

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25



**Protsahan**  
India Foundation



Healing Childhoods • Empowering Girls • Scaling Care







## Contents

Founder's Message	05
Who We Are	06
Awards & Recognition	07
Global Recognition for H.E.A.R.T	10
Media Coverage	12
Our Systems Strategy	14
Fifteen Years, Countless Journeys of Hope	15
Impact at a Glance	17
<b>Health</b>	26
<b>Education</b>	32
<b>Arts</b>	46
<b>Rights</b>	52
<b>Technology</b>	58
When Communities Speak	70
Hriday Dialogues: National Stakeholders Consultation	82
Grassroots Alliances for Resilient Childhoods	86
CareVerse	87
People at Protsahan	92
Above & Beyond	95
Mentor Spotlight	99
Compliance with Law	103
Our Funders & Partners	104
Financials - Income, Growth & Expenditure	105







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## Founder's Message

***"Girls and women will not logframe their way out of poverty."***

As Protsahan turns 14, I'm not thinking about awards, team size, or numbers. I'm thinking about Anju a migrant girl from Darbhanga, Bihar, who stood up for her right to stay in school. About Afsana, who taught herself how to enter the corporate world, becoming the first girl in her family to do so, after surviving unimaginable violence. I'm thinking of Neetu, a migrant girl from Uttar Pradesh, who led government convergence camps in her basti, helping link migrant families with critical schemes and entitlements through simple baithaks. I'm thinking of Soni, who escaped child marriage and went on to crack the Azim Premji University interview with a full scholarship. I'm thinking of Manya, who shared her vision for STEM education for girls with the Honorable Minister, Women and Child Development, Smt. Smriti Irani, and left such an impression that she and her mother were invited to visit Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), Bangalore!

These girls, their courage and dreams, are the milestones that matter most. This is what 14 years of Protsahan look like. This is why we keep going.

These girls are not "beneficiaries." They are survivors and system changers in their own right. They remind us every day: our job is not to save, but to enable spaces for learning and thriving in grassroots communities, classrooms and courtrooms, where children and girls no longer need saving.

This year, as we step into our 15th, we hold close, a quiet conviction with deep clarity: We are scaling the idea of trauma informed child care. The idea that healing from severe childhood adversity & trauma requires more than sympathy, it needs **Ecosystems of Care, Access to Capital, and the Building of Capabilities**, at the grassroots. It needs parts of Samaaj, Sarkaar, and Bazaar walking together, unlearning and re-learning how to center the child.

At Protsahan, our Girl Champions don't just survive, they lead. Everything we've built has grown from their lived realities on footpaths, in shelter homes, across bastis and factories, not from external asks of resource holders. Whether it's our **Girl Empowerment Centers** in a hub-and-spoke model to anchor government entitlements in urban slums for disadvantaged migrants girls, or **CareVerse**, a digital public good for trauma-informed training of caregivers across India's diverse context of child protection landscape, or even **Hriday Dialogues**, it all begins by *listening*.

To those who've believed in us: thank you. Your trust is the scaffolding that's held us steady through storms. To those just joining us: welcome. This work is hard. But it's possible when we walk together. Let's not lose sight of what truly matters.

Sonal Kapoor





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# Who We Are

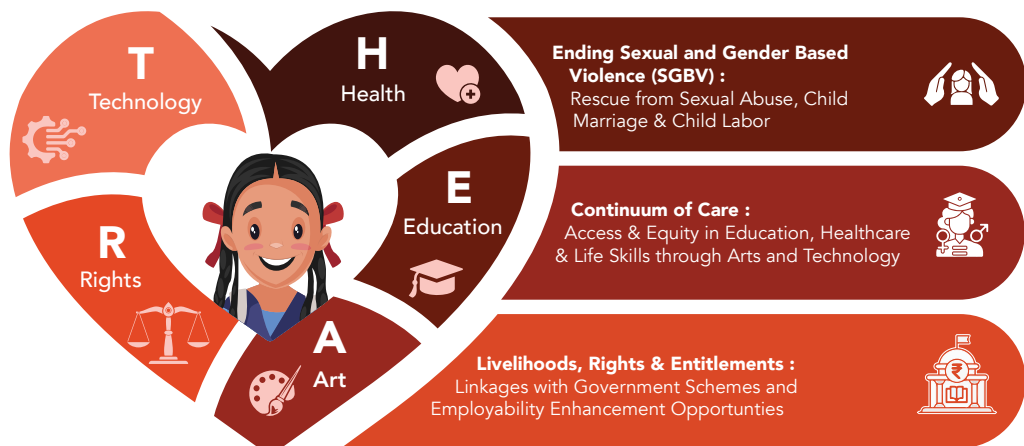
## H.E.A.R.T - Healing With Art

Protsahan is a Delhi-based nonprofit organisation dedicated to the care, rehabilitation, and reintegration of marginalised migrant adolescent girls who have faced severe adversity, violence, or abuse. Since 2010, Protsahan has supported over 96,000 girls in Delhi's urban slums, enabling them to break intergenerational cycles of adverse childhood experiences including but not limited to begging, child marriage, child labour, child sexual abuse and gender based violence.

Our trauma-informed interventions use the power of art, technology, and psychosocial care to help girls heal and grow into self-reliant young women by enabling direct access to Care, Capabilities, and Capital.

We work at the intersection of direct service and ecosystem building: while our Girl Empowerment Centers serve the most vulnerable girls in Delhi slums, our digital training platform, CareVerse, equips child protection actors across India with the tools to recognise and respond to childhood trauma. By embedding healing and resilience into communities and strengthening families' access to social protection schemes, Protsahan ensures that children are raised in safe families, nurturing environments, not left alone in institutions or on the streets. Our model invests in both survivor agency and systems' workforce capability, creating a robust child protection ecosystem that is inclusive, accountable, and built to last in the grassroots context of India.

**Protsahan's heart model is a holistic, flexible, first-of its kind gender transformative approach to seamlessly blending physical, mental, material and emotional well-being of a survivor of sexual and gender based violence (sgbv)**





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# Awards & Recognitions

## Protsahan selected for Atal Incubation Centre N/Core The /Nudge Incubator

Selected for the N/11 Cohort of prestigious The /Nudge Incubator program, after grilling rounds that tested our innovation, ideas and intent for growth out of 448 strong applications across india in the thematic area: Employability & Skilling



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## Protsahan selected for the Ashoka ASPIRe Accelerator

A global initiative from Ashoka Innovators for the Public, that supports social entrepreneurs to design for exponential social impact by activating agency, cultivating changemaking networks, empowered by data and enabled by technology, selected our founder: Sonal Kapoor for this prestigious learning program.

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**Mallika Sinha**  
(Manager - Resource  
Mobilisation &  
Compliance) at  
Protsahan was selected  
for the Vital Voices  
Visionaries Program  
2024

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## Bridgespan Spotlights Protsahan's Body of Work



### Client Spotlight: Protsahan India Foundation

Protsahan is rooted in the mission of care, rehabilitation, and reintegration of migrant girls and women in India who have faced severe adversity and violence. Their key focus is transitioning them from impoverished slums to the formal workforce, through trauma-informed education, skilling and government linkages thereby unlocking dignified access to care, capital, and capabilities at the last mile for them.

Protsahan was one of the participant organizations in our BNDP cohort on Designing Strategy which saw their diverse and inclusive team supported by two Bridgespan coaches in the development of a strategy for their next phase of growth.



As a result of this work, the Protsahan team learned to pressure test and tighten the outcomes to which they intend to hold themselves accountable as part of their intended impact. They have also refined their theory of change to anchor on their deep work with marginalized communities and introduced new pathways for non-linear growth such as directly building capacities of other organizations working in the field and engaging with government.

Since participating in BNDP, their growth has been tremendous. They have followed through on their strategy and developed 44 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which their state government partner is using to implement stronger child protection systems. Additionally, Protsahan has reinforced its partnerships with other intermediaries and NGOs to further strengthen its own organization and effectively implement its envisioned strategy.



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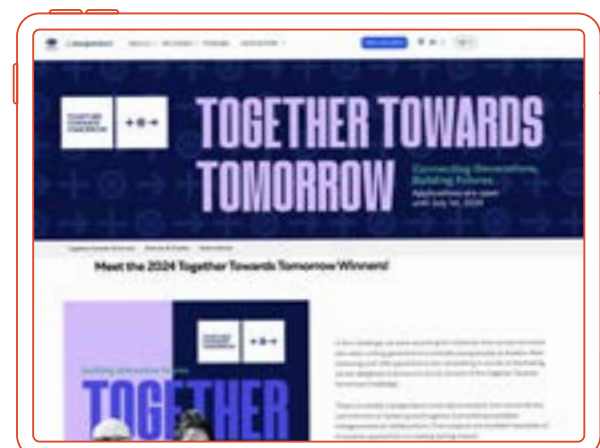
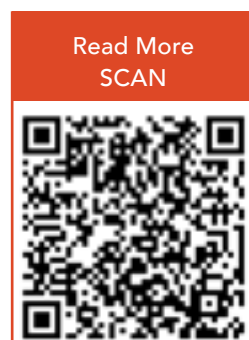
# Global Recognition for H.E.A.R.T

**Stanford Social Innovation  
Review recognises our  
H.E.A.R.T Approach by  
Publishing our original work**



## Protsahan wins the Together Towards Tomorrow Challenge

**Protsahan's H.E.A.R.T Program selected as a  
Top Prize Winner amongst the 12 winners,  
out of 450 global applications, of the Together  
Towards Tomorrow Challenge, facilitated in  
collaboration between Ashoka and HSBC**





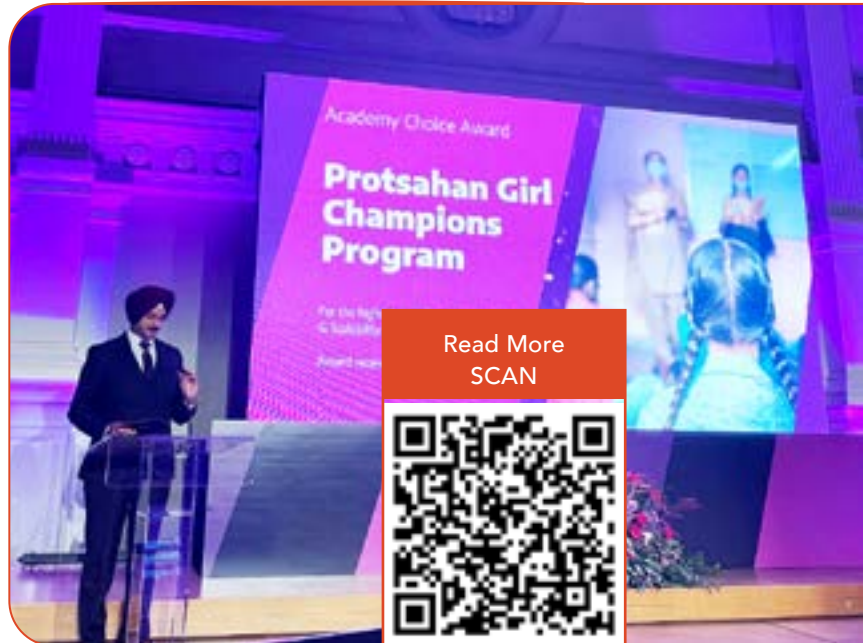


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## Protsahan's Girl Champions Program wins the Academy Choice Award at the HundrED Summit in Helsinki, Finland

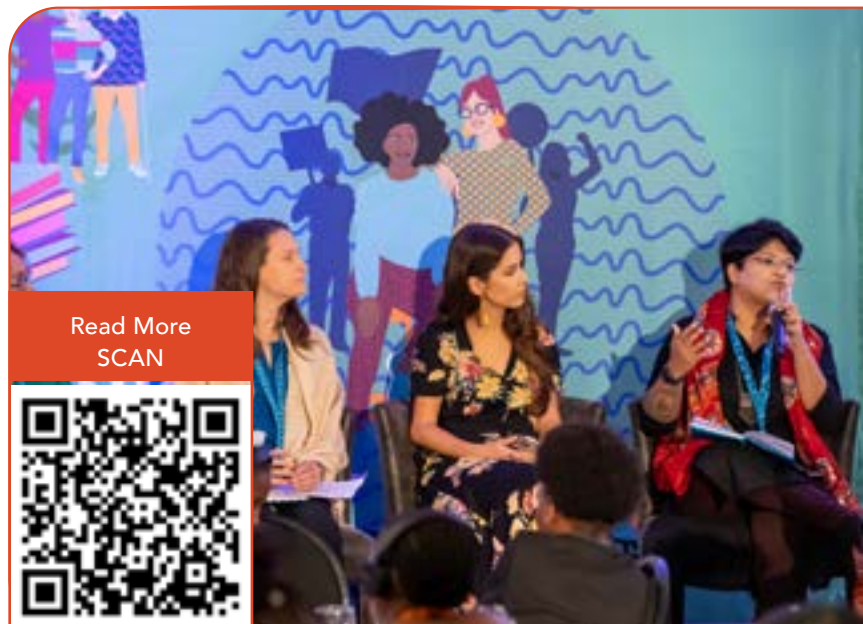
For achieving the highest overall ranking in Impact & Scalability by the esteemed HundrED Academy. Our Executive Director, Jaswinder Singh accepted the award and inspired everyone to continue working for the marginalised girls so they too have access to opportunities.



## Protsahan at UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) in South Africa

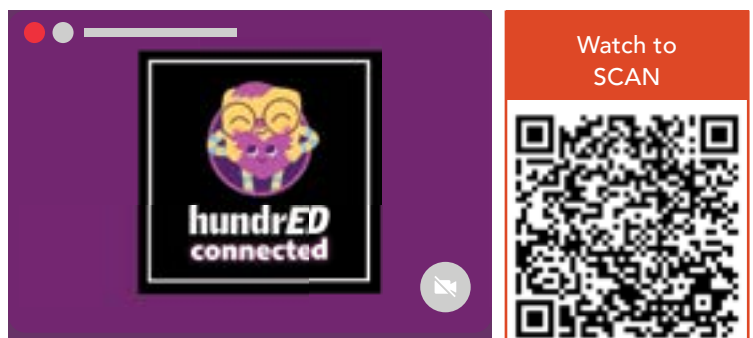
*"Girls and women will NOT logframe their way out of poverty." - Sonal Kapoor*

We spotlighted how depth of scale approaches that focus on resourcing for gender equity are key to seeing the progress in communities and what true sustainability stands for. We highlighted best practices from India in Juvenile Justice approaches, that the world can learn from.



