



SATYARTHI

FOR SATYARTHI CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview of the Year	01
Our Vision, Mission, Values	02
Our Impact	03
Bal Mitra Gram™	04 - 12
Guiding Principles of BMG	05
Key Highlights	06 - 09
Stories Of Change	10 - 12
Bal Mitra Mandal	13 - 19
Parameters of BMM	14
Key Highlights	15 - 17
Stories Of Change	18 - 19
Initiatives	20 - 25



OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR

This has been a fulfilling year for us. Our collective fight to ensure that every child in the world is safe continues, and the past year has been testament to that. In today's fast-paced world, digital literacy is a fundamental skill set, and Bal Mitra Gram™ (BMG™) has been leading by example by empowering communities through different initiatives in the digital space. As a result, over 1000 students across five villages in Jharkhand have access to digital classrooms.

Our Bal Panchayats have always been instrumental in giving children the opportunity to play an active role in local governance, and they are championing the cause of child safety and protection. This year, 1430 children took part in the Bal Panchayat elections, leading to the formation of 130 children's councils in Madhya Pradesh. The experience proved to be very empowering for the children, enabling them to engage in problem-solving activities for the well-being of the community.

This year, our campaigns, initiatives and outreach programmes also saw huge participation. A total of 705 girl child leaders hailing from different villages of Uttar Pradesh took part in the Himmat Yatra campaign and led the charge in promoting gender equality and education. We also organised the Compassion for Children's Well-Being rally in Uttar Pradesh, wherein 165 participants reached out to 25,000 community members to speak against child marriage and to emphasise the significance of education. The BMG™ across Maharashtra focused on empowering marginalised communities by connecting them with government welfare schemes and ensuring access to essential resources. One of their programmes led to the enrollment of 1,355 individuals in different welfare schemes, securing benefits worth Rs 67.75 crore.

Similarly, the 'School Chalo Abhiyan' initiative worked towards ensuring every child's right to education by encouraging children from marginalised communities to attend school.

We believe that education should be holistic and not just limited to textbooks, and the PAD project was one such initiative that created an awareness between girls and women about the importance of menstrual hygiene. The 'Meri Saheli Meri Maa' campaign reached 2.34 lakh women and girls in rural Rajasthan. This effort was amplified by MHM Carvaan, which has had a direct impact on the lives of over four lakh people.

In order to accomplish the UN Sustainable Development Goal 8.7, which calls for the elimination of all forms of child labour by 2025, we must ensure that the safety and education for children who are trafficked and enslaved become the top priority. And we must fight this social evil through Compassion in Action.

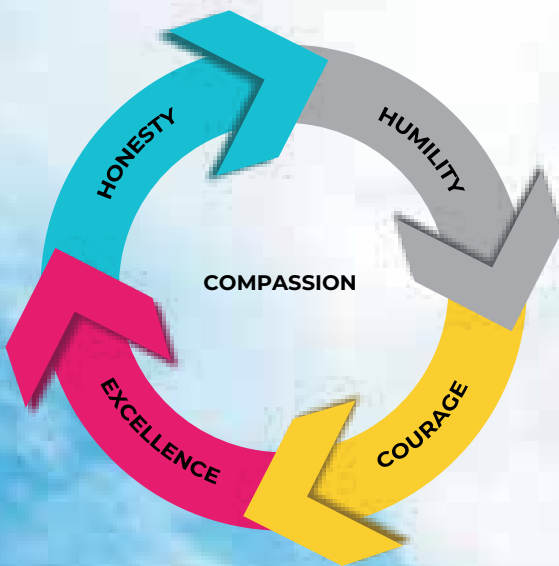
We are grateful to all those who have extended their unwavering support to the cause.



OUR VISION

Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation (KSCF), India envisions a world where every child is free, safe, healthy and educated.

OUR VALUES



OUR MISSION



Protect child rights through holistically tackling violence against children - abuse, illiteracy and poor health



Enable global and national policies and their implementation for protecting children



Become a global platform to disseminate best practices relating to child protection and child rights promotion, and bridge the trust deficit between various stakeholders



Be recognised as a global voice speaking about violence against children through movement creation and research



Work towards capacity building of all stakeholders, including governments, corporates, grassroots organisations for child rights protection and promotion



OUR IMPACT

5,939 Community members benefitted through linkages with social welfare schemes.

