



Creating Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities and Building Climate Resilience - Annual Report 2025-26

Project *Udaan* (giving wings) - Focused on the Indigenous Women and Girls of Madhya Pradesh, India



Submitted by
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Partner Organisation
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Overview

Indigenous women and girls in Madhya Pradesh face multi-dimensional marginalisation, shaped by their social status, gender and poverty. Living in remote villages with limited access to education, healthcare and stable livelihoods means they are often excluded from development processes. Their dependence on precarious, informal work makes them particularly vulnerable to climate instability, which directly compromises household incomes and food security. For these women, diversifying livelihoods through skill-building and sustainable practices is essential to breaking cycles of poverty and building resilience.



*This map highlights the **Indore District**, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, with a smaller inset in the top left corner showing Madhya Pradesh's location within India*

Programme Participants

Project Udhaan, which means “to give wings” and was named by our partner, reflects the transformative power of livelihood building in rural communities.

Over this past year, we ran several community awareness programs to improve health, raise awareness of government schemes, and promote environmental consciousness. Efforts also encouraged women to participate in regular savings activities and financial inclusion initiatives. Overall, these interventions reached 6,200 women, contributing to meaningful positive changes in their lives

Goals

- Equip women and girls with skills for self-employment through training in areas such as food processing, terracotta production and sustainable agriculture.
- Facilitate access to existing government schemes and benefits to enhance household security and social protection.
- Build collective strength through Self-Help Groups and Vigilance Committees, enabling women to lead community initiatives and participate in local governance.
- Promote climate resilience through awareness-building, adoption of sustainable practices and diversification of income sources.
- Establish market linkages and community enterprises to help women generate sustainable and independent livelihoods.

Initiatives and Activities



Awareness Programmes

- Conducted awareness sessions on health, welfare schemes, and the environment across villages.
- Coordinated with Panchayat and NRLM for community engagement.
- Mobilised women for skill training and scheme linkages.
- Facilitated post office accounts to support savings and financial inclusion.

Digital Information Centre

- The **Digital Suchna Kendra** assisted with **government schemes** such as Ayushman Bharat, PM Matru Vandana Yojna, and PM Gramin Awas Yojna.
- **Coordination with government departments** helped villagers apply for and access benefits
- Efforts for online registration is ongoing, portal is currently closed



Government and Welfare Linkages

- **Women participated** in Gram Sabha meetings **across seven villages**, raising issues such as water scarcity and road access.
- **706 applications** were facilitated for government schemes
- Under Dharti Abha Tribal Village Utkarsh Abhiyan, **212 community members** completed documentation and applied for schemes through the camps set up
- Support was provided to women to open bank accounts

Climate Change Awareness

- A total of **4195 villagers participated** in climate and environmental awareness programmes about the harmful effects of chemicals and plastics.
- Training on natural pesticides (five-leaf and ten-leaf decoctions) was conducted, **142 farmers** adopted these natural methods, reporting pest reductions, cost savings and better crop health.
- **350 saplings were planted**, including neem, mango, jamun, moringa, peepal and ashok.
- **8 women** established kitchen gardens growing nutritious vegetables like ladyfinger, ridge gourd, apple gourd, cluster beans, and spinach regularly, reducing costs



Gram Sabha Participation

- Facilitated women's participation in Gram Sabha meetings across **7 villages** (Mangaliya, Kawali, Badgonda, Bashi Pipri, Ghoda Khurd, Badkuwa, and Chhapariya) to discuss local issues.
- Conducted follow-ups with community members and Panchayats, leading to the resolution of key village-level issues.
- Assisted women in completing documentation to access government welfare schemes.
- Provided additional support at the district level for unresolved cases, for successful resolution



Skills Development and Livelihoods Training



Food Processing & Terracotta

- **10 women** who received training last year have expanded their product range and are now producing and selling potato chips and sago (sabudanna) chaklis.
- **7 women** prepared the potato chips of 3-4 bags (per bag 60kg potato) this season, and they will sell them.
- Women who received terracotta training produced clay lamps (diyas) and sold them in local markets and weekly markets (haats), which helped increase their income.