## Podcast with HundrED:

Scaling up from the grassroots with Protsahan Founder, Sonal Kapoor and Co-Founder, Jaswinder Singh





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# Media Coverage

≡ NEWS

1<sup>st</sup> August, 2024

## THE TIMES OF INDIA

A 13-YR-OLD RAPED, KILLED  
9-YR-OLD SISTER AS MOM  
WATCHED. IS HE A VICTIM TOO?

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≡ NEWS

14<sup>th</sup> January, 2025

## DECODE

IN WORLD'S MOST POLLUTED  
CAPITAL, DIGITAL DIVIDE  
DISRUPTS EDUCATION

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≡ NEWS

6<sup>th</sup> March, 2025

## YOURSTORY

HOW PROTSAHAN INDIA  
FOUNDATION IS CHANGING  
THE LIVES OF GIRLS FROM  
WEST DELHI'S SLUMS THROUGH  
EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE

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# Our Systems Strategy



## DIRECT IMPACT

Protsahan's on-ground model has served over **96,000 vulnerable girls across 107 slum communities**. Enabling direct pathways out of child marriage, child labor, child abuse, and gender based violence, we enable adolescent girls with trauma informed **education, healthcare and livelihoods**, ensuring holistic care & social protection for a self reliant thriving future of migrant communities.

## DISTRIBUTING THE ABILITY TO SOLVE ACROSS PUBLIC SYSTEMS

We take 15 years of frontline experience working with girls and communities and translate that into supporting systems that enable care for children. Through CareVerse, we train frontline caregivers - social workers, teachers, aaganwadi workers, parents counselors and government child protection functionaries - to identify, report, and respond to childhood trauma. Our work uplifts the quality of child care across public child protection systems by building capacity in trauma-informed psychosocial care services for 170 million vulnerable children. This is in accordance with National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) and India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

## BUILDING THE FIELD

We anchor annual multi-stakeholder Hriday Dialogues, and equip the national child protection ecosystem with data, insight, and collective capacity. We equip frontline caregivers accessible, neuroscience-backed, and contextually grounded trauma-response skills to protect and nurture vulnerable children.







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# Fifteen Years, Countless Journeys of Hope

## 2010-2025

### From Footpaths to Field Building: Protsahan's 15 Year Journey

#### Walking With Girls, Building Systems That Care

Protsahan India Foundation began in 2010 with a simple belief: no child should be left behind because of poverty, child abuse, or gender based violence. In Delhi's informal settlements, we saw girls on the brink of child marriage, child labour, child sexual abuse, and illiteracy. From the rescue of one girl from the point of transactional sex to feed her family to today having empowered over 96,000 girls to be admitted in schools, complete schools & colleges, enter the workforce and heal from the trauma of violence and adversity, our journey has taken us from streets to schools, dreaming the big Indian dream, alongside the girls we work with.





## Key Milestones :

### 1 2010–2012: The Beginnings

Started art and creative education sessions on the footpaths and in shelter homes of Delhi, using art, photography, and storytelling as tools of healing and learning for girls facing violence and adversity in Uttam Nagar slums. Our first needs assessment showed, that 89% of the adolescent girls, we worked with, fell below the poverty line and had faced sexual violence before they turned 12. Our first batch of 43 girls facing extreme adversity were enrolled in government schools.

### 2 2013–2015: Genesis of the H.E.A.R.T Framework

Developed our now globally recognised, H.E.A.R.T. (Health, Education, Art, Rights, Technology) model, centering trauma-informed, arts-based learning while strengthening linkages with government systems. Because without family strengthening, social protection, and community resilience, child protection is incomplete.

### 4 2019–2020: Systems Thinking for Community Resilience

We realised that while direct services can heal trauma of childhood abuse, they alone cannot prevent it. To drive systemic change, we began training social workers, child protection officers, and frontline caregivers in trauma-informed practices. Our arts-based training proved highly effective for government child protection officers across Child Welfare Committees, Juvenile Justice Boards, law colleges, and among child psychology students, building a shared language of care within the system.

### 3 2016–2019: Establishing Girl Empowerment Centres (GECs)

Transitioned from ad-hoc sessions to community-based GECs as safe spaces, enabling out-of-school girls to reintegrate into education while accessing healthcare and psychosocial care. Established 2 GECs as hub-and-spoke facilitation spaces, reaching over 20,000 migrant girls from Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal across 39 migrant slums in Delhi.

### 5 2020–2021: Responding During the Pandemic

During COVID-19, we pivoted swiftly to deliver emergency relief with dignity, providing wellbeing kits, trauma-informed tele-counselling, and digital education access, reaching over 500,000 migrants. It was during these conversations, while deeply listening to the needs of girls in the community, that the foundation for trauma-informed livelihoods was laid, ensuring skilling pathways through a fellowship model for migrant girls at the last mile to enter India's workforce with confidence and hope.

### 6 2022–2025: Scaling Ecosystems of Care (CareVerse and Tech-Enabled Field Building)

Launched Hriday Dialogues (2023) and CareVerse (2024), an AI-powered digital public good, to democratise trauma-informed care training for frontline workers across India. National POC SO report released. Expanded structured employability and micro-entrepreneurial skilling programs for migrant girls facing severe adversity. Deepened our work in Delhi across 107 slum clusters with 5 Girl Empowerment Centers, having impacted over 96,000 girls by now, while aligning with India's National Education Policy and global Sustainable Development Goals, positioning Protsahan as a systems orchestrator in child protection and gender equity in India.



### 7 The Road Ahead

Protsahan remains committed to ending violence in the lives of girls, ensuring continued education and skilling, and building ecosystems of trauma-informed care across India. Together, hand in hand with government, philanthropy, civil society and India Inc., we are nurturing resilient communities to contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047, ensuring every girl has the opportunity to learn, thrive, and lead in a strong, inclusive India.





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# Impact at a Glance

2024-2025



## CARE: Where Healing Begins for Survivors and Their Families

Our girl champions have high scores of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). They face abuse across multiple intersections of migration, poverty, violence, gender and caste. By design, psychosocial support is vital and has proven to improve retention and longevity in formal education, enhanced confidence, and the ability to articulate their need and better health outcomes. Such outcomes wouldn't be possible to achieve in the absence of psychosocial support.

**2,37,754 individuals** across **107 slums** gained access to safety nets, government services, and Protsahan's support when facing adversity. **Access to government schemes and state benefits is an often-overlooked pillar of mental healthcare, providing critical stability and security that enables families to prioritise healing and wellbeing for their girl children.**



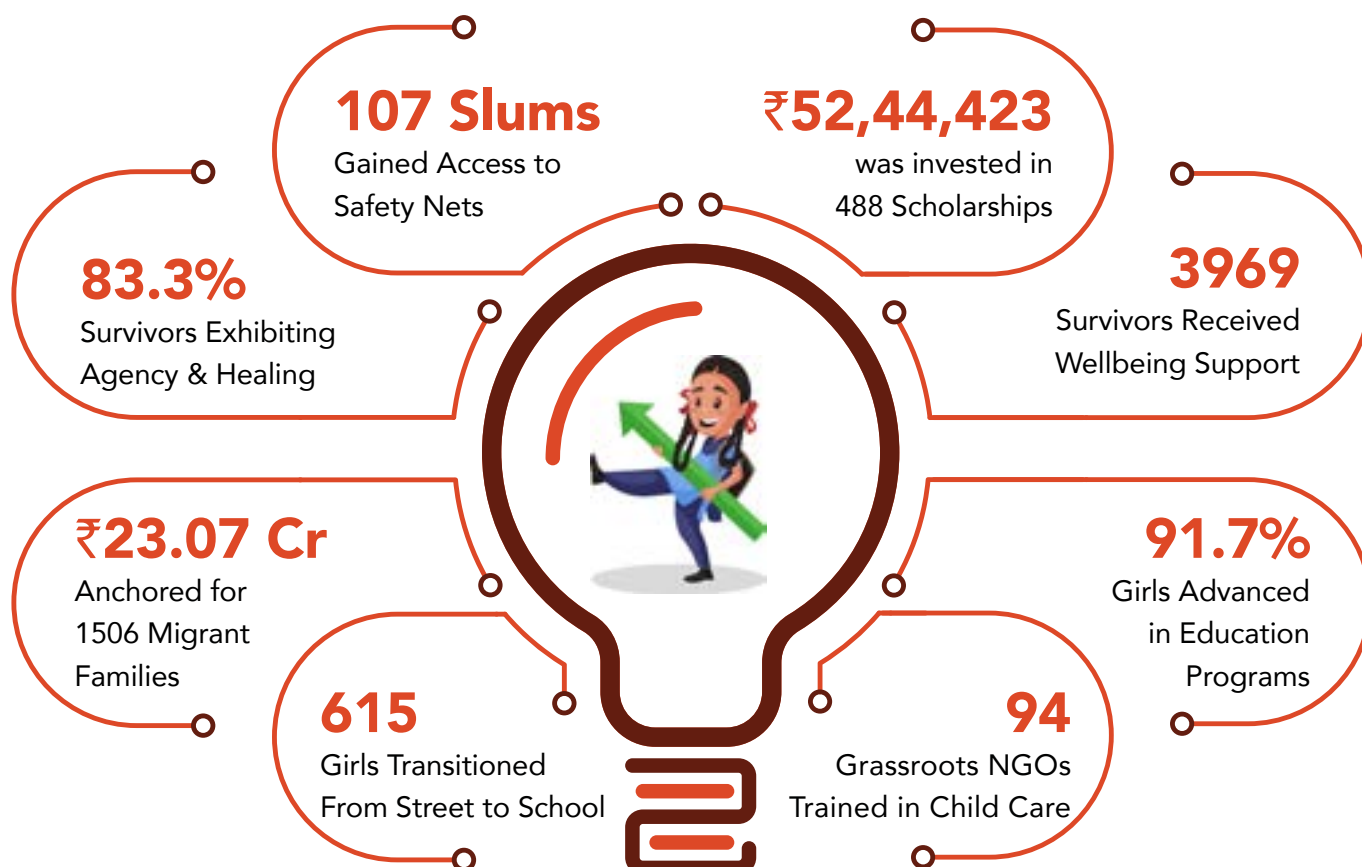


First-aid psychosocial support was provided through 9,912 wellbeing kits (protein, sanitary napkins, etc.), supplementing state PDS benefits, to care for **3,969** migrant girls, their families, and community members. This was not a one time intervention, but extended throughout the year to truly support the most valueable girls and their families. These were delivered through our 5 Girl Empowerment Centers across 107 slums and last-mile resettlement communities in Delhi, ensuring that vulnerable families received consistent support, dignity, and care during times of acute need.

**100%** of identified violence cases received immediate, in-depth intervention through trauma-informed counselling and/or linkage to government helplines 181 and 1098, ensuring timely safety and support for each child and family. In the past year, Protsahan intervened in 55 cases, including:

- ▶ 46 cases of domestic violence (DV)
- ▶ 6 cases of child sexual abuse (CSA)
- ▶ 3 cases of cybercrime, self-harm, and other critical incidents

**83.3%** of Girl Champions who survived severe sexual and gender-based violence are regularly using at least one positive coping mechanism such as seeking peer support, speaking with a counsellor, showing self-affirming behaviours, etc. after psychosocial counselling and case management support.







Additionally, to build emotional resilience and healing-centered care:

- ▶ 233 adolescent girls participated in psycho-social group counselling sessions.
- ▶ 136 individual trauma-informed counselling sessions were provided.
- ▶ 89 Psychological First Aid (PFA) interventions were delivered by social workers.
- ▶ 3 trauma-informed capacity-building trainings were conducted for the Protsahan team to strengthen internal care practices.

**615 adolescent girls facing gender-based violence received continuum of care through trauma-informed education, healthcare, mental health support, and skilling opportunities, ensuring their journey from crisis to stability with dignity was met with consistent, compassionate support**

At Protsahan, every number reflects a commitment to healing, safety, and dignity for girls and their communities.





## CAPABILITIES: Where Agency is Built

The cost of a dream is often unaffordable for girls born into poverty. Yet more and more migrant girls from ultra-poor families are gaining the confidence to dream big. What holds them back is not a lack of ambition, but barriers like limited access to digital devices, scholarships, reliable information, peer networks, and pathways to learn transferable skills.

Over the past year, 293 girls enrolled in employability enhancement training through trauma informed livelihood fellowships, out of which 274 girls successfully graduated. **More than 90% of Girl Champions fellows aged 18-24 have either secured employment, enrolled in higher education, or are further learning professional and microentrepreneurial skills.** This transformation became possible once they gained access to digital devices, right information, and supportive community based ecosystems.

91.7% of girls in education programs advanced academically, successfully transitioning to the next grade





95% of Girl Champions preparing for future readiness secured formal sector jobs and/or internships/apprenticeships, etc. in companies like LIC India, Mc Donald's, Apollo Hospitals, Radisson Blu Hotels, local boutiques, lab technicians, retail companies, bakeries or higher education opportunities like Azim Premji University, Freedom Employability Academy, Tata Strive, Haldiram Academy, etc. with the highest salary secured this year being ₹23,000 per month and median stipend/salary of ₹11,433.

Protsahan's field-building work expanded as 663 social workers, paralegals, and child welfare personnel from 94 grassroots organisations across India were trained in trauma-informed, child-centric practices. Platforms like Hriday Dialogues and CareVerse played a critical role in enabling this learning for systems strengthening.

**When girls have access to the right tools, knowledge, and networks,  
they don't just dream, they lead and uplift their families and their  
entire communities on their strong shoulders**





## CAPITAL: Enabling Families to Access State Resources

**₹23.07 Cr. anchored through 1506 referrals, registrations, and linkages with the critical social security and welfare schemes as deployed by the Government of India for migrant girls and their families**

**Additionally, ₹52,44,423 was invested in 488 need-based equity scholarships, ensuring that the most vulnerable girls and children could continue their education and pursue their aspirations with dignity**

Through these efforts, Protsahan continued to bridge the gap between communities and state resources, ensuring access, inclusion, and opportunity at the last mile.







# Building Evidence and Strengthening the Field for Child Protection in India

## 1. **Child Sexual Abuse-NCRB data research report using field stories from Protsahan:**

Our POCSO report insights have been adopted by Juvenile Justice Committee in State High Court (Madhya Pradesh) to train incoming young lawyers annually, creating long-term impact in legal capacity-building for child protection.

