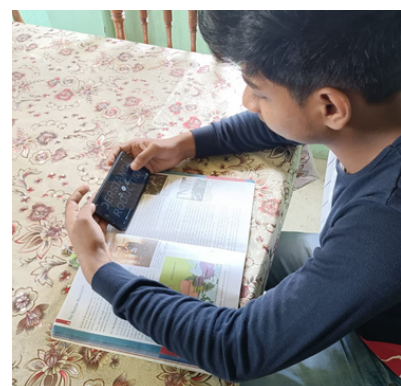
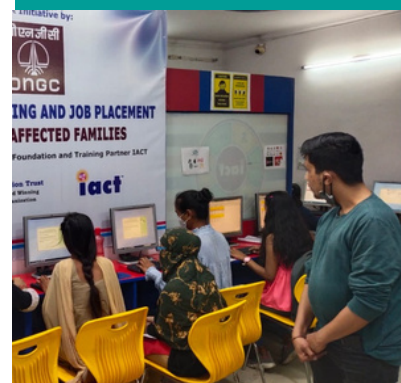


# LIVELIHOOD

Empowering Communities for  
Sustainable Future



Prepared & Designed by: Ladli Foundation Trust  
Assessment & Research Support by: Indian Social  
Responsibility Network (ISRN)





## About the Report

Ladli Foundation Trust has prepared this report to share key insights into its interventions under the Livelihood thematic area, with the aim of encouraging greater engagement and impactful support from stakeholders invested in sustainable development. The report offers an overview of Ladli's livelihood initiatives that focus on empowering marginalized communities particularly women and youth by enhancing access to vocational training, digital literacy, and dignified employment opportunities. This report examines the design, implementation, and impact of flagship programs such as NIXI, Sashakt, Punar-Utthan, Sashakt Lab, and highlights how these initiatives have addressed pressing challenges like income insecurity, lack of employable skills, and post pandemic job loss. It also reflects on funding barriers, programmatic challenges, and the need for ecosystem-level collaboration. By documenting both the achievements and the challenges, the report aims to provide actionable insights for CSR partners, government agencies, and social investors. It outlines recommendations for strengthening the effectiveness, scalability, and sustainability of livelihood programs at the grassroots level. We hope that this report serves as a catalyst for deeper collaboration and encourages stronger, more strategic investments in India's livelihood ecosystem ultimately supporting the creation of resilient, self-reliant communities.





## Acknowledgement

This report has been meticulously prepared by the **Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN)**, leveraging its **expertise**, advanced **tools**, and rigorous **data analytics** methods. The report highlights the **impact** and **outcomes** of **Ladli Foundation Trust's** livelihood interventions and **showcases how these initiatives have significantly empowered marginalized communities** through **vocational training, digital literacy, and dignified employment opportunities**.

The dedicated **ISRN** team approached this study with rigor, compassion, and **professionalism**, ensuring that every stage of **research** and **documentation** maintained the highest standards. Their use of innovative research **tools**, evidence-based **methodologies**, and thoughtful **analysis** allowed for meaningful **insights** and informed **perspectives** to emerge. This **Livelihood Thematic Report** would not have been possible without the active support of **Ladli Foundation Trust**, its **leadership**, and its dedicated **team members**, who generously shared their **time, data, and expertise**, truly standing out as pioneers in creating sustainable livelihood solutions.

Throughout the process, **field officers, program coordinators, and community stakeholders** were exceptionally **responsive, cooperative, and welcoming**, which ensured that the **documentation process** was **smooth and meaningful**. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who shared their **experiences**, contributed valuable **information**, and worked alongside the **pioneers of Ladli Foundation Trust**, enriching the **data analysis** and strengthening the **findings**.

The **support** and **collaboration** from **Ladli Foundation Trust** have been invaluable. Their timely sharing of **information**, assistance in **coordinating field activities**, and commitment to transparency greatly enriched the **report**. Late-night **discussions**, detailed **clarifications**, and prompt **responses to data requests** were critical in ensuring that this study accurately reflects the true **impact** of **Ladli Foundation Trust's** programs and their role as **pioneers** of social transformation. We also acknowledge the **implementing partners, CSR collaborators, and local volunteers**, whose **dedication** and cooperation complemented the efforts of these **pioneers**, adding immense value to the **documentation process**.

We hope that this **Livelihood Thematic Report** serves not only as a **testament** to the **transformative work** of **Ladli Foundation Trust** but also as an **inspiration** for **future collaborations, scalable livelihood solutions, and sustainable impact** across **India**, driven by expertise, innovative tools, insightful **data analytics**, and the vision of true **pioneers** in the field of community empowerment.

To:

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<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Full Form</b>
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CUET	Common University Entrance Test
DAY-NRLM	Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission
DAY-NULM	Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FLFPR	Female Labour Force Participation Rate
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IACT	Institute for Advanced Computer Technology
IEC	Information, Education and Communication

ILO	International Labour Organization
INDO-US	CoronavirIndia–United States (bilateral relationship or collaboration)
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NCAER	National Council of Applied Economic Research
NIXI	National Internet Exchange of India
NSDC	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
ONGC	Oil and Natural Gas Corporation
PEERs	Peer Educators or Peer Networks

PLFS	Periodic Labour Force Survey
PM-FME	Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises
PMGDISHA	Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan
PMKVY	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
SDGs 1/5/8	Sustainable Development Goals – 1: No Poverty, 5: Gender Equality, 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
SHGs	Self-Help Groups
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UPI	Unified Payments Interface



## About the Founder



Devendra Kumar Gupta represents a rare convergence of lived experience, transformative leadership, and systems-level thinking. Born into the stark socio-economic margins of Delhi's most under-resourced and violence-prone slums, he was abandoned in infancy alongside his younger sister and survived on less than ₹300 per month. Exposed to child labour, social exclusion, and the absence of basic safety nets, his early life was marked by structural deprivation.

Yet, amidst these hardships, Devendra cultivated a fierce moral resilience and a commitment to challenge the very systems that perpetuated injustice. A defining moment came in 2010 when he boldly opposed a dowry demand during his sister's marriage—a personal act of defiance that sparked his lifelong campaign against gender-based violence and patriarchal norms. In 2012, he founded the Ladli Foundation Trust, an indigenous non-profit that has directly impacted over 2.5 million lives through interventions addressing child marriage, malnutrition, digital exclusion, and gender inequality.

Devendra's influence extends beyond national borders. His policy insights were referenced by the United Nations Secretary-General at the 65th Commission on the Status of Women. He is a two-time recipient of the National Youth Award, has been nominated for the Padma Shri, and has received accolades from three Presidents of India. His leadership has been publicly praised by Amitabh Bachchan, who called him a "True Hero" on national television.

He is the founder of Ladli Foundation USA and the South and East Asia Foundation, through which he curates global platforms like the INDO-US Summit, fostering dialogue on development justice and interregional cooperation. Devendra integrates Theory of Change and results-based frameworks into program design, ensuring measurable and sustainable impact.

His guiding credo—*"Society is like a canvas; it's you who need to paint it beautifully"*—captures his belief in the creative power of empathy, equity, and grassroots action.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Livelihood Impact Report of Ladli Foundation Trust presents a comprehensive analysis of the organisation's targeted efforts to strengthen sustainable livelihood ecosystems among India's most vulnerable and underserved populations. In a socio-economic landscape marked by deep-rooted gender disparities, digital exclusion, and youth unemployment, Ladli Foundation has positioned itself as a catalyst for inclusive development. Through a blend of skill development, digital literacy, legal awareness, and employment facilitation, the organisation has created pathways for social mobility, economic empowerment, and community resilience across 12 states and 3 Union Territories.

India's informal workforce, which comprises over 80% of total employment, continues to be characterized by unregulated wages, lack of social protection, and minimal access to upskilling opportunities. The situation is particularly acute for adolescent girls, women, and marginalized youth residing in urban slums and remote rural districts, where access to structured skill training remains limited. Ladli Foundation's livelihood initiatives directly respond to these systemic challenges by providing context-specific and community-embedded solutions that not only enhance employability but also foster dignity, autonomy, and rights-based awareness among beneficiaries.

The Foundation's flagship program, Sashakt, has been a pivotal intervention for marginalized adolescent girls and women since its inception in 2015. Operating in the urban slums of Delhi and other underserved areas, it has empowered over 16,000 beneficiaries with vocational training, financial literacy, soft skills, and legal education. The program follows a holistic model, ensuring that participants receive not just technical training but also psychosocial support and mentorship to navigate societal barriers and secure dignified livelihoods.

The subsequent launch of Sashakt Lab in 2024 further scaled this impact by establishing eight Advanced Computer Skill Centres that have trained over 25,000 young individuals in high-demand digital competencies. These centres act as bridges between underserved communities and the formal job market, thereby addressing the digital divide at scale.

Another major initiative, Punar-Utthan, implemented in 2021 with CSR support from ONGC in collaboration with IACT, was designed to rehabilitate families who lost their primary breadwinners during the COVID-19 pandemic. This program provided advanced digital skills, menstrual and reproductive health education, financial awareness, and legal literacy to over 350 widows and orphaned girls in Delhi.

Its outcomes included not only skilling but also direct job placement support through local employment fairs, showcasing the Foundation's capacity to provide comprehensive post-crisis livelihood rehabilitation. In parallel, the Sahali model—focusing on mobile outreach and peer-led vocational mentoring—was introduced to penetrate deeper into high-risk communities, especially where formal centres were less accessible.

To ensure accountability and transparency, Ladli Foundation commissioned the Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN) to conduct an independent impact evaluation. Adhering to OECD-DAC standards for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, ISRN employed a mixed-methods approach involving baseline-endline surveys, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and digital data tracking systems. The evaluation, formally submitted by ISRN on 5th August 2025 (see Annexure A), confirmed the strategic value and field-level effectiveness of the programs.

*“We are pleased to submit the enclosed Impact Evaluation Report... which covers key achievements, learnings, and measurable outcomes of the project... based on field interactions, beneficiary feedback, and data collected during the project period.”*

**— Excerpt from ISRN Cover Letter**

The Foundation employed an internationally benchmarked evaluation framework grounded in OECD-DAC criteria—focusing on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. A mixed-method approach incorporating surveys, interviews, FGDs, and digital tracking revealed significant outcomes: over 6,000 individuals transitioned into employment or self-employment, and 2,000 were placed via structured job fairs. Notably, 75% of participants improved their digital and financial skills, and 68% of women reported enhanced autonomy and legal awareness.

Strategic institutional collaborations remain central to Ladli Foundation’s model. The Trust has aligned with national skill development schemes such as PMKVY, DAY-NULM, and the National Skill Development Mission, while CSR partnerships with organisations like ONGC and NIXI have expanded the program’s reach and impact. This ecosystem approach ensures not just delivery at scale but also sustainability and system integration.

Each intervention embeds a long-term exit strategy, emphasising local ownership, infrastructure continuity, and linkage to employment portals, MSMEs, and self-help groups. The Foundation also engages in policy advocacy to institutionalise gender-equitable, digitally inclusive livelihood models.

In essence, Ladli Foundation’s livelihood programs reflect a scalable, rights-based approach to economic empowerment. Rooted in social justice and community resilience, the initiatives are aligned with national priorities and global SDGs—offering a replicable model for inclusive, dignified, and sustainable development.

## About Ladli Foundation Trust

The Ladli Foundation Trust is a renowned non-profit organization headquartered in New Delhi, India, working relentlessly to promote a gender-neutral and inclusive society. Since its inception on August 13, 2012, the organization has directly impacted more than 2.7 million lives through grassroots interventions across diverse thematic areas such as Health, Education, Livelihood, WaSH, Social Protection, and Prevention of Drug and Crimes. Registered under the Indian Trust Act, Ladli Foundation has grown into a credible social development entity, recognized for its deep engagement with vulnerable communities and marginalized groups.



### Mission

The mission of Ladli Foundation is deeply rooted in social transformation through grassroots action. The organization is committed to improving the lives of underprivileged populations by designing and implementing holistic, community-based interventions in the areas of health, education, social protection, wash, livelihood, and prevention of drug & crimes. With a strong focus on behavioral change and empowerment, Ladli aims to bridge the gap between marginalization and mainstream inclusion. Its mission is not only to provide support but also to inspire self-reliance, dignity, and long-term resilience among the people it serves.

### Vision

Ladli Foundation envisions a world where every human being regardless of caste, gender, economic background, or social status has equal access to dignity, security, and the right to thrive. The organization dreams of building a compassionate and inclusive society where vulnerable communities, especially women and youth, are not left behind but are empowered to lead lives of purpose, safety, and fulfillment. This vision reflects a future where social barriers are dismantled, enabling individuals to realize their full potential in a just and equitable environment.

In recognition of its impactful work, the Ladli Foundation holds Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 2020. It has also received multiple national awards from the Government of India for its innovation in the social sector. The organization has built strong partnerships with government departments, corporate donors like Standard Chartered Bank, and global agencies such as USAID to scale its impact across states like Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, and Rajasthan.



## Project Supported States in India

States  
12

Union Territories  
3

Districts  
47





## Chapter 1- Background

# 1. Introduction

The concept of livelihood occupies a pivotal locus in contemporary development discourse. Rooted in the fundamental human aspiration for survival, dignity, and self actualisation, the term encapsulates the capabilities, assets, and activities required for a means of living. In both global and Indian contexts, livelihoods are not merely defined by employment statistics or income levels; they are embedded within the broader socio-economic, political, and cultural fabrics of communities. As the world navigates the complexities of post-pandemic recovery, climate change, technological disruption, and widening inequalities, re-examining the foundations of livelihood security becomes imperative.

Livelihood, in its most essential form, encompasses the means and capabilities by which individuals and households secure the necessities of life such as food, shelter, education, and healthcare through employment, self-employment, or entrepreneurship. However, the concept extends far beyond income generation. It incorporates the social, environmental, and institutional contexts that shape people's ability to sustain and improve their living conditions over time (Chambers & Conway, 1992).

### 1.1 Global Landscape of Livelihoods

The global livelihood scenario is marked by a stark duality—unprecedented economic progress on one hand and deepening precarity for vast populations on the other. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), approximately 2 billion people globally work in the informal economy, representing over 60% of the world's employed population (ILO, 2023). Informal workers are disproportionately concentrated in the Global South, where social protection systems remain underdeveloped, and labour rights are often unenforced.

Moreover, the global youth employment crisis remains acute. The ILO's "Global Employment Trends for Youth 2022" report highlights that over 73 million young people were unemployed globally, with many more engaged in insecure or underpaid work. The phenomenon of NEETs youth Not in Education, Employment, or Training has risen alarmingly, with women forming a substantial majority, particularly in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.



Simultaneously, climate-induced livelihood displacement is emerging as a dominant force shaping the global labour landscape. According to the World Bank's Groundswell report (2021), over 216 million people could be internally displaced due to climate related stressors by 2050. This displacement not only disrupts local economies but also exacerbates gender disparities, health vulnerabilities, and intergenerational poverty.

## **1.2 India's Livelihood Paradox: Economic Growth and Employment Distress**

India, home to the world's largest youth population and a burgeoning working age demographic, faces a paradoxical situation robust GDP growth juxtaposed with chronic employment fragility. As per the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2023-24, India's labour force participation rate (LFPR) for individuals aged 15 years and above stands at 57.9%. While this reflects a modest improvement from previous years, a deeper disaggregation reveals enduring structural infirmities.

Female LFPR, in particular, remains troublingly low at 22.3% in urban areas, as compared to 59.1% for males (PLFS, 2023-24). This gendered asymmetry is further reinforced by occupational segregation, wage disparities, and unpaid care burdens. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), which offers a vital safety net for rural households, witnessed heightened demand during the pandemic, underscoring the widespread livelihood distress. Furthermore, the quality of employment remains a pressing concern. Over 90% of India's workforce is engaged in informal employment, devoid of social security, job stability, or formal contracts (ILO, 2022). Self-employment, casual labour, and unpaid family work dominate the occupational matrix, particularly in agrarian and tribal belts.

## **1.3 The Informal Sector: A Double-Edged Sword**

The informal sector, while providing immediate employment to millions, perpetuates a cycle of economic vulnerability and social exclusion. It is characterised by low productivity, irregular incomes, and absence of workplace protections. Street vendors, domestic workers, construction labourers, and agricultural workers constitute a significant segment of this sector.

In urban India, the gig economy has emerged as a significant new employer, yet it replicates many informal sector challenges. Platforms like ride-hailing apps and food delivery services offer flexible work but without employee benefits or long-term security. The Platform Workers' Bill, still under deliberation, aims to rectify some of these inequities, but implementation challenges remain formidable.



### 1.4 Agriculture and Allied Livelihoods

Agriculture continues to sustain nearly 45% of India's population, yet its contribution to GDP has steadily declined to around 15% (Economic Survey, 2023). Fragmented landholdings, monsoon dependency, price volatility, and indebtedness plague the sector. The post-Green Revolution era has failed to deliver sustained income growth for small and marginal farmers. Livestock rearing, fisheries, and forest-based livelihoods offer significant potential for diversification. However, these sub-sectors remain under capitalised and poorly integrated into value chains. The Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PM-FME), launched in 2020, seeks to address some of these gaps, yet uptake and outreach remain uneven.



### 1.5 Migration and Urban Livelihoods

Internal migration has become an intrinsic component of livelihood strategies for millions. Seasonal and circular migration from rural hinterlands to urban centres is driven by agrarian distress and aspirations for better opportunities. However, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the fragility of this coping mechanism. The exodus of migrant workers during the nationwide lockdowns revealed the absence of urban social protection and the invisibility of these workers in policy frameworks.



Post-pandemic recovery efforts have included schemes such as the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan and the e-Shram portal. Nonetheless, meaningful reintegration of migrants into the formal economy demands more than welfare provisioning; it necessitates institutional reforms, portability of entitlements, and inclusive urban planning.



## 1.6 Digitalisation, Skills, and the New Economy

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, powered by artificial intelligence, robotics, and big data, is rapidly transforming the employment landscape. While digitalisation holds the promise of new livelihood avenues, it also threatens to displace low-skilled workers and widen existing inequalities. India's skilling ecosystem, spearheaded by the Skill India Mission, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), and various state-level initiatives, has aimed to address the skills-employment mismatch.



However, a 2022 report by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) revealed that only 4.6% of the workforce has received formal vocational training. The mismatch between academic curricula and market requirements further aggravates employability challenges. Moreover, digital illiteracy compounds socio-economic exclusion. The BharatNet initiative and the PMGDISHA scheme attempt to bridge this digital divide, yet rural-urban and gendered disparities persist. For instance, women and older adults in rural areas face significant hurdles in accessing and utilising digital technologies for economic activities.

## 1.7 Gender and Livelihoods

Gender remains a critical axis along which livelihood outcomes are distributed. Women, particularly from marginalised castes, tribes, and religious communities, face multidimensional barriers patriarchal norms, mobility restrictions, discriminatory labour practices, and inadequate access to credit or assets.

Government interventions such as the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) have made strides in promoting women's self-help groups (SHGs) and microenterprise development. However, systemic challenges in scaling, sustaining, and integrating these initiatives into larger market systems remain unresolved.



### 1.8 Livelihoods and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Livelihood security is inextricably linked to multiple SDGs, notably SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). Achieving these goals necessitates not only the creation of jobs but the generation of dignified, sustainable, and inclusive economic opportunities. SDG indicators reveal that despite progress, India continues to lag in several critical areas. For example, the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) indicates that 16.4% of Indians still live in multidimensional poverty, with children, rural populations, and SC/ST communities disproportionately affected (UNDP-Oxford, 2022).



Addressing these gaps requires integrating livelihood strategies with health, education, social protection, and environmental resilience.

### 1.9 Civil Society and Community-Led Models

Non-governmental organisations and grassroots collectives have played a catalytic role in innovating livelihood solutions that are context-specific, participatory, and rights based. Models such as women-led federations, producer collectives, and social enterprises have demonstrated success in building agency, fostering resilience, and generating economic returns.



The Ladli Foundation Trust, through its flagship initiatives like "Sashakt" and "Punar-Utthan," exemplifies such transformative approaches. By focusing on skill development, digital inclusion, and market linkages for vulnerable populations especially adolescent girls, rural youth, and survivors of abuse the Foundation seeks to construct pathways for long-term empowerment. In the context of developing economies like India, where significant sections of the population remain economically vulnerable, promoting sustainable and inclusive livelihoods has emerged as a policy imperative. India's demographic profile offers a unique opportunity:

- with more than 500 million people in the working-age population, the country is poised for accelerated economic growth, provided it can equip its youth with the necessary skills, resources, and opportunities. Unfortunately, persistent structural challenges continue to hinder this potential.

The unemployment rate has increased over the last decade, with formal unemployment rising from 2.1% in 2012 to 6.1% in 2018, and graduate unemployment more than doubling from 19.2% to 35.8% by 2023 (Education.gov.in; IDR; Economic Times). Compounding this challenge, the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data from 2023–24 reveals striking regional and gender-based disparities in employment. Although there has been a gradual decline in unemployment across urban and rural areas, urban women continue to face disproportionately high unemployment levels (7.1%), compared to their rural counterparts (2.1%).

Area & Gender	2017–18	2019–20	2023–24	Notes & Source
Rural – All	5.30%	3.90%	<b>2.50%</b>	<a href="#">Decline in rural un</a>
Urban – All	7.70%	6.90%	<b>5.10%</b>	Urban unemploy
Rural – Female	3.80%	3.20%	<b>2.10%</b>	Female unemployr
Rural – Male	5.70%	4.50%	<b>2.70%</b>	Male unemployme
Urban – Female	10.80%	8.90%	<b>7.10%</b>	Urban female uner
Urban – Male	6.90%	6.40%	<b>4.40%</b>	Male urban unemp

Table 1-Source - (PLFS Quarterly & Annual Bulletins 2023–24)

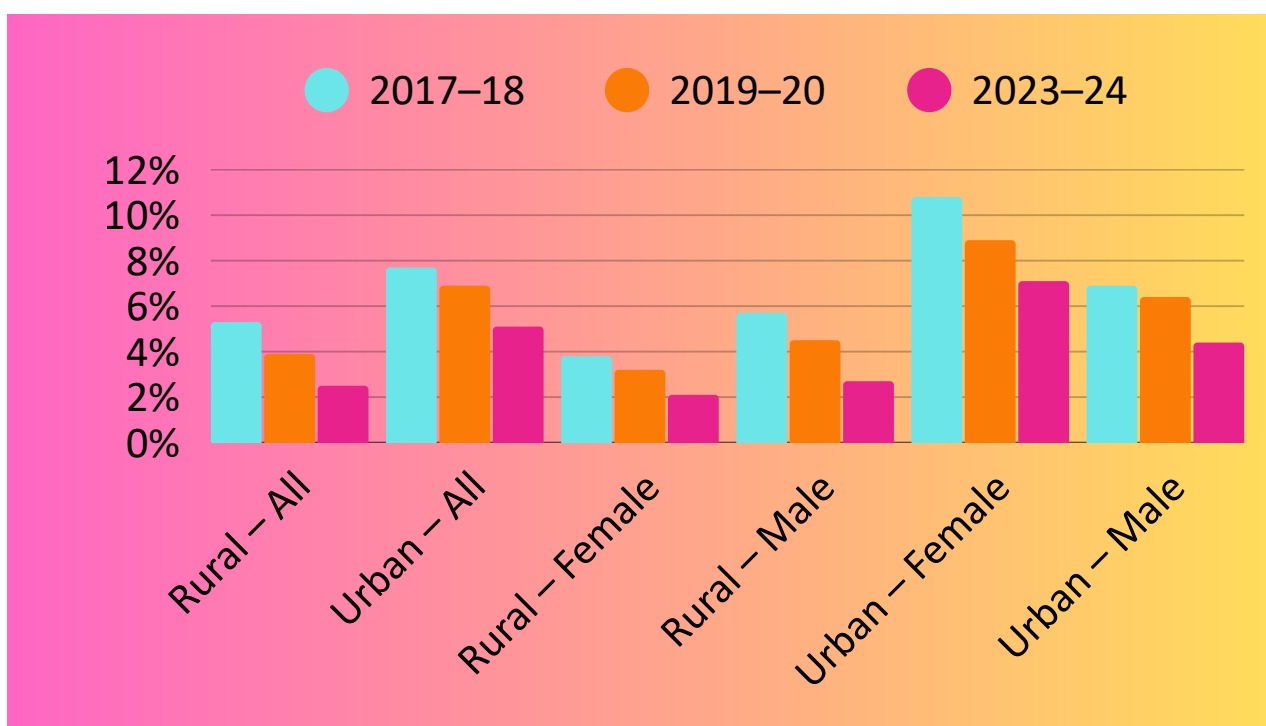


Table 2,Source - (PLFS Quarterly & Annual Bulletins 2023–24)

Migration, too, is shaping India's livelihood landscape. According to the Economic Survey 2023–24 and PLFS data (2020–21), rural-to-urban migration remains a dominant pattern, driven largely by aspirations for better employment and living standards.

Over 55% of all migration happens between rural areas, but nearly 19% of migrants move from rural to urban areas—indicating a significant shift in livelihood-seeking behavior.

ECONOMIC SURVEY OF RURAL-URBAN POPULATION				
All India	Rural to rural	Urban to rural	Rural to urban	Urban to urban
Person	55	10.2	18.9	15.9

Table 3 Source : Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation

Another transformation is being propelled by India’s fast-growing digital economy, which is expected to reach \$1 trillion by 2028. This growth is predicted to create demand for over 30 million digitally skilled professionals and necessitate the reskilling of nearly 50% of the existing workforce (Education Times, 2024). Yet, just 5% of India’s total workforce has access to formal vocational training (PLFS, 2020), and over 80% of rural workers are engaged in informal, low-wage jobs with minimal social protection. Women remain particularly disadvantaged, with only 20% formally employed (World Bank, 2022) and nearly 60% of rural women lacking basic financial or digital literacy.

