Impact Assessment of Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana (RUBY) Program

Ankleshwar and Dahej Districts of Gujarat

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Executive Summary

The Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana (RUBY) is a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative by Rallis India Limited that aims to strengthen foundational learning in Science, Mathematics, and English among students in rural Gujarat. Introduced in 13 schools across two districts, Ankleshwar and Dahej, the program seeks to bridge persistent learning gaps through activity-based learning, phonics-led literacy, and digital numeracy modules. It aligns closely with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes experiential, skill-based, and inclusive learning for all children.

This impact assessment, conducted by NuSocia using the OECD-DAC REECIS framework, evaluates the program's performance across six parameters: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Coherence, and Sustainability. The study covered nine schools and engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including students, teachers, principals, parents, and implementation partners, through mixed-methods research combining interviews, focus group discussions, and quantitative surveys.

Findings reveal that RUBY has significantly improved student engagement, conceptual understanding, and classroom participation. Over 96% of students reported enhanced confidence in science through hands-on experiments, while over 70% observed improved reading and comprehension in English. Teachers noted visible progress in communication, pronunciation, and motivation, with girls showing marked gains in confidence and curiosity, breaking traditional barriers in STEM learning.

The program has also fostered teacher innovation, peer learning, and community recognition, transforming classrooms into more dynamic and participatory learning spaces. However, challenges remain in terms of resource limitations, short session durations, teacher workload, and limited parental involvement, which may constrain long-term sustainability.

Overall, the RUBY program demonstrates strong relevance and short-term effectiveness, contributing meaningfully to improved learning outcomes and student confidence in under-resourced contexts. To ensure lasting impact, future cycles should prioritize structured teacher development, localized resource creation, enhanced parental engagement, and integration with district education systems. With these refinements, RUBY holds the potential to evolve into a scalable and sustainable model of rural education transformation, bridging the gap between access and actual learning for India's next generation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Over the past two decades, India has made remarkable strides in expanding access to education, achieving near-universal enrolment at the elementary level and improving school infrastructure across states. According to the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2024-25, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the upper primary level (Classes 6–8) stands at around 90%, reflecting commendable progress towards universal education. Nationwide initiatives such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Samagra Shiksha, and the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 have strengthened school participation, gender parity, and inclusion. However, the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) remains significantly lower at around 67%[1], implying that many children are either out of school, over-aged for their grade, or face frequent dropouts due to socio-economic pressures.

While access to education has increased, the challenge of learning outcomes remains India's most persistent concern. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024 highlights that despite over a decade of sustained enrolment, foundational skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic remain alarmingly weak. Nearly 50% of children in Grade 5 cannot read a Grade 2-level text, and over 45% struggle to perform basic division problems[2]. This means that students are progressing through the system without mastering essential competencies (such as higher-order thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities), leading to cumulative learning deficits by the time they reach middle school. Such disparities between schooling and learning have prompted the Government of India and education experts to shift focus from 'schooling for all' to 'learning for all.'

Within this national context, Gujarat presents a compelling case of both progress and paradox. The state has historically invested strongly in education infrastructure and teacher training through programs like Gunotsav and Mission Schools of Excellence, contributing to a relatively high literacy rate of 79.31% (Census 2011)[3]. According to ASER 2023, Gujarat ranks among states with near-universal primary enrolment and improved pupil-teacher ratios. The state's emphasis on public-private partnerships and digital learning initiatives, including Gyankunj and e-content platforms, reflects a proactive approach to integrating technology in classrooms.

Yet, learning outcomes continue to lag behind enrolment metrics. The ASER 2024 data reveal that only 46.3% of Class 5 students in Gujarat can read a Class 2-level text, and just 14.3% can solve a basic division problem (three-digit by one-digit). By Class 8, over 69% of students still cannot perform simple division, and three out of four students fail to read text meant for lower grades. These figures underscore the persistence of foundational learning gaps, particularly in rural and socio-economically disadvantaged regions. Gender-based disparities further compound the issue, with female literacy (around 70.73%)

[1] https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2161543

[2] https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/news/story/only-50-class-5-students-can-read-class-2-text-learning-gap-by-class-3-report-2672907-2025-01-31

[3] https://gujaratindia.gov.in/Home/Demography

trailing behind male literacy (over 85%), limiting equal participation in academic and professional pathways[4].

The Bharuch district, home to the industrial hubs of Ankleshwar and Dahej, mirrors these broader patterns. While the district's overall literacy rate of 81.51% is higher than the state average, rural pockets reveal deep divides[5]. In Dahej and surrounding areas, where many families depend on industrial or agricultural labor, children often face inconsistent school attendance, language barriers, and limited parental support for studies. The migratory nature of industrial work further disrupts educational continuity for many households.

Focusing interventions in rural locations like Ankleshwar and Dahej is therefore both strategic and necessary. These areas illustrate the intersection of economic growth and educational inequity, where proximity to industrial growth coexists with fragile learning environments. Targeted programs that strengthen foundational learning, teacher capacity, and community engagement can bridge this divide, ensuring that students in rural Gujarat not only attend school but also acquire the skills, confidence, and curiosity essential for lifelong learning.

1.2 Project Details

The Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana (RUBY) is a flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative of Rallis India Limited that aims at strengthening foundational learning and building academic confidence among students in rural Gujarat. Launched in 2021, the program is being implemented across 13 government schools in Ankleshwar and Dahej, regions that represent a sharp contrast between industrial prosperity and persistent educational inequities.

RUBY was conceptualized to address critical learning gaps in Science, Mathematics, and English, subjects that form the foundation for analytical reasoning, problem-solving, and communication skills but remain underdeveloped in rural and under-resourced classrooms. The program follows an integrated, multi-pronged pedagogy through three targeted interventions:

- **Activity-Based Science Learning (BASSE):** Promoting curiosity and conceptual understanding in science through hands-on experiments and experiential learning.
- **Phonics-Based English Literacy (LeapforWord):** Enhancing reading, writing, and comprehension through bilingual, phonetic instruction tailored to local learning contexts.
- **Foundational Numeracy (First-in-Math):** Introducing digital, game-based learning tools that make arithmetic practice engaging and reinforce logical reasoning skills.

[4] https://gujaratindia.gov.in/Home/Demography
[5] https://www.census2011.co.in/census/district/202-bharuch.html

Beyond improving student outcomes, RUBY places strong emphasis on teacher capacity building, community participation, and curricular alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. These elements collectively ensure that learning improvements are inclusive, participatory, and sustainable.

As of FY 2025, the program has directly benefited over 3,600 students and empowered numerous teachers across 13 government schools in Ankleshwar and Dahej. By combining experiential pedagogy, mentoring, and stakeholder collaboration, RUBY aspires to build a scalable and sustainable model of rural education transformation, one that not only expands access to education but also ensures meaningful learning for every child.

2. Research Methodology

Following the successful implementation of the Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana (RUBY) over three financial years (2021-24), Rallis India Limited commissioned NuSocia, an impact advisory firm, to undertake a comprehensive impact assessment of the program. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the program's effectiveness in enhancing learning outcomes and to derive actionable insights that can inform future program design, replication, and scale-up.

2.1 Objectives

The primary objectives of this impact assessment study were to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the program in enhancing students' learning outcomes, Science, Mathematics, and English across selected schools in Ankleshwar and Dahej.
- Assess the influence of the program on students' confidence levels, classroom participation, and overall motivation toward learning.
- Examine the role and contribution of teachers, parents, and community stakeholders in supporting program implementation.

2.2 Research Framework

The assessment followed the OECD-DAC REECIS framework, examining the project across six key parameters: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Coherence, and Sustainability. Each dimension was explored using both quantitative and qualitative indicators to generate a balanced understanding of the program's performance.

Source: OECD DAC: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)

2.3 Sampling

The study covered nine schools across two districts of Gujarat, Ankleshwar and Dahej, benefiting 3,681 children. Within these schools, a representative sample of students, teachers, principals, parents, and implementation team members was selected using purposive sampling for qualitative inquiry and convenience sampling for quantitative research to ensure diversity in geography, school type, and student demographics.

Stakeholders	Qualitative Research (Purposive Sampling)		Quantitative Research (Convenience Sampling)
	Key Informant Interviews	Focus Group Discussions	Quantitative survey*
Students		6	213
Teachers	8		
Principals	5		
Parents		3	
Implementation Team	3		
Rallis Team			
Total	**16**	**9**	**213**

2.4 Data Collection

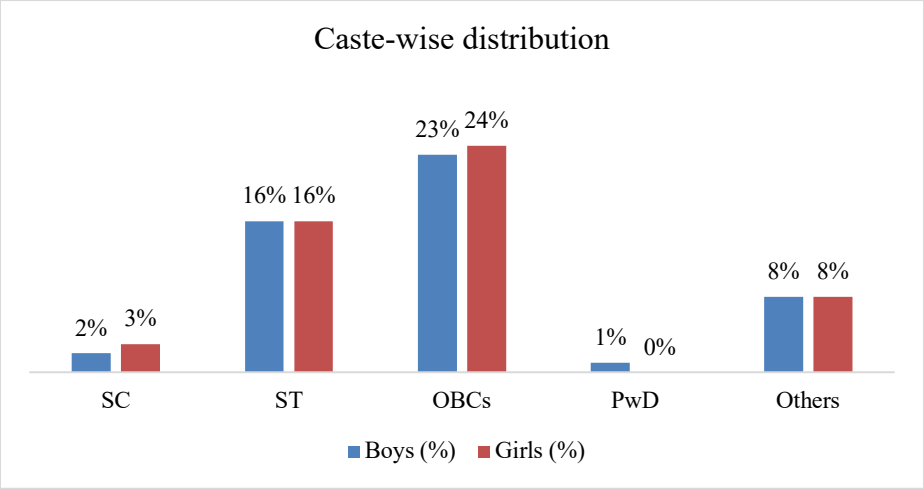
Data collection for this program was carried out using the following methods:

- **Desk Research:** Existing materials, including annual project reports, assessment studies, and documents shared by implementation partners, were reviewed. This was complemented by additional secondary information gathered from credible online sources.
- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** Structured in-depth interviews guided by open-ended questions were conducted with students, teachers, parents, and implementation teams to gain a nuanced understanding of the project's design, effectiveness, and implementation challenges.
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Beneficiaries were selected using convenience sampling to participate in discussions. These sessions focused on exploring their experiences, perceptions of project objectives, and the overall impact on their lives.

3. Findings

The Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana (RUBY) program's core objective was to enhance the academic abilities, conceptual grasp, and learning enthusiasm among students in the Ankleshwar and Dahej districts of Gujarat. It focuses on foundational learning in Science, Math, and English through activity-based and phonics-led approaches. The quantitative data gathered over the project tenure reveal substantive shifts in student learning metrics, indicating widespread gains across the 13 schools involved (5 in Ankleshwar and 8 in Dahej).

The project benefited 3,681 students, 49% of whom were boys and 51% were girls. The students mainly belong to underprivileged sections of society where parents are engaged in farming or work as laborers and employees in the nearby GIDC industrial area. In most cases, mothers handle household responsibilities such as cooking, childcare, cattle care, and sometimes help in the fields. The young people mostly work in chemical and pharmaceutical factories in the industrial area.



Graph 1: Caste wise Bifurcation

The project targeted students from Standard 1st to 12th, with a major focus on early and middle education. Many children in our school are from families with poor economic conditions, and their parents are unable to focus on their studies. Therefore, children often find it difficult to learn subjects like English and Science because the language is new, they lack practice, and there is no reading–writing environment at home. There is also a shortage of teachers and a heavy administrative workload. Hence, it was necessary to join programs that motivate students to learn and maintain the quality of education.

"*The school caters to children from financially poor and migrant families, where both parents often work as factory laborers or daily wage earners. Children lacked strong academic foundations, especially in English, Science, and Math. Many students were not even confident with the alphabet earlier. Limited resources, lack of experiment books, and poor exposure in these subjects made it difficult to bring improvement without additional intervention.*"

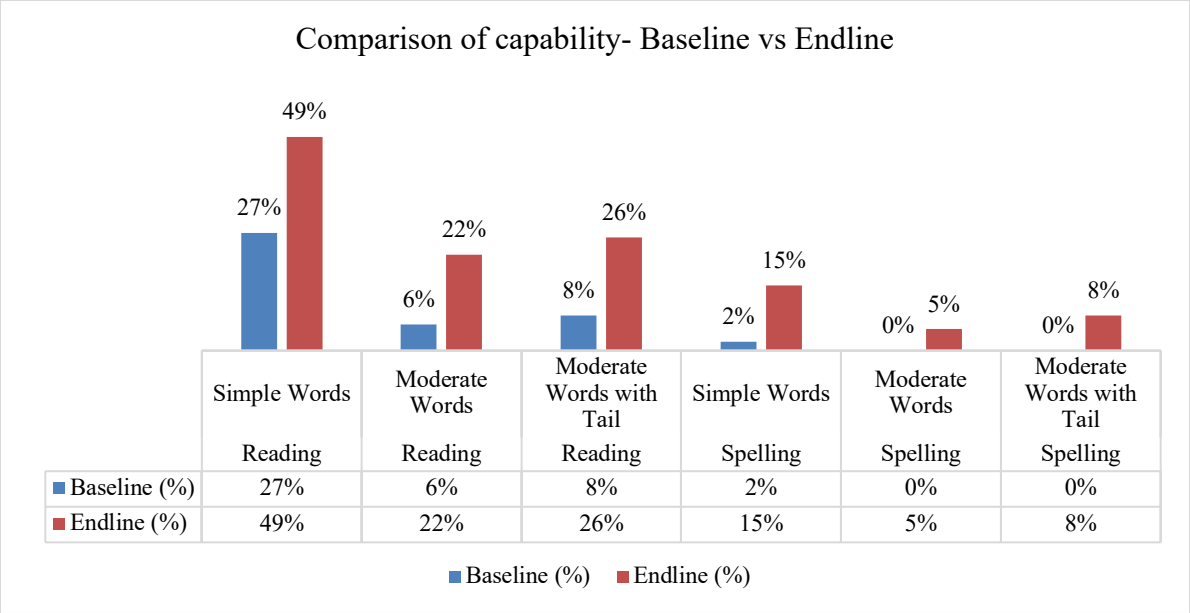
3.1 Enhanced Learning Outcomes and Conceptual Understanding

Analysis of the student survey undertaken by Rallis shows that out of 3,681 students across 13 schools, 42.6% participated in Math, 31.8% in English, and 25.6% in science. A distinct feature of Project RUBY's success lies in its multi-pronged approach, which integrates activity-based science education (BASSE), phonics-based English literacy (LeapforWord), and digital math practice (First in Math). This comprehensive methodology effectively addressed prevalent challenges such as students' fear of English, limited exposure to scientific inquiry, and foundational numeracy difficulties.

In the Science Intervention Program implemented by BASSE, the curriculum was designed to be fun, relaxed, and skill-oriented to enhance children's learning through experience. Each phase included ten sessions of two hours each, with ten experiments per session—ensuring that every student had the opportunity to explore, question, and learn by doing. This hands-on structure emphasized the value of experimentation, nurturing curiosity and scientific thinking. According to the survey, over 96% of students reported improved skills in conducting science experiments, underscoring the program's success in deepening conceptual understanding through experiential learning.

"In the Ruby Project, Science is taught well through new experiments. Abhay Sir came twice in three months and taught by conducting experiments, which made learning easier and more interesting."— A student from Kumar School, Kosamdi (Boys)

Similarly, the LeapforWord English Literacy Program (ELP) was introduced to bridge the wide gap in reading and comprehension skills among students studying in regional-language government schools—a gap that often restricts their access to higher education. The ELP was organized into four progressive levels: Elementary Reading, Advanced Reading, Elementary Comprehension, and Advanced Comprehension. To track learning outcomes, baseline and endline assessments were conducted during the program. In addition, surprise tests, spelling competitions, word-power activities, and class-wise exams ensured continuous evaluation and helped identify students who needed additional support. Monthly review meetings with teachers facilitated regular feedback and instructional improvement, while curriculum-aligned textbooks were provided at every level. Before the intervention, the average English score among students in Ankleshwar (Grades 4–6) was 20%, which increased to 34% in the endline assessment. There was also notable progress in reading ability across all categories—particularly in Moderate Words with Tail, which saw an 18% improvement, and Simple Words, where scores rose from 27% to 49%.



Graph 2: Capability comparison- baseline vs endline

The student survey also revealed that over 71% of students reported improved reading, speaking, and comprehension abilities following the intervention. Furthermore, more than 81% of students expressed an increased interest in Science and English, reflecting the program's effectiveness in making these subjects more engaging and approachable.

A facilitator captured the transformative impact of the program on both motivation and skill development, stating, "*Students have gained a range of skills, including phonemic awareness, spelling, reading fluency, and comprehension. For instance, once they understood the sounds of 'oo,' they were able to identify and read multiple new words independently. This shows their ability to transfer learning to new contexts. In higher grades, comprehension and spoken English also strengthened, as evidenced by the English skits performed by students.*"

The Foundational Numeracy and Math (FIM) Project was launched to address the substantial learning gaps in mathematics that emerged after prolonged school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project aimed to measure and remediate individual losses in math proficiency while ensuring that teachers were not burdened with additional workloads.

The program emphasized speed, accuracy, mental math, and core numeracy skills, with a particular focus on mastering the four operations—addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division—across whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers. According to the assessments, the average baseline score among students was 25.9%, which increased to over 30% in the endline survey, indicating measurable progress in foundational numeracy.

"Earlier, children had difficulties and lacked interest, but now interest levels have risen considerably. Students enjoy Maths through plays and have shown 100% improvement compared to earlier struggles."— Principal, Kumar Shala Dahej

Despite considerable progress, the assessment findings also highlight persistent challenges. More than 50% of students reported resource constraints—including a limited number of experiment books and insufficient session durations (typically 35 to 45 minutes)—as key factors restricting deeper engagement and participation. One teacher also observed:
"The session is for 45 minutes every day, but this is not enough. I personally feel that the time allocated is insufficient. However, I understand that other teachers get only 35 minutes and still need to complete their syllabus as well."

Furthermore, while students' immediate post-program outcomes are encouraging, principals and educators emphasized the need for continuous monitoring and reinforcement to sustain learning gains—especially in communities with limited exposure to English and digital learning environments outside school.

