

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC **EMPOWERMENT**

Mainstreaming Gender for Equitable Development



While government programmes, schemes, and governance structures have witnessed notable strides in institutional efficiency, significant social and economic inequalities persist, especially for women, girls, and marginalised communities. Despite the global commitment to leave no one behind, many continue to face systemic barriers to access, agency, and opportunity.

At Social and Economic Empowerment Practice, we believe that gender equity is not a siloed goal; it is foundational to achieving sustainable development. Drawing from our cross-sectoral experience in policy reform, capacity building, adaptive programming, behaviour change communication, mass mobilisation, social protection, and data-driven insights, we design and deliver solutions that are inclusive, resilient, and locally anchored.

Our **3** Core Pillars

Building Girl Capital

We invest in girls' education, voice, and agency by providing access to life skills, sexual and reproductive health knowledge, and pathways to vocational and academic success. This strengthens their ability to lead, earn, and break cycles of poverty.

Empowering Women

We address structural and societal barriers that affect women's health, nutrition, and livelihoods. We drive change through integrated approaches that link economic empowerment with improved well-being.

Nurturing Resilient Communities

We support community-led adaptation strategies, promoting climate-smart practices, & generating evidence for building resilient systems. We ensure that local voices shape solutions to future shocks.

IMPACT & REACH

0.76 Mn+
Adolescent girls
reached

1.78 Mn+
Women
impacted

0.83 Mn+
Households
benefitted

0.13 Mn+
Government
officials assisted

0.34 Mn+
Community
members reached



BUILDING **GIRL CAPITAL**

Donor: Children's Investment Fund Foundation

Collaboration: Government of Rajasthan

Project Manzil, implemented in partnership with the Department of Education and the Rajasthan Skills and Livelihoods Development Corporation (RSLDC), empowered girls and young women in and out of school with skills and economic opportunities to delay early marriage and first pregnancy.

The project maps girls' aspirations, to link them with appropriate training opportunities, improving the quality of employability, skills training, and facilitating access to safe and secure jobs to enhance their participation in the workforce. Initiated in 2019 in 6 districts of the State, the project was expanded in 2023 to cover a total of 10 districts, including Dungarpur, Jaipur, Sawai Madhopur, Tonk, Udaipur, Alwar, Ajmer, Baran, Bhilwara, and Dausa.

Focusing on girls aged 15 – 24, the project adopted a two-pronged approach:

- **In schools:** Encouraged participation and retention in vocational education by linking them with on-the-job training and mentorship opportunities.
- **Out-of-school:** Facilitated enrolment in skills training programmes and supported their transition into meaningful employment.



71,000+ girls completed vocational education in schools



28,000+ girls completed their skill training courses

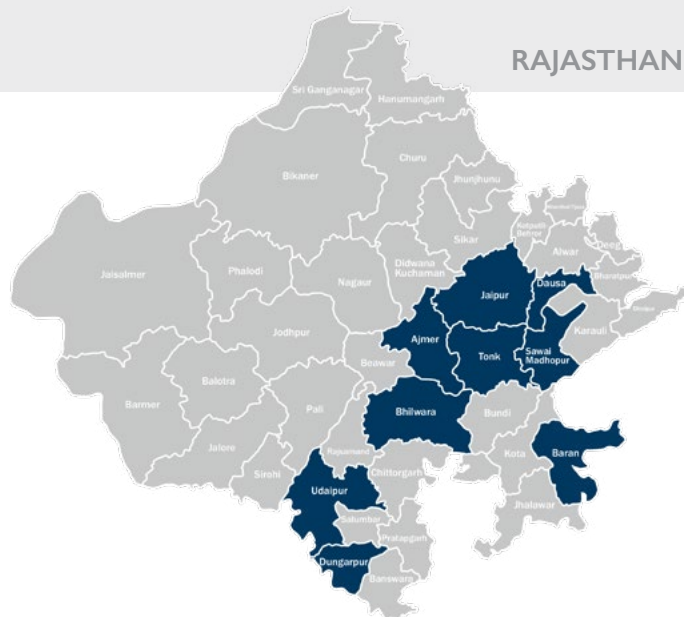


16,000+ girls got placed with 70% completing 6 months+ on the job



780 vocational trainers from schools trained in delivering employability skills

RAJASTHAN



Manzil implemented across 10 districts, including Ajmer, Alwar, Baran, Bhilwara, Dausa, Dungarpur, Jaipur, Sawai Madhopur, Tonk, and Udaipur.