## 2. **Strengthening State Systems to Prevent Trafficking and Violence Against Girls:**

We actively supported the state government in Delhi to frame guidelines for the Ujjawala Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking and Gender Based Violence. The Ujjawala Scheme has implemented 254 projects, including 134 Protective and Rehabilitative Homes, benefiting 5,291 people.











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# H of H.E.A.R.T Health

## Healthy Adolescence



**99.83% of Girl Champions delayed the age  
of marriage and first pregnancy**

### The Role of Psychologists and Social Workers in Trauma-Informed Care

At Protsahan, mental health and psychosocial support is not a one-time service. It is a continuum of care which is rooted in access to state support, and always centred around the voice, choice, dignity of the girl facing severe adverse childhood experiences.

When a Girl Champion undergoes counseling therapy, she starts learning how to identify and regulate emotions, such as grief, fear, anger, sadness, and understand where they come from. But mental wellbeing cannot thrive if a girl is constantly surrounded by the same stress or violence that first caused her pain.

That's why our approach brings in lawyers, psychologists and social workers. In family sessions, we create space for children and caregivers to reconnect: sometimes through shared childhood stories, sometimes through long-held silences finally breaking. These conversations often spark new understanding, and slowly, new patterns begin to emerge.

Outside the counselling, our social workers become a steady presence, supporting girls in school, helping families access entitlements, and making sure girls are not pushed back into unsafe spaces. They keep momentum alive, through regular home visits.





And often, the deepest shifts happen at Girl Empowerment Centre when girls build friendships rooted in solidarity. When they see each other not just as peers, but as sisters who have survived and are now learning to lead. That sense of belonging becomes a powerful anchor.

Individual counselling therapy helps then identify and cope with varied emotions and triggers, and real healing often needs deeper change. Many come from homes where trauma resides. Joint child-family sessions, where both share their childhood dreams and struggles, help shift these patterns. Social workers play a key role in sustaining progress between sessions. But the most lasting breakthroughs come when girls form connections through mentorships, art, play and theater, reminding them they're not alone and that they belong.





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## Unlocking Agency: Comprehensive Sexuality Education & Psychosocial Support for Migrant Girls & Their Families

*Everyone has the right to know.*

This year, Protsahan provided **90.5 hours of critical SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) sessions and training to 615 Girl Champions & their mothers across Delhi's migrant slum communities.** These sessions strengthened agency, menstrual and hygiene practices, and girls' ability to make informed decisions about their bodies and futures with dignity.

At Protsahan, we believe every girl and woman deserves comprehensive sexuality education - the right to decide if and when to become a mother, to live without fear of unwanted pregnancies or infections like HIV, and to lead a healthy, informed sexual life rooted in choice and agency.

We envision a world where gender and sexuality are sources of empowerment and justice, not inequality or shame. Protsahan makes this **critical information available in Hindi** at the last mile, ensuring the current and next generation of marginalised migrant adolescent girls grow up safe, informed, and confident.







में चाहती हूँ कि मेरी बेटी को जीवन में अपनी बातें कहने और अपने निर्णय लेने का विश्वास मिले वो बस चूल्हा-चौका में न बढ़ें मेरी तरह (I want my daughter to have the confidence to speak up and make her own choices in life, so she doesn't have to remain confined to the kitchen like I did.)

— Sushila, mother of a Protsahan Girl Fellow, Uttam Nagar Community





दीदी, मैं नहीं चाहती मेरी बेटी मेरी तरह 16 साल में शादी कर के बच्चे संभालने लगे। अब मुझे पता है कि हेल्थ सेंटर से क्या मदद मिल सकती है। (Didi, I don't want my daughter to be married off at 16 and get busy handling children like I did. Now I know what help is available at the health center.)

— Radha, mother of a Protsahan Girl Fellow, Dwarka Slum Community





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“पहले हमें लगता था यह बातें सिर्फ अमीरों की होती हैं। अब पता चला कि हमें भी अपने शरीर के बारे में जानने और हक से जीने का अधिकार है। (Earlier we thought these conversations were only for the rich. Now I know that we also have the right to understand our bodies and live with dignity.)

— Kavita, 14, Girl Champion, Uttam Nagar Community





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# E of H.E.A.R.T Education

## From Street to School



In India, nearly 29% of adolescent girls (15–19 years) are not enrolled in any formal education (NFHS-5). Among girls from migrant families, the barriers multiply unstable housing, seasonal displacement, lack of documentation, early domestic responsibilities, and social norms that deprioritise their learning. As a result, many of these girls face scholastic backwardness, a condition where students lag significantly behind expected learning levels for their age. This isn't due to a lack of ability. It's the outcome of systemic neglect and exclusion from early schooling. Girls enter adolescence unable to read basic text, perform simple math, or engage with age-appropriate curriculum. They're labelled "weak" or "slow" and many times fall off the boundaries of school systems.

When given an equal chance, we don't just barely pass - we excel. I feel strong in my mind. I want to place my first salary in my mother's hands.

- Gulsaba, who scored an outstanding 88.9% in her 12th Grade Board Exams, in spite of financial odds

At Protsahan, education is not a service, it's a right. It is where the journey of dignity, voice, and leadership begins for every girl.



At Protsahan Girl Empowerment Centres (GECs), we begin at the root:

- ▶ SCERT-certified Bridge Courses help out-of-school girls rebuild foundational skills in literacy and numeracy.
- ▶ Experiential Learning through creative, inclusive methods to restore confidence and spark curiosity, for first generation school goers.
- ▶ Critical thinking and leadership are embedded in every interaction.
- ▶ Our social workers work with parents and communities, often through multiple home visits, to break resistance and renew belief in their daughters' education.
- ▶ Once ready, girls are reintegrated into government schools and supported through the transition from streets to schools, through longitudinal support.

Every girl who enters our GEC corridors carries immense potential in spite of severe adversity. Our responsibility is to ensure she is never lost to barriers that label her as too late, too far behind, or not worth the effort. Education for marginalized girls is gender justice. Education is non-negotiable.





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## The Gift of Choice: Trauma Informed Scholarships for Adolescent Girls



**Protsahan enabled access to Capital worth INR  
52,44,423 via 488 need-based Equity Scholarships**

At Protsahan, we believe scholarships are not merely financial aid; they are instruments of justice, dignity, and long-term empowerment. For girls facing gender-based violence within ultra-poor migrant communities, education is often disrupted by frequent relocation, economic insecurity, and deeply entrenched gender norms. Scholarships act as a stabilizing force, enabling girls to continue their education despite adversity, while also supporting critical needs such as transportation, digital tools, and tuition.

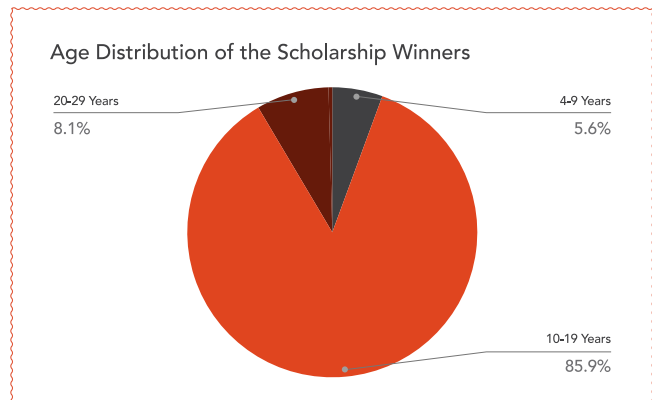
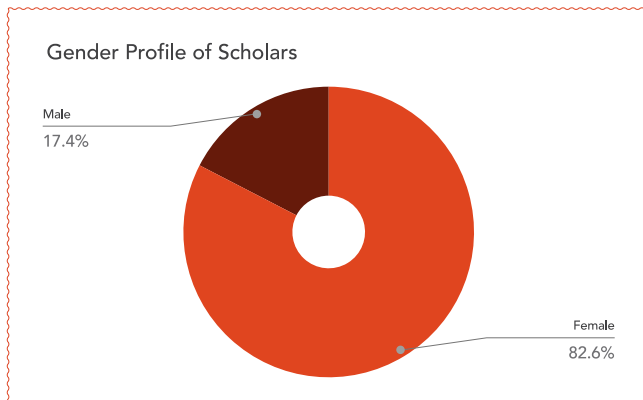
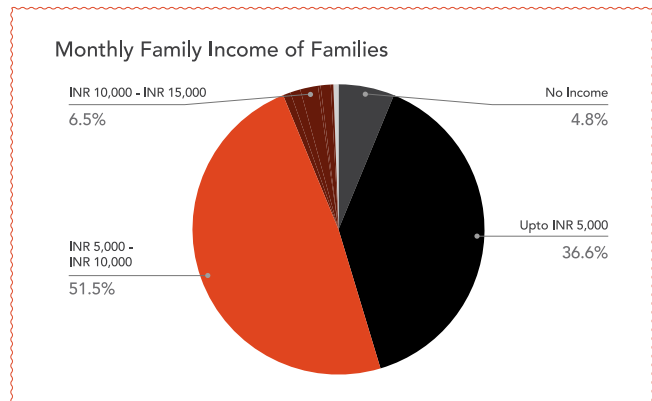
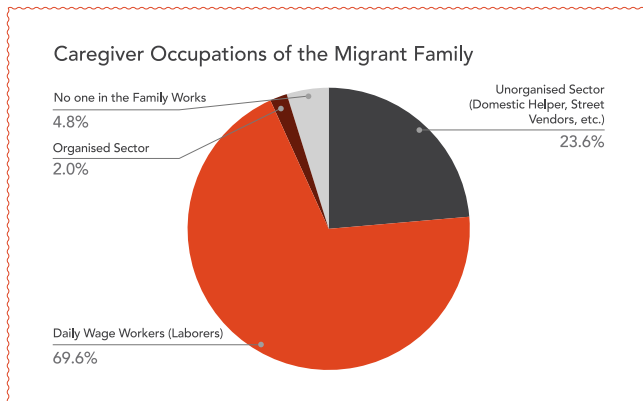
By enhancing both physical and social mobility, scholarships expand girls' access to technology and safe spaces where they can learn, dream, and lead. As Protsahan extended these opportunities to marginalized girls (82.6%), we also uncovered cases of young boys experiencing ultra-poverty and violence, with approximately 17.4% of scholarship support being extended to these youth, ensuring no child is left behind. Through these targeted investments, we not only enabled individual educational journeys but also catalyzed systemic change for gender equity and social mobility among the most vulnerable children and youth.

**In FY 2024-25, most scholarship awardees came from families that had migrated from Bihar (48.5%) and Uttar Pradesh (39.2%).** Around 66.8% of these families had between 4 and 6 members, indicating larger household sizes with multiple dependents, with most having only one earning member.





## Demographic Background of the Scholarship Awardees:



In communities where early marriage and dropout rates are high, equity based education scholarships act as powerful deterrents, giving families a compelling reason to support their daughters' aspirations. Most importantly, investing in the education of a single girl has a ripple effect nurturing role models, encouraging peer ambition, and gradually shifting harmful cultural norms.

**The Scholarships enhance girls' mobility, access to technology and higher education carving their future trajectory towards a more equitable and dignified life.**



# Stories of Resilience

## Impact of Equity based Education Scholarships in Lives of Girls

*Sonam\* Cycles towards her dream of going to School!*

दीदी, मेरी बेटी को साइकिल मिली है, अब वह हवा से बातें करती हुई स्कूल जाती है मेरी तरह कूड़ा नहीं बीनती। मैं उसे पढ़ाऊंगी, ताकि उसके सपनों के पंख कभी छोटे न पड़ें  
(Didi, my daughter has received a bicycle, and now she goes to school with the wind in her hair. She no longer has to pick rags like I did. I will educate her so that the wings of her dreams are never clipped.)

— Scholar Sonam's Mother, Uttam Nagar Community

**Sonam\*** comes from Samastipur, Bihar. Her family, living in a small rented room, survived by ragpicking - each day marked by struggle and uncertainty. In 2021, Sonam joined Protsahan and was enrolled in the sixth grade. But her education was constantly at risk. Her mother, burdened by poverty and societal pressures, believed early marriage was the only option for her daughter. Through persistent counseling, critical first aid support, and linking the family to government schemes, Protsahan gently but firmly shifted that narrative. We convinced Sonam's family to give her the chance to study - to dream beyond survival.

When Sonam proved her commitment by attending school regularly, she was awarded a Cycle Scholarship. Those simple bicycle wheels became her wings. Today, not only does Sonam ride to school with pride, but she also takes her younger sister along, leading the way—literally and figuratively.







### Bhumi's Quiet Bravery: Choosing School In spite of Severe Family Struggle

I will spend this scholarship award money only on Bhumi's books and her education. The wellbeing and protein kits with lentils we receive here also help us a lot. Sometimes, that's the only protein we consume in the month. I want my daughter to go far in life and never have to face the kind of hardships I did. I want her to have a very different life. Only education can give her that.

— Bhumi's mother

Bhumi, a student of grade 4, comes from a migrant family under constant strain. Her father, battling alcohol addiction, is unable to support the household. Her mother, who works placing wires on vehicle holders, earns a meager ₹2000 per month, an income that barely sustains their basic needs.

Despite these odds, Bhumi is cheerful and deeply committed to her studies. When she received a scholarship through Protsahan, her mother's eyes welled with tears of hope. With the scholarship, they purchased Bhumi's schoolbooks and essentials for the year. Protsahan also provided the family with nutritious lentils and wellness kits, which made a noticeable difference in Bhumi's health and energy levels. Bhumi is beginning to also grasp how to apply for a ration card online to access the state benefit. She is a regular at the dance movement therapy workshops at the GEC too. Bhumi now goes to school every day, carries her own books, and smiles more often. She embodies how a small opportunity can become a big transformation.



## Choreographing Palak's Dreams!

प्रोत्साहन ने मुझे सिखाया, अपने सपनों से समझौता नहीं करते।  
(Protsahan taught me that you should never compromise on your dreams.)

— Bhumi's mother says

Palak, currently in Grade 11, lives with her family in a small rented room in Delhi. Originally from Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh, her family has faced relentless financial challenges since moving to the city. Her father drives a rented auto, earning ₹10,000 a month, which must cover rent, electricity, food, and the education of four children. Palak has three sisters and a younger brother.

