MISSING

Impact Assessment 2021-2024



Empowering underprivileged communities through adolescent awareness & women's skill development

- MISSING Awareness and Safety School Program (MASSp)
- Women's Empowerment Centre (WEC)

Assessment conducted by ASPIRE IMPACT



About



The Missing Public Art project started by photographer and installation artist Leena Kejriwal was a response to her deep sensitivity to the plight of the millions of girls lost into the dark world of sex trafficking.

Having spent more than a decade collaborating with NGOs in the red light districts of Kolkata, Leena gained profound insights into the fact that sex trafficking is primarily driven by demand.

In 2014, Leena Kejriwal launched MISSING Public Art Project to engage the public on the issue of sex trafficking. It was launched as a public art work, at the India Art Fair and immediately caught the eye of many international and national media through its installations.

Today, the project is growing rapidly with the formation of the Missing Link Trust. At present, the flagship program Missing Awareness and Safety School program (MASSp), is not just a campaign; it's a movement that educates adolescents about child abuse, exploitation, and trafficking both within schools and beyond. To date, it has touched the lives of over 1.75 lakh students nationwide, leaving an indelible mark on their futures.

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Certification



NON-PROFIT

ASPIRE™

CERTIFIED
GOLD LEAF
IMPACT

CERTIFICATE OF IMPACT

AWARDED TO

Missing Link Trust

Missing Awareness and Safety School Program

Aspire Impact has successfully concluded an Impact Assessment for Missing Link Trust's Missing Awareness and Safety School Program for the period 2023 - 2024 and awards the project a "**Gold Leaf**".

The evaluation included 11 impact themes using our proprietary 4P framework which captures the impact of program across four dimensions (Reach, Depth, Inclusion and Sustainability)

Amit Bhatia
Founder & CEO, ASPIRE

Aspire's impact seal is a stylised rendition of a Khejri leaf. The Khejri (*Prosopis cineraria*) tree is the state tree of Rajasthan. It epitomises sustainability as it survives 0-50°C temperature to provide food, fodder, fuel, compost, medicine and afforestation.

Certification ↘



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AWARDED TO

Missing Link Trust

Women Empowerment Centre

Aspire Impact has successfully concluded an Impact Assessment for Missing Link Trust Project on women empowerment center and skill upgradation for the period 2023 - 2024 and awards the project a "**Silver Leaf**".

The evaluation included 11 impact themes using our proprietary 4P framework which captures the impact of program across four dimensions (Reach, Depth, Inclusion and Sustainability)

Amit Bhatia
Founder & CEO, ASPIRE

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Aspire's Impact Assessment **Methodology** ↘

Aspire Impact has conducted an impact assessment of Missing Link Trust's programs:

1. **Missing Awareness and Safety School Program (MASSp)**, is directly implemented by Missing Link Trust in government schools in Kolkata and the Sundarbans and indirectly implemented by NGO partners, schools in other locations, such as Durg District in Chhattisgarh, Dehradun, Delhi & NCR, Aurangabad, Chennai, Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Haridwar, Bangalore, Madhya Pradesh, Jaipur, and the North East.
2. **Women's Empowerment Centre (WEC)** being implemented by Missing Link Trust in the Sundarbans (Kultali & Joynagar).

REACH	DEPTH	INCLUSION	SUSTAINABILITY
Assessing scale of the intervention, and coverage of lives touched.	Assessing effectiveness of intervention and the quality of impact delivered.	Assessing equitable access providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.	Assessing ability to maintain quality of impact delivery and their environmental impact.

Aspire Impact followed a comprehensive primary and secondary approach for data collection. The stakeholders' feedback were captured through in-depth interviews and quantitative surveys. The methodology encompassed developing a set of research guidelines and survey questionnaires to draw evidence towards each impact area, which helped draw reasonable conclusions at the current stage of the program.

MASSP:

- The scope of the assessment included **17050** students from grades 8 to 12 who attended the program offline or online, from 2021 - 2023.
- A sample of **359** students was selected for quantitative surveys based on 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level.
- In order to supplement the findings of the quantitative survey and to gain insights into the perspective of relevant stakeholders **15** qualitative interviews were held (students, teachers, parent, project coordinator, ASHA workers, police officers)

WEC:

- The assessment evaluated **90** women trained in tailoring skills in Kultali, Sunderbans in 2023-24. To better understand the challenges faced by women in pursuing post-training opportunities, the assessment surveyed a representative sample of **30** women to gain insights into their motivations and barriers.
- **10** qualitative interviews were conducted with beneficiaries, trainers, family members, and program staff to gain further insights.

Summary of findings ↘

Main findings of the primary research conducted by Aspire Impact to capture the end-to-end Impact of the programs across Reach, Depth, Inclusion and Sustainability:

MASSp	WEC
REACH: 17050 students underwent MASSp training between 2021-23.	**REACH: 90 women trained in the WEC Program from 2023-24 (333 women trained since inception in 2017)**
• **91%** found the program content easy to understand • **89%** received support in understanding difficult concepts • **87%** accessed the MASSp program offline through school	• **70%** women underwent training in the Vasa Centre; **30%** trained in Nakuler Mor centre. • **97%** acquired livelihood skills • **59%** reported residing less than 5 kms from the WEC centres
DEPTH: Adolescents empowered with knowledge	**DEPTH: Women empowered with skill training**
• Participants learned key concepts from the MASSp program, including safe internet usage (**80%**), changes during puberty (**72%**), tools to stay safe from abuse (**77%**). • **97%** of participants enjoyed MASSp pedagogy and appreciated learning the concepts through videos, puzzles, and activities.	• **74%** learned tailoring/stitching skills, 32% understood how to earn income by applying their tailoring skills, • **62%** reported a significant boost in their confidence after acquiring tailoring skills through the program • **26%** reported regularly applying skills acquired through WEC towards income generation
INCLUSION: Vulnerable adolescent girls are primary beneficiaries	**INCLUSION: Vulnerable women with limited income opportunities are primary beneficiaries**
• **62%** students that benefitted were female • **84%** of participants reported monthly household income of **less than Rs 20k** per month at the time of joining the course	• The program exclusively supports women's employment • **91%** of participants reported monthly household income of less than Rs. 10k per month
SUSTAINABILITY: Majority adolescents are highly likely to recommend MASSp	**SUSTAINABILITY: Women report keenness to learn and apply skills for income generation**
• **95%** of participants found the workbook, materials, and videos useful in refreshing the concepts learned in the program • **71%** are highly likely to recommend MASSp Program to peers.	• **76%** of participants expressed interest in attending the Kantha Embroidery course offered by Missing Link Trust • **71%** of participants reported a positive change in community's perception towards them post WEC training.

Missing Awareness and Safety School Program (MASSp)



A look at Impact from the lens of Reach, Depth, Inclusion, and Sustainability

MASSp

As per a 2022 report by the National Crime Records Bureau, India recorded as many as 10,659 cases of human trafficking between 2018 and 2022*. In Kultali a region in Sunderbans in West Bengal, girls aged 15 to 20 are trafficked more owing to their high demands in sex trade**.

As per UNICEF**, India is home to **223** million child brides, with nearly one in four adolescent girls (10-18 year old) (**23%**) married before their 18th birthday. At least **40%** of young women are married before turning 18 in West Bengal.

Cyber safety is another growing concern. In India, **65,893** cybercrime cases were reported in 2022, a **24.4%***** increase from 2021. Of these, **5.2%** were related to sexual exploitation.

End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children****
- : Key SDG target identified Indian Sundarbans.



*https://www.ncrb.gov.in/uploads/nationalcrimerecordsbureau/custom/1701607577CrimeinIndia2022Book1.pdf
**https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321652363_Perils_of_Women_Trafficking_A_Case_Study_of_Joynagar_Kultali_Administrative_Blocks_Sundarban_India
*** https://data.unicef.org/resources/ending-child-marriage-a-profile-of-progress-in-india-2023/?utm_source=chatgpt.com
*** https://theprint.in/india/24-spike-in-cybercrime-in-india-shows-ncrb-data-fraud-extortion-sexual-exploitation-top-motives/1871498/?
****https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/beacons-of-excellence/rights-lab/resources/reports-and-briefings/2023/september/final-version-climate-change-migration-human-trafficking-september2023.pdf

Context and **Approach**

India faces a significant challenge with child sex abuse and exploitation, child marriage, and a lack of cyber safety awareness, particularly among young women and girls. This is especially concerning in West Bengal, where these issues are compounded by poverty, illiteracy, and the Sundarbans region's unique socio-economic conditions.

The Sundarbans region, encompassing 19 blocks (13 in South 24 Parganas and 6 in North 24 Parganas), faces unique challenges due to its geographical and socio-economic conditions:

- **Weather**: Frequent natural disasters such as cyclones and flooding disrupt lives and livelihoods, leaving families in extreme poverty. Cyclone Amphan in 2020 affected 2.5 million people in the Sundarbans*, forcing many to migrate in search of work. This vulnerability is exploited by traffickers, leading to an alarming rise in child trafficking as families struggle to secure basic necessities.
- **Poverty**: High poverty rates, with many families living below the poverty line. With an estimated poverty rate of 40%**, of households live below the poverty line. This economic hardship makes children susceptible to trafficking, as desperate families fall prey to false promises leading to exploitation.
- **Illiteracy**: Low literacy rates in the Sundarbans, especially among women (only 31% have completed primary school***), increase vulnerability to exploitation. Limited education reduces awareness of rights and opportunities, making families susceptible to traffickers' false promises. Addressing illiteracy is key to breaking this cycle and protecting children from trafficking.



MASSp – The Missing Awareness Safety School Program

Against the backdrop of escalating crises in child abuse and academic dropouts among adolescents in West Bengal, the Missing Awareness and Safety School Program (MASSp) focuses on empowering adolescents through digital education to prevent exploitation and enhance personal safety. Employing narratives, art, games, and technology, MASSp creates an immersive learning environment that builds assertiveness, self-efficacy, and critical thinking—essential skills for preventing violence identified by WHO.

