisfied and 23.3% satisfied. This universal satisfaction demonstrates exceptional program quality and delivery. Participants cited a comprehensive curriculum, expert faculty, personalised mentoring, practical skill application, and supportive learning environments as key drivers of satisfaction. The 23.3% satisfied participants primarily desired additional components, such as longer program duration, more live case sessions, or enhanced post-program support, indicating areas for further improvement while still expressing overall positive experiences. The 100% satisfaction rate validates program design and implementation approaches.

SATISFACTION LEVELS ACROSS TRAINING PROGRAMS

CHART 46: SATISFACTION LEVELS ACROSS TRAINING PROGRAMS

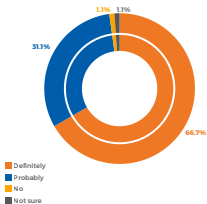


PRANA achieves the highest "Very satisfied" rating at 94.1%, despite its shorter format, demonstrating that its well-designed, hands-on activities effectively deliver high impact and participant connection. Gurukul closely follows at 80.3%, where its detailed, comprehensive structure, focusing on foundational basics through extended engagement, benefits participants most, fostering deep learning.

Master's scores 55.1%, while MUHS Fellowship garners a strong 84.6% approval, reflecting program-specific resonance with experiential and advanced methodologies. Overall, the 76.7% "Very satisfied" rate highlights The Other Song's tailored approaches, driving superior outcomes across formats.

LIKELIHOOD OF RECOMMENDING PROGRAM TO OTHERS

CHART 47: RECOMMENDATION LIKELIHOOD



Nearly all participants (97.8%) would recommend programs, with 66.7% definitely recommending, 31.1% probably recommending. The overwhelming recommendation rate (97.8%) represents a strong endorsement and indicates the likelihood of organic growth through participant referrals.



CERTIFICATE DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY

INTEREST IN ATTENDING ADVANCED OR CONTINUATION COURSES

CHART 48: INTEREST IN ADVANCED/CONTINUATION COURSES

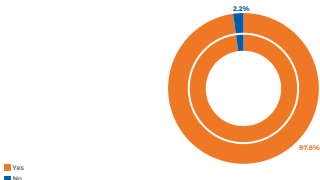


Chart 48 shows an overwhelming 97.8% expressed interest in attending advanced or continuation courses. This exceptional continuation interest demonstrates successful cultivation of lifelong learning commitment and sustained engagement with The Other Song's educational ecosystem. Participants sought deeper specialisation, updates on methodology evolution, and continued mentorship support. The 97.8% continuation interest provides a strong mandate for developing advanced program tracks, alumni networks, and ongoing professional development opportunities. It also indicates participants' confidence that continued investment in these programs will yield continued professional and personal growth.

In conclusion, the programs demonstrate exceptional effectiveness across multiple dimensions, including participant reach, provision of learning inputs, skill development, clinical application, professional impact, and participant satisfaction. The near-universal positive outcomes across diverse metrics validate The Other Song's educational model and establish a strong foundation for continued program expansion and impact.



**CELEBRATING GRADUATION CEREMONY
AT THE OTHER SONG ACADEMY**

06. IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM FOR MULTIPLE LEVELS



INDIVIDUAL LEVEL IMPACT

The programme significantly strengthened the clinical competence, confidence, and professional capabilities of practitioners and students. Participants reported improved clarity in case-taking, better analytical skills, and more consistent treatment outcomes, which translated into increased patient inflow and enhanced professional credibility. The programme also contributed to personal growth, enhancing empathy, self-awareness, and holistic patient engagement.



COMMUNITY LEVEL IMPACT

The programme strengthened the quality of homoeopathic services available within communities. Peer-learning groups and alumni networks contributed to professional collaboration, collective problem-solving, and greater community-level capacity in homoeopathic practice. The programme also enabled more women, including those returning after career breaks, to participate in professional practice. By reaching practitioners from rural and marginalised areas, it helped expand access to quality homoeopathic care at the community level.



STATE-LEVEL IMPACT

By building a cadre of trained practitioners across Maharashtra, the programme strengthened state-level healthcare delivery systems within the AYUSH ecosystem. Through alignment with MUHS Fellowship standards, the programme enhanced academic quality, clinical rigour, and professional recognition. This contributes to state goals of improving healthcare quality, expanding skilled manpower, and strengthening alternative medicine services.