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS



Identifying girls who were out of school and initiating conversations to understand their aspirations and barriers.



Counselling girls and their families to raise awareness about the value of skilling and economic independence.



Registering girls on the Manzil App (MAP) and helping them identify courses aligned with their aspirations.



Facilitating enrolment in Skill Development Centres (SDCs) and regularly monitoring attendance for course completion.



Providing employability skills training at Skill Development Centres (SDCs) to make girls job-ready.



Counselling skill-trained girls on employment prospects and connecting them with gender-audited employers.



Monitoring the progress of placed girls for six months to ensure sustainable outcomes.

Independent Evaluation of Women and Child Development Schemes

The Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog, commissioned an independent third-party evaluation of all the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

Led by us, the evaluation aimed to strengthen the design and delivery through strategic inputs to unlock the growth potential, integrate different programmes, and adopt a holistic approach to achieving the intended outcomes of the flagship schemes across India.

The strategic objectives of the evaluation:

- **Sector Review:** Assessed performance on key outcomes such as stunting, anaemia, child protection, low birth weight, women empowerment and related health and nutrition outcomes for at-risk and vulnerable women and children.
- **Scheme Assessment:** Analysed 15 CSS schemes on relevance, effectiveness, equity, efficiency, and sustainability and cross-sectional themes.
- **Best Practices & Innovations:** Identified and showcased scalable models and home-grown innovations for wider replication.
- **Programme Convergence & Harmonisation:** Recommended convergence of overlapping schemes for enhanced performance against various cross-sectional themes, including the use of information technology, gender mainstreaming, social inclusion and alignment with national development goals.



Donor

DMEO, NITI Aayog

State

Pan India



Odisha Girls' Incentive Programme (OGIP)

Delivering Conditional Secondary School Incentive Programme (CSSIP)

Donor: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Previously DFID)

The initiative focused on improving secondary school enrolment, attendance, and completion rates among Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) students (both girls and boys) in Odisha through a system of direct transfer of scholarship, organising learning hubs for knowledge uptake and safe transport.

A secure system for cash transfers was designed and managed, ensuring that scholarships reached nearly 6,50,000 disadvantaged girls and boys across 30 districts in Odisha through direct transfers to their bank accounts.

As part of technical assistance, we supported the Government of Odisha to run these systems sustainably and piloted learning hubs for remedial education and safe transport for improving attendance of disadvantaged students. The intervention led to an increase in secondary school enrolment of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) students by almost 14%, increasing the enrolment from 4.41 lakh in the base year, 2012-13, to 5.02 lakh in 2015-16.

In addition, we provided technical support to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), Government of India for over three years (2013-2016), to help set up and monitor its national scholarship funds and other education schemes for disadvantaged students, thereby replicating successful aspects of the Odisha model across other states.



A secure system enabled direct cash transfers of scholarships to nearly **6,50,000** disadvantaged girls and boys across **30 districts**.

UDAAN

A 360° Approach to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy

Donor: Children's Investment Fund Foundation

Collaboration: Department of Education, Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, Government of Rajasthan

UDAAN, a five-year project aimed at reducing early marriage of girls and teenage pregnancy, was implemented in Rajasthan.

The project was designed to address the alarming situation of early marriage of girls leading to early childbearing, dropping out of school and other detrimental consequences. It adopted a multi-sectoral approach to prevent teenage pregnancy, layering interventions beyond sexual health, to fundamentally change the way adolescent programmes operate and

achieve results. The investment leveraged existing government platforms and programmes to focus on three interrelated components.

Three Pronged-Approach

- **Keeping** Girls in Secondary Schools
- **Improving** Knowledge, Attitude and Practices around Sexual and Reproductive Health
- **Expanding** Contraceptive Choices for Young Women