- **221** Applications submitted for entitlement documentation
-

2,881 Children enrolled and regularised in schools

- **1694** Child leaders developed through the formation of the Bal Panchayat Child Council
 - **1051** Children have access to digital classrooms across 5 villages in Jharkhand
-

85,293 Children regularly protected from all forms of exploitation

- **108** Child labourers withdrawn
 - **39** Child marriages prevented
 - **2,38,642** Community members made aware of the issues of child rights and protection
-

7 States Capacity building and training sessions conducted

- Trained and built the capacity of community stakeholders on the issues of child rights, child protection, and education
-

Community-led Campaigns to amplify the change

- Empowered 750 women and girls through the women empowerment campaign 'Himmat Yatra'
 - Successfully conducted 'School Chalo Abhiyan' - a school enrolment campaign that saw spirited community participation leading to upsurge in enrolments including re-enrolment of drop-out children
-



BAL MITRA GRAM™

Bal Mitra Gram™ (BMG™) is an award-winning model launched in 2001 by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi and Sumedha Kailash with a vision to create a child-friendly world and ensure that every child is free, safe and educated.

This model strengthens communities to protect children's rights and eliminate child labour, trafficking, and exploitation while promoting access to education. Using a democratic, rights-based, and inclusive approach, the BMG™ model breaks down systemic obstacles to justice and rights, empowering the community as a whole. By forming child councils (Bal Panchayats), which are recognised by local authorities, BMG™ ensures that children's voices are both heard and valued in decision-making processes.

BMG™ is not just a programme—it's a movement that challenges the status quo and redefines what is possible when communities unite to protect their children. By grounding its efforts in compassion, democracy, and inclusivity, BMG™ paves the way for sustainable development and a future where no child is left behind.

The Guiding Principles of BMG™

1

Village Empowerment

BMG™ empowers entire villages by fostering community ownership and collective action. By engaging local stakeholders, including children, parents, teachers, and village leaders, BMG promotes a holistic approach that addresses the root causes of child exploitation.



2

Integrated and Inclusive Development

BMG™ ensures that development is comprehensive and benefits all community members, emphasising inclusive practices that prioritise the most vulnerable, including children, women, and marginalised groups.



3

Participatory Democracy

Central to BMG™ is the belief in participatory democracy, where every voice counts. The creation of Bal Panchayat embodies this principle by giving children an active role in local governance and decision-making processes.



4

Child-Centred Decision-Making Process

Decisions within BMG™ villages are guided by the needs and rights of children. This child-centred approach ensures that the well-being of children is at the heart of community actions and policies.



5

Ending Centuries-Old Discriminatory Mindsets

BMG™ challenges and dismantles deep-rooted societal norms that perpetuate child labour, discrimination, and gender inequality. By educating and empowering community members, BMG fosters a culture of equality and respect.



Programmmme Objectives

- Ensure the protection of all children from child labour, child marriage, child trafficking, and any form of exploitation or abuse.
- Ensure all children in the community have access to education.
- Ensure the democratic participation of child leaders to create a child-friendly village.
- Empower communities to take active and sustainable actions to address issues related to children and the community.
- Promote gender empowerment to achieve inclusivity.
- Youth empowerment through leadership and skill building, where they become agents of change in solving problems of their communities.

Key Highlights

1. Digital Literacy

BMG™ is focused on empowering communities by ensuring equitable access to technology and integrating digital literacy into our initiatives. By embedding digital literacy, our initiatives not only prepare children for future world and career opportunities but also fosters a culture of shared learning.

Digital learning tools were provided to 1051 children across five villages in Jharkhand. By equipping classrooms with laptops, projectors, and sound systems, and incorporating innovative teaching methods, we have elevated the learning experience for young students.



2. Building leadership qualities among children

Central to the BMG™ is the belief in building leadership to promote democratic participation where every voice counts. The creation of the Bal Panchayat (Children's Council) embodies this principle by giving children an active role in local governance and decision-making processes for issues centric to child safety and protection.

Leadership building is one of the key pillars and central to our programmes. It is the belief in participatory democracy, where every voice counts. The creation of the Bal Panchayat (Children's Council) embodies this principle by giving children an active role in local governance and decision-making processes.

Bal Panchayat is a tool for children to voice their rights for safety and protection, have equal access to quality education, and initiate the change in the systemic barriers of oppression and injustice. This provides a platform for children to participate in child-centric issues. The Bal Panchayat is supported by stakeholder groups, including the school management committee, women's groups, youth groups and an advisory committee.