Palak has a deep love for dance, but her father sees it as a waste of time. Still, she didn't give up. Every day, Palak would walk 6 kilometers to Uttam Nagar to catch a free bus to Dwarka for dance class. But buses came with their own struggles - sometimes they wouldn't stop, sometimes there was no space to sit. Seeing Palak's determination, Protsahan recognized her spirit and supported her with a ₹10,000 scholarship. With this, Palak bought her school uniform, books for Grade 12, and a bicycle. This bicycle has transformed her daily journey, saving her an hour each day, allowing her to balance both her studies and her love for dance.

Now, Palak rides with the wind, moving faster towards her dreams. She holds onto a single promise to herself:





I will fall, I will rise, I will learn, and  
I will fight to make my dreams come true



### Rewriting Her Story: Radha is Determined to secure a Government Job one day!

Radha, a Class 12 student from Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, had just started planning for her future when her father passed away from cancer in July 2024. He was the family's only earning member. The cost of his treatment left the family in debt.

Her mother, who works as a domestic worker earning ₹6,000 per month, now supports three children. Radha's older brother had just completed Class 12, and her younger brother is in Class 9. All three faced the risk of dropping out.

At this point, Radha received a ₹10,000 scholarship through Protsahan. She used the amount to buy textbooks for herself and her brother. Even with ongoing challenges, Radha continues to study late into the night. She helps her younger brother with studies and shares caregiving responsibilities at home. She wants to become a government officer and remains focused on her goal. Radha's story shows what becomes possible when even one girl is given the support to continue her education—despite everything working against her.



### Defying Limits: Priyanka's Path to a Masters in Physics from Delhi's Slums

Ma'am, with this scholarship, I will finally be able to pursue my Master's in Physics, a dream I have held close to my heart for so long.

— Priyanka Kumari, Vikas Nagar

In a community where girls are rarely encouraged to dream of careers in Science, Priyanka Kumari's journey stands as a powerful reminder of what's possible when determination meets timely support. Living with her mother and siblings in the Vikas Nagar slum, Priyanka stepped up to support her family after her father abandoned them, leaving her mother in deep mental distress. Balancing household responsibilities and caregiving, Priyanka continued her education and completed her B.Sc. in Physics from Delhi University while earning through private tuitions.





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Despite her academic excellence, financial constraints stood in the way of her dream to pursue an M.Sc. in Physics. The application fee felt like an insurmountable hurdle as she prioritized her family's basic needs over her aspirations.

During a community outreach, Protsahan's team met Priyanka and recognised her potential. Through an encouragement scholarship of ₹15,000, Priyanka was able to pay her M.Sc. application fee of ₹14,410, ensuring her academic journey did not pause due to financial barriers.

Today, Priyanka has begun her Master's in Physics while continuing to care for her mother and manage her home. She refuses to let circumstances define her, proving that **girls can and must lead in STEM** if we want to build a more equitable and prosperous India.

In communities where science is rarely seen as a path for girls, Priyanka's pursuit of a Master's in Physics lights the way for many more girls to follow.





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# Scholar's Conclave

The Scholars' Conclave 2025 brought together 250 remarkable young leaders from migrant communities across Delhi's slums to celebrate their achievements. Our Girl Champions led powerful street plays and puppetry performances spotlighting cyber safety, STEM careers for women, and the readiness of growing up in an AI world, echoing the national vision of Digital Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047, where technology drives inclusion, growth, and grassroots leadership for a truly developed India.

## Main Bhi Einstein Awards: Access, Dignity, and the Gift of Choice

At Protsahan, we believe access to technology is a fundamental enabler of choice, dignity, and future readiness for young girls from marginalized communities.

Through the **Main Bhi Einstein Awards, 19 exceptional young leaders (aged 16–24) received laptops** to pursue their aspirations in STEM, education, and entrepreneurship despite challenging circumstances. These awardees are **aspiring police officers, doctors, engineers, women football players, entrepreneurs, and community role models**, each demonstrating the power of resilience and ambition in transforming their under-represented communities.

### Award categories included:

- ▶ Community Impact Award
- ▶ Academic Excellence Award
- ▶ Higher Technical Education Award
- ▶ STEM Excellence Award
- ▶ Young Entrepreneur Award
- ▶ Community Resilience Role Model Award







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This initiative was designed with intentionality to ensure girls from under-resourced communities are not left behind in the AI and technology revolution. By providing critical digital devices, the awards enhanced educational, employability, and entrepreneurial pathways, advancing Protsahan's commitment to tech-enabled, gender-inclusive hyperlocal change at grassroots.

The Main Bhi Einstein Awards reaffirm our belief that when we invest in young leaders with the digital tools they need, we enable them to build futures rooted in dignity, choice, and leadership, catalyzing change far beyond themselves.

Gendered access and inclusion in technology are the key pillars on which this initiative stands tall!

To Watch  
SCAN











# A of H.E.A.R.T

## Arts

### Breaking the Cycle of Intergenerational Trauma



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) such as abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction can lead to long-term psychological and physical health issues. For internally migrated adolescent girls in India, these experiences are compounded by the challenges of resettlement and marginalization. Internally migrated adolescent girls face repeated displacement, poverty, and exclusion from education and social systems. These stressors, when compounded, lead to **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** that are proven to increase the risk of depression, anxiety, and emotional dysregulation over a lifetime (WHO, 2018).

In many cases, these girls show signs of toxic stress and intergenerational trauma, passed down through cycles of violence, abandonment, or poverty. Traditional learning or talk therapy often does not work when trust and safety are missing. Emotional distress is not restricted to the emotional, physiological and cognitive realm, but also has an impact on the behavioural realm. Emotional distress can form a part of normal experiences that subside over time. (NDMA Guidelines, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services in Disasters, 2003).

**240 Hours of Art as  
Therapy Sessions Conducted**

At our Girl Empowerment Centers, we integrate art-based therapy into our programs to create safe and nurturing environments where girls can explore and express their difficult, often repressed emotions. Through a combination of dance movement therapy, puppetry, storytelling, theatre, music, cinema, photography, comic making, medical clowning, clay art and craft-based workshops, difficult conversations on childhood adversity and safety are addressed to enable healing and help girls process their experiences and build resilience.





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## Medical Clowning: Bringing Psychological Healing to Migrant Girls



These workshops bring joy, laughter, and a sense of safety, helping girls regulate their emotions and reconnect with their inner strength through play.

— Sheetal, Medical Clowning Facilitator



## Empowering Migrant Girls through Therapeutic Clay Art

ये कार्यशालाएं उपचार, आत्म-अभिव्यक्ति और सहनशीलता को बढ़ावा देती हैं, जो किशोरियों को अपने आत्मविश्वास को पुनः स्थापित करने और अपनी आंतरिक शक्ति से पुनः जुड़ने के लिए एक सुरक्षित स्थान प्रदान करती हैं। (These workshops promote healing, self-expression, and resilience, providing adolescent girls with a safe space to rebuild their confidence and reconnect with their inner strength.)

— Taapsi, Clay as Therapy Resource Person







## Dance Movement Therapy to Heal the Trauma of Violence

जब थिरकती कहानी महसूस की जाती है, तो कला भी डाटा का रूप ले लेती है। हमारी कहानियाँ आंकड़ों से नहीं, भावना और कला से गढ़ी जाती हैं। जब एक बच्ची मिट्टी से अपने सपनों को बनाती है, वह केवल कला नहीं है। वह उसका पुनर्निर्माण है। जब वह कठपुतली के ज़रिए अपने दर्द को बाहर लाती है, वह केवल प्रस्तुति नहीं है, वह डाटा पॉइंट है, जो बता रहा है कि healing हो रही है। सभी लोग इसे समझे ये कठिन भी है। (When a dance is deeply felt by survivors in a workshop, art itself becomes data. Our stories are not just shaped by numbers but by emotion and art too. When a girl molds her dreams from clay, it is not just art; it is her rebuilding herself. When she uses a puppet to express her pain, it is not just a performance; it is a data point showing that healing is happening. It is not always easy for everyone to understand this.)

— Preeti Poddar, Program Officer - Learning and Development





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## Expressive Calligraphy, Origami and Puppets for Cognitive Skills Building for Migrant Girls

कठपुतली कला: बाल विवाह के खिलाफ,  
प्रोत्साहन की लड़कियों का एक शक्तिशाली हथियार।

Calligraphy, Origami and Puppets are a fun way for children to explore powerful emotions and learn effective self-regulation skills. To assist children in learning how to name and manage emotions, puppets offer a new method to explore emotions and develop empathy for themselves and others. Puppets can help to normalise emotions in children. Through a combination of Calligraphy, Origami and Puppets, girls who are first generation school goers, made theater shows to fight child labour and child marriage inspiring their families and communities at large with powerful messages that were innocently delivered.



Learning about Resilience through  
Freida Kahlo and Savitri Phule's Life  
Stories and Art Murals

Unlearning Gender & Caste stereotypes  
through arts and storytelling on celebrated  
Feminist Icons



## Theatre workshops enabling Voice, Choice & Agency for Migrant Girls in Slums

Girls Lead Powerful Puppetry Performance Against Child Labour! Child labour is still deeply entrenched in the slum communities. As a response, our Girl Champions chose puppetry to talk about it—openly and powerfully.

“मंच पर आने का मौका मिला  
अपने आप पर भरोसा महसूस हुआ।”



Through storytelling, they unpacked their lived experiences. They created characters and scripts based on real stories from their communities, led beautifully by Resource Persons - Kumari Yadav, Vipul Kalra, Mrinalini Nair, Sheetal & Simran.

The performances opened space for healing, reflection, and change.



*In Frida's unibrow, we've found courage.  
In Savitribai's bindi, we see new paths.  
In Fatima Sheikh's smile, we discover  
education.  
The girls of Protsahan  
find home in art,  
wings in knowledge,  
and strength — in one another.*





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# R of H.E.A.R.T Rights

## Linking the Unlinked with Government Services & Systemic Care



Child Protection is not possible without Social Protection

Nearly 80% of the communities where Protsahan works are daily wage workers, many of whom are construction workers. Whatever they earn each day is what puts two meals on the table for their families, (and girls end up getting to eat last and least in such situations). Recently, due to pollution-related restrictions in Delhi, many daily wage workers lost their livelihoods. In such situations, when pollution suddenly halts their work, it also means their kitchen fires cannot be lit (to cook food).

— Jaswinder Singh, Executive Director

For adolescent girls from migrant and historically excluded communities, entitlements duly made available by state are hard to access due to severe lack of awareness. A majority of the population we work with are families who have migrated to Delhi from smaller towns, villages, and zillas in search of better earning opportunities and living conditions. We work towards bridging this gap by making critical referrals, connections, and linkages to social security and welfare ecosystems that have been established by the government, with a key focus on not creating any parallel duplicate systems.







## Government Linkages Camps - Mainstreaming the marginalised

**INR 23.07 Cr anchored through 1506 referrals,  
registrations, and linkages with the most critical social  
security and welfare schemes in 2024-25**

The Linkages Camps are led by our own alumni Girl Champions from the community, who receive training in tech-enabled learning to build more resilience in communities. The girls then go ahead in facilitating online registrations and direct linkages for the most marginalised migrant families in their communities and beyond through official government portals. These convergence camps function as community-based facilitation hubs, where girl role models assist community members in securing essential services. Documentation is critical for enabling access to education, healthcare, and government entitlements. Through these efforts, the camps support direct registration and anchoring of government schemes, ensuring social protection reaches ultra-poor migrant communities effectively and with dignity.



हमने तो हमेशा लड़को को देखा हैं साइबर कैफ़े में आधार कार्ड बनाते हुए। यहाँ पहली बार लड़कियों को देखा कंप्यूटर पर काम करते हुए। (We had only ever seen boys working on computers at the cyber café to make Aadhaar cards. Here, for the first time, we saw girls confidently working on computers.)

— Shushila Devi, Dwarka Community



“यह इनकम सर्टिफिकेट जब हम साइबर कैफ़े में बनवाने गए, तो वहां हमें 3000 रुपये का चार्ज बताया गया, जबकि प्रोत्साहन के सरकारी लिंकेज कैंप में बिलकुल फ्री में बन गया!” (“When we went to the cyber café to get this income certificate made, they asked us for 3,000 rupees. At Protsahan’s government linkage camp, it was made completely free of cost.”)

— Shyam, Uttam Nagar Community

For years after my husband passed away, I did not know how to apply for the widow pension. At Protsahan’s camp, the girls helped me apply online without any hassle. Now I will get a state pension every month to manage my household.

— Kamla, Uttam Nagar Community

We had knocked on many doors to get a disability pension for my child but never knew how to complete the process. At Protsahan’s camp, the girls explained each step patiently and helped us apply without fear. Now, this pension will ensure my child gets his medicines on time, and I can care for him with dignity.

— Mohammad Anwar, Dwarka Community

## Slum Panchayats as Jansunvai Participatory Dialogues

गहरे मुद्दों पर सीधी बात

Quiet Community Resilience Reducing Child Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence at the Last Mile

You know, they say change starts at home, but sometimes home is the hardest place to change. So we take the conversation to the basti’s galli-mohalla (local slums) using arts. At Slum Panchayats, you’ll find aunties, uncles, and teenagers cracking open big topics like patriarchy over chai, one knot at a time. It’s not flashy, but that’s where the real baatein (conversations) begin over chai pe charcha. It is in these community dialogues that we have seen, a mother decides her daughter will finish school, a survivor builds sisterhood networks of solidarity with more women survivors and reports domestic violence on 181 Govt. Helpline and a father learns that raising girls is building a nation.

— Sonal Kapoor, Founder, Protsahan



According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) conducted between 2019 and 2021, only 14% of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence have sought help or reported the incidents. Through community-led participatory platforms like Slum Panchayats, Protsahan activates critical dialogues with women, parents, and community stakeholders to advance child protection, prevent domestic violence, promote continued schooling, and enable access to social entitlements for vulnerable families by spreading awareness on government schemes and state entitlements.

In many low-income, migrant households, the burden of unpaid care work continues to fall disproportionately on adolescent girls, limiting their ability to attend school regularly, complete studies, or engage in age-appropriate play and learning opportunities. This invisible labour, rooted in gendered social norms, is a critical barrier to educational retention and overall well-being.

