



FINAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Dharampal Satyapal Limited

August 2025

Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
AAY	Antyodaya Anna Yojna
BCA	Backward Class A
BCB	Backward Class B
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CSC	Common Service Centers
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DS/DSL	Dharampal Satyapal Limited
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FMCG	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
FPO	Farmer Producers Organisation
IDI	In-depth Interviews
IRECS	Inclusiveness, Relevance, Effectiveness, Convergence, Sustainability
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MS Office	Microsoft Office
MMV	Mobile Medical Van
OBC	Other Backward Class
OPD	Outdoor Patient Department
PAN	Permanent Account Number
PHC	Primary Health Centre
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PW	Price Waterhouse
PWCALLP	Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP
SC	Scheduled Caste
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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Executive Summary

About the Study:

DS Limited initiated '**Community Development Project**' in 5 villages of Barota Gram Panchayat, Karnal District, Haryana with an objective to support the underprivileged rural communities to attain sustainable solutions for their basic needs around Education, Health, Livelihood and Environment. This Community Development Project in Karnal was **implemented by DS Foundation** (CSR arm of DS Group). DS Limited **engaged Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP ("PWCALLP", "PW")** to carry out the impact assessment of this Project with a purpose to evaluate the impact created on the community for a period of FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23. The **PW's scope of work** encompassed a desk review of project documents, development of research tools, data collection and analysis, and the presentation of key findings and recommendations in a report for management's consideration.

A **mixed methodology** involving both quantitative and qualitative research methods was deployed by PW to carry out the impact assessment study. As part of the **quantitative approach**, a structured sampling plan was implemented, involving a survey with a **sample size of 248 beneficiaries** which was calculated using 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error by considering the total number of beneficiaries covered under the several initiatives. As a part of the **qualitative assessment**, **19 interactions** including In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also conducted to ensure holistic feedback on the project activities from the stakeholders.



Key Findings of Study:

The intervention-wise key findings of the project are presented below:

- I. **Infrastructure and STEM Labs Support:** Before the intervention, 69% of respondents rated the infrastructure as average, and 31% rated it as poor, negatively affecting the educational environment. After infrastructural improvements, including repairs and new installations, 97% felt safer, 94% noted improved learning environments, and 80% observed increased student engagement, enhancing educational standards.
- II. **Comprehensive Support Initiatives for a Primary School Development:** At Government Primary School, Barota, poor sanitation and limited access to clean drinking water posed health and hygiene risks. Following an intervention, infrastructure improvements and a reduction in the pupil-teacher ratio from 50:1 to 15:1 significantly enhanced educational conditions. With 95% of students gaining access to safe drinking water and clean, well-maintained toilets, there was an increase in attendance and comfort, particularly benefiting female students. These improvements mitigated dehydration and illness, fostering a better learning environment.
- III. **Establishment of Kindergarten:** Before the intervention, many children lacked access to suitable learning environments and trained teachers, resulting in insufficient literacy, numeracy, and social skills at the start of primary school. Parents later observed that the kindergarten's inclusive environment improved interaction and essential skills—such as speaking, reading, writing, and motor skills—boosting confidence and easing the transition to formal education.
- IV. **Remedial Classes:** Students in Years 6 to 12 in rural areas struggled with fundamental Maths, Science, and English concepts due to limited support, risking poor performance and higher dropout.

rates. The intervention, deemed "highly impactful" by 97%, provided free remedial classes, overcoming financial barriers for BPL students. Additionally, 19% appreciated mentorship and career guidance, which supported their academic and career development while closing educational gaps.

- V. **Set up of a Computer Centre:** Limited computer access and education hindered digital literacy, with schools lacking labs and instructors, leaving students unprepared for higher education and the job market before the intervention. Initially, 60% of respondents had never used computers, while 40% had limited experience mainly at school (67%), home (25%), and college (8%). The intervention provided enough computers for individual use during classes, resulting in 87% feeling "very comfortable" with computer usage, and the remaining 13% gaining confidence while recognizing ongoing learning needs.
- VI. **Career Counselling:** Before the intervention, students finishing 12th grade had limited awareness of career and higher education options due to a lack of formal guidance, leading to uninformed decisions. The intervention addressed this gap, with 97% of respondents valuing career counselling sessions that enhanced awareness of career options, job market trends, education pathways, and provided tools for interview, resume preparation, and personality assessments.
- VII. **Organisation of Medical Camps:** Before the intervention, the PHC faced accessibility issues due to limited information and doctor unavailability, forcing villagers to travel to Karnal for healthcare, resulting in high time and cost burdens. The eye-related medical camps have greatly benefitted the community, with 95% utilizing the services and 58% returning multiple times. Notably, 62% accessed cataract surgery through these camps without financial barriers, easing financial stress and ensuring essential healthcare accessibility.
- VIII. **Common Services Centers (CSC):** Community members struggled to access government welfare schemes due to poor roads and transportation, needing to travel to Karnal even for minor issues. CSC camps have helped, with 63% accessing them up to three times and 13% more than eight times, mainly for obtaining essential documents like Aadhar and PAN cards. All respondents reported increased awareness of government services, 88% noted improved access to welfare schemes, and 25% felt digitally empowered by the camps.
- IX. **Infrastructure Support- Drain Work, Road Construction and Solar Lights Installation:** Before the intervention, inadequate village connectivity was a major challenge, with 68% citing poor roads and lighting as significant issues. The intervention also led to 94% reporting fewer drainage-related diseases and 91% noting reduced crime and eve-teasing, demonstrating the positive impact of better infrastructure and solar lighting on safety and health.
- XI. **Establishment of A New Sports Complex:** The sports complex previously struggled due to a lack of facilities like electricity and a gym, hindering evening training and essential athlete conditioning. The intervention led to significant success, with 17 students participating in State Level competitions. Its impact is evident in international achievements, including a Bronze Medal at the Sub Junior Asian Championship in Oman and Jordan, and a student's professional transition to the Indian Railways after competing internationally.
- XII. **Support in Agriculture:** Farmers struggled to adopt natural farming due to lack of awareness, entrenched traditional practices, and reliance on chemical methods, requiring education and training for transition. Post-intervention, savings improved with 50% reporting INR 100,001-200,000, up from 18%, and savings over INR 400,000 rising from 14% to 18%.