### 1.10 Ladli Foundation Trust: Building Dignified and Inclusive Livelihoods:

In response to these deeply entrenched challenges, the Ladli Foundation Trust has positioned itself as a grassroots catalyst for change. Its livelihood programs are not limited to income generation but are rooted in a holistic framework that promotes empowerment, dignity, and self-reliance—especially among marginalized and socially excluded communities. Through multi sectoral interventions in education, health, skill development, and entrepreneurship, Ladli’s initiatives align with global commitments like SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

#### 1.10.1 Alignment of Ladli Foundation Trust’s Livelihood Programs with SDG 1, 5 and 8

##### 1.10.2 SDG 1: No Poverty

Eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. Ladli Foundation Trust’s livelihood interventions directly address multidimensional poverty by creating pathways for socio-economic inclusion among underserved populations. Programs such as Sashakt and Punar-Utthan are tailored to support individuals especially women and youth from marginalized communities who lack access to education, skills, and economic resources. Through skill-building workshops, financial literacy sessions, and livelihood training, Ladli empowers beneficiaries to become self-reliant and break intergenerational cycles of poverty. The Trust’s approach is not just about income generation, but about restoring dignity, agency, and sustainable wellbeing.





### 1.10.3 SDG 5: Gender Equality

Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls is central to sustainable development. Ladli Foundation Trust places gender justice at the core of its livelihood agenda. Recognizing that women especially in rural and semi-urban India—face disproportionate barriers to employment, mobility, and decision-making, Ladli’s interventions actively challenge these structural inequalities. The Trust’s livelihood programs offer gender-sensitive skill development, promote entrepreneurial training tailored for women, and address social norms through community sensitization. By enabling women to participate fully in economic life, Ladli contributes not just to individual empowerment, but to broader social transformation.

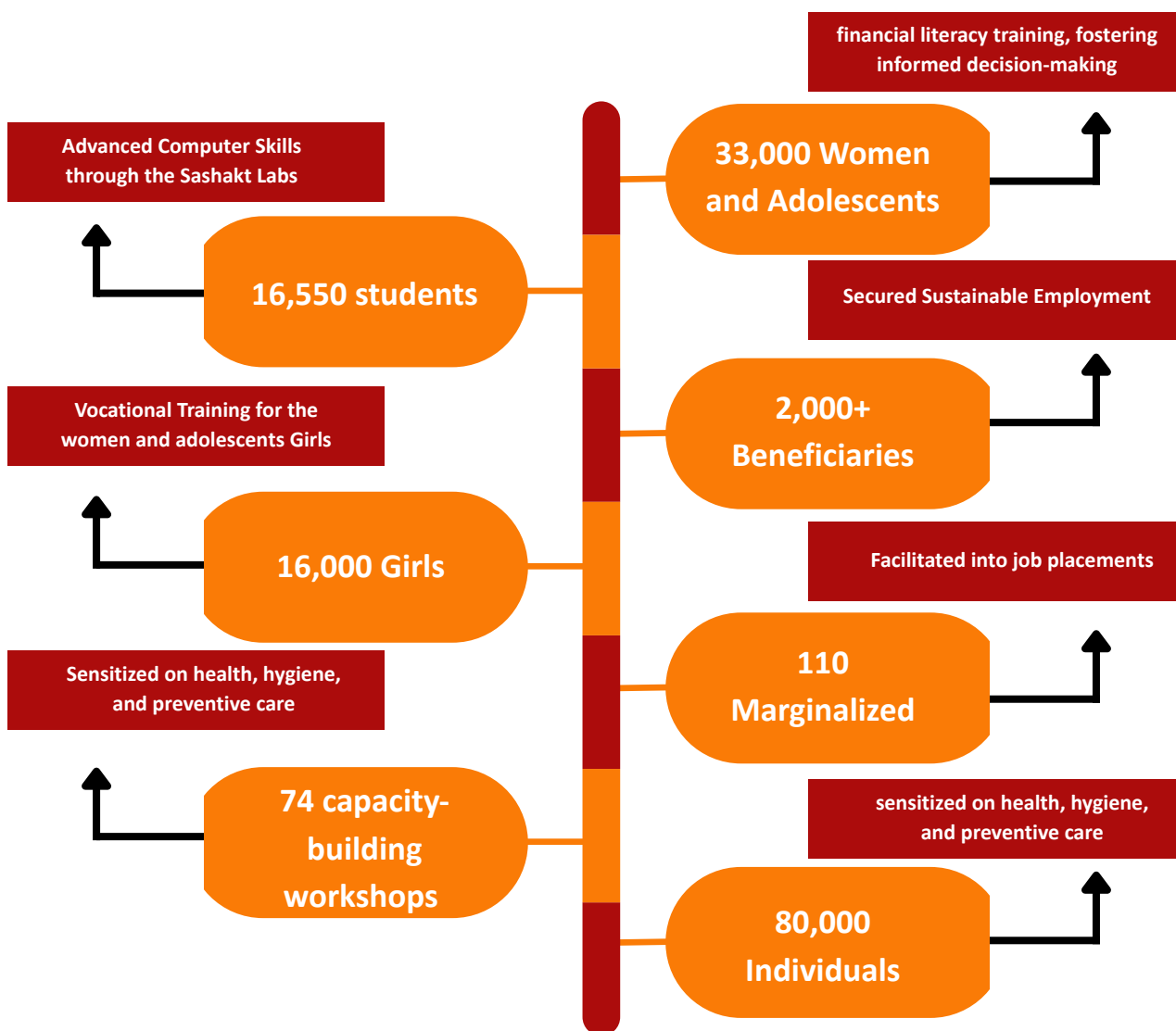
### 1.10.4 SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. India’s large informal workforce, high youth unemployment, and skill mismatch are key barriers to achieving SDG 8. Ladli Foundation Trust bridges these gaps through its livelihood-focused initiatives that foster employability, entrepreneurship, and economic empowerment. The Trust offers hands-on vocational training, digital literacy programs, and market linkage support to ensure that individuals particularly young people are better equipped for the demands of a changing economy. By focusing on both capacity-building and access to opportunity, Ladli ensures that economic growth is inclusive and equitable.

Ladli Foundation's livelihood strategy includes flagship programs like Sashakt, Punar-Utthan, and its Sashakt Labs, which offer targeted support to adolescent girls, women, and underprivileged youth. Since 2015, these programs have empowered over 75,000 individuals through sustainable livelihood interventions.

## 1.11 Key outcomes include:

Ladli Foundation's livelihood initiatives have demonstrated significant, measurable impact across underserved communities in India. Through a comprehensive suite of interventions, the Foundation has successfully enhanced digital proficiency, promoted financial independence, and challenged socio-cultural barriers to inclusion.





- Over **25,000 students** have been trained in advanced computer skills through the Sashakt Labs, equipping marginalized youth with critical technological competencies for the modern workforce.
- **33,000+ women and adolescents** girls have undergone financial literacy training, fostering informed decision-making, economic autonomy, and intergenerational resilience.
- **More than 16,000+ girls** have completed their intermediate education through Sashakt Vocational Training, bridging the gap between academic learning and employable skills.
- **2,000+ beneficiaries** have secured sustainable employment through strategically organized job fairs and career readiness programs.
- **110+ marginalized individuals** have been facilitated into job placements, connecting vulnerable populations with meaningful livelihood opportunities.
- **Over 100 capacity-building workshops** have been conducted to raise awareness about women's legal rights, promoting access to justice and legal empowerment.
- **Over 80,000 individuals** also have been sensitized on health, hygiene, and preventive care through targeted IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) campaigns.

These efforts go beyond skilling and employment—they contribute to systemic change. By encouraging women and girls to pursue non-traditional career paths and challenging entrenched gender norms, Ladli Foundation is catalyzing a cultural shift towards gender equity. Its digital literacy and computer lab programs are bridging the urban-rural digital divide, ensuring equitable access to opportunities in the digital age.

Collectively, these multidimensional interventions are creating resilient pathways for economic empowerment, social mobility, and inclusive development. The Foundation remains committed to fostering dignity, opportunity, and agency for some of India's most vulnerable and marginalized populations, laying the groundwork for a more equitable and future-ready society.



## Chapter-2

### Addressing Livelihood

#### 2.Social Problem Addressed

This report addresses the critical and multifaceted challenge of livelihood insecurity among marginalized populations in India, particularly focusing on structural unemployment, gendered economic exclusion, and inadequate skill development systems that perpetuate cycles of poverty and social marginalization. The intervention specifically targets the disconnect between India's economic growth trajectory and inclusive employment generation, examining why demographic dividends have not translated into sustainable livelihood opportunities for the most vulnerable populations.

#### 2.1 Objectives :

The study aims to systematically evaluate Ladli Foundation's livelihood initiatives.

Specifically:

- To explore how vocational training initiatives help in breaking traditional gender barriers by opening avenues to non-traditional career paths and fostering independence.
- To evaluate how strategic collaborations with partners (such as ONGC, NIXI, and IACT) contribute to the scalability and sustainability of livelihood projects.
- To analyze the effectiveness of advanced computer and digital skill training provided through initiatives like the Sashakt Lab in increasing employability and bridging the digital divide.

## 2.2 Context and Need Assessment

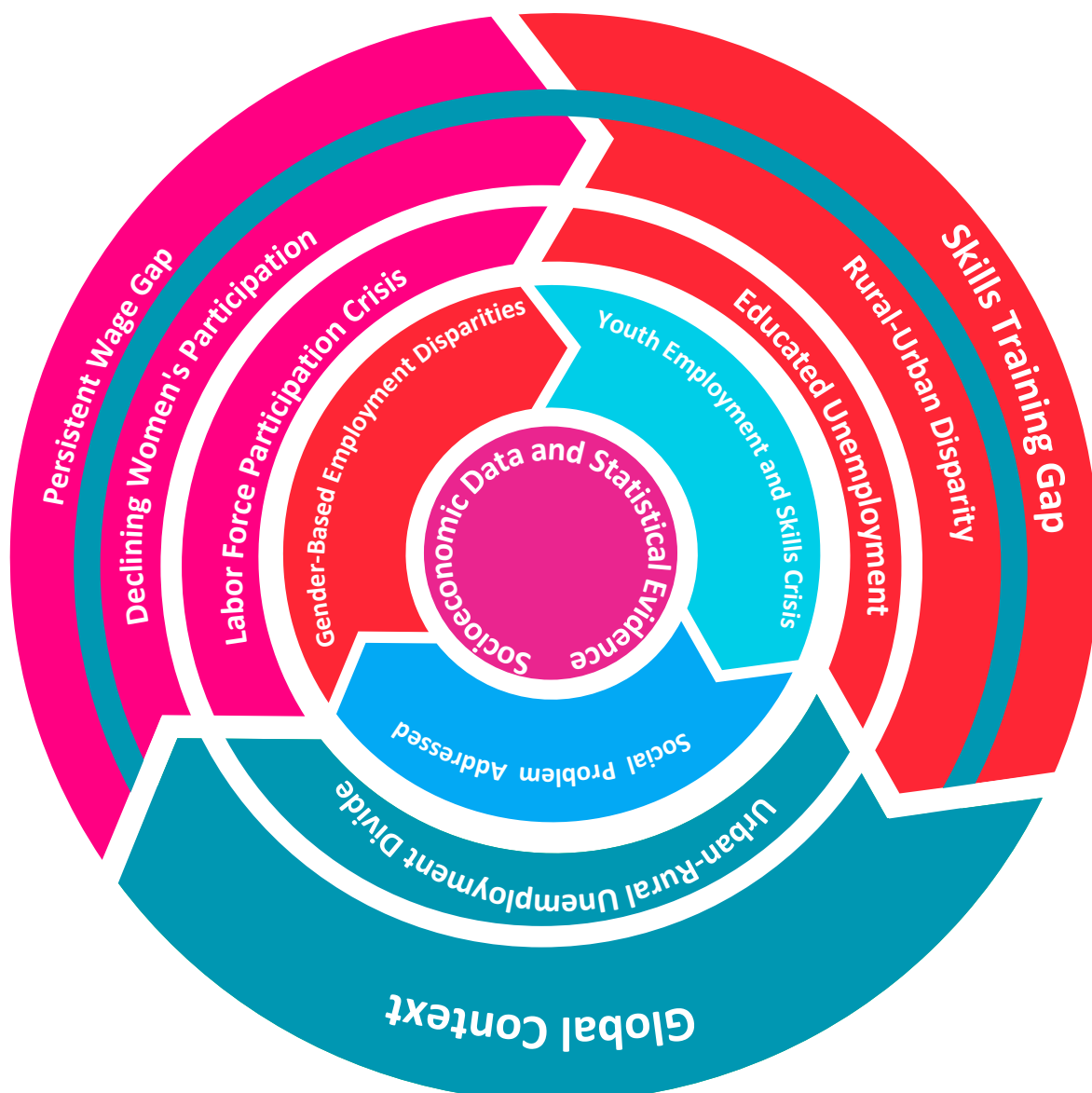
### 2.2.1 Social Problem Addressed

This report addresses the critical and multifaceted challenge of livelihood insecurity among marginalized populations in India, particularly focusing on structural unemployment, gendered economic exclusion, and inadequate skill development systems that perpetuate cycles of poverty and social marginalization. The intervention specifically targets the disconnect between India's economic growth trajectory and inclusive employment generation, examining why demographic dividends have not translated into sustainable livelihood opportunities for the most vulnerable populations.

### 2.3.Socioeconomic Data and Statistical Evidence

- 2.3.1 Gender-Based Employment Disparities-

India's labor market continues to reflect deep-rooted gender inequalities that hinder inclusive economic growth. Statistical trends over the past two decades reveal a persistent and widening gap in employment outcomes between men and women, particularly in urban and rural settings.



### 2.3.2. Labor Force Participation Crisis:

- Despite growing urbanization and economic development, women remain significantly underrepresented in the workforce. As per 2023–24 estimates, the urban male labor force participation rate stands at over 59%, while the corresponding rate for urban females is alarmingly low at 22%. This stark contrast illustrates the structural and sociocultural barriers impeding women's entry and retention in the formal labor market.



### 2.3.3. Declining Female Participation Over Time:

- India has experienced a sustained and troubling decline in female labour force participation over the past two decades, despite considerable improvements in women's educational attainment, health outcomes, and demographic profiles. The Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) has dropped precipitously from 32% in 2005 to just 19% in 2021, as per estimates from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) and corroborated by ILO assessments. This regression is indicative of deep-rooted structural barriers, including the increasing informalisation of work, the lack of safe, flexible, and dignified employment opportunities, and the disproportionate burden of unpaid care responsibilities borne by women.



The withdrawal of women from the labour force cannot be interpreted merely as a reflection of economic cycles. Rather, it signals a systemic failure to create enabling environments for women's economic participation. Social norms, mobility restrictions, occupational segregation, and the absence of family-friendly workplace policies collectively perpetuate this exclusion. Unless addressed through structural reforms, this trend poses a serious threat to inclusive economic growth and gender equity.



#### 2.3.4. Persistent Gender Wage Gap:

The gender wage gap in India remains a persistent and complex challenge, despite the proliferation of policy measures aimed at promoting workplace equity. As of 2022–23, women earn approximately 76% of male earnings for comparable work, according to aggregated labour market data. This disparity is exacerbated in rural areas, where patriarchal norms, lack of wage transparency, and minimal union representation entrench discriminatory wage practices.



Crucially, this income inequality extends beyond individual economic disadvantage it has intergenerational and societal consequences, limiting women's financial autonomy, bargaining power, and ability to invest in their children's health, nutrition, and education. Bridging the gender pay gap will require not only stronger enforcement of equal remuneration laws but also proactive policy frameworks that incentivise gender parity in recruitment, promotion, and compensation structures.

These persistent disparities underscore the urgency of implementing gender sensitive employment policies, investing in skill development tailored to women's socio-cultural realities, and addressing the institutional discrimination that impedes equal economic participation.

#### 2.4. Youth Employment and Skills Crisis

India's demographic advantage, often celebrated as a potential driver of economic dynamism, risks devolving into a demographic liability due to the pervasive unemployment, underemployment, and under-skilling of its youth population. The country's labour market is characterised by a growing misalignment between educational outcomes and employability, as well as a disjunction between youth aspirations and available economic opportunities.





#### 2.4.1. Educated but Unemployed

Paradoxically, youth with higher educational qualifications face higher rates of unemployment. The most recent PLFS data reveal an unemployment rate of 7.1% among youth with secondary education and above, the highest across all educational cohorts. This phenomenon reflects both the quality deficit in education particularly in skills-based and industry-relevant learning—and the failure of the formal economy to generate jobs that correspond with the qualifications held by young aspirants.

#### 2.4.2. Rural–Urban Employment Disparities

Employment patterns among youth are significantly shaped by geographical context. In urban areas, 17.5% of youth engage in regular wage employment, whereas rural youth are more likely to engage in seasonal, informal, or self-employed work. Gender disparities are also stark: 61.1% of young women in rural areas are confined to unpaid family labour, compared to 42.9% of young men. These figures illuminate the compounded effects of patriarchal norms, low female labour mobility, and limited access to skilling opportunities in rural contexts.

#### 2.4.3. The Skills Deficit

India continues to face a critical skills gap across sectors. As per government data, one in every three youth in India is classified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). Among these, a majority have not accessed formal or certified skill training. This not only hampers their labour market entry but also curtails upward mobility and productivity, resulting in a massive underutilisation of human capital. The challenge demands a comprehensive overhaul of the skilling ecosystem, with greater alignment between training curricula and labour market demand, especially in high-growth sectors such as digital services, renewable energy, and logistics.

### 2.5. Structural Employment Challenges in India's Labour Market

India's employment ecosystem is characterised by low employment elasticity, a large informal sector, and weak labour absorption capacity, particularly in urban contexts and among marginalised populations.





### 2.5.1. Urban–Rural Employment Divide

While conventional labour statistics suggest that rural unemployment is lower than in urban areas, this masks the underemployment and disguised unemployment prevalent in rural economies. Urban regions, by contrast, exhibit consistently higher open unemployment rates, reflecting the inadequacy of formal sector job creation and the saturation of low-skilled service industries. The inability of India’s rapidly urbanising centres to absorb rural migrants into secure, formal employment signals a failure of spatial economic planning and industrial policy.

### 2.5.2. Global Comparative Context

India’s youth employment crisis is not an isolated phenomenon but part of a broader global challenge. According to ILO estimates, of the 1.8 billion youth worldwide, nearly one-third are neither employed, in education, nor receiving vocational training (NEET). Over 90% of this population resides in developing economies, and a disproportionate three-quarters are women. These figures reflect a global structural bias in youth employment outcomes, deeply rooted in gender inequality, education quality deficits, and inadequate labour market linkages. For India to realise its demographic dividend, it must pioneer inclusive employment models that prioritise gender equity, rural employability, and youth participation in governance and innovation.

## 2.6. Government Data and Labour Market Baselines

Drawing on authoritative data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2023–24 and the India Employment Report 2024, jointly published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Institute for Human Development (IHD), several critical labour market indicators provide a snapshot of the employment landscape:

## 2.7 Employment Quality and Inclusion Metrics

- **Urban Bias in Formal Employment:** Formal sector jobs are overwhelmingly concentrated in urban centres, with rural areas largely excluded from formal job creation efforts. This exacerbates regional inequalities and leads to heightened rural-to-urban migration.
- **Prevalence of Unpaid and Informal Work Among Women:** The vast majority of working women remain engaged in self-employment or unpaid family work, often beyond the reach of labour protections, maternity benefits, or social security. This contributes to their invisibility in economic statistics and exclusion from policy focus.
- **Skill–Job Mismatch:** Over 60% of Indian youth entering the workforce report a mismatch between their qualifications and available job opportunities, leading to disillusionment, job-hopping, and productivity losses. This gap demands data-driven skilling programmes and real-time labour market information systems to guide both trainees and employers.

## 2.8. Testimonials and Ground-Level Evidence :

Ground-level voices provide powerful insights into the lived realities behind statistical trends. These firsthand narratives reveal the systemic barriers to livelihood security and underscore the need for responsive, context-sensitive interventions.

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# Pre Assessment

## Rural Women's Experiences

"पहले मैं सिर्फ घर का काम करती थी, पर अब मुझे लगता है कि मैं भी कुछ कर सकती हूँ। लेकिन न तो कोई ट्रेनिंग है, न ही काम मिलता है।"

("Earlier I only did household work, but now I feel I can also do something. But there's neither training available nor work opportunities.")

Sunita Devi, 28, Delhi

## Youth Employment Challenges

"ग्रेजुएशन तो कर ली, लेकिन अब समझ नहीं आता आगे क्या करें। फैक्ट्रियाँ कहती हैं अनुभव चाहिए, और जो नौकरी अच्छी है, वहाँ डिग्री से ज़्यादा कुछ और माँगते हैं जो हमारे पास नहीं है। न इधर के रहे, न उधर के। अब तो बस जैसे-तैसे छोटे-मोटे काम करके गुज़ारा कर रहे हैं।"

"I completed my graduation, but factories want experienced workers and experienced jobs want degrees we don't have. We're stuck in between, doing odd jobs just to survive."

Ritu Singh, 24, Delhi

## The Digital Divide

"अब बैंक में भी नेट बैंकिंग के लिए मोबाइल का इस्तेमाल करना पड़ता है, और दुकान में भुगतान के लिए UPI से करना पड़ता है। लेकिन हमें कुछ समझ नहीं आता। हमारे बच्चे सिखाते हैं, लेकिन उन्हें भी ज़्यादा जानकारी नहीं होती।"

"Now even in banks, we have to use mobile phones for net banking, and in shops, payments have to be made through UPI. But we don't understand much. Our children try to teach us, but even they don't know enough."

Kamala Devi, 45, Delhi

## Skills Training Accessibility

"सबसे नज़दीकी स्किल सेंटर 10 किलोमीटर दूर है। परिवार की ज़िम्मेदारियाँ और आने-जाने के पैसे नहीं हैं, तो तीन महीने का कोर्स कैसे करें? हमें ऐसी ट्रेनिंग चाहिए जो हमारे पास आए या हमारे समय के हिसाब से हो।"

"The nearest skill center is 10 kilometers away. With family responsibilities and no transport money, how can we attend three-month courses? We need training that comes to us or fits our time."

Priya Singh, 22, Delhi

### Gender Specific Barriers

"समाज हमसे यही उम्मीद करता है कि पहले बच्चों और घर को संभालें। अगर हम कमाते भी हैं, तो भी परिवार के फैसले पुरुष ही लेते हैं। हमें सिर्फ नौकरी नहीं चाहिए, हमें हमारे योगदान के लिए सम्मान भी चाहिए।"

"Society expects us to handle children and household first. Even if we earn, family decisions are still made by men. We need more than just jobs—we need respect for our contributions."

Meera Sharma, 32, Delhi

## 2.9. Institutional and Policy Context

### 2.9.1 Government Program Limitations

Field observations and beneficiary feedback reveal significant gaps between policy design and actual implementation:

- **Implementation Gaps:** Policies often fail in last-mile delivery due to bureaucratic delays and weak accountability.
- **One-Size-Fits-All Models:** Uniform program designs do not reflect the heterogeneity of local socioeconomic contexts.
- **Short-Term Focus:** Many interventions prioritize immediate deliverables over sustainable outcomes or capacity building.
- **Limited Follow-Up:** There is minimal monitoring or post-training support, weakening long-term impact and employment outcomes.

### 2.9.2 Market System Failures

Beyond state limitations, market dynamics themselves are exclusionary for marginalized groups:

- **Information Asymmetry:** Rural and underprivileged communities lack access to timely and relevant market or job information.
- **Social Capital Deficits:** Weak networks hinder job referrals, peer learning, and market linkages, particularly for women and first-time job seekers.
- **Variable Training Quality:** Inconsistent standards across skilling centers dilute effectiveness and employer trust.
- **Persistent Discrimination:** Bias in hiring practices and wage disparities disproportionately affect women, Dalits, and religious minorities.

### 2.9.3 Research Intervention Rationale

The convergence of quantitative findings and lived experiences gathered during the evaluation process underscores the urgent need for a more structured and impact-oriented research intervention. While livelihood programs have achieved notable outcomes in terms of skills development and economic activation, the broader socio-economic complexities influencing these outcomes remain insufficiently explored. A research-driven approach is essential to bridge this gap and inform inclusive, scalable, and sustainable interventions.

#### 1. Addressing Evidence Gaps

Many existing policy frameworks and development strategies rely on generalized assumptions and fragmented data. These overlook the nuanced realities of vulnerable communities, leading to one-size-fits-all solutions that fail to address structural disparities. A dedicated research intervention enables the uncovering of hidden dimensions of livelihood insecurity particularly those rooted in social exclusion, informal employment, and systemic barriers. Robust primary data collection and field-based insights are critical to reshape evidence frameworks and reorient interventions towards genuine empowerment.

#### 2. Examining Intersectionality

Livelihood outcomes are profoundly shaped by the intersections of gender, caste, geography, education, disability, and prevailing social norms. Women, youth, widows, and migrants face distinct layers of marginalisation, which interact to determine their access to economic opportunity and social mobility. Disaggregated data and intersectional research methods are therefore necessary to understand these layered vulnerabilities and to design context-sensitive responses that leave no one behind.

#### 3. Evaluating Intervention Effectiveness

Despite the growing proliferation of livelihood programs across India, few undergo rigorous impact evaluations. There is a critical need to assess what works, for whom, under what conditions, and why. This requires not only measuring outputs (e.g., number of trainings completed) but also long-term outcomes (e.g., sustained employment, income growth, social inclusion). Through mixed-method evaluation tools, the effectiveness of interventions can be examined with greater clarity, enabling program redesign and policy refinement.

#### 4. Developing Holistic Models

The current fragmented approach to skilling, financing, and employment generation fails to address the underlying structural constraints faced by marginalized groups. Research must be leveraged to develop integrated livelihood models that align economic empowerment with social protection, digital inclusion, gender justice, and institutional accountability.



These holistic frameworks are essential for generating sustainable change that is both bottom-up and systemic in nature.

## **5. Informing Scalable and Replicable Solutions**

High-quality research not only serves to evaluate existing interventions but also provides a foundation for the development of adaptable models. Insights derived from rigorous field-based studies can inform policies and programs that are scalable across regions and replicable across demographic profiles. Such knowledge products contribute to the larger discourse on inclusive development and enable organizations like Ladli Foundation Trust to influence public policy and philanthropic investments.