Linkages with CSR event by Cipla

- Facilitated market linkage for women trained in terracotta and food processing through participation in the Joy of Caring (CSR) event
- Enabled women to showcase their products directly to consumers, creating income-generation opportunities.
- Strengthened participants' confidence and entrepreneurial skills, including product presentation and understanding of market demand.



Production-Cum-Shop and Training Centre (Badgonda)

- The **centre continues to produce and market local products** - chips, papad, terracotta goods, incense sticks, jute bags, Ganesh idols, and rakhis.
- Artisans **created decorative clay items for Diwali** (season of high demand)
- Ongoing **efforts for online presence** to expand market access

Beauty Parlour Training

- **20 eligible** indigenous girls and women received beauty parlour training for **2 months** from a qualified trainer
- After completion of the training, certificates were issued to participants, and future career plans were made
- **Several women** offer basic beauty services from their homes, such as eyebrow shaping, facials, festive makeup, and bridal makeup, earning a small but regular income.
- **7 participants** established their own beauty parlour services in their villages, providing routine services like eyebrow shaping and facials, as well as bridal makeup during weddings and special occasions and **earning INR 4000-8000** monthly.
- **2 participants** have joined well-known beauty parlours in Mhow, gaining further practical experience and earning an income.

Computer Training

- Preparatory activities identified **20 eligible women and girls** for a **2-month** course.
- **5 computers** were installed for training, and a qualified teacher was hired.
- Training included hardware and software basics, MS Word, Excel, Paint, typing in Hindi & English, Gmail, and Google Input Tools - certified on completion.
- **2 women** secured data entry jobs in schools, earning **INR 6,000 monthly**
- **3 women** secured data entry jobs in private shops, earning **INR 7,000 monthly**



(See stories of impact below for examples of success)

Accomplishments in Numbers

- 4195** Participants reached through meetings on health, governance, and environment
- 40** Women completed either beauty parlour training or computer training
- 5** Earn a stable income through data entry jobs after computer training
- 10** Women earned income through food processing
- 8** New SHGs formed under NRLM, regular savings activities have begun
- 195** Participants trained on climate change
- 350** Saplings planted
- 142** Community members used organic fertilisers, reducing costs
- 706** Individuals linked with government welfare schemes
- 212** Assisted through special camps
- 6847** Awareness meetings took place
- 34** Community meetings were conducted
- 5** SHGs were linked with a loan of INR 750,000 for livelihood activities
- 3** Health camps in Badgonda were organised and free medicine was distributed
- 700** Community members participated and received health check-ups, including blood sugar and blood pressure screening





Girls supporting the Snacks Exhibition of Indigenous Women



Basic Computer Skills Training



Computer Skills Training Certificates to Indigenous Young Women and Girls



Awarness Session on Climate Change and Environment



A Master Trainer from the Community providing Wellness and Beauty Culture Training

Challenges and Responses for Future

Challenges	Responses	Outcomes
Meetings were difficult to organise as women often prioritised daily work over attendance	This was combated by hosting a larger number of meeting	Overall more women were reached
Women made Ganesh idols and Diwali lamps, but clay cracked due to weather conditions	Production activities are currently on hold	Production will resume once the weather stabilises
Frequent changes in staff (<i>Sewa Sakhis and Centre-In-Charges</i>)	New members were recruited and trained	Field operations were stable again, 35 meetings took place
Unavailability of government officials to tend to issues	Continuous follow-ups via phone calls and repeated visits to respective departments	Tasks were completed after consistent efforts, overcoming uncooperative officials
Beneficiaries lacked required documents, threatening access to welfare schemes	Assisted beneficiaries with documentation and follow-ups across Panchayats, Janpad Panchayats, banks, post offices, and district-level departments	Significant time and repeated follow-ups ensured that women became more familiar with the procedures
Many women were hesitant or fearful to participate in Gram Sabha meetings	Seniors encouraged participation, and repeated meetings helped build women's confidence	Few women successfully participated in Panchayat meetings
Chips and Papad Skill training saw some errors in measuring ingredients during preparation	Trainers provided additional guidance to correct quantities	This enabled the women to improve their methods

Stories of Impact

01 Ghoda Khurd: A Small Success of Community Struggle

During a community meeting in Ghoda Khurd village, women raised a pressing issue - the shortage of water. The problem affected the entire village, disrupting domestic chores, animal care, and children's school attendance.