Formation of 130 Children's Councils In Madhya Pradesh



We encouraged democratic participation and leadership skills among children across 130 Bal Mitra Gram™ (Child-friendly villages) in Madhya Pradesh by involving them in the Bal Panchayat election activities. A total of 1,430 children took part in the electoral and decision-making processes, leading to the formation of 130 children's councils. This initiative not only instilled a deep understanding of justice and empowerment but also prepared children to assume leadership roles, equipping them with the skills to address community challenges thoughtfully and collaboratively for the well-being of all.



3. Community Outreach

The BMG™ model fosters sustainable change in villages by promoting community ownership and collective action. By engaging local stakeholders—parents, youth, teachers and community leaders—this approach addresses the root causes of child exploitation and encourages a holistic strategy for societal transformation.

Through widespread awareness campaigns and a focus on inclusive, integrated development, BMG™ prioritises the needs of society's most vulnerable members, including children, women, and marginalised groups. This ensures that systemic issues related to child welfare, health, gender equality, infrastructure, and education are comprehensively addressed for the benefit of the entire community.



Rally on 'Compassion for Children's Well-being'

A rally focused on children's rights, advocacy against child marriages and the promotion of education reached over 25,000 people across 40 villages in Uttar Pradesh. Led by 165 participants who actively engaged with community members during the rally, the initiative successfully inspired action on critical children's rights issues.



Himmat Yatra Campaign

The Himmat Yatra campaign, spearheaded by 705 girl child leaders from the villages of Mainputthi, Jainpur and Meharmati in Uttar Pradesh, focused on promoting gender equality and creating awareness about girls' education. The campaign engaged 1,082 community members, emphasising the transformative power of education in empowering girls to assert their rights and ensure their safety. This initiative underscored the role of a strong education system in fostering gender equality, leaving a lasting impact on the community.



4. Strengthening network and collaboration with Government stakeholders

Building robust partnerships with Government stakeholders is a cornerstone of the Bal Mitra Gram™ (BMG™) initiative. By collaborating with local authorities, child protection agencies, and government bodies, BMG™ ensures the effective implementation of policies aimed at safeguarding children's rights. These collaborations enable access to essential services, support community-driven efforts, and align with Government initiatives to foster sustainable, child-friendly ecosystems.

Activation of 20 Village Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPCs)

Bal Mitra Gram™ in Karnataka aims to combat child exploitation by forming strong partnerships with Government officials and establishing Village Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPCs). These committees integrate representatives from various sectors, including education, police, child development, legal services, and local governance, to address and resolve child-centric issues collaboratively. The efforts have resulted in the activation of 20 VLCPCs at the block level, driving significant positive changes within the community. These committees have developed and implemented innovative solutions to improve child welfare, earning recognition from the District Legal Services Authority for their contributions to child protection and community welfare.



5. Benefiting communities by enrolling members in Government schemes

The BMG™ across Maharashtra focused on empowering marginalised communities by connecting them with Government welfare schemes and ensuring access to essential resources. A key challenge was the lack of identification documents, which limited access to benefits related to employment, social security, health, and housing. In response, the programme facilitated the enrollment of 1,355 individuals in government social welfare schemes, securing benefits worth Rs 67.75 crore.



Stories of change

Preventing Child Marriage: Nagarathna's Journey



Nagarathna, hailing from the Chamrajnagar district in Karnataka, faced the daunting prospect of an early marriage arranged by her parents. This development came to the attention of the village's Advisory Committee, which immediately informed the Anganwadi worker.

Collaborating with the Child Development Project Officer (CDPO), the committee visited Nagarathna's parents, urging them to reconsider their decision. Despite initial reluctance from the girl's parents, the committee persisted. They sought the intervention of the Women and Child Welfare Department officers in Gundlupet block, who also visited Nagarathna's parents and , emphasised the detrimental effects of early marriage on a girl's health, education and overall well-being. They also highlighted the legal implications involved.

Through persistent advocacy and education, Nagarathna's parents ultimately agreed to postpone the marriage until Nagarathna turned 18, enabling her to continue her education. This successful intervention underscores the power of collective action of community members and government officials in preventing child marriages.

Improving lives of students at a Karnataka village



In Karnataka's Bheemanabeedu village, the Bal Panchayat members identified a significant challenge affecting the students of the local Government Upper Primary School: lack of proper space to sit and eat their mid-day meals. This problem was exacerbated during the monsoon season, as children were forced to sit on the floor, underscoring the need for immediate action.