Digital Infrastructure Support

Rallis India has provided digital classroom infrastructure to selected schools in Ankleshwar and Dahej as part of its CSR initiatives. While this support was not part of the RUBY program's core academic interventions in Science, Mathematics, and English, it forms an important part of Rallis' overall contribution to improving the learning environment in Gujarat.

Rallis had previously installed digital classrooms in three schools in Dahej: the Primary Boys School, Primary Girls School, and P J Cheda Janata Vidyalaya. Teachers noted that this early support introduced them to technology-enabled teaching at a time when such resources were limited. In the years that followed, the Government of Gujarat implemented a statewide digitalisation drive, equipping all government schools with digital infrastructure. Consequently, the digital classrooms currently in use in these schools are primarily government-provided, while Rallis offered the initial digital upgrade. At P J Cheda Janata Vidyalaya, Rallis had provided one digital classroom in earlier years. This facility was later lost in a fire that destroyed parts of the school building. A new school building has since been constructed next to the burned structure, and while it now has digital classrooms in every room, these were contributed by other CSR organisations. Overall, Rallis' digital support played a foundational role, though subsequent digitalisation has largely been driven by government and other CSR donors.

Additional Support

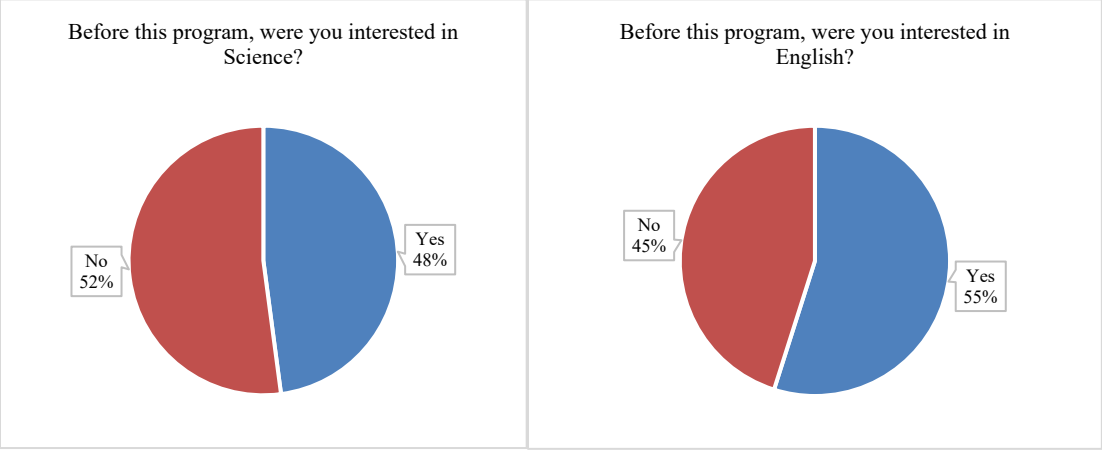
In addition to academic and digital infrastructure interventions, Rallis India has extended targeted support to address institution-specific needs that fall outside the scope of the RUBY program but play a critical role in ensuring educational continuity and student well-being.

At PJ Chedda College, Rallis supported the introduction of the science stream by facilitating the engagement of two subject teachers, a gap that the institution was previously unable to address through its own resources. During teacher interactions, faculty members highlighted that the science stream could be initiated only because of the availability of these Rallis-supported teachers, underscoring the role of this intervention in expanding academic pathways for students.

Similarly, Rallis has provided sustained assistance to Shaishav Divyang Children's School, Ankleshwar, by supplying physiotherapy equipment and appointing a dedicated physiotherapist who visits the school daily from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. The timing of these sessions was aligned with parents' availability, enabling their presence during therapy when required. School staff and parents reported visible improvements among children receiving regular physiotherapy. In one case highlighted during field discussions, a child with cerebral palsy, who was previously unable to walk, had begun walking independently following consistent therapy sessions. This support has significantly enhanced mobility, independence, and overall quality of life for students, positioning physiotherapy as a critical enabler in their developmental journey.

3.2 Increased Student Confidence and Interest in Learning

Beyond measurable academic gains, the RUBY program's transformative impact is most vividly reflected in the heightened confidence and sustained interest students demonstrate in all three subjects, Math, Science, and English. This is essential for nurturing lifelong learners and future achievers. The quantitative data show that more than 90% of students reported increased confidence in applying their newly acquired skills through exhibitions, assignments, and group projects, while 76% can express their ideas in proper English without any hesitation. It also shows a striking 81.7% of students expressing "much more interest" in Science and English following their participation in the RUBY program, compared to around only 46% of students before the intervention. Both boys and girls showed increased enthusiasm, **with a slightly higher increase among girls**, evidencing the program's success in breaking down previous gendered barriers to engagement.



A teacher from Primary School Kosamdi highlighted: *"At the beginning, students' interest in English was very low, and many lacked confidence. Over time, however, their interest has grown, and I have seen a visible change, especially among girls, who started showing more confidence and enthusiasm for learning."*

Picture 1: Student FGD in Kosamdi Girls school

Over 96% of students continued to maintain active involvement with the program content beyond formal sessions, participating in group studies and peer-learning sessions, signaling genuine motivation rather than transient enthusiasm. Qualitative data exposes a positive feedback loop between increased interest and the program's innovative pedagogies, which actively foster participation and confidence building. Students vividly recount how the program transformed their attitudes toward learning and self-expression:

"I can clearly explain my thoughts to others, conduct experiments, and speak English confidently both inside and outside school. Our English Ma'am teaches through group discussions and quiz competitions, which makes learning enjoyable and easier to remember. We know what we are learning in this program will be very useful in our next classes, and later in life and jobs as well."- A student at Primary School Kosamdi (Boys).

Teachers and administrative staff at schools also attest to how confidence facilitates deeper learning engagement:

"Students' confidence can be easily assessed by the way they give answers independently. Many students were initially reluctant to attend classes, but they are now regular because they enjoy the interactive sessions and group activities."- A teacher at Primary School, Sarangpur.

"Earlier, children had difficulties and lacked interest, but now interest levels have risen considerably. They have become more interested in practical learning and demonstrate greater curiosity during experiments and exhibitions. In English, students who earlier could not read the alphabet are now more confident, with progress visible in phonics learning and pronunciation."

The program's inclusive approach has fostered increased participation and confidence among girls, a key success in rural and traditional settings where female engagement in STEM-related subjects often faces cultural and social barriers.

"Girls have shown higher attendance and enthusiasm. They were shy at first but soon began leading group activities and presentations. In science exhibitions, girls often top the competitions in our schools. This shift has encouraged a more gender-equal learning environment."

This empowerment through education marks a critical step toward long-term socio-economic upliftment and gender equity, as confidence and skills in Science and English are foundational for future study and employability.

Despite the overwhelmingly positive narrative, some barriers persist that dampen the full realization of confidence and interest gains. For instance, around 25% of students firmly believe insufficient experiment materials and teaching aids limited the frequency and variety of engaging activities, especially for larger classes. And, while students express confidence, parental support remains limited due to socio-economic constraints, potentially restricting encouragement outside school hours.

3.3 Teacher and Community Engagement as Catalysts of Change

The success and sustainability of the RUBY program in improving educational outcomes in Ankleshwar and Dahej districts directly depend on the active involvement and commitment of teachers alongside varying degrees of community and parental support.

Teachers and administrative staff emerged as key agents in driving new pedagogical innovation and student motivation, and played a crucial role in orchestrating the intervention within schools. Their consistent efforts facilitated the timely identification of learning gaps and tailored teaching methods. Over 92% of students identified teachers and school administrators as major sources of support in their learning journey. Moreover, student responses highlight regular teacher assessments and feedback sessions, with 67% confirming monthly progress reviews and around 14% weekly evaluations. Additionally, the enrollment data across the 13 schools presents healthy student-teacher ratios, averaging around 21 to 39 students per teacher, which is conducive to personalized attention and classroom engagement.

The school staff expressed that they had adopted interactive methodologies, replacing rote learning with approaches that made core subjects more tangible and enjoyable.
"I told them how important English is. I told them that they need to be able to read what is written on railway stations or banks, and it even helps them in filling out forms that are only in English. That actually motivated them. The program has inspired students to aspire for careers like scientist, engineer, sarpanch, and teacher. By building confidence in Science, English, and Math, it has broadened their outlook for higher studies and future opportunities."

Despite the success, a high administrative workload emerged as a persistent challenge among teachers, which sometimes constrained their ability to dedicate extra time to RUBY activities. Another barrier is the limited role of parents and the broader community, which requires further impact. Due to socio-economic realities, most parents are engaged in low-paying jobs with limited formal education, limiting their involvement in children's academic work or homework support.

"Teachers have contributed by balancing extra sessions with curriculum load, though this has increased their workload. But there is no support from parents. Since many of them are uneducated, they are unable to help their children with studies or homework. They show moral support during program exhibitions but cannot consistently engage due to long working hours."- A Principal at Kanya Shala, Dahej.

In most cases, parents themselves confirmed this. In group discussions, several admitted they lacked the skills to assist children academically but recognized the program's importance. Mobilization efforts through community meetings and exhibitions were met with varying attendance. While some parents from stable economic backgrounds regularly participated, many from poorer families could not due to time and resource constraints.

"This program is very important for children. It helps boost confidence in Mathematics and enables students to understand complex subjects like Science, Technology, and Computer Science. Children do not engage much in academic work at home due to our busy schedules, but we try to motivate them when possible."

To enhance teacher capacity, the RUBY program's design incorporated external agency support by recruiting community teachers and facilitating academic resource provision, training, and monitoring systems for effective program delivery. Teacher capacity building included annual training sessions, certification tests, and monthly review meetings. While teachers expressed motivation and enhanced skills, many noted the need for ongoing training and resources to maintain program quality beyond the donor-supported timeline.

3.4 Sustainability Challenges and Resource Constraints

Sustaining the positive educational outcomes and momentum generated by the RUBY program in the long run is a critical challenge. While the program has made commendable strides in boosting foundational learning in Math, Science, and English among rural students, the data and stakeholder feedback reveal ongoing sustainability barriers related to resources, time allocation, teacher capacity, and community engagement that could affect lasting impact.

Although RUBY achieved impressive enrollment and participation rates, with over **3,600** students reached and strong engagement levels, certain systemic stress points were also identified. Classroom session durations remain limited, with most teachers allocating only 35 to 45 minutes daily for RUBY activities, posing constraints on depth and individualized attention.

Resource availability also emerges as a concern: the survey reveals gaps in experiment kits, English language materials, and digital resources that limit rich experiential learning for all students, especially as class sizes fluctuate. Despite high rates of progress monitoring (monthly or weekly), teacher feedback identifies workload pressures, as many juggle regular curriculum demands alongside RUBY interventions. The dropout rate remains low overall but is notably influenced by socio-economic factors such as family migration and poverty, underscoring the need for sustained community support mechanisms.
Educators also expressed concern about the continuity of skill-building efforts after the conclusion of donor funding and programmatic timelines. Continuous capacity building and availability of teaching aids were highlighted as priorities to grow local ownership and embed RUBY practices within standard classroom activities:

"Teachers are increasingly confident and have gained skills but they still need continued training and resources to sustain the intervention independently. Post-training support in terms of teaching aids and follow-up is required as teachers may struggle to maintain the intervention's innovative pedagogies effectively."- A principal at Kumar Shala Dahej.

Parental involvement, a vital component of sustainability, presented a mixed picture. While many parents demonstrated interest in and appreciation for the program, socio-economic realities frequently impeded active participation. Nevertheless, more than 98% of students expressed that they are aware of their parents' encouragement towards their new skills. This suggests that even small increases in family involvement could amplify long-term outcomes.

Community engagement also appears constrained by resource limitations and logistical challenges. School administrators expressed a desire for stronger partnerships with local organizations to enlist volunteers or mentors who can reinforce learning outside school hours.

4. Analysis

The impact of the Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana (RUBY) has been analyzed using the OECD-DAC REECIS framework, covering six dimensions: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Coherence, and Sustainability. The assessment integrates qualitative insights from stakeholders and quantitative indicators from school data.

Relevance

The RUBY program demonstrates high relevance in addressing the foundational learning crisis prevalent in rural Gujarat. The selected intervention areas, Science, Mathematics, and English, correspond directly to subjects where government and independent surveys, such as ASER, have shown persistent learning deficits. The program's activity-based and phonics-led pedagogical approach is well aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes experiential, skill-oriented learning. Furthermore, the target group, students from Classes 4 to 8 in low-income, rural households, represents a segment often excluded from quality learning interventions, reinforcing the project's social relevance. The integration of teacher training and community involvement ensures that the program not only addresses student needs but also builds local capacity. Overall, RUBY effectively bridges systemic educational gaps through a context-specific design rooted in real classroom challenges, making it a well-targeted and responsive CSR initiative.

Effectiveness

Evidence from the field suggests that the program has been effective in enhancing learning outcomes and student engagement. Over 96% of surveyed students reported improved understanding of scientific concepts through hands-on experiments, while 71% reported progress in reading and comprehension skills. Teachers corroborated these findings, noting significant improvement in participation, pronunciation, and conceptual clarity. The use of interactive methods such as experiments, games, and peer learning has successfully reduced students' fear of English and Science. Additionally, the program's emphasis on teacher mentoring and monthly assessments has contributed to steady academic progress. However, the short duration of sessions (35–45 minutes) and heavy teacher workload have somewhat constrained deeper engagement. While the program has achieved immediate learning gains, the absence of standardized pre- and post-assessments limits precise measurement of academic improvement. Nevertheless, qualitative and anecdotal evidence collectively indicate that RUBY has achieved its short-term learning and confidence-building objectives to a high degree.

Efficiency

In terms of efficiency, the program demonstrates effective use of available resources within existing school structures. The integration of external trainers and digital tools (such as First in Math) optimized delivery without significantly increasing the administrative burden. Teachers managed to balance the additional RUBY activities with their regular curriculum despite limited resources and time constraints. The student–teacher ratios across schools (ranging from 21 to 39 students per teacher) were conducive to participatory learning. However, efficiency is somewhat challenged by the scarcity of teaching aids, experiment kits, and digital access in some schools, which limits full utilization of the program design.

Moreover, scheduling constraints, particularly in multi-grade classrooms, occasionally reduced instructional time. On the administrative side, coordination between implementation partners and schools was smooth, reflecting good governance and reporting mechanisms. Targeted improvements in resource distribution and digital infrastructure could substantially enhance both operational efficiency and scalability in future cycles.

Impact

The overall impact of RUBY extends beyond improved academic performance. The program has notably enhanced student confidence, communication skills, and interest in learning, particularly among girls. Teachers reported greater classroom participation and reduced absenteeism. Students expressed enthusiasm for practical learning, with many articulating aspirations for higher education and technical careers. The program's success in shifting perceptions of Science and English from "difficult subjects" to "interesting and achievable" marks a critical behavioral impact. Teachers themselves benefited from exposure to innovative pedagogies, adopting more interactive and student-centered teaching methods. While broader community-level impact remains modest, parent testimonies indicate increased awareness of education's value. However, the long-term academic and socio-economic impact cannot yet be quantified due to the program's short implementation cycle. Overall, RUBY demonstrates substantial positive influence on learner mindsets, teaching culture, and school environments.

Coherence

The program exhibits strong internal and external coherence. Internally, the three pedagogical components, BASSE, LeapforWord, and First-in-Math, complement each other effectively, creating a cohesive framework for holistic learning. The program's design is consistent with the stated objectives of improving conceptual understanding, communication, and numeracy skills. Externally, RUBY aligns well with the NEP 2020 vision of foundational literacy and numeracy and with the CSR mandate of Rallis India Limited to promote rural education. Partnerships with experienced implementation agencies further reinforce coherence, ensuring methodological consistency and quality assurance. Coordination among teachers, principals, and partner organizations was generally smooth, although occasional overlap in scheduling and workload pressures suggests scope for improved synchronization. Overall, the program demonstrates clear strategic alignment across objectives, stakeholders, and implementation processes.

Sustainability

Sustainability remains both the most critical and most challenging dimension for RUBY. While the program has built momentum in improving student learning and motivation, its long-term continuity is uncertain without ongoing support. Teachers expressed willingness to continue experiential teaching methods but cited lack of materials, refresher training, and time as key barriers. Parental involvement remains low, largely due to socio-economic constraints and limited academic literacy. As a result, reinforcement of learning at home is minimal. The absence of a clear exit or transition plan to institutionalize the program within school systems also poses a risk. Nonetheless, the foundation for sustainability exists: teacher capacity has improved, community awareness has grown, and school administrators recognize the program's value. Strengthening linkages with government education departments and developing low-

cost teaching aids could help embed RUBY practices within the regular curriculum, ensuring lasting benefits beyond CSR support.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis of the RUBY program's implementation across Ankleshwar and Dahej districts, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance its effectiveness, scalability, and sustainability in future cycles.

Strengthening Learning Continuity and Depth

While the program has significantly improved conceptual understanding, session durations and follow-up mechanisms remain limited. To deepen learning impact, schools can adopt a modular extension model where key topics in Science, Math, and English are revisited through short revision cycles and peer-learning groups. Incorporating weekly remedial hours for slower learners and using blended learning tools can help sustain learning gains. Regular pre- and post-assessments can be institutionalized to measure progress more accurately and guide customized support. Additionally, establishing a student mentorship system, where older students assist younger ones in activities, can reinforce learning retention while fostering leadership and collaboration. This will ensure that improvements achieved through RUBY are not episodic but continuous and embedded within the academic calendar.

Enhancing Teacher Capacity and Support Systems

Teachers are central to the program's success, but face time and workload constraints. To maintain quality delivery, continuous professional development can be built into the program framework. This includes refresher training, exposure visits, and pedagogical resource groups at the district level to share best practices. Providing teachers with digital and low-cost teaching aids, as well as ready-to-use activity kits, will reduce preparation burden and improve classroom efficiency. Introducing teacher recognition or incentive schemes within CSR budgets will further motivate participation. Importantly, coordination with government education departments to align RUBY teacher training with official in-service modules will foster ownership and institutionalization. Regular feedback loops, such as monthly reflection meetings, can also be established to keep teachers engaged, supported, and continuously learning.

Addressing Resource Constraints and Infrastructure Gaps

Limited availability of experiment kits, English learning materials, and digital access continues to be a recurring challenge. Future iterations of the program may focus on resource optimization and localized material development, encouraging collaboration with local industries, NGOs, and educational start-ups to co-create low-cost, community-sourced learning materials that are contextually relevant. Establishing a shared resource bank among participating schools can enable equitable access to learning aids and equipment.