A 5-module, 8-10 hour program, delivered to 13 – 18 year olds through schools, MASSp engages learners to think critically and creatively. It creates awareness about: abuse and exploitation, adolescent hygiene and sex education, online safety and cyber crimes.

- Awareness leads to prevention
- Easily localized
- Narrative-based modules
- 100% Audio-Visual learning

*https://wmo.int/media/news/cyclone-amphan-highlights-value-of-multi-hazard-early-warnings
** https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5340112/#:~:text=More%20than%2040%25%20of%20households,in%20farming%20are%20landless%20laborers.
***https://www.globalhumanitariausa.org/alfabetizacion-de-mujeres-en-sunderbans/#:~:text=The%20low%20female%20literacy%20rate,more%20so%20on%20women%20themselves.

Theory of **change**

Problems addressed:

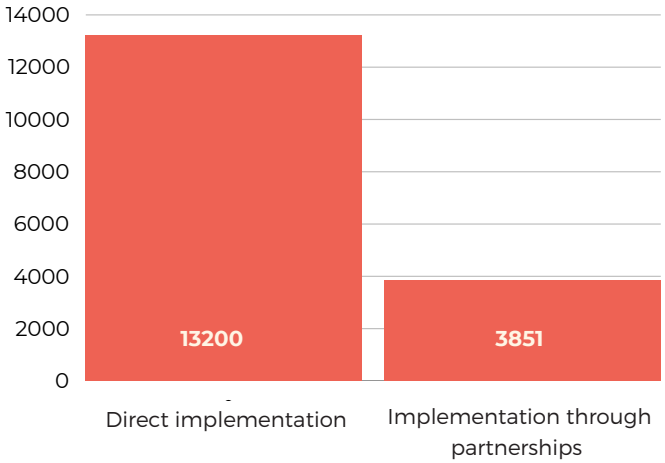
High exposure cybercrime risk	**Child marriage and trafficking in West Bengal**	**Lack of cyber safety awareness**	**Educational deficits in child safety**	**Inadequate reporting and response mechanisms**

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Funding and Resources: Financial support from donors, AV equipment, educational materials, and training manuals. **Human Resources:** Trained volunteer psychologists for M&E and program managers. **Implementation through collaboration:** Direct implementation in schools. Indirect implementation through implementation partners such as Udayan Care, Nomi Network. Collaboration with state governments and officials. **Technology:** Digital platforms, immersive AV content.	**Program Development:** Designing and updating five curriculum modules focused on child safety, cyber safety, and adolescent education. **Trainer Training:** Conducting a comprehensive Training of Trainers (ToT) program to equip volunteers with necessary skills through **8-10** hours of training. **School Engagement:** Securing permissions from state, district, and block levels to implement the program in **41** schools in Sundarbans and Kolkata. **Program Implementation:** Delivering the AV program through interactive sessions, repeated exposure, and peer engagement to over **17050** students. **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** Pre- and post-module surveys for students, psychometric assessments, and continuous feedback collection.	**Program Reach:** Direct implementation in **16** schools in Kultali, **5** schools in Joynagar, and **20** schools in Kolkata, impacting over **17050** students & indirect implementation through NGO's. **Knowledge Gain:** Significant increase in students' understanding of human trafficking (from 30.1% to **84.8%**), cyber safety (from 35.8% to **81.5%**), and adolescent hygiene (from 24.5% to **80.9%**). **Increased awareness:** Awareness around topics such as risk of human trafficking, cyber security and importance of mental health. **Parental and Community Engagement:** Engaged parents and community members, fostering a supportive environment.	**97%** feel more empowered to take action and help others with the knowledge gained from the program **91%** found MASSp useful in improving their overall physical and mental safety and well-being **40%** of students now recognize signs and situations that may lead to abuse or exploitation, enhancing their ability to protect themselves.

Program **Reach**

Bridging the awareness gap to deliver change

Recognizing the critical need for accessible information in resource-constrained environments, the MASSp program empowers vulnerable adolescents with essential knowledge and skills. The program provides crucial information on abuse, exploitation, adolescent health, and online safety to students who may have limited access to such critical information through other channels.

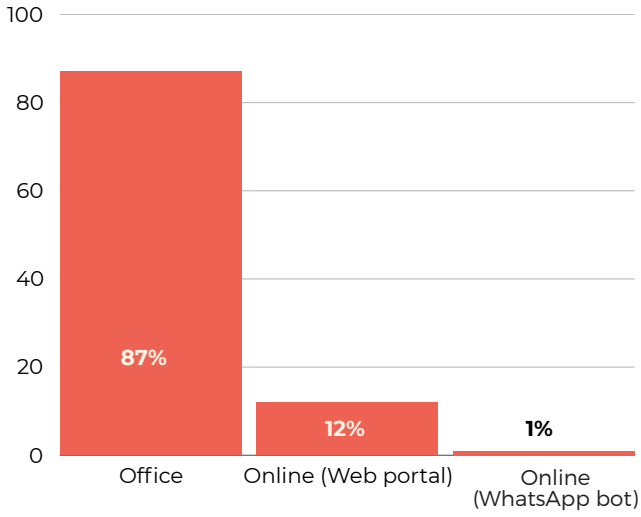


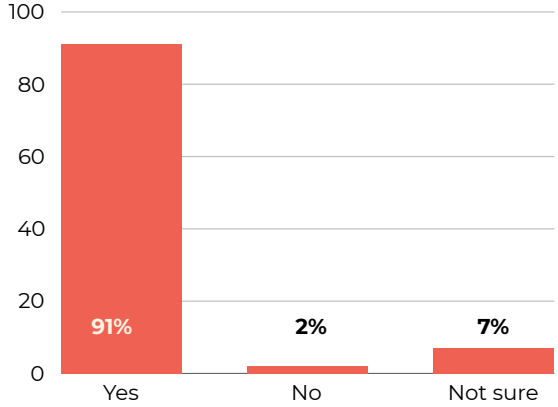
17, 051 students trained from 2021 till date

Missing Link Trust's commitment to enhancing education is evident through its successful implementation of the MASSp program. Between 2021 and 2024, the program directly impacted 13,200 students across 41 government schools. Collaborating with nine partner organizations further expanded the program's reach to an additional 3,851 students. This combined effort resulted in MASSp positively influencing over 17,051 students.

Program was primarily accessed offline in schools

MASSp effectively reached participants through a variety of channels. The majority (87%) accessed the program offline within traditional school settings, demonstrating strong integration into the educational framework. A significant portion (12%) engaged digitally through the web portal, showcasing the program's adaptability to modern learning methods. Additionally, 1% utilized both online and offline platforms, highlighting MASSp's flexibility in catering to diverse learner preferences. These figures underscore the program's comprehensive approach to accessibility.





MASSp pedagogy ensures complex concepts are understood

The MASSp program demonstrated high levels of content clarity, with 91% of participants finding the material easy to understand. This indicates effective knowledge transfer. While 7% reported occasional comprehension challenges, and 2% found the content difficult, these figures suggest minor areas for improvement. Overall, the program effectively communicated its message to the majority of participants.

MASSp is raising awareness and building self-confidence ↘

Ranjan Kumar, a dedicated teacher, shares his experience of witnessing the transformative impact of MASSp on his students and their families. He highlights the program's role in empowering young women, raising awareness of safety issues & promoting self-confidence.



Ranjan Kumar, Teacher, Debipur H.M Bidyapith

Ranjan Kumar vividly recalls the initial anxieties of his students when discussing safety issues. Many felt uncomfortable openly addressing these topics due to societal norms. However, with the interactive and engaging approach employed by MASSp, students gradually felt more comfortable sharing their concerns and learning valuable safety strategies.

Building observable confidence and skills
Ranjan feels that the program proved to be a crucial tool for empowering young women. Through engaging modules on self-awareness, cyber safety, and personal boundaries, they acquired knowledge and skills to navigate the world more confidently.

The program also fostered open communication within families, allowing parents and daughters to discuss sensitive topics more freely. Parents witnessed a shift in their daughters' behavior. Young women became more assertive, expressing their opinions and concerns with greater confidence. They were better equipped to identify potentially risky situations and take proactive measures to ensure their safety.

Priya's story: A transformation
Ranjan Kumar fondly remembers the story of Priya, a student who initially appeared withdrawn and hesitant to engage in discussions about safety. The MASSp, with its innovative use of art, technology, and storytelling, helped Priya overcome her inhibitions. She emerged more vocal and empowered, even taking on the role of a peer educator within her community, sharing the safety knowledge she gained with her friends.

Lasting impact
Ranjan Kumar's testimonial underscores the profound impact of the MASSp program. He emphasizes its ability to empower young women with safety knowledge and self-confidence, create an open dialogue within families & foster a safer environment for young women in the community.



Moulding minds, **shaping futures**



Students receiving training on MASSp

In a sunlit classroom on the outskirts of a bustling city, Purbasha Dubey stands before eager faces, determined to empower adolescents through the Missing Link Trust's MASSp program. As a dedicated trainer, she has spent nearly a year imparting crucial knowledge on cyber safety, adolescent education, and personal awareness.

Purbasha, a second-year Sociology Honors student with a passion for empowering young minds, joined the Missing Link Trust to address critical knowledge gaps among government school students. Terms like catfishing and cybersecurity were foreign concepts to them, highlighting the program's necessity.

Her approachable demeanor has fostered trust among students, enabling open discussions on sensitive topics like blackmail and cyber threats. Interactive lessons on cyber security have captivated students, empowering them with essential digital literacy skills in an increasingly online world.

Breaking societal stigmas with education

Despite occasional resistance from orthodox-minded teachers, Purbasha remains steadfast in creating a safe environment for learning and discussion. The program's modules on adolescent education have successfully normalized discussions on LGBTQIA+ awareness, consent, and puberty, breaking down stigma and misinformation.

Families empowered with students initiatives

Students share newfound knowledge with their families, fostering positive community-wide change. She recalls instances where students have overcome personal challenges related to adolescence, empowered by MASSp's teachings on safety and responsibility.

Reflections and future goals

Reflecting on her journey, Purbasha identifies areas for improvement while celebrating the program's undeniable impact on student confidence and safety awareness. Her commitment to bridging educational gaps continues to drive her, reaffirming the transformative power of education through MASSp.