35,540+
child marriages
prevented



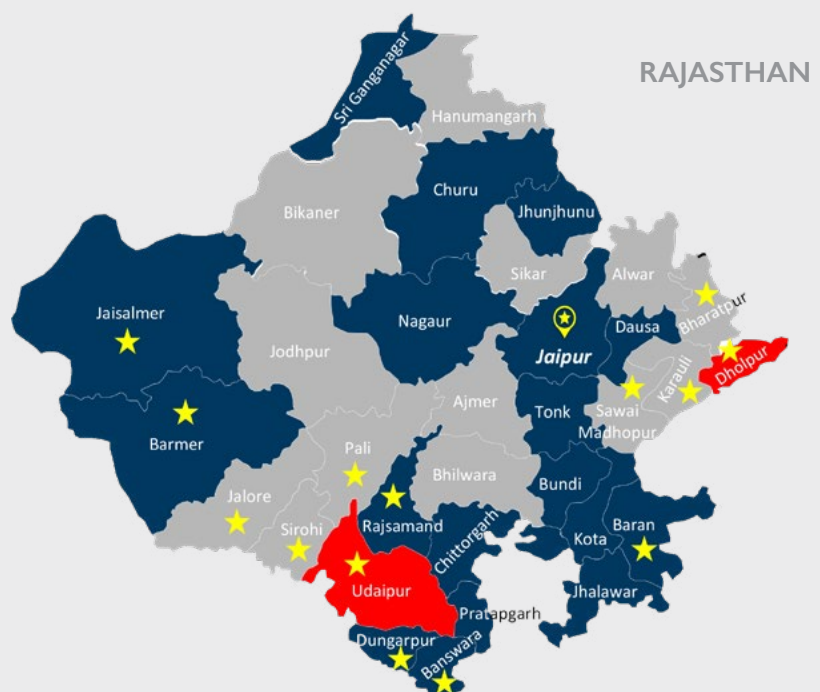
28,220+
teenage pregnancies
averted



52,650+
additional girls
enrolled in schools



575,140+
female users
introduced to the
new injectable
contraceptive method



■ Keeping girls in school – initial 2 focus districts (2017)

■ Expanded coverage to additional 13 districts in 2020

★ Initial 14 Mission Parivar Vikas Districts (Injectable Contraceptive). Coverage expanded to remaining 19 districts in 2022



Bal Vivah Mukat Rajasthan Mission

Toward a Future Free of Child Marriage

Rajasthan has a high incidence of child marriage, with over 1,27,000 girls getting married each year before the age of 18 due to deep-rooted social norms, poverty, and gender inequality contributing to the persistence of this harmful practice. While Rajasthan has demonstrated considerable improvement in the past decade, with a 10% decline in girl-child marriages from 35.4% in 2015-16 to 25.4% in 2020-21 (NFHS), there is a need to accelerate the progress.

The Department for Child Rights, Rajasthan, has initiated the Bal Vivah Mukat Rajasthan Mission - a statewide initiative to eliminate child marriage in the State that is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and India's Bal Vivah Mukat Abhiyan.

We are supporting the Department, through a Technical Assistance Unit, to design a state strategy and a multi-sectoral action plan to accelerate change by strengthening implementation systems, supporting awareness campaigns, enhancing interdepartmental coordination, and enabling data-driven planning and response.



Donor	Children's Investment Fund Foundation
Collaboration	Department of Child Rights, Government of Rajasthan
State	Rajasthan

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS



Institute the Bal Vivah Mukat Rajasthan Mission

Develop a comprehensive roadmap with operational strategies, implementation pathways, and financial architecture for long-term impact.



Launch a Statewide Campaign

Roll out a dynamic awareness and action calendar for community and public mobilisation rooted in local language and culture, spotlight role models, and leverage social media and news.



Build Capacity at Every Level

Train state, district, and frontline workers, especially child marriage protection officers, on legal frameworks, early warning signs, and referral systems.



Leverage Digital Tools

Create a Bal Vivah Mukat Rajasthan Portal-cum-Dashboard to house real-time data, campaign materials, and a repository of best practices.