Beyond material resources, there is value in building the capacities of implementing partners and school teams by providing them with information on relevant education sector schemes, including those related

to school infrastructure development, teacher training, salary support, and the establishment of science and language laboratories. This awareness can help institutions leverage existing government and CSR initiatives to strengthen their own capabilities.

Networking and collaboration can also play a pivotal role in enhancing efficiency and scalability. Creating linkages between schools, district education offices, NGOs, and local community groups can facilitate knowledge exchange, collective resource mobilization, and mentorship support. Periodic audits of material use and maintenance can help ensure longevity, while a focus on resource reusability, teacher-led innovations, and community participation can reduce dependency on external funding over time.

Deepening Parental and Community Engagement

Parental involvement remains one of the weaker links, largely due to socio-economic and educational barriers. Strengthening this dimension calls for innovative, low-burden engagement approaches. Schools can organize community learning fairs and student-led exhibitions on weekends or local holidays to maximize attendance. Short orientation sessions for parents, focused on simple at-home learning support techniques, can be held quarterly. Partnerships with local self-help groups, panchayats, and youth clubs may help mobilize parents for school activities. Parental recognition initiatives, such as 'Supportive Parent of the Month', can encourage greater participation, while engaging community volunteers and local youth as learning ambassadors can create a broader ecosystem of shared responsibility. As networks and collaborations strengthen across communities, these efforts can gradually evolve the program from a donor-driven model into a community-supported and institutionally sustained movement.

Building Long-Term Sustainability and Institutional Integration

For long-term impact, RUBY must transition from a project-based initiative to an integrated part of the school system. Developing a sustainability roadmap with clear exit strategies is crucial. This could include gradually transferring operational responsibility to schools, forming school-based RUBY clubs, and embedding key activities into existing timetables. Continuous teacher training, local resource creation, and stakeholder alignment can be institutionalized rather than externally driven. Partnering with District Education Offices and DIETs can help mainstream the pedagogy into official programs. Moreover, periodic impact reviews and learning workshops involving school leaders, Rallis representatives, and community stakeholders will help refine and sustain efforts. Embedding sustainability principles from the start will ensure that the positive outcomes achieved so far are not only maintained but expanded over time.

Conclusion

The Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana (RUBY) represents a significant and contextually relevant CSR intervention aimed at improving foundational learning in rural Gujarat. Through its integrated focus on Science, Mathematics, and English, the program has effectively introduced experiential and phonics-based learning methods that have rekindled students' interest and confidence in education. The assessment reveals that RUBY has succeeded in transforming classroom dynamics, making learning more participatory, activity-driven, and inclusive. Students, particularly girls, have shown notable improvement in both engagement and self-expression, signaling positive shifts not just in academic ability but also in mindset and aspiration.

At the institutional level, the program has enhanced teacher motivation and introduced innovative pedagogical practices that align well with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The collaboration between Rallis India, implementation partners, and schools demonstrates the potential of CSR-led initiatives to complement public education systems in bridging learning gaps.

However, challenges persist, especially regarding limited resources, short session durations, heavy teacher workloads, and minimal parental involvement. Addressing these issues through continuous reinforcement, capacity building, localized resource generation, and stronger community engagement will be crucial for sustaining long-term impact.

Going forward, the sustainability of RUBY will depend on its integration into the existing school ecosystem and alignment with local education governance structures. With strategic support, the program holds strong potential to evolve into a scalable, replicable model of rural education improvement, one that not only strengthens foundational learning but also empowers students with the curiosity, confidence, and skills to pursue brighter futures.

Impact Assessment Report

Project Saksham Gram

at

Karimnagar and Warangal

(Telangana)

Submitted by: NuSocia | 13/11/2025

NuSocia
Impact. Evident.

Disclaimer

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Ethical Consideration

Informed consent: The interviews were done after the respondents gave their consent. Even after the interviews were completed, their permission was sought to proceed with their responses.

Confidentiality: The information provided by participants has been kept private. At no point were their data or identities disclosed. The research findings have been quoted in a way that does not expose the respondents' identities.

Comfort: The interviews were performed following the respondents' preferences. In addition, the interview time was chosen in consultation with them. At each level, respondents' convenience and comfort were considered.

Right to reject or withdraw: Respondents were guaranteed safety and allowed to refuse to answer questions or withdraw during the study.

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Executive Summary

The Saksham Gram Project was implemented by Rallis India Limited under its CSR initiative in the districts of Karimnagar and Warangal of Telangana state. It aimed to enhance the quality of life in rural communities through integrated interventions in education, livelihood, health, governance, and environmental sustainability. The project was executed in 8 villages: Baopet, Koppur & Ramakrishnapur of Warangal and Kandugula, Rajapoor, Metpally, Narsingapur, & CP Pally of Karimnagar, representing the socio-economic diversity of rural Telangana.

The project addressed key developmental gaps identified during the need assessment such as limited livelihood options, poor educational infrastructure, weak healthcare access, and low awareness of government schemes. It adopted a holistic and participatory approach with interventions designed to promote women's empowerment, youth skill development, women and child health, organic farming, and community governance.

A mixed method approach has been employed to conduct the impact assessment using OECD-DAC REECIS framework. The result is summarised here:

- **Livelihood and Skill Development**: Over 217 beneficiaries were engaged through training and enterprise creation. Youth received training in driving, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship, resulting in over 90% income growth and enhanced self-reliance. Women were trained in tailoring and embroidery. They started home based enterprises, thereby achieving economic and social empowerment.
- **Education**: Establishment of Village Learning Centres (VLCs) and appointment of Shikshak Mitras improved children's foundational learning and reduced dropout rates. About 74% of parents reported significant improvement among children in reading and writing skills.
- **Health and Nutrition**: Awareness sessions, vaccination drives, and kitchen garden initiatives improved maternal and child health and promoted nutritional self-sufficiency.
- **Governance and Inclusion**: The Community Governance and Empowerment initiative enabled beneficiaries to access Telangana government welfare schemes worth Rs 1.05 crore, enhancing social protection and financial inclusion. Digital and financial literacy sessions empowered villagers to navigate government processes independently.
- **Agriculture and Sustainability**: Promotion of organic farming practices reduced input costs, improved soil fertility, and enhanced farmer income.

The project demonstrated gender and social inclusion, ~44% women participation and 38% beneficiaries from marginalized communities (OBC/SC/ST). It directly contributed to multiple UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as SDG-1, SDG-4, SDG-5, SDG-8 etc.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Rallis India Limited is a leading player of Agri-input solutions. It is a subsidiary of Tata Chemicals which is the world's second largest soda ash producer and focuses on Living, Industry, and Farm Essentials (LIFE).

Rallis offers a wide range of products such as pesticides, fungicides, insecticides, seeds, and plant growth nutrients. These products meet various crop care and nutrition needs. It has become a global market leader through continuous innovation and deep expertise in farm science. Rallis has a strong network of over 6,000 dealers and 70,000 retailers. It reaches farmers in 80% of India's districts and exports to 58 countries.

Rallis works with the mission of "Serving Farmers through Science." This mission drives the company to develop sustainable and productive solutions that enhance farm efficiency and livelihoods.

Aligned with its goal of empowering farmers, Rallis also places strong emphasis on CSR initiatives. The company strives to improve the quality of life of rural communities by creating long term value for all the stakeholders. The company's initiatives primarily target farmers and underprivileged groups in areas surrounding its manufacturing plants and business regions.

Its CSR initiatives majorly focus on access to clean water, livelihood opportunities, healthcare, and sanitation. It supports key programs such as RUBY (Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana) for quality education, TaRa for livelihoods, Model Tribal Village project for sustainable rural development. Its Jal Dhan program focuses on water and sanitation. Rallis has also implemented special initiatives to provide pandemic support such as COVID-19 relief efforts.

"Saksham Gram" project is implemented by Rallis India Limited at Karimnagar and Warangal districts of Telangana in 2022-23 and 2023-24. It focuses on improving the quality of life in villages through integrated efforts in education, skill development, health, livelihood enhancement etc. with a focus on women's empowerment and the development of youth and children. It aims to build self-reliant and empowered rural communities.

1.2. Widening of the Rural and Urban Divide in India

India is one of the fastest growing major economies. Its growth was at 6.3-6.8% in FY2024-25. Country has already crossed $4 trillion GDP, surpassing Japan to become the world's fourth largest economy. India is on track to become the world's third largest economy with a projected GDP of $7.3 trillion by 2030.[1]

However, this growth tells only part of the story. Economic progress has not reached everyone. India ranks 105th on the Global Hunger Index and 130th on the Human Development Index, showing a clear gap between national wealth and people's lives[2].

The gap between urban and rural India keeps widening. Urban areas, though home to only about one-third of the population, contribute nearly 70% of India's GDP due to better access to industries, services, technology, and markets. In contrast, the rural economy continues to depend heavily on agriculture and informal labor, where productivity and income levels remain low. Cities have modern infrastructure, but villages still face limited livelihoods opportunities, weak healthcare, and limited

[1] https://www.pib.gov.in/PressNoteDetails.aspx?NoteId=154660&ModuleId=3

[2] https://www.undp.org/india/press-releases/indias-human-development-continues-make-progress-ranks-130-out-193-countries?utm_source=chatgpt.com

education. Persistent challenges like poverty, illiteracy, unemployment remain major obstacles to progress and quality of life in rural parts of India.[3]

It remains a major hurdle to balanced growth. This inequality pushes many rural youth to migrate to cities in search of jobs, causing urban overcrowding and rural decline. The digital and skill divide further limits rural participation in the modern economy.[4]

The rural parts of Telangana also faces the multiple interlinked challenges that continue to limit their overall development. It faces deep-rooted challenges in agriculture, livelihoods, and basic services. Despite strong community potential, development remains constrained by gaps in infrastructure, opportunities, and social support systems.

1.3. Need for the Project

The persistent socio-economic and infrastructural gaps in the Karimnagar and Warangal districts of Telangana continue to limit rural growth and inclusion. Despite being primarily agrarian regions, most households face low agricultural productivity, limited irrigation facilities, dependence on traditional methods, and inadequate market linkages. These factors have led to farmer distress and unstable livelihoods.

At the same time, unemployment, especially among youth and women, remains high due to poor access to skill development, and limited entrepreneurship support. The education and healthcare infrastructure is weak, rural schools lack quality teachers and resources, and many villages depend on under-equipped public health facilities. Basic amenities like safe drinking water, sanitation, and housing are insufficient, while environmental challenges such as soil erosion, deforestation, and water scarcity worsen living conditions.

Given these conditions, “Saksham Gram” project bridges the gap and promotes sustainable agriculture, improves access to education, strengthens infrastructure, empowers women and youth, and ensures inclusive economic growth. The project aims to build community resilience, enhance livelihood security, and create an enabling environment for long-term, self-sustained development in the rural parts of Telangana.

1.4. About the Project

The project “Saksham Gram” encompasses a range of activities designed to address key challenges in the rural areas of Karimnagar and Warangal districts. It aimed to improve the quality of life and economic status of rural communities. It focused on empowering the community members through education, skill development, health improvement, and livelihood enhancement.

Key interventions of the project were education, livelihood activities, health and kitchen gardens, women and youth development, financial inclusion, social security, and government convergence. Project implemented with major objectives:

a) Promotion of sustainable livelihoods by using local resources and supporting small businesses.
b) Enhancing primary education quality.
c) Building employability and entrepreneurship skills, and creates job opportunities to address rural unemployment.
d) Environmental conservation through awareness and organic farming initiatives.
e) Develop connectivity between villages and government services.

[3] https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/opinion/urban-india-s-economic-drive-powers-rural-consumption-growth-12905158.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com
[4] https://mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/Statistical_year_book_india_chapters

The Saksham Gram targeted farmers, women, youth, children, and community based organizations across villages in Karimnagar and Warangal.

2. Approach and Methodology

2.1. Approach

The study aimed at Impact Assessment of the project "Saksham Gram", which was supported by Rallis CSR initiative. The project was implemented in FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24 in Karimnagar and Warangal (Telangana). The Impact Assessment study conducted had the following broad objectives and outputs:

01	02	03
Impact on Beneficiaries To evaluate the level of awareness and impact on the target beneficiaries	**Best Practices** To identify best practice, areas for improvement and recommend strategies for enhancing project impact	**Area of Improvement** To provide evidence-based recommendations on the continuation, modification, or discontinuation of project

2.2. Methodology

The team adopted a mixed method research approach incorporating both Qualitative and Quantitative Research methodology for impact assessment. The study followed a well-defined methodology, participative and research-based strategy, consisting of a five-stage process for undertaking this study as explained below:

Context Setting	Research Design	Primary Research	Analysis	Output
Building common understanding of project terminology. Introduction to key stakeholders / implementation partners	Desk review of project documents Primary research tool preparation Sharing of inception report with tools for approval of Rallis team	Training of field research team On-field data collection through quantitative and /or qualitative methods to analyse programmatic elements	Data analysis based on OCED-DAC 'REECIS' Framework Triangulation against qualitative research through KIIs	Detailed report on observations, analysis, inferences, and recommendations Presentation of Findings

2.3. Data Collection Tools

2.3.1. Development of assessment framework: The team developed research objectives, key probe areas, and methodology of interaction with stakeholders. This helped in the effective designing of research instruments.

2.3.2. Primary data acquiring tools: The team prepared an **Interview Guide** for collecting qualitative data from the beneficiaries and KIIs (Key Informants Interviews) and **Survey Tool** for collecting the quantitative data from the beneficiaries based on the assessment framework.

2.4. Sampling techniques

To understand the project's impact and to get an unbiased representation on of the beneficiaries, the research team used **convenience sampling** for qualitative research and **stratified sampling** methods to select respondents for the quantitative research.

2.5. Acquiring Information and Data Collection

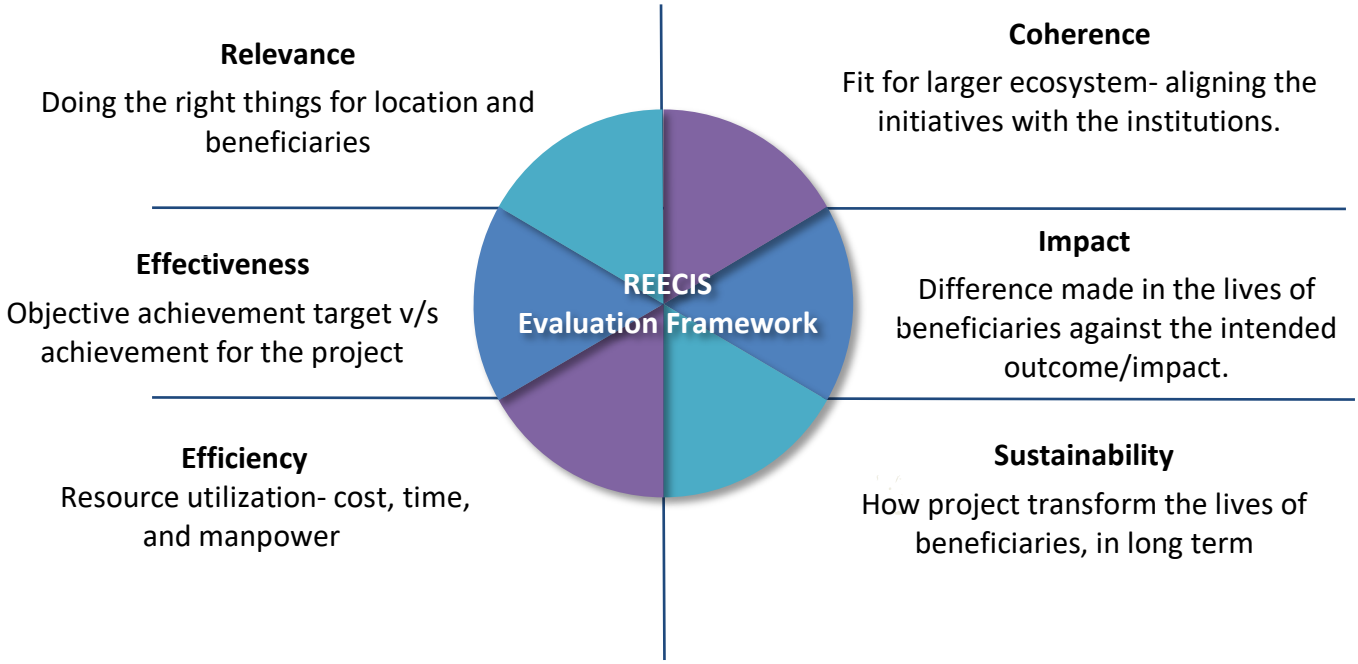
Primary and secondary research was conducted to acquire necessary data for the program. Field level data were collected through Interviews of **Beneficiaries and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**. Team **interviewed 217** beneficiaries to collect the information.

Primary research respondents:

Stakeholders	Karimnagar			Warangal		
	KII	FGD	Survey	KII	FGD	Survey
All Beneficiaries			142			75
- Multiple Projects		1			1	
- Education Project	1	1				
- Organic Farming		1				
- Driving Training	1	1		2		
- Computer Embroidery	1	1		2		
KIIs						
- Gram Mitra	4			3		
- Implementation Team	1					
- Driving Licence	1					

2.6. Analysing the information

After the primary and secondary research, the team compiled and tabulated the acquired data. Tabulated data was analysed and triangulated with the findings of KIIs to get insight as per the requirement of the study. The assessment was done through the REECIS evaluation framework (as explained below), developed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Development Assistance Committee (DAC). It includes analysis of the results based on parameters such as Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact and Sustainability.



2.7. Documentation and Report Preparation

The team prepared a detailed report of the Impact Assessment study of **"Saksham Gram"** project covering all the necessary aspects in accordance with the findings of the data analysis.

3. Findings

The "Saksham Gram" project implemented in the villages across Karimnagar and Warangal districts of Telangana. The research independently assesses the key themes under which projects were implemented in the rural areas of the districts.

3.1. Socio-economic Status of the Selected Geographies

The Saksham Gram project was implemented in the 8 villages of Karimnagar and Warangal districts, as given below:

Karimnagar	Warangal
1. Kandugula 2. CP-Pally 3. Rajapoor 4. Metpally 5. Narsingapur	1. Baopet, 2. Koppur 3. Ramakrishnapur

These villages represent the socio-economic diversity of rural Telangana. Despite strong agricultural roots, the region faces several developmental challenges and opportunities.