By leveraging Slum Panchayats as safe, structured spaces for open dialogue, Protsahan opens subtle knots of patriarchal norms, catalysing social and behavioural change at the last mile. These platforms build community ownership, foster peer learning, and support families in prioritising girls' education and well-being. This approach critically aligns with national priorities under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao framework, the National Education Policy, and SDG targets for gender equity and quality education. It ensures systemic, sustainable change by engaging families and communities as active participants in transforming the landscape of opportunity for girls. This community model continues to strengthen family and community ecosystems, reduce the gender gap in education, and contribute to breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty and gender-based discrimination, allowing girls to thrive and communities to become more resilient and proactive in issues that matter to them.

In 2024-25, 55 cases of domestic violence, child sexual abuse, gender based violence, vulnerability of mental health, poverty, neglect, or un-employment were identified and addressed by our Child Protection Team through these platforms of slum panchayats.





“  
In every community meeting, when I listen to my  
daughter's progress, I feel pride I never knew I could hold.  
She is my teacher now.

— Father of a Girl Champion

”

Change is not something we *deliver* to communities,  
it's something that *emerges* when communities lead





”

Didi, I have three children - two daughters and a son. My husband has passed away. I work as a daily wage labourer and earn ₹9,000 a month, which is how I manage the household and my children's education. But suddenly, due to pollution-related work stoppages, we are on the brink of dying hungry. I am uneducated, and I have carried bricks and stones to run the house, but I thought if my children study, their lives will be easier. I just want my kids to somehow pass Class 12 so that they don't have to work as a labourer like me. I want them to have a better quality of life.

“

— Mamta Devi, Uttam Nagar Community

”

Didi, I am living for my children. But my husband used to beat me every day, and I didn't know where to seek help. I am not educated, and I was afraid. For the first time, during a Slum Panchayat meeting, I heard from Protsahan's Payal Madam that I could call 181 and get immediate help. Didi, for the first time, I raised my voice for my rights, and now the police and counselors are supporting me. Now, I want my daughters to study without fear.

“

— Rekha, Deepak Vihar Community





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# T of H.E.A.R.T Technology

## #STEMpowered



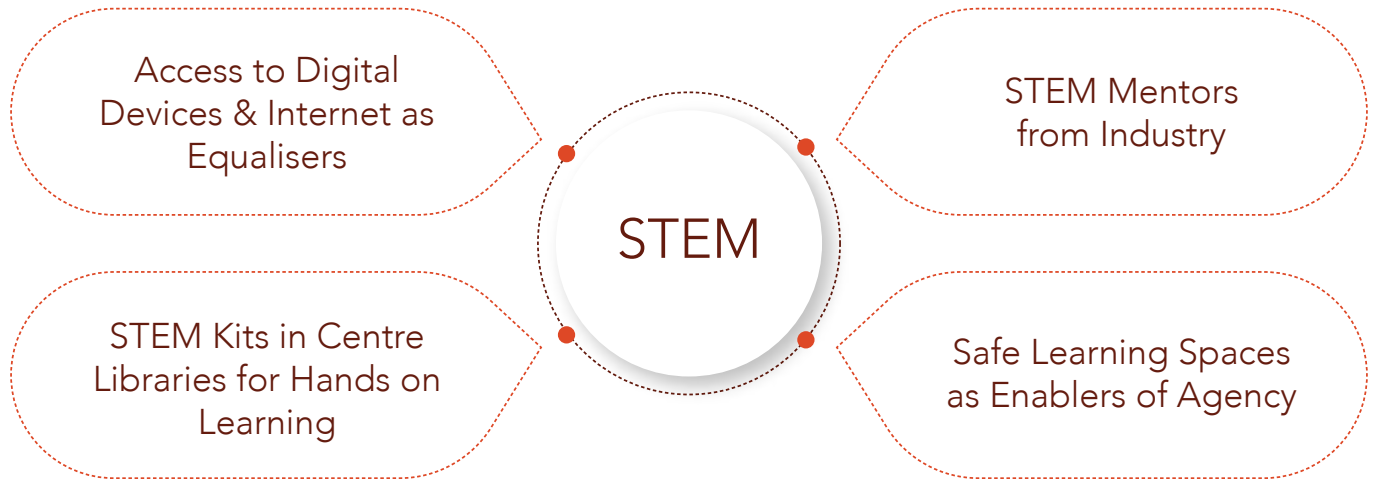
STEM learning at Protsahan is not just about Science, Technology, and Mathematics. It's about creating access - access to skills, confidence, and opportunities that adolescent girls in slum communities have been denied. This is their first access to the internet, laptops, tablets, and devices. In our centers, girls explore tech freely. They make mistakes, ask questions, try again, and that's where the real learning happens. They begin to see themselves not just as students but as capable young women who can lead and contribute to one day have a dignified job in the formal sector. With these tools, they attend online classes, create resumes, learn design tools like Canva, Tally, Salesforce CRM, and explore digital platforms like YouTube and Google for research. This digital access helps bridge the gap between school dropout and job readiness.







## How STEM enables Protsahan's Girl Champions Program:



Science • Technology • Engineering • Mathematics





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## Click. Code. Earn: How Digital Skills Are Powering Livelihoods for Young Women in Delhi's Urban Slums

This year, in partnership with Ciphermetic Consulting, Protsahan launched a short-term certificate program in Web Development to equip 16–24-year-old first-generation learners in migrant slums with critical digital skills, enabling them to access education, employability, and entrepreneurship opportunities in India's growing digital economy. Our Girl Champions gained hands-on experience in understanding domain names and servers, setting up and managing websites using AI-powered WordPress tools, managing digital platforms, and learning the basics of coding and troubleshooting. This initiative not only built technical proficiency but also boosted confidence and income-generation potential among girls who are often locked out of the digital revolution. As we look ahead, Protsahan aims to bring more girls in this AI-powered, gender-inclusive digital skilling model across our Girl Empowerment Centres to create a future-ready, resilient workforce of young women who will lead India's digital growth story.

Blog by Program  
Officers, Bhawna  
Rawat & Govind  
Rathore

Read More  
SCAN



Every day, I would watch my brother working on the laptop, but I never imagined that one day, I could have that chance too.







## From Margins to Markets: First-Gen School Going Girls Using AI to Power Their Micro-Entrepreneurial Dreams

I used to think dreams meant getting a big job somewhere far away. Now I know I can build something of my own right here in my community. I want to open a beauty parlour as a business and teach other girls like me, too. And now I've learned that AI can help me design and print posters for my shop in any language & make a powerful website. It feels like my dream is no longer far away.

Leaders from **MuleDreamin**, a tech corporate collective striving to cultivate a culture of learning & collaboration within the Salesforce ecosystem, conducted sessions on Artificial Intelligence & its importance for Protsahan Girl Champions. Critical themes like types of learning procedures, importance, key concepts, ethical considerations & how to start building the skills to develop a career in AI. We thank Shiva Sahu, Rishabh Seth & Amit Singh for #STEMpowering our Girl Champions by making AI & Technology a tangible skill at the last mile.

### STEM Kits and Tools as Confidence Builders

When a girl builds a simple circuit or conducts an experiment, she learns to solve problems hands-on. The process builds critical thinking, patience, and teamwork—skills that go far beyond the science classroom.





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## Building Agency Trauma-Informed Fellowships For Adolescent Girls

Highest salary secured in this year's cohort is INR 23,000,  
proof that when girls who are first gen school goers,  
access the right skills and support, they begin to dream!



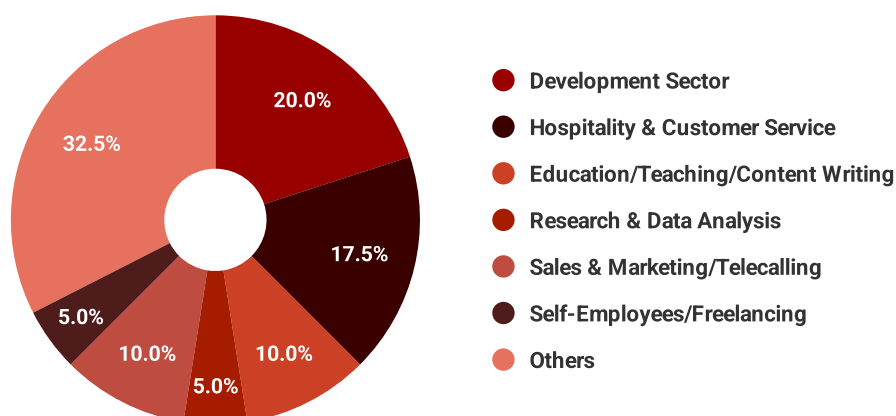
After completing Protsahan's rigorous 7-month employability program, 95% of our young women have stepped into the workforce with confidence and purpose, securing roles at McDonald's, LIC India, Tata Strive, Haldiram, Hi-Tech firms, Ginger Hotel, Radisson Blu, FMCG research agencies, and even Protsahan itself as Youth Peer Leaders and Social Workers.

Many have launched freelance ventures as Mehndi Artists and YouTube Educators, turning creativity into income, while others have enrolled in technical courses in Spoken English, Graphic Design, and Hospitality to advance their careers. Some are now preparing for competitive exams, proving that with the right support, girls from the margins don't just find jobs—they begin to dream for the first time.



A heartfelt thank you to employees who volunteered from Salesforce, Google, Azim Premji Foundation, EMpower—The Emerging Markets Foundation, CIPHERMETIC Consulting, MuleDreamin, Magicpin, Ekam Analytics, EY India, and those who joined as friends of Protsahan. Your commitment to mentoring our girls through workshops on technology, marketing, and HR has turned potential into progress. You are the reason these girls are driving India's future forward.

### Post Fellowship Career Trajectories of Girl Champions



As a father, I'm incredibly proud of my daughter's journey with Protsahan. Through this experience, I've also learned how important it is to build a strong support system for her. Protsahan hasn't just helped her become a confident and capable woman; it has also shown me how to be a better father for her.

— Girl Champion Alumni Priyanka's Father

Since its launch in 2021 at the peak of Covid, listening to what the girls wanted, our Fellowship Programme has evolved from an annual pilot cohort of 30 girls to strengthen the program into a deeper and growing initiative aiming to reach over 450 young women from migrant slum communities in 2025-26. This growth is timely as gender remains a primary barrier to women's workforce participation. With the understanding of our community, needs of the girls, we started working in the direction of facilitating a resilient future for the migrant girls.

Our trauma informed curriculum rooted in the grassroots realities for marginalised girls focuses on building resilience for job retention and responds directly to these workforce participation gaps. We have integrated:

- ▶ **Technical Partnerships** with industry leaders like Google, Salesforce, Haldiram, Ernst and Young, McDonald's and Tata Strive, to facilitate trainings and certifications and employment pipelines in accordance with Viksit Bharat vision to enhance women's participation in country's progress

- ▶ **Active citizenship and community action projects**, normalizing girls' mobility and enabling them to serve as role models in their communities to better lives of more young girls and women by linking them with government services
- ▶ **Arts-based counseling and trauma-informed practices**, to build emotional resilience and confidence of voice and choice in historically disadvantaged migrant girls
- ▶ **Structured group discussions on important issues with mock-interviews with experienced industry mentors**, simulating corporate environments and strengthening communication skills required at workplace
- ▶ **Peer-led skill-barter sessions on understanding AI, Tech and Climate Change for first gen job seekers**, fostering hyperlocal leadership through a gender lens at the level of urban slums to tap potential in unchartered nooks of the country

This intentional trauma-informed design reflects both the documented needs and the aspirations of urban slum girls, in spite of entrenched gender barriers like low literacy, chronic violence in homes, limited access to dignified employment and skills. By addressing these at multiple levels such as personal, social, and structural, we are working towards equitable, dignified livelihoods and empowering a generation of young women to take control of their futures.

## Dreaming Bigger: Opening Corporate Doors for Migrant Girls

Over the past year, Protsahan partnered with leading organisations, including Google, Salesforce, Naukri.com, Ernst & Young, Tata Strive, McDonald's, and Haldiram's, to facilitate immersive corporate visits and intergenerational dialogues with young migrant women at our centres.

These curated experiences:

- ▶ **Raised Aspirations for Migrant Girls:** Meeting accomplished women in diverse corporate roles inspired girls to envision ambitious career goals and build the confidence to pursue formal sector opportunities.
- ▶ **Built Workplace Readiness:** First-hand exposure to corporate environments fostered learning in workplace etiquette, topics like AI and technology, softer skills and resilience for communication, and professional conduct.
- ▶ **Strengthened Sisterhood Networks:** Connections with mentors and everyday women role models opened avenues for guidance, encouragement, and sustained support.

By bridging the worlds of corporate India and grassroots communities, these engagements expand pathways for young women from urban slums to participate meaningfully in India's economic growth story, one step at a time.





**Bridging Grassroots Talent with the Future of Work:** Protsahan girls gain hands-on exposure to AI tools, industry mentorship, and workplace skills—building confidence, career readiness, and pathways to formal sector employability. Our fellowship program goes beyond income generation, nurturing leadership, resilience, and the ability to thrive in a rapidly changing world of work.



**Trailhead by Salesforce:** Equipping girls with digital and AI skills for future-ready careers



**Google Serve Engagement:** Inspiring career aspirations through leaders' journeys in technology fields



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**Common Purpose:** Demystifying basics of simple investment, insurance and pension for first-generation job seekers from disadvantaged migrant households



**EY GDS Training:** Helping build interview confidence for formal sector jobs





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**Industry Mentorship:** From dignified resumes to advanced AI tools, preparing our girl champions for the workplace



**Naukri.com & InfoEdge:** Connecting grassroots talent with industry insights to identify skills, interests, values, and career aspirations



## Notes from the Field



During my interview at McDonald's, I was nervous at first because of my simple level of English, but the interviewers spoke to me so comfortably that my nervousness faded away. They gave me real-life challenges and asked how I would handle them, which pushed me to think beyond my comfort zone. Although I was anxious, I answered honestly and, in the end, gained not just the experience of the interview but also the confidence to face challenges. Now I feel like I can win at a lot of things in life, no matter where I come from.

- Radha, Girl Champion

The Google IT Support and résumé-building sessions were incredibly helpful. It was a new experience for me, and they taught us important skills like communication and problem-solving. We learned how to keep our CVs simple and professional. I loved the mock interviews—they gave me so much confidence! Now I know how to structure my résumé and how to use the STAR technique in interviews.