### **2.9.4 Critical Need for Impact-Based Action**

The convergence of data and voices from the ground makes it clear that livelihood insecurity is not simply an issue of employment but a broader socio-institutional failure. Therefore, any effective solution must:

- **Identify Why Conventional Approaches Fail:** Understand the systemic causes behind recurring program inefficiencies.
- **Design Evidence-Based Models:** Develop new approaches based on empirical evidence and community realities.
- **Drive Systemic Reform:** Influence policy and program frameworks through robust, actionable research.
- **Ensure Long-Term Impact:** Move beyond short-term metrics to focus on livelihood security, dignity, and empowerment.

This comprehensive assessment underscores the urgency and value of research that is community-informed, evidence-backed, and solution-oriented. Such an approach is essential to foster economic inclusion and sustainable development, especially for those currently left on the margins of India's growth story.





**Sampling Strategy  
and Coverage**

**Data Collection Tools  
and Techniques**

**Data Quality  
Assurance and Ethics**

**Limitations and  
Mitigation Strategies**

## **Chapter-3 Methodology**

The present section delineates the methodological framework employed by the Ladli Foundation Trust to design, implement, and evaluate its livelihood enhancement interventions. Rooted in participatory development theory and informed by empirical field practice, the Foundation's methodology follows an integrated, multi-tiered approach to address structural barriers to employment, skill acquisition, and financial autonomy among marginalised populations particularly women and youth in urban and peri-urban India.

The methodology operationalises a hybrid model that combines bottom-up participatory diagnostics with top-down programmatic alignment to national and state-level skilling and digital empowerment policies. This approach ensures not only contextual sensitivity but also institutional coherence and scalability.

raph text

### **3. Evaluation Framework and Design**

This Livelihood Impact Assessment was undertaken to systematically evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of Ladli Foundation Trust's livelihood initiatives implemented between 2015 and continuing across multiple geographies. The methodology adheres to internationally recognized evaluation standards, drawing upon the OECD DAC Criteria and UNEG norms, ensuring a rigorous, inclusive, and ethically sound approach to evidence generation.

To capture the multidimensional and intersectional nature of livelihood security, the assessment employed a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative data sources to triangulate findings and strengthen the reliability of conclusions. This approach enabled the team to measure not only tangible outcomes such as employment generation, income enhancement, and skill acquisition, but also intangible impacts on self-reliance, gender empowerment, access to entitlements, and social inclusion.

The evaluation also sought to assess institutional linkages, community ownership, and scalability of interventions, with a view to informing policy advocacy, program refinement, and strategic partnerships.

### **3.1. Sampling Strategy and Coverage**

A stratified, random-probability sampling methodology was adopted to ensure representative, gender-balanced, and demographically diverse participation. The sampling frame included beneficiaries and community stakeholders from operational areas in Delhi, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh, selected on the basis of intervention intensity, socio-economic vulnerability, and contextual diversity.

The sample was stratified across the following dimensions:

- Gender and Age: Ensuring representation of female-headed households, youth (18–35), and economically active adults (36–50).
- Intervention Type: Covering various thematic interventions, including digital literacy (Sashakt), computer training (Punar-Utthan), vocational skilling, and self-employment facilitation.
- Socioeconomic Profile: Prioritizing engagement with low-income families, pandemic-affected households, informal workers, widows, and school dropouts.

In total, the evaluation engaged through respondents, comprising direct beneficiaries, community representatives, implementing partners, and institutional stakeholders.

### **3.2. Data Collection Tools and Techniques**

To ensure methodological rigor and data integrity, the following instruments were deployed, aligned with international M&E best practices:

#### **3.2.1 Quantitative Surveys**

A total of 60 % structured beneficiary surveys were conducted using a digitized tool designed on KoboToolbox, based on pre-validated indicators aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Key indicators included:

- Pre- and post-intervention employment status
- Monthly income differentials
- Access to government skill and employment schemes
- Changes in financial literacy, digital inclusion, and self-perceived agency

Enumerators were trained intensively and supervised in real-time through a centralized monitoring dashboard. In regions with poor internet connectivity, offline forms were deployed and digitized post-fieldwork.

### 3.2.2 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

To assess institutional effectiveness and stakeholder perspectives, 146 semi-structured interviews were conducted with:

- Ladli Foundation program leads and trainers
- Representatives from State Livelihood Missions, Skill Development Corporations, and Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- Local employers, placement agencies, and micro-finance actors
- CSO partners and block-level governance actors.
- Interviews were transcribed, anonymized, and analyzed using thematic coding in NVivo to derive policy-relevant insights and operational lessons.

### 3.2.3 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The FGDs were facilitated with strategically selected cohorts to explore collective experiences and social impacts of the interventions. The groups included:

- Women entrepreneurs and micro-entrepreneurs
- Unemployed youth pre- and post-training
- Male beneficiaries and their household members
- SHG leaders and community volunteers

A participatory rural appraisal (PRA)-informed guide was employed to encourage open dialogue, shared reflections, and group consensus on perceived program changes

## 3.3. Data Quality Assurance and Ethics

All data collection was conducted in accordance with UNICEF's Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC) protocols and UNDP's Data Quality Standards.

- **Informed Consent:** Written and/or verbal consent was obtained from all respondents after a clear explanation of the study's purpose, confidentiality clauses, and voluntary participation.
- **Privacy & Confidentiality:** No personally identifiable data was collected without consent. All records were stored on encrypted, access-controlled servers.
- **Enumerator Training:** Field researchers underwent a three-day intensive training covering ethical conduct, data protection, tool familiarization, and respondent engagement techniques.
- **Real-Time Monitoring:** Supervisory checks and field audits were conducted daily to validate data consistency and rectify anomalies.

### 3.4. Limitations and Mitigation Strategies

Despite adherence to rigorous standards, several constraints were encountered:

- Attrition and Migration: Tracking long-term outcomes among early-phase beneficiaries was affected by seasonal migration patterns, especially among informal workers.
- Digital Divide: In select rural clusters, the lack of mobile network access necessitated the use of paper tools, introducing a minor time lag in data synchronization.
- Response Bias: A small percentage of respondents may have overstated gains due to social desirability; this was mitigated by cross-validating responses with trainers and employers.
- Programmatic Variation: Slight heterogeneity in program delivery modalities across states necessitated careful interpretation of comparative results.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the study's triangulated and participatory methodology enabled a robust and credible analysis of the livelihood ecosystem fostered by Ladli Foundation Trust. The findings derived from this evaluation provide an evidence-based foundation for enhancing program quality, strengthening institutional partnerships, and shaping data-driven policy discourse in the domain of inclusive livelihoods.

### 3.5 Baseline and Endline Study Approach

This can include:

- Objectives of baseline and endline studies
- Tools used (surveys, KIIs, FGDs)
- Timeline (when baseline and endline were conducted)
- Indicators tracked
- Comparison methodology

# Chapter- 4

## Desk Review

The notion of livelihood has transcended its traditional economic confines to become a multidimensional construct in development theory and practice. From its origins in subsistence economics to its contemporary manifestation as a holistic, people-centred analytical framework, the concept of livelihoods has enabled more integrated understandings of poverty, resilience, and development pathways. At its core, as conceptualised by Chambers and Conway (1992), a livelihood comprises “the capabilities, assets, and activities required for a means of living.” Sustainability, within this framework, is measured not only by economic endurance but by the capacity of individuals and households to withstand shocks, recover from crises, and sustain or improve their quality of life across generations.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA), which formalises this understanding, gained momentum during the late 1990s as a tool to reorient development planning towards community-driven, context-specific, and resilience-based models. Initially popularised by the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) and adopted by global institutions including UNDP, CARE, and Oxfam, the SLA integrates five capitals human, social, natural, physical, and financial into a unified framework of analysis and intervention.







Yet, as Scoones (2009) incisively critiques, this very adaptability has rendered the SLA vulnerable to technocratic dilution and conceptual fatigue.

This literature review aims to synthesise key empirical insights from Indian contexts and broader theoretical contributions particularly Ian Scoones' critical reappraisal to construct a comprehensive, high calibre understanding of the livelihoods discourse.

The following sections chart the framework's historical foundations, empirical applications, limitations, and emerging directions in response to contemporary challenges such as digitalisation, climate change, and gendered exclusion.

#### **4.1. Theoretical Foundations and Evolution of Livelihood Perspectives**

The origins of livelihood thinking lie in the interdisciplinary cross-pollination of agrarian political economy, rural sociology, and ecological anthropology. Before the formal advent of the SLA, the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute in Central Africa (1950s) and India's village studies tradition (Lipton, 1977; Walker & Ryan, 1990) laid empirical groundwork for understanding how rural households combine diverse income sources, manage risks, and navigate institutional constraints.

Chambers and Conway (1992) introduced a more systematic articulation of livelihoods as a composite of capabilities, assets, and activities. Their model integrated the environmental dimension by defining sustainability in terms of intergenerational equity and ecological integrity. The asset-based framing gained institutional backing through DFID, which operationalised the SLA via the 'asset pentagon'—mapping the interdependencies of various forms of capital in shaping livelihood outcomes.

Scoones (1998) added analytical clarity by framing livelihoods within a dynamic context of vulnerability, institutional mediation, and livelihood strategies. His typology—coping, adapting, and transforming—provided a heuristic for evaluating how livelihoods respond to internal and external stimuli. Over time, however, this analytical richness was often lost in instrumental application, a phenomenon Scoones (2009) critiques as the "technocratisation of SLA."

#### **4.2. Empirical Landscape in India: Evidence from the Field**

Empirical studies in India have applied the SLA extensively to assess the livelihoods of marginalised groups—smallholders, tribal populations, women-headed households, and informal labourers.

Baby (2005) reported that 87% of marginal farmers and 58% of small farmers enjoyed medium to high livelihood security, in contrast to 43% of agricultural labourers who remained acutely insecure. This segmentation underscores the role of landholding, caste, and education in mediating access to livelihood capitals..MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) represents a watershed in state-led livelihood provisioning. Roy (2011) observed that participation in MGNREGA facilitated upward mobility from low to medium livelihood security brackets.



Parmanand (2012) noted that nearly 40% of rural households reported improved food and income security post-MGNREGA participation. However, persistent administrative inefficiencies, delayed wage payments, and limited asset-creation have muted the programme's full potential.

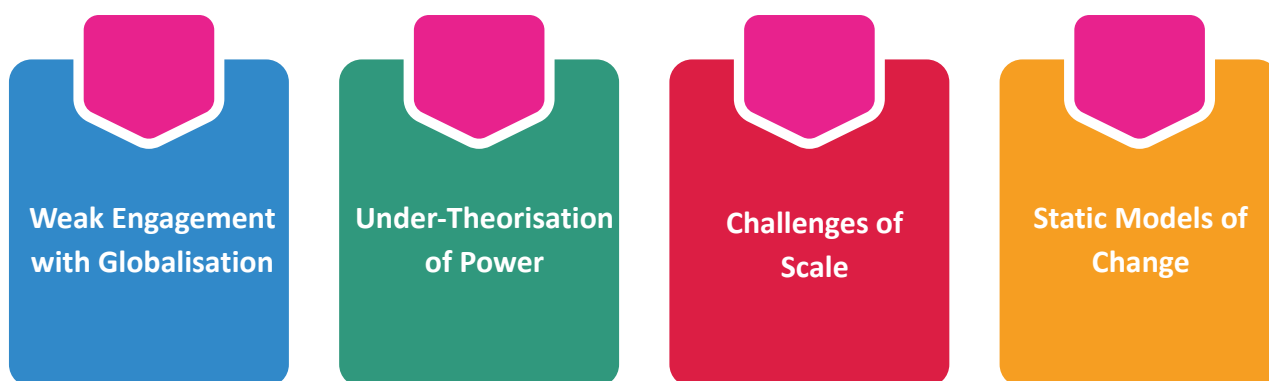
Livelihood Security Indices (LSI), which quantify multidimensional well-being, have emerged as a vital tool in comparative diagnostics. Hatai and Sen (2008) revealed spatial disparities in Odisha, where only eight districts surpassed an LSI score of 0.5. Similarly, Prakash et al. (2019) found LSI values ranging from 0.24 to 0.59 across 13 districts in Uttarakhand, illustrating intra-state inequalities. These studies confirm that access to education, healthcare, credit, and infrastructure are crucial determinants of livelihood resilience.

### 4.3. Gender, Social Exclusion, and Vulnerable Groups

The literature consistently identifies gender and caste as powerful axes of livelihood vulnerability. Sathwika et al. (2019) and Barela et al. (2018) highlight that women-headed households, Scheduled Castes (SCs), and Scheduled Tribes (STs) suffer from compounded exclusion across all five livelihood capitals. Women, in particular, face barriers to land ownership, wage parity, and mobility. Despite the proliferation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and microfinance programmes, financial literacy, asset control, and bargaining power remain limited among female beneficiaries. Moreover, Shyamalie and Saini (2010) and Swati (2016) demonstrate that while social capital may be relatively strong—via kinship, community institutions, or SHGs—this is often insufficient to offset deficits in human and financial capital. Institutional gaps, ranging from poor extension services to underfunded rural banks, perpetuate livelihood insecurity.

### 4.4. Static Models of Change

While the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) has been instrumental in promoting resilience and adaptive capacity among rural populations, it has often been critiqued for its static conceptualisation of change.



#### 4.4.1. Conceptual Critiques and Theoretical Gaps

Despite its strengths, the SLA faces sustained critique. Scoones (2009) identifies four major shortcomings:

##### 4.4.1.1. Weak Engagement with Globalisation

One of the foundational critiques of the SLA lies in its inadequate engagement with the structural drivers of globalisation that shape local livelihood contexts. While the framework acknowledges the external environment, it often treats macroeconomic forces—such as trade liberalisation, structural adjustment, and global commodity chains—as static backdrops rather than dynamic and relational influences. Bebbington and Batterbury (2001) argue that by neglecting the transnational dimensions of capital, labour, and resource flows, SLA-based analyses risk detaching local livelihood strategies from the global systems in which they are embedded. In a globalised world, where rural communities are increasingly affected by distant decisions—whether on international trade, climate finance, or geopolitical instability—a livelihoods framework that fails to engage with these processes is inherently limited in its explanatory and transformative potential.

##### 4.4.1.2. Under-Theorisation of Power

Another enduring limitation of the SLA is its insufficient theorisation of power and politics. Although the framework acknowledges the role of institutions in mediating access to livelihood capitals, it often does so in a depoliticised manner, reducing structural inequalities to issues of governance or capacity. Critics such as O’Laughlin (2004) and De Haan (2012) contend that this narrow focus on individual and household capabilities obscures deeper processes of marginalisation rooted in class exploitation, patriarchal norms, and caste-based discrimination.

Without a critical interrogation of how power operates—both visibly and invisibly—across institutions, markets, and communities, the SLA risks becoming a technocratic tool that reinforces, rather than challenges, entrenched inequities. A more politically engaged approach must foreground questions of rights, representation, and redistribution, recognising that livelihoods are not only shaped by assets and activities but also by histories of struggle, resistance, and collective action.

#### **4.4.1.3. Challenges of Scale**

Finally, the SLA's predominant focus on the local—households, communities, or micro-regions—has limited its applicability in addressing macro-level challenges and opportunities. While local specificity is crucial for contextual relevance, the absence of vertical integration with regional, national, and global policy frameworks impedes the development of scalable and coherent livelihood strategies. Scholars such as Zoomers (1999) and Cleaver (2005) have called for a more scalar and relational understanding of livelihoods that connects micro-level insights with macro-level systems. This involves mapping the interfaces between local livelihood dynamics and broader political-economic structures such as fiscal policies, international trade agreements, climate governance mechanisms, and transboundary resource regimes. Bridging these scales is not only a methodological imperative but a normative one, essential for ensuring that grassroots realities inform and shape institutional decision-making at all levels of governance.

#### **4.4.1.4. Static Models of Change**

While the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) has been instrumental in promoting resilience and adaptive capacity among rural populations, it has often been critiqued for its static conceptualisation of change. The predominant focus on coping strategies and short-term adaptation fails to adequately engage with the structural and systemic transformations required in the face of long-term stressors such as climate change, demographic shifts, and economic transitions. The integration of resilience theory (Folke et al., 2002) and socio-technical transition frameworks (Geels & Schot, 2007) offers a valuable extension to the SLA, enabling a more dynamic and future-oriented understanding of how livelihoods evolve. These perspectives emphasise transformation—not merely survival—as a legitimate and necessary response to systemic disruptions, advocating for proactive, anticipatory strategies that reconfigure existing livelihood systems and challenge entrenched vulnerabilities.

#### **4.4.2 Emerging Themes: Digital Inclusion and Climate-Smart Livelihoods**

Recent scholarship has increasingly highlighted the profound impact of digitalisation and climate change on rural livelihoods, identifying both as critical domains in contemporary livelihood discourse. Digital inclusion, particularly in the form of mobile banking, digital credit, and e-commerce platforms, has emerged as a transformative mechanism for enhancing economic agency among marginalised groups. As Mehta and Kapoor (2021) demonstrate, these tools have enabled rural women to access financial services, start micro-enterprises, and reduce their reliance on informal and often exploitative credit systems. However, the benefits of digital technologies are not uniformly distributed. Persistent digital divides—driven by literacy gaps, infrastructural deficits, and gender norms—continue to constrain access and usage, reinforcing existing inequalities.





Simultaneously, the threat of climate change has become a defining challenge for rural livelihoods. Singh et al. (2020) document the increasingly erratic patterns of rainfall, soil degradation, and intensifying heatwaves that are undermining agricultural productivity and food security. These environmental shocks have led to a surge in distress-driven migration, with significant socio-economic costs including the informalisation of urban labour markets, the erosion of rural social capital, and intergenerational educational disruptions. In this context, the integration of climate-smart agricultural practices, weather-based insurance schemes, and green employment opportunities is essential for enhancing both ecological sustainability and livelihood resilience.

#### 4.4.3. Reimagining Livelihoods: From Resilience to Transformation

To maintain relevance in a development landscape characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA), the livelihoods discourse must evolve beyond conventional resilience-focused paradigms and embrace a vision of structural transformation. This necessitates a conceptual and operational shift from managing vulnerability to enabling empowerment, from maintaining the status quo to reimagining alternative futures. Scholars such as Carr (2020) and Tschakert et al. (2019) advocate for intersectional approaches that foreground the emotional, cultural, and political dimensions of well-being, which are often sidelined in technocratic development models.

**A justice-oriented livelihoods framework must encompass the following dimensions:**

- The recognition of intersectionality, acknowledging how overlapping identities—such as gender, caste, class, age, and disability—compound vulnerability;
- The co-production of knowledge that values experiential and indigenous expertise alongside academic and technical knowledge;
- The adoption of systems thinking, recognising the interconnectedness of ecological, social, and economic subsystems;
- And The promotion of policy coherence across sectors such as agriculture, education, health, finance, and social protection. Such a paradigm repositions rural populations as agents of change—active participants in shaping their livelihoods and futures rather than passive recipients of aid or adaptation.



## Chapter 5- Program Overview

**L**adli Foundation Trust's livelihood programs are strategically designed to promote sustainable economic empowerment among underserved and marginalized communities across India. Anchored in the belief that inclusive growth begins with enabling access to skills, resources, and dignified employment, the organization has implemented multi-pronged livelihood interventions targeting women, youth, and vulnerable households in both rural and urban settings.

The four flagship initiatives under the livelihood theme NIXI, Sashakt, Project Sashakt lab and Punar-Utthan aim to bridge systemic gaps in employability, digital literacy, vocational training, and enterprise development. These programs are grounded in a rights-based and gender-responsive framework, ensuring that socio-economically disadvantaged populations are equipped with market-relevant skills and linked to viable income-generating opportunities.

- **Project NIXI** collaboration with **Ladli Foundation** focuses on empowering 200 underprivileged girls and women through life skills education, vocational training, and academic support to enhance their learning, employability, and economic independence.
- **Project Sashakt** collaboration with TARC focuses on enhancing women's economic participation by providing them with skill-based training, digital tools, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship support. It is specifically tailored to overcome the intersectional barriers of caste, gender, and geography, thus fostering greater agency among women in marginalised communities.
- **Punar-Utthan** collaboration with ONGC addresses the reintegration of youth and informal workers who have experienced economic displacement, particularly in the post-pandemic context. The program delivers demand-driven skill-building modules, job placement assistance, and mental wellness support, thereby ensuring a holistic pathway to sustainable livelihoods.
- **Project Sashakt Lab** is an initiative by **Ladli Foundation**, address 7 Sashakt Advanced Computer Skill Centers empower marginalized students with crucial skills, enhancing their career prospects.

This strategic initiative addresses the imperative for technological proficiency in underserved communities. Tailored programs provide practical expertise, positioning students for success in a competitive job market. These centers act as catalysts for socioeconomic upliftment, bridging the digital divide and fostering inclusivity. Ladli Foundation's commitment not only transforms lives but also contributes to a more skilled and resilient workforce.

## **5.1 Goals and Objectives**

Ladli Foundation Trust's livelihood interventions are strategically designed to address the systemic challenges of unemployment, economic vulnerability, and exclusion faced by underserved populations in India. Through a people centric and inclusive approach, the organization aims to foster long-term socio-economic empowerment, particularly among adolescent girls, youth, and marginalised women communities. The following key goals and objectives drive Ladli's livelihood programs:

### **5.1.1 Economic Empowerment of Marginalized Communities**

- At the heart of Ladli's livelihood interventions lies the commitment to enhancing the economic agency of individuals from low-income and socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The programs focus on equipping beneficiaries with market-relevant skills through vocational and digital literacy training. By improving employability, enhancing productivity, and promoting access to income-generating opportunities, the organization enables participants to break free from cycles of dependency and poverty. Livelihood initiatives are contextualised to reflect regional employment trends, sector-specific demands, and evolving technological requirements, thereby ensuring that training remains relevant and impactful.

### **5.1.2 Promotion of Gender-Inclusive Development**

- Recognising the multi-layered barriers that hinder women's access to the labour market, Ladli Foundation Trust integrates a strong gender lens into its livelihood programming. Through targeted interventions such as capacity-building workshops, leadership training, digital upskilling, and enterprise support, the programs aim to increase the participation of women in formal and informal economic sectors. Gender-responsive modules address deeply rooted social norms, safety concerns, and mobility restrictions. Furthermore, support mechanisms such as mentoring, access to credit, and post-training assistance ensure that women not only enter but also thrive in economic ecosystems.

### **5.1.3 Facilitation of Sustainable Livelihoods**

Sustainability is a core principle guiding all livelihood initiatives at Ladli. Beyond providing short-term skill acquisition, the organization promotes long-term income stability by facilitating entrepreneurship, wage employment, and self-employment opportunities. This is achieved through structured curricula, market linkages, incubation support, and exposure to real-world business ecosystems.



Post-training handholding including access to financial services, legal literacy, and business mentoring ensures that the beneficiaries are able to operationalise their learning and convert it into tangible income-generating outcomes. The approach empowers individuals to become not just skilled workers but self-sustaining economic agents.

#### **5.1.4 Strengthening Community Resilience**

Ladli's interventions go beyond individual economic mobility to focus on enhancing collective resilience at the community level. By embedding dignity, self-reliance, and shared responsibility into livelihood programs, the Trust fosters local ownership and participatory development. Community-based mobilisation, the creation of local resource networks, and collaboration with grassroots institutions help ensure that socio-economic gains are sustained across generations. The programming encourages behavioural change, peer support structures, and an ethos of mutual upliftment critical to building communities that can withstand economic shocks and uncertainties.

#### **5.1.5 Financial Independence and Informed Decision-Making**

A distinctive element of Ladli Foundation Trust's livelihood strategy is its emphasis on nurturing financial independence and informed decision-making among beneficiaries. Recognising that economic empowerment is incomplete without financial agency, the programs incorporate modules on financial literacy, budgeting, digital banking, investment planning, and responsible credit behaviour. Participants are trained to make informed financial decisions regarding savings, loans, insurance, and entrepreneurial investment. Special emphasis is placed on demystifying formal financial systems and fostering trust in digital financial tools, especially among women and adolescent girls populations. This enables individuals not just to earn, but to manage, grow, and protect their incomes, leading to long-term economic resilience and autonomy.

### **5.2. Target Groups**

Ladli Foundation Trust strategically focuses on groups that are typically excluded from mainstream economic opportunities. These include:

- **Rural and Urban Marginalized Women:** Including widows, single mothers, adolescent girls, and women with no prior work experience.
- **Youth from Low-Income Households:** Particularly those who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET), and are at high risk of informal or exploitative work.
- **Persons with Disabilities:** Ensuring inclusive program design that accommodates the specific livelihood challenges faced by disabled individuals.
- **Communities in Distress Migration Zones:** Engaging those displaced or economically marginalized due to lack of opportunities in their native regions.

By focusing on these groups, Ladli Foundation aims to bridge the intersectional inequalities that perpetuate poverty and exclusion.



### 5.3. Project Duration and Phases

Ladli Foundation's livelihood programs are structured into distinct implementation phases, tailored for adaptability across varied socio-economic contexts:

Phase	Duration	Key Activities
Baseline & Mobilization	1–3 months	Community sensitization, beneficiary identification, needs assessment
Training & Capacity Building	6–9 months	Delivery of certified skill development modules, digital literacy, soft skills
Placement & Enterprise Support	3–6 months	Job fairs, on-the-job training, micro-enterprise incubation, financial linkages
Post-Training Support	6–12 months	Mentorship, refresher training, access to market linkages, alumni networks

### 5.4. Geographic Reach

Ladli Foundation Trust has a wide operational footprint across India, implementing livelihood programs in both urban and rural settings.

- States Covered: The Trust operates in over 12 states and 3 U.T .
- District-Level Focus: Projects are implemented in more than 36 districts, reaching over 1,350 marginalized communities, especially in urban slums and underdeveloped rural blocks.
- Delhi NCR: Digital labs and skilling centers for adolescent girls and women.

This extensive reach ensures that programs are contextually relevant and scalable across geographies.