Recommendations:

- **Teacher training for effective implementation:** To improve STEM labs and interventions, comprehensive teacher training is essential. By equipping educators with skills in innovative STEM technologies and teaching methods, the initiative can foster engaging learning environments.
- **Transportation assistance to strengthen Kindergarten access and attendance:** Parents revealed that work and household responsibilities often hinder their ability to pick up and drop off children for kindergarten interventions. Providing transportation support can enhance attendance, alleviate family burden, and improve the program's accessibility and impact.
- **Linking education for greater career outcomes:** To boost the impact of career counselling project, forming strong links with colleges and companies is key. This will streamline education and employment pathways, offering structured opportunities and clear career prospects.
- **Integrating additional courses into the existing compute intervention:** To enhance employability and meet job market demands, introducing advanced courses like Tally, AI, and other job-focused applications is recommended, providing practical, in-demand skills for the digital age.
- **A Unified Framework for Scalable and Sustainable Village Development:** To boost effectiveness, a unified strategy covering education, health, agriculture, and infrastructure is needed. A comprehensive Community Development Project, informed by village input and scalable pilots, will ensure focused and sustainable community growth.
- **Establishing a Farmers' Cooperative for Sustainable Stubble Management:** Establishing a Farmers' Cooperative is recommended to provide baler machines at subsidized rates, promoting sustainable practices.
- **Providing Marketing Platforms through developing an FPO:** To support farmers practicing natural farming, forming a Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) is recommended to improve market access. The FPO will create a unified marketing platform to ensure fair pricing, reduce reliance on middlemen, and offer training in packaging and branding, boosting crop demand.
- **Increased Community Involvement:** To tailor interventions to community needs, it's crucial to enhance community involvement through advisory boards or committees, addressing local resistance.

For a complete understanding of findings for each intervention, IRECS Analysis and recommendations, please refer to the ["Key Findings"](#) section.

1. Introduction

1.1. CSR at Dharampal Satyapal Limited

Dharampal Satyapal Group (DS Group) is a Multi-Business Corporation and one of the leading Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) conglomerate with Indian and International presence¹. One of the group entities is DS Limited which endeavours for sustainable wellbeing of the stakeholder communities by addressing economic, environmental and social issues and challenges.

At DS Limited, CSR projects are designed on the principles that indigenous knowledge and skills of the local community are important towards sustainable development². In line with its commitment to social responsibility, DS Limited has identified specific CSR themes to guide its projects spread across the country (Figure 1 and Figure 2):