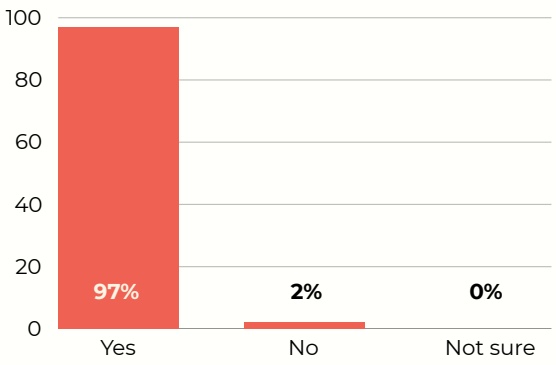
In just a year, Purbasha has witnessed firsthand how MASSp can empower and transform lives, reinforcing her dedication to making a lasting difference in the community.

Program Depth ↘

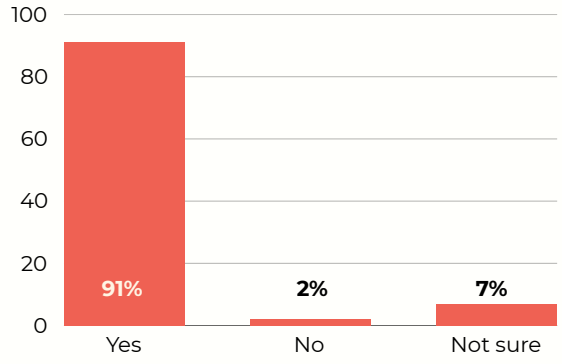
A balanced approach to cyber- safety, adolescent well-being

This section explores the impact of the program on participants, focusing on their empowerment, enhanced safety and well-being, and their understanding of key concepts related to digital safety, adolescent health.

Empowerment through MASSp



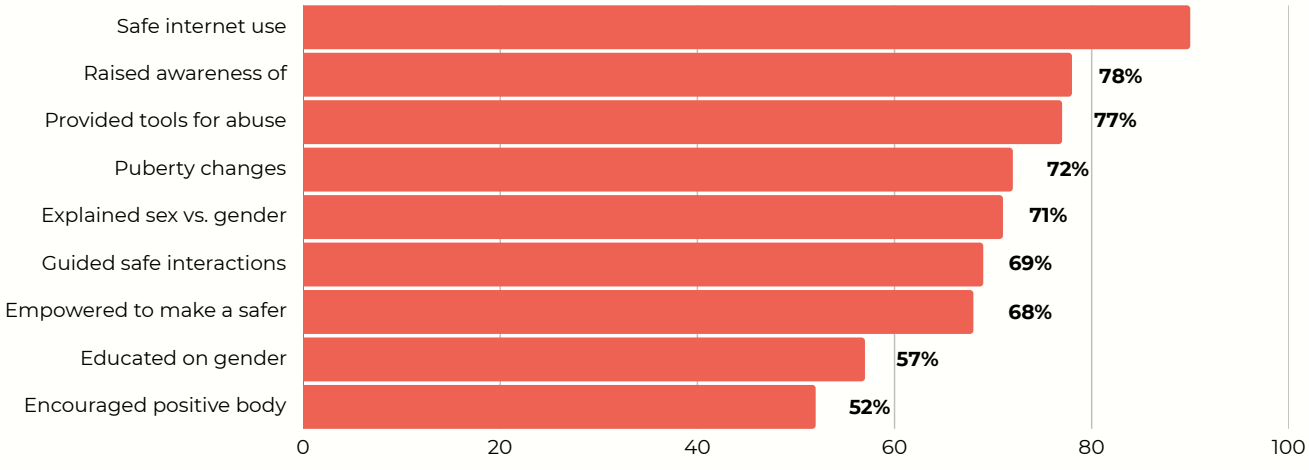
MASSp's impact on safety and well-being



Students empowered to act for self & others
MASSp is proving to be a powerful catalyst for change. A remarkable 97% of participants report feeling more empowered to help themselves and others after completing the program. As a result, MASSp has cultivated a community of individuals ready to use their knowledge to positively impact their communities, driving social change and promoting collective well-being.

Adolescents experienced well-being
MASSp is equipping adolescents with the tools they need to thrive. A resounding **91%** of participants believe the program has enhanced their ability to navigate life's challenges and prioritize well-being. This empowers them to not only protect themselves but also contribute positively to their families and communities, fostering a healthier and more resilient society.

Key concepts learnt:



Champion on **Cyber safety**



Students at the school

In the heart of Dongajora High School, eighteen-year-old Arup Kiari stands out for his academic performance and commitment to safety. After being a participant in the Missing Awareness and Safety School Program (MASSp) for two years, Arup exemplifies the program's transformative power in shaping young minds and fostering a culture of safety.

Despite his young age, Arup demonstrates remarkable maturity. He actively absorbs knowledge on crucial subjects like cybercrime, child protection, education, and health. "Cybercrime, Child Protection, Education and Health," he explains, listing the diverse topics covered in the program.

Arup recognizes the importance of these lessons, emphasizing, "It's for our safety. We can learn a lot from it."

His favorite topic is cybercrime. He recounts an incident where his friend received a suspicious OTP promising a large reward. Arup, drawing upon his MASSp knowledge, advised his friend against the scam, showcasing his ability to apply what he learned.

Empowering youth as digital guardians
MASSp has empowered Arup to become a guardian of safety for himself and his family. "After doing the program, I told my family about ways to protect ourselves from cyber crimes. After that, I do not post any online photos," he shares, demonstrating responsible digital citizenship. Arup believes MASSp's impact should extend beyond his school. "We have to do this program again, in many places, to teach those who do not know," he states, highlighting the need for widespread awareness campaigns.

Instilling informed decision-making skills
The program's influence extends beyond specific topics. Arup acknowledges, "Before taking any decision, we think about it." This critical thinking approach, instilled by MASSp, empowers him to make informed decisions.

Fostering community safety through education
Arup actively shares his learnings with peers and family, creating a ripple effect within his community. "We are sharing this with our parents and friends," he says, emphasizing the program's ability to foster a culture of safety. Arup Kiari's journey with MASSp is a testament to the transformative power of education. The program has equipped him with invaluable knowledge and skills, making him not just a responsible student but also a champion for safety within his community.

Enabling **informed futures**



Pratima Tewari, Parent

Pratima Tewari, a proud mother, beams as she talks about her daughter's transformation since joining the MASSp program two years ago. Her daughter, now in class 11, has gained valuable knowledge and confidence that is shaping her future.

MASSp equipped Pratima's daughter with crucial life skills. She learned about the detrimental health effects of child marriage, empowering her to make informed decisions about her future. Additionally, the program addressed cybercrime prevention, making her aware of online threats and how to stay safe. Pratima has witnessed a remarkable shift in her daughter's outlook. The program instilled in her the importance of self-reliance and pursuing her dreams before marriage.

This newfound confidence extends beyond personal choices; Pratima's daughter feels empowered to educate and protect her community. The program's impact extends beyond the individual.

Pratima's daughter has become a champion for online safety within the family. She actively discourages sharing inappropriate content on social media and educates her friends about online dangers.

This newfound awareness has even trickled down to protecting senior family members from cybercrime scams.

Advocacy for community access
Pratima emphasizes the program's importance, believing it should be accessible to everyone, not just students. She suggests creative methods like street plays to raise awareness across the community. Pratima's daughter is fueled by ambition.

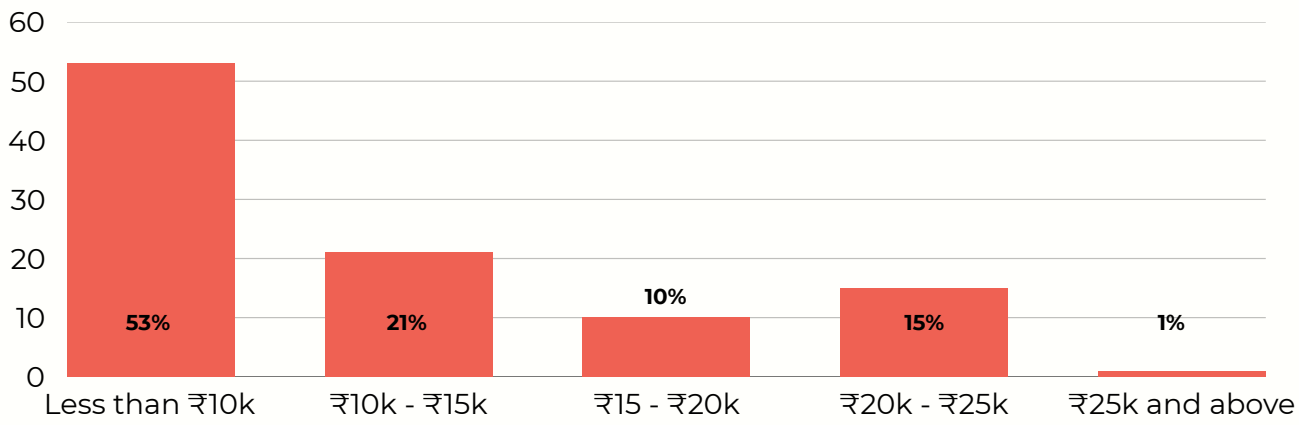
Torn between becoming a police officer and a doctor, she's on a path to pursue a fulfilling career. Pratima, a supportive pillar, offers unwavering support, cherishing her daughter's happiness above all else.

Vision for an empowered future
Pratima wholeheartedly endorses MASSp, recognizing its potential to create a generation of empowered young people. She envisions a future where awareness about critical issues like child marriage and online safety is commonplace. Pratima's story exemplifies the transformative power of MASSp, impacting not just individuals, but families and communities as a whole.