## 5.5. Culturally Sensitive and Contextualized Interventions

Recognizing the intersection of culture, gender norms, and access, Ladli Foundation contextualizes its interventions for each community. For example, in areas where women's mobility is restricted, community-based centers were established in collaboration with local schools or Panchayat Bhawans to ensure proximity and safety.

Spoken English and digital literacy courses were taught using local idioms and examples to aid comprehension and retention, particularly for first-generation learners.

Ladli Foundation Trust's livelihood interventions are strengthened through multi-sectoral partnerships and institutional collaborations that bring together corporate, government, and civil society stakeholders.

### 5.5.1. Key Partners and Collaborators:

#### 5.5.1.1. Corporate CSR Partners:

- The Ladli Foundation Trust has strategically collaborated with prominent corporate CSR partners to enhance the reach and impact of its livelihood initiatives. For Example, the Punar-Utthan Project is being implemented in partnership with Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) , NIXI, and TARC. This initiative focuses on imparting advanced digital literacy, job readiness, and placement support to marginalized women, empowering them to secure sustainable employment. In parallel, several private CSR foundations extend critical support to the Sashakt Digital Labs and various grassroots skill development camps, strengthening Ladli's community-based skilling ecosystem.

#### 5.5.1.2. Training and Certification Bodies:

- To ensure high-quality, industry-relevant training, the Foundation has established partnerships with accredited vocational training institutions. For ExampleExample, it collaborates with the Institute for Advanced Computer Technology (IACT) and similar organizations to provide beneficiaries with certified courses. These certifications enhance the employability of trainees and foster their integration into formal economic sectors. The credibility and recognition of such certifications also contribute to building confidence among participants and potential employers alike.

#### 5.5.1.3. Government Engagement:

- The Foundation actively engages with government bodies at multiple levels to drive program implementation and scalability. Through partnerships with Delhi Government schools, Ladli has established digital labs that serve as centers for digital literacy and vocational instruction. Further, continuous collaboration with district and municipal administrations enables effective community mobilization, logistical coordination, and infrastructural facilitation. These efforts are closely aligned with national skilling missions such as the Skill India Mission and complementary state-level entrepreneurship programs, ensuring policy coherence and institutional synergy.

#### **5.5.1.4.Civil Society Networks:**

Recognizing the importance of grassroots reach and community trust, the Foundation partners with a diverse range of civil society actors. These include local NGOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that facilitate last-mile connectivity, culturally sensitive mobilization, and sustained beneficiary engagement. Additionally, in pursuit of inclusive development, Ladli collaborates with disability support organizations to integrate accessibility measures in training curricula and infrastructure, thereby fostering an equitable learning environment for all, including persons with disabilities.

### **5.6. Community Engagement and Implementation Approach**

Aligned with the best practices championed by the Ladli Foundation Trust, the organization adopts a community-centric implementation model across its livelihood thematic projects, ensuring sustainability, inclusivity, and local ownership. This participatory approach is not only rooted in the grassroots realities of the communities it serves but also strategically designed to foster self-reliance, intergenerational impact, and long-term development outcomes.

#### **5.6.1. Community-Based Needs Assessment**

Every livelihood intervention under projects such as Sashakt, Punar-Utthan, and the Sashakt Advanced Computer Skill Centers begins with a participatory baseline survey and community mapping exercise. These tools help identify localized needs, skill gaps, and socio-economic vulnerabilities—particularly for women, youth, and marginalized groups. Local volunteers and trained community resource persons are engaged in data collection, ensuring that assessments reflect lived realities.

#### **5.6.2. Mobilization Through Grassroots Institutions**

"Rather than implementing programs through a top-down approach, Ladli Foundation believes in a bottom-up strategy by working through existing community structures such as Mahila Mandals, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), adolescent girls' collectives, and school management committees."

These groups are mobilized to participate in planning, outreach, and beneficiary selection, thereby reinforcing transparency, equity, and accountability in the implementation process.

In the Sashakt Project, peer educators from within the community were trained to serve as facilitators for digital literacy and soft-skills training sessions. This promoted trust among participants and helped normalize women's participation in public and economic life—particularly in conservative or low-income neighborhoods.

#### **5.6.3. Local Trainers and Female Leadership**

Ladli Foundation prioritizes the capacity building of local trainers, especially women from within the community, who are identified, trained, and employed as instructors in livelihood programs. These women serve as role models, bridging the gap between formal training structures and informal community learning ecosystems.

Like one of our projects Punar-Utthan, where widows and young women who had lost their family's breadwinners during the COVID-19 pandemic were not only trained but were also engaged as peer mentors for newer batches.

This method creates a multiplier effect—training women who in turn train others, ensuring knowledge transfer and sustainability.

#### **5.6.4. Culturally Sensitive and Contextualized Interventions**

Recognizing the intersection of culture, gender norms, and access, Ladli Foundation contextualizes its interventions for each community. For example, in areas where women's mobility is restricted, community-based centers were established in collaboration with local schools or Panchayat Bhawans to ensure proximity and safety.

Spoken English and digital literacy courses were taught using local idioms and examples to aid comprehension and retention, particularly for first-generation learners.

#### **5.6.5. Continuous Feedback Loops and Iterative Design**

Implementation is guided by weekly community feedback mechanisms, including group reflections, feedback forms, and mentor check-ins. This ensures real-time problem-solving and allows curriculum, training schedules, and even logistical arrangements to be adapted based on beneficiary needs. In the Sashakt Lab initiative, this feedback mechanism led to the inclusion of CUET-focused modules and resume-building workshops to better align with students' higher education aspirations.

#### **5.6.6. Strengthening Social Capital and Ownership**

Through consistent engagement and participatory governance, the livelihood initiatives contribute to building social capital within communities. Alumni networks, youth clubs, and parent-mentor groups have emerged organically from these interventions, reinforcing community solidarity and support mechanisms.

Exit strategies are also designed collaboratively, wherein community members take over responsibilities such as mobilization, facility management, or facilitating peer sessions—thus institutionalizing ownership.

#### **5.6.7. Participatory Planning:**

At the core of Ladli's strategy is participatory planning, wherein community members are meaningfully engaged throughout the program lifecycle. From the initial needs assessments to the co-creation of training modules and continuous feedback mechanisms, beneficiaries play an active role in shaping interventions. This inclusive approach enhances program relevance, fosters community buy-in, and builds a strong foundation for sustained impact.

#### 5.6.8. Decentralized Delivery:

- The Foundation emphasizes decentralized delivery by equipping local trainers, volunteers, and field teams to execute programs with high cultural and linguistic sensitivity. This localized approach ensures that interventions are contextually appropriate, increases accessibility for marginalized populations, and strengthens community trust in the process.

#### 5.6.9. Gender-Responsive Programming:

- Recognizing the systemic barriers that limit women's participation in skill development, Ladli integrates a gender-responsive lens across its initiatives. This includes the establishment of safe and inclusive training spaces, provision of mobility assistance, and the implementation of flexible learning schedules. Such measures are crucial in enabling greater participation and retention of female beneficiaries, particularly in conservative or resource-constrained communities.

#### 5.6.10. Data-Driven Monitoring:

- To ensure accountability and adaptive learning, Ladli employs robust digital tools for real-time monitoring and evaluation. These systems track beneficiary progress, training quality, and placement outcomes while also capturing community-level impact metrics. The use of data-driven insights facilitates evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement of program delivery.

### 5.7. Implementation Strategy

- Ladli Foundation Trust's livelihood programs are implemented through a multi-layered, community-anchored strategy that combines grassroots engagement with scalable innovations. The focus remains on empowering underserved populations, especially women and youth, by equipping them with sustainable income-generation skills, confidence, and access to employment or entrepreneurship pathways.

#### 5.7.1. Key Activities and Interventions

##### 5.7.1.1 Community Mobilization & Baseline Assessment

- The initial phase of the program focused on intensive community mobilization and comprehensive baseline assessments to ensure contextual relevance and targeted outreach. Door-to-door surveys, participatory rural appraisals (PRA), and focused community meetings were conducted to map local livelihood conditions, identify existing skill gaps, and understand the aspirations of potential beneficiaries. Special attention was given to the inclusion of women and out-of-school youth, with local influencers such as anganwadi workers, school teachers, and Self-Help Group (SHG) leaders playing a pivotal role in building trust and mobilizing participants from marginalized backgrounds.



### **5.7.1.2. Skill Development & Digital Literacy Training**

- Certified skill development programs were delivered in demand-driven sectors such as , beauty and wellness, digital office management, and spoken English. These trainings were hosted in specially designed “Sashakt Digital Labs” and “Punar-Utthan” classrooms, established through partnerships with CSR sponsors and government stakeholders. Each training module was curated to not only build technical competencies but also enhance soft skills, workplace readiness, and digital confidence. In response to the widening digital divide, modules on digital financial literacy and app-based learning were embedded into the curriculum, equipping participants with essential tools for navigating digital ecosystems.

### **5.7.1.3. Job Placement and Market Linkages**

- For those seeking formal employment, a range of job-readiness services were offered, including career counseling, resume-building workshops, and mock interview sessions. Regular placement drives were organized in collaboration with local industries, retail outlets, and service-sector employers. To support long-term employment sustainability, post-placement follow-up mechanisms and mentorship support were instituted. These efforts ensured that beneficiaries not only accessed job opportunities but were also equipped to retain and grow within their professional roles.

## **5.8. Innovative Tools and Approaches**

### **5.8.1. Peer Educator Model**

An innovative peer educator model was introduced to create a multiplier effect and strengthen community ownership. Selected program alumni and local youth, after receiving specialized training, served as peer mentors and facilitators. Their cultural familiarity and lived experiences enhanced the relatability and effectiveness of training delivery, while also fostering leadership within the community.

### **5.8.2. Flexible, Community-Centric Training Schedules**

To ensure inclusivity and maximize participation, training schedules were designed around local routines and community needs. This flexibility was particularly beneficial for women with caregiving responsibilities, as sessions were tailored to accommodate domestic workloads and mobility limitations. The community-centric approach not only increased enrollment but also improved retention and completion rates among participants.

### 5.8.3. QR-Code Enabled Attendance and Progress Tracking

To ensure transparency, accountability, and real-time progress monitoring, Ladli Foundation Trust integrated QR-code-based attendance systems and Google Forms into its program management processes. These digital tools enabled seamless tracking of individual trainee attendance, skill acquisition milestones, and participant feedback, allowing for responsive program adjustments and data-informed decision-making.

### 5.8.4. Hybrid Learning Formats

In response to diverse connectivity challenges across implementation areas, the Foundation adopted a hybrid learning model. This approach blended offline, in-person classroom sessions with digital content delivery via mobile applications and online platforms like BYJUS apps . By doing so, it ensured continuous learning access in both urban and digitally underserved rural settings, making education more inclusive and adaptive to local infrastructure realities.

## 5.9. Stakeholder Engagement and Institutional Partnerships

Ladli Foundation Trust adopts a collaborative governance model, working across multiple stakeholder groups to ensure effective implementation:

### 5.9.1. Government Bodies

- Ladli Foundation follows a collaborative governance model that actively engages a spectrum of institutional stakeholders to ensure contextual grounding, programmatic alignment, and systemic support. These partnerships strengthen outreach, optimize resource utilization, and embed interventions within existing local structures.

### 5.9.2 Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) and Urban Local Bodies

- The Foundation worked in close coordination with District Administrations, State Skill Development Missions, and Delhi Government schools. These partnerships enabled beneficiary mobilization, provided access to training infrastructure, and supported program monitoring. Strategic alignment with national flagship schemes such as Skill India, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), and Digital India ensured the relevance and scalability of interventions while leveraging government resources and visibility.

### 5.9.3. Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Local NGOs

- SHG networks were mobilized extensively to promote women's participation in both skilling and entrepreneurship components. Local civil society partners provided essential support in community sensitization, language localization of training materials, and last-mile delivery—ensuring programs reached those most in need.

### 5.9.4. Schools and Community Centers

- To increase local accessibility and minimize travel barriers, existing infrastructure such as school premises, anganwadi centers, and panchayat bhawans were repurposed into training venues. These community-owned spaces enhanced the program's inclusivity, particularly for women and adolescents with mobility constraints.

## 5.10. Volunteer and Community Participation

### 5.10.1 Volunteer Engagement

- Youth volunteers formed a critical pillar of the implementation strategy, supporting logistics, digital learning facilitation, and mentorship. These volunteers were especially active during community mobilization drives, sensitization campaigns, and job fairs, providing valuable support while also gaining exposure to social leadership.

### 5.10.2. Alumni-Led Empowerment Circles

Graduates of Ladli's skilling programs established peer-led Empowerment Circles—ongoing forums for mutual learning, and experience-sharing. These alumni networks have emerged as powerful platforms for sustained engagement, knowledge transfer, and social cohesion within the community.

### 5.10.3 Community Ownership and Sustainability

To ensure sustainability beyond the formal project cycle, local trainers and micro-leaders were identified, capacitated, and entrusted with continued program delivery. This strategy promotes long-term community ownership, enabling continuous skill-building, mentorship, and local economic development without external dependence.



## Chapter 6 - Implementation Strategy

The livelihood initiatives of the Ladli Foundation Trust represent a systematic and transformative approach to addressing economic vulnerability among marginalized communities, with a particular emphasis on women, adolescent girls, and youth. Through a carefully curated blend of vocational training, digital education, legal awareness, and health-linked behavioral sensitization, the Foundation has delivered multi-dimensional outcomes that go beyond mere numbers. Each initiative from Punar-Utthan to Sashakt and the Sashakt Labs is structured to provide not only immediate skill-building but also to influence long-term socio-economic behavior and resilience.

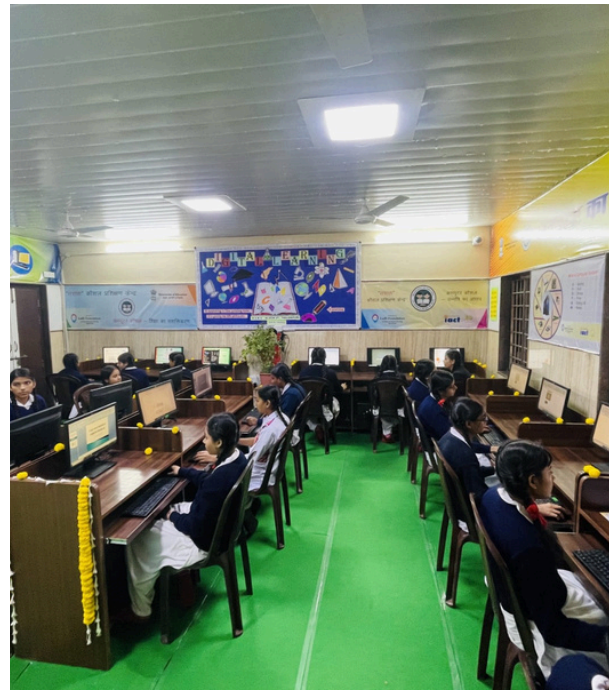
The Foundation adopts a results-oriented framework to measure the effectiveness of its livelihood programs. In terms of outputs, more than 75,000 individuals have been reached through structured interventions since 2015. Key deliverables include the establishment of eight advanced computer training labs in Delhi government schools, the distribution of over 41,000 stationery kits, and the delivery of 74 workshops on legal rights and gender awareness. The Sashakt initiative alone has trained over 16,000 women and girls in employable digital and soft skills. Meanwhile, under the post-COVID Punar-Utthan program, families that lost their primary earners were provided targeted training and employment support.



These outputs are not just evidence of outreach—they form the foundation for deeper transformation. More importantly, the programs have led to measurable outcomes. A total of 62,466 beneficiaries have secured job placements, a clear indicator of Ladli Foundation's ability to align training with real labor market needs.



Additionally, more than 33,000 women and adolescents have been educated in financial literacy, leading to significant improvements in their ability to manage household finances, access formal banking, and participate in community economic life. The digital literacy enabled through Sashakt Labs has equipped students from underserved schools with the competence to navigate online examinations like CUET, use productivity software, and engage with e-learning platforms. Participants of menstrual hygiene and legal awareness sessions have reported significant behavioral changes, such as improved personal hygiene, increased school attendance, and greater use of legal aid resources.



The long-term impact of these interventions is reflected in shifts at both the household and community levels. The livelihoods enabled by these programs have contributed to breaking cycles of intergenerational poverty. Women who were previously restricted to unpaid domestic roles have emerged as economically active members of their families. Adolescent girls who may have otherwise dropped out due to financial or cultural pressures are now equipped with both confidence and means to pursue higher education or vocational training. The digital and financial inclusion achieved through these programs has narrowed the gap in access between slum communities and urban mainstream populations.



In essence, these interventions have not only equipped individuals with skills but have created pathways toward self-sufficiency, dignity, and social mobility. Geographically, Ladli Foundation's reach is equally impressive. While its core activities are concentrated in Delhi, the livelihood initiatives extend across 17 states and 30+ districts, engaging over 1,350 village slum clusters. The demographic focus remains intersectional, targeting women, adolescent girls and boys, and marginalized men affected by systemic exclusion or crisis events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This expansive reach ensures that the programs are scalable and adaptable to different socio-cultural contexts across urban and rural India.



## 6.1.Objectives of the impact assessment

- To measure the overall impact of the project interventions on targeted beneficiaries, including improvements in socio-economic conditions, skill acquisition, and behavioral change.
- To assess the long-term sustainability of the project model and its potential for scalability and replication across similar demographic and geographic contexts, ensuring continued benefits beyond the project lifecycle.
- To evaluate the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and outcomes, aligning with predefined indicators and benchmarks to determine effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance.

## 6.2 Activities and Interventions Conducted

The livelihood intervention implemented by Ladli Foundation Trust was strategically designed to address the multifaceted challenges faced by women and youth from underprivileged backgrounds. The program blended vocational training, life skills education, and community mobilisation to empower participants with not only employable skills but also the confidence and resilience necessary to sustain dignified livelihoods. The interventions were grounded in grassroots realities and structured through innovative and participatory methods to ensure long-term impact. The following sections elaborate the core activities, delivery methods, and stakeholder engagements involved in the program.

### 6.2.1 Vocational Training Sessions

The foundation of the program rested on comprehensive vocational training modules aimed at enhancing the employability of beneficiaries in the current job market. A total of 51 structured sessions were conducted in two key domains: Advanced Computer Training and Spoken English Communication. These sessions were held at the Institute for Advanced Computing and Training (IACT), a dedicated partner institution with robust digital infrastructure and trained instructors.

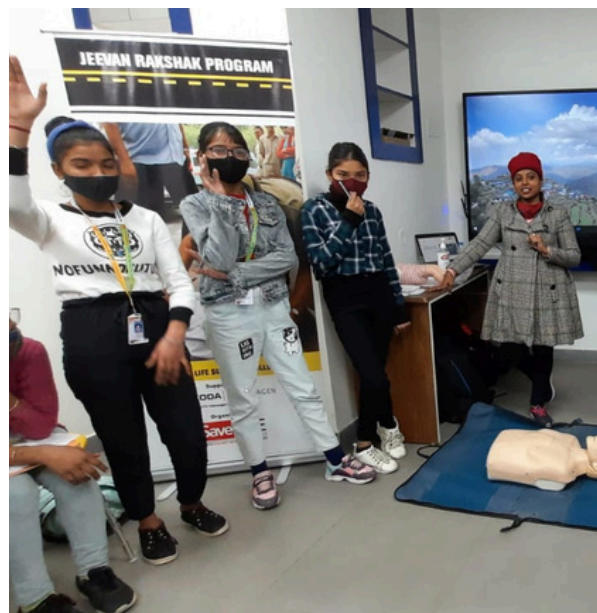


The Advanced Computer Training curriculum focused on equipping participants with foundational and intermediate-level digital competencies. Many of the beneficiaries were first-generation learners with little to no prior exposure to technology. Therefore, the training began with basics such as computer operations, typing skills, and use of essential software including Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. It also included components on internet usage, email writing, and digital safety, aligning the training with real-world work environments.

Parallel to the digital skills component, the Spoken English Communication training was designed to help participants overcome linguistic barriers that often hinder access to formal employment. The training adopted practical modules focusing on pronunciation, vocabulary development, sentence structuring, and conversational fluency. Additionally, professional communication skills such as telephonic etiquette, interview preparation, and workplace dialogue were integrated to ensure that beneficiaries could confidently interact in both customer service and office-based roles. This holistic focus on both hard and soft skills reflected the program's commitment to real-world applicability and participant readiness.

### 6.2.2 Life Skill Education Workshops

Recognising that employability is not solely determined by technical skills, the program incorporated a critical life skills education component. Four thematic workshops were delivered based on the WHO Life Skills Education framework, which is globally recognised for promoting psychosocial competence in adolescents and young adults. These workshops addressed the often-overlooked emotional and behavioural aspects of professional development and personal growth. This was particularly crucial for women who had faced social isolation or domestic constraints.



The second theme revolved around decision-making and problem-solving, where participants were presented with situational dilemmas and encouraged to critically assess possible solutions, thereby developing cognitive resilience and ethical reasoning. Another key component was emotional regulation and stress management. Through storytelling, role-play, and guided reflection, the sessions helped participants recognise their emotional responses and learn strategies to manage anxiety, pressure, and conflict. Finally, self-awareness and goal-setting exercises enabled the participants to reflect on their values, strengths, and future aspirations. These life skills workshops were not merely supplementary but central to building a holistic foundation for sustainable livelihood transitions.

### 6.2.3. 'Jeevan Rakshak' First Aid Training

In an innovative expansion of the livelihood framework, the program included a module titled 'Jeevan Rakshak,' which focused on first aid training. This component introduced participants to essential life-saving techniques, including Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), bleeding control, fracture management, and handling of common medical emergencies.

The sessions were practical and hands-on, delivered by certified trainers and health professionals. For many participants, this was their first exposure to health-based skills, and it contributed significantly to their sense of capability and community responsibility. In addition to building personal safety awareness, the training also opened potential avenues for employment in caregiving, community health work, and school safety programs. The Jeevan Rakshak module thus served as both an empowerment tool and a community preparedness initiative, reinforcing the program's commitment to integrated, multidimensional skill-building.



### 6.2.4. Capacity Building and Career Readiness

To ensure a holistic transition into economic independence, the program integrated supplementary sessions focused on essential workplace and life skills. Training in workplace etiquette introduced participants to professional norms such as punctuality, appropriate communication, grooming, and behaviour expected in formal work environments. These sessions were particularly valuable for first-time job seekers unfamiliar with organisational culture. Additionally, workshops on personal goal setting helped participants identify their aspirations and break them into actionable steps, fostering a sense of direction and motivation.



Financial literacy training was also a key component, covering topics such as budgeting, saving, and using digital financial tools. This enabled participants, especially women with limited prior exposure to formal banking systems, to manage their finances confidently and independently. Together, these sessions complemented vocational training by equipping beneficiaries with the practical skills and mindset needed to sustain employment, make informed decisions, and achieve long-term self-reliance.



### 6.3. Innovative Methods and Tools Used

To ensure relevance, accessibility, and sustainability of learning, the program embedded a range of innovative pedagogical tools and delivery strategies. These were tailored specifically to the needs and contexts of first-time learners, particularly women from disadvantaged backgrounds who often experience exclusion from formal education systems.

#### 6.3.1 Technology-Enabled Learning

Smart classroom infrastructure played a pivotal role in elevating the quality and engagement level of training sessions. Equipped with projectors, audio-visual content, and interactive boards, the classrooms created an immersive learning environment where abstract concepts could be visualised, repeated, and internalised. These tools were particularly beneficial for learners who struggled with textbook-based instruction.



Furthermore, to account for connectivity challenges in remote areas, the program employed hybrid formats combining offline materials with occasional online modules. Digital devices such as tablets and pre-loaded content ensured that learning could continue outside the classroom. This blended approach helped bridge the digital divide and brought learners closer to the technological demands of the modern economy.

#### 6.3.2 Activity-Based and Scenario Learning

Moving away from rote learning, the program adopted an activity-based learning framework grounded in constructivist pedagogies. Exercises such as “Think It,” where participants were encouraged to brainstorm real-life problems, fostered creativity and critical thinking. Similarly, “Worst-Case Scenario” drills taught participants how to assess risks and devise proactive responses in challenging situations.



Team-based simulations, including role-plays and group problem-solving activities, built interpersonal trust and leadership among the learners. These experiential learning methods allowed for organic development of decision-making and negotiation skills—traits essential in both entrepreneurial ventures and formal employment settings.



### 6.3.3 Peer-Led Facilitation Model

One of the most impactful elements of the program was the incorporation of a peer-led facilitation model. Select participants, identified for their aptitude and leadership potential, were given additional training to serve as peer educators and facilitators within their groups. This approach helped decentralise the learning process and reinforced internal community leadership.



Peer facilitators acted as bridges between the formal training framework and the local socio-cultural contexts of learners. Their involvement ensured greater participant retention, motivation, and trust, particularly among women who were hesitant to engage with external trainers. This model also laid the foundation for a sustainable ecosystem where trained participants could continue to support their communities beyond the program duration.

### 6.3.4. Continuous Assessment and Adaptive Feedback

To monitor progress and adapt the curriculum to emerging needs, the program implemented a continuous assessment mechanism. Monthly evaluations, reflective feedback sessions, and peer reviews provided both quantitative and qualitative insights into participant learning. Trainers used this data to refine content, pace, and teaching strategies in real time. This dynamic approach ensured that the program remained learner-centric and responsive to the diverse educational backgrounds and learning speeds of participants.



It also helped identify gaps early, allowing for timely interventions such as remedial sessions or additional mentorship support.

## 6.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Effective delivery of the program was made possible through robust stakeholder engagement at institutional, local governance, and community levels. This multi-tiered collaboration ensured that the program was not only technically sound but also socially accepted and operationally feasible.



## 6.5. CSR and Training Partnerships

The program was supported by the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), TARC, and ONGC, which provided crucial funding under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework. NIXI's involvement lent credibility and scale to the intervention. Technical and instructional support was provided by the Institute for Advanced Computing and Training (IACT), which tailored the content to reflect current industry standards and employer expectations. This partnership model exemplified how collaboration between civil society and CSR actors can yield high-impact, scalable livelihood solutions.