Recognising the problem, the Bal Panchayat proactively raised a request to construct a dining hall equipped with benches. Their appeal was brought to the attention of the Gram Panchayat and the School Development and Management Committee (SDMC). During a site visit at meal time, SDMC members observed the inadequate conditions and promptly acknowledged the need for a proper dining facility.

Through a collaborative effort involving the SDMC, the Bal Panchayat, the village council president, council members, SDMC president, and school teachers, the necessary funds were secured. A sum of Rs 1,00,000 was allocated for the construction of benches.

The initiative resulted in a new dining facility that now benefits 471 children, including 279 from the Higher Primary School and 192 from the High School. This accomplishment highlights the Bal Panchayat's critical role in driving meaningful, community-led change.

From Adversity to Triumph: Pramila's Story



Fourteen-year-old Pramila Marandi from Jharkhand's Karmatand village faced unimaginable adversity when the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted her education and economic stability. Forced to drop out of school, she took up work as a domestic help in Kerala, where she unknowingly became a victim of human trafficking and endured exploitation.

However, Pramila's story took a hopeful turn when the Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation (KSCF), under the Bal Mitra Gram™ (BMG™) project, intervened. With the help of the Gram Sabha, Pramila was rescued from exploitation and safely returned to her home. Pramila demonstrated remarkable resilience by resuming her education, fully supported by KSCF.

Pramila's story not only highlights the importance of child protection but also inspires others in her community to not give up.

BAL MITRA MANDAL

Bal Mitra Mandal (BMM) offers a sustainable solution for urban slum communities by focusing on child-centric development, education, and gender equality. The programme is designed to protect children and their communities from exploitation, including child labour and abuse, while fostering an environment of safety, education, and empowerment. Currently operational in 20 urban areas across Delhi and Maharashtra, BMM ensures that children attend school regularly and remain safeguarded from harm. By involving mothers, teachers, youth and children, it creates a ripple effect of awareness and compassion, driving sustainable impact.

The BMM model is built around the following parameters:

1

Child-Centric Community Development

This approach empowers children and their communities to collaboratively address systemic challenges. Tailored interventions prioritise education and gender equality, creating safe spaces where children can thrive and develop their potential.



2

Prevention of Child Exploitation

Focused on eradicating child labour and preventing child sexual abuse, this component strengthens child rights protections. Successful implementation in 12 communities in Delhi and Pune has demonstrated the effectiveness of these interventions in safeguarding children.



3

Community Empowerment

BMM empowers women teachers, youth and children to address challenges. By fostering leadership and shared responsibility, this approach drives grassroots change and cultivates a resilient and proactive community.



4

Structural Democratic Reforms

The BMM model enables democratic engagement within communities, led by children themselves. Through advocacy and participatory initiatives, BMM instills a culture of accountability and promotes reforms that lay the groundwork for long-term social impact.



By embedding principles of compassion, collaboration and inclusivity, BMM paves the way for lasting positive change, empowering communities to protect and nurture their most vulnerable members.

Key Highlights

‘Bag Pack Heroes’ Campaign

Supported by Games 24x7, the Child Council of Bal Mitra Mandal launched the ‘Bag Pack Heroes’ campaign to empower 74 child beggars in Pune by steering them toward education. This campaign, conceptualised and led by child leaders from Pune’s slums, included street classes at traffic signals during summer vacation, specifically designed to inspire and educate marginalised children.

Launched on May 10, 2023, the initiative aimed to raise awareness among street children about their right to education and encourage them to join school. Child leaders, who had previously transformed their own lives through education, devoted their time to teaching Mathematics, Science, and English using creative tools such as art and music. They also distributed educational materials, gathered basic information about children, and worked to facilitate their school admissions, ensuring their educational needs were addressed.

This initiative fosters compassion, allowing child leaders to empathise with the struggles of street children while acting as catalysts for change.

“The effort will not only help street children access education but also strengthen social networks that promote compassion and empowerment across urban slum communities.” – Rakesh Sengar, Executive Director, Programmes, KSCF.



Talent Development

The Talent Development initiative under BMM focuses on fostering social inclusion by providing marginalised children and youth with opportunities to explore and develop their interests. This year, the initiative concentrated on engaging children from slum communities in cricket, music, dance and theatre.