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



2017-2025

RAJPUSHT

Cash Plus Programme to Improve Maternal and Child Nutrition

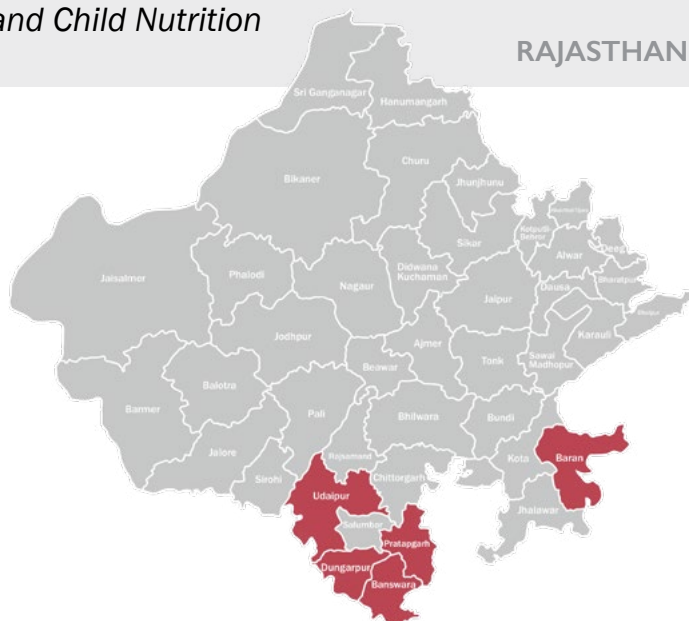
RAJASTHAN

Donor: Children's Investment Fund Foundation

Collaboration: Department of Women & Child Development, Government of Rajasthan

RajPusht - Cash Plus program seeks to accelerate the reduction of low birth weight and wasting among children in Rajasthan, India.

The project follows a transformative pathway for improved maternal and child health by championing cash transfers for new mothers to help them purchase and eat a locally available nutritious diet. It focuses on a 360° Social & Behaviour Change (SBC) strategy to create and enable an environment for adoption of recommended pregnancy care, childcare & nutrition practices.



Cash Plus Programme across 5 districts, including Udaipur, Dungarpur, Banswara, Pratapgarh, and Baran.

KEY INTERVENTIONS

Supporting cash transfers to pregnant and lactating women

Implementing evidence-led Social & Behaviour Change (SBC) interventions

Fostering innovations in public financing for tribal health and nutrition

Building capacities of frontline government staff in counselling for Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) outcomes

Promoting technology integration to deliver health and nutrition services on time and without hassle to the citizens

OUTCOMES



11,26,000+ women received cash benefits for buying nutritious food



6,50,000+ households counselled on the importance of nutrition for pregnant and lactating women and young children



90,600+ frontline workers trained



3,90,000+ newborns weighed accurately through innovative digital weighing machines



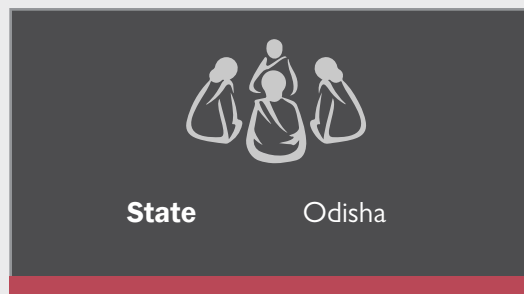
1,90,000+ community meetings conducted

OUTREACH

INDICATOR	1. % Increase in adequate maternal nutrition knowledge of pregnant women	15	% INCREASE
	2. % Increase in adequate maternal nutrition knowledge of family members	50	
	3. % Increase in maternal diet diversity	48	
	4. % Increase in gestational weight gain	33	
	5. % Increase in timely initiation of breastfeeding	46	
	6. % Increase in exclusive breastfeeding	25	
	7. % Increase in child diet diversity	49	

Empowering Mission Shakti SHG Network in Odisha

Mission Shakti, one of the flagship programmes of the Government of Odisha works to bridge gender, financial, digital, and social gaps by strengthening the Mission Shakti Women Self-Help Group (WSHG) network.



This partnership is furthering women's social and economic empowerment in the state by promoting digital and financial literacy among WSHG members, while also providing them with information on key aspects of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

Over the past three years, the initiative has built and strengthened the capacities of more than 6,00,000 SHG women across the state by:

- **Building digital and financial literacy**
- **Raising awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights**
- **Addressing gender-based violence**

To achieve this, both e-learning content and a physical in-person training toolkit were developed. A user-friendly, dynamic, interactive, and self-facilitative Android mobile application-based Learning Management System (LMS) has been deployed and securely hosted on the AWS cloud. The LMS, available in both English and Odia, offers 44 videos covering the thematic areas and supports three levels of users — Master Trainers, DigiShakti Trainers, and Learners. Additionally, 285 women have been trained as Master Trainers, who are supporting a cascade model of training across the state. By May 2025, the LMS had already registered over 9,000 DigiShakti Trainers, with trainings underway across 15 priority districts. An online support unit, including a dedicated helpline, has been established in Bhubaneswar to offer real-time technical assistance, track progress, monitor training quality, and provide regular feedback through a web-based dashboard system.



RANI

Reduction in Anaemia through Normative Innovations

Donor: Gates Foundation

Partner: George Washington University, USA

Collaboration: Odisha Livelihoods Mission, Department of Panchayati Raj, Government of Odisha

RANI was a clustered randomised controlled trial that tested the ability of a norms-based behaviour change intervention to reduce anaemia. The project supported the National and State Governments' anaemia reduction endeavours among Women of Reproductive Age (WRA) (15-49 years). Using an innovative package of interventions, RANI promoted changes in social norms, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours of WRA and pregnant women in Odisha to increase initial intake and adherence to iron and folic acid (IFA) consumption and reduce anaemia.