The Centre-In-Charge from MSSN and community members met with the Sarpanch to explain the gravity of the situation, to which the Sarpanch reassured action. Their persistence through regular follow-ups paid off. Within 15 days, a new hand pump was installed, benefitting 40-45 tribal families.

Additionally, after a recent budget allocation, the process of laying a pipeline from the water tank located outside the village will begin, providing the villagers with relief. The villagers expressed gratitude to the Sarpanch and the organisation. The water problem was resolved, making daily life easier.



02 Empowered Voices: Kehraphali's Road to Change



Before Construction:



After Construction:

In Kheraphali, a sub-hamlet under Manglia Village, home to roughly 100 families, reaching anywhere meant travelling through unsafe, unpaved, potholed paths caused great inconvenience to residents. Women repeatedly asked for a proper road, but nothing changed.

The issue became urgent after a tragic incident in 2021, when Babulal, the husband of resident Resham Bai, lost his life after slipping and drowning in a nearby pond. Deeply affected, Resham Bai realised that poor road conditions and negligence were not just inconvenient but dangerous for the entire community.

Determined, Resham Bai filed a complaint through the Chief Minister's Helpline. When state officials followed up, the Panchayat Secretary falsely claimed the road had already been built and even submitted misleading photos. Resham Bai was pressured to withdraw her complaint with the assurance that it would be addressed, but still no road was constructed.

In 2024, during a meeting under the *Udaan* program, this issue was raised again before the *Sewa Sakhi*. Together, Resham Bai, women from the community and the *Sewa Sakhi* presented a written application to the Gram Sabha, demanding action. When officials argued that construction was impossible due to lack of land, women went door-to-door, talking to families about the importance of the road. In an inspiring act of unity, the residents of Kheraphali collectively agreed to donate portions of their land to make construction possible.

Within 2 months of continuous follow-up the road construction was approved and completed. Its completion has greatly improved mobility and safety, marking a significant achievement in collective action and women-led local governance.

03 Journey to Self-Reliance - Basipiri's Story of Training to Independence

Dhankunwar Pawar, a resident of Basipipri village, had a keen interest in beauty parlour work from the beginning. When the opportunity for training was introduced by MSSN, she expressed her willingness to participate. She attended a two-month beauty parlour training program conducted in Badgonda. During the training, she learned various beauty services and received practical exposure to skills such as eyebrow shaping, facials, and basic makeup.

After completing the training, Dhankunwar started a small beauty parlour from her home in the village. In the beginning, the number of customers was limited, but as word of her services spread, her clientele gradually increased. Now, especially during festive and wedding seasons, she receives regular work and earns around INR 4,000–5,000 per month, which has improved her family's net income and supports household expenses. She expresses her gratitude shares that the program provided her with an opportunity to learn a skill and start her own work.



04 From First Lessons to New Opportunities: Self-Reliance through Computer Skills

Monica Bahadur, a resident of Ada Pahad village in Bassi Pipari, put herself forward to learn new skills through the computer training programme at the training centre to improve her livelihood opportunities.

Monica learnt basic computer skills, including Hindi and English typing and data entry work. Through regular practice and guidance at the centre, she gradually developed confidence in operating computers and handling digital tasks. Continuous practical exposure and support helped her become proficient in these skills.

Upon training completion, Monica began data entry work at a shop in Mhow town. She is earning around INR 6,000 per month, and generating income that has not only become central to her family's livelihood but also solidified her financial independence. Today, she is not only supporting her family financially but is also inspiring other women in her village to learn new skills and pursue livelihood opportunities.