Figure 1: Geographical Presence of CSR activities of DS Limited

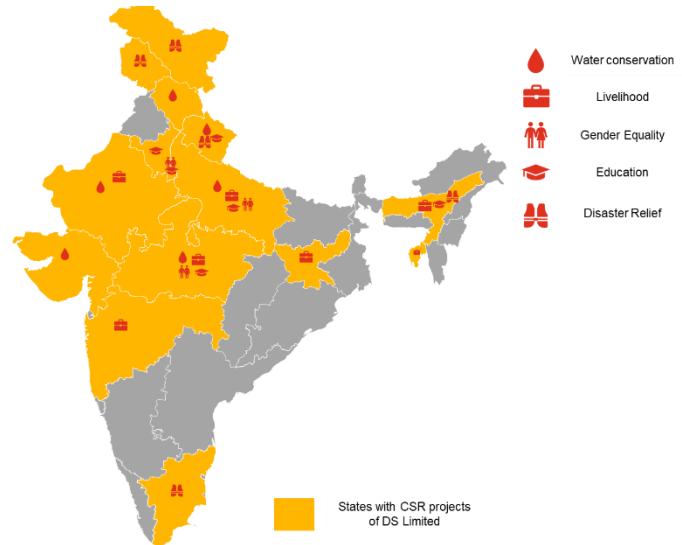
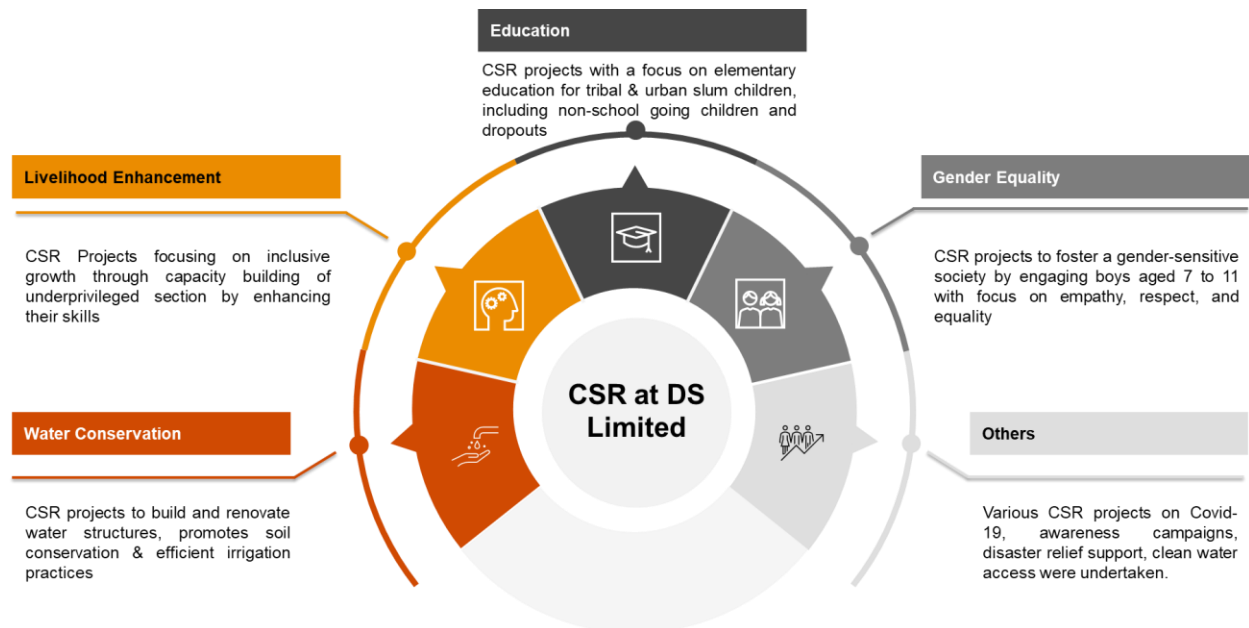


Figure 2: Theme-wise Overview of CSR activities at DS Limited



¹ Source: [DS Limited Website](#)

² Source: *ibid*

1.2. About the CSR Project

DS Limited started '**Community Development Project**' in 5 villages of Barota Gram Panchayat, Karnal District, Haryana in August 2021. The objective of this project was **to support the underprivileged rural communities** to attain sustainable solutions for their basic needs around Education, Health, Livelihood and Environment. This Community Development Project in Karnal was implemented by **DS Foundation** (CSR arm of DS Group)³.

Below Figure outlines the different interventions undertaken by DS Limited as a part of the Community Development Project⁴:

Figure 3: Different Interventions of the Community Development Project⁵



These CSR interventions have been discussed in the “overview of intervention” sub-section of [“key finding”](#) within this report.

³ Source: Project Annual report FY 2021-22 & FY 2022-23

⁴ Source: ibid

⁵ Source: ibid

2. Approach & Methodology

2.1. Objective of Impact Assessment

DS Limited intended to carry out the impact assessment of 'Community Development Project' to assess the impact created on the lives of various stakeholders and provide management with key findings and recommendations. Accordingly, it has engaged Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP ("PWCALLP", "PW") to conduct the independent impact assessment of this CSR project for a period of FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23 (period of review).

2.2. Scope of Work

The scope of work included reviewing the Key performance indicators (KPIs) as defined by the Management of the DS Limited under the framework for implementing the Project for the outputs, outcomes and impact of the Project. Framework adopted was Inclusiveness, Relevance, Effectiveness, Convergence, and Sustainability Framework (the 'IRECS') and accordingly, recommendations were provided on the Project's performance for their further evaluation and consideration. Following activities were completed as a part of this approach:

- Understood the scope and boundary of the CSR Project to be evaluated and the assistance to be provided.
- Conducted desk review of the documentation provided by the DSL and in consultation with their implementing partner- DS Foundation; and agreed jointly with the Management the parameters to be assessed for the Impact Assessment.
- Mapped stakeholders to identify key stakeholder groups to be interacted with during the assessment.
- Based on the above, developed the quantitative/ qualitative questionnaires (as relevant) to be used during the assessment for conducting in-depth interviews, interactions, meetings with the stakeholders and beneficiaries of the CSR Project.
- Collected data through virtual/ in-person interactions (as relevant) based on the questionnaires developed and consultations done. A sample size of 248 was covered as part of the quantitative survey along with qualitative interactions as mutually agreed.
- Based on the interactions and discussions, the qualitative and quantitative information was analysed and assessment of outcome/impact was done.
- Developed report based on the overall findings, including the recommendations for Management's consideration.