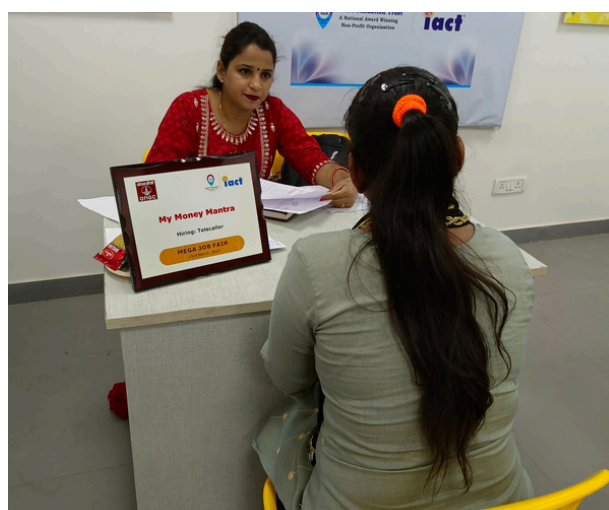
### 6.5.1 Local Governance and Community Institutions

Local government entities such as municipal corporations, ward councillors, and Panchayati Raj Institutions were instrumental in facilitating venue allocation, community mobilisation, and administrative approvals. Their involvement ensured the intervention's legitimacy and created an enabling environment for women's participation. These institutions also helped overcome cultural and logistical barriers, such as securing safe spaces for training and mediating with families resistant to women's public engagement.



### 6.5.2 Capacity Building and Career Readiness

Beyond technical and communication training, the program integrated modules aimed at preparing participants for real-world workplace environments. These included workshops on grooming, time management, interview etiquette, and organisational behaviour. Financial literacy sessions educated participants about budgeting, savings, and the use of digital financial tools, thereby promoting economic autonomy.





Career planning exercises helped participants envision long-term trajectories and identify concrete steps to achieve professional goals. This comprehensive approach transformed skill development into a pathway for sustainable livelihoods and self-reliance.

### 6.5.3 Self-Help Groups and Educational Institutions

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and local schools played a pivotal role in the identification and mobilisation of beneficiaries. Their social capital helped legitimise the program and ensured deeper reach within communities, especially among married women or school dropouts who might otherwise be excluded. These local institutions not only facilitated enrolment but also contributed to follow-up engagement and reinforcement of learnings, extending the program's impact beyond the classroom.



## 6.6. Volunteer and Community Participation

Community involvement was embedded in every phase of the intervention, from mobilisation to delivery and follow-up. This participatory approach strengthened inclusivity, accountability, and sustainability.

### 6.6.1 Youth Volunteer Mobilisation

Over 50 trained youth volunteers were engaged to assist in community outreach, beneficiary registration, logistical arrangements, and session facilitation. Their grassroots presence and cultural familiarity made them effective mobilisers and role models. Their contributions also nurtured a sense of ownership and civic responsibility among the youth themselves.



### 6.6.2. Alumni as Community Catalysts

Graduates of previous Ladli Foundation programs were reintegrated as mentors and community ambassadors. By sharing their success stories, they inspired new participants and alleviated community apprehensions. Their involvement not only strengthened trust but also ensured a continuity of engagement and peer mentorship.



### 6.6.3. Family and Community Dialogues

A key innovation was the regular engagement of families, especially spouses and elders, in community dialogues. These sessions addressed socio-cultural fears, discussed the benefits of women's participation in livelihood programs, and built collective buy-in. By shifting narratives within the household, the program dismantled patriarchal resistance and enabled women to pursue learning and employment opportunities with familial support. This cultural transformation was as critical as the vocational training itself in achieving long-term success.

This implementation strategy reflects Ladli Foundation's commitment to delivering sustainable impact through grassroots engagement, adaptive delivery models, and ecosystem partnerships. The convergence of digital literacy, life skills, and local leadership has enabled the creation of a replicable and scalable model for empowering marginalised women and girls in India.



## 6.7. Projexct NIXI



The NIXI Project aims to empower 200 underserved girls and women by providing life skills, education, and vocational training to enhance their learning and livelihood opportunities. Focused on slum communities, the initiative offers a months structured program with regular assessments, mentorship, and market linkages. Continuous monitoring, parental engagement, and endline evaluations will help measure impact and ensure sustainable development, economic independence, and social empowerment for the beneficiaries.

### 6.7.1 Life skill education and capacity building workshops

WHO defines life skills as psychosocial and interpersonal 'abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life'.

Life Skill Education will empower them, by enabling self-efficacy, decision- making power, reach physical and emotional maturity. It prepares an individual to be a responsible citizen, and helps in inculcating the good practices in the family, and with the friends as well. Life skill education aids in fostering the communication, decision-making, critical thinking skills necessary for young people's healthy growth and the mitigation of risk-taking behaviours.

The three components of Life skill education as described by WHO are Communication skills, Decision – making skills and self-management skills which is also necessary for their healthy growth and the mitigation of risk-taking behaviours.

### 6.7.2. Brief of Project Activities NIXI

The students were engaged in the following training and workshop sessions

S.no.	VOCATIONAL TRAINING/WORKSHOPS	Description
1	Vocational Training	Advance COMPUTER TRAINING
2	Vocational Training	SPOKEN ENGLISH
3	WORKSHOP 1	Life skill education training on Communication Skills, Leadership
4	WORKSHOP 2	Health advocacy on Cervical cancer and balanced diet
5	WORKSHOP 3	Life skill training on critical thinking skill
6	WORKSHOP 4	The Jeevan Rakshak Training
8	Job Portal Registration & Application Guidance	Job Linkages & Placement Support

Table -4, Training and Workshop Sessions

### 6.7.3 OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECTS

The Ladli Foundation Trust, in collaboration with the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), has successfully implemented vocational training sessions for all 200 targeted beneficiaries under its livelihood enhancement initiative. The training program is being conducted at the Institute for Advanced Computing and Training (IACT) and comprises comprehensive modules in advanced computer applications and spoken English proficiency. This strategic intervention aims to equip participants with essential digital and communication skills that enhance their employability and align with the demands of the modern workforce.



S.no.	Life skill education and capacity building workshops	Workshop objectives	Workshop content	Creative activities	Outcome
1	Life skill education on communication skills	Developing effective communication skills Developing interpersonal communication Enhancing public speaking skills	The facilitator explained the students about communication skills, its importance, and the 7 cs of communication (concreteness, consideration, correctness, courtesy, conciseness, completeness, and clarity). This was followed by the interactive session to ensure the student's understanding of the topic.	Storytelling activity  Connect the lines	Improved ability to express ideas and opinions clearly and confidently.  Enhanced listening skills and the ability to understand and respond to others effectively.  Enhanced ability to build positive relationships.  Increased confidence in communicating and expressing their views
2	Health advocacy on cervical cancer and balanced diet	To increase awareness regarding balanced diet and healthy foods To increase knowledge on safe and healthy reproductive practices To increase awareness regarding Cervical cancer, HPV vaccination	The workshop focuses on Balanced diet and its importance on health, Cervical cancer as a disease and importance of HPV vaccination for adolescent girls.	Interactive session on health advocacy	Increased awareness regarding balanced diet and healthy foods and inculcate them with the healthy eating habits.  Increased knowledge about safe and healthy reproductive practices and develop sustainable hygiene practices.  Increased knowledge about cancer, cervical cancer, HPV vaccination

S.no.	Life skill education and capacity building workshops	Workshop objectives	Workshop content	Creative activities	Outcome
3	Life skill education on critical thinking skills	To develop the effective critical thinking skills among the adolescent girls and vulnerable women. To empower participants to become more confident and independent thinkers, capable of making informed decisions. To foster a culture of open-mindedness, and intellectual curiosity among the target beneficiaries.	The third workshop aimed at instilling critical thinking skills among the target beneficiaries through interactive sessions. Additionally, all the beneficiaries were provided with the stationary kits as well	Activity I: Read, Think and Decide as a team.  Activity II: See, observe and write  Activity III: Worst case scenario  Activity IV: Think it	Enhanced ability to identify, and analyse, evaluate evidence, and generate effective solutions.  Increased confidence and decision making.  Improved communication in expressing creative ideas clearly and logically and engage in productive discussions.
4	The Jeevan Rakshak training	The primary aim was to equip women and adolescent girls with basic life-saving skills and build their confidence to respond effectively in emergencies such as accidents or disasters.	The 'Jeevan Rakshak training as part of Life skill training was conducted for all the target beneficiaries. They were trained in scene safety, CPR, bleeding control and lifting & moving injured people in an accident or disaster.	Interactive activities such as mock drills, role plays, poster-making, skits, and quizzes were conducted to reinforce learning and promote participation.	Over 90% of participants showed improved understanding of emergency response techniques. The training enhanced their decision-making skills, built confidence, and led to the formation of peer support groups for first-aid awareness at the community level.

Table 5- Overview of the project activities



## 6.8. Punar-Utthan(2021)



A CSR initiative by ONGC, in collaboration with Ladli Foundation and training partner IACT, provided advanced computer skills training and employment opportunities families in Delhi. The program also educated widows and young girls from families that lost their sole breadwinners during the COVID-19 pandemic on critical topics such as women’s legal rights, menstrual hygiene management, and financial literacy. Additionally, an exclusive job fair was organized to ensure sustainable employment.

### 6.8.1 Activities Punar-Utthan

The students were engaged in the following training and workshop sessions

S.No.	VOCATIONAL TRAINING/WORKSHOPS	description
1	Vocational Training	Advanced COMPUTER TRAINING
2	Vocational Training	SPOKEN ENGLISH
3	WORKSHOP 1	Life skill training on Communication Skills
4	WORKSHOP 2	Health advocacy on Cervical cancer and MHM
5	WORKSHOP 3	Life skill training on critical thinking skill
6	WORKSHOP 4	Women’s Legal Rights
7	Job Portal Registration & Application Guidance	Job Linkages & Placement Support

S.No.	VOCATIONAL TRAINING/WORKSHOPS	Description
8	WORKSHOP 5	Financial Literacy
9	WORKSHOP 6	The Jeevan Rakshak Training

Table 6- Activities Punar-Utthan

## 6.8.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

As part of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative by ONGC, in strategic collaboration with the Ladli Foundation Trust and training partner IACT, a comprehensive Livelihood Enhancement Programme was executed to address the critical economic and social vulnerabilities of marginalized populations in Delhi. The program specifically targeted 350 beneficiaries, prioritizing widows and young girls from families that had lost their primary earners during the COVID-19 pandemic, thereby addressing the compounded challenges of grief, poverty, and social exclusion.



The core objective of the initiative was to equip participants with market-relevant skills that would enable them to attain sustainable livelihoods and economic independence. To this end, the program delivered intensive vocational training modules in advanced computer applications, including MS Office, digital communication tools, and basic data handling. Complementing this, a focused curriculum in spoken English proficiency was provided to enhance participants' confidence, employability, and workplace readiness—crucial competencies in today's service-driven and digitally integrated economy.

By bridging the digital divide and addressing skill gaps in underserved communities, the initiative not only empowered participants with technical and soft skills, but also instilled a sense of dignity, resilience, and future-orientation. Through its inclusive design and targeted support for COVID-affected families, the project stands as a replicable model for holistic livelihood development that is responsive to both local realities and broader socio-economic shifts.

S.no.	Life skill education and capacity building workshops	Workshop objectives	Workshop content	Creative activities	Outcome
1	Life skill education on communication skills	Developing effective communication skills Developing interpersonal communication Enhancing public speaking skills	The facilitator explained the students about communication skills, its importance, and the 7 cs of communication (concreteness, consideration, correctness, courtesy, conciseness, completeness, and clarity). This was followed by the interactive session to ensure the student's understanding of the topic.	Storytelling activity  Connect the lines	Improved ability to express ideas and opinions clearly and confidently.  Enhanced listening skills and the ability to understand and respond to others effectively.  Enhanced ability to build positive relationships.  Increased confidence in communicating and expressing their views
2	Women Legal Rights , and MHM Workshop	Raise awareness on women's and children's legal rights. Promote hygienic menstrual practices and break taboos. Build life skills for personal and economic empowerment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundamental rights, Laws on domestic violence, child marriage, education, and protection. and Access to welfare. schemes.</li> </ul> MHM Menstrual biology, Hygiene and safe practices, Myths vs. facts ,and Sustainable menstrual products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal rights role play.</li> <li>Pad-making demo.</li> <li>MHM poster-making.</li> <li>Legal literacy games and group discussions.</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better awareness of legal rights</li> <li>Improved menstrual hygiene and reduced stigma</li> <li>Enhanced confidence and life skills</li> <li>Readiness for education and livelihood opportunities</li> </ul>

3	Life skill education on critical thinking skills, Communication and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop the effective critical thinking skills among the adolescent girls and vulnerable women.</li> <li>To empower participants to become more confident and independent thinkers, capable of making informed decisions.</li> <li>To foster a culture of open-mindedness, and intellectual curiosity among the target beneficiaries.</li> </ul>	The third workshop aimed at instilling critical thinking skills among the target beneficiaries through interactive sessions. Additionally, all the beneficiaries were provided with the stationary kits as well	<p>Activity I: Read, Think and Decide as a team.</p> <p>Activity II: See, observe and write</p> <p>Activity III: Worst case scenario</p> <p>Activity IV: Think it</p>	<p>Enhanced ability to identify, and analyse, evaluate evidence, and generate effective solutions.</p> <p>Increased confidence and decision making.</p> <p>Improved communication in expressing creative ideas clearly and logically and engage in productive discussions.</p>
4	Financial Literacy	The workshop aimed to empower widows and young girls with essential knowledge of personal finance, enabling them to manage their finances independently. It also sought to enhance their understanding of savings, budgeting, banking systems, and government welfare schemes.	Participants were trained on practical financial topics including budgeting, saving habits, use of bank accounts, digital payments (UPI, net banking), understanding interest rates, and awareness of government schemes such as Jan Dhan Yojana, Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, and widow pension schemes.	Engaging activities like role-plays on household budgeting, money management games, group discussions, mock ATM and mobile banking demonstrations, and visual storytelling sessions on the importance of savings were conducted to simplify complex financial concepts.	The workshop enhanced financial awareness among 100+ beneficiaries, helping them open bank accounts, use digital payments, and confidently manage household finances and access welfare schemes.
5	BYJU'S Learning Subscriptions for Students	To enhance academic support and digital learning continuity	Access to BYJU'S e-learning platform covering school curriculum and exam prep	Orientation on digital platform usage, guided learning sessions	Improved learning outcomes, continuity in education for students affected by the pandemic



6	<b>Advanced Computer Training</b>	To provide digital skills for improved employment and productivity	MS Office, internet browsing, email etiquette, data entry	Hands-on computer sessions, digital tasks	Enhanced digital literacy and workplace readiness
7	<b>Spoken English &amp; Communication Skills</b>	To build verbal confidence and communication fluency for workplace success	Spoken English, vocabulary building, situational dialogue practice	Role-plays, group discussions	Improved communication, confidence, and interview preparedness

Table 7- Overview of the project activities

## 6.9. Project Sashakt (2015 - 2024)



The **Sashakt Project** has been empowering marginalized women and girls since **2015** through vocational training at our skill center, an **initiative** by **Ladli Foundation**. We offer advanced computer training, English-speaking courses, and soft skills development to enhance their employability. By equipping them with essential skills, the project helps improve their livelihood opportunities and fosters economic independence.

### 6.9.1. Brief of Project Activities Sashakt

The students were engaged in the following training and workshop sessions

S.No.	VOCATIONAL TRAINING/WORKSHOPS	Description
1	Advanced Computer Training	Livelihood & Digital Empowerment
2	Spoken English & Personality Development	Livelihood & Soft Skills Development
3	Workshop 1	Life Skill Training on Communication Skills and Leadership
4	Workshop 2	Life Skill Training on Critical Thinking Skills
5	Workshop 3	Digital Literacy for Financial Inclusion
6	Creative Activities	Drawing related to the Environment

Table 8- Activities Sashakt

S.no.	Life skill education and capacity building workshops	Workshop objectives	Workshop content	Creative activities	Outcome
1	Advanced Computer Training	To provide digital skills for improved employment and productivity	MS Office, internet browsing, email etiquette, data entry	Hands-on computer sessions, digital tasks	Enhanced digital literacy and workplace readiness
2	Spoken English & Communication Skills	To build verbal confidence and communication fluency for workplace success	Spoken English, vocabulary building, situational dialogue practice	Role-plays, group discussions	Improved communication, confidence, and interview preparedness
3	Soft Skills Development	To strengthen personal and professional competencies	Time management, teamwork, workplace behaviour, CV writing	Mock interviews, peer feedback sessions	Enhanced employability and social adaptability
4	Career Guidance & Personality Development	To help participants identify career pathways and build self-awareness	Career mapping, goal-setting, personal grooming, self-presentation	Vision board creation, self-assessment exercises	Informed career choices and increased self-efficacy

5	Digital Literacy for Financial Inclusion	To enable access to financial tools and promote autonomy in financial decision-making	UPI, mobile banking, online transactions, introduction to government schemes	Simulated transactions, app walkthroughs	Increased participation in formal financial systems
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Table 9- Overview of the project activities



## 6.10. Project Sashakt Lab

Ladli Foundation's seven Sashakt Labs empower marginalized youth with essential digital skills, enhancing their employability and career readiness. These centers offer training in IT literacy, MS Office, online communication, and soft skills—bridging the digital divide and promoting socioeconomic inclusion. By aligning with national skilling initiatives, Sashakt Labs serve as catalysts for building a resilient, tech-enabled, and future-ready workforce.



### 6.10.1 Brief of Project Activities Sashakt Lab

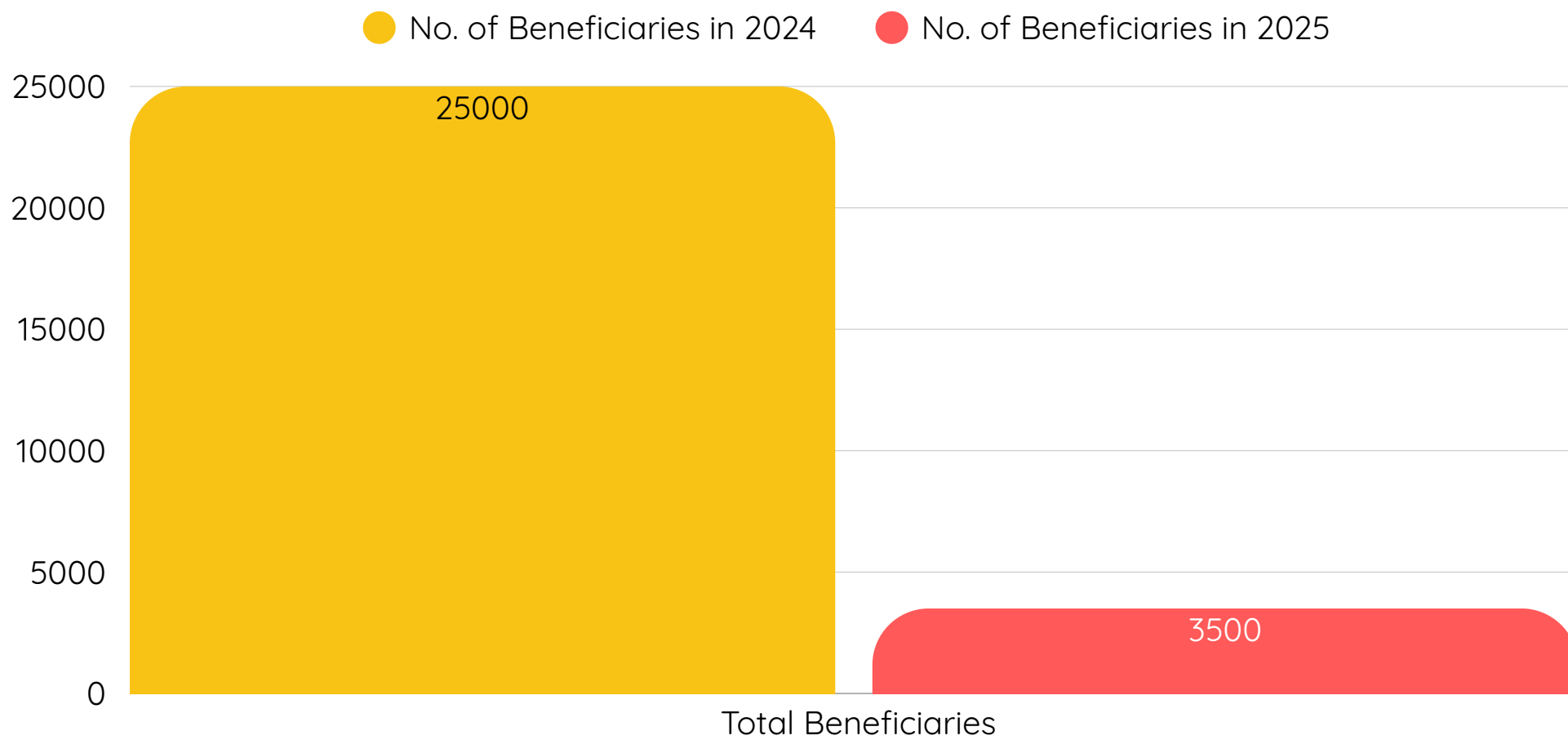
The students were engaged in the following training and workshop sessions

S.No.	VOCATIONAL TRAINING/WORKSHOPS	description
1	Advanced Computer Literacy	Digital Skills & Employability
2	Basic Financial and Digital Literacy	Financial Inclusion & Digital Access
3	Entrepreneurship Orientation Sessions	Enterprise Development

Table 10- VOCATIONAL TRAINING/WORKSHOPS

S.no.	Life skill education and capacity building workshops	Workshop objectives	Workshop content	Creative activities	Outcome
1	Advanced Computer Training	To develop digital proficiency for employability and career advancement	MS Office, typing, internet usage, online forms, data entry	Practical lab sessions, typing drills	Increased digital competency and workplace readiness
2	Entrepreneurship Orientation Sessions	To build entrepreneurial mindset and self-employment readiness among participants.	Basics of entrepreneurship, financial literacy, business planning, and marketing.	Business idea canvas, role plays, group challenges, and vision board creation.	Improved awareness, confidence, and readiness to start micro or home-based enterprises.
3	Digital Awareness for Job Readiness	To prepare students for digital job markets and online application platforms	Job search techniques, resume creation, application portals	Resume building workshops, mock online job applications	Enhanced digital employability and placement preparedness
4	Digital Financial Literacy	To empower students with tools for digital financial independence	UPI, online banking, budgeting apps, introduction to fintech tools	Digital wallet demos, budgeting games	Financial empowerment and increased inclusion in digital economy

Table 11- Overview of Sashakt Lab Activities



"Empowering Through Skills"					
Project Name	Duration	Key Focus Areas	Location	Beneficiaries	Partners (CSR & Training)
NIXI	2023	Computer Skills, Legal Rights, Menstrual Hygiene, Financial Literacy, Employment, COVID-19 Response	Delhi	200	NIXI
Punar-Utthan	2021	Vocational Training, English Speaking, Soft Skills, Employability	Delhi	350	ONGC, IACT
Sashakt	(2015 - 2024)	Vocational Training, English Speaking, Soft Skills, Employability	Delhi	16000	TARC
Sashakt Lab	(2024)	Advanced Computer Labs (8), CUET Prep, Digital Literacy, Career Readiness	Delhi	25000	IACT

Table 14- Overviews of all projects activities





## Chapter -7

# Impact & Outcomes

The livelihood initiatives of the Ladli Foundation Trust represent a systematic and transformative approach to addressing economic vulnerability among marginalized communities, with a particular emphasis on women, adolescent girls, and youth. Through a carefully curated blend of vocational training, digital education, legal awareness, and health-linked behavioral sensitization, the Foundation has delivered multi-dimensional outcomes that go beyond mere numbers. Each initiative from Punar-Utthan to Sashakt ,NIXI and the Sashakt Labs is structured to provide not only immediate skill-building but also to influence long-term socio-economic behavior and resilience.

The Foundation adopts a results-oriented framework to measure the effectiveness of its livelihood programs. In terms of outputs, more than 75,000 individuals have been reached through structured interventions since 2015. Key deliverables include the establishment of eight advanced computer training labs in Delhi government schools, the distribution of over 41,000 stationery kits, and the delivery of 74 workshops on legal rights and gender awareness. The Sashakt initiative alone has trained over 16,000 women and girls in employable digital and soft skills.

Meanwhile, under the post-COVID Punar-Utthan program, families that lost their primary earners were provided targeted training and employment support. These outputs are not just evidence of outreach—they form the foundation for deeper transformation. More importantly, the programs have led to measurable outcomes. A total of 55 percent beneficiaries have secured job placements, a clear indicator of Ladli Foundation's ability to align training with real labor market needs.



Additionally, more than 33,000 women and adolescents have been educated in financial literacy, leading to significant improvements in their ability to manage household finances, access formal banking, and participate in community economic life. The digital literacy enabled through Sashakt Labs has equipped students from underserved schools with the competence to navigate online examinations like CUET, use productivity software, and engage with e-learning platforms. Participants of menstrual hygiene and legal awareness sessions have reported significant behavioral changes, such as improved personal hygiene, increased school attendance, and greater use of legal aid resources.

The long-term impact of these interventions is reflected in shifts at both the household and community levels. The livelihoods enabled by these programs have contributed to breaking cycles of intergenerational poverty. Women who were previously restricted to unpaid domestic roles have emerged as economically active members of their families. Adolescent girls who may have otherwise dropped out due to financial or cultural pressures are now equipped with both confidence and means to pursue higher education or vocational training.

The digital and financial inclusion achieved through these programs has narrowed the gap in access between slum communities and urban mainstream populations. In essence, these interventions have not only equipped individuals with skills but have created pathways toward self-sufficiency, dignity, and social mobility. Geographically, Ladli Foundation's reach is equally impressive. While its core activities are concentrated in Delhi, the livelihood initiatives extend across 12 State and 3 Union territories and 30+ districts, engaging over 1,350 village slum clusters. The demographic focus remains intersectional, targeting women, adolescent girls and boys, and marginalized men affected by systemic exclusion or crisis events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This expansive reach ensures that the programs are scalable and adaptable to different socio-cultural contexts across urban and rural India.