As a local research and implementation partner, we collaborated with Odisha Livelihoods Mission, leveraging the strength of the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) promoted by them. RANI was based on a unique design, a first-of-its-kind initiative integrating the social and behavioural norms affecting an individual, key influencers, and the larger community to drive change.

Strategic Approach

- **Lower** rates of anaemia among women in rural Odisha
- **Identify** the social norms that impact behaviours related to anaemia
- **Design** innovative social norms solutions that facilitate iron folic supplement use
- **Engage** with self-help groups, health workers, and the general population in Odisha



130 treatment villages



17,000+ women across participated



16,800+ WRAs were tested under the programme and were made aware of their haemoglobin levels



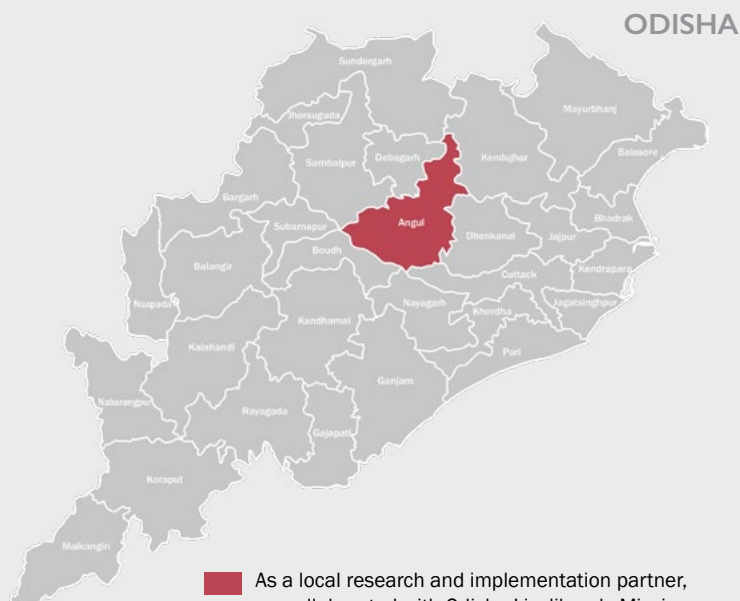
12.5% reduction in the proportion of anaemic women in the treatment arm at the Project endline



88% increase in self-reported Iron Folic Acid (IFA) consumption in treatment villages



0.34 G/DL improvement in haemoglobin levels was observed in the RANI project at the end of the intervention



June to October, 2021

Assessment and Documentation of Odisha Millets Mission

Recognised by NITI Aayog as one of the two most progressive models for millet promotion in India, the Odisha Millets Mission (OMM) has emerged as a leading example for other states to emulate. The Government of India has since advised all state governments to adopt the OMM approach for advancing millet-based interventions.



In an effort to advance South-South Cooperation, OMM signed an MoU to inform national, regional, and global policy dialogues on millets as climate-adaptable nutri-cereals for sustainable food and nutrition security. As part of this collaboration, OMM aimed to document 'good practices' of millet mainstreaming in Odisha.

We were selected to assess and document the good practices and lessons learned since its inception.

The assignment involved developing compelling narratives and case stories to showcase the OMM model as a replicable and scalable operational framework for other states and regions. The work culminated in a series of policy briefs aimed at influencing the revival and mainstreaming of millets in state, national, and global food system strategies.

2017-2020

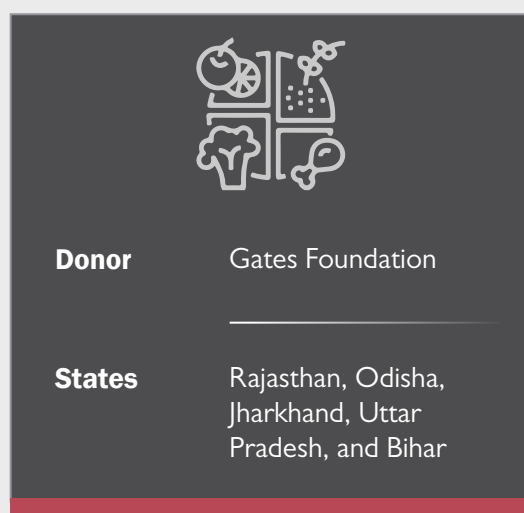
We Collaborate for Nutrition

Supported by the Gates Foundation, We Collaborate for Nutrition (WeCan) was a national-level platform that documented and shared high-impact nutrition interventions to enable cross-learning for increasing efficiencies among different stakeholders and development partners working to reduce malnutrition and improve the nutrition indicators across India. Born out of the need for a common forum to facilitate cross-pollination of experiences and sharing of learnings amongst development partners.