2.3. Overall Methodology

The impact assessment study utilised an integrated and cohesive approach (as depicted below) which enabled the research team to evaluate the impact of the project on the lives of the beneficiaries:

Step 1: Engagement kick-off and desk review

The impact assessment began with a kick-off meeting with the project team from DS Limited to discuss the overall scope of work, gain a detailed understanding of the project activities and further, align on the expectations of the DS Limited from the assessment. Following the meeting, PW team prepared and shared a list of documents required for initiating the impact assessment. Below documents were received from DS Limited to initiate the desk review:

- Scope Identification Study report providing an overview of needs, gaps and aspirations of the community across thematic areas
- Project Proposal 2021-22 highlighting expected outcomes and indicators
- Annual Report 2021-22 and 2022-23 mentioning the details on project activities, beneficiary coverage, progress and achievements

Step 2: Research design and tool development

Based on the desk review, PW team initiated the mapping of stakeholders for the purpose of impact assessment. Key stakeholders were identified for the project to undertake quantitative and qualitative interactions. After mapping, in consultation with DS Limited team, team developed research tools for data collection. The assessment for Community Development Project adopted **Mixed Method approach (Quantitative & Qualitative Methods)**.

A sample size of 236 respondents, comprising stakeholders from each project activities, were determined with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. The study employed a purposive sampling method to identify a specific subgroup within the population. Within this targeted subgroup, a simple random sampling technique was applied to ensure that each member had an equal opportunity of being selected. To ensure the appropriate representation of geographies in our findings, an additional sample of **12 respondents was added as a booster sample**, thereby increasing the **total sample size to 248 respondents**. This sample size was further distributed proportionally in line with the number of beneficiaries of respective activities.

Below table indicates the stakeholders mapped for quantitative and qualitative interactions for this CSR project:

Table 1: Details of quantitative interactions for Community Development Project

Activity	Stakeholders	Target Beneficiaries ⁶	Quantitative Sample
Infrastructure and STEM Labs Support	Students	210	36
Comprehensive Support Initiatives for a Primary School Development	Students	120	21
Establishment of Kindergarten	Students	30	Not applicable ⁷
Remedial Classes	Students	101	30
Set up of a Computer Centre	Students	54	30
Career Counselling	Students	91	32
Organisation of Medical Camps	Local Community	4,389	21
Common Services Center (CSC) Camp	Local Community	693	8
Infrastructure Support- Drain Work, Road Construction and Solar Lights Installation	Local Community	Local Community Members	47
Establishment of A New Sports Complex	Wrestlers	70	Not applicable ⁸
Support in Agriculture	Farmers	79	23

Table 2: Details of qualitative interactions for Community Development Project

Activity	Stakeholders	Tools	No. of interactions
Infrastructure and STEM Labs Support	Students	FGD	2
Comprehensive Support Initiatives for a Primary School Development	Students	FGD	1
	Teacher	IDI	1
Establishment of Kindergarten	Parents	FGD	1
Remedial Classes	Students	FGD	1

⁶ As shared by DS Limited team (no validation has been done)

⁷ The impact of interventions on (a) Establishment of Kindergarten at Saral Satya School, (b) Establishment of A New Sports Complex was assessed using the qualitative interactions with related stakeholders as reflected in the Table 2.