Robust monitoring and evaluation systems ensure the credibility and reliability of these outcomes. Digital tools such as QR-code-based attendance tracking, feedback mechanisms, and pre-post assessments are routinely used to evaluate performance, beneficiary satisfaction, and knowledge gain. Institutional partnerships with training agencies such as IACT and government schools further validate the curriculum and training protocols used in the field.



In aligning itself with the Sustainable Development Goals—particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)—Ladli Foundation’s livelihood work not only meets local needs but also contributes to global development benchmarks.

## 7.1 Quantitative Results

**Table 12- Beneficiary Reach and Expansion**

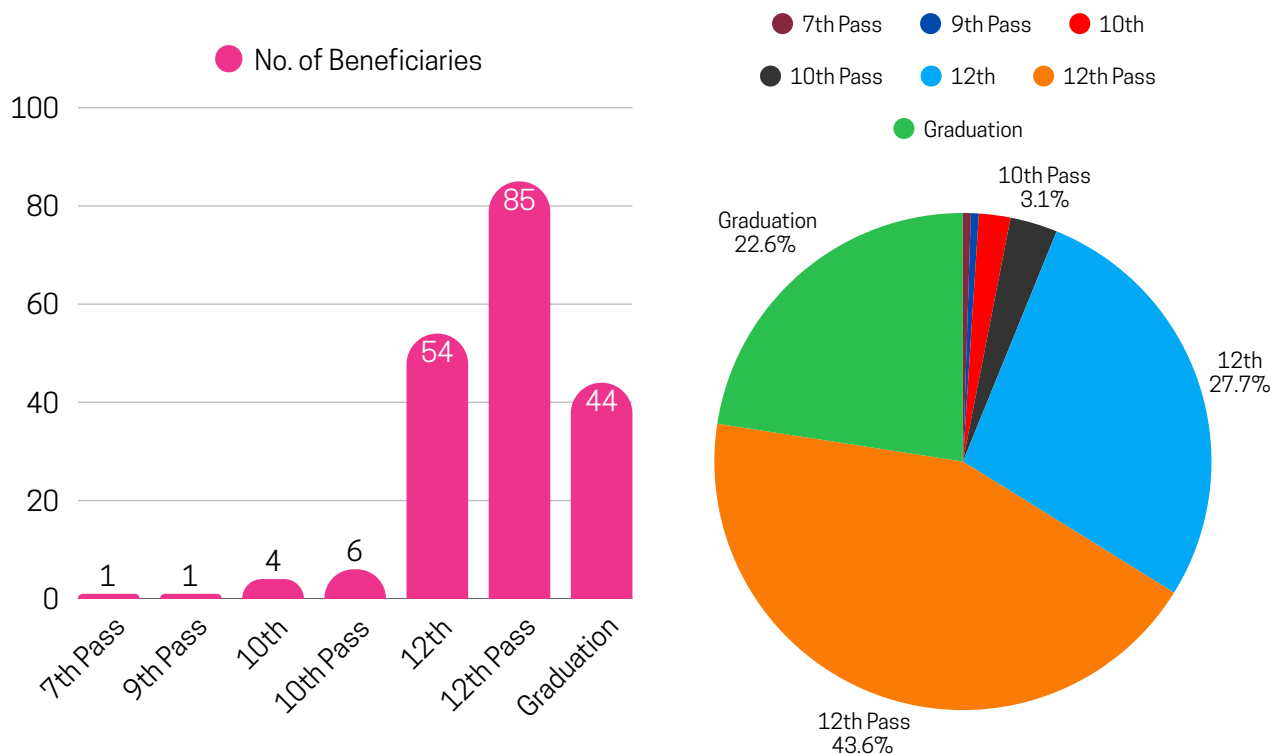
Indicator	Value	Explanation
Total People Reached via Livelihood Programs	41550	Direct beneficiaries trained, placed, or sensitized through structured livelihood programs
Women & Girls in Vocational Training	16,550+	Trained through Sashakt Centres since 2015
Digital Labs Established	7 (in 2024)	Computer labs set up in Delhi Govt. schools under Sashakt Labs initiative
Stationery Kits Distributed through all Thematic	16550	Supporting educational continuity among adolescent girls and boys
Financial Literacy Training Provided by all Thematic	41550	Focused on banking access, budgeting, savings and micro-finance for women and adolescents
Individuals Placed in Employment	110	Employment facilitated via job fairs, industry linkages, and skill-aligned placement support
Legal Awareness Workshops Conducted	29	Addressing legal rights, gender justice, and documentation access for vulnerable populations

## 7.2 Key Findings and Impact of Project NIXI

### Educational status of the project beneficiaries

- All the 200 beneficiaries have varied educational status. Most of them are 12th pass (42.5%); about 22% are graduate and few of them have their qualification as 10th pass or below.

### BENEFICIARY DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO THE EDUCATION STATUS



The figure below illustrates the distribution of beneficiaries according to their education status.

#### 7.2.1. Vocational Training and Skill Education workshops

- With the ability to use a computer, and speak English fluently, they can access information, communicate with others, and develop new skills that can help them succeed in the workplace and in their personal lives.
- The following chart describes the number of workshops and regular vocational training conducted for the adolescent girls and women.





Fig. Number of training and workshop sessions conducted

#### 7.2.2. Participation rate of beneficiaries in the workshop

- The active participation of the students is crucial for the successful interactive sessions and to comprehend their understanding of the topic. It was observed that few of the beneficiaries were not active participant during initial workshop. About 70% active participation was seen among the total participants. However, these percentages have significantly increased in subsequent sessions.

### Participation Rate of the Target beneficiaries

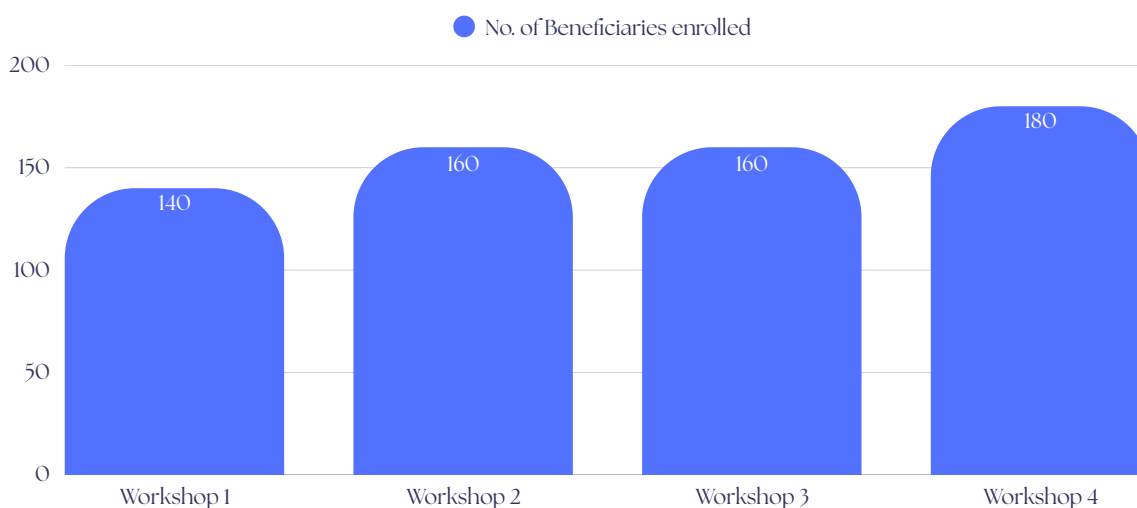


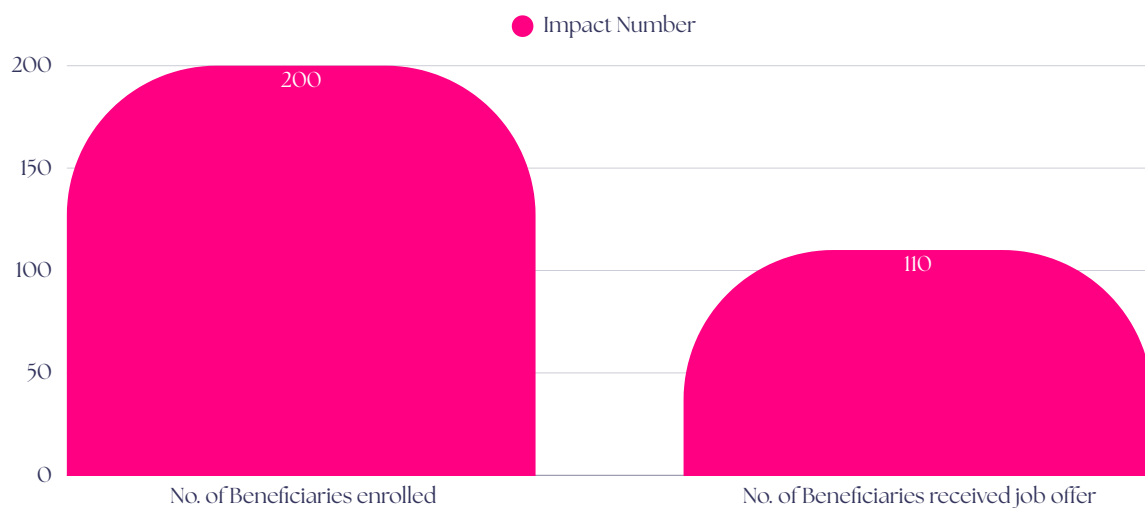
Fig. Participation rate of the target beneficiaries

The feedback received from the beneficiaries illustrates the overall impact of the activities on them.

### 7.2.3. Livelihood opportunity

- The training and the workshops aided in creating livelihood opportunities for the project beneficiaries. About 55 % of the participants have been offered with job opportunities and are successfully placed. The placement drive for other beneficiaries is ended.

## IMPACT OF THE PROJECT



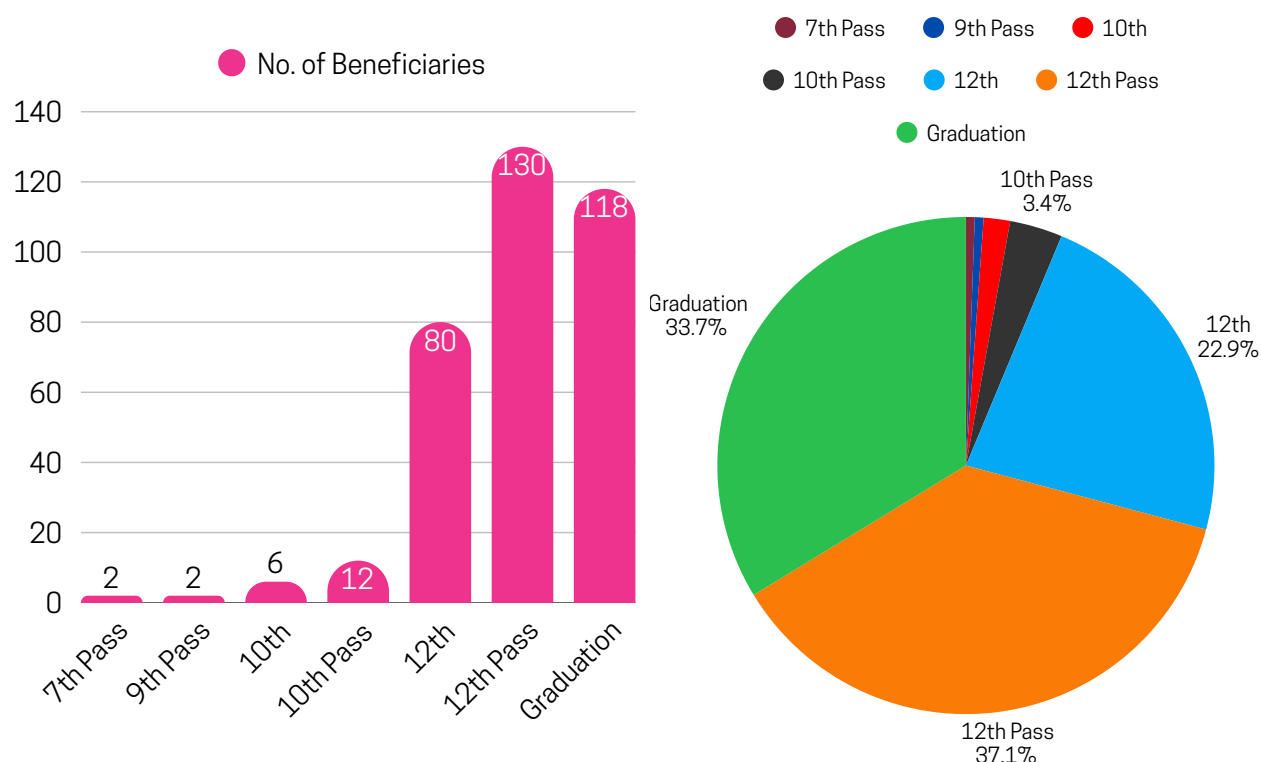
The project has not only aided in providing the livelihood opportunities to these girls and women but have significantly contributed to the nation's economy.

## 7.3. Key Findings and Impact of Project Punnar Utthan

### Educational status of the project beneficiaries

- All the 350 beneficiaries have varied educational status. Most of them are 12th pass (42.5%); about 22% are graduate and few of them have their qualification as 10th pass or below.

### BENEFICIARY DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO THE EDUCATION STATUS



The figure below illustrates the distribution of beneficiaries according to their education status.

#### 7.3.1 Vocational Training and Skill Education workshops

- With the ability to use a computer, and speak English fluently, they can access information, communicate with others, and develop new skills that can help them succeed in the workplace and in their personal lives.
- The following chart describes the number of workshops and regular vocation training conducted for the adolescent girls and women.

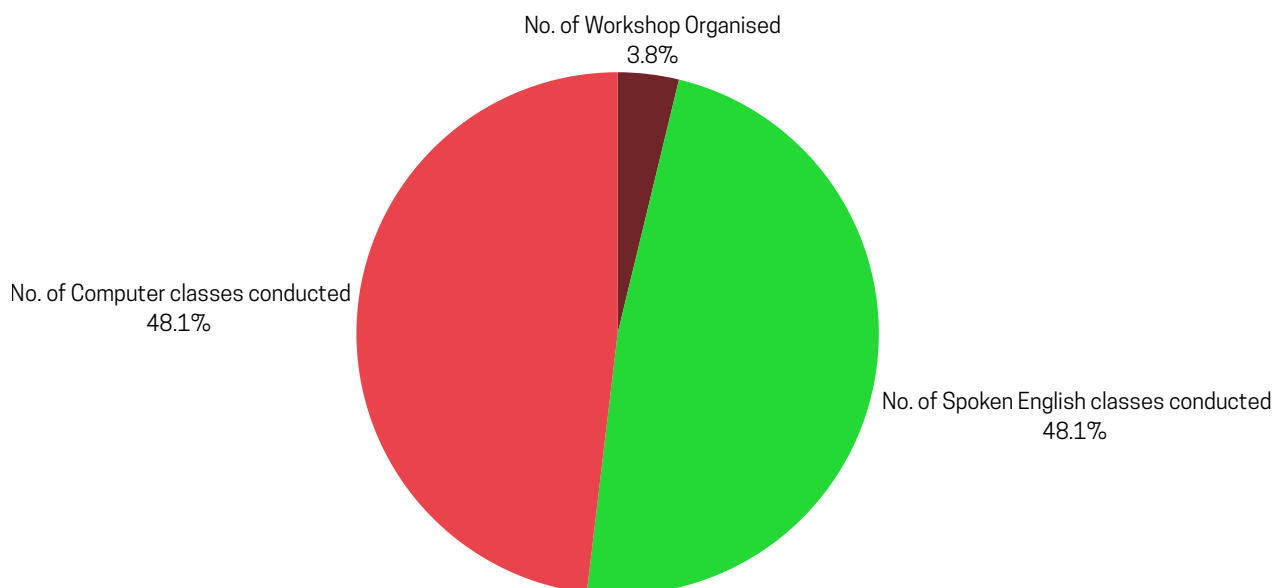


Fig. Number of training and workshop sessions conducted

### 7.3.2 Participation rate of beneficiaries in the workshop

- The active participation of the students is crucial for the successful interactive sessions and to comprehend their understanding of the topic. It was observed that few of the beneficiaries were not active participant during initial workshop. About 70% active participation was seen among the total participants. However, these percentages have significantly increased in subsequent sessions.

## Participation Rate of the Target beneficiaries



Fig. Participation rate of the target beneficiaries

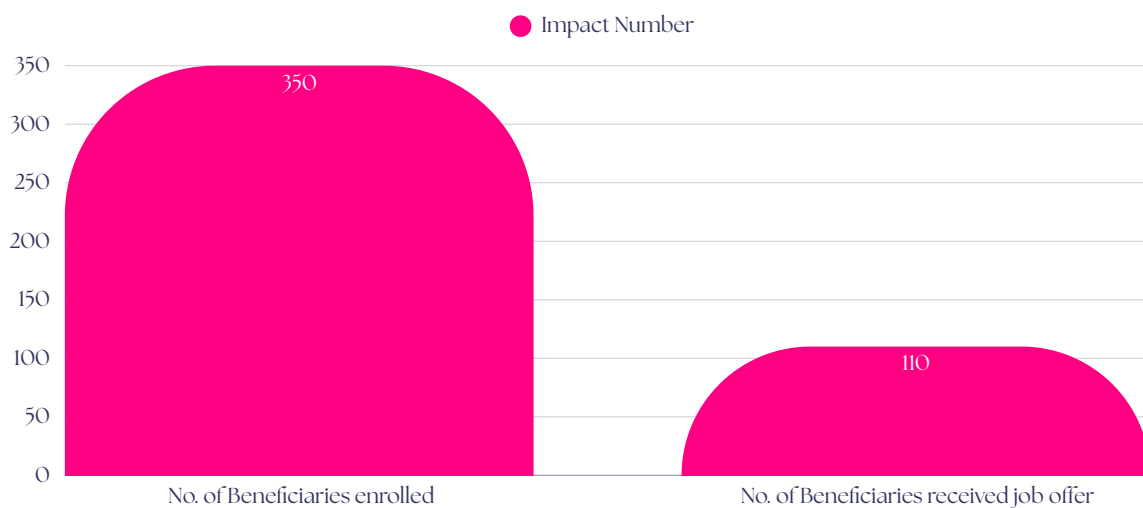
The feedback received from the beneficiaries illustrates the overall impact of the activities on them.



### 7.3.3 Livelihood opportunity

- The training and the workshops aided in creating livelihood opportunities for the project beneficiaries. About 55 % of the participants have been offered with job opportunities and are successfully placed. The placement drive for other beneficiaries is on-going.

## IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

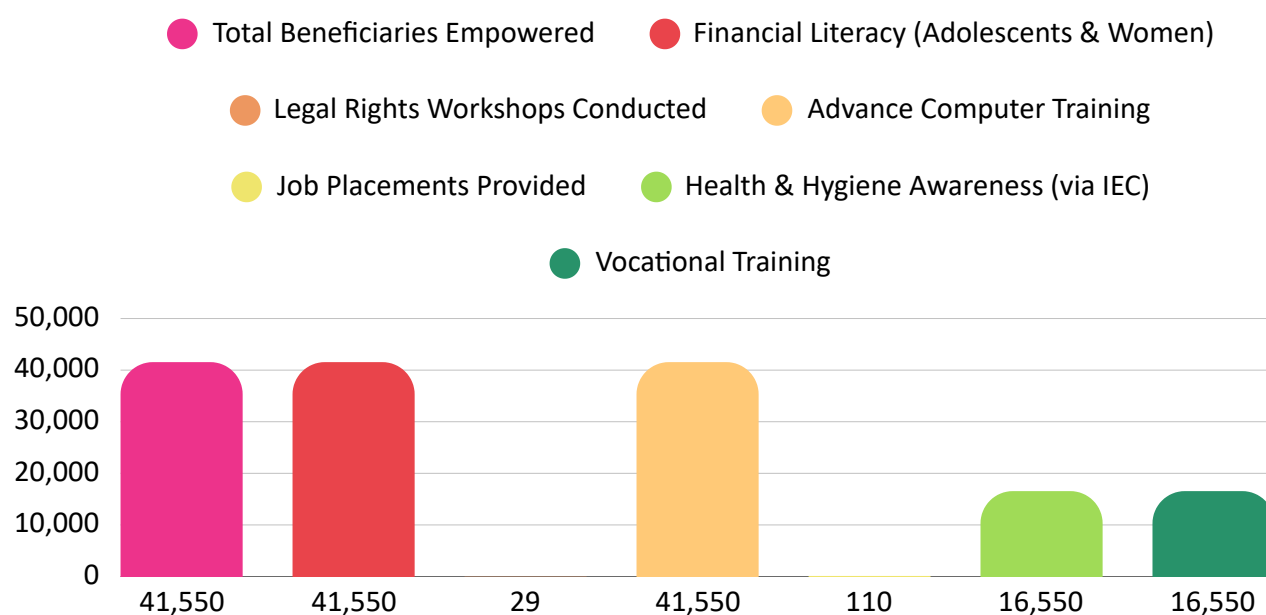


The project has not only aided in providing the livelihood opportunities to these girls and women but have significantly contributed to the nation's economy.

## 7.4. Total outcomes of all the Projects

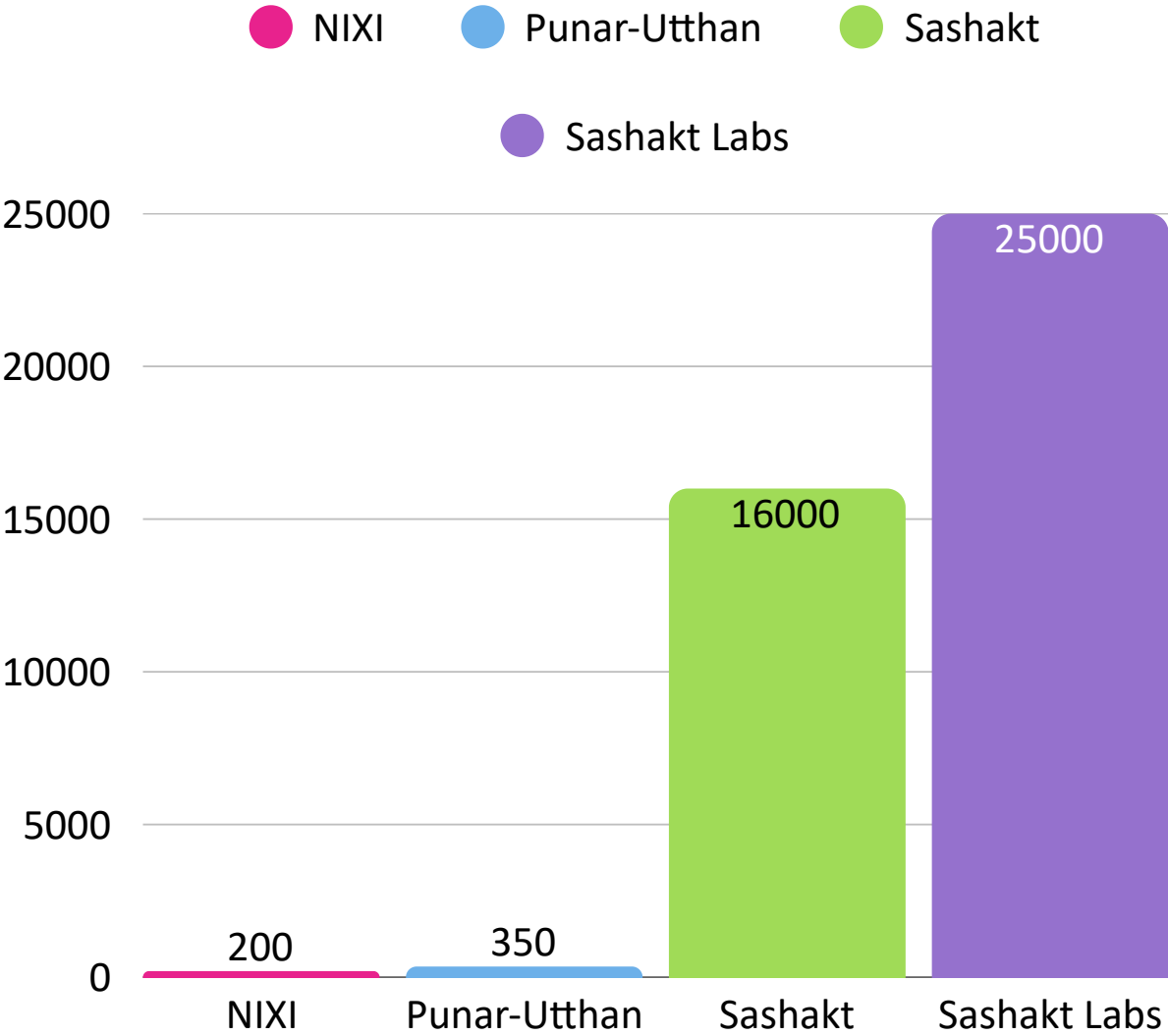
Table 13-Cumulative Impact Overview

Cumulative Impact Overview		
S.No.	Impact Area	Bineficieries
1	Total Beneficiaries Empowered	41550
2	Financial Literacy (Adolescents & Women)	41550
3	Legal Rights Workshops Conducted	29
4	Advance Computer Training	41550
5	Job Placements Provided	110
6	Health & Hygiene Awareness (via IEC)	41550
7	Vocational Training	16550



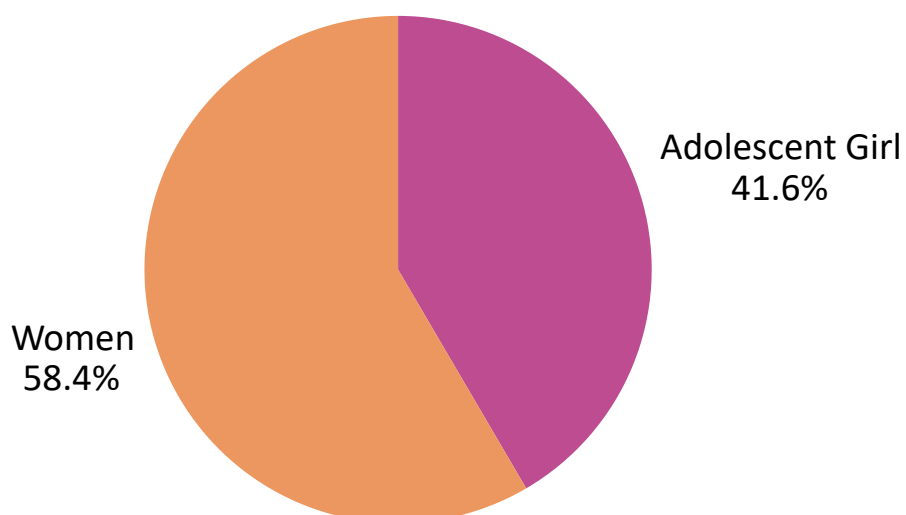
<i>Target Population</i>	
<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>
<i>NIXI</i>	<i>200</i>
<i>Punar-Utthan</i>	<i>350</i>
<i>Sashakt</i>	<i>16000</i>
<i>Sashakt Labs</i>	<i>25000</i>

Table 15- Total Project Beneficiary

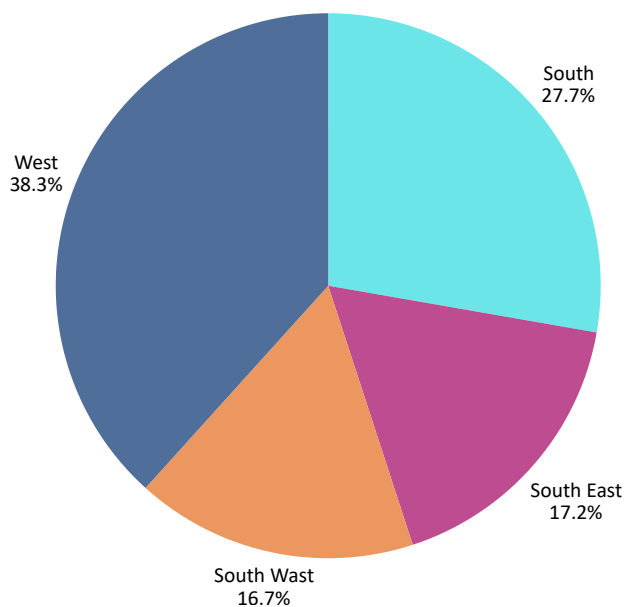


<i>Target Population</i>	
<i>Adolescent Girl</i>	<i>41.57 Percent</i>
<i>Women</i>	<i>58.43 Percent</i>

**Table 16- Target Population**



<b>Geography Covered</b>	
<b>South</b>	<b>27.74 Percent</b>
<b>South East</b>	<b>17.23 Percent</b>
<b>South West</b>	<b>16.71 Percent</b>
<b>West</b>	<b>38.3 Percent</b>



**Table 17- Geography Covered**



## Chapter -8

### Case Studies

#### 8.1. CASE STUDY I: Empowering Through Skill Development

**Beneficiary Name:** Uma

**Age:** 25

**Father's Name:** Mr. Naresh Chandra Gahatyari

**Educational Qualification:** Graduate

**Location:** Delhi

**Family Size:** 8 Members, **Annual Income:** ₹60,000–₹75,000

**Family Background:** Father – Private Sector Employee; Mother – Homemaker

##### 8.1.1. Background

Uma, a 25-year-old graduate residing in Delhi, comes from a modest household of eight members. Despite completing her graduation, Uma faced significant challenges in finding employment due to her limited proficiency in English and a lack of digital literacy. These barriers curtailed her confidence and severely restricted her access to meaningful livelihood opportunities, thereby exacerbating her family's financial vulnerability.