Program Inclusion

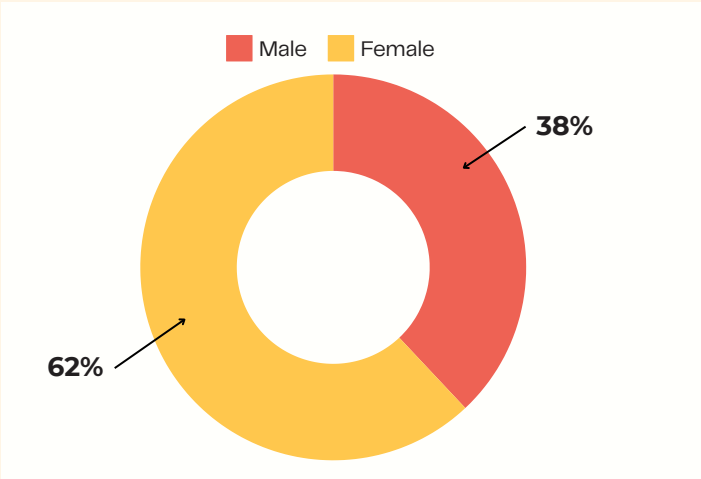
Designed to reach the most vulnerable adolescents

Inclusion section within this impact report emphasizes the pivotal role of equitable access, particularly for students due to factors such as gender, and socio-economic status. We delve into the program's commitment to fostering inclusivity, offering an overview of its practices and policies designed to ensure that diverse groups have equal opportunities for participation.



53% are below 10k household income

A substantial **84%** of MASSp participants come from households earning less than Rs. 20,000 monthly. In fact, over half (53%) live on less than Rs. 10,000. This stark reality underscores MASSp's critical role in serving economically marginalized communities. By providing vital resources and education to those with limited opportunities, the program empowers participants to overcome barriers to knowledge. This targeted approach not only addresses immediate educational needs but also lays the groundwork for long-term personal and economic growth, fostering a more equitable society.



Protecting girls, reducing vulnerability

MASSp demonstrates a strong commitment to gender equality: 62% female and 38% male. While MASSp boasts a balance of male and female participants, it's crucial to recognize that girls are disproportionately vulnerable to child marriage and trafficking. To effectively address these pressing issues and protect the rights of young women, it is imperative to increase the number of girls participating in the program. By expanding outreach to girls, MASSp has equipped them with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to prevent exploitation and build brighter futures..

MASSp combats Child Marriage, **Boosts School retention**



Sudeep Maiti, Teacher, Ambika Nagar Haripriya High School

Ambika Nagar Haripriya High School in Sundarbans, has implemented the Missing Awareness and Safety School Program (MASSp) to create a safer environment. The school has struggled with early marriage and elopement among students. These issues disrupt education and create long-term stigma.

Sudip Maity, a teacher since 2009, shared, "Before the girls come of age, they may run away. It is inconvenient and there is no concentration on studies. But it has been seen in some cases that the girl who has run away, comes back again after 6 months or a year but may not return to school because of that shame."

MASSp, introduced two years ago, raises awareness about child marriage and human trafficking, involving both students and teachers from classes 8 to 12. Maity explained, "We all participate in this program along with children and also become more aware."

Reduction in early marriage rates

MASSp has significantly reduced early marriage and elopement incidents. Maity noted, "Due to this, the tendency to leave and escape has been reduced." The program also changed students' attitudes, allowing some who had eloped to return to school with community support. Parents and the broader community have become more informed and supportive.

MASSp enhances safety

The collaboration between Ambika Nagar Haripriya High School and the Missing Link Trust through MASSp has created a safer and more nurturing environment. As Maity optimistically stated, "There has been a change in the attitude and perception of students towards the MASSp program," indicating a brighter future for Sundarbans' children.



Arming girls with knowledge, **protecting their dreams**



Nitay Mati, a resident of Sundarbans, has a rich background working with various organizations like DF, Google, and Bandhan Bank. However, his passion for education led him to MASSp in December 2011, initially as a volunteer. Witnessing the impact of the program firsthand, he rose to the position of Block Coordinator.

Nitay acknowledges the challenges he faced while running the program at the Block level. One significant hurdle was gaining acceptance from certain communities, particularly the Muslim community, who were hesitant to discuss topics related to adolescence and sexuality. However, Nitay, along with his team, didn't give up. They employed convincing strategies to engage both students and teachers, overcoming these initial hurdles and leading to positive outcomes. The program received great feedback from schools, with teachers appreciating the initiative and acknowledging it should have happened earlier. This positive response fuels Nitay's determination to keep the program running.

MASSp empowers girls through education

Nitay emphasizes the crucial role MASSp plays in empowering young girls. Many girls leave school early due to a lack of knowledge about their physical development and related issues. This lack of awareness can have serious consequences. MASSp equips young girls with the knowledge and tools they need to navigate adolescence safely, educating them about the POCSO Act and empowering them to protect themselves.

MASSp empowering impact on a student's life

Nitay witnesses the positive changes in the program participants as MASSp fosters awareness and empowers young girls to make informed decisions about their well-being. His story highlights the dedication and perseverance required to overcome challenges and deliver impactful programs like MASSp.

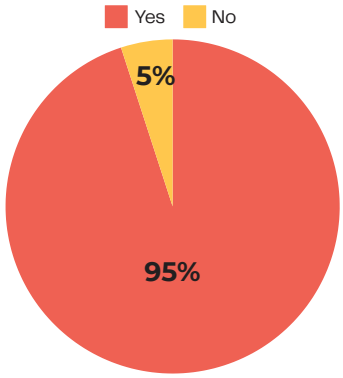


Program **Sustainability**

Empowering futures through sustainability

The Sustainability section of this report explores the program's long-term impact. This is evaluated by assessing the material's ability to refresh key concepts over time, improvement observed by students recognize in their ability to recognize and deal with risky situations, and their likelihood of recommending the program to their peers.

Usefulness of workbooks for MASSp program



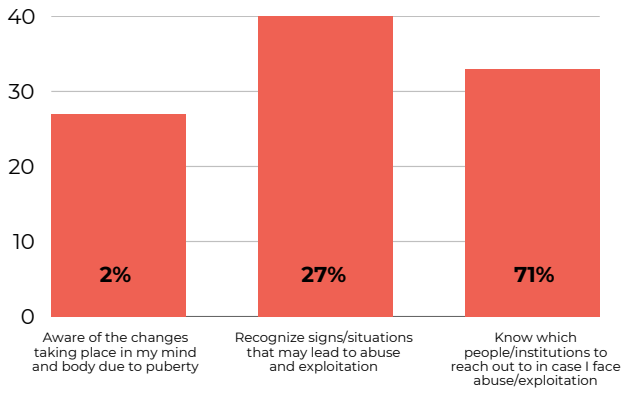
Participants found workbook materials crucial for knowledge retention

An impressive **95%** of participants found the workbook, materials, and videos essential in reinforcing the concepts learned during the program. This strong response highlights the significant role these resources play in deepening understanding and ensuring knowledge retention. By equipping participants with tools to revisit and apply key concepts, the resources contribute to sustained learning, empowering participants to effectively integrate the knowledge into their daily lives and work for lasting, positive change.

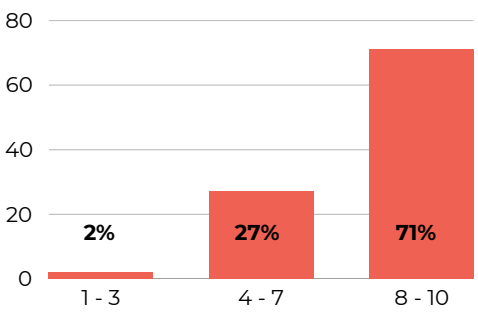
Students prioritise higher education

The MASSp program has made a significant impact on students by increasing their self-awareness and understanding of critical issues: 27% of students reported being more aware of the changes in their mind and body due to puberty, helping them navigate this phase with confidence. 40% of students now recognize signs and situations that may lead to abuse or exploitation, enhancing their ability to protect themselves. 33% of students feel equipped to identify trusted people and institutions they can approach in case of abuse or exploitation.

Changes observed by students in themselves after the program



Overall program rating



Likelihood of recommending the program

71% of participants gave positive ratings (8-10) to the MASSp program, indicating high satisfaction. This shows the program is meeting their needs and expectations. It also demonstrates MASSp's impact in empowering students, helping them understand important topics for their future, and making them more likely to recommend the program to others.

A powerful partnership for **Child Protection**



Sourav Dasgupta, Joint BDO

In the bustling heart of Sundarbans, Sourav Dasgupta, a dedicated joint Block Development Officer (BDO), stands as a beacon of hope for child protection. **Dasgupta has been tirelessly working alongside the Missing Awareness and Safety School Program (MASSp) to safeguard the welfare of children** in his community.

Dasgupta's partnership with MASSp has been transformative, addressing critical gaps in child protection and enhancing the well-being of vulnerable children. Through their collective efforts, they have navigated the complex landscape of rural poverty and limited access to education, striving to mitigate the risks of exploitation and early marriage.

What sets Dasgupta's collaboration with MASSp apart is his unequivocal endorsement of their work. "The dedication and effectiveness of MASSp in generating awareness and preventing child abuse are unparalleled," he praises.

Dasgupta highlights their pivotal role in bridging gaps between civil and police administration, facilitating targeted interventions, and fostering greater accountability within the community.

Tangible improvements
Through targeted initiatives and collaborative networks, Dasgupta and MASSp have brought about tangible improvements in child protection procedures and outcomes. "Our joint efforts have not only increased awareness but also fostered greater accountability and responsiveness within the community," Dasgupta notes. Their work has significantly impacted the community's approach to child protection, creating a safer environment for children.

A beacon of hope
Dasgupta's unwavering support of MASSp's work speaks volumes. "The impact of MASSp extends far beyond statistics. It represents a beacon of hope, a lifeline for vulnerable children, and a testament to the transformative power of collective action," he states. Their collaborative approach exemplifies the power of partnership in driving meaningful change and ensuring the safety and well-being of children across the district.

Inspiring communities
Through their continued partnership, Dasgupta and MASSp inspire communities to stand together to safeguarding the future of their children. Their efforts demonstrate the profound impact of dedicated collaboration in creating lasting, positive change.