3.1.1. Geographic Location

Most of the selected villages lie within an average distance of 20 km, ranging from 8 to 35 km, from nearby towns such as Huzurabad, Shankarapatnam, Karimnagar, and Jammikunta in the Karimnagar cluster, and Warangal and Hasanparthi in the Warangal cluster. All the villages have basic transport facilities having availability of both public and private options. However internal connectivity is a challenge particularly during the monsoon due to conditions of the road. Weekly market are held in almost all the villages. Grain market requires travel to nearby towns like Warangal, Huzurabad etc.

3.1.2. Demographic Overview

The combined population across these villages is more than 16,000 with ~ 4,500 households. The gender ratio is fairly balanced. The youth population (18-35 years) forms a significant share in the total population. It indicates a strong labor base but also highlights the need for employment and skill development. Villages have social diversity such as Baopet and Narsingapur have a notable proportion of SC and ST population.

3.1.3. Livelihood Opportunities

Agriculture is the primary occupation across all the villages. Farmers mainly cultivate paddy, cotton, maize etc. Landholdings are small to medium in size. Farmers have mixed irrigation sources such as wells, borewells, and canals. Villages have adoption of farm machinery like tractors, harvesters, transplanters etc., however productivity and profitability is constrained due to irregular rainfall and high input costs. Farmers mainly depended on borewells for irrigation however many of the borewells are non-functional. Farmers also face challenges due to limited market linkages and credit access and vulnerability due to debt.

3.1.4. Livestock and Allied Activities

Livestock plays a key role in household income, particularly in Metpally, Kandugula, and Narsingapur, villages where goat and buffalo rearing are common. However, lack of veterinary support and organized milk collection centers limits economic potential. Only a few villages have milk collection.

3.1.5. Education and Human Development

All the villages have at least one primary school or Anganwadi center for basic education and child care. The literacy rate averages around 65%, with male literacy higher than female. Community members face challenges due to shortage of teachers, poor infrastructure, and lower enrollment at secondary level schools.

3.1.6. Health and Sanitation

All the villages have access to basic health sub-centers or PHCs. However bigger hospitals are at significantly higher distance. Private doctors and ASHA workers are present in the villages. However, they lack ambulance services and gaps in nutrition among children. Drinking water is largely sourced from borewells and wells; however, over half of these are non-functional, leading to seasonal shortages.

3.1.7. Infrastructure and Housing

Infrastructure development is uneven. While electricity and sewage systems are present, housing, drainage, and road maintenance need improvement. Several SRK centers (community centers) require repairs, electrical rewiring, and painting. Water supply infrastructure also need improvement.

3.1.8. Social and Economic Gaps

The region faces challenges due to economic inequality, gender disparity, and rising unemployment. Income diversification is restricted due to limited entrepreneurship, poor access to credit, and weak local industries. Many families are live below the poverty line and rely on seasonal migration.

Rallis India Limited has implemented several community development projects in the selected villages of Karimnagar and Warangal focused on four key themes: Livelihoods, Education, Health, and Community Governance & Empowerment. The impact of these initiatives under each theme is explained below:

3.2. Livelihoods

To enhance livelihoods in the region, Rallis India implemented various of targeted initiatives. These included skill development programs for local youth (age 18 to 35 years), employment support through job placements and self-enterprise opportunities, and skill training for women in hand embroidery, tailoring etc. It also promoted women led livelihood activities, organized training and demonstrations on organic farming practices, and created local job opportunities through self-employment initiatives. Livelihoods enhancement activities were implemented under two major projects as given below:

3.2.1. Youth Skill Development and Employability

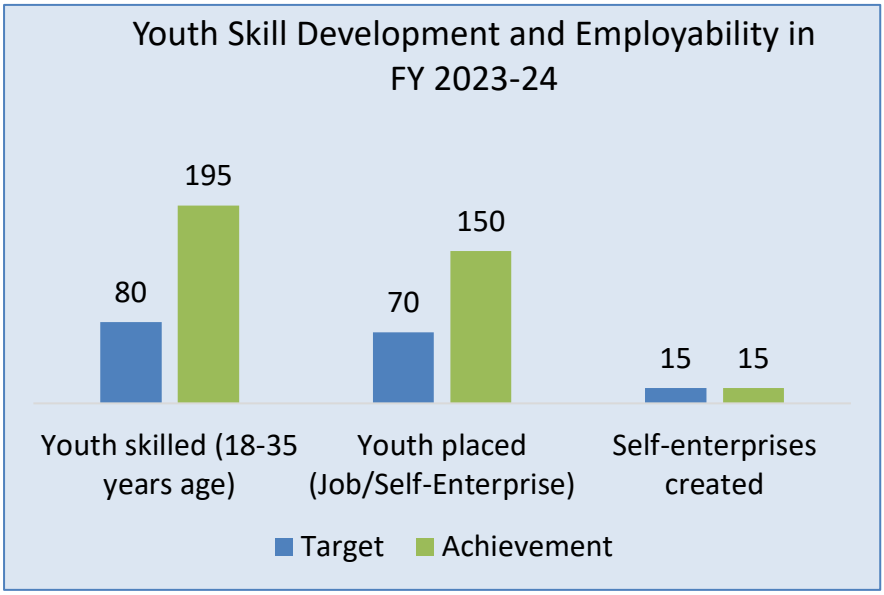
"Youth Skill Development and Employability" project by Rallis India aimed to improve the economic and social well-being of rural youth by enhancing their skills, creating job opportunities, and promoting entrepreneurship. The project focused on developing employability skills among local residents aged 18-35 years and encouraging them to build sustainable livelihoods within their own communities. Rallis seeks to bridge the rural employment gap and stimulate local economic growth through this initiative.

i. Project aimed to:

a) Improve the overall quality of life and economic condition of community members in the intervention villages through skill enhancement.
b) Stimulate rural economic growth by providing vocational training and support for micro-enterprises.
c) Develop employability skills for youth and enable access to formal and self-employment opportunities.
d) Promote entrepreneurship as a sustainable solution to rural unemployment.

ii. Outcome of the Project

The project made progress in empowering rural youth across villages in Karimnagar and Warangal districts. In 2023-24, it achieved the set targets**.** Against a target of 80, the 195 youth were trained and 150 youth were successfully placed in jobs or self-employment, surpassing the target of 70. Fifteen self-enterprises were also established in the location. It highlights project's impact in enhancing youth employability, promoting entrepreneurship, and driving rural economic growth.



Project has an improvement over the previous year (FY 2022–23), where 117 youth were skilled and 20 were placed in employment or enterprise. The project's expansion and community based approach helped more than double participation and placement outcomes within one year.

iii. Interventions and Enterprises Created

The project facilitated various livelihood interventions such as skill training, financial assistance, and mentoring tailored to local demand and youth interest. These enterprises span across service, manufacturing, and agri-based sectors included both skill training and enterprise creation support such as driving, computer application, flour milling, and small scale service units etc. Enterprise were

developed through identification of local needs, capacity building, provision of equipment, and handholding support to ensure sustainability and income generation.

The key enterprises established include:

- **Driving Skill** Training of youth in driving skill, to enable transport services and logistics based employment.**:**
- **Computer Training and Digital Centers**: Training the youth on digital literacy and supporting them in establishing the digital service centers.
- **Flour Mills (Atta Chakki)**: Established flour mills to offer essential grain milling services in the region and generate local employment.
- **Puncture Shops**: Established puncture shops to meet daily mobility needs and saving villagers travel costs for repairs.
- **Power Sprayer and Battery Sprayer**: Supported farmers with sprayers for custom renting service and crop protection to enhance agri-productivity.
- **Power Weeders and Solar Dryers**: Introducing sustainable agri-technologies and clean energy solutions.
- **Vegetable Trolleys and Mini Rice Mills**: Supported youths with vegetable trolleys and mini Rice mills encouraging agripreneurship and value addition at the village level.

- **Laundry Shops, Tea Stalls, and Men's Parlors**: Creating self-employment opportunities in the service sector.
- **Bicycle Repair Units, Welding Shops, and Tent Houses**: Addressing local market gaps and providing essential village services.

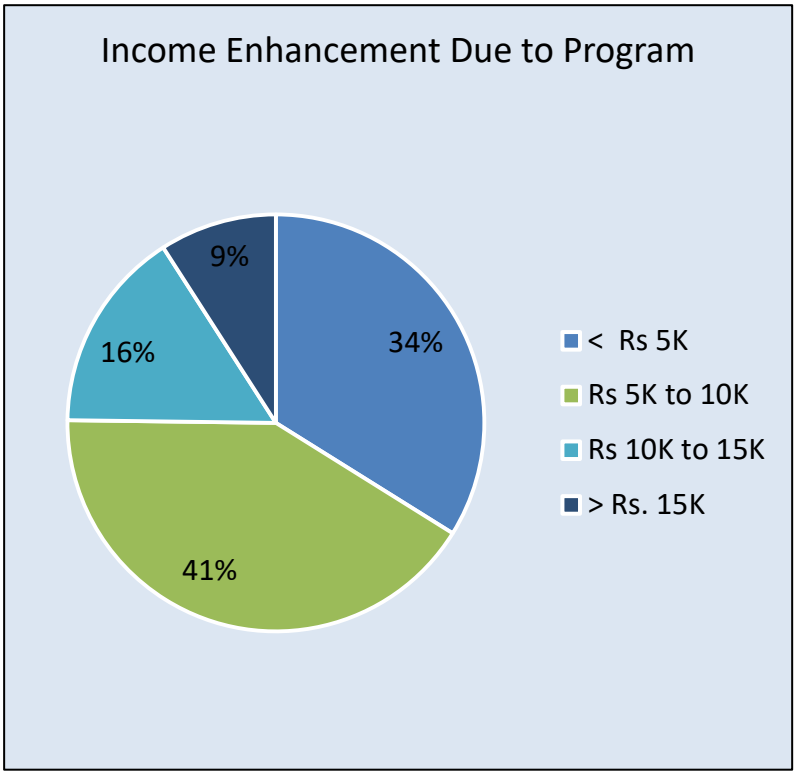
Cumulative number of livelihood interventions for the youth employment in FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24 are given in the below table:

Intervention	Number	Intervention	Number
Driving Skill	99	Bicycle Repair	24
Computer Training	32	Men's Parlour	4
Flour Mill (Atta Chakki)	8	Tea Stall	4
Puncture Shop	4	Battery Sprayer	30
Power Sprayer	22	Power Weeder	20
Vegetable Trolley	12	Mini Rice Mill	3
Laundry Shop	7	Tent House	5
Solar Dryer	1	Welding Machine	4
Community Digital Centre	8		

iv. Impact of the Program

a) Financial Empowerment of the Youth

The enterprises established post training program have collectively improved rural livelihoods by providing consistent income, promoting self-reliance, and inspiring other youth to pursue entrepreneurship. More than 90% of the trained youth reported significant increase in income post training. Over 66% of participants have reported an increase of more than ₹5,000 in their monthly income compared to their earlier earnings. This steady increase in earnings reflects the program's impact on improving livelihoods, promoting financial stability, and enabling rural youth to achieve greater self-reliance.



b) Impact on Self-Reliance and Social Empowerment

The program has a positive impact on the self-reliance and social status of beneficiaries. About 95 % of participants reported becoming self-reliant, after gaining a new income source. However, a small portion continued to seek additional livelihood options. Moreover, 92% of the participants stated that their status within the family improved after they began earning, it reflects enhanced confidence, respect, and decision-making power. It highlights program's impact on socio-economic empowered of youth, fostering dignity and independence among rural households.

Around 80% of the youth expressed interest in expanding their existing income sources, reflecting growing confidence and entrepreneurial motivation after the program. However, it was also observed that 40% of youth entrepreneurs are facing challenges while initiating or sustaining their enterprises due to factors such as lack of raw materials, limited financial support, insufficient customer base, family restrictions etc. It highlights the need for continued mentoring, access to working capital, and market linkage support to help young entrepreneurs strengthen and scale their ventures sustainably.

v. Case Study of Entrepreneurs

Driving Skill in Narsingapur Village of Karimnagar

Mr. K. Vishnu Reddy a 21-year-old youth at Narsingapur, completed the education until intermediate. He represents the aspirations and challenges of rural youth from modest educational backgrounds. He joined the training with the goal of improving employability, gaining practical experience, and building a stable livelihood.

The driving training was conducted in batches of 25 participants over a 10-days training period, with 2 trainers per group ensuring personal attention and quality instruction. The curriculum included both

theoretical and practical components covering traffic rules, safety regulations, vehicle maintenance, and hands-on driving practice under different road conditions. After completion, participants could easily apply for and obtain their driving licenses within 15 days.

The program effectively addressed local employment needs by producing skilled drivers ready to serve in the growing rural transport sector. Mr. Reddy successfully obtained his license and transitioned into self-employment. He went on to purchase vehicle and start small-scale transportation service generating steady monthly income to improve his family's financial stability.

He reported significant lifestyle changes such as increased income, enhanced self-respect, and recognition in the community.

The training program provided driving skills and instilled entrepreneurial values such as problem-solving, customer service, and financial management. Many trainees developed the confidence to start their own ventures and manage small businesses independently. The success of early participants inspired other youth to join subsequent training batches.

While the program strengthened driving skills and technical knowledge, beneficiaries noted the need for stronger job placement linkages and faster license processing to ensure smoother transitions into employment. They also suggested continuing the program on a long-term basis and expanding its reach to more villages.

Similar to driving skill a Digital Centres were established in remote villages, which brought essential online services closer to the community. Earlier, villagers had to travel 15-20 km for basic digital tasks, losing time and wages. With support from Rallis, local youth like Mr. Vanga Vishvanath, a graduate who was unemployed for two years, received training and equipment to manage digital centre. He now earns Rs 4,000-5,000 per month by providing services such as Aadhaar updates, government document services, and online transactions. It reduced villagers' travel costs and improved access to government schemes. Similarly, Mrs. Kasagani Mounika, a 34-year-old agricultural laborer, achieved financial independence by setting up an Atta Chakki (flour mill) with support from Rallis. Her monthly income is Rs 5,000 to 7,000. She formed a Self-Help Group, encouraging women to save and invest in income-generating activities, becoming a role model for women's empowerment in her village. Another success story is Mr. MD Anwar Pasha, a young graduate who started a puncture repair shop with Rallis' technical and financial assistance. His enterprise addressed a local gap in vehicle repair services, saving villagers time and money while earning him about Rs 6,000 per month.

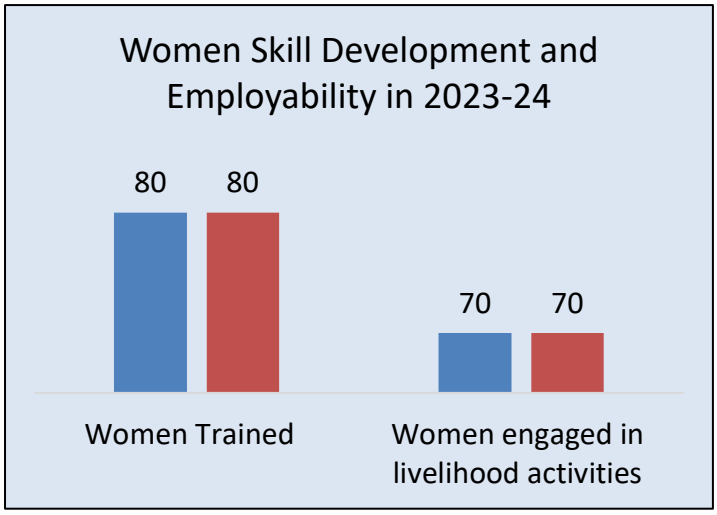
These stories reflect program's role in skill development, entrepreneurship in empowering rural youth and women to become self-reliant, improve their living standards, and contribute to the overall economic growth of their communities.

3.2.2. Women Skill Development and Employability

Project "Women Skill Development and Employability" was implemented to empower rural women in the Karimnagar and Warangal districts by enhancing their employability skills, promoting entrepreneurship, and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities. The project aimed to build the capacity of women through vocational training, skill-based enterprise development, and self-employment support, helping them become financially independent and socially empowered.

i. Project Aimed to:

a) Empower rural women on socio-economic parameters through targeted skill enhancement.
b) Develop employability skills and enable women to access formal and self-employment opportunities.
c) Promote entrepreneurship as a sustainable livelihood option for women in rural areas.



ii. Outcome of the Project

During FY 2023-24, the project progressed well in improving women's employability and livelihood opportunities. Against the target of 80 women to be trained, the project successfully trained all 80 women in hand embroidery, tailoring, and related trades. Similarly, 70 of these trained 80 women were engaged in livelihood activities. The project has shown an improvement compared to FY 2022-23, where only 65 women were trained and only 27 were engaged in livelihood activities. The project's participatory and community based approach enhanced women's confidence, skill levels, and access to income generating opportunities.

iii. Interventions and Enterprises Created

The project facilitated livelihood interventions designed to meet local demand and women's interests. Training was provided in tailoring, embroidery, computer embroidery, beauty parlour operations etc. Women were also supported through equipment assistance such as sewing machines and also provided the mentoring for enterprise setup.

The enterprises established under this initiative included:

a) **Tailoring and Stitching Training**: Supporting women to provide garment services locally and meet village demand.
b) **Sewing Machine Purchase Support:** Women were supported with Sewing Machine. Enabling women to work from home and balance family responsibilities with income generation.
c) **Hand and Computer Embroidery**: Helping women produce decorative textiles and embroidery products for nearby markets.
d) **Beauty Parlours**: Creating self-employment for women offering beauty and grooming services.