NATIONAL-LEVEL IMPACT

At the national level, the programme supports broader priorities, including strengthening traditional medicine, enhancing healthcare quality, and building skilled human resources. By improving case outcomes, clinical consistency, and professional competency, the initiative contributes to national efforts to mainstream AYUSH, promote evidence-based practice, and empower health professionals. The programme also advances national goals on gender equity, professional development, and accessible healthcare.

07. CASE STUDIES

This chapter presents three human-interest stories that illustrate the transformative impact of The Other Song's homoeopathy education programs. These case studies showcase how participants from different backgrounds overcame professional challenges, rebuilt their careers, and gained confidence through structured training and mentorship. Each story highlights personal journeys of growth, skill development, and renewed commitment to homoeopathic practice.



CASE STUDY 1: FULFILLING A FATHER'S DREAM

Dr Anukriti Verma, aged 25, from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, is a participant in the Master's Course (January-June 2025). She lost her father at age 13 when he was battling third-stage Multiple Myeloma. Her father, Late Dr Arvind Verma, was a homoeopathic practitioner in Bhopal. From childhood, Anukriti dreamt of becoming a doctor and continuing her father's legacy. However, after completing her BHMS degree, she lacked confidence in prescribing appropriate remedies and in dealing with patients independently. She felt unprepared to reopen her father's clinic and serve the community.

Dr Anukriti enrolled in the six-month Master's Course at The Other Song Academy. During the program, she received comprehensive training in homoeopathic philosophy, case-taking techniques, repertory application, and remedy differentiation. She attended live clinical sessions at the Ghatkopar peripheral centre, where she gained hands-on experience observing senior practitioners. Through group mentoring and individual feedback, she gradually built her clinical skills and confidence. The course also helped her overcome personal fears, including travelling alone to new places for clinical training.

By the end of the program, Dr Anukriti gained valuable insights into effective questioning techniques, case-taking strategies, and the management of diverse cases across various age groups. She developed confidence in prescribing the similimum (the most accurate remedy for a person's condition, offering long-lasting healing) and in handling patients with different conditions. The positive outcomes she witnessed in patients during her clinical training were particularly rewarding and reinforced her decision to practice homoeopathy.

"After attending the course, I gained valuable insights into effective questioning techniques, case-taking strategies, and managing diverse cases across various age groups. The hands-on experience not only enhanced my skills but also boosted my confidence. Seeing positive outcomes in patients was particularly rewarding, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow in a practical setting."

On August 6, 2025, Dr Anukriti proudly opened her homoeopathic practice in Bhopal, fulfilling her childhood dream and honouring her father's memory. She now confidently serves patients in the same city where her father once practised, continuing the family legacy of healing through homoeopathy. Her journey from an uncertain graduate to a confident practitioner demonstrates how structured training and mentorship can transform professional lives and help young practitioners realise their aspirations.



CASE STUDY 2: FROM DIAGNOSTIC THINKING TO HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING

Dr Arul Jennifer, aged 34, from Madurai, Tamil Nadu, is a participant in the Master's Course (July-December 2024). Before joining the Master's Course, Dr Arul could diagnose cases and manage acute conditions well, but found chronic cases difficult. She could initially help patients, but she was unsure how to decide on the second prescription. This uncertainty prevented her from starting her own clinic. She approached cases mainly from a diagnostic, disease-focused angle rather than from a holistic patient perspective, which affected her confidence in managing a clinic independently.

Dr Arul enrolled in the six-month Master's Course, where she learnt homoeopathic philosophy in depth. The course introduced her to the Sensation Method, which was completely new to her. Through lectures, live case sessions, mentoring, and clinical training, she learnt to observe people from their perspective rather than focusing solely on their disease. She received hands-on training in different case-taking techniques, follow-up management, diet counselling, and orthopaedic applications.

After completing the course, Dr Arul gained confidence in managing her clinic. She developed the ability to understand and observe patients from their perspective, embracing the holistic approach prescribed by Dr Hahnemann. The Sensation Method fundamentally changed her perspective; she shifted from diagnostic thinking to perceiving cases as a true homoeopath would. She learnt to be an unprejudiced observer, seeing patients without bias. Her ability to handle chronic cases improved significantly, and she now confidently manages complex cases that previously intimidated her.