Advocating safety, **inspiring the Community**



Pranita, a Class 11 student at Bhuvaneshwari Jaikrishna School, has been immersed in the transformative Missing Awareness and Safety School Program (MASSp) for two years. This initiative has enlightened her on pressing issues such as human trafficking, adolescent health, and the insidious threats of cybercrime, including fraudulent OTPs and phishing scams.

MASSp has revolutionized Pranita's daily habits, instilling a vigilant approach to online safety. She now exercises caution, refraining from sharing sensitive information like OTPs and navigating the web with heightened awareness against potential cyber threats. These practical skills have significantly bolstered her confidence and ability to navigate the digital world securely. Beyond personal growth, MASSp has empowered Pranita to catalyze change within her community. She actively engages in preventing child marriages by educating families and liaising with authorities.

This proactive involvement underscores the program's broader impact, fostering a safer environment beyond its participants.

Deepened responsibility and awareness
Formerly passive in her digital interactions, Pranita now champions responsible online behaviour among peers. She has taken the lead in cleansing social media profiles of inappropriate content and educating her family on cyber safety measures. Her efforts have not only fortified family security but also cultivated a culture of vigilance and empowerment within her social circle.

Inspired confidence and aspirations
MASSp has imbued Pranita with profound confidence and a sense of responsibility, which are pivotal as she navigates towards independence and pursues her educational aspirations. She envisions a future where her knowledge and experience contribute to a safer, more informed community.

In essence, MASSp has not only equipped Pranita with vital safety skills but also empowered her to advocate for change and inspire others within her community. Her journey exemplifies the program's transformative impact, fostering resilience and proactive engagement in safeguarding oneself and others.

Recommendations ↘

Integrate Vocational and Career Guidance for Grades 8–12:
Many graduates face challenges due to limited career opportunities, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation. To address this, MASSp can introduce vocational and career guidance modules tailored for students in Grades 8–12. These modules will equip students with essential knowledge and skills to navigate the job market, secure meaningful employment, and achieve financial independence, thereby reducing their long-term vulnerability.

Enhance Knowledge Retention Through Refresher Sessions:
Safety information covered in the MASSp program may diminish over time. To reinforce retention and ensure long-term effectiveness, MASSp can introduce periodic recap sessions or refresher modules. These sessions can revisit key safety concepts through engaging methods, such as interactive activities and peer-to-peer learning. By continuously reinforcing critical safety information, students are more likely to retain and effectively apply these lessons in real-life situations.

Promote Student Leadership and Engagement Through a MASSp Club:
Establishing a MASSp Club can serve as a student-led platform for leadership development, peer-to-peer learning, and knowledge sharing. The club can organize diverse activities to promote safety awareness, such as:

- **Safety Workshops:** Students lead workshops on specific safety topics, encouraging deeper understanding and interactive learning.
- **Guest Speaker Sessions:** Invite local law enforcement or NGO representatives to provide practical insights and address student concerns.
- **Creative Cultural Activities:** Use art, dance, drama, and crafts to convey safety messages in an engaging way:
  - **Art Exhibitions/Competitions:** Encourage students to create art on safety themes for visual impact.
  - **Performances:** Dance and plays can effectively communicate safety messages, resonating with a broader school audience.
  - **Craft Workshops:** Design educational materials for younger students, fostering safety awareness across age groups.

The MASSp Club will develop leadership skills, encourage a sense of ownership in safety awareness, and build community responsibility. Additionally, these creative and engaging activities will make safety messages more impactful and memorable for students

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT CENTRE (WEC)

KULTALI, SUNDARBANS





A look at Impact from the lens of Reach, Depth, Inclusion, Sustainability.

WEC

As per UNICEF, in India nearly one in four young women (23%) married before their 18th birthday*.

As per the 2020 National Family Health Survey, at least 40 per cent of young women were married before turning 18 in West Bengal.**

Cyber safety is another growing concern. In India, 65,893 cybercrime cases were reported in 2022, a 24.4% increase from 2021. Of these, 5.2% were related to sexual exploitation***

In a research study , it is pointed out that West Bengal is used as a source, transit and destination for national & international trafficking in women and children. Helpless children and women of West Bengal, generally are trafficked to Mumbai, Pune and Delhi.****



*https://www.unicef.org/india/media/1176/file/Ending-Child-Marriage.pdf
**https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2020/Dec/15/over-40-women-were-married-before-they-turned-18-in-bihar-west-bengal-and-tripura-survey-2236537.html
***https://indianexpress.com/article/india/rise-cybercrime-2022-economic-offences-ncrb-report-9053882/
****https://www.researchgate.net/publication/366385963_Human_trafficking_in_West_Bengal_the_present_scenario_and_challenges

Context and **Approach**

The mission of Missing Link Trust is to empower vulnerable women and their families by providing employability related skill training to enhance their well-being, focusing on preventing trafficking, reducing violence, and promoting gender equality.

Their Women's Empowerment Centre (WEC) in Kultali, West Bengal, offers vocational training in trades like tailoring, handicrafts, and IT skills. Community outreach includes campaigns to change societal attitudes and training leaders to advocate for women's rights.





Theory of **change**

Problems addressed:

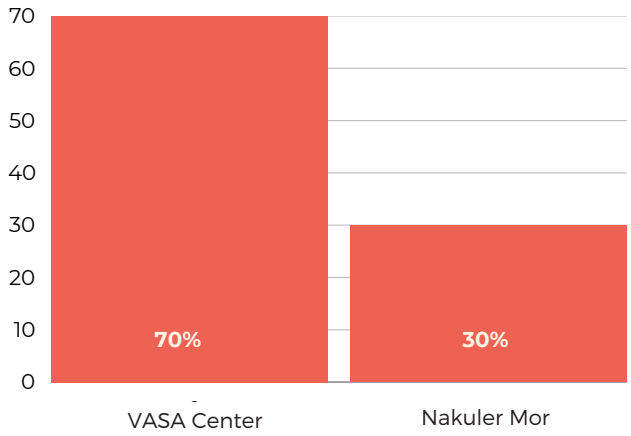
Lack of economic Opportunities	Early marriages and inadequate infrastructure result in disrupted education	Significant need for structured skill development programs to empower women and enhance their employability	Poverty, lack of skills, and limited market access render women in the Sundarbans highly economically vulnerable

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Establishment of WECs in Vasa, Madhusudanpur, and Nakuler Mor region Recruitment of master tailors and trainers Procurement of sewing machines and training materials Development of a structured training curriculum Partnerships with local markets and fashion brands	Skill training in tailoring, including making underpants, petticoats, blouses, frocks for children, and churidaars Hand embroidery training to produce items like table mats, table runners, and kantha tea towels and napkins Women equipped to use center machines to complete received orders Connecting trained women to markets to fulfill orders and generate income Participation in exhibitions to showcase products and receive market feedback.	Training of **90** women in various tailoring skills from 2023-24 in Kultali Execution of a **1 lakh** drawstring bag order for Jaypore, a well-known fashion brand. Participation in exhibitions like FICCI Ladies Organization, Cherry Orchard, German Consulate Christmas fair, and Mrs. Wilson's cafe exhibitions. Women earning between Rs. **2,500** to Rs. **8,000** per month, based on their time and effort	Over **90** women trained in tailoring and embroidery have gained employable skills **79%** express willingness to take the job opportunities provided by WEC **76%** of participants are eager to acquire new skills, highlighting a strong demand for continued learning and personal growth **28%** women participants felt their social standing in the community improved

Program **Reach**

Empowering women in remote areas like Sunderbans

The "Reach" section of the Impact Report provides insights into the number of lives impacted and the accessibility of the program. The mission was to generate knowledge on economic livelihoods for marginalized women through skill training. To understand the program's reach and accessibility, factors such as training distribution, association with WEC program, accessibility from center etc were examined.

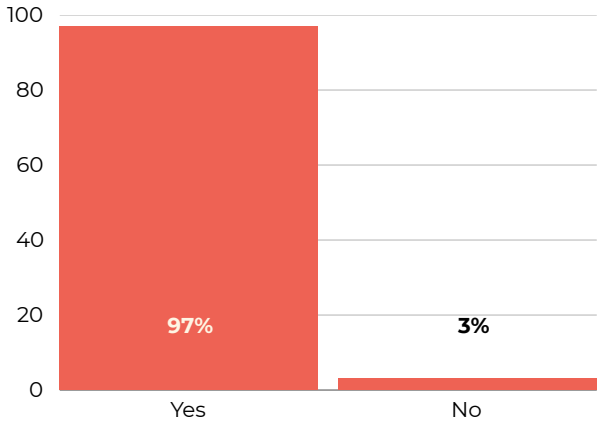


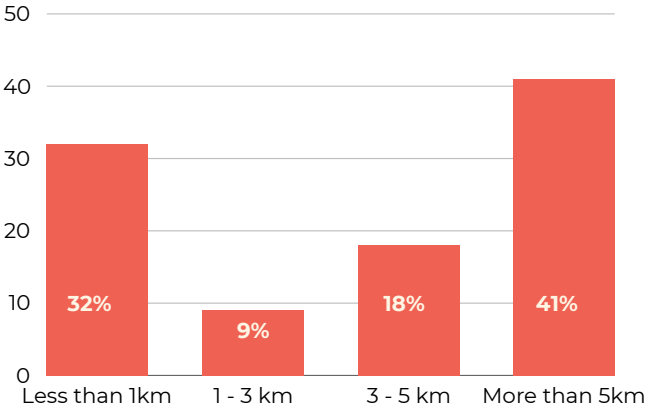
90 women trained from 2017 till June 2024 in West Bengal

Between 2017 and June 2024, a total of 333 women in Kultali, West Bengal received training to enhance their skills and economic prospects. The Vasa centre provided training to 70% of these women, while Nakuler Mor catered to the remaining 30%. This concentrated effort in Kultali signifies a substantial commitment to empowering local women, as evidenced by the program's reach and impact on skill development

Livelihood skills reported to be acquired by majority participants

A remarkable **97%** participants reported gaining new, livelihood-enhancing skills. This demonstrates the program's potential to boost employability and economic prospects. Through the training the participants have been equipped to contribute to their communities. However the application of these skills is crucial in driving meaningful change and fostering sustainable livelihoods.