- Shobha, Girl Champion

Recently, I went to Gurugram for an interview at Magicpin. Because I didn't know the way, I reached an hour late. Still, I apologised and went ahead with the interview. It was a stressful experience, but I learned a lot from it. Obstacles will come, but I know I have to create my own path.

- Kajal, Girl Champion

The Google visit was such an eye-opening experience for me! In the first session, we learned ways to search better on Google, which I found very useful. I also got tips on identifying safe websites. They showed us how to check a site's security and even how to spot AI-generated images.

- Muskan Rai, Girl Champion

With Tata Strive Team, I had the chance to connect with others and explore new things. Meeting the mentors and learning about their own journeys was both powerful and inspiring. I am very grateful for the experience of a mock interview and making my profile on LinkedIn as a job seeker. *Main bhi successful ho sakti hun zindagi mein. Bas dil lga ke mehnat karni hoti hai.*

- Neha, Girl Champion Fellow







## Notes from the Field



At the end of the community action project, we felt a deep sense of satisfaction. We didn't just collect data, we built real connections with people. By listening to and understanding this data in depth, we organised a government linkages camp and connected around 135 migrant workers in Uttam Nagar & Dwarka communities in a single day, to important and useful government schemes. Community members also shared challenges in creating documents, like lack of awareness regarding government services. For many of us, it was perhaps the first time we got to know our own communities so deeply. The road is not easy, but this experience has made us stronger for community action.

- Priya, Girl Champion Fellow

After finishing the survey, we performed a nukkad natak [street play] in our own streets, right where we live, to reclaim public spaces and talk about gender equity in our migrant community. Through our play, we showed the daily struggles girls and women face for safety and rights. As the scenes unfolded, people began to stop and watch. Soon, nearly 1400 people were standing there, listening, talking, and sharing their own thoughts about these issues. For me, it felt like our voices had finally filled the streets where we had so often been told to stay silent.

- Aanchal, Girl Champion Fellow





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# When Communities Speak

First-person journeys of courage, change, and possibility





## Roshni wins 100% Scholarship for Masters at Azim Premji University!

**“Girls in our community don’t speak at all. They’re even afraid to dream.”**

Roshni, 21, was born and raised in a slum cluster in south southwest Delhi. Her family’s roots lie in Etawah district, Uttar Pradesh. She recently completed her B.A. from NCWEB, Delhi University. Her family’s total income is Rs 15,000, largely supported by her elder brother, who works at a private firm in Janakpuri.

But Roshni’s dreams were larger than the four walls she grew up in. Joining Protsahan marked her first step. It was a safe space for her. Through life skills training using theater, she learned to communicate with articulation and confidence. Career mapping and mentorship sessions helped her realise that her dream of becoming a professor was not just a personal goal, but a responsibility to become a role model her community had always lacked. She often observed how young women in her neighbourhood remained silent, accustomed to being unheard and confined.

Today, Roshni stands tall, **having secured a 100% scholarship to pursue her Master’s in Education at Azim Premji University.** She never imagined she would reach here.

Roshni is not just studying to become a professor, she is preparing to become a voice that will echo through her neighbourhood, where girls are encouraged not to pursue higher education because they won’t be able to find suitable grooms. She is breaking barriers and carving her own path.



## Breaking Digital Barriers: Shila Clears National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) Exam with Distinction

Shila, 24, moved to Delhi from Aara District, Bihar. She comes from a family of six and is the first woman in her family to graduate.

Her father, who drives an auto-rickshaw, always encouraged her to focus on education and hard work. At Protsahan, Shila took part in digital and livelihood training designed to build practical skills. She steadily improved her digital literacy and prepared for the NIELIT CCC exam.

With the organization's support, she passed the exam with an A grade - **becoming the first Protsahan Girl Champion to achieve this milestone.**

**Shila is now eligible to apply for central and state government jobs that require basic computer knowledge,** inspiring many other girls in her community to explore digital learning and believe in their own potential.







## From Grief to Grit: How Janvi Built a YouTube Channel, Found Work, and Began Her Path to Journalism

***"I don't want to add 'tadka' to the news. I want to bring the truth to people."***

Janvi grew up in a small village in the Palamu district of Jharkhand. She lost her mother when she was very young. After that, life changed quickly. Her father, a school teacher in a private school, stayed back in Jharkhand. Her elder brother moved to Ranchi to prepare for government exams. Janvi was sent to Delhi to live with her aunt in a small rented room in a slum. She studied through the School of Open Learning while joining Protsahan's Digital Lab, where she gained digital literacy, confidence, and a safe space to nurture her love for stories.

Her passion for truth-telling led her to create Stories by Janvi, a YouTube channel bringing children's tales to life. Through the Girl Champion Fellowship at Protsahan, Janvi learned to craft a resume, face interviews, and above all, not give up. With quiet determination, she secured a job as a Data Entry Associate, earning ₹15,000 a month and saving diligently. For her, journalism is not just a course but a calling and she is setting aside every rupee she can to join a professional journalism program in the next 2 years.

## Protsahan's Soni makes it to Azim Premji University to pursue Masters on 100% Scholarship!

Soni Kumari, finally gets to live her dream of studying in a regular full-time college, she has been awarded a full scholarship to pursue her Masters in Social Work Program from Azim Premji University (APU), giving her a chance of independently leading her life in Bangalore and paving the way for other girls in her community and setting example of perseverance and resilience. From battling child marriage at the age of 12 years, to creating over three hundred digital women champions in her community, to now becoming the first woman in her family pursue post graduation, Soni has will always be a true role model for her community. Today, she is working closely with APU professors on academic research papers. Through this, she is not only deepening her own learning but also contributing valuable insights to the field through her lived experiences. Soni is also a part of the APU's placement cell. How incredible is that! A true leader in every respect.





## Fatima - A Cricketer in the Making!

*"I want girls in my mohalla to believe they can do anything. Whether it's Science, Music or Sports, they can do anything!"*

Growing up in a small village in Muzaffarpur, Bihar, Fatima saw her family face many struggles with utmost strength. Her father used to work as a tailor, now unable to work due to health issues. Her mother is a homemaker. The main support for the family comes from her elder brother, who works at a mall in Delhi, earning ₹18,000 a month. In the middle of all this, Fatima held on to something different—passion for cricket. Playing sports wasn't seen as 'suitable' for girls in her community, and opportunities were few. But that didn't stop her. Her journey changed when she joined the Girl Champion Fellowship at Pratsahan. Here, she found space to learn, reflect, and grow. She explored leadership, built confidence, and understood her rights through sessions on sexual and reproductive health and digital skills. Visits to corporate spaces like Google, EY, and Naukri.com opened her eyes to a world beyond her communities—one where girls like her could belong.

Now, **Fatima is about to begin a two-year Sports for Transformation Fellowship**. She will be working in a remote rural village in Gujarat, **using sports as a tool to empower children, especially girls**. She dreams of working in the development sector—focusing on the education of Muslim girls and breaking taboos around menstruation.





## Where Trauma Meets Healing, Dreams Find Their Way Back — Khwaish's\* Story

When Khwaish\* first came to Protsahan, the markers of deprivation were visible: broken spectacles patched with tape, lack of basic school supplies, and a withdrawn demeanor that signaled a deeper distress. Her mother, a domestic worker and single parent, carried the weight of sustaining a family of three. Beneath this visible hardship lay an unspoken pain—Khwaish had experienced child sexual abuse, which she later disclosed to Samina, a Youth Peer Leader she learned to trust.

From a neuroscientific perspective, Khwaish's symptoms—withdrawal, low confidence, emotional shutdown—were consistent with the impact of trauma on the developing brain. Repeated exposure to adversity wires the stress-response pathways into hypervigilance, impairing the brain's prefrontal cortex functions of learning, planning, and trust-building. In Khwaish, this presented as silence and disengagement. At Protsahan's Girl Empowerment Center, she was gently introduced to arts-based therapy, a non-threatening medium that activates sensory and emotional circuits in the brain. Over time, these repetitive, nurturing experiences began to create new neural connections—a process called neuroplasticity. Through clay therapy, storytelling, and creative expression, Khwaish accessed safe pathways to process her emotions, moving her brain away from "survival mode" toward "growth mode."

As weeks passed, her participation in class increased. She began to share not only her struggles but also her hopes, signaling a strengthening of her sense of safety and self-worth. The very act of engaging, expressing, and receiving affirmation from caring adults was rewiring her neural pathways, proving that trauma, though deeply impactful, is not destiny. Healing experiences can reshape the brain. Today, Khwaish is studying with determination and speaks with growing confidence about her future. Her story is not only one of personal courage but also a living example of how trauma-informed, arts-based interventions can restore agency and dignity. In Khwaish, we see the profound truth of neuroscience: with the right care and consistent support, the brain can heal, and dreams once buried by trauma can find their way back.





## Muskan Rai: Coding a Future Her Community Never Imagined

In Khagariya, Bihar, most girls are told how to dress, behave, and settle. Muskan Rai was too—until she chose otherwise. Born into a family where her father works as a carpenter and her mother is a homemaker, Muskan’s future was expected to look like a blackboard and chalk - being a teacher was something safe, small, and predictable. But Muskan had bigger plans. When she joined the Girl Champion Fellowship, she learned that her voice mattered. **“I know I can do so much more”** she often says.

She completed a short-term course with Protsahan in AI and Web Development, built her own website, and now mentors younger girls as a subject coach at Protsahan. She’s dreaming big - of a future in digital marketing and AI, and beyond that, she wants to launch an all-women cab service to tackle unsafe public spaces and create mobility solutions led by girls from her own neighborhood. Muskan isn’t learning for herself. She’s building role modeling for an entire generation of girls who never saw someone like them doing something like this.



## When Homes Hurt: Ending Domestic Violence through Community Care

Kiran Devi, 34, a domestic worker in Dwarka's slum clusters, lived through years of intimate partner violence that left deep psychological scars on her and her children. Neuroscience tells us that repeated exposure to violence wires the brain into a constant state of fear, disrupting learning, memory, and emotional regulation in both adults and children.

When the abuse escalated, Kiran remembered a Protsahan Slum Panchayat session she had once attended on domestic violence. She dialed the 181 helpline, a moment of agency born from knowledge and community reinforcement. Protsahan's social worker, stepped in to provide counseling, consistent follow-ups, and psychoeducation. Through calm, repetitive interactions, a core principle of trauma-informed practice, Kiran's husband began to engage, and the cycle of violence slowly de-escalated.

Meanwhile, Protsahan anchored Kiran and her daughters in stability: emotional counseling, school re-enrollment, and access to safe community networks. In neuroscience terms, this is "rewiring" in action—helping the brain shift from survival pathways toward healing and learning pathways. Kiran's journey highlights how survivor-centered interventions, combining legal awareness, psychosocial care, and community reinforcement, can interrupt intergenerational trauma, safeguard children's education, and restore dignity.





## 'Abuse Destroyed My Documents, Not My Determination': Vanita

When the Protsahan team first met Vanita in the Dwarka community, she was struggling with financial stress, family abuse, and the invisible wounds of gender-based violence. Despite having completed Class 12 and a B.Com degree, her brother had destroyed all her educational documents in anger—an act that symbolized how violence doesn't just harm women's bodies, it destroys their dreams and futures. Without proof of her education, Vanita felt trapped, forced to work as a sweeper just to survive.

At Protsahan, we encouraged her to rebuild on her own terms. Enrolled in our Basic Computer Skills course at the Digi Lab, Vanita showed steady determination and quickly mastered digital tools. Within months, she secured a billing job at a grocery store, earning ₹15,000 per month.

***"Violence took away my certificates, my chances, and almost my courage. But today, with these skills, no one can take away my confidence. I finally feel like my dreams are mine again." — Vanita***

Today, Vanita's story is not only about employment, it's about reclaiming dignity from the shadow of violence. She now walks with confidence, calling herself independent, capable, and in control of her journey. For her, digital skills unlocked more than income: they reignited self-belief and a renewed vision for the future.















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# Hriday Dialogues National Stakeholders' Consultation

**663 social workers, para-legal, Child-welfare personals were trained under trauma informed and child-centric holistic approach to social work through 94 organisations in India (86 participating through Hriday Dialogues convening)**

Protsahan is committed to strengthening India's child protection ecosystem by anchoring field-building efforts that center the lived realities of adolescent girls and children at the last mile, who have fallen off the margins. We actively take part in national dialogues, conduct trainings, take part in policy shaping consultations, and knowledge exchange by working closely with state mechanisms, academic institutions, grassroots and civil society organisations. Our teams lead capacity-building workshops on trauma-informed care for members of the Child Welfare Committee, child protection functionaries, and NGO partners across states. We participate in consultations on restorative justice, JJ Act reforms, and survivor-led approaches, ensuring that ground realities inform systemic change. Through academic papers, policy briefs, and mentoring of grassroots youth leaders and survivor champions, we share insights from the field to enable trauma-informed care and spaces. This work is rooted in our belief that resilient ecosystems are built through collective responsibility and consistent learning.







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Hriday Dialogues is an annual stakeholder consultation representing an unwavering commitment to the well-being of vulnerable children across our nation. Bringing together an extraordinary coalition of minds, it aims to serve as a platform where voices from government, media, civil society, funding organisations, and key legal and psychological institutions converge. This dynamic gathering is a step toward shaping a nurturing ecosystem that empowers children to heal, grow, and thrive, through investment in the capacity building of proximate leaders.

With representatives from **86 organisations**, the conversations in the second edition of Hriday Dialogues revolved around several critical themes. Participants examined the interconnected levels of self, system, and society, reflecting on how healed individuals can heal communities. The importance of listening to children and engaging with them was highlighted, on an interpersonal level and on a policy level. Intersections of gender, caste, class, ability, and more were discussed, while representing the intricacies of situations of children in child care institutions, classrooms, and family units. A common



thread emerged from the discussions on the day, centring on the idea that networks create the conditions for change. Change cannot happen in silos; it requires the sharing of power, reflexivity, and a commitment to systemic transformation.

प्रोत्साहन की ma'ams ने मुझे समझाया, 'अगर हम try करेंगे, तभी तो कुछ हासिल होगा।' जब कोई हम पर believe करता है, तो हमारी शमता दोगुनी हो जाती है।

— Uzma, 11-year-old chess aficionado, who wants to become a Barrister and work for girls' rights

SCAN  
To Read More



What really stayed with me was the reminder that it's so important to heal ourselves before stepping into this kind of work. How often do we pause and reflect on that? This deeply resonates with what we focus on at Dawn Child Foundation (NGO). I am looking forward to exploring the toolkit made by Protsahan and finding ways to integrate neuro science learnings into our own work with parents and communities.