⁸ ibid

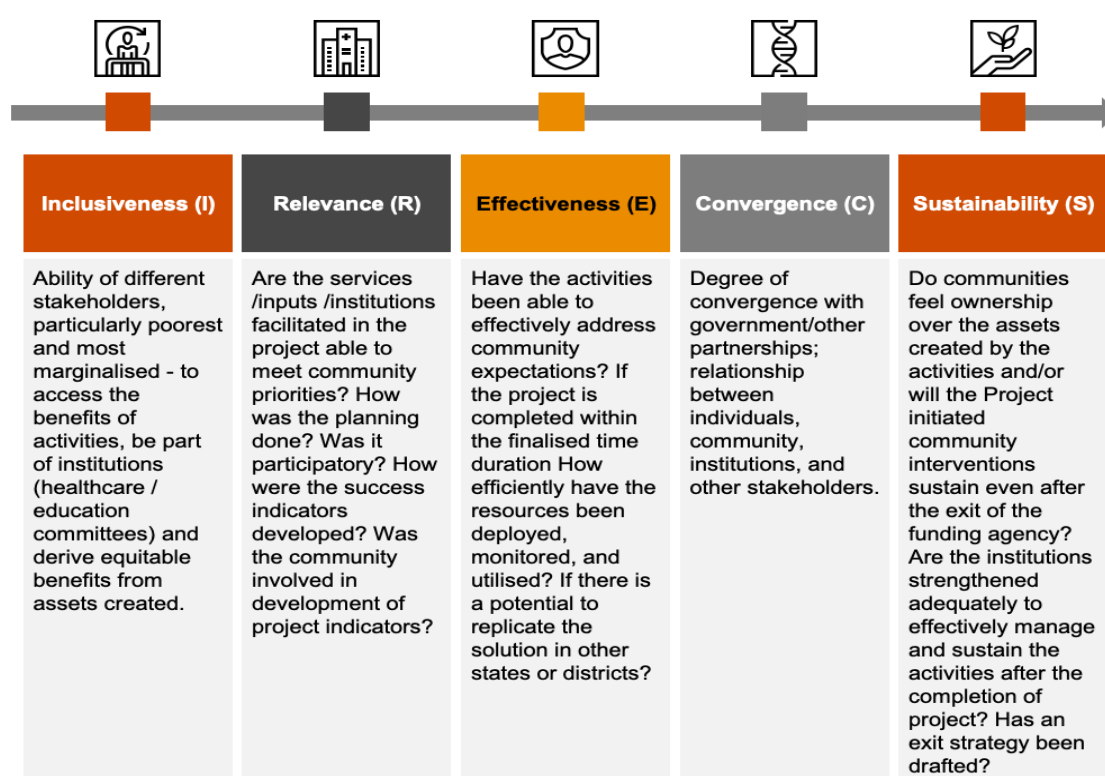
Activity	Stakeholders	Tools	No. of interactions
	Parents	FGD	1
	Teacher	IDI	1
Set up of a Computer Centre	Students	FGD	1
Career Counselling	Students	FGD	1
Organisation of Medical Camps	Community	FGD	2
	Doctor	IDI	1
Common Services Center (CSC) Camp	CSC centre in charge	IDI	1
	Community	FGD	1
Infrastructure Support- Drain Work, Road Construction and Solar Lights Installation	Community	FGD	1
Establishment of A New Sports Complex	Trainer	IDI	1
	Wrestlers	FGD	1
Support in Agriculture	Farmers	FGD	1

*IDI- In-depth-Interviews, FGD- Focused Group Discussions

Team reviewed and understood the implementation processes for this CSR project. The impact assessment study was guided by the **IRECS assessment framework** which was used to provide overall feedback on the efficacy of implementation as well, as its efficiency in terms of achievement of the desired project outputs with reference to inputs (refer Figure 3).

The impact of this project was assessed using “IRECS framework” which helped in providing overall feedback on the efficacy of the implementation process and its efficiency in terms of achieving the desired project outputs. IRECS framework measured the performance of the project on five parameters – **Inclusiveness, Relevance, Effectiveness, Convergence and Sustainability**. Overview of areas assessed under each of these five parameters is provided below:

Figure 4: IRECS Assessment Framework



Step 3: Data collection & data cleaning

PW team also ensured sensitising DS Limited project team on requirements from impact assessment study. Following finalisation of data collection plan, research team from PW was oriented on research tools and dos & don'ts during data collection. The team conducted interactions with identified stakeholders to understand the challenges as well as benefits of the project. The purpose was to understand the impact created by the intervention and roadmap going forward. Once data was collected, data entry and cleaning were carried out.

Step 4: Data analysis & report submission

Following completion of data cleaning, analysis was carried out to arrive at key findings for this project. Initially, the data was analysed separately, quantitative data for statistical patterns/ trends/ changes, and qualitative data to gather the perceptions and narratives. The next phase involved comparing these analyses to identify where the findings align such as correlating statistical trends identified through quantitative survey with community perspectives and opinions collected through qualitative interactions. This cross-verification not only enhanced the validity of the findings but also enriched the narrative by capturing the multifaceted impact of the project. The draft report was prepared accordingly and shared with DS Limited Team for review and inputs. PW submitted the final report to DS Limited Team for management's consideration after incorporating the inputs received from the team.



2.4. Assumptions and Limitations

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assumptions, which if not entirely complete or accurate, should be communicated to us immediately, as the inaccuracy or incompleteness could have a material impact on our conclusions.

- PW's work was limited to the samples/specific procedures described in this report and were based only on the information and analysis of the data obtained through interviews of beneficiaries supported under the intervention, selected as respondents. Accordingly, changes in circumstances/samples/ procedures or information available could affect the findings outlined in this report.

Study Limitations:

- The PW team could not connect with students at Government Secondary School, Gadhi Birbal (beneficiaries of STEM lab), due to post-exam holidays.
- The PW team reviewed the Scope Identification Report shared by DS Limited and found that the indicators shared in the report (such as Pupil Teacher Ratio, Drop Out Ratio etc.) are not comparable with the impact assessment study due to their overarching nature.