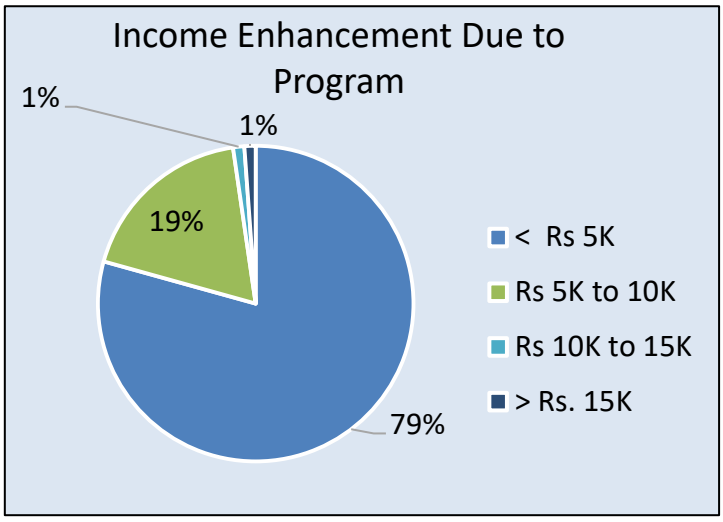
Cumulative number of interventions in FY 2022-23 and 2023-24 are given below:

Enterprise	Beneficiaries
Tailoring	125
Hand Embroidery	41
Computer Embroidery	9
Beauty Parlour	9
Support in Procurement of Sewing Machine	17

iv. Impact of the Program

These interventions helped women gain practical, market-relevant skills and access to self-employment opportunities leading to long term income generation and household stability.

a) Financial Empowerment and Livelihood Security



The project enhanced women's income levels and economic participation. During the primary research ~90% of women beneficiaries responded that their monthly income has changed because of the support provided under "Saksham Gram" program. The project contributed to a rise in women's income levels. Around 79% of beneficiaries reported that their monthly earning enhanced by Rs 5,000 per month and ~19% experienced income growth between Rs 5,000 to 10,000. It reflects a positive outcome in expanding women's skill and business activities. This financial stability encouraged greater confidence and decision-making power among women within their households.

b) Social Empowerment and Self-Reliance

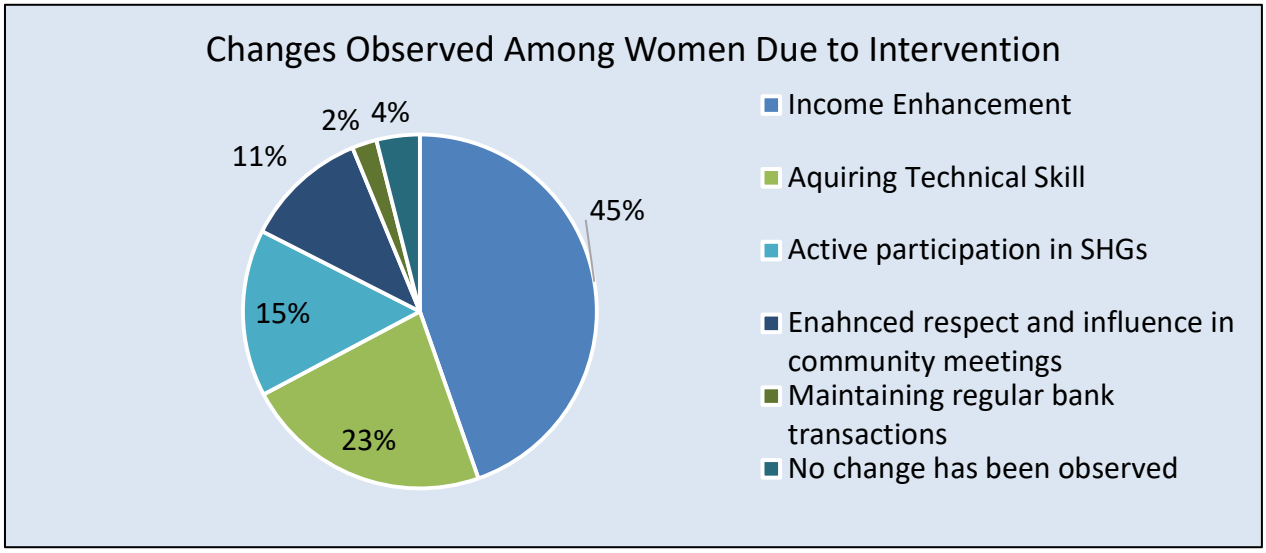
The program had a social impact on women's life, with over 95% of women beneficiaries reported that it increased self-reliance among them. and improved family status. Women gained greater respect and recognition within their communities, with over 96% women reported that their social standing enhanced after joining the program. The initiative also fostered solidarity among participants through group learning and peer mentoring, through the formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) that promote savings and micro-entrepreneurship.

c) Enhanced Decision Making Power

The program has created positive impact on women's empowerment, household decision making. After completing training, ~93% of women reported feeling more empowered to make financial and career related decisions and their status within the family improved after they started earning. It reflects growing confidence, independence, and respect among trained women in both personal and community spaces.

d) Changes Observed at the Individual Level

At the individual level, ~45% of the women beneficiaries observed a clear increase in income, while ~23% gained new technical skills and ~15% became active participants in activities of SHGs. Additionally, ~11% felt more respected and influential in community meetings. It shows positive impact of the program in both economic and social empowerment of the women.



Case Study: Manthepuri Vinnu: Driving Towards Self-Reliance

Manthepuri Vinnu, a 25-year-old graduate from Ramakrishnapur of Warangal district. He belongs to an agriculture based family. In his village, there was a growing demand for trained drivers, especially for tractors and cultivators, as many farmers lacked driving skills or valid licenses. To meet this need, Vinnu enrolled in the Driving Skill Training Program conducted in Huzurabad under the initiative.

The training was delivered by two experienced trainers using two vehicles, providing hands on learning for a small group of four participants. Through the program, Vinnu not only learned to drive but also successfully obtained his driving license, fulfilling a long-standing personal goal. Some of his batchmates went on to buy their own tractors, while others found employment in nearby towns and cities, contributing to improved financial stability for their families.

For Vinnu, the training was more than just a technical course, it was a gateway to independence. By driving on his family farm and assisting other farmers, he increased his family's income and reduced their reliance on external labor. His success inspired other youth in his community to join similar programs, seeing driving as a reliable means of livelihood and self-employment.

Vinnu believes that driving is a lifelong skill that can open diverse income opportunities, such as starting small driving schools or transport services. He also emphasized the need for more trainers, extended training duration, and stipends to support trainees' travel and learning expenses.

e) Enhanced Decision Making Power

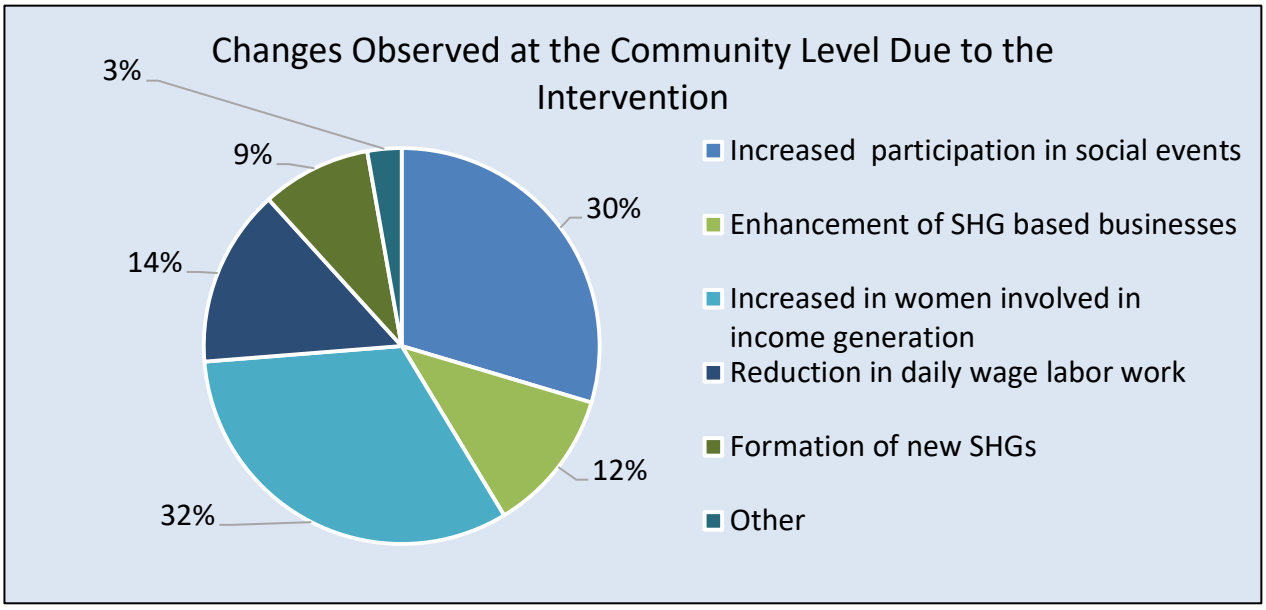
The program has created positive impact on women's empowerment, household decision making. After completing training, ~93% of women reported feeling more empowered to make financial and career related decisions and their status within the family improved after they started earning. It reflects growing confidence, independence, and respect among trained women in both personal and community spaces.

f) Changes Observed at the Individual Level

At the individual level, ~45% of the women beneficiaries observed a clear increase in income, while ~23% gained new technical skills and ~15% became active participants in activities of SHGs. Additionally, ~11% felt more respected and influential in community meetings. It shows positive impact of the program in both economic and social empowerment of the women.

g) Changes Observed at the Community Level

At the community level, collective participation by women led to broader changes within the villages. About 32% of respondents observed an increase in their involvement in income-generating activities, and ~30% reported greater participation in social events. Furthermore, 12% noted the expansion of SHG based businesses, and new SHGs were formed in several locations, creating an ecosystem for women's economic cooperation and peer support.



v. Case Study of Entrepreneurs

Kondapaka Manjula: Empowerment through Computer Embroidery Training

Kondapaka Manjula, a 37-year-old graduate from Metpally (Karimnagar), represents the aspirations of many rural women seeking to improve their livelihoods through modern skill-based opportunities. Before joining the Computer Embroidery Training under the Saksham Gram Project supported, she had no prior experience with embroidery work or exposure to computerized

embroidery machines. Her curiosity to learn a new and in demand skill, combined with encouragement from local coordinator, motivated her to enrol in the program.

The training, conducted in Huzurabad. It was designed to introduce participants to the fundamentals of computerized embroidery, including machine operation, thread setting, safety practices, and understanding single head and multi head embroidery systems. The two month course combined both theoretical and practical learning, ensuring that trainees gained hands on experience with embroidery machines. She explained that five trainers were there for the batch and the learning environment was comfortable, and each participant received individual attention. Manjula rated the teaching highly effective, though she felt the training duration could have been slightly extended for more in-depth practice.

While the training equipped Manjula with valuable technical knowledge, the high cost of purchasing a computer embroidery machine limited her ability to start her own venture. Despite this, she described the experience as “life-changing”, as it boosted her self-confidence, enhanced her technical literacy, and gave her a sense of empowerment. Manjula now believes she can take up any work with the right support and plans to explore ways to continue practicing her skills through shared access or cooperative ownership of embroidery machines.

She also recognizes the long term potential of computer embroidery as a livelihood option, especially for women entrepreneurs. In her view, it can provide consistent income opportunities during festive and wedding seasons, and its market can grow through local boutiques and tailoring units. However, she emphasized the need for continued post training support, particularly access to credit, machines, and job linkages, to help women like her convert their training into sustainable employment.

Similarly, **Shanigarapu Rajitha**, a 29-year-old woman from a farming family, exemplifies the impact of the Women Skill Development Project. Educated up to the intermediate level, she had spent several years working as an agricultural labourer before enrolling in the tailoring training program. Her enthusiasm and leadership motivated many other women in her village to participate. Three-month tailoring course was conducted in her village by a master tailor, where Rajitha offered her own home as the training venue. After completing the training, she and other participants began taking local stitching orders, earning Rs 1,500 to 2,000 per month. Encouraged by this success, Rajitha invested in her own sewing machine and started a small tailoring business, earning a steady income of about Rs 2,000 monthly. Beyond improving her family’s finances, she became a mentor and role model for other women, sharing her skills and encouraging them to pursue self-employment. Her journey from a daily wage labourer to a confident entrepreneur and community leader reflects how skill development, determination, and community support can drive women’s empowerment and create lasting socio-economic change in rural areas.

3.2.3. Organic Farming Initiative

The Organic Farming Initiative, implemented under the Saksham Gram Project aimed to promote sustainable agriculture practices among rural farmers by reducing dependence on chemical inputs and improving soil health. The initiative focused on training farmers in natural farming methods, providing organic input kits, and building awareness about eco-friendly cultivation techniques that enhance productivity, profitability, and long-term sustainability.

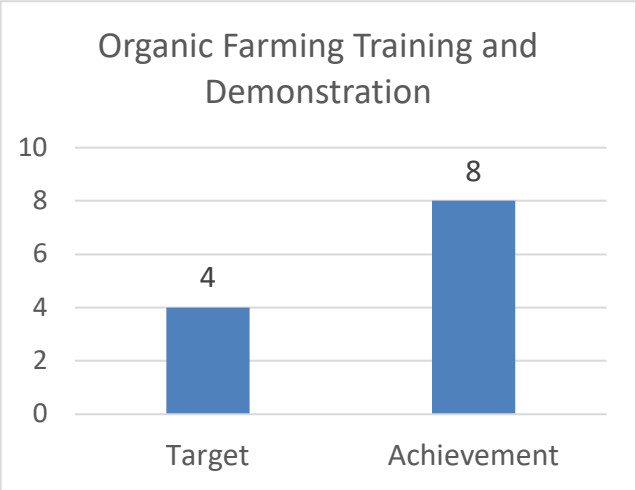
i. Project Objective

The project was designed to:

a) Promote organic and eco-friendly farming methods for long-term soil fertility and sustainability.
b) Reduce the dependence of farmers on chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
c) Improve crop yield, input efficiency, and farmers' income through organic techniques.
d) Support farmers with inputs, training, and market linkages to strengthen organic farming systems.

ii. Implementation and Farmer Participation

The project was implemented in multiple villages through Gram Mitras, who helped identify and mobilize interested farmers. Training sessions and on-field demonstrations were conducted to build farmers' technical knowledge of organic methods.



The project team successfully conducted 8 organic farming training and demonstration, doubling its initial target of 4.

The training focused on practical techniques such as the preparation and use of biofertilizers (jeevamrut and panchagavya), biopesticides, green manuring, crop rotation, and natural pest management using neem based solutions. Farmers were also guided on maintaining farm records, composting, and preparing for organic certification.

iii. Support Provided by Rallis India

Tata Rallis provided farmers with organic input kits that included biofertilizers, biopesticides, and composting units. Regular follow-up visits were conducted to monitor crop performance and offer technical guidance. The company also assisted farmers with soil testing, water management support, and advice on irrigation infrastructure to improve productivity during dry periods. Some farmers were guided on building storage units to minimize post-harvest losses and on maintaining proper financial planning through savings and emergency funds.

iv. Key Outcomes

The project has brought visible improvement in both productivity and sustainability for participating farmers. Before joining the project, farmers relied heavily on chemical inputs, which increased costs and gradually reduced soil fertility. After adopting organic methods, they reported:

a) Improved crop yield and soil fertility, leading to long-term productivity gains.
b) Reduction in input costs due to the use of self-prepared organic fertilizers and compost.

c) Healthier produce and better environmental outcomes through chemical-free cultivation.
d) Improved income stability, as many farmers now sell surplus produce locally while using part of their yield for household consumption.

Case Study: Thallapally Srinivas
Promoting Sustainable Farming through Organic Practices

Thallapally Srinivas, a 46-year-old farmer from Narsingapur village, Karimnagar, shifted from chemical based farming to organic cultivation through the Saksham Gram Project. He learned about the program from Gram Mitra and joined to improve soil health and reduce input costs. Through training, he learned to prepare bio-fertilizers like Jeevamrut and Panchagavya, use neem-based pest control, and practice crop rotation and composting.

Program supported in organic input kits and regular follow up visits. Srinivas reduced input expenses and improved crop productivity. His income increased, allowing him to invest in irrigation and storage facilities while saving for emergencies. He now consumes part of his organic produce and sells the rest locally.

Despite initial challenges mainly adapting to new tools and changing traditional methods Srinivas persisted and successfully integrated organic practices into his routine. As a result, his farm's productivity and income improved noticeably, and he reinvested part of his earnings into irrigation infrastructure and storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses. He also set aside funds for savings and emergencies, strengthening his family's financial resilience.

Currently, Srinivas uses part of his organic produce for household consumption and sells the surplus within the village, ensuring both food security and local supply. Looking ahead, he is eager to diversify his income by producing organic inputs and promoting organic farming among fellow farmers. He believes that continued adoption of these practices builds stability, morale, and confidence within the farming community.

Srinivas's success shows how organic farming can boost productivity, cut costs, and ensure sustainability. His journey reflects the growing shift toward eco-friendly farming practices that improve livelihoods and promote long-term soil health.

v. Challenges and Adaptation

While the shift from conventional to organic farming brought multiple benefits, farmers initially faced challenges such as adapting to new tools, managing pest control without chemicals, and understanding record keeping for certification. Continuous technical guidance and peer learning among farmers helped them overcome these challenges. Over time, farmers gained confidence in managing their farms organically and began sharing knowledge with others.

vi. Future Scope and Sustainability

Most participating farmers have expressed willingness to continue and expand organic practices. They are also exploring diversified income sources such as producing and selling bio-inputs, compost, and other farm byproducts. Farmers believe that continuing these practices builds routine, stability, and motivation within the farming community. However, they emphasized the need for market linkages, collective branding, and training continuity to ensure the long-term success of organic farming.

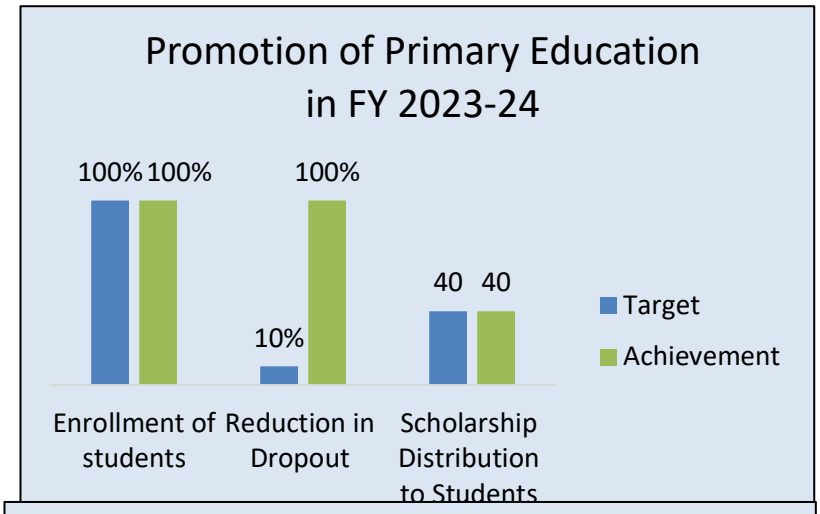
3.3. Education

The Promotion of Primary Education initiative under the Saksham Gram Project, implemented by Rallis India in 9 schools of Karimnagar and Warangal districts. It focused on strengthening foundational learning and improving access to quality education for children in rural communities. The project aimed to reduce school dropouts, enhance academic performance, and foster holistic child development through Village Learning Centres (VLCs), Shikshan Ranjan Kendras, and the active involvement of Shikshak Mitras (village educators). Project appointed 9 teachers in each of the selected schools.