Distance from the center is critical

59% participants live less than 5 km from centre, while 41% of beneficiaries reside more than 5 km from the center. This highlights the need for strategies to improve accessibility, such as exploring transportation support or establishing decentralized service points, to further enhance program reach and impact.

A journey of Empowerment and Financial Independence

Debashree Senapati, a resident of Kultali village, has been attending the Women Empowerment Center (WEC) since 2018. Located conveniently close to her home, the center has profoundly impacted her daily life and family dynamics. Debashree shares that the WEC program has significantly boosted her confidence, enabling her to guide her husband and family in making crucial decisions, particularly in financial matters.

Her journey to the center wasn't without obstacles. Her father-in-law initially opposed her enrollment, believing she should focus solely on household chores. However, the team at the center patiently explained the benefits the family would reap from her training, ultimately convincing him to allow her admission.

Over the years, Debashree has acquired various skills at the WEC, including making jute bags, masks, cushion covers, and women's and kids' apparel. The most remarkable change, she notes, is her father-in-law's transformation from a skeptic to a supporter who now actively helps her in her work, even setting up a tailoring machine to aid her in product creation.



Debashree Senapati, WEC Trainee

WEC boosts confidence and financial independence

Debashree's confidence has soared since joining the WEC. She now creates products and sells them in the market, significantly improving her family's financial condition. She recalls a time when she felt helpless due to a lack of funds to pay bills.. Her family is now supportive and proud of her work. They appreciate the positive changes she has brought about through her involvement with the WEC. Her daily routine has shifted from solely doing household chores and helping on the farm to attending the center and continuing her household responsibilities.

Belief in women empowerment and future appreciation

Debashree strongly believes that every woman should learn skills to feel empowered in life. She now feels confident enough to set up stalls at craft and trade fairs, showcasing her expertise in making crafts. Looking ahead, Debashree hopes the WEC program will introduce more opportunities for women to earn money. The inspiring story of Debashree Senapati demonstrates the significant potential of the WEC program in Kultali and emphasizes the significance of giving women the skills and confidence they need to improve their communities and their own lives.

WEC fosters **Social Recognition and Respect** ↘



Tanvi, Project Manager

Tanvi, is a dedicated Project Manager and Product Designer at the Women Empowerment Center (WEC).

The WEC program aims to combat sex trafficking by providing women with an alternative source of income. As Tanvi emphasizes, “Our main goal is to train women so they can stand on their own feet and proudly tell their families about their work.” This empowerment extends beyond financial independence, encompassing social recognition and respect. She adds, “These women are now part of decision making and are providing for their children’s education and other needs at home.”

This empowerment is not just about financial independence; it also includes social recognition and respect. She adds that these women are now part of decision makers in their home and are providing for their children's education and other needs at home.

Reduction of inequality and increase livelihood options

The WEC initiative has greatly decreased the range of problems that these villages' women experience. With the aid of training, many women are now self-sufficient and have stable sources of income, which has contributed to the reduction of gender inequality, particularly among women. Moreover, the awareness spread by the program has shown women that they have options beyond illegal activities to earn a livelihood. The women in the region, with the help of the WEC earn an average monthly income of 3000 rupees, which is a big deal for them. Last financial year, the center completed three batches of training, and received another grant from B.C. Jindal for this year.

Looking ahead with new rays of hope

Tanvi acknowledges the need for patience and understanding when working with these women. "They have gone through tough times and need our support," she says. The key to the program's sustainability lies in securing more orders, to keep the women engaged and earning. She mentioned that they are working towards getting more orders and are planning to hire a marketing person to help them.

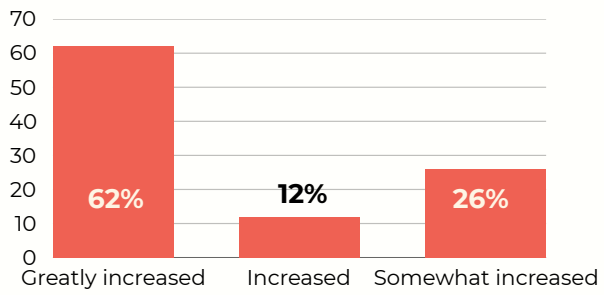
Tanvi's dedication to the WEC program is fueled by the positive impact she witnesses daily. "Seeing these women stand on their own feet and gain respect in their communities motivates me to keep working on this program," she says with a smile. The WEC program continues to be a beacon of hope, transforming lives one stitch at a time.

Program Depth ↘

Empowering women through skills and equality

The program aimed at developing skills that help uplifting the women in social and financial independence. Additionally, it sought to transform the perceptions and attitudes of communities thereby creating gender equality. To assess the impact, a primary survey was conducted across categories including effectiveness of training, skills and livelihood acquired, confidence level, satisfaction level, applications of skills learned etc.

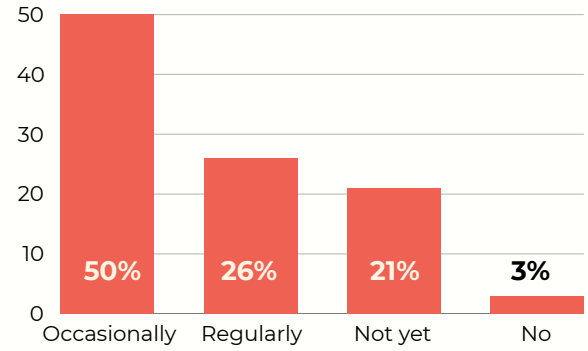
Increase in confidence



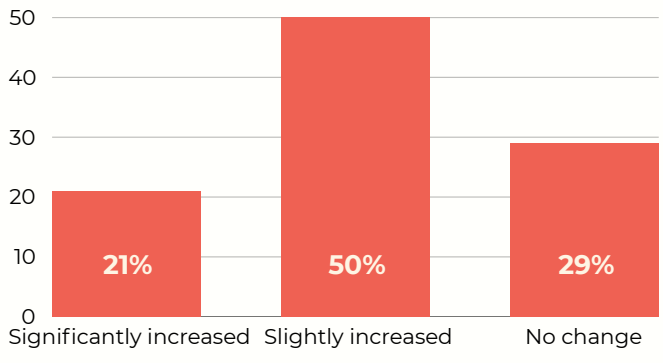
Self confidence boosted due to training
62% reported their confidence in their skills has greatly increased, 26% stated their confidence somewhat increased, and 12% mentioned their confidence increased. These shifts highlight the significant impact of WEC in bolstering personal confidence among participants.

A substantial portion (74%) of participants do not consistently utilize their WEC-acquired skills for income generation.
While the WEC program has equipped participants with valuable skills, their consistent application for income generation may be limited. Only 26% of participants utilize these skills regularly for income generation, indicating a potential gap between skill acquisition and its practical application.

Application of skills learned at WEC



Change in financial situation



Major financial impact remains to be realised
21% of participants reported improved financial conditions, while the remaining participants reported slight or no change. This suggests that while the program has the potential to improve financial outcomes, a significant portion of participants have not yet fully translated their acquired skills into tangible economic benefits.

From Fisherwoman to guiding light, **Padma's journey with WEC**



Padma, WEC staff

Padma, once a fisherwoman in the Sundarbans rivers, has transformed her life through her role as a support staff member at the Women Empowerment Centre (WEC). Before joining WEC, she relied on selling fish to support her family. Now, she imparts stitching skills to women beneficiaries and continues stitching and alterations at home to support her husband.

Padma's journey with WEC began with her learning stitching at the centre. Overcoming initial family and financial challenges, she now enjoys full support from her family, who have seen their household income improve significantly. Padma is proud of her contributions to her children's education and the financial stability she has brought to her family, including opening her own bank savings account.

While Padma once faced family opposition and financial struggles, she now sees no such challenges.

The WEC program has helped resolve her family problems, and she assists other women in gaining financial independence.

Padma highlights the importance of increased orders for the center to ensure monthly earnings for all women. Her family's perception of financial independence and confidence has shifted positively, leading to educational opportunities for her children, home renovations, and overall financial improvement.

WEC transforms lives and inspires

Padma's involvement with WEC has had a profound impact on her and her family life. She tearfully shares that, without WEC, financial and family problems might have driven her to despair. The center is now her second life, and she eagerly attends every day. Padma proudly recounts how her community, once skeptical, now sees the positive changes in her life. Her success has inspired over 15 women to join WEC, seeking similar improvements in their lives.

Upliftment of life with WEC support

Padma describes the WEC program as the best thing that has happened to her. It has provided her with mental, social, and financial support, bringing immense happiness and stability to her life. Her story is a testament to the transformative power of the WEC program, which continues to uplift and empower women in Kultali.



A shift in Perspective: **The Community's changing attitudes**



Chandini, Beneficiary

Chandini has been a dedicated beneficiary of the WEC Center since its inception. Her involvement started from the very first meeting and led to her formal admission. This journey has brought significant positive changes to her life and household.

Chandini shares that joining the WEC Center has resulted in numerous positive changes. Even during the challenging times of the COVID-19 lockdown, the center provided essential supplies like staples and masks, offering crucial support when she faced difficulties at home. Through the income generated from orders, she has been able to contribute financially to her family.

Chandini's commitment to her household responsibilities has now prevented her from attending the center regularly. With her in-laws and husband engaged in outside work and her husband occasionally facing health issues, she has to manage farm work and household chores.

Support for future generations
When asked about her daughter-in-law's potential involvement with the WEC Center, Chandini expresses her full support. She recalls the benefits she received from the center and is determined to encourage her daughter-in-law to join once she settles into married life. Chandini is a strong advocate for women learning new skills and gaining independence.

Suggestions for improvement in WEC
Chandini suggests that allowing some of the order-related work to be completed at home could be beneficial. This flexibility would enable women to balance their household duties with their commitment to the center.