3. Key Findings

3.1. Infrastructure and STEM Labs Support

3.1.1. About the intervention

Under the “Community Development Project”, the intervention involved providing critical infrastructure support to Government Senior Secondary School, Barota by repairing and upgrading essential structural components such as windows, doors, and roofs to ensure safe and conducive learning environments. Additionally, the intervention included establishment of **two dedicated STEM labs** in Government Secondary School, Gadhi Birbal (125 students- 9th to 12th grade) and Government Senior Secondary School, Barota (85 students- 8th to 10th grade).⁹

3.1.2. Analysis and Findings

The below section provides an overview of key insights based on the quantitative and qualitative survey carried out with 36 students (n=36) from Government Senior Secondary School, Barota and other stakeholders during the field visits:

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

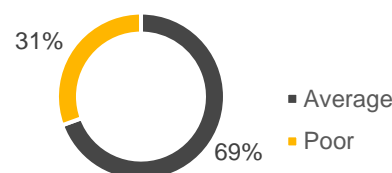
- **Infrastructure Condition:** 69% (n=36) of respondents reported the infrastructure as average, while 31% (n=36) described it as poor prior to the intervention. Based on the discussions with teacher, team noted many government senior secondary schools within this region are grappling with substandard structural conditions.

In Government Senior Secondary School, Barota, essential components like windows, doors, and roofs were broken and in a dilapidated state, creating unsafe and uncomfortable environments. This also compromised the security and comfort of both students and teachers, disrupting the educational atmosphere.

- **Lack of STEM Facilities:** There was a pronounced lack of dedicated STEM labs in two selected Government Schools, which are crucial for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education. Without these labs, students **had limited opportunities for practical and hands-on learning experiences**. This gap restricted the ability of students to fully engage with and understand STEM subjects as mentioned by the teacher.

Overall, the inadequate infrastructure, combined with the lack of STEM facilities, hampered the quality of education. Students mentioned that they experienced limited interactive learning, which is essential for developing interest and skills in science-related fields. The deficiencies in infrastructure and educational resources led to reduced student interest and engagement, particularly in science subjects, as the environment failed to motivate involvement and exploration in these areas.

Figure 5: School's infrastructure condition before the intervention (n=36)



⁹Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Profile of the respondents:

- **Geographical Distribution:** The respondents mostly come from Barota Gram Panchayat, accounting for 72% of the sample population. This concentration signifies the area's primary focus and involvement in the intervention. Remaining respondents are from Bijna (11%) and Bichpur (17%) villages.
- **Social Category Representation:** The respondents reflect a diverse mix of social categories, with the largest group being from the Scheduled Castes (SC) at 42%. Both the Backward Class (A) and Backward Class (B) categories¹⁰ are also represented, with 33% and 3% of respondents respectively. This diversity in representation suggests the intervention's aim is to be inclusive and cater to various social categories, potentially addressing disparities and promoting equity within these communities.

Figure 6: Name of Gram Panchayats(n=36)

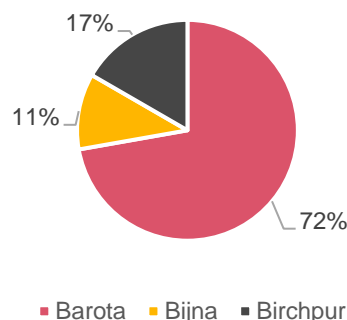
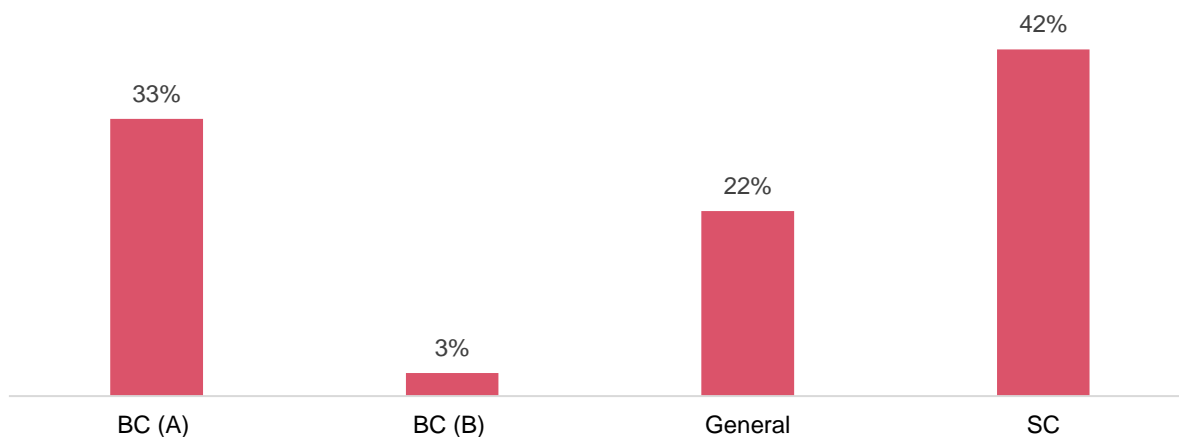