"Now I am confident in managing my clinic. After joining the program, I can understand and observe people from their perspectives. I could understand the Holistic approach. The sensation method was new to me, and it has changed my perspective from the core level. Before, I used to go with a diagnostic way, now I can perceive from a Homoeopath's way. Dr Hahnemann instructed us to view things holistically. So now, learning with Dr Sankaran, I can differentiate between these. Great training received as a Homoeopath."

Dr Arul now practices homoeopathy confidently in Madurai. She has successfully transitioned from treating only acute cases to managing chronic and complex cases with a holistic understanding. The course transformed not just her clinical skills but also her entire philosophical approach to healing, making her more complete and effective homoeopathic practitioner.

“ CASE STUDY 3: FINDING DIRECTION THROUGH MENTORSHIP

Dr Aishwarya Dherange (27 years), from Maharashtra, is a BHMS graduate and had less than 1 year of experience in homoeopathy at the time of joining the program. She participated in the Gurukul Programme (2023-24) through online mode.

At the early stage of her professional journey, Dr Aishwarya was eager to begin clinical practice but felt the need to strengthen her foundation and gain clarity in applying homoeopathic principles in real cases. With limited hands-on experience, she sought structured guidance to better understand case analysis, remedy selection, and the practical application of advanced concepts.

During the Gurukul Programme, Dr Aishwarya received access to Sankaran Masterclass videos, live case sessions with Dr Rajan Sankaran, and mentoring sessions. Although she did not participate in the WISE retreat, she later attended a Pune retreat as part of her learning exposure. She found the program highly effective in improving her knowledge of basic homoeopathic principles, including the Materia Medica and Repertory, and reported that her understanding had improved significantly.

She regularly engaged with Sankaran Masterclass learning modules and gained access to the Synergy Homoeopathic Software, which she now uses daily in practice. Dr Aishwarya applies what she learnt daily, and the program helped her handle complex and difficult cases significantly better. Her ability to analyse and present cases improved notably, and she experienced better treatment outcomes, increased confidence in prescribing, and greater use of advanced methods and software.

Overall, Dr Aishwarya reported being very satisfied with the program and stated that she would recommend it to other students and practitioners. Her journey highlights how early exposure to structured mentorship and practical learning can play a critical role in building confidence and clinical competence at the start of a homoeopathic career.

These three case studies illustrate the diverse ways in which The Other Song's programs transform participants' professional lives. Whether fulfilling a family legacy, shifting from a diagnostic to a holistic approach, or finding clarity through expert mentorship, each participant experienced profound personal and professional growth. Common themes across these stories include:

- »» Building confidence through hands-on clinical training and mentorship
- »» Shifting from theoretical knowledge to practical clinical competency
- »» Developing systematic approaches to case analysis and remedy selection
- »» Learning to see patients holistically rather than diagnostically
- »» Receiving personalised feedback that addresses individual learning needs
- »» Gaining access to tools, materials, and resources that support ongoing learning

These stories represent the lived experiences of participants across different programs, demonstrating that The Other Song's educational model successfully supports homoeopaths at various career stages, from recent graduates starting their first practice to experienced practitioners seeking to refine their skills and deepen their understanding.

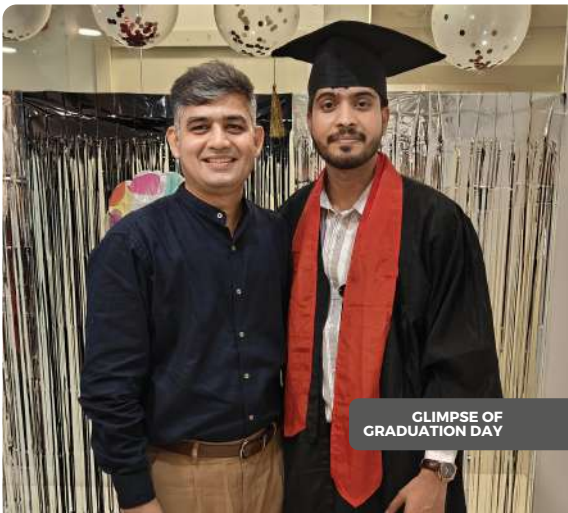
08. CHALLENGE

The implementation of The Other Song's homoeopathy training programs revealed valuable insights into operational complexities. Drawing on interviews with implementing agency staff and faculty reflections, this chapter examines the challenge encountered during program delivery and the inherent limitation of this impact assessment study.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION COMPLEXITY



The Master's Course faced challenges in multi-stakeholder coordination, as reported by the Implementing Agency's curriculum designer and course administrative team. Coordinating among teaching faculty, mentors, clinical supervisors, and administrative teams required careful planning, particularly to align lecture schedules, mentoring sessions, and clinical rotations across online and offline formats while accommodating senior faculty availability. The inclusion of external experts further added to coordination demands, as their teaching approaches needed to be smoothly integrated.