3.3.1. Project Objectives

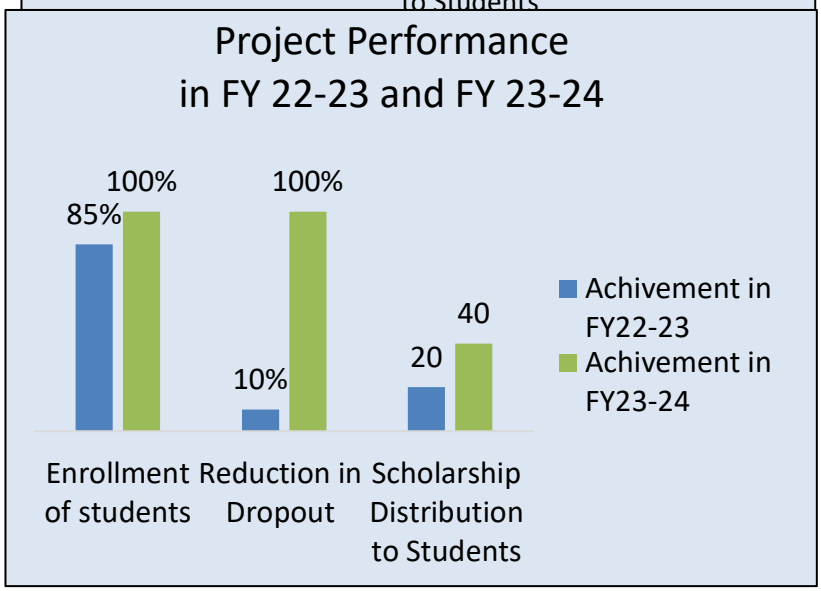
The project focused on addressing educational gaps, strengthening learning outcomes, and ensuring inclusive and sustainable community participation. The project aimed to:

a) Ensure 100% enrolment of eligible children in schools and reduce dropouts.
b) Strengthen foundational learning through remedial education and after school support.
c) Provide scholarships and incentives to encourage consistent school attendance.
d) Promote community involvement in children's education and enhance parental participation.
e) Build the capacity of Shikshak Mitras and schoolteachers to improve learning outcomes.



3.3.2. Project Outcome

The project achieved remarkable progress in promoting education across villages in Karimnagar and Warangal districts. In the FY 2023-24, it ensured 100% enrolment of all eligible children in schools and successfully reduced the dropout rate to zero, surpassing the set target of 10%. Additionally, 40 students received scholarships, which is double the number achieved in the previous financial year (FY 2022–23). Project improved school participation, ensuring educational continuity, and enhancing students' motivation and academic engagement in the region.



3.3.3. Implementation

The project was delivered through Village Learning Centres (VLCs). Or Community Learning Centres (CLCs), which served as community based learning hubs. These centres provided after school tutoring, remedial learning, and activity based teaching to improve children's academic performance and overall well-being.

Shikshak Mitras are trained local educators who played a central role in facilitating learning, conducting home visits, and engaging with parents to ensure regular attendance. They also organized extracurricular activities, awareness sessions, and mother child interaction programs to enhance both learning outcomes and social development.

Rallis India supported the centres with educational materials, digital aids, and continuous teacher training. Partnerships with local schools and community organizations ensured alignment with the state curriculum and improved coordination with formal schooling systems.


3.3.4. Impact of the Project

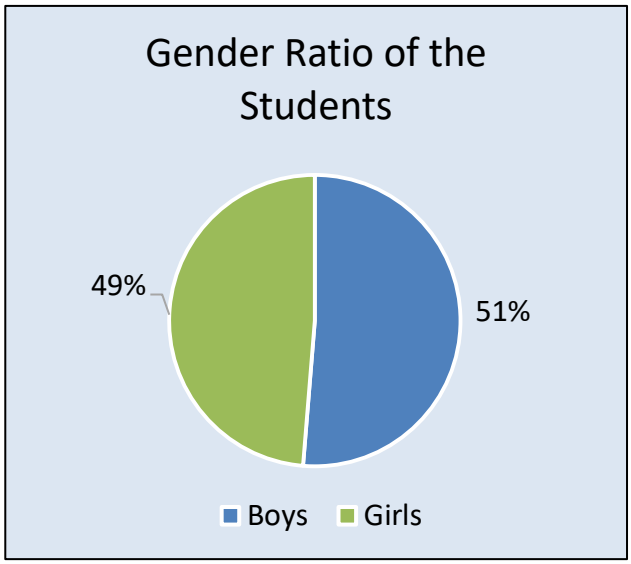
The project has led academic and social improvements among rural children. Teachers and parents observed better reading, writing, and comprehension skills, along with improved study habits and confidence among students.

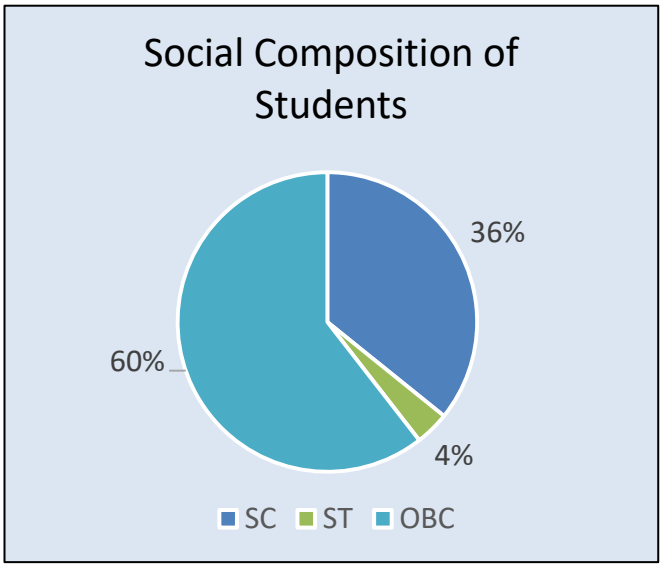
a) Inclusive Education for the Children from Marginalised Section

Project demonstrated social and gender inclusion in its implementation. It ensured participation from diverse social groups. In July'24 total 271 students of 1st to 5th std were enrolled. All the students belong to marginalised sections of the society. Around 60% of students were belonging to the OBC category, 36% from SC and 4% from ST. It reflects equitable outreach to marginalized sections of society.

Project succeded in promoting equal access to education for both genders. The gender ratio indicates near parity, with 51% boys and 49% girls. Project emphasized on inclusive approach, ensuring that educational opportunities reach all sections of the community, particularly those who are economically and socially disadvantaged. It fostered equity and social empowerment through education.

b) Enhancement of Learning Level

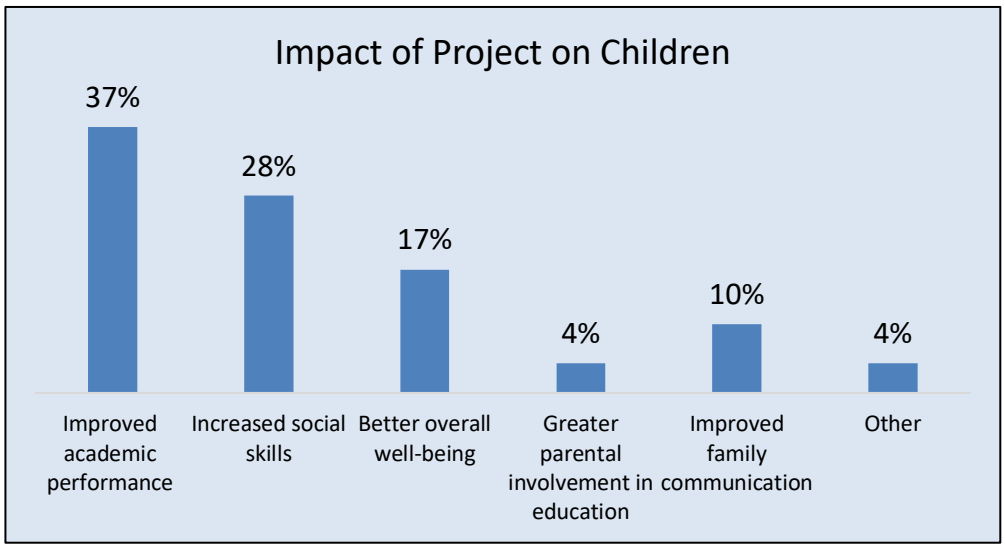




The VLCs have a measurable impact on children's learning level and overall development. Primary research shows that, around 74% of the parents responded positively that their children demonstrated significant improvement in their ability to read and write, while 26% responded that their children showed moderate improvement. It highlights the project's success in strengthening foundational literacy skills. A similar trend was observed in children's behaviour and study habits, where 74% of the parents responded that their children has shown notable progress. It indicates better discipline and learning engagement.

Parental involvement has also increased substantially, with over 74% of parents reported that frequent positive interactions with teachers and

the VLC increased, it fostered a supportive home learning environment. Through the Saksham Gram project children gained access to structured learning environments and personalized support which were previously unavailable in their villages. It has also enhanced parent-teacher collaboration and increased community ownership of education, creating a culture that values learning and child development.



The project contributed to children's holistic growth ~37% of parents noted improved academic performance, 28% observed enhanced social skills, and 17% reported better overall well-being of their children. It demonstrates that VLCs improved academic learning and built stronger family school relationships and promoted socio-emotional development, creating a lasting impact on both students and their communities.

3.3.5. Case Studies

Case Study: Transforming Rural Education through the Saksham Gram

According to Mr. N. Nageshwar Rao, a teacher associated with the program for over a year, the project has impacted both students and the wider community. Most children enrolled come from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, where irregular attendance and poor foundational skills were common challenges. The Shikshan Ranjan Kendras (SRKs) and VLCs established under the project provided structured, supportive environments for students to enhance their literacy, numeracy, and overall academic performance.

Mr Rao explained that the project's educational interventions were carefully aligned with the local learning needs and cultural context. Teaching methods incorporated local examples, play based learning, and activity based approaches, making education relatable and engaging. Teachers have adopted innovative practices such as the "play-way" method, which helped in sustaining interest and curiosity among students while improving comprehension and creativity.

He told that a key highlight of the project is the integration of technology and digital tools within the learning process. CLCs provided access to computers and learning materials, enabling children to develop essential digital and soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem solving. These interventions resulted in measurable improvements, students displayed greater confidence, improved academic performance, and better classroom participation.

Mr Rao further added that the project also enhanced parental engagement in education. Parents reported increased communication with teachers and greater involvement in their children's academic progress. This created a strong ecosystem of shared responsibility between schools, families, and the community.

He explained that the program's monitoring and resource allocation are efficient and transparent, ensuring maximum utilization of materials and infrastructure. Continuous training and capacity building initiatives for teachers have further strengthened classroom delivery and educational quality. Looking ahead, the project aims to ensure long term sustainability by fostering community ownership. Local partnerships, regular monitoring, and capacity building of village educators have been established to ensure that learning centres continue to function effectively even beyond the project's direct support.

Some other case studies:

Thanugula Anjali, a B.A. graduate from a marginalized community, broke social barriers to become a r Shikshak Mitra in her village. Despite facing caste-based resistance, her determination and outreach efforts gradually built community trust. With training and mentorship from Tata Rallis, she turned the VLC into a vibrant hub of learning, inspiring social inclusion and gender equality. Today, her VLC operates in two shifts and stands as a model of educational transformation.

Similarly, Yelka Saujanya, a widowed mother from Narsingapur, rebuilt her life after joining the Saksham Gram Project as a VLC teacher. The opportunity provided her with both financial stability and social respect. Through training and guidance, she became an effective and creative educator, engaging students and empowering her community.

Among students, K. Raman Kumar from Baopet village stands out. Coming from a poor farming family, he was once irregular in school. Encouraged by the Gram Mitra and the VLC team, he improved his attendance and performance. Now he is performing well in academics. Raman dreams of becoming a doctor, inspiring other families in his village to value education and send their children to the VLC.

3.4. Health

Rallis India implemented "Rural Health and Nutrition" initiative to improve the health, nutrition, and food security of rural communities in Karimnagar and Warangal districts. The project focused on 3 major components promoting kitchen gardens, increasing Maternal and Child Health (MCH) awareness, and supporting routine vaccinations for women and children. It was designed to help families adopt healthy practices, reduce malnutrition, and improve overall wellbeing through sustainable and community led interventions.

3.4.1. Implementation and Coverage

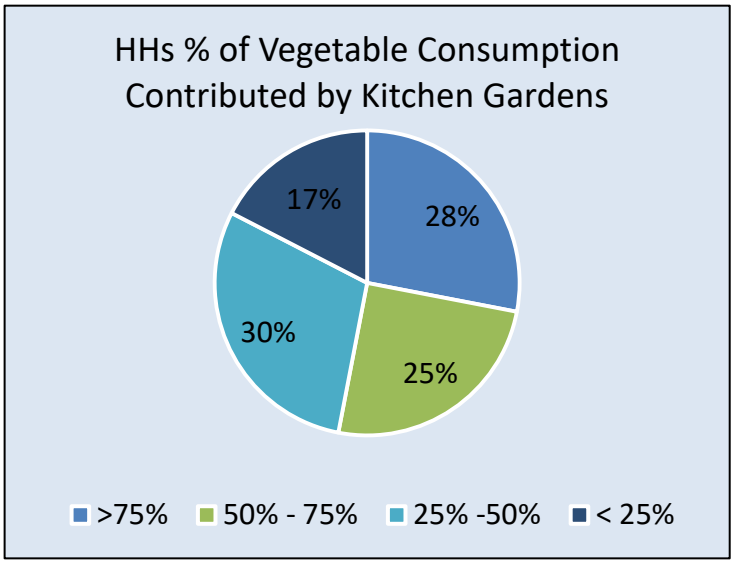
During FY 2023-24, the project achieved all its planned project targets. A total of 2,750 kitchen gardens were established across villages, ensuring households had regular access to fresh vegetables. In addition, 32 awareness sessions on maternal and child health were organized, focusing on nutrition, hygiene, and preventive care. The program also conducted 100 vaccination drives for women and children under the age of five in the targeted geography.

Health Intervention in FY 2023-24	Target	Achievement
Kitchen garden	2750	2750
MCH awareness session	32	32
Vaccination of U-5 children and women	100	100

3.4.2. Impact of Kitchen Gardens on Nutrition and Food Security

a) Impact on Household Nutrition and Food Security

The kitchen garden initiative became one of the most impactful components of the program. Primary survey data shows that over 60% of households benefited directly from kitchen gardens and related health activities. Among these, 65% of families reported consuming vegetables from their gardens almost daily, while another 30% used them weekly. For many, this practice replaced the need to purchase vegetables from markets, saving costs and ensuring freshness.



Around 28% of households responded that they met over 75% of their weekly vegetable consumption from their gardens. It has led to

improved household diets, better nutritional intake, and enhanced food security throughout the year.

b) Improved Dietary Diversity

The project also encouraged families to include a diverse range of foods in their daily meals. It was found through the primary research that ~44% of Households (HHs) consumed fruits, vegetables, and proteins at least 3-4 times a week, and 23% ate a balanced diet daily. This improvement in dietary diversity reduced dependency on limited staple foods and improved the nutritional status of rural households.

c) Improved Children Nutrition

Children under five year had significant benefit. Around 61% of households reported visible improvement in their children's health and nutrition, reflecting better dietary intake and increased awareness among mothers.

3.4.3. Vaccination and Health Awareness

The project strengthened access to preventive healthcare. The data indicates that almost 80% of eligible children were vaccinated, either through project led drives or with support from local health departments. It was possible due to consistent awareness campaigns and collaboration with local ASHA and Anganwadi workers. However it was observed that ~20% HHs were faced challenges and did not vaccinate their children.

The MCH awareness sessions conducted during the year helped women understand the importance of nutrition during pregnancy, child immunization schedules, and sanitation practices. These sessions also encouraged open discussions on women's health issues, creating a supportive environment for behavioural change.

3.4.4. Improvement in Overall Well-being and Community Impact

The project strengthened food and health security across participating villages. Around 83% of respondents acknowledged that their household food security and wellbeing improved due to these interventions, with 49% reporting significant positive change. Families expressed that having a kitchen garden ensured daily access to vegetables and built a responsibility toward better health.

Mostly women managed the kitchen gardens, they contributed to household nutrition and income stability and also gained confidence and leadership within their communities. The initiative improved physical health and advanced social empowerment.

3.5. Community Governance and Empowerment

Community Governance and Empowerment project aimed to bridge the gap between rural citizens and government welfare systems. It focused on enabling households to access social welfare schemes, promoting digital and financial literacy, and strengthening local governance institutions. The project empowered individuals, especially women, to actively participate in governance and improve their financial inclusion and livelihood security.

3.5.1. Project Objectives

Objectives of the Community Governance and Empowerment Project are given below:

a) Develop connectivity between villages and government services
b) Facilitate access to government schemes
c) Improve efficiency and transparency in governance
d) Promote awareness and accountability

3.5.2. Project Outcome

a) Facilitating Access to Government Schemes

The project helped community members connect with key Telangana government welfare schemes, such as Mahalakshmi Scheme, Kalyana Lakshmi Yojana, Gruha Jyoti, Aasara Pension, Rythu Beema, Runa Mafi etc. Cumulatively 181 beneficiaries availed support between year 2019 and Dec'24, through these schemes under the convergence initiative, receiving a combined amount of Rs 1.05 crore, ensuring financial relief and social security for rural families.