Professional training sessions allowed participants not only to refine their skills but also to use their talent as a medium to express their views on child rights and community empowerment. Through performances themed around social justice and awareness, the initiative nurtured both individual growth and collective responsibility.



50 marginalised children shine through the Talent Development initiative

Our Talent Development initiative also addresses youth employment and provides a platform for marginalised children and youth to explore career opportunities. Over several months of training, 50 children were enrolled in sessions facilitated by professional groups.



Health Awareness for Women and Girls

A series of six health awareness sessions were conducted across BMM communities, covering issues like teenage pregnancy and menstrual hygiene. These sessions, aimed at fostering adolescent well-being, encouraged open communication between parents and children, and addressed the risks associated with early pregnancies.

A Menstrual Health Management session, conducted by Dr. Deepali Khode in collaboration with Cummins College, provided participants with comprehensive education on menstruation. Sanitary pads were distributed, ensuring both awareness and accessibility.

A total of 365 women and girls participated in these sessions, gaining vital knowledge to make informed decisions about their health and well-being. This initiative highlights BMM's commitment to empowering women and girls through education and proactive community engagement.



Stories of change

Nagamma Chalwadi: A Young Leader Raising Awareness About Menstrual Hygiene



Nagamma Chalwadi, a 12-year-old girl from Pune's Indiranagar, is championing menstrual hygiene awareness among young girls. Recognising the pressing need for education on this crucial subject, Nagamma took proactive steps to break stigmas and improve health practices in her community.

With the support of her peers, Nagamma initiated a grassroots campaign, engaging over 50 girls. She led a rally attended by more than 150 women and girls, bringing the conversation on menstrual health into the public domain.

Nagamma's determination and innovative approach to peer engagement reflect her exceptional leadership skills. Her work not only addresses immediate health concerns but also inspires systemic change, paving the way for a healthier and more informed community. She is proof that age is no barrier to driving meaningful progress.

Priyanka Sowame: Braving Challenges During Covid-19



Priyanka Sowame, a resident of Bhim Nagar in Pune, faced grave challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic when her husband lost his job. Determined to support her family, Priyanka began baking cakes from home, juggling work and household responsibilities.

Her life took a turn in September 2023, when she attended the Youth Summit on Human Fraternity and Compassion at Bal Ashram, Rajasthan. The summit ignited a new sense of purpose in Priyanka, motivating her to channel her resilience and creativity into a sustainable venture.

Upon returning home, Priyanka launched 'DD Cafe', named after her daughters. More than a business, the cafe is a platform for advocacy, educating customers about child rights and the importance of ending child labour.



Priyanka also extended her efforts to empower women in her community, providing mentorship on entrepreneurial skills and raising awareness about Government schemes by offering financial assistance.

Initiatives

Pad Project

In rural Rajasthan, women and girls encounter considerable challenges in menstrual health due to lack of awareness, persistent stigma, inadequate access to hygienic products, and poor sanitation facilities. To address these critical issues, KSCF launched a comprehensive Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) programme called Pad Project, creating a sustainable impact in underserved communities.

As part of this initiative, a local centre was established to manufacture sanitary pads, which were distributed in schools, colleges and communities. Beyond meeting immediate hygiene needs, the programme emphasised education, teaching girls proper usage and disposal of pads to foster sustainable hygiene practices and reduce stigma.

This campaign was pivotal in reaching 2.34 lakh women and girls, equipping them with accurate information about menstruation and fostering open conversations. This initiative created a supportive environment to prepare girls for menstruation, while also involving 617 boys from 12 schools and 45 villages in discussions. These sessions encouraged compassion and understanding, promoting a culture of mutual respect and inclusivity in schools and communities.

Additionally, workshops were conducted for health workers in 113 villages, engaging ASHAs, ANMs, and GNMs to enhance their knowledge and practices regarding MHM. These sessions also introduced strategies for sustainable menstrual waste management and ensuring long-term solutions.

To expand the programme's reach, the MHM Carvaan initiative amplified awareness efforts across 245 villages, engaging over 4,00,000 people. This initiative fostered dialogue, debunked myths, and worked with local authorities to improve access to affordable menstrual products and sanitation facilities. It also advocated for the integration of MHM into local health programmes, ensuring sustainable progress.



School Chalo Abhiyan

The School Chalo Abhiyan is a transformative campaign that operates across BMM and BMG™. The campaign aims to ensure every child's right to education by encouraging children from marginalised communities to attend school.