##### 8.1.2. Intervention

- She joined a vocational training program by *Ladli Foundation Trust in collaboration with NIXI , and conducted at IACT Skill Center*. The program focused on digital literacy and English speaking. With encouragement from trainers, Uma overcame her fears and embraced learning.
- Simultaneously, she was introduced to fundamental computer applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Notepad, WordPad, and email usage. Through regular practice, Uma improved her typing speed and grasped core digital competencies.



### 8.1.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Today, Uma is confidently placed at **KFC under Sapphire Foods as a Food Preparation and Cashier Associate**. Her transformation from hesitant graduate to frontline professional highlights the power of skill development in enabling dignified employment.

## 8.2. CASE STUDY II: Bridging the Gap Between Aspiration and Opportunity

Beneficiary Name: Kanchan Ashawl

Age: 21

Educational Qualification: 12th Pass

Family Size: 4 Members, Annual Income: ₹80,000–₹90,000

Family Background: Father – Driver; Mother – Homemaker

Location: Delhi

### 8.2.1. Background

Kanchan Ashawl, a 21 year old adolescent from Delhi, hails from a modest family of four. Her father works as a driver and her mother is a homemaker. While Kanchan had always aspired to pursue higher education and build a career, her ambitions were constrained by a lack of access to skill development resources. Despite completing her 12th grade, she lacked both English communication proficiency and basic digital literacy—two foundational requirements in today's competitive job market.

### 8.2.2. Intervention

Ladli Foundation's digital inclusion program at IACT helped Kanchan develop basic computer knowledge, spoken English fluency, and soft skills needed in a corporate environment. The exposure to group discussions, mock interviews, and real-life work simulations turned her into a confident jobseeker.

- With consistent attendance and commitment, Kanchan immersed herself in the program. She received structured training in English communication—covering grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and practical conversation skills. Trainers encouraged regular speaking and writing practice, enabling her to overcome hesitation and build confidence.
- Simultaneously, she was introduced to basic computer literacy, with a focus on hands-on learning. She became proficient in using Microsoft Word and Excel, skills that are vital in administrative, educational, and entry-level professional roles.

### 8.2.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Now a **Sales Executive at Kotak Mahindra Bank**, Kanchan serves as an example of how timely support and structured learning can turn dreams into achievable milestones, especially for adolescent girls.

### 8.3. CASE STUDY III: Equipping Youth with Skills for a Digital Future

Beneficiary Name: Kashish Baral

Age: 18

Educational Qualification: 12th Pass (Currently pursuing B.A. Hons.)

Location: Gazipur Village, Delhi

Family Size: 4 Members, Annual Income: ₹50,000–₹65,000

Family Background: Father – Private Sector Employee; Mother – Homemaker

#### 8.3.1 Background

Kashish Baral, an ambitious 18-year-old student residing in Gazipur Village, Delhi, lives in a rented home with her parents and younger sister. Despite pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Arts (Hons.), her family continues to face financial challenges, relying solely on her father's income. Like many young women from low-income households, Kashish struggled to find meaningful employment due to a lack of industry-relevant skills and practical work experience.

#### 8.3.2. Intervention

She enrolled in Ladli's digital literacy program supported by ONGC, where she gained hands-on experience with MS Office tools, call handling etiquette, and professional communication. Peer-led sessions further helped her build clarity and direction.

- The training, conducted at a local center, offered a holistic curriculum encompassing computer literacy, English language proficiency, life skills, and communication development.
- Throughout the program, Kashish demonstrated a keen interest in learning and actively participated in all modules. She received structured training in communication and critical thinking and was introduced to basic computer applications including Microsoft Word, Excel, and email communication.
- She also engaged in English language learning—covering grammar, vocabulary, and conversational practice. With consistent mentoring, she gained fluency and grew more comfortable using the language in academic and social contexts.

#### 8.3.2. Outcomes & Impact

- Kashish now works as a **BPO Telecaller at OM Innovations Call Services Pvt. Ltd.** Her journey underlines how foundational skill development can convert potential into performance.

#### 8.4. CASE STUDY IV: Breaking Barriers Through Access to Education

Beneficiary Name: Syama Bai

Age: 19

Educational Qualification: 11th Pass

Location: [Specify Town, India – if available]

Family Size: 4 Members. Annual Income : ₹60,000–₹75,000

Family Background: Father – Daily Wage Labourer; Mother – Domestic Worker

##### 8.4.1 Background

Syama Bai, a bright and determined 16-year-old girl, comes from a financially challenged family of four in a small town in India. Her father works as a daily wage labourer, and her mother supports the family as a domestic worker. Despite the harsh economic constraints, Syama harboured a strong desire to learn computer technology and improve her spoken English skills—two key tools she knew could transform her future. However, like many girls from economically marginalized households, the cost of private training programs placed these opportunities out of reach. The lack of access to affordable and quality education was a major barrier to her aspirations.

##### 8.4.2 Intervention

Through Ladli Foundation's holistic training at IACT, Syama learned computer applications, communication strategies, and customer service skills. She was encouraged to speak up, participate in group tasks, and visualize a better life.

As part of the program, Syama received structured training in:

- Spoken English (with focus on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and conversation).
- Basic computer applications (including Microsoft Office, typing, and digital navigation),
- And life skills such as communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving.
- The program's hands-on approach and dedicated trainers enabled her to attend classes confidently and consistently. She quickly adapted to the learning environment, embraced each session with enthusiasm, and demonstrated rapid improvement.

##### 8.4.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Now employed as a **Sales Associate at Rap Infosystems Pvt. Ltd.**, Syama embodies the belief that age and background need not define your future when education and support are accessible.

## 8.5. CASE STUDY V: From Struggles to Self-Reliance – Pooja's Path to Empowerment

**Beneficiary Name:** Pooja Gupta

**Age:** 28

**Educational Qualification:** 12th Pass (Currently pursuing further education)

**Family Size:** 3 Members, **Annual Income:** ₹60,000

**Family Background:** Husband – Small Shop Owner; Daughter – Dependent

**Location:** Delhi

### 8.5.1 Background

Pooja Gupta, a 28-year-old woman, resides in a rented home with her husband and young daughter. Despite completing her 12th standard education, Pooja was unable to pursue higher studies due to financial constraints and early family responsibilities. Her husband's small shop provided a limited income, and without employable skills, Pooja struggled to contribute economically to her household. The absence of digital literacy and communication skills further narrowed her job prospects, leaving her with few viable options.

### 8.5.2 Intervention

She joined Ladli's training module at IACT, where she improved her typing speed, learned Excel and email usage, and regained fluency in English. Group counseling sessions restored her confidence.

During the training sessions, Pooja participated in multiple modules including:

- Basic computer literacy (Microsoft Word, Excel, email usage)
- Spoken English and grammar
- Life skill education, focusing on personal development, confidence-building, and critical thinking
- With the support and guidance of the trainers, Pooja steadily progressed in her learning journey. Her typing skills improved significantly, and she became comfortable navigating basic computer applications tools that are essential in both formal employment and entrepreneurial work. Additionally, regular spoken English sessions helped her communicate with greater clarity and confidence.

### 8.5.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Currently working in ***Back Office Support and Sales at Reliance Security***, Pooja's story is one of resilience and revival, showing that it's never too late to rebuild a career.

## 8.6. CASE STUDY VI: Empowering Aspirations through Skill and Self-Belief

Beneficiary Name: Sakshi

Age: 22

Educational Qualification: 12th Pass (Currently pursuing B.A. Hons.)

Family Size: 7 Members, Annual Income : ₹100,000

Family Background: Father – Private Sector Employee; Mother – Homemaker

Location: [Backward Area], Delhi

### 8.6.1 Background

Sakshi, a 22-year-old B.A. (Hons.) student, lives in a socioeconomically disadvantaged area of Delhi with her parents, three sisters, and a brother. With her father being the sole breadwinner and the family residing in a small rented house, financial pressures have always loomed large over their daily lives. Despite these hardships, Sakshi remained determined to contribute to her family's well-being and sought to upskill herself in ways that could improve her future employability.

### 8.6.2. Intervention

Through the Ladli Foundation's partnership with ONGC, NIXI, and TARC, Sakshi underwent extensive training in digital skills, business communication, and customer engagement techniques. The inclusive learning environment helped her grow into a confident professional.

Through the Ladli–NIXI program, Sakshi gained access to structured, professionally guided training in:

- Computer literacy – including Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Notepad, and email applications
- Spoken English and communication skills
- Life skills and capacity building workshops focusing on self-awareness, interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and personal development.
- Sakshi attended the sessions with dedication and a deep sense of purpose. She consistently improved her typing speed, learned to format documents, prepare spreadsheets, and give presentations using PowerPoint—skills crucial for administrative and data-centric roles.
- The spoken English component helped her overcome hesitation and boosted her ability to communicate confidently in both professional and social contexts.

### 8.6.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Sakshi is now working as a **Data Entry Operator and Sales Executive at Adecco Pvt. Ltd.**, bridging the gap between aspiration and livelihood with resilience and determination.



## 8.7. CASE STUDY VII: Building a Brighter Future Through Digital and Language Empowerment

**Beneficiary Name:** Nazrine

**Age:** 18

**Educational Qualification:** Pursuing B.A. (Hons.)

**Family Size:** 4 Members, **Annual Income:** ₹80,000

**Family Background:** Father – Auto Driver; Mother – Homemaker

**Location:** Delhi

### 8.7.1. Background

Nazrine, an 18-year-old aspiring student from Delhi, lives in a modest household with her parents and sibling. Her father drives an auto-rickshaw while her mother manages the home. Despite being academically inclined and pursuing a Bachelor's degree (B.A. Hons.), Nazrine lacked fluency in English and familiarity with computer technology—two essential skills in today's job market. This severely limited her employment prospects and ability to support her family's financial needs.

### 8.7.2. Intervention

She joined Ladli's free digital learning and employability training program. The program included English fluency development, CRM software usage, and personality enhancement sessions.

Through regular training sessions, Nazrine received:

- Spoken English instruction focused on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation
- Computer literacy training, including practical lessons on Microsoft Word, Excel, Notepad, WordPad, and email usage.
- Encouragement and mentorship to overcome self-doubt and build her confidence in communication and digital skills.
- The trainers offered a supportive learning environment, guiding her through each step and helping her overcome the fear of making mistakes.

### 8.7.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Today, Nazrine works as a **BPO Telecaller at MY Money Mantra**, showing how structured digital skilling can uplift families and ignite new aspirations in young women.

## 8.8. CASE STUDY VIII: Digital Empowerment for an Aspiring Technologist

Beneficiary Name: Aanchal

Age: 18

Educational Qualification: Pursuing B.C.A. (Bachelor of Computer Applications)

Family Size: 5 Members, Annual Income: ₹75,000

Family Background: Father – Private Sector Employee; Mother – Homemaker

Location: [Backward Area], Delhi

### 8.8.1 Background

Aanchal, an ambitious 18-year-old student pursuing her Bachelor's degree in Computer Applications (B.C.A.), resides in a socio-economically backward locality in Delhi with her family of five. Her father is the sole earning member, supporting the family through a modest private sector job. The family lives in a small rented home, facing financial constraints that made it difficult for Aanchal to afford supplementary training—particularly in areas that would strengthen her technical and professional readiness. Driven by a desire to support her family and build a career in technology, Aanchal long aspired to gain hands-on digital skills. However, the high cost of quality training courses stood in her way—until she discovered an opportunity through a community-based initiative.

### 8.8.2. Intervention

She joined Ladli Foundation's digital empowerment program, where she gained advanced computer knowledge, communication training, and real-world workplace readiness.

As part of the initiative, Aanchal began attending

- Regular computer training sessions, where she learned Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Notepad, and email communication.
- Spoken English classes, aimed at improving fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and confidence
- Life skills and capacity-building workshops, including personal development, time management, and workplace readiness.

Through consistent participation, she gained both technical know-how and soft skills essential for future professional environments.

### 8.8.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Aanchal now works as a **Sales Executive at Rap Infosystems Pvt. Ltd.**, taking her first steps in the tech world and inspiring other students to dream big.

## 8.9. CASE STUDY IX: Strengthening Career Readiness Through Skill Empowerment

Beneficiary Name: Sonal

Age: 19

Educational Qualification: Pursuing B.Com (Hons.)

Family Size: 5 Members, Annual Income : ₹65,000–₹75,000

Family Background: Father – Private Sector Driver; Mother – Homemaker

Location: [Delhi or specific area if known]

### 8.9.1 Background

Sonal, a 19-year-old undergraduate student enrolled in a Bachelor of Commerce (Hons.) program, lives with her parents and two siblings in a modest household. Her father works as a driver in the private sector, while her mother is a homemaker. Despite having academic aspirations and a strong desire to support her family financially, Sonal lacked practical, market-relevant skills—especially in English communication and computer literacy—both of which are essential for securing employment in today's competitive job market.

### 8.9.2 Intervention

Through the Ladli-NIXI program at IACT, she developed strong computer skills, mastered resume writing, and practiced interviews. This professional grooming changed her outlook completely.

As part of the program, Sonal received:

- English language training, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spoken communication
- Computer literacy modules, covering Microsoft Word, Excel, and digital basics
- Professional development inputs, such as resume building, workplace etiquette, and interpersonal communication.
- Sonal engaged fully in the training sessions, taking initiative to overcome her hesitation and actively participate in speaking and writing exercises. She also practiced regularly on computers, gradually becoming proficient in typing, formatting documents, and preparing spreadsheets.

### 8.9.3 Outcomes & Impact

- She is now working as a **Data Entry Operator at Adecco Pvt. Ltd.**, empowered with both skills and confidence to grow further.

## 8.10. CASE STUDY X: Empowering Dreams – Kirti’s Journey to Self-Reliance

Beneficiary Name: Kirti

Age: 25

Educational Qualification: 12th Pass

Family Size: 5 Members, Annual Income: ₹80,000–₹85,000

Family Background: Husband – Restaurant Worker; Lives in a Rented House

Location: [Specify area – if known]

### 8.10.1 Background

Kirti, a 25-year-old woman with a quiet resolve and big dreams, lives in a rented accommodation with her husband. Her husband works in a restaurant, and the couple struggled to meet their daily expenses. Despite financial hardship, Kirti always aspired to start her own computer training centre, envisioning it as both a livelihood opportunity and a means to empower others in her community. However, the high cost of formal technical courses and lack of access to quality training stood as significant barriers. With limited resources, her dream remained distant—until she found an opportunity through a community-based skill development program.

### 8.10.2 Intervention

Through Ladli Foundation’s training initiative, she was introduced to essential computer tools, entrepreneurship modules, and leadership skills. She also received one-on-one mentoring.

Through this initiative, Kirti received hands-on training in:

- Computer fundamentals and MS Office tools (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Effective communication and soft skills.
- Guidance and mentorship, helping her build confidence and clarity around her goals

The trainers provided consistent encouragement, helping Kirti overcome self-doubt and build her technical competency from the ground up.

### 8.10.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Kirti is now in the process of launching her **own computer training centre**, creating opportunities not just for herself but for her community, embodying the spirit of women-led development.

### 8.11. CASE STUDY XI: Mehak Saxena – Advancing Digital Learning in Government Schools

Name: Mehak Saxena

Age: 17 (Approx.)

Location: Kalyanpuri, Delhi

Institution: Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Kalyanpuri

Class: 12th (A)

#### 8.11.1 Background

Mehak, a student from an under-resourced school, lacked access to digital infrastructure and modern study methods. With the Ladli Foundation's digital lab setup in her school, she learned to use e-learning platforms, create presentations, and conduct online research. Now preparing for competitive exams, Mehak's academic confidence has soared.

#### 8.11.2 Intervention

Through Ladli Foundation's digital empowerment initiative, a fully-equipped smart classroom and computer lab were established in her school with support from the Director of Education. Mehak received structured training in digital literacy, smart classroom tools, PowerPoint presentation design, and online research techniques. Mentorship from trained facilitators helped her develop confidence in navigating e-learning platforms and tech-based study resources.

#### 8.11.3. Outcomes & Impact

- Mehak's academic capabilities improved significantly, and she began mentoring her classmates in digital learning tools. Recognizing her transformation and leadership potential, she was offered a position as a **Digital Learning Facilitator at Adecco Pvt. Ltd.**, where she now helps other students transition to smart education methods. Her story is a shining example of how grassroots digital access can lead to academic empowerment and meaningful employment in the education sector.



## 8.12. CASE STUDY XII: Sheetal – Bridging the Skills Gap for Aspiring Young Women

Name: Sheetal

Age: 19

Location: Laxmi Nagar, Delhi

Educational Qualification: Higher Secondary

### 8.12.1 Background

Hailing from a low-income household in Laxmi Nagar, Sheetal had aspirations for a professional career but lacked access to quality skill development programs. High course fees for computer and English training kept her from acquiring essential skills.

### 8.12.2. Impact

She enrolled in Ladli Foundation's no-cost vocational training initiative. The program equipped her with practical sales techniques, effective communication, and digital fluency.

### 8.12.2. Outcomes & Impact

- Sheetal is now placed at ***Kotak Mahindra Bank as a Sales Executive***, progressing steadily toward financial independence and career growth.



# CHALLENGE

## Chapter -9

### Challenges Faced & Lessons Learned

#### 9. Operational, Social, and Policy-Level Hurdles

The implementation of Ladli Foundation Trust's livelihood programmes Punar-Utthan, Sashakt, and Sashakt Lab has provided a critical lens into the complex socio economic landscape of urban marginalized communities. While these initiatives have collectively empowered over 41,550 individuals, their implementation revealed multi-layered challenges at the operational, social, and institutional levels. Each project provided unique lessons that continue to inform Ladli's adaptive, community-rooted development approach.

##### 9.1 Beneficiary Identification and Data Deficits

In the Punar-Utthan project (2021), launched as a CSR partnership with ONGC, the initial hurdle was identifying eligible families particularly those who had lost their sole breadwinners due to COVID-19. Field teams encountered serious data gaps, as death records and family information were often unavailable or unverified at the community level.

To overcome this, the team collaborated with the Sub-Divisional Magistrate's (SDM) office to access official death registers. This institutional engagement enabled the project to build a more accurate and needs-based beneficiary list, ensuring outreach to the most vulnerable households. The experience underscores the importance of inter-agency data coordination in post-disaster interventions.

##### 9.2 Psychological Trauma and Readiness

Beneficiaries under Punar-Utthan were emotionally fragile—widows and young girls mourning their loss, often suffering from depression or low self-esteem. This presented a significant barrier to initiating technical training. Participants were not mentally ready to engage in classroom-based skilling.

Therefore, the programme team had to integrate a preparatory phase of emotional normalisation, including trust-building, informal counselling, and one-on-one motivational dialogue. This was a critical pivot, reinforcing that livelihood training must be trauma-informed, especially in crisis recovery programmes.

### 9.3 Gender-Based Resistance and Patriarchal Barriers

In the long-standing Sashakt programme (2015–2024), aimed at empowering domestic workers and low-income women through computer training and spoken English, a recurrent challenge was resistance from male family members. Many participants were initially forbidden by husbands or in-laws to attend training sessions, as their mobility was constrained by traditional gender norms. To counter this, the Ladli team conducted extensive family sensitization campaigns, engaging children, parents-in-law, and community elders.

The project leveraged door-to-door mobilisation and peer motivators to create an environment where women could attend skill centres without fear or stigma. This illustrated the need for household-level inclusion in any women-centric livelihood initiative.

### 9.4 Institutional Alignment and Access

In contrast, Sashakt Lab (2024), which operated through 8 advanced skill centres with support from educational institutions, faced relatively fewer hurdles due to formal endorsement from the Directorate of Education. Operating within school ecosystems gave the programme legitimacy, infrastructure access, and smoother administrative processes.

This contrast revealed that government-aligned programmes tend to enjoy greater continuity, stakeholder cooperation, and scalability. It emphasized the strategic importance of policy alignment and public infrastructure in achieving operational efficiency.

### 9.5. What Worked and What Didn't

#### 9.5.1 Programmatic Successes

- **Targeted Emotional Engagement:** In Punar-Utthan, empathy-based communication, storytelling, and human-centric outreach built trust among COVID-affected families, especially those reeling from recent loss.
- **Livelihood Transformation:** In Sashakt, domestic workers were successfully reskilled and transitioned to roles as computer operators and digital support staff, altering their economic trajectories and societal perception.
- **Comprehensive Training Design:** All four programmes—Punar-Utthan, NIXI, Sashakt, and Sashakt Lab—provided an integrated curriculum combining technical skills, spoken English, financial literacy, and legal awareness, contributing to a holistic employability framework.
- **Digital & Financial Empowerment:** Across projects, beneficiaries were sensitized on digital banking, UPI, ATM use, and were encouraged to open individual bank accounts, fostering economic independence and reducing dependency.

#### 9.5.2 Key Gaps and Challenges

- **Lack of Trauma Support at Outset:** Early stages of Punar-Utthan revealed that conventional training models fail without mental health readiness, especially when targeting grief-stricken families.

- **Community Identification Limitations:** During COVID-19, field-based identification in the Punar-Utthan program was hindered by the unavailability of accurate data. Government officials often withheld or lacked updated beneficiary lists, making it difficult to reach the most vulnerable. This exposed a key gap in local data systems and the need for better coordination during crisis response.
- **Persistent Patriarchal Norms:** Despite intensive family engagement, Sashakt struggled with deeply entrenched gender norms in some cases, leading to dropout or non-participation by eligible women.

## 9.6. Adaptations Made On-Ground

The diverse implementation contexts across the four projects required flexible and responsive strategies:

- **Emotional Healing First:** In Punar-Utthan, NIXI, the training sequence was adapted to begin with counselling and informal interaction, establishing emotional safety before introducing advanced digital learning.
- **Family as Stakeholders:** In Sashakt, the team reoriented its mobilisation to include entire families, addressing collective concerns and gradually building acceptance of women's mobility and employment.
- **Modular, Contextual Curriculum:** All programmes used a hands-on, project-based approach, especially in Sashakt, Sashakt Lab, where learners engaged with real-time digital tools (e.g., Canva, Trello, Google Workspace), enhancing practical application.
- **Banking and UPI Inclusion:** Recognising the digital divide, special sessions across all projects covered how to open and use a bank account, ATM operation, and UPI applications, with an emphasis on independence from male-controlled finances.