Increased Confidence and Community Impact
The WEC Center has significantly boosted Chandini's confidence. The financial support from the center helped in her daughter's marriage, and she is proud that her daughter is now working at the center. She highlights that her family has become more supportive of women's participation in the center, a shift from their initial hesitation.

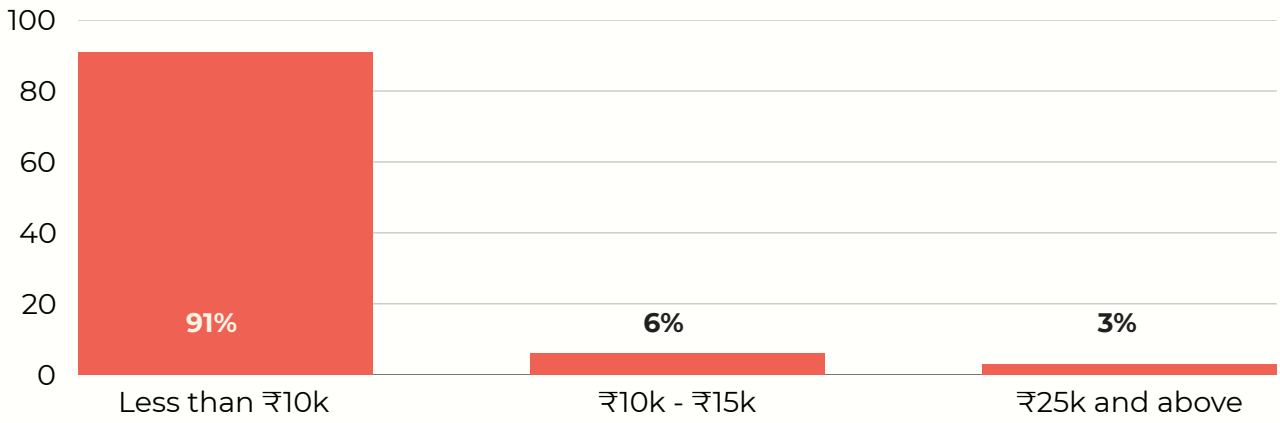
Success Stories and Community Change
Chandini proudly shares that the WEC Center has been instrumental in changing the mindset of men in her community. The center's efforts have not only improved the lives of women but also played a role in reducing child marriages. She recalls how the center's intervention prevented a friend's daughter's child marriage, showcasing the profound impact of their work. The WEC program by Missing Link Trust has empowered her and many others, fostering financial independence, boosting confidence, and creating a positive ripple effect in the community.

Program Inclusion

Fostering equitable access and inclusivity

The inclusion section within this impact report emphasizes the pivotal role of equitable access, particularly for women who may face exclusion or marginalization due to factors such as gender, and socio-economic status. We delve into the program's commitment to fostering inclusivity, offering an overview of its practices and policies designed to ensure that diverse groups have equal opportunities for participation.

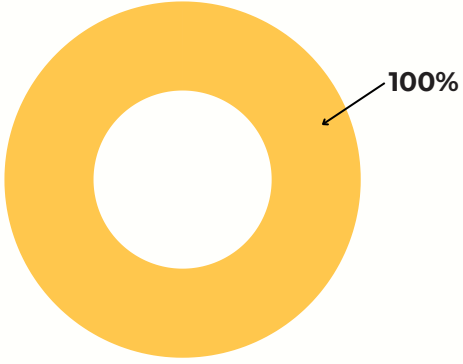
Monthly household income of women



Widespread financial challenges and moderate gains

The data reveals a stark economic reality: 91% of participants reported monthly household incomes below Rs 10,000, underscoring widespread financial hardship. While 6% earned between Rs 10,001 and Rs 15,000, and a small 3% exceeded Rs 25,000, these figures highlight the significant economic disparities within the community. The data emphasizes the urgent need for economic empowerment programs to address these challenges and improve livelihoods.

100% women centric



100% women empowered

The initiative achieved 100% women's participation, demonstrating a strong commitment to inclusivity. This full engagement reflects the program's success in building confidence and providing tools for women's empowerment. By fostering a supportive environment, the initiative has enabled participants to gain skills, boost self-esteem, and drive personal and community growth.

Sewing seeds of **Entrepreneurship**



Geetanjali Maity, WEC trainee

A resident of Bhubaneswari, Ms. Geetanjali Maity, is a 22-year-old college student and a dedicated participant in the Women Empowerment Center (WEC) program. Since joining the program six years ago, Geetanjali has seen her life transform significantly through the skills and opportunities provided by the center.

Since the inception of her journey with WEC, Geetanjali has mastered the art of tailoring, focusing on creating various types of bags and apparels. Despite the challenge of traveling long distances to the center, she remains committed, cycling for an hour each way. Her family's unwavering support has been a cornerstone of her success, encouraging her to pursue her training and enhance her skills.

Geetanjali's hard work has begun to pay off. Initially, she received smaller orders, but now she handles larger ones, generating a substantial income. The financial independence she is now experiencing has greatly enhanced the standard of living for her family and herself by enabling her to support them. The WEC program has empowered her to make financial decisions, boosting her confidence and independence.

Community impact and educational advancement

The WEC program has not only impacted Geetanjali but also brought positive changes to her community. There has been a noticeable reduction in child marriages and there has been a shift in the community's mindset regarding women's education and empowerment. Young girls in her village are now motivated to join the center, eager to learn new skills and earn their own income.

Future aspirations and continuous learning

Looking ahead, Geetanjali aspires to continue her association with the WEC center, aiming to further hone her skills and achieve professional excellence in tailoring. She dreams of starting her own tailoring business one day. She has seen her fellow beneficiaries' lives improve to the point that their means of living has increased economically. The WEC program has been a beacon of hope and transformation for many women in her village, providing them with the tools to build better futures.

The program has been a life-changing experience for Geetanjali. It has not only enhanced her skills and confidence but also brought financial stability and a sense of purpose to her life. She hopes that the program will continue to grow and mitigate challenges like long-distance travel, enabling more women to benefit from its opportunities.

Empowered to **take charge of Children's Education**

Manashi Maity, a 34-year-old former housewife, embarked on a transformative journey with the Women Empowerment Center (WEC) in 2018. Initially bound by traditional household roles, Manashi sought a change that would not only improve her own life but also uplift her family.



Manashi Maity, WEC trainee

Empowering skills and financial independence
Since joining WEC, Manashi has acquired valuable skills in stitching women's and children's apparel, crafting various types of bags, and creating cushion covers. These skills have empowered her to earn a steady income, enabling her to pay rent and cover her children's education expenses. Her financial independence has significantly improved her household's livelihood, allowing her to invest in herself and make independent decisions.

Before joining WEC, Manashi had little independence and was confined to following her family's wishes. The WEC program has been a turning point, instilling in her the confidence to manage household affairs independently.

With her newfound skills and financial strength, she no longer faces the restrictions and challenges she once did. Her in-laws and husband, who previously discouraged her from working, have come to respect and support her efforts.

Changing perspectives and family dynamics
The positive impact of the WEC program extends beyond financial benefits. It has transformed the mindset of the men in her community, promoting women's education and equality. Manashi's husband and father-in-law now appreciate the value of her work, recognizing the significant contributions she makes to the household. The WEC program has not only provided income but has also empowered Manashi to solve household problems and make informed decisions.

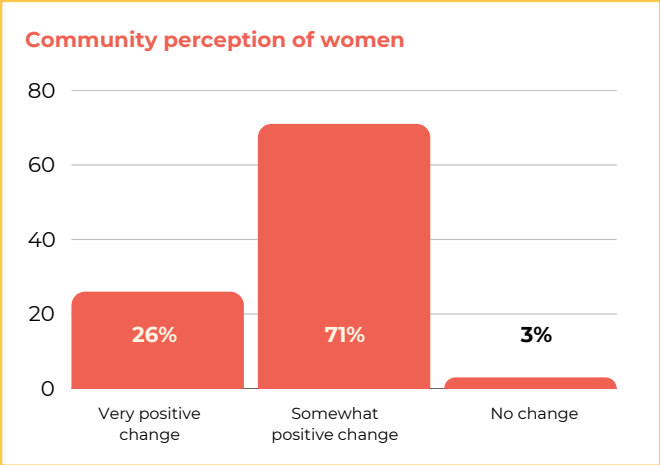
Investing in children's education
One of the most profound changes Manashi has experienced is in her children's education. Previously, her husband's resistance made it difficult to address her son's educational needs. Today, thanks to the WEC program, Manashi independently covers all educational expenses, ensuring a better future for her child.

Future aspirations and gratitude
Looking ahead, Manashi hopes for a consistent flow of orders, which will allow her to further support her family. She expresses immense gratitude towards the program, stating, "WEC is my life. It should run for a lifetime, and I will always work here."

Program **Sustainability**

Beyond employment, illuminating social and economic changes

The Sustainability section of this report examines the program's impact on enhancing the ability and interest of the women to earn a livelihood by applying the skills acquired. Here we look at the factors that would enable women to keep up sustained employment while managing household and farming responsibilities.