— Mukul S Gulati, Co-Founder and CEO, Dawn Child Foundation

Classrooms need to be comfortable and engaging. Classrooms that are silent and too tough can be detrimental to mental health. The simplest pedagogical tool is to smile a lot at children. Before we teach, we need to connect. Children's minds have a lot more going on than we'd expect. Understanding it, connecting to it, and responding to it, can lay the cornerstone for trauma-informed classrooms.

— Subir Shukla, Former Educational Quality Advisor to MHRD, Government of India

The masterclass activities made me visualize the polyvagal theory and how trauma sits in the brain of a child like crawling bugs, while safety eludes. It took me back to the Hriday Dialogue 2023, where the similar visualization was done using bindis on the brain. Like Sonal Kapoor said the heavy intellectual conversations might fade away, we might forget all the complex terms after a while but this would stay. Indeed, the image of crawlies in the brain is a powerful metaphor that is difficult to erase.

— Pallavi Kulshrestha, Associate Director - National Partnerships, Dream A Dream

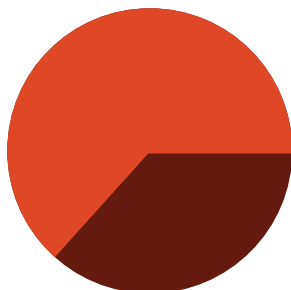




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#HridayDialogues by Protsahan India Foundation was perhaps the most unique dialogue I have ever attended. Blending neurobiology with art to solve one of the trickiest and dire problems of healing trauma amongst survivors of abuse, was ingenious. The panel discussions were amazing and the Girl Champions' stories were extremely inspiring. Well, my biggest takeaway from this: is to always use my Head, Heart and Hands to create meaningful solutions for a better child rights ecosystem.

— Baishali M, Founder, Vaishali Skill and Development Centre



**63%** participants gave Hriday Dialogues an overall rating of 5/5 for decoding neuro science in childcare

**37%** participants gave Hriday Dialogues an overall rating of 4/5 for decoding neuro science in childcare

SCAN To Watch  
Hriday Dialogues  
2024 Panels &  
Discussions

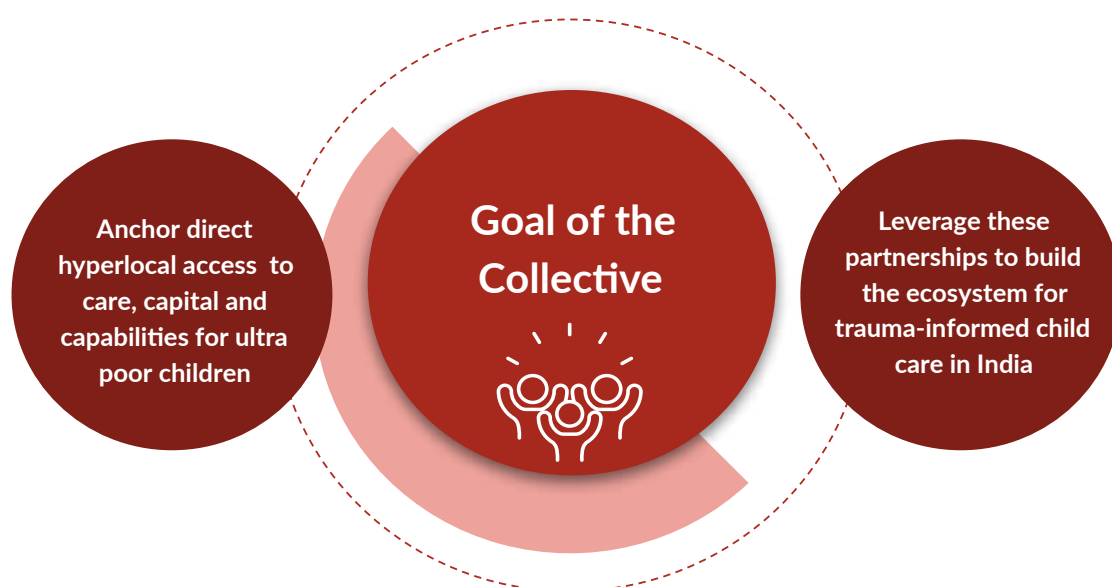




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# Grassroots Alliances for Resilient Childhoods

Protsahan spearheaded the creation of the Resilient Childhoods Collective coming together with 8 Grassroots organizations to support students from marginalized and low-income families facing severe childhood adversities with access to care, capabilities, and capital.







# CareVerse

CareVerse is an mobile-first platform that transforms India's frontline workforce into trauma-informed caregivers. We build bite-sized, DIY learning journeys in regional Indian languages, co-created with caregivers, using stories, art, and real-life trauma case studies. The content will soon be AI-personalized based on learner profile (ASHA, teacher, parents), geography, and language level. CareVerse is designed for low-bandwidth environments.

Technology in workforce development can help solve key challenges, especially those related to universal access and efficiency, but innovations must be centered on the needs of communities and enable relevant learning outcomes for learners. While technology is not a replacement for human interaction, it can offer new assistive devices, help cross language barriers, and support educators, caregivers, and mentors in creating more personalized learning experiences. Deploying high-impact educational ideas at scale can also benefit from technology through networks and efficiencies, even as the end goal remains learner success.

## Strengthening Caregivers Through Trauma-Informed Training: Evidence from CareVerse

CareVerse is Protsahan's learning academy - a digital, arts- and science-based platform that trains frontline caregivers (teachers, social workers, Anganwadi workers, Child Welfare Committees, peer NGOs, etc.) in trauma-informed care. It brings the latest neuroscience of childhood trauma together with creative, accessible tools (arts, stories, digital micro-learning) so caregivers can better support children who've faced violence and adversity.

To assess the effectiveness of the workshop, paired t-tests were conducted on participants' pre- and post-workshop scores across three domains: Practice, and Knowledge, and Overall performance. The questions were designed to capture two critical domains—participants' understanding of trauma and trauma-informed approaches, and their ability to apply these approaches in practice. While some items focused on awareness (e.g., identifying signs of trauma, understanding the amygdala's role in fear and anxiety, or recognizing the risks of re-traumatization), others measured practical skills (e.g., using arts-based methods, maintaining confidentiality in case documentation, and applying trauma-informed strategies with children). Together, these tools offered a holistic measure of both conceptual knowledge and practical competence in trauma-informed care.

### Practice:

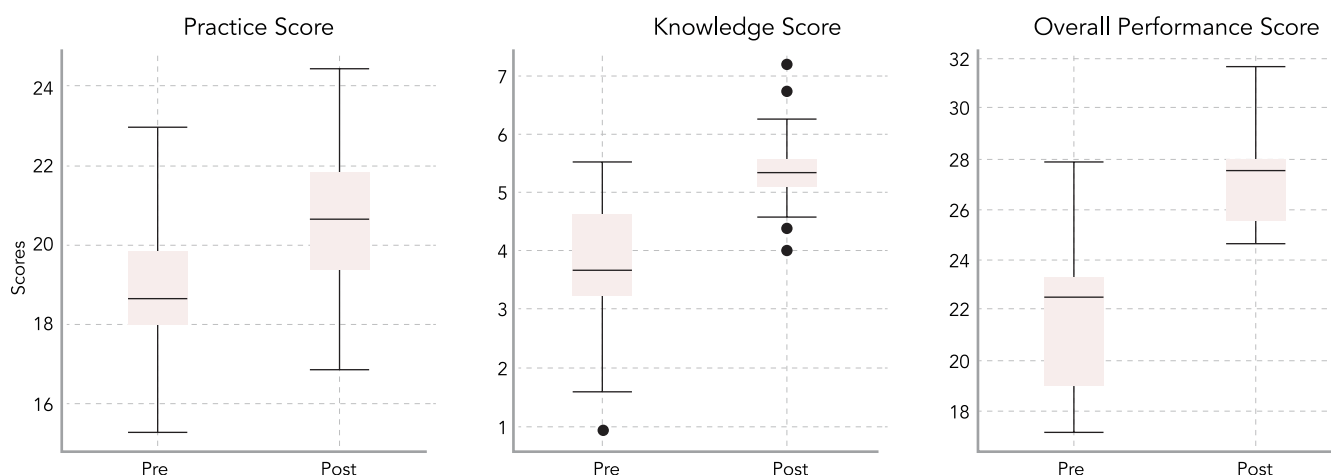
The mean practice score increased from 19.2 (SD = 2.04) pre-workshop to 20.8 (SD = 2.00) post-workshop. The improvement was statistically significant ( $t = -2.29$ ,  $p = 0.032$ ), indicating measurable gains in participants' ability to apply trauma-informed concepts in their work.

### Knowledge:

Knowledge scores showed a sharper rise, with mean scores improving from 3.8 (SD = 1.11) pre-workshop to 5.4 (SD = 0.72) post-workshop. The difference was highly significant ( $t = -5.46$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting that the workshop was particularly effective in strengthening participants' conceptual understanding and retention of trauma and trauma-informed practices.

### Overall performance:

Overall performance scores showed a clear rise, with mean scores improving from 21.7 (SD = 2.8) pre-workshop to 26.7 (SD = 1.8) post-workshop. The difference was highly significant ( $t = 6.22$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), reflecting a 23% improvement over baseline. This suggests that the workshop was effective in enhancing participants' ability to apply concepts consistently and with greater confidence.



## CareVerse Impact on Practice, Knowledge, and Overall Performance Scores

The workshops had a dual impact on individuals—both at the knowledge level and the practice level. At the knowledge level, participants developed a deeper understanding of trauma, its effects on the brain, and the importance of trauma-informed approaches, which enhanced their confidence and clarity in supporting children. At the practice level, they gained concrete tools—such as arts-based methods, safeguarding practices, and strategies to avoid re-traumatization—that translated directly into their day-to-day interactions with children, peers, and colleagues. Together, these shifts enabled participants not only to internalize trauma-informed principles but also to apply them effectively, creating safer and more supportive environments for adolescent girls. CareVerse is not just innovative but provably impactful.





“The real innovation is Protsahan’s shift to exponential thinking — growing impact without growing the organization. Through the Ashoka ASPIRE accelerator, they embraced models of seeding intelligence into the ecosystem, much like an Intel chip powering multiple devices. Protsahan’s trauma-informed intelligence (through CareVerse) can now be embedded across classrooms, communities, and child protection systems, enabling capacities and scale through local proximate actors.

— Gopal Garg, Director - Ecosystem & Partnerships, Project ASPIRE

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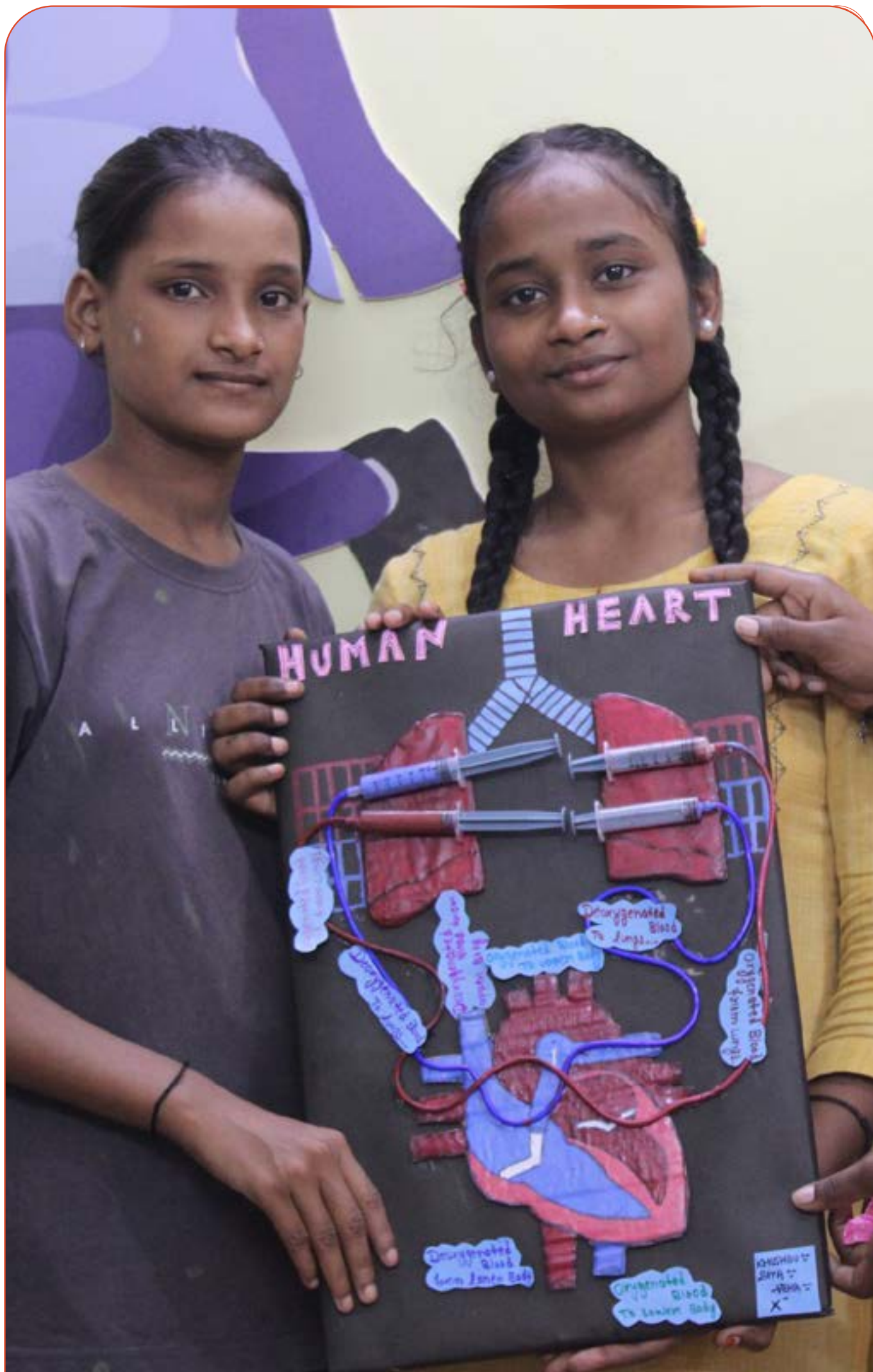