Figure 7: Social Category of the respondents (n=36)



- **Gender and Age Group:** 72% of respondents were male whereas 28% were female. Further, majority of the respondents (67%) from the age group of 16-20 years while remaining respondents (33%) were from the age group of 11-20 years.
- **Economic Status:** A staggering 94% of respondents are from Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, underscoring the intervention's focus on students coming from economically disadvantaged populations. This affiliation with BPL households indicates that the intervention aims to provide substantial support and resources to elevate the standard of living and opportunities for these individuals.
- **Educational Status:** The majority of respondents are at a critical educational juncture, with 81% studying in 12th standard and 19% in 11th standard. This focuses on the intervention's engagement in educational development at a stage that is pivotal for future career choices and higher education pathways. The intervention's involvement at this level may indicate an aim to ensure successful transitions into higher education or vocational opportunities, especially crucial for BPL and marginalised groups.

¹⁰ BC (A) and BC (B) refer to sub-categories within the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category in Haryana.
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP Impact Assessment Report

(ii) Enhanced Learning Experience

- Nearly all respondents (97%) felt **increased safety and comfort** due to infrastructure improvements like the repair and installation of windows, doors, and roofs. This positive change in the learning environment **contributed to higher attendance and classroom participation**, illustrating the importance of basic infrastructure in educational settings as mentioned by the students. It highlights how structural improvements can lead to psychological comfort, thereby fostering better educational engagement.
- Respondents from diverse social categories, including Scheduled Castes, benefited distinctly from the infrastructure upgrades. Enhanced safety and comfort address historical disparities in educational access, promoting equity and encouraging participation across various communities by improving school environments for marginalized groups.
- With 21% of respondents citing classroom infrastructure and roof renovations as major improvements, these interventions are evidently important in providing **a functional and secure learning space**. As highlighted by the students, such upgrades reduced external distractions and enhanced focus during academic activities, and provided a more welcoming atmosphere, directly impacting students' enthusiasm for learning.
- Approximately 20% of respondents noted the introduction of STEM labs, highlighting a strategic initiative to bolster science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education. This intervention underscores its focus on preparing students for future demands in the workforce by **fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and innovation**.
- Articulated by 5% of respondents, aesthetic upgrades including school painting not only **improved visual appeal** but also contributed to a more **engaging and stimulating atmosphere**. Infrastructural changes, such as window installations, helped in natural lighting and ventilation, enriching the overall learning backdrop.
- A large majority (94%) reported that infrastructural developments had been one of the reasons which has positively impacted their educational experiences. This positive feedback signified the intervention's success in creating conducive learning environments that cater to and elevate educational standards, ensuring students are better positioned for academic success.

Since the inception of STEM labs, I've observed a positive change in students. Their curiosity is now driven by innovation, leading to enhanced participation. The classroom is alive with eager minds daily, exploring the interesting domains of science, technology, engineering, and math.



- As narrated by a teacher from Senior Secondary School, Barota, Karnal

The analysis unveils a targeted approach in school infrastructure enhancement, prioritising safety, technological advancement in STEM, health, aesthetics, and overall comfort, which collectively lead to substantial improvements in educational outcomes. These insights advocate for continued and expanded support in developing educational facilities to perpetuate beneficiary satisfaction and educational effectiveness.

(iii) Better Students' Participation and Retention in School

- All surveyed students (100%) indicated that improved infrastructure has had a direct **positive impact on attendance**. This improvement is attributed to the enhanced learning environment that encourages regular participation, reflecting a more engaging and inviting school setting.
- Post-renovation, every respondent (n=36) expressed **feeling safe while attending classes**. Previously, broken doors and windows had allowed pests and rodents to infiltrate classrooms, while a deteriorating roof necessitated outdoor study sessions, causing frequent educational disruptions. The infrastructural

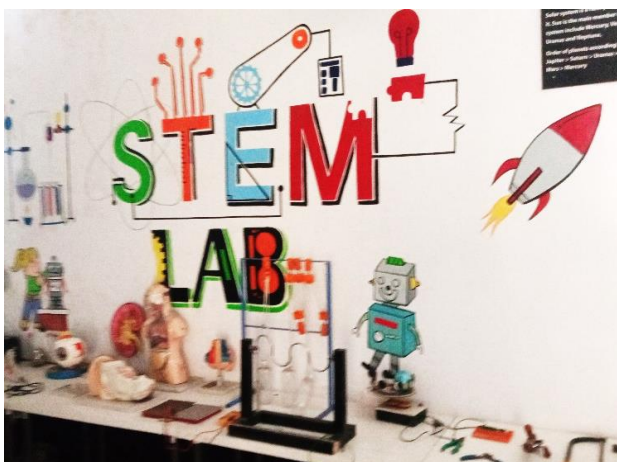
improvements have effectively mitigated these issues, ensuring a safer and more secure learning environment.