WeCan aggregated, documented, and disseminated knowledge of replicable and proven interventions implemented by partner organisations. WeCan worked on the thematic areas of Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN), keeping it in line with the priorities of POSHAN Abhiyaan, a flagship programme of the Government of India to improve nutritional outcomes.

As a national platform, WeCan engaged and collaborated with government, donors and development partners to facilitate convergence and cross-learning on innovative models and technical assistance on nutrition to the Government of India and in states including Rajasthan, Odisha, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Under our leadership and management, WeCan project was instrumental in fostering partner collaborations and leveraging the existing resources to achieve the targets of POSHAN Abhiyaan through a range of national and international partners working in the nutrition space across the country.



NURTURING RESILIENT **COMMUNITIES**



SAPLING

Strengthening Climate-Resilient Food Systems and Nutrition Governance, South Asia

Donor: Gates Foundation

2022-2023

The South Asian Policy Leadership for Improved Nutrition and Growth (SAPLING), a unique multi-stakeholder policy advocacy platform, served as a pioneering regional platform aimed at supporting South Asian countries to adopt a food systems approach for tackling malnutrition, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With climate change increasingly threatening food and nutrition security in the region, SAPLING Phase 2 design strategically placed climate resilience at the heart of its mission.

We led the designing and planning of SAPLING Phase 2 through a participatory and evidence-informed process, focusing on strengthening strategy, governance, and implementation planning to ensure SAPLING's continued relevance and impact across the region.

By placing climate resilience and systems thinking at the centre of its work, SAPLING Phase 2 laid the groundwork for more robust, sustainable, and inclusive nutrition policies in South Asia. Our support was critical in anchoring this next phase of strategic action and policy leadership across the region.

FOCUS AREAS



Climate-Resilient Food Systems: Integrated and redefined approaches around climate-resilient agriculture, food safety, and post-harvest loss reduction illustrating the pathways towards improved nutrition.



Regional Policy Advocacy Momentum: Convened regional consultations and roundtables across India, Nepal, and Bangladesh to build alignment and commitment to SAPLING's agenda.



Governance and Transition Planning: Developed SAPLING's governance and management and supported the Foundation in identifying a long-term anchor institution for the Secretariat.



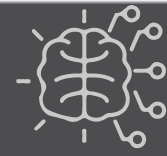
Preparation of Strategy Document for State Climate Change Knowledge Centre, Uttar Pradesh

As part of the Indo-German Technical Cooperation on climate change, GIZ — on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) — partnered with the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC) to implement the climate change-focused initiatives through the Climate Adaptation and Finance in Rural India (CAFRI project).

Under this initiative, the Directorate of Environment (DoE), Government of Uttar Pradesh, with GIZ's support, advanced several climate action efforts aligned with the State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG Vision 2030). One of the key components of this agenda was to conceptualise and operationalise a State Knowledge Centre on Climate Change (SKCCC) under the National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change (NMSKCC).

We provided technical support to DoE, Government of Uttar Pradesh and GIZ in developing a strategy document and a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for establishing the SKCCC.

The project assessed climate knowledge centres across India, identified best practices and gaps, and tailored insights for Uttar Pradesh. These were further sharpened with consultations with key stakeholders, including the Department of Environment, Directorate of Science & Technology, and GIZ, to deliver a strategy document outlining SKCCC's vision, mission, objectives, and a 10-year roadmap.



Donor

GIZ India

State

Uttar Pradesh

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Established a strategic and operational roadmap for Uttar Pradesh's first State Climate Change Knowledge Centre, a significant milestone in building institutional capacity for climate adaptation and mitigation.

Created a model to serve as a **hub for research, data exchange, policy advisory, and knowledge dissemination**, directly contributing to more climate-resilient planning and practices in the state.

Aligned with **national mission and the SAPCC**, ensuring the **centre's long-term relevance, funding prospects**, and potential for scaling best practices across other states.