**We were also a part of these critical conversation on Child Protection, Youth Empowerment & Sexual & Gender Based Violence, under 2024-25**

- ▶ **Strengthening Family Support Systems at the 1st National Family Summit hosted by Miracle Foundation**
- ▶ **10th State network convergence meeting with grassroot organizations involving Udayan care and India Alternate Care Network**
- ▶ **State Consultation on Prevention and Redressal Mechanism for Violence Against Women hosted by Effrah**
- ▶ **Leveraging Data & Collaboration for Greater Social Impact at the Dasra Data for Good Exchange Annual Conference 2024**
- ▶ **Protsahan speaks at the Dialogues of Development Management (DoDM) on Blueprints for Resilience: Strategic Planning with Purpose**
- ▶ **Indian School of Development Management (ISDM) hosted Ashoka Fellows: Bezwada Wilson (Founder, Safai Karamchari Andolan: mission: to eradicate manual scavenging in India) & Sonal Kapoor (Founder, Protsahan: mission: healing childhood trauma) for a lecture with the students on "Scale and Sustainability" in social development.**
- ▶ **Navigating Child Safety in the Age of Online Gaming at Manthan, hosted by Unicef**









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# People at Protsahan

## Nurturing Accountability & Trauma-Informed Excellence in NGO Teams

Our people are at the core of everything we do. Working with adolescent girls who have faced trauma, systemic exclusion, and displacement requires a team that is not only skilled, but also deeply empathetic and resilient. When we say we scale our people, we mean we invest in deep, long-term growth of individuals - especially those from the communities we serve, rather than focusing only on organisational expansion. Instead of growing in size, we grow in strength, by building people who can lead change in their families, communities, and beyond. This includes:

### Protsahan's Human Capital Edge

#### Building Future-Ready Teams to Drive Systems Change

- ▶ **Community-Rooted Talent (DEI at the Core):** Over 60% of our team are women hired from the very communities we serve, embedding lived experience and cultural fluency directly into program delivery.
- ▶ **Structured Internal Growth Pathways:** Clearly defined role bands, competency frameworks, and mentorship ladders enable frontline youth to rise through the ranks into management and leadership roles, nurturing long-term institutional memory and loyalty.
- ▶ **Trauma-Informed Capacity Building:** Regular, evidence-based training on trauma stewardship and psychosocial safety ensures that staff well-being and resilience are treated as core organisational assets, not afterthoughts.
- ▶ **Shared Leadership Architecture:** Decision-making power is intentionally distributed across domain leads and Youth Peer Leaders, reducing founder dependence and fostering collective ownership of outcomes.

In FY 2024-25, Protsahan earned the **Great Place to Work** certification for the second time in a row! This was a third party evaluation that took **Credibility, Respect, Fairness, Pride and Camaraderie** into consideration. We're proud that 87.5% of our team is made up of women, strengthening India's female workforce and driving gender equity through action.

**97% people believe that they are treated fairly at Protsahan, regardless of their background**





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Nidhi Sharma, Senior Manager - Human Resources, leading a critical dialogue with the Team on what shapes Protsahan's work culture, our values, our practice, our how.



**We're Great Place to  
Work-Certified™!**

**91%**

of our employees said that when  
you join the company, you are  
made to feel welcome

Source: 2024 Great Place To Work Trust Index® Survey



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Celebrating  
Independence Day:  
Centering Wellness of  
the Social Workers



Diwali  
Celebrations!





# Above & Beyond

## Ensuring Organisational Sustainability

At Protsahan, we believe organisational sustainability begins with consistent investment in our people. The challenges our team navigates at the intersection of child protection, trauma, gender-based violence require not just commitment, but ongoing capacity building and care.

In FY 2024–25, we conducted about 50 internal capacity building trainings & facilitated participation in external capacity building trainings, thoughtfully designed to match the experience, roles, and growth trajectories of our staff. These weren't generic workshops, they were curated based on real-time capacity gaps observed in the field and feedback from the team, including:

- ▶ **KRA Alignment Workshops** to help teams clarify role expectations and delivery outcomes
- ▶ **Gender Sensitisation Sessions** to deepen understanding of power, consent, and safety in field contexts
- ▶ **Psycho-Social and Art-Based Healing Workshops** to equip frontline workers with tools to support children through trauma from neuroscientific approach
- ▶ **Sexual & Reproductive Health Trainings** to build accurate knowledge and comfort around working with adolescent girls
- ▶ **Storytelling, Read-Aloud & Communications Workshops** to build empathic community engagement skills
- ▶ **Integrating Technology in Everyday Operations:** Hands-on IT support and training on platforms like Keka for HR
- ▶ **National Training on NGO Management & Resource Mobilisation** to expand leadership capacity in non-profit operations
- ▶ **Legal Empowerment Training** to strengthen the team's ability to navigate child rights laws and entitlements in accordance with India's laws



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Gender Sensitisation  
& Psychosocial  
Workshops | Capacity  
Building of the  
proximate Youth Peer  
Leaders with Ritwik Das



Decision Making,  
Feedback, Team Work,  
Self Reflection and  
more | Capacity Building  
Training in Dhikuli,  
Uttarakhand for Senior  
Leaders at Protsahan





Pratsahan  
India Foundation



Preeti Poddar, Manager  
- Ground Operations &  
Mallika Sinha, Manager  
- Resource Mobilization  
& Compliance at the  
National Training on  
NGO Management &  
Resource Mobilisation  
by Vishwa Yuva Kendra



Payal Rani, Assistant  
Manager - Ground  
Operations & Govind  
Rathod, Program Officer  
- STEM & Livelihoods  
at the Centre for Social  
Justice, in Ahmedabad,  
Gujarat for a Training on  
Leading and Managing  
Legal Empowerment  
Programmes for girls and  
their families





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Charul Kaushik,  
Associate Director -  
Programs, Moushumi  
Baruah, Manager -  
Grassroots Alliances ,  
Preeti Poddar, Manager  
- Ground Operations  
& Payal Rani, Assistant  
Manager - Ground  
Operations at the  
Youth-Led and Youth-  
centered Training by  
EMpower



Moushumi Baruah,  
Manager - Grassroots  
Alliances at the 9th State  
network convergence  
meeting with grassroot  
organizations involving  
Udayan care and India  
Alternate Care Network







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# Mentor Spotlight



**Kumari Yadav**

Puppeteer | Performer | Arts Educator

Conducting workshops with the girls who have transitioned from child labour at Protsahan was a truly special experience. In a short time, they created original songs, scripts, and poetry—infusing each moment with creativity and confidence. What stood out was their ability to support one another. Their teamwork, care, and respect made the space feel collaborative and deeply moving. I’m grateful to have worked with them and to witness their growth through the arts.



With early roots in drama, dance, and football, her creative journey began as a child performing in street plays and annual productions with Salaam Baalak Trust. At 15, she was introduced to puppetry by Shri Kapil Dev of Samarpan, who guided her through the basics of theatre and puppetry. What began with foundational movements grew into three years of rigorous training in the art form.

She later trained in dance with Mr. Avinash Kumar and Shri Astad Deboo, further enriching her movement vocabulary. Her path led her to the Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust, where she continues to work under the mentorship of Dadi D. Pudumjee—one of India's most renowned puppeteers. Since 2007, she has participated in national and international performances, deepening her practice and expanding her creative range.

In 2012, she launched her own puppet stall, Pout Zip, at the Ishara Puppet Festival, inspired by her years of experience and mentorship.







## Mrinalini Nair

Dance Movement Therapy Facilitator

“My year with Protsahan has been deeply grounding. It gave me insight into the care, sensitivity, and intention needed to work with girls affected by trauma. Each session was a reminder that healing is slow, layered, and often silent. I witnessed how trust is built through consistency. How movement becomes language when words feel distant. Being part of this journey—where safety and expression go hand-in-hand—was not just professionally enriching, but personally humbling.”

Introduced to dance at the age of five, Mrinalini has used movement as a steady companion in her personal and professional journey. Dance taught her discipline, curiosity, and resilience—not just in perfecting technique but in navigating life with focus and perseverance. Her interest evolved into purpose when she discovered the field of Dance Movement Therapy. She completed her diploma in Dance Movement Therapy from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Since then, she has worked with Teach for India and Protsahan India Foundation to support children and adolescents through movement-based healing. She believes that while talent may open the door, it is consistent practice and a deep sense of responsibility that builds meaningful change.





### Vipul Kalra

Theatre Practitioner | Social Activist | Founder, Ibaarat Festival & Project Vyom

”

Working with Protsahan was a deeply meaningful journey—not just for the girls, but for me as a facilitator. We designed creative and participatory workshops around real-life themes: early marriage, girls’ education, menstrual hygiene, sanitation, digital literacy, and gender equality. Sessions included roleplay, monologues, storytelling, forum theatre, and silent acts—each tailored to help the girls reflect, express, and lead. Many began their journey, hesitant to even speak. By the end, they were writing, performing, and leading their peers with conviction. These weren’t just theatre sessions—they were spaces of transformation. The girls built essential life skills: confidence, teamwork, empathy, and decision-making. I’m proud of what we created together. I carry their voices and stories with me—reminders of the power of art to unlock agency.

“

Vipul is a passionate theatre artist and founder of the Ibaarat Nukkad Festival and Project Vyom. He has trained with Asmita Theatre Group and uses theatre to mobilise youth and women across urban and rural spaces. He collaborates closely with NSS leaders in Delhi University colleges and is an alumnus of Jagriti Yatra, a 15-day train journey across India focused on grassroots innovation and social change.



# Compliance with Law

Protsahan continues to uphold the highest standards of legal compliance, with strong emphasis on child protection, safeguarding, and Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) at the workplace. These are not just statutory requirements for us, but core values that define how we operate with integrity and accountability.

## POSH Compliance

Our Internal Committee, formed under the POSH Act, remains active and trained to handle complaints with care and confidentiality. We are happy to report that no POSH complaints were reported this year. All team members undergo regular orientation and refresher training on gender equity, workplace dignity, and respectful conduct.

## Child Protection

We strengthened our Child Protection Policy, aligned with the latest legal frameworks and good practices. All staff, interns, and volunteers were trained on child safeguarding protocols. We continue to follow a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and conduct periodic safety audits.

## Statutory and Legal Compliance

Protsahan has complied with all applicable Indian laws and statutory requirements for non-profits:

- ▶ Timely filing under the Income Tax Act, Indian Trusts Act, EPF, ESIC, and FCRA (where applicable).
- ▶ All statutory deductions were made and deposited on time.
- ▶ The organisation successfully completed its annual external financial audit, as well as internal compliance reviews.

## Grievance Redressal

We continue to offer accessible and inclusive grievance redressal systems. Our staff can report concerns via email or in person to the Executive Director. HR ensures follow-through, documentation, and resolution tracking of every case. No open grievances were pending at the end of FY 2024–25.

By investing in rigorous training, preventive systems, and transparent reporting structures, we continue to prioritise safety, dignity, and legal integrity across every layer of our work.



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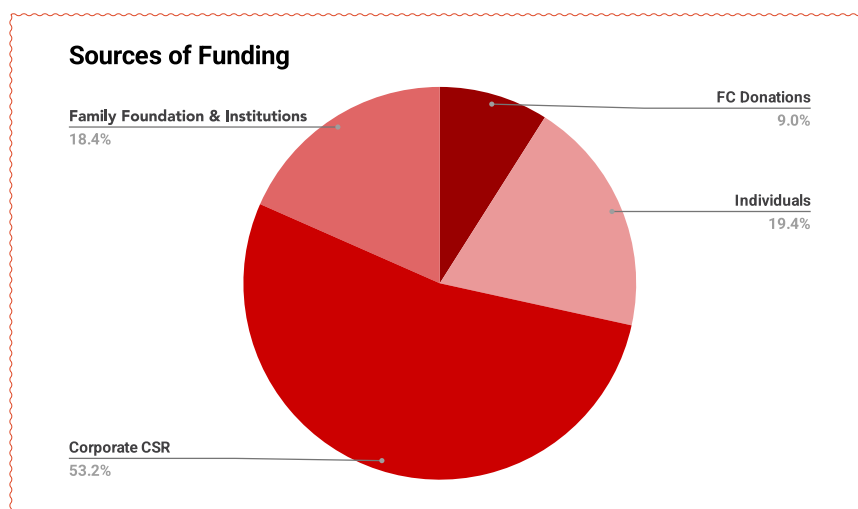
# Our Funders & Partners





# Financials - Income, Growth & Expenditure

The financial year 2024-25 ended on a positive note, paving the way for the organisation's sustainability. We closed the year with a gross receipt of INR 5,00,55,260.65. It is pertinent to mention that Protsahan has ample diversity in its funding sources with INR 97,35,365.50 donated by individuals, INR 2,66,12,835.59 came from Corporate CSR, and INR 92,07,692.00 by family foundations and institutions. 72.68% of the funds were directed toward direct program implementation, while 16.36% supported administration and fundraising efforts. The slight variance in utilisation figures is due to some grants extending beyond the FY 2024-25 period, with disbursements scheduled after the financial year close. We are humbled to share that Protsahan received the FCRA Certification in February 2024, granted by the Government of India, paving the way for us to receive foreign donations. In FY 24-25, we received INR 44,99,367.56 in foreign contributions.



Retail donations & High Net Worth Individuals - **INR 9,735,365.50 (19.45%)**

Corporate - **INR 26,612,835.59 (53.17%)**

Institutions - **INR 9,207,692.00 (18.40%)**

FC Donations - **INR 44,99,367.56 (8.99%)**

## Transparency & Accountability

We follow international industry standard GAAP guidelines with respect to administrative costs and allocation of salaries and overheads to projects based on actual effort and time spent on the execution of the projects. Our complete audited financial statements for all years are available on request. We use Razorpay payment gateway APIs for online donations on our official website.



01

### INTERNAL AUDIT

Conducted by an independent external agency to ensure compliance with industry regulations

### BUDGETING & CONTROL

Requests for approving budgets for grassroots activities are submitted in advance and are stringently monitored

02

03

### INTERNAL AUDIT

Conducted by an independent external agency to ensure compliance with industry regulations









**Protsahan**  
India Foundation

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🌐 [www.protsahan.co.in](http://www.protsahan.co.in)

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