## 9.7. Future Course Corrections and Strategic Recommendations

Based on experiential learnings and implementation insights from initiatives such as Punar-Utthan, NIXI Digital Literacy Program, Sashakt, and Sashakt Lab, the following strategic recommendations are proposed to strengthen future programming, improve sustainability, and enhance impact:

- **Strengthen Beneficiary Identification Systems:** Future interventions must prioritise accurate and real-time identification of beneficiaries, particularly in crisis-affected zones. This can be achieved by forging formal data-sharing partnerships with local health departments, municipal bodies, and social welfare offices. Leveraging existing government databases such as SECC, ration card lists, or PMJAY can reduce redundancy, increase targeting precision, and expedite response timelines during emergencies.
- **Formalise Mental Health Orientation:** A structured, trauma-informed onboarding module should be institutionalised across all future programs, especially those targeting populations impacted by natural disasters, pandemics, displacement, or gender-based violence.

This orientation phase should include psychological first aid, emotional resilience sessions, and safe space protocols to ensure participants are mentally prepared for engagement and learning.

- **Institutionalise Family-Centric Mobilisation:** Rather than limiting outreach to individual beneficiaries, future models should adopt a household-based mobilisation strategy. Engaging family members—particularly male decision-makers in patriarchal or conservative settings—can lead to sustained behavioural shifts and enhanced support for women’s participation. Community counsellors or trained mobilisers should conduct home visits, family dialogues, and collective awareness sessions to build household-level buy-in.
- **Leverage Public Infrastructure:** To scale sustainably, programs should anchor their operations within public schools, panchayat bhawans, community health centers, and government-approved learning hubs. The success of the Sashakt Lab model demonstrates the advantages of institutional infrastructure in terms of accessibility, trust, and legitimacy. Government partnerships also open avenues for policy endorsement, public visibility, and integration into state or central schemes.
- **Develop Post-Training Career Pathways:** A key limitation of short-term training programs is the absence of livelihood continuity. To address this, future projects should design a livelihood transition ecosystem that includes:
  1. Job placement fairs (as implemented in Punar-Utthan)
  2. Formation of alumni groups for continued networking and peer support
  3. Orientation in digital freelancing and gig economy opportunities
  4. Strategic employer linkages with local industries, MSMEs, and skill councils
  5. Access to micro-financing or start-up toolkits for self-employment

This structured exit strategy ensures that skill development leads to actual income generation, rather than remaining an end in itself.





## Chapter 10- Partnership & Collaboration

### 10.1. Strategic Engagement with Government Institutions

At the heart of Ladli Foundation's operational strategy lies an enduring partnership with governmental bodies, both at the national and sub-national levels. These engagements are not merely transactional; they are rooted in a shared commitment to policy convergence, programmatic harmonisation, and outcome-oriented public service delivery.

- Directorate of Education, Government of NCT of Delhi has played a catalytic role in legitimising and integrating Ladli's Sashakt Labs within the formal schooling ecosystem. The endorsement of digital labs in government schools underscores institutional trust and reinforces the program's alignment with the National Education Policy 2020.
- District and Municipal Administrations have been instrumental in the on-ground facilitation of community mobilisation, capacity-building, and beneficiary verification processes. Their administrative support enables seamless implementation and last-mile delivery.
- Collaborations with entities under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Women & Child Development, and Digital India Mission help ensure that Ladli's livelihood initiatives act as accelerators of national flagship schemes, such as PMKVY, Stand-Up India, and Digital Saksharta Abhiyan.

Such institutional linkages not only elevate program credibility but also embed Ladli's interventions within India's broader development architecture.

### 10.2. CSR Donors and Development Financing Partners

Ladli Foundation's livelihood initiatives are strategically co-financed through CSR capital, enabling both innovation and scale. These collaborations transcend funding—they represent shared value creation and co-designed impact pathways.

- ONGC, under its CSR mandate, funded the Punar-Utthan initiative, which targeted socioeconomically displaced families post-pandemic. The program offered comprehensive vocational training and psychosocial support to widowed women and youth, thereby fostering resilience and social mobility.
- National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), a long-standing partner, contributed to bridging the digital divide through capacity-building in internet literacy and safe cyber practices. Their engagement also ensured technological robustness across program sites.
- Several corporate entities and philanthropic foundations, including skill sector councils and donor networks, have co-supported job fairs, legal awareness drives, menstrual hygiene campaigns, and digital infrastructure deployment.

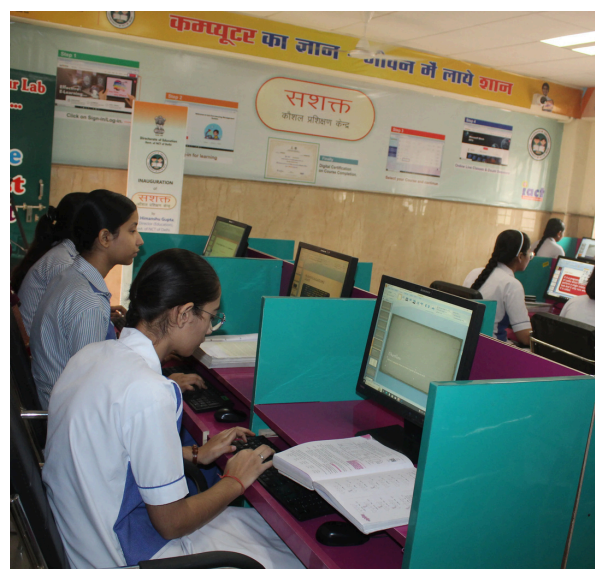
These partnerships reflect Ladli's capacity to attract mission-aligned funders and deploy CSR investments toward demonstrable social return on investment (SROI).

### 10.3. Academic and Technology Collaborations

Recognising the criticality of domain expertise and future-ready curricula, Ladli Foundation has formalised knowledge partnerships with academic and technical institutions that ensure pedagogical rigour and market relevance. Institute for Advanced Computer Technology (IACT) serves as a technical implementation partner, curating training content in MS Office, digital productivity tools, and foundational IT literacy. The institution also facilitates certification, ensuring credibility in job placements.



Inputs from academic consultants, ed-tech advisors, and university faculty help contextualise training modules in line with evolving employer demands, ensuring that learners acquire not just skills, but competencies. Digital innovation firms and software partners have supported the deployment of smart learning systems, learning management platforms, and hybrid learning environments especially critical for remote and low-connectivity geographies. These alliances enhance the Foundation's ability to offer agile, scalable, and sector-aligned learning pathways to underserved communities.



#### **10.4. Multi-Stakeholder Engagement through ISRN**

The Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN) has emerged as a pivotal enabling partner in enhancing Ladli Foundation's outreach, credibility, and engagement with both grassroots implementers and institutional stakeholders.

ISRN, with its expansive network of civil society organizations and public institutions, acts as a catalytic platform for knowledge exchange, capacity building, and convergence across thematic sectors including health, education, skill development, and social inclusion.

Through ISRN:

Ladli Foundation has accessed structured training modules, national consultative platforms, and best practices frameworks that enhance the quality and scalability of program delivery.

The Foundation has participated in joint initiatives focused on preventive healthcare, rural sanitation awareness, and community-based digital literacy, particularly in high-need geographies.

ISRN's facilitation of cross-sectoral partnerships has allowed Ladli to synergise efforts with state health missions, district education departments, and corporate CSR arms on unified intervention goals.

The relationship with ISRN exemplifies Ladli's belief in the power of collective action—bringing together government, civil society, and private sector actors on a common platform to drive systemic impact.



## Chapter 11- Sustainability & Exit Strategy

### 11. Capacity Building of Local Stakeholders

Sustainability is not merely an outcome but a core operating principle for the Ladli Foundation Trust's livelihood initiatives. Recognising that true impact transcends short-term relief, the Foundation adopts a long-term perspective that embeds sustainability into the very fabric of program design and implementation. The Livelihood thematic, aimed at empowering marginalized and vulnerable communities especially adolescent girls and women places a premium on equipping beneficiaries not just with skills, but with institutional networks, agency, and resilience. This chapter delves into the core pillars of the Ladli Foundation's sustainability and exit strategy in its livelihood programs, focusing on capacity building of local stakeholders, institutional linkages, and the strategic vision for scaling or exiting interventions without destabilizing the communities served.

#### 11.1 Empowering Grassroots Leadership

Ladli Foundation understands that sustainability is anchored in the ability of communities to lead their own transformation. Thus, capacity building is not a one-off training exercise but a continual process of leadership development, resource sharing, and participatory learning. The Foundation engages local community members, especially women, as trainers, mobilisers, and coordinators. These individuals serve as peer educators and role models, ensuring contextual relevance and cultural resonance in program delivery. Through structured Training-of-Trainers (ToT) models under programs like Sashakt and Punar-Utthan, Ladli fosters a cadre of community-based facilitators. These facilitators are equipped not only with technical skills ranging from digital literacy to financial management but also with competencies in mentoring, group facilitation, conflict resolution, and community mobilisation.



## **11.2 Skill Diversification and Adaptability**

The livelihood landscape is not static. With the rapid evolution of digital economies, green jobs, and remote work, the Foundation's approach to capacity building includes developing adaptive skills. For example, beyond teaching MS Office or spoken English, training modules emphasize entrepreneurial thinking, problem-solving, market trend analysis, and digital innovation. These skills prepare beneficiaries to remain economically relevant even after the formal end of the intervention.

## **11.3 Institutionalizing Community Participation**

Community ownership is a key determinant of long-term sustainability. In this regard, the Ladli Foundation ensures the formation and strengthening of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Youth Clubs, and Alumni Networks. These forums serve as collective voices for advocacy, peer learning platforms, and support mechanisms for continued development. Through these institutional spaces, local stakeholders gain confidence in resource mobilization, program management, and negotiation with external actors like local governance bodies or private employers.

## **11.4 Institutional Linkages**

### **11.4.1 Collaborations with Government Agencies**

Ladli Foundation aligns its programs with national development frameworks such as the Skill India Mission, Digital India, Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, and National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM). Such alignment not only amplifies impact but ensures that beneficiaries are connected to long-term government schemes and entitlements.

For instance, under Punar-Utthan, beneficiaries were educated about and linked to Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Dhan Yojana, e-Shram portal, and local municipal employment schemes. The Foundation facilitates on-ground camps in coordination with district administration to ensure beneficiaries can access benefits like scholarships, job cards, and credit for self-employment.

### **11.4.2 CSR and Industry Partnerships**

Corporate partnerships have played a pivotal role in institutional strengthening and sustainability. Companies like ONGC, NIXI, and IACT have provided not just funding but also technical infrastructure, subject-matter expertise, and placement linkages. These relationships are not extractive but symbiotic, designed with the objective of creating a pipeline between trained youth and industry needs.

Corporate entities are involved in curriculum co-design, certification validation, and even hosting job fairs. Moreover, many industry partners have absorbed trainees into their workforce, particularly in IT enabled services, retail, and logistics. These partnerships reflect a triple-bottom-line approach: social equity, economic inclusion, and business relevance.



### 11.4.3 Academic and Technological Collaborations

To future-proof its livelihood model, Ladli Foundation has forged collaborations with academic and technical institutions. These linkages ensure that the curriculum is responsive to labor market trends and includes blended learning models using Learning Management Systems (LMS), AI-assisted tools, and interactive simulations. Colleges and ed-tech partners provide digital platforms, faculty mentorship, and certification, which add credibility and scalability to the training modules. This also enables remote delivery and tracking an essential feature for outreach in rural or low-connectivity areas.

## 11.5. Long-Term Vision for Scale-Up or Exit

### 11.5.1 Scalable and Replicable Models

Ladli Foundation has invested in creating modular, adaptable program designs that can be scaled both vertically (depth) and horizontally (breadth). The Sashakt Labs, for instance, are designed as plug-and-play computer labs with ready-to-deploy curricula, allowing replication across urban and semi-urban contexts.

Each pilot project serves as a testbed for scale. Outcome evaluation data—collected through baseline and endline surveys is analyzed to refine content, streamline delivery, and identify replicable best practices. These learnings feed into state-wide or national scale-up strategies supported by CSR or government funding.

### 11.5.2 Digital Infrastructure for Continuity

Digital sustainability is central to Ladli's long-term vision. Beneficiaries are not only trained in ICT tools but also provided continued access to digital content and community learning platforms post-program. These include WhatsApp groups, mobile based LMS, and YouTube-based tutorials curated in local languages.

In regions with infrastructural limitations, hybrid models are employed combining offline group sessions with low-data online content. This ensures knowledge continuity, peer support, and access to job notifications and e-governance services even after physical centers wind down.

### 11.5.3 Peer Model for Sustainable Impact

The incorporation of a peer-led facilitation model played a crucial role in ensuring the program's sustainability. Select participants with leadership potential were trained as peer educators, enabling them to guide others within their communities. This decentralized approach enhanced trust, cultural relevance, and participant retention—particularly among women and marginalised groups.

By bridging formal training with local contexts, peer facilitators fostered ownership and continuity. Even after program completion, they remained active as community leaders, extending the intervention's reach and impact. This model not only reduced dependency on external trainers but also established a self-sustaining ecosystem of support, making it a vital component of the program's exit strategy.

#### 11.5.4 Community-Led Exit Strategy

An effective exit strategy must prioritize the autonomy of the community. Ladli Foundation adopts a graduated exit model, where responsibilities are transferred gradually to community groups and local institutions. This is accomplished in three phases:

- Phase 1: Co-implementation – Local youth and women’s collectives co-lead program delivery alongside Ladli staff.
- Phase 2: Capacity Transition – Extensive training on monitoring, reporting, and resource management is imparted.
- Phase 3: Autonomous Functioning – Community-based organizations operate independently, with Ladli in an advisory capacity.

This model ensures that exit does not equate to abandonment, but rather to empowerment. Graduates of past programs often return as trainers or mentors, strengthening the ecosystem further.

### 11.6. Risk Mitigation and Adaptive Strategy

#### 11.6.1 Risk Analysis

Ladli Foundation proactively identifies risks associated with program continuity, including:

- Donor dependency: Mitigated through diversified funding streams.
- Technology gaps: Addressed via hybrid teaching models.
- Migration of skilled youth: Managed by linking training to local job opportunities and entrepreneurship.

#### 11.6.2 Adaptive Management

The Foundation uses real-time Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) systems to track performance and adapt strategies. Weekly feedback loops, periodic beneficiary reviews, and data dashboards allow program managers to detect slippages, pivot strategies, and document lessons.

## 11.7. Testimonials on Livelihood Empowerment



**Himanshu Gupta,  
Secretary, CBSE**

*"I commend the outstanding efforts of Ladli Foundation through their Sashakt initiative, which has set up 8 computer labs in Delhi government schools to enhance the livelihood and skill development of students. These labs provide crucial digital skills and serve as a valuable resource for students to prepare for the CUET exam. By offering access to technology and skill-building opportunities, Ladli Foundation is empowering students to excel academically and pursue their professional goals."*



**Rajeev Singh, Director,  
Institute for Advanced Computer  
Technology**

*"I am deeply impressed by Ladli Foundation's exceptional work in skill development and livelihood initiatives. Through their focused programs, they have provided underprivileged individuals, especially women and youth, with the training and resources needed to enhance their skills and create sustainable livelihoods. Their approach not only focuses on vocational training but also empowers beneficiaries with the confidence and tools necessary for success in the workforce."*



**Ms. Sudha, Principal, Chhatarpur Government School**

*"We are immensely grateful to Ladli Foundation for setting up a state-of-the-art computer lab in our school. This initiative has opened up new horizons for our students, giving them access to digital learning and enhancing their technical skills. In today's era, computer literacy is not just a skill but a necessity, and this lab ensures our students are prepared for a competitive future."*

## 11.8. Beneficiary Testimonials: Voices of Transformation

- [Mehak Saxena](#)

Student, Class 12-A

Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Kalyanpuri, Delhi

*"I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Ladli Foundation for providing us with this incredible computer lab, which was inaugurated by the Director of Education. With the introduction of digital screens, our learning experience has been truly transformed. Previously, we could only study through textbooks, but now we are creating PowerPoint presentations and engaging in digital learning that prepares us for the modern world. This lab is also helping us prepare for the CUET exam, which is crucial for our college admissions. We are deeply thankful for this initiative that has opened up new possibilities for our future."*

- [Sheetal](#)

Student, Class 12<sup>th</sup>

Govt. Girls Sr. Sec School Chhatarpur, Delhi

*"I want to sincerely thank Ladli Foundation for offering us free computer and spoken English classes—opportunities that are usually very expensive and often out of reach for many girls like me. Beyond these courses, the Foundation also provided soft skills development workshops that have enhanced our communication, teamwork, and leadership abilities. The life skills sessions were particularly impactful, helping us grow personally and professionally. Additionally, the job fairs organized by Ladli Foundation allowed us to explore real career paths. These empowering experiences have truly opened new doors for my future, and I am immensely grateful."*

- [Meenakshi](#)

Student, Class 11<sup>th</sup>

Govt. PDSKV Fatehpur Beri, Delhi

*"Losing my father to COVID-19 was one of the darkest moments of my life—he was our family's only source of income. We were devastated and unsure how to survive. But my life took a turn when I enrolled in Ladli Foundation's Punar-Utthan initiative. Through this program, I received advanced computer training and vocational skills that empowered me to rebuild from scratch. After completing the course, I attended a job fair organized by Ladli Foundation and successfully secured employment. Today, I am the support my family needed. I will forever remain grateful to Ladli Foundation for giving me not just skills, but hope, dignity, and the strength to move forward."*

Name: - [Pooja Kumari](#)

Student , Class - 12<sup>th</sup>

Govt. Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya Dara Gaon, Delhi

*I finished school with dreams of working in an office, but in my community, girls are expected to marry young. My parents believed that spending money on a girl's education was a waste, so I couldn't join any course or learn computer skills. Then I came to know about the Sashakt Initiative by the Ladli Foundation, and everything changed. I got admission, learned multiple skills including an advanced computer course, and was soon placed as a data operator. Now, instead of getting married early, I've started a new journey toward independence.*

Name: [Anjali Verma](#)

Student, Class -8<sup>th</sup>

Govt. Girls Sr. Sec School Vasant Kunj B-1, Delhi

Coming from a marginalized community and studying in a government school, we could never afford expensive coaching or private institutes for advanced skills. This created a big hurdle in pursuing our dreams especially when we had to appear for the CUET exam, which is completely computer-based. Most of us were unfamiliar with basic computer functions, so we ended up wasting time just trying to understand how to use the system during the exam. But everything changed when the Ladli Foundation set up a high-tech computer lab in our school and provided a free CUET mock test series. It felt like someone had given wings to our dreams.

Name: [Radhika](#)

Student , Class - 9<sup>th</sup>

Govt. Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya West Vinod Nagar, Delhi

*After I lost my father to COVID-19, our home fell into silence. He was the only earning member, and everything suddenly stopped my education, my dreams, and my confidence. But when I joined the Punuruthan Initiative by Ladli Foundation, it felt like someone held my hand in the darkest time. I learnt computer skills, communication, and how to face interviews. And today, I am working as a data entry operator in a reputed firm. I can support my mother and younger brother. This is not just a job, this is my second chance at life.*



Name: **Komal Bairwa**

Student , Class - 12<sup>th</sup>

Govt. Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya Trilokpuri, Delhi

*Life after COVID was like a blank page. I didn't know where or how to begin again. Through the Punuruthan Initiative, I was introduced to a new world of opportunities. I learnt MS Office, email writing, personality grooming, and how to face interviews. I even improved my English, At the job fair organized by the Ladli Foundation, I got placed in a customer support role. Today, I feel independent and proud. Thank you for giving wings to girls like me.*

Name - **Priyanka**

Student , Class - 10<sup>th</sup>

Govt.Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya Smalka, Delhi

*husband, I worked as a domestic help for two years. Joining Ladli Foundation's computer center changed my life I completed a 9-month course and got placed as a receptionist through their job fair. From a maid to a professional, I've regained my confidence and self-worth.*

Name: **Farheen Ansari**

Student, Class - 12<sup>th</sup>

Govt.Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya Smalka, Delhi

*COVID snatched my father, and with him, our source of hope. I was not sure if I'd ever be able to continue my studies or do something meaningful in life. But through the Punuruthan Initiative, I gained not only computer training but also the courage to speak up, express myself, and believe in my abilities. At the job fair, I was selected as a receptionist in a healthcare company. Today, my salary supports my siblings' school fees. Ladli Foundation has truly rebuilt my life*



## Chapter 12: Policy Intervention

Ladli Foundation Trust's livelihood interventions are rooted in a robust policy-aligned framework that leverages national, international, and state-level schemes to ensure scalability, sustainability, and structural integration. By anchoring its programs within the broader developmental mandates of the Government of India and global frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1/5/8) — No Poverty, Gender Equality, and Decent Work and Economic Growth — the organization ensures its efforts are not standalone but synergistic with long-term nation-building strategies.

At the core of Ladli's grassroots livelihood programs lies convergence with schemes like the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) and National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), which aim to build sustainable community institutions for the poor and enhance their access to financial services and market linkages. Through mobilization of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), the Foundation empowers women to become economically active, creditworthy, and self-reliant.

Vocational skilling, a cornerstone of Ladli's livelihood model, is closely aligned with national programs such as the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), enabling beneficiaries to receive certified, industry-recognized training. This alignment ensures employability, both in formal and informal sectors, especially for young people categorized as Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET), a critical demographic often left behind in mainstream skilling.

Further, programs like PM-FME (Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises) and MSME policies are used to support micro-entrepreneurs, particularly women-led home-based businesses. Ladli supports the creation of market linkages, branding, and digital presence — in synergy with Digital India and PMGDISHA (Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan) — helping beneficiaries navigate the evolving digital economy using tools like Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and e-commerce platforms.

The Foundation also integrates financial empowerment as a key policy tool. Through its financial literacy workshops, aligned with Jan Dhan Yojana, MUDRA loans, and Stand-Up India, Ladli enables widows, adolescent girls, and female-headed households to access formal financial services. With support from CSR partners like ONGC (Oil and Natural Gas Corporation) and training partner IACT (Institute for Advanced Computer Technology), TARC beneficiaries are also educated on women's legal rights, financial management, and digital transactions to promote long-term economic self-sufficiency.

International frameworks are also embedded into Ladli's approach. The organisation's model aligns with the International Labour Organization (ILO) principles on decent work and social protection and the recommendations of OECD-DAC (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee) on inclusive development. It also contributes to India's international development reporting through mechanisms like ECOSOC (United Nations Economic and Social Council), especially in post-pandemic economic recovery efforts.

Ladli also plays a policy advocacy role, using Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), field surveys, and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data to highlight gaps in the Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR). By aligning its programs with the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) and integrating real-time insights into policy design, the Foundation ensures its work is evidence-based and impact-driven.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The publication of this **Livelihood Impact Report** marks a significant milestone in Ladli Foundation Trust's enduring commitment to advancing equitable and inclusive development for vulnerable and underserved communities across India. We extend our profound appreciation to the **Board of Trustees and Executive Leadership of Ladli Foundation Trust**, whose strategic foresight, institutional integrity, and unwavering commitment to social transformation have guided the design and execution of our livelihood interventions. Their stewardship has been instrumental in ensuring that our work remains both mission-driven and impact-oriented.

We are deeply grateful to our funding and implementation partners, particularly **ONGC, NIXI, TARC**, and other stakeholders, whose catalytic support enabled the deployment of high-impact livelihood programs. Their trust in our vision and alignment with our grassroots approach has enabled sustainable change across diverse geographies. We especially acknowledge **IACT** as our key training partner, along with other stakeholders who played vital roles in implementation and capacity building.

We especially acknowledge **IACT** as our core training partner, along with other collaborators who contributed significantly to implementation and capacity building.

We extend sincere thanks to our **field implementation teams, vocational trainers, and community mobilizers**, whose tireless efforts ensured that each intervention was contextually relevant, culturally sensitive, and logistically sound. Their on-ground leadership and adaptability were vital in translating strategy into meaningful action. A special note of recognition goes to the **Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN)**, whose role as an independent evaluation partner added exceptional value to this report. Their evidence-based insights, rigorous field validation, and adherence to international M&E standards have not only strengthened the credibility of our findings but also provided an analytical foundation for future program enhancement.

We acknowledge the vital role of our **Leadership & Contributors** whose evidence-based insights, rigorous field validation, and data stewardship provided the analytical foundation for this report. Their commitment to transparency, accountability, and learning has ensured that this document reflects both impact and introspection. We remain indebted to the communities and individuals we serve, whose resilience, participation, and lived experiences are at the core of this narrative. Their trust in our organization and openness in sharing their journeys have not only enriched this report but continue to inspire our collective purpose.

Finally, we recognize the contribution of our **researchers, writers, editors, and designers**, whose intellectual diligence and editorial craftsmanship shaped this publication into a document of both substance and clarity. This report is not just a record of achievements—it is a call to action for continued collaboration, deeper investment, and systemic change in pursuit of livelihood equity and social justice.

# Annexures



Ref. No: ISRIN/Ladli/2025/2023  
Date: 5th August 2025

To  
**Mr. Devendra Kumar**  
Founder & Chief Innovation  
Officer (CIO)  
Ladli Foundation Trust  
New Delhi

**Subject: Submission of Impact Evaluation Report – Livelihood Project**

Dear Mr. Devendra Kumar,

Greetings from the Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRIN)!

We are pleased to submit the enclosed Impact Evaluation Report of the livelihood initiative implemented by Ladli Foundation Trust. This report covers the key achievements, learnings, and measurable outcomes of the project aimed at strengthening the socio-economic resilience of rural and marginalized communities.

The evaluation provides a detailed analysis of the program's effectiveness, sustainability, and relevance, based on field interactions, beneficiary feedback, and data collected during the project period. We hope the insights shared in this report will be valuable in shaping future strategies for livelihood enhancement and community development.

We take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and collaboration. We look forward to your valuable feedback and to working together on future impactful initiatives.

Please feel free to contact us for any further information or clarification.

Warm regards,

  
**Santosh Gupta**  
CEO, ISRIN



## Indian Social Responsibility Network

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# Thank You!

## ***Support Our Mission – Make a Difference Today***

*Your generosity helps us continue our work, providing aid, support, and resources to those in need. Every contribution, big or small, brings hope and positive change. Join us in making an impact!*

### **Contact us :**



<https://ladlifoundation.org>



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