**GLIMPSE OF
GRADUATION DAY**

09. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the challenge identified during program implementation, the following recommendation is proposed to strengthen program delivery.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY



Implement centralised scheduling and coordination platforms to streamline the complex logistics of coordinating faculty, mentors, clinical supervisors, and external experts across multiple program streams, reducing administrative burden and scheduling conflicts.

Implementation of the recommendation will require phased planning, stakeholder consultation, resource mobilisation, and adaptive management. Prioritisation should consider feasibility, potential impact, and alignment with The Other Song's strategic vision for advancing homoeopathic education and excellence in practice in India.



**GLIMPSE OF
GRADUATION DAY**

10. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT READINESS

The sustainability and exit-readiness of The Other Song homoeopathy training programs are reflected in documented outcomes that demonstrate alumni independence, continued professional engagement, and systemic contributions to the homoeopathy ecosystem. Field evidence collected from implementing agency staff, faculty, and program documentation reveals multiple dimensions of program sustainability that extend beyond the formal certification period.



ALUMNI TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

As per interviews with implementing agencies, program alumni have successfully transitioned into independent homoeopathic practitioners, with clinics established across multiple cities, including Mumbai, Pune, Goa, Bhopal, and Madurai. The administrative staff reported that graduates are not only practising independently but are also mentoring others, sharing their learnings, and extending Dr Sankaran's legacy by teaching in their own local settings. Nearly all Master's program participants and approximately 90% of MUHS fellowship participants were reported to be practising homoeopathy confidently post-certification.



ALUMNI CONTRIBUTION TO THE HOMOEOPATHY ECOSYSTEM

The programs have generated a cadre of practitioners who are actively strengthening the broader homoeopathy ecosystem. Gurukul alumni are reported to be highly involved in mentoring and teaching, helping to spread high-quality homoeopathic education across various platforms and to learners at various levels. Master's course graduates are similarly engaged in practice, mentoring, and teaching, helping people to heal while disseminating advanced homoeopathic knowledge. Faculty interviews corroborated this finding, noting that alumni have been actively using and teaching the methods to students and colleagues. Notably, some alumni have transitioned into faculty or mentor roles within The Other Song programs, thereby contributing to the training ecosystem.



PATHWAYS FOR CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The organisation has created several pathways for alumni to continue growing after completing their initial training, supporting long-term professional development. Some PRANA participants have joined OPD and mentorship programs for ongoing learning, while Gurukul has offered extension courses, including the Gurukul 1 Extension program, which has 10 certified participants. These continued learning options show that the organisation is building sustainable, long-term systems to support practitioners at different stages of their careers.



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND READINESS

The program shows strong readiness for long-term sustainability through clear coordination systems, experienced faculty, and well-established monitoring processes. Monthly case evaluations, logbook reviews, and regular feedback indicate that quality assurance is built into everyday operations. Software-based tracking and student coordinators who manage attendance and feedback further support smooth functioning. Additionally, many alumni have gone on to open their own practices and later returned as mentors, creating a self-sustaining cycle in which trained practitioners train future batches, reducing reliance on the founding team over time.

CERTIFICATION CEREMONY AT PRANA



11. CONCLUSION

The Other Song homeopathy training programs, comprising Gurukul, Master's, MUHS fellowship courses, and PRANA, have demonstrated measurable contributions to advancing homeopathic education and practice during the assessment period. The programs offered well-structured learning pathways that combined classical homeopathic foundations with modern methods like the Sensation Method, Superclass, WISE processes, and the Five-Finger approach. Through all program streams, participants reported enhanced clinical reasoning, improved case-taking skills, and increased confidence in prescription and patient management.

A particularly significant outcome is the emergence of program alumni as contributors to the broader homeopathy ecosystem. Graduates are now engaged in mentoring, teaching, and knowledge-dissemination activities, with some returning to The Other Song as faculty or mentors. This development suggests that the programs have successfully seeded a self-reinforcing cycle of capacity building within the homeopathic practitioner community.