Scheme	No. of Beneficiaries	Total Amount Received through Scheme (In Rs)	Documents Submitted by Project team along with the Application
Kalyana Laxmi	15	15,16,740	Marriage certificate, Photos, Adhar, Marriage Card, Bank Passbook
Runamafi	52	15,50,000	Evidence of Agriculture, Adhar, PAN card and marginal farmer Bank Passbook
Gruha Jhothi	46	3,53,280	Evidence of residence, Electric Meter Document, Adhar, PAN card and Bank Passbook
Asara Pension	56	11,28,960	Evidence of age, PWD, residence, Electric Meter Document, Adhar, PAN, Bank, Passbook
Rithu Beema	12	60,00,000	Evidence of death, Residence proof, Adhar, PAN card, Bank Passbook
Total	**181**	**1,05,48,980**	

The project team actively supported beneficiaries in preparing and submitting applications for these schemes, ensuring all required documents were in place and it also helped in liaison with the govt department.

It is found through the primary research that, 53% received support in all their applications, while 39% received support for at least one scheme.

Since the team did not charge any monetary fee for their services, each beneficiary contributed through "Shramdan" (voluntary labor) equivalent to four days of work, valued at Rs 550 per day. In total, 181 beneficiaries performed 724 days of Shramdan, amounting to an estimated value of Rs 3,98,200. It fostered a spirit of community participation and ownership in accessing government welfare schemes.

Brief description of each of the schemes is given below:

i. **Mahalakshmi Scheme:** It is a flagship women empowerment initiative, which provides financial assistance of Rs 2,500 per month to women who are heads of their families. In addition, the scheme offers LPG cylinders at a subsidized price of Rs 500 and free RTC bus travel across the state. The program aims to reduce the financial burden on women, promote their mobility, and enhance their role in household and community decision-making.

ii. **Kalyana Lakshmi Yojana:** It provides financial support to BPL families for the marriage of their daughters. Eligible families receive one time assistance to cover marriage related expenses. It offers financial relief to poor households and helps prevent child marriages and promotes social equality by supporting distressed families.

iii. **Gruha Jyoti Scheme:** Under this scheme, all eligible households receive up to 200 units of free electricity per month for domestic use. With the current electricity cost in Telangana at Rs 4.8 per unit, this support saves families ~ Rs 960 per month. The scheme helps reduce the cost of living for low income households and ensures access to electricity without financial stress, improving their quality of life.

iv. **Aasara Pension Scheme:** It provides monthly pensions of Rs 4,016 to elderly citizens, widows, persons with disabilities, weavers, beedi workers, and other vulnerable groups. It is designed to ensure social security and dignity for disadvantaged populations. The scheme supports livelihood stability and provides regular income to families that depend on limited or no sources of earning.

v. **Runa Mafi Scheme :** It offers debt relief to farmers by waiving their outstanding agricultural loans up to Rs 2 lakh. It aims to reduce rural indebtedness and support farmers facing financial distress due to crop failures or poor market conditions. Scheme provides farmers with an opportunity to rebuild their livelihoods and continue farming without economic burden by freeing them from debt.

b) Facilitating Access to other Government Schemes

Project team also supported in convergence for other Govt schemes. A total of 203 beneficiaries availed financial and livelihood support amounting to Rs 5.43 crore through four major Telangana Govt schemes.

Name of Scheme	Amount Received (in Rs)	No of Beneficiaries
B C Bandhu	29,00,000	29
Dhalitha Bhandhu	4,10,00,000	53
KCR Kit	5,46,000	42
Sheep Scheme	98,75,000	79
Total	5,43,21,000	203

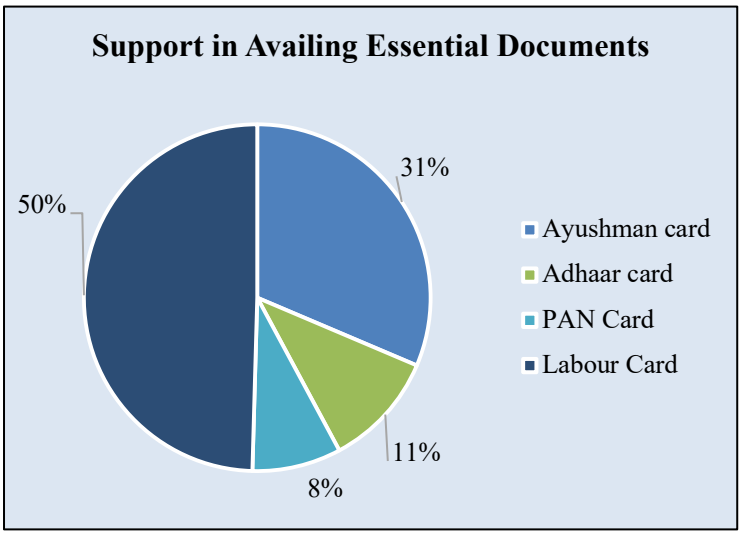
i. **B.C. Bandhu Scheme:** It provided Rs 29 lakh to 29 beneficiaries belonging to the backward classes. It aims to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment by offering financial assistance to start small and medium businesses. Beneficiaries used the financial support to establish auto services, milk parlors, hotels, welding shops, general stores, saloon shops, water plants etc for creating self-employment opportunities.

ii. **Dalitha Bandhu Scheme**: It offered Rs 4.10 crore to 53 beneficiaries, focuses on empowering Dalit families by providing direct financial support to set up sustainable enterprises and promote economic independence. Beneficiaries invested in income generating assets such as tractors, trailers, autos, cars, JCB machines, harvesters, dairy farms, fertilizer shops, supermarkets, general stores, paint shops, and buffaloes etc. Several beneficiaries also started cell shops, ladies' emporiums, and cement brick units etc.

iii. **KCR Kit Scheme**: With Rs 5.46 lakh distributed among 42 women beneficiaries, this health initiative supports pregnant women by providing maternity kits containing essential items for mother and child care, promoting institutional deliveries and maternal health.

iv. **Sheep Scheme**: Supporting 79 beneficiaries with Rs 98.75 lakh, this scheme aims to improve livelihoods among the Golla and Kuruma communities by providing loan of Rs 1.25 lacs to establish sheep units. It aimed to boost rural incomes and strengthen the livestock economy.

c) Facilitating in Availing Essential Documents



The project team helped community members obtain essential government identification and benefit documents. A total of 446 individuals availed support in getting essential documents in FY 2023-24. Among them, 140 people received Ayushman Cards for healthcare coverage, 48 obtained Aadhaar Cards, 37 secured PAN Cards, and 221 received Labour Card for MGNREGA employment related benefits. It strengthened community access to welfare schemes, financial inclusion, and essential social security benefits.

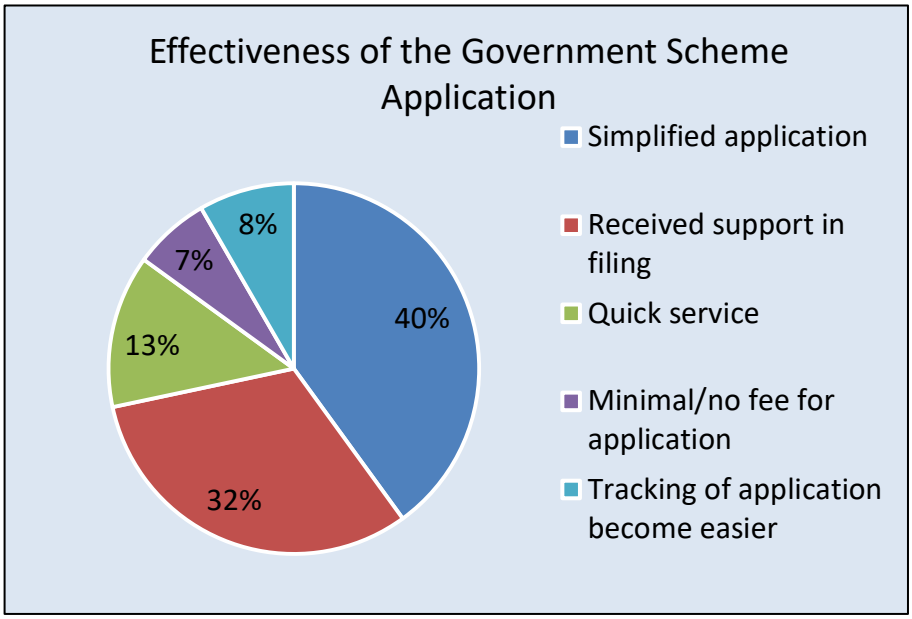
d) Capacity Building of Community Members

Project implemented initiatives to strengthen local capacities and promote inclusive development. During FY 2023-24, a total of 24 Financial and Digital Literacy sessions were organized, enabling community members to manage finances effectively, understand digital transactions, and access online government services. Additionally, 4 Capacity Building sessions for Community Based Organization (CBO) members were conducted to enhance leadership, planning, and coordination skills among local representatives. It aimed to empower CBOs to actively participate in village development processes and improve governance transparency. Further, 16 Disaster Preparedness sessions were organized to equip communities with knowledge and practical strategies for managing risks during natural calamities. These sessions emphasized community-based response mechanisms and resilience planning.

Initiatives in FY 2023-24	Target	Achievement
Financial and Digital literacy sessions	24	24
Capacity building of CBO members	4	4
Disaster preparedness sessions	16	16

3.5.3. Project Impact

a) Effective in Access to Government Schemes



The Project had an impact on improving access to government schemes and financial inclusion in rural communities. It simplified the application process, with 39% of respondents confirming that the procedures became easier to understand and follow. Around 31% of

beneficiaries received direct support in filling out forms, which reduced dependency on intermediaries and minimized errors during submission. Additionally, 13% of participants appreciated the quick service and timely response from field team, while 6.5% reported that applications required either no fee or a minimal charge, reducing the financial burden on poor families. Another 8% stated that tracking applications became more transparent and convenient, ensuring accountability and confidence among villagers.

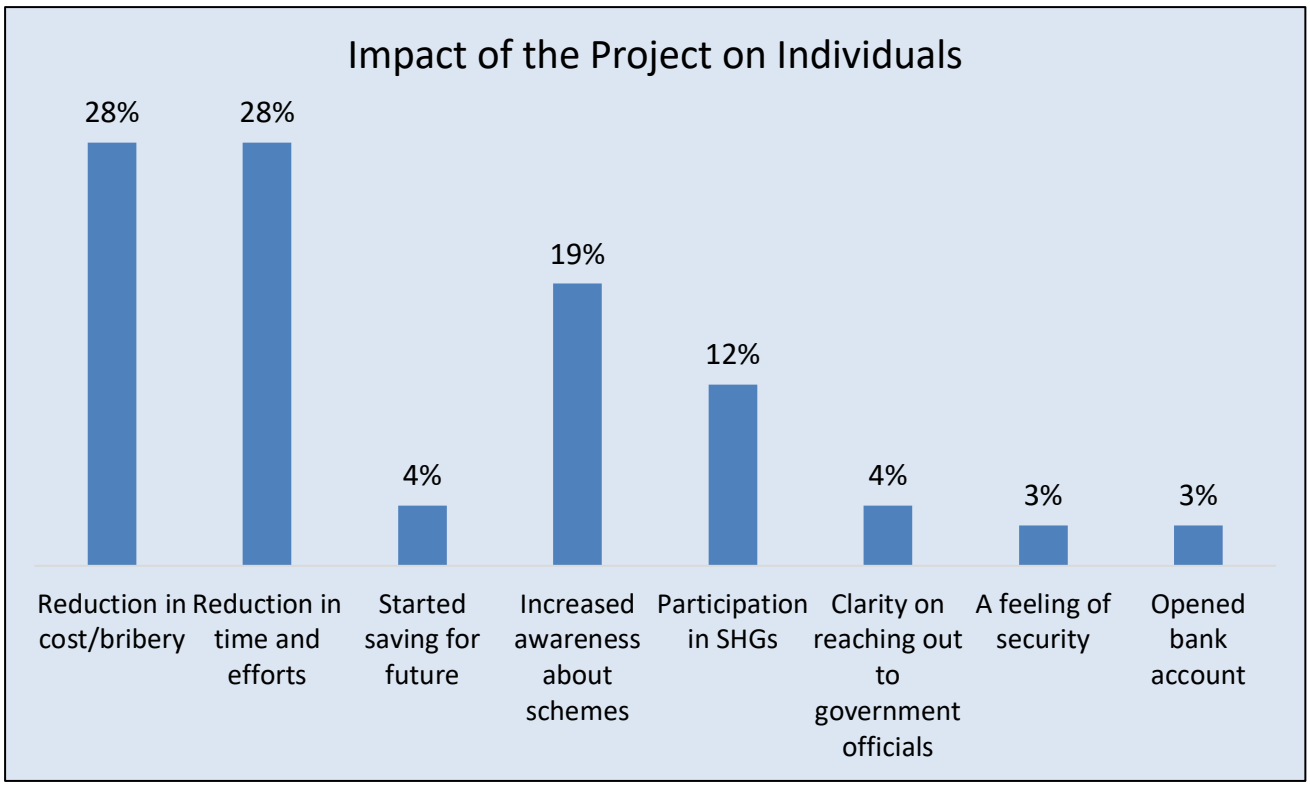
Project improved transparency, reduced time and cost, and built trust between villagers and government institutions making welfare schemes more accessible and efficient for marginalized communities.

b) Impact of the Project on Individual

Project brought tangible improvements to individuals' lives by simplifying access to government schemes and promoting financial inclusion. About 28% of beneficiaries experienced a reduction in cost of application of scheme or reduction in bribery, another 28% benefited from a reduction in time and effort during the application process.

Nearly 19% reported increased awareness about government schemes, which helped them make informed decisions and access new opportunities. Around 12% became active members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), strengthening their financial and social participation. A few beneficiaries also began saving for the future and gained clarity in reaching out to government officials, reflecting enhanced confidence.

Additionally, some beneficiaries felt a greater sense of security through insurance coverage and



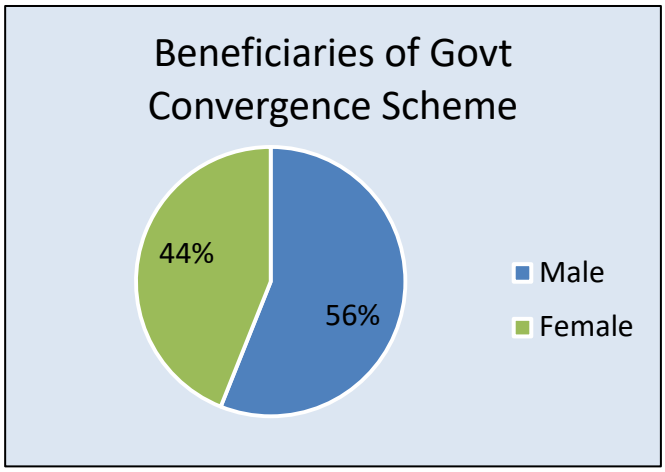
opened new bank accounts, signaling growing financial inclusion in rural areas. Overall, the project empowered individuals to access resources independently and engage confidently with local governance systems.

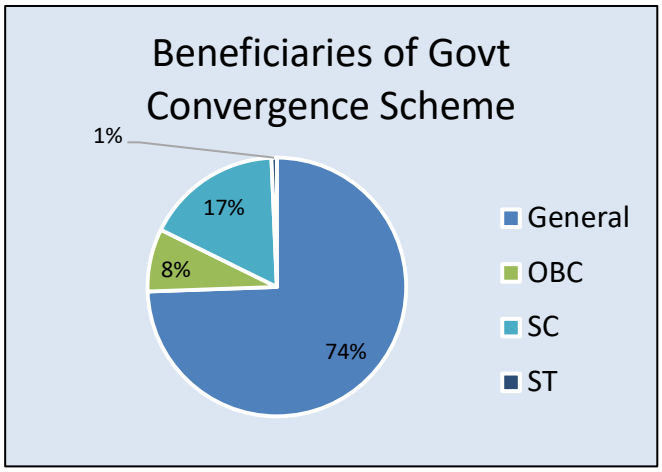
The project reduced bureaucratic delays and dependence on middlemen, ensuring timely submission of documents. Women beneficiaries especially valued the sense of security provided by access to

insurance and pension schemes. The program also encouraged financial inclusion, with some participants opening new bank accounts to manage benefits and savings. The support of Gram Mitras and community volunteers under the project proved instrumental in helping rural citizens access schemes smoothly.

c) Inclusive Participation: Gender and Social Inclusion

Around 56% of beneficiaries were male and 44% were female. This near balanced participation highlights inclusion of women in accessing the government schemes. Similarly, project brought social inclusion as ~26% beneficiaries belong to marginalized section. It underscores the project's effort to reach marginalized and economically weaker sections.





4. Analysis

The observations and findings through primary research of the "Saksham Gram" program have been analysed on the OECD-DAC global framework REECIS as below:

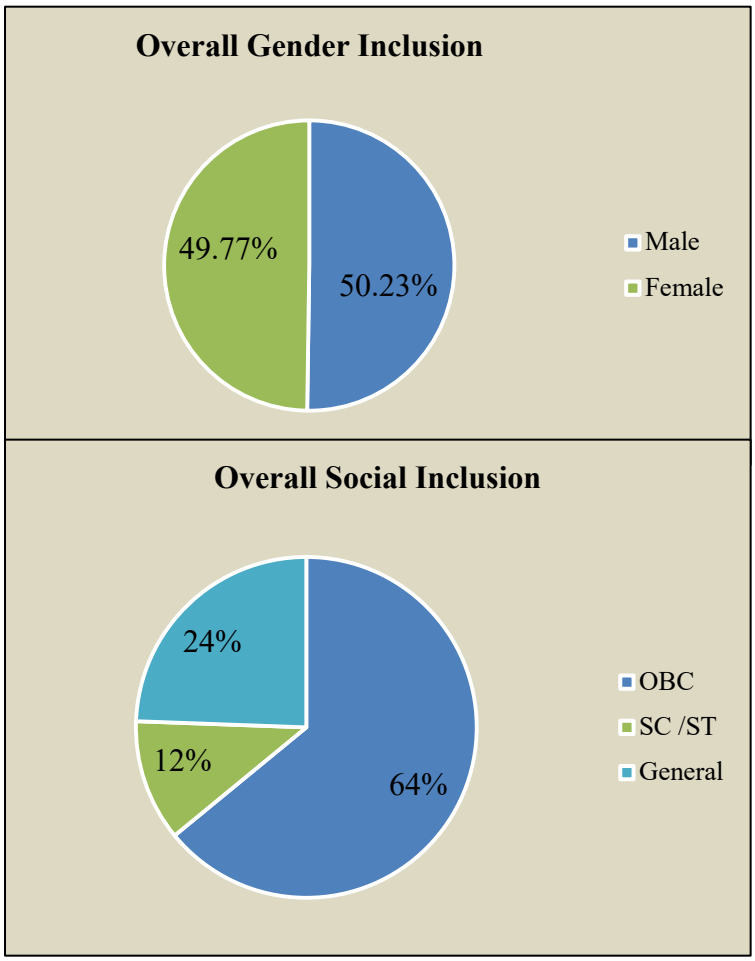
4.1. Inclusiveness

The Saksham Gram project targeted women, youth, smallholders, and marginalized communities. It delivered services at the doorstep. Field teams and Gram Mitras actively identified and mobilized vulnerable households.