Implementation of the Infrastructure for Climate Resilient Growth (ICRG) Programme

Donor: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Previously DFID)

Collaboration: Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India (GoI)

States: Bihar, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh

The ICRG programme, led by us with support from FCDO, partnered with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and state governments in Bihar, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh to embed climate resilience into India's flagship rural employment scheme – Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

The programme addressed long-standing challenges in rural infrastructure, such as poor asset quality, limited climate-resilient design, and inadequate links with the livelihoods of those living in poverty.

Objectives

- Strengthen the capacity of the states and community for improved planning, implementation, and monitoring of MGNREGS assets.
- Enhance technical ecosystems by training institutions and networks of resource persons at the district and block level, including Barefoot Technicians, for effective implementation.
- Improve MGNREGS systems and tools to support climate-resilient, high-quality rural infrastructure, with a focus on IT innovations.
- Generate and share evidence to inform national policy and demonstrate how resilient assets can secure rural livelihoods.

By embedding climate resilience into public works, ICRG redefined how rural infrastructure is planned and delivered, creating a model for climate-smart livelihoods and sustainable rural development in India.

IMPACT



792 climate-resilient works designed



24,618 households directly benefitted



7,775 hectares of irrigated area created



1,51,752 households indirectly reached



66 hectares of new plantations



34,000 tonnes of carbon sequestered



35,340 people trained on climate-proofing MGNREGS assets



Climate-Adaptive District Plan for Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Sikkim

As part of the SDC-supported project “Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions,” we undertook a strategic initiative to embed climate resilience into district-level planning across three climate-sensitive states: Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, and Uttarakhand.

The project integrated climate-adaptive planning into local governance, benefiting vulnerable communities through more responsive and future-ready development strategies. Working in one district in each of the three states, we facilitated the development of climate-smart district plans, using a participatory and evidence-based approach that contributed significantly to broader policy thinking on climate change adaptation.

While adopting a systems approach, the process integrated research, field engagement, institutional analysis, and capacity building to craft comprehensive and implementable Climate Adaptation Plans.



Donor

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

States

Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Sikkim

Strategic Sectoral Evaluation of Rural Development Schemes in India

Donor: NITI Aayog

Collaboration: Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India

To strengthen the governance and effectiveness of India’s rural development efforts, the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog, initiated a third-party, independent evaluation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) under the Ministry of Rural Development. We were entrusted with the task of undertaking a sectoral review of key rural development programmes to support the rationalisation and integration of schemes for improved outcomes.

We served as the evaluation partner, leading a comprehensive sectoral review of the Rural Development sector, to unlock the sector’s full potential by integrating programmes and harmonising strategies for long-term, sustainable growth.

The evaluation adopted the REESI+E framework (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Impact + Equity), ensuring a holistic and equity-centred approach to assess six flagship schemes: **MGNREGA, PMAY-G, PMGSY, DAY-NRLM, NSAP, and SPMRM.**

These sector-wide insights laid the foundation for evidence-based policy reforms and helped shape a more resilient, integrated rural development policy framework aligned with India’s long-term growth ambitions.



GLOBAL FOOTPRINT



The GAVI Alliance

Gender - Responsive Technical Assistance for Immunisation, Ethiopia

Donor: The GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization) Alliance

We provide comprehensive gender-specific, technical assistance in Ethiopia to support the design, implementation, and monitoring of gender - responsive and transformative immunisation programs under the GAVI grant cycle. Working at both federal and regional levels (Oromia and Afar), the initiative aims to tackle gender-based barriers to immunisation, improve equitable coverage, and strengthen local capacity for sustainable gender integration.

We have deployed three gender-focused consultants within Ethiopia's Federal Ministry of Health and EPI (Expanded Programme on Immunisation) offices in Oromia and Afar to support gender-responsive immunisation programs under Gavi's Full Portfolio Planning. In Afar, we are partnering with the Afar Pastoralist Development Association to adapt efforts to the region's pastoralist and cultural context through strong civil society engagement.

KEY OBJECTIVES

Reaching Zero-Dose Children by Addressing Gender Barriers: Identify and address gender-specific barriers faced by caregivers, adolescents, and health workers. Translating these findings from gender analyses into practical, actionable solutions to empower women and ensure all children are vaccinated.

Enhancing Female Participation in Health Decision-Making: Promote the equal and active involvement of women and girls in shaping health programs, through the design and implementation of gender-integrated interventions and monitoring plans.

Improving Gender Equity in Immunisation Coverage: Eliminate disparities in immunisation rates between girls and boys by scaling up gender-responsive practices and providing technical support across all levels of the health system.