In conclusion, The Other Song's training programs have built a strong foundation for improving homeopathic practice through structured teaching and ongoing mentorship. Many participants have grown into confident practitioners, successfully combining advanced methods with classical principles, and some are now contributing back to the wider homeopathy community. To sustain and expand this impact, the organisation will need to address implementation challenges, improve post-program tracking, scale personalised teaching approaches, and broaden funding support. The essential elements for long-term sustainability, such as coordination systems, monitoring processes, alumni engagement, and a growing group of trained practitioners, are already in place, positioning the programs to continue strengthening homeopathic education and practice in India.



ABOUT BAJAJ AUTO LIMITED

Bajaj Auto Limited, a prominent player in the global automotive industry, is one of India's leading manufacturers of two-wheelers and three-wheelers. Founded in 1945 by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, the company has established itself as a trusted, innovative brand, having sold over 21 million motorcycles in 79 countries. Headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra, Bajaj Auto is known for its extensive product portfolio, including motorcycles, scooters, and autorickshaws, catering to diverse consumer needs in both India and international markets. It is also India's No. 1 motorcycle exporter, with two out of every three bikes sold internationally carrying a Bajaj badge. With a rich legacy and a focus on innovation and sustainability, Bajaj Auto continues to shape the future of mobility, both in India and around the world. In addition to its pioneering contributions in the automotive sector, Bajaj Auto's legacy of social responsibility has always been integral to its ethos, reflecting the commitment to serve society. In March 2024, the Bajaj group came together for Bajaj Beyond and announced a commitment of ₹5,000 crore over the next 5 years to benefit over 2 crore Indians, with a sharp focus on skilling. With this vision, Bajaj Auto is channelising its CSR resources and expertise into skilling, especially in STEM and related fields. Additionally, Bajaj Auto CSR contributes to education, health, environmental, and animal welfare projects to support the sustainable development of the community and the nation.



ABOUT NGO PARTNER

The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy is committed to delivering high-quality education for homoeopathic students and practitioners through a combination of online and offline learning formats. Its courses are delivered by faculty members with extensive clinical experience and years of teaching expertise. Through this approach, the academy aims to nurture some of the finest homoeopaths worldwide, practitioners who are equipped to treat a wide range of illnesses in clinical practice. By strengthening clinical competence and professional confidence, the academy contributes to building greater trust in homoeopathy and enhancing its global standing as a credible system of medicine.

The academy functions as an international centre for homoeopathic education, bringing together world-renowned senior doctors and homoeopathic consultants from across the globe. It is guided by the pioneer of the Sensation Method, Dr. Rajan Sankaran, whose leadership and vision have shaped the academy into a hub for advanced homoeopathic learning.

All courses are firmly rooted in the practical application of classical homoeopathic principles as taught in undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. The academy offers foundation and basic programs designed specifically for students and newly qualified practitioners. As learners develop a strong command of the fundamentals, they can progress to advanced programs that focus on contemporary developments in homoeopathy, particularly the Sensation Method.

In addition to core training, the academy provides a wide range of specialised courses and seminars to help practitioners manage diverse clinical conditions commonly encountered in practice, including paediatrics, acute illnesses, oncology, and other speciality areas. Many educators from around the world contribute to these programs, sharing innovative approaches, not only within the Sensation Method but also across other evolving homoeopathic frameworks. When applied effectively, these advances significantly enhance clinical practice.

The academy regularly organises seminars led by such innovators, offering practitioners ongoing opportunities to broaden their knowledge and refine their skills. The COVID-19 pandemic further expanded the academy's reach by highlighting the value of collaborative and technology-enabled learning models. As a result, The Other Song Homoeopathic Academy now works in partnership with HOPE (Homoeopathy Online Portal for Education). It is supported by its sister organisation PRANA, the world's first homoeopathy and yoga centre based in Pune, along with Synergy Homoeopathic Software (SHS) and Homoeopathic Medical Publishers (HMP).

ABOUT SOULACE

SoulAce is India's leading CSR consulting, and monitoring & evaluation firm with deep expertise in CSR, employee volunteering and tech for good. Over the last 16 years, SoulAce has partnered with the Top 200 of Fortune 500 companies in India, having delivered over 5,000 projects across all states and 250+ districts. SoulAce's work spans three core verticals - CSR Impact Assessment and M&E, Tech for Good Platforms for CSR, Volunteering and ESC, and the third vertical being Corporate Employee Volunteering end to end execution.

Prepared by