Child leaders play a pivotal role in this initiative by identifying out-of-school children, conducting awareness campaigns, and assisting with school enrollment. Beyond addressing education gaps, the campaign combats child labour, child marriage, and other exploitative practices, helping build a brighter and more secure future for children.

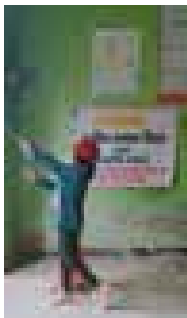
Implemented across seven states, the campaign has successfully enrolled 7,404 children into formal education. Regular follow-ups with parents ensure sustained attendance, reinforcing the programme's long-term impact in the lives of countless children.



Surakshit Bachpan Diwas

Surakshit Bachpan Diwas on 11th January is a nationwide celebration of childhood, bringing communities together to champion child rights. The day features dynamic storytelling sessions that engage over 9,000 community members, fostering awareness on child protection issues and the importance of safeguarding childhood.

In recognition of their exemplary efforts to uphold child rights, 251 community members were honoured during the event in January 2024, inspiring others to join the mission for a safer, more equitable environment for children.

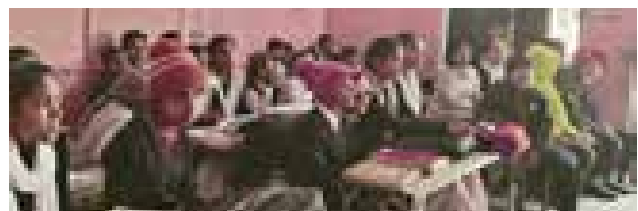
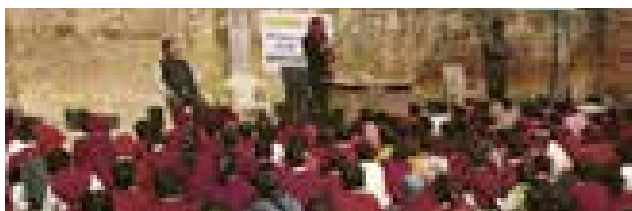


Gyanshala

Gyanshala, meaning 'Knowledge Hub', is aimed at empowering children and youth by equipping them with essential career knowledge and life skills. The programme enables participants to explore diverse career paths, build confidence, and make informed decisions about their future.

Bringing together professionals from a variety of backgrounds, including Anganwadi workers, business leaders, retired army officers and artisans, Gyanshala provides practical guidance and inspiration. It also fosters respect for diverse professions, breaking stereotypes and promoting the dignity of all forms of work.

Since its launch in February 2024, 21 Gyanshala sessions have been organised, engaging 720 young participants. Professionals from diverse fields, including education, healthcare, arts and government services offered tailored guidance and resources, equipping youth with the knowledge and confidence to make informed and impactful career decisions.



Trainings and Workshops

The project conducted a diverse range of training and workshops focusing on menstrual health, child rights, and cybercrime awareness, reaching 2,289 community members. These sessions aimed at building awareness and equipping individuals with practical knowledge to address pressing issues in their communities.

Skill development was a key focus, with 39 women enrolling in vocational courses such as plumbing and embroidery through partnerships with local NGOs. These programmes are designed to empower women by enhancing their prospect for employment, fostering financial independence and improving their quality of life.



The Yuva Parivartan Initiative

In collaboration with Yuva Parivartan, a skill development initiative was launched to provide youth with career-oriented opportunities. As part of this effort, 71 young individuals were enrolled in a hotel management course tailored to prepare them for successful careers in the hospitality industry.

The programme combines practical training with financial support, enabling participants to earn a monthly stipend of Rs 8,000 to Rs 10,000 during their training period. Through this programme, we are empowering the youth to build a strong foundation for their careers, contributing to their long-term economic stability and professional growth.



Fostering Unity Through Community Lunches

To promote social harmony and combat caste and religious discrimination, a series of community lunches (Sahbhaj) were organised across multiple states on the occasion of Makar Sankranti and Republic Day. These events aimed to foster a sense of unity and emphasise the importance of equality within society.

Funds were raised through door-to-door campaigns, with community members contributing generously in cash and kind. Participants collaborated to prepare meals, breaking down social barriers and fostering mutual respect. A total of 5,050 individuals took part, embodying the spirit of unity and inclusion.