It demonstrated inclusiveness by ensuring balanced participation across gender, social, and educational backgrounds.

a) Gender Inclusion

The project kept gender balance a priority. Overall Male (50.23%) and female (49.77%) representation was nearly equal, showing gender equity in project access and benefits. Women received dedicated skilling, sewing machines, and support to form SHGs. Women beneficiaries reported increased self-reliance and improved household decision-making.



b) Social Inclusion

The project reached socially marginalized communities. Around 64% of beneficiaries belonged to OBC and ~12% to SC / ST groups, showing priority to marginalized sections. School and VLC enrolment prioritized children from OBC, SC and ST backgrounds (60% OBC, 36% SC, 4% ST). Rationed scholarships, home visits, and local Shikshan Mitras removed barriers to learning for children.

The program also reflected religious inclusion, with 97% Hindu, 2.3% Muslim, and 0.46% Christian participants. It covered all community members from all educational level from those who never attended school (~9%) to graduates and postgraduates ensuring opportunities suited to diverse learning capacities.

c) Economical and Geographical Inclusion

The program focused on economic inclusion. It trained youths and placed them in jobs or enterprises. It trained women in tailoring and embroidery and engaged them in livelihood activities. It supported households to access government welfare schemes and lowered entry barriers to social protection.
Services were decentralized. Village Learning Centres, local digital centres, and Organic plot demonstrations etc brought services close to people. It built sustained inclusion through capacity building. It ran financial and digital literacy sessions, CBO training, and disaster preparedness workshops to strengthen local governance links.

4.2. Relevance

Saskham Gram project was relevant to the socio-economic realities of selected villages in Karimnagar and Warangal districts. The project design and implementation directly responded to the priority needs identified in the need assessment studies, which highlighted gaps in livelihoods, education, health, and governance systems.
Selected villages are predominantly agrarian, with small and marginal farmers, mainly depending on rain-fed agriculture and facing challenges like irregular rainfall, low productivity, limited irrigation, and lack of market access. Saksham Gram addressed these issues by promoting organic farming, introducing Agri based enterprises, and supporting youth and women in developing alternative income sources through skill-based training. Project created self-employment and job opportunities within the villages, reducing dependence on seasonal migration.
The project's education interventions were equally relevant. The need assessment highlighted a shortage of teachers, low learning levels, and irregular attendance among children. Saksham Gram's establishment of Village Learning Centres (VLCs) and appointment of Shikshak Mitras improved access to quality learning and reduced dropout rates.
The community governance and empowerment component of the project was another critical response to local needs. The need assessment had shown that villagers struggled with documentation and access to government welfare schemes due to low literacy and bureaucratic barriers. Through Gram Mitras and digital literacy sessions, the project helped families access welfare benefits.

4.3. Effectiveness

The project interventions improved economic stability and social inclusion and built local capacity, enhanced self-reliance, and fostered a sense of community ownership. Saksham Gram addressed both immediate and long-term needs of the region by integrating livelihoods, education, health, and governance under one framework, making it effective and impactful initiative for inclusive and sustainable rural transformation.

In terms of livelihood enhancement, project effectively tackled challenges of unemployment, lower income level and lack of alternate income sources. Project introduced diversified livelihood options through skill training and enterprise creation. Youth were trained and placed in jobs or self-employment, directly addressing rural unemployment and migration issues. Establishing local enterprises such as flour mills, digital centers, driving services, vegetable trolleys, and mini rice mills responded to the identified need for village based economic activities and reduced dependence on

external markets. The promotion of organic farming further addressed agricultural sustainability concerns by reducing input costs and improving soil fertility.

The women's empowerment component effectively responded to the limited income opportunities, low financial literacy, and weak participation of women in economic decision making. Through the Women Skill Development and Employability project, women were trained engaged in income generating activities such as tailoring, embroidery, and beauty services.

The education interventions it resolved the educational gaps such as high dropout rates, shortage of teachers, and poor foundational learning. Establishment of Village Learning Centres (VLCs) and appointment of Shikshak Mitras provided addressed the educational exclusion of marginalized groups By creating community-based learning hubs, the project resolved both accessibility and quality related education needs.

In the health and nutrition domain, it addressed child malnutrition, and low access to preventive healthcare as major gaps. Project effectively responded through the establishment of kitchen gardens, MCH awareness sessions, and vaccination drives.

In the area of community governance and empowerment it addressed weak institutional linkages, low awareness of government welfare schemes, and dependency on intermediaries. The project successfully bridged this gap by facilitating access to key state welfare programs such as Rythu Beema, Dalitha Bandhu, Gruha Jyoti, Aasara Pension, and Kalyana Lakshmi. The project also assisted in obtaining essential documents like Aadhaar, PAN, and Ayushman cards directly resolving the access to documentation issues.

4.4. Efficiency

The project used resources efficiently to maximize reach and impact. It met or exceeded most targets (youth trained and placed, kitchen gardens, enrolment, scheme facilitation) while delivering services across eight villages with the same set of Gram Mitras, VLCs and partner trainers. Community contribution through "shramdan" and use of local trainers and SHGs reduced implementation costs and built ownership. Interventions were implemented within timeline and at scalable level. Efficiency limits remain in a few areas such as ~20% of households missed vaccination drives and enterprises need stronger market linkages and working capital.

4.5. Coherence

a) Alignment with Government of India Schemes

The project's integrated approach covering livelihoods, education, health, and governance reflects a convergence model that complements national priorities for rural development, women's empowerment, skill enhancement, and inclusive growth.

Skill Development and Livelihood Promotion

The project's Youth Skill Development and Employability and Women Skill Development and Employability initiatives align with the objectives of:

i. **Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)**: By training youth and facilitating self-employment, placements, project supports DDU-GKY's mandate of enhancing employability of rural youth aged 15-35 years through skill training and placements.

ii. **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)**: The project's community based vocational trainings in driving, computer literacy, and digital services are consistent with PMKVY's objectives of skill certification and employability enhancement.

Women Empowerment and Gender Equality

The Women Skill Development and Employability Project and the formation of SHGs are closely aligned with:

iii. **Mission Shakti (Ministry of Women & Child Development):** By empowering women through skills, financial literacy, and self-employment, the project contributed to Mission Shakti's goal of making women self-reliant and enhancing their role in decision-making.

iv. **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM**): The project's focus on women led enterprises, tailoring and embroidery training, SHG formation, and livelihood promotion corresponds directly with NRLM's goal of enabling poor women to access sustainable livelihood opportunities.

v. **Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra (PMMSK)**: The mentoring support, peer learning, and SHG strengthening under Saksham Gram reflect PMMSK's objective of providing community-level support for women's social and economic empowerment.

Agriculture and Sustainable Farming

The Organic Farming Initiative under Saksham Gram aligns with the following programs:

vi. **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY):** The promotion of natural fertilizers, bio-pesticides, and crop rotation practices reflected the goals of PKVY, which encourages chemical-free, sustainable agriculture.

vii. **National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**: The initiative's focus on soil health, eco-friendly farming, and organic input kits directly supported NMSA's objectives of sustainable farming systems and climate resilience.

Health, Nutrition, and Sanitation

The Rural Health and Nutrition Initiative of the project complement several GoI health and nutrition schemes:

viii. **Poshan Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission):** The establishment of kitchen gardens and MCH sessions aligned directly with Poshan Abhiyaan's goal of improving maternal and child nutrition through community-based interventions.

ix. **National Health Mission (NHM)**: The project's vaccination drives and collaboration with ASHA and Anganwadi workers strengthened NHM's objective of achieving universal immunization and preventive healthcare in rural areas.

Governance, Inclusion, and Social Security

The Community Governance and Empowerment component of the project aligns with the Government's vision for transparent, participatory, and inclusive governance:

x. **Digital India Mission:** The establishment of digital service centers and financial and digital literacy sessions promoted digital inclusion and align with the mission's goal of empowering citizens through digital access**.**

xi. **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY):** By supporting over villagers in obtaining Aadhaar, PAN, labour, and Ayushman cards, the project contributed to PMJDY's vision of universal access to banking and social security.

xii. **Aadhaar Enabled Service Delivery**: Simplifying access to government benefited and reduced middlemen reflect the principles of Aadhaar-based direct benefit transfer (DBT).

xiii. **Social Welfare Schemes (Aasara Pension, Dalitha Bandhu, Kalyana Lakshmi, Rythu Beema, Gruha Jyoti):** The project's convergence approach directly assisted rural families in availing these schemes, helping beneficiaries receive financial support. This fostered inclusivity and strengthens last mile delivery of welfare.

b) Coherence with SDGs

SDG	Project Contribution
SDG 1: No Poverty	Created local employment, increased household incomes, supported access to welfare schemes, and reduced migration.
SDG 2: Zero Hunger	Promoted kitchen gardens and organic farming, improving dietary diversity and reducing malnutrition.
SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being	Conducted vaccination drives, MCH sessions, and improved preventive healthcare through awareness.
SDG 4: Quality Education	Increased school enrolment, reduced dropouts, and improved learning outcomes through VLCs and Shikshak Mitras.
SDG 5: Gender Equality	Trained women, engaged in livelihoods, strengthened SHGs, and enhanced women's decision-making power.
SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	Promoted safe water use and hygiene practices through awareness under health and sanitation interventions.
SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	Created enterprises, trained youth, and enabled entrepreneurship through local enterprise support.
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	Targeted marginalized communities (ST/SC/OBC) beneficiaries to promote social inclusion.

SDG 13: Climate Action	Promoted climate-resilient agriculture practices and reduced chemical use through organic farming.

4.6. Impact

The impact of the project observed in livelihoods, education, health, and governance. The project addressed the systemic challenges such as agricultural distress, limited non-farm opportunities, low education levels, poor nutrition, and weak institutional access.

a) Livelihood and Economic Impact

Project strengthened the economic base of rural households. Through targeted skill development, enterprise creation, and agricultural interventions, the project helped families diversify income sources, reducing dependency on farm based or migratory employment.

The training and enterprise support project fostered financial resilience. Beneficiaries who once earned irregular daily wages developed steady income streams through self-employment and small businesses. This led to greater household savings, and improved financial planning.

It instilled a sense of self-reliance and dignity of work. Youth who once migrated to nearby cities for casual labor began to perceive entrepreneurship as a sustainable and respectable career path. Women, previously confined to unpaid domestic roles, gained agency as income earners and decision makers. Their visible contribution to family income altered household dynamics, reduced gender dependency, and improved their social standing in the community.

The promotion of organic and sustainable agriculture created ecological as well as economic impact. Farmers who transitioned from chemical to organic inputs observed improved soil health, reduced input costs, and more stable yields. It contributed to both environmental restoration and economic viability.

b) Educational and Social Impact

Project bridged learning gap, reduced dropouts, and fostered a culture of education in communities where schooling was once irregular and undervalued. By establishing Village Learning Centres (VLCs) and supporting local Shikshak Mitras, the project restored confidence among parents and students in rural education.

The most visible impact has been the strengthening of foundational learning. Children who earlier struggled with reading and writing developed core literacy and numeracy skills, boosting their academic performance and motivation to continue schooling.

Another significant change has been the revival of parental involvement in education. Earlier, parents viewed schooling as the government's responsibility. Project encouraged families to participate in their children's learning journey.

Inclusion of local women as teachers and learning facilitators created employment and elevated women's social role as community educators and leaders.

c) Health and Nutrition Impact

Health and nutrition interventions under the project created visible improvements in the wellbeing of rural families, particularly women and children. By integrating health awareness with kitchen garden, iit changed everyday household practices related to food, hygiene, and preventive care.

The introduction of kitchen gardens improved dietary diversity by regular inclusion of leafy greens, pulses, and vegetables.

MCH sessions deepened community understanding of nutrition, pregnancy care, vaccination, and hygiene, it built preventive health awareness that continues beyond project activities.

d) Governance and Institutional Impact

Project strengthened grassroots governance and bridged the access gap between rural citizens and government systems. Through structured facilitation, digital literacy, and documentation support, the project democratized access to entitlements. Families were able to secure pensions, marriage assistance, agricultural relief, and housing subsidies. This access improved financial security and restored citizens' trust in public institutions.

The introduction of Gram Mitras as local facilitators within villages ensured that administrative processes became approachable, transparent, and responsive.

5. Best Practices, Suggestions and Conclusion

5.1. Best Practices of the Program

a) Community Mobilization through Local Facilitators

The project mobilized communities through local actors. Gram Mitras and Shikshak Mitras who lives within the same villages, conducted door-to-door outreach, building strong personal trust. This localized approach ensured deeper community engagement, high participation, and clear understanding of project services among beneficiaries.

b) Decentralized and Doorstep Service Delivery

Decentralization was a key operational strategy. Interventions such as Village Learning Centres (VLCs), Community Digital Centres, and on-field organic farming demonstrations brought services directly to people's doorsteps. This reduced travel costs and time barriers for marginalized families, ensuring equitable access and community ownership.

c) Demand Driven and Context Specific Interventions

All project interventions were designed based on needs identified in the Need Assessment Study. Skill trainings matched local market gaps, such as driving, digital services, flour milling, and tailoring. Organic farming demonstrations addressed soil fertility, irrigation, and input challenges. This ensured that every activity was relevant and immediately useful for local livelihoods.

d) Gender and Social Inclusion as a Core Principle

Gender and social inclusion were integrated into every project component. Women received dedicated skill training, sewing machine support, and entrepreneurship mentoring. Educational and livelihood interventions prioritized OBC, SC, and ST communities. As a result, gender participation reached near parity, and women's confidence and decision-making power improved significantly.

e) Linking Skills to Sustainable Enterprises

The program linked vocational training with enterprise creation and local market demand. Training in driving, digital services, tailoring, and agri-based activities was paired with access to start-up tools and financial assistance. This converted skills into sustainable livelihoods, reducing unemployment and rural migration.

f) Integration of Behaviour Change in Health and Nutrition

Health and nutrition initiatives combined practical interventions with behaviour change. Kitchen gardens improved food access, while MCH sessions educated families on hygiene, diet, and preventive care. This dual approach changed long-term habits, leading to sustained improvements in household nutrition and wellbeing.

5.2. Suggestions for Improvement of the Program

1. Beneficiary Level :

a. Build Local Skill Ecosystem and Enhance Post-Training Market-Driven Mentorship Networks

While the project's skill development and enterprise creation components have led to income gains and higher self-reliance, numerous beneficiaries especially youth continue to face challenges such as market access, unstable demand, and lack of raw materials or working capital. Establishing structured post-training mentorship "circles" led by successful local entrepreneurs and market actors. Also instead of focusing only on individual training batches, the project can create micro skill clusters (e.g., tailoring, computer embroidery etc.) within villages. These clusters can be linked with local MSMEs, government skill programs, and markets.

b. Collective Asset Ownership Models

Many women trained in computer embroidery, tailoring, and other skills struggle to acquire capital-intensive equipment independently. Introducing co-ownership models, such as shared machinery banks and digital centers run by SHGs or youth groups, can spread capital risk, ensure continuous equipment utilization, and lower entry barriers for marginalized entrepreneurs. Encourage Panchayat and Gram Mitra to manage and jointly upgrade shared assets, while rotating operational responsibility among members to build management skills and enhance group cohesion.

c. Align Training with Emerging Market Demands

Shifting focus from skill development programs from saturated trades like tailoring to emerging sectors such as solar equipment maintenance, EV servicing, and digital livelihoods. Training should be delivered through group models, enabling shared access to resources and improved market reach. This approach will better align beneficiary capacities with evolving economic opportunities and foster sustainable rural growth.

2. Program Level:

a. Introduce a Livelihood Progress Dashboard

After the training or livelihood support, there was a need for a structured system to track each beneficiary's progress over the next six months, including challenges faced in income, employment, and social mobility. Such ongoing monitoring helps identify trade level gaps early, that can be catered in next consecutive year with same trade implementation.

Develop a digital 'Livelihood Progress Dashboard' to track each trainee's income, employment, and mobility in real time. This will enable both field and CSR teams to visualize project impact, facilitating data-driven adaptation and effective scale-up decisions.

5.3. Conclusion

The Saksham Gram project has created a visible transformation in the social and economic landscape of the villages in Karimnagar and Warangal. It strengthened livelihoods, enhanced education, improved health outcomes, and empowered communities through holistic, inclusive and participatory approaches. The project helped rural families move toward greater self-reliance and stability by building local capacity, promoting skill development, and improving access to essential services. Women gained confidence and decision-making power, youth found dignified income opportunities, and communities developed stronger connections with governance systems. The project fostered collective ownership, built local leadership, and inspired behavioural change across communities. Overall, Saksham Gram stands as a successful model of community driven rural development, demonstrating how targeted interventions can lead to lasting improvements in quality of life and social empowerment.

6. List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist
AYUSHMAN	Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CLC	Community Learning Centre
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DBT	Direct Benefit Transfer
DDU-GKY	Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY	Financial Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoI	Government of India
GoT	Government of Telangana
HH	Household
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
KII	Key Informant Interview
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NHM	National Health Mission
NMSA	National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture
NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
NRP	Nutrition Rehabilitation Programme
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OBC	Other Backward Classes
OCED / OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OCED-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PAN	Permanent Account Number
PHC	Primary Health Centre
PKVY	Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana
PMAY	Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana
PMJDY	Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
PMKSY	Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana
PMKVY	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
PMMSK	Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
REECIS	Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact, and Sustainability (OECD-DAC evaluation framework)
RTC	Road Transport Corporation
RUBY	Rallis Ujjwal Bhavishya Yojana

SBM	Swachh Bharat Mission
SC	Scheduled Castes
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDP	Skill Development Program
SHG	Self-Help Group
SHS	State Health Society
SHS	State Health Society
SRK	Shikshan Ranjan Kendra
ST	Scheduled Tribes
SWM	Solid Waste Management
SWM Rules	Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016
TaRa	Tata Rallis Livelihood Program (TaRa Initiative)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VLC	Village Learning Centre
VOC	Vocational