Building Local Gender Programming Expertise: Enhance sustainable in-country capacity by training and mentoring government and civil society partners and encouraging peer-to-peer learning across regions.

Informing GAVI's Future Strategy (Gavi 6.0): Document lessons, gather evidence, and produce case studies and guidelines to inform GAVI's long-term goals on gender-responsive programming.



Ethiopia Portfolio Assurance Programme, Phase II, (EPAP 2), Ethiopia

Donor: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Previously DFID)

Building on insights from the initial 9-month pilot phase (EPAP I), EPAP II was designed to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of FCDO's Ethiopia's programme portfolio by proactively identifying and addressing risks across the supply chain. The initiative focused on enhancing the capacity of FCDO, its implementing partners – including the Government of Ethiopia, multilateral agencies, and INGOs – to mitigate operational risks while ensuring value for money.

The programme reviewed and supported improvements in governance structures, financial management, safeguarding protocols, and monitoring and evaluation systems. It delivered flexible, value-for-money, targeted technical support, contributing to capacity strengthening across FDCO Ethiopia staff, partner organisations, downstream partners and relevant government departments.

As a result, FDCO Ethiopia programmes witnessed improved efficiency and effectiveness, with safeguarded funds more likely to reach intended beneficiaries. By addressing systemic governance gaps, the initiative also enhanced internal efficiencies within partner organisations and facilitated smoother fund flows. The programme significantly deepened understanding of the financial ecosystems through which FDCO resources were delivered, ultimately contributing to stronger, more accountable development outcomes.

Evaluation of Zimbabwe Programme Portfolio, Zimbabwe

Donor: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Previously DFID)

The evaluation aimed to generate actionable evidence and insights to inform the future design of FCDO's strategic engagement in Zimbabwe. It sought to enhance the impact, optimise the value for money, and improve the effectiveness of programming.

The assessment reviewed the alignment of FCDO's Zimbabwe's portfolio — including both programmes and policy influencing — with its business plan and strategic objectives. It also identified necessary adjustments to ensure that the portfolio maximised its contribution to poverty reduction in Zimbabwe, while remaining responsive to UK national priorities. The evaluation further examined the relevance of interventions across thematic areas within the country's evolving socio-economic and political context.



Evaluation of Mother and Child Cash Transfer Programme, Myanmar

The Maternal and Child Cash Transfer (MCCT) Programme, aimed to empower pregnant women and mothers of children under two by increasing their purchasing power during the first 1,000 days, while promoting improved nutrition and health practices through behaviour change communication interventions.

Insights from the evaluation not only informed programme strengthening and improvements in Chin and Rakhine states but provided critical inputs for scaling up the MCCT to other states in Myanmar.

We led a formative evaluation of the MCCT programme to assess the appropriateness of the programme design, effectiveness and efficiency of implementation mechanisms, and the satisfaction of beneficiaries in Chin and Rakhine States. The findings for the MCCT Programme in Chin and Rakhine States were used to inform scale-up to other states and regions.

The evaluation adopted a non-experimental research design, mixed method and utilisation-focused approach—combining quantitative and qualitative primary data collection while drawing inferences from key programme documents including policy, design and implementation documents. The evaluation used the modified Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as well as equity, gender equality and human rights considerations.

Formative Evaluation of Cash Transfer Pilot Project for Pregnant Women and Children, Cambodia

The Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) launched a cash transfer pilot in 2013 in Prasat Bakong district, Siem Reap, to support pregnant women and children under five living in poverty. The pilot aimed to reduce financial barriers to health and nutrition services, stimulate demand for basic care, and improve child well-being.

The evaluation reached **240 households** and interviewed a total of **343** individuals across national, district, commune, and household levels. Random sampling among beneficiaries helped minimise bias.

We undertook a formative, independent, and learning-oriented evaluation of the pilot to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and equity of the programme's design and delivery, while providing actionable recommendations to inform scale-up and the design of Cambodia's national cash transfer programme.

- A key methodological aspect of this evaluation was its participatory and learning-oriented nature. A mixed methods approach was followed, combining extensive quantitative and qualitative primary data collection (a beneficiary survey, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions) with a secondary review of project documents.
- A cost-effective analysis was also undertaken along with a comparative assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the Cash transfer pilot project versus other cash transfer interventions in Cambodia, such as those implemented by the World Bank and Save the Children.
- The tools aligned with Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria gender, equity, and human rights considerations.



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