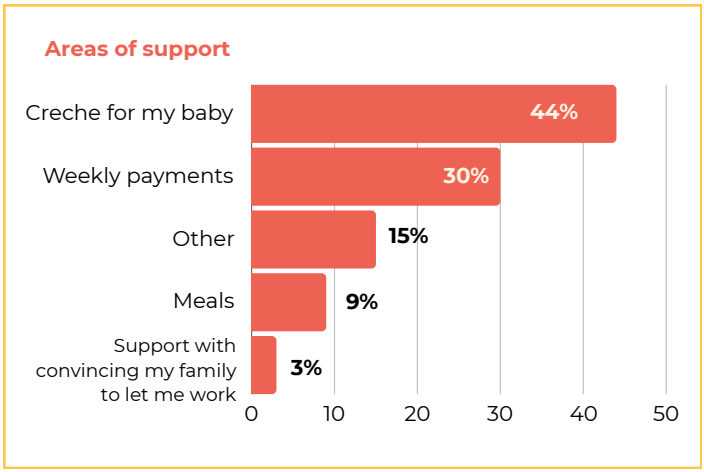


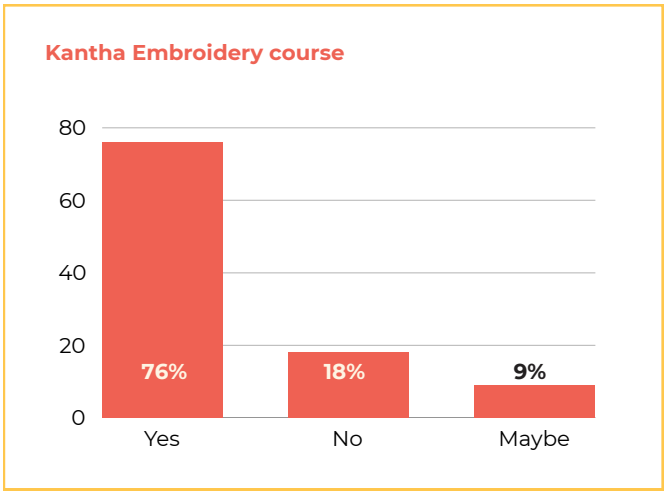
Slight shift in community perception

26% participants noted a very positive change in the community perceptions of women who have under the WEC program, demonstrating the program's broader impact. This attitudinal shift, likely driven by the women's increased economic independence and empowerment through skill development and income generation, fosters increased respect, opportunities, and support for women within their communities.

Support needed to sustain participation in job assignments

Supportive measures such as access to childcare and reliable income are crucial for enhancing participation of rural women who are often managing household, childcare as well as farm duties. **44%** of beneficiaries prioritize access to a creche, addressing essential childcare needs and enabling mothers to pursue work opportunities. Additionally, **30%** highlight the importance of monthly payments through regular orders, ensuring financial stability and consistent income.





76% of participants have expressed strong interest in attending the Kantha Embroidery course

However, the learnings from the tailoring course must be considered, particularly the factors that influenced the successful application of skills into income-generating activities. This analysis will be crucial in ensuring that the Katha Embroidery course effectively equips participants with the necessary skills, market linkages, and support mechanisms to translate their training into sustainable income generation.

Safe and Positive **Environment for Women**



Geeta Rani, Mother of Trainee

Geeta Rani, a proud mother-in-law in Kultali village, West Bengal, shares how transformation was brought to her family by the Women Empowerment Center (WEC). Her daughter-in-law, one of the beneficiaries of the program was encouraged wholeheartedly by Geeta after having witnessed many women in her village embracing this opportunity. Geeta acknowledges the broader impact of the WEC program on their community. "Many women from our village now gather at the center to learn and earn," she notes proudly.

Geeta mentioned that she witnessed the transformative power of skill-building. "My daughter-in-law has gained confidence since joining WEC," she beams. Financially, the skills acquired by her daughter-in-law have significantly strengthened the family income, providing much-needed support to her husband and the household. Beyond financial gains, Geeta remarked that she observed a remarkable shift in her daughter-in-law's role within the family. She now advises her husband on improving his work and offers Geeta valuable insights into managing household affairs more efficiently.

New perspective on gender equality

Reflecting on her own past, Geeta contrasts her daughter-in-law's experiences with her own limited opportunities. In her youth, societal norms confined her to household duties, denying her the chance to work or learn new skills. However, witnessing the safe and productive environment of the WEC center, Geeta feels inspired and reassured. She firmly believes in providing equal opportunities for both genders and is proud to see her daughter-in-law seize these opportunities, earning respect and financial independence. Geeta's support for WEC is unwavering. "The center is a beacon of hope. It has not only enriched our lives but also fostered gender equality," she concludes.

Improved household stability

Geeta notes a noticeable improvement in their household's financial stability, with all earnings being pooled together to mitigate any financial challenges. She praises the WEC program for its comprehensive support and training, which have enabled her daughter-in-law to contribute meaningfully to the family's income.

Future hopes and community appreciation

Geeta's appreciation extends beyond her family, and she shares that the villages around her value the presence of the center in their lives. The WEC program, she asserts, has not only improved their lives but also fostered a sense of community and empowerment among the women in Kultali. Geeta hopes for the program's continued success and expansion, envisioning a future where more women can access these life-changing opportunities.

Igniting **Aspirations**



Sunanda Shasmal, WEC Trainee

Sunanda joined the Women Empowerment Center (WEC) in 2022, driven by a desire to enhance her skills and contribute financially to her family. With a background of farming and household management, she embraced the opportunity provided by WEC to learn stitching and improve her confidence.

Sunanda speaks highly of WEC, emphasizing the support she receives from her family to attend the center regularly. Her family values her involvement and respects her decisions in household matters, creating a supportive environment crucial for her growth.

Through WEC, Sunanda's stitching skills have flourished, bolstering her confidence significantly. Although she is currently prioritizing childcare responsibilities, she remains committed to utilizing her skills for her child's future education and in supporting household finances.

While she temporarily pauses attending WEC due to childcare needs and distance, Sunanda eagerly looks forward to rejoining once her child grows and mentions if there is a childcare facility at the center she would have joined immediately.

She envisions this as a solution to effectively balance earning potential with childcare responsibilities effectively.

Inspiration from success stories
Sunanda draws inspiration from Padma Ji's transformation, witnessing how WEC has empowered women like her to overcome challenges and achieve financial stability. This motivation drives Sunanda to continue her journey towards personal and familial improvement.

Positive Reflections on WEC
In conclusion, Sunanda praises WEC for its transformative impact, noting how many women have become financially strong and empowered through the program. Her positive review underscores the program's role in enhancing livelihoods and fostering independence among women in her community.



Recommendations ↘

MASSp

Support areas identified by women as requirements for work at WEC

- Establish partnerships with local transportation providers to offer subsidized or free transportation services, ensuring convenient routes and schedules, especially for participants in remote areas.
- Implement flexible work hours and explore creche options to accommodate diverse family schedules and childcare needs.
- Offer weekly payments to incentivize consistent attendance and program participation, particularly among women from underprivileged backgrounds. This system should be transparent and aligned with participant needs, fostering a supportive environment for long-term empowerment.

Consider seasonal availability of women for production work:

For example: Given the high availability of women beneficiaries (44%) in January, prioritize production orders and schedule high-demand activities for this month. Aligning operational planning with this peak availability period can maximize project impact in several ways:

- Increased Productivity: With a larger workforce available, the production centre can operate at a higher capacity, leading to a significant increase in output during January.
- Enhanced Engagement: By scheduling high-demand activities during peak availability, women beneficiaries will likely be more engaged and motivated, potentially leading to improved quality and efficiency.
- Financial Gains: By maximizing production output in January, the project can generate a larger income for the women beneficiaries, directly contributing to their financial independence goals.

Introduction of new skill trainings:

Expansion to various other training skills such as handicrafts , beauty parlor course, digital literacy, financial management, textile dyeing and Katha embroidery (with 76% of women expressing interest). Conduct regular assessments of market demands and participant interests to continuously update and introduce new skills. Offer certification and accreditation for completed courses to enhance participants' credentials and employability.

Form a committee for in house effective training & mobilization:

To effectively address on-ground issues and tailor support to the unique needs of beneficiaries, it is recommended to establish a dedicated Committee at WEC. This committee, comprised of women with firsthand experience and understanding of the challenges faced by participants, should take charge of training and mobilization efforts. By leveraging their insights and lived experiences, the committee can ensure that the training programs are more relevant and impactful, directly addressing the beneficiaries' needs and aspirations. This approach will enhance the program's effectiveness and sustainability, fostering a more supportive and responsive environment for women’s empowerment.

Sustainable **Development Goals**

The program addresses issues such as mental health, sexual behavior, and overall well-being, promoting a healthier lifestyle among adolescents.

The program includes promoting inclusive, equitable education and lifelong learning opportunities through awareness on safety, mental health, and exploitation for adolescents.

The program includes education on gender identities and aims to promote gender equality by teaching respect for all genders and providing tools to combat gender-based exploitation and abuse.

By raising awareness about issues such as trafficking and cyber safety, and by promoting equality irrespective of gender identity, the program works towards reducing inequalities.



List of **Abbreviations**

ABBREVIATIONS	DEFINITIONS
MASSp	Missing Awareness and Safety School program
WEC	Women Empowerment Center
ASHA Worker	Accredited Social Health Activist worker
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
AV	Audio Visual
ToT	Training of Trainers
H.M.	Headmaster
TLM	Teaching learning materials
OTP	One time password
POSCO Act	Protection of children from sexual offences act
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry

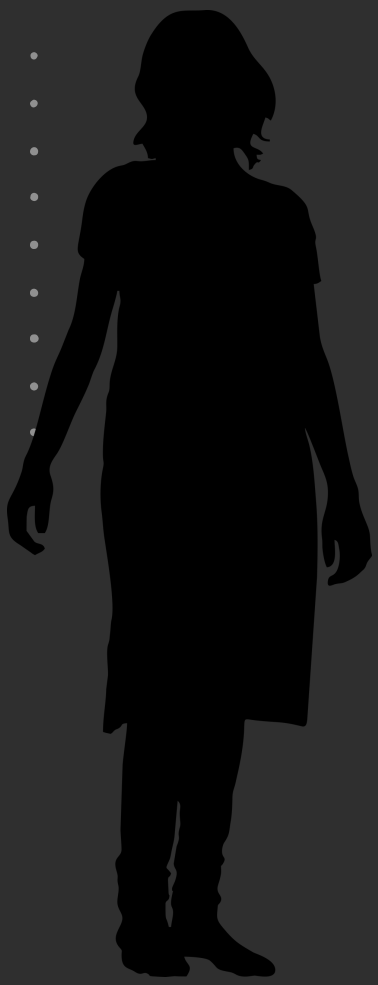
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Annexure 1 ↘

The link for the quantitative survey questionnaire of MASSp and WEC program:

1. **MASSp**- https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/nR7e1A9m
2. **WEC**- https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/mtSAuttc



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We are deeply appreciative of the participants and communities who have engaged with these programs, sharing their experiences and contributing to the success of our efforts.

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Why wait for a girl to get trafficked to save her?
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