- Respondents also reported that prior to intervention, **rain-induced leaks in roof disrupted classes**. The upgraded facilities have **eliminated these immediate physical risks**, thereby fostering a secure academic environment that sustains uninterrupted learning even during adverse weather conditions.
- All respondents (100%, n=36) noted that **cleanliness and organisation of new facilities have boosted students' morale and motivation**. This has translated into heightened enthusiasm among students to attend school and actively participate in academic pursuits, suggesting a direct correlation between well-maintained spaces and student engagement.
- Interactions with parents revealed an **increased willingness to send their children to a well-maintained school**. The enhanced infrastructure reassured parents about safety and suitability of learning environment, potentially impacting enrolment positively. Parents perceived improved infrastructure as an investment in their children's education, contributing to a supportive and nurturing community perception.
- Over time, the infrastructure enhancements are expected to contribute to improved academic outcomes. A safer, more engaging, and organized environment can foster **better focus, reducing absenteeism and ultimately leading to higher student achievement and retention rates**.
- The renovation has not only elevated school's standards but also potentially increased its value within community. This transformation can spur greater community involvement and support, paving the way for future investments in educational infrastructure, benefiting the broader community.

(iv) Access to Quality Education Infrastructure

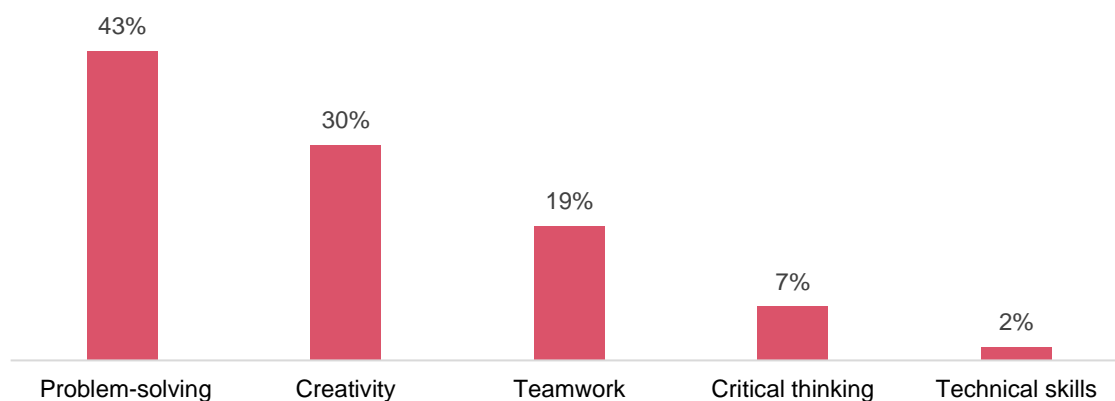
Figure 8: STEM lab, Govt. Sr. Secondary School, Barota

- Out of the total respondents (n=36), 69% of the respondents (n=25) reported that they have used the STEM labs. A majority of respondents (83%) indicated that establishment of STEM labs has provided students with **valuable access to hands-on learning tools and experiments**.
- Nearly half of these students (48%) reported using **labs more than once a week, which has contributed to making STEM subjects more relatable and sparked interest in pursuing STEM careers**.
- With the introduction of STEM labs, 92% of respondents have noticed a **marked increase in interest towards STEM subjects**. The interactive nature of these labs has made learning more engaging, allowing students to grasp complex concepts through exploration and experimentation.
- An overwhelming 96% of respondents **expressed increased confidence in STEM subjects after utilizing STEM labs**. This reflects intervention's success in empowering students through practical learning experiences. The newfound confidence is expected to yield long-term academic benefits, including improved performance and a sustained interest in STEM fields.
- Respondents reported improvements in various skills as a result of using the STEM labs:
 - a. 43% of respondents noted **enhanced problem-solving skills**, demonstrating labs' effectiveness in fostering critical thinking.
 - b. 30% reported an **increase in creativity, highlighting labs' ability to cultivate innovative thinking**.
 - c. 19% mentioned that group assignments and practical activities in STEM labs have **reinforced teamwork skills, underscoring collaborative nature of STEM education**.



- d. 7% experienced improvements in critical thinking, emphasising the labs' role in developing analytical abilities.
 - e. 2% reported a growth in technical skills, showcasing the labs' contribution to practical, industry-relevant learning.
- These enhancements in learning and interest extend beyond individual academic growth to potentially influence broader educational goals. As students increasingly engage with STEM, schools may see higher enrolment in STEM courses, better preparation for higher education, and increased readiness for STEM-related careers.
 - During the discussion with a teacher from Government Senior Secondary School, it was shared that while the STEM lab facilities have been beneficial for instructing students, further training for teachers in effective delivery methods would improve the teaching and learning experience.
 - The positive reception and outcomes of STEM labs not only elevate school's educational standards but may also attract community investment and interest in further infrastructural improvements. This can foster partnerships with local industries, stimulate economic growth, and enhance community's skill base.
 - The age demographic (16-20 years) gained mostly from focused interventions in educational engagement at a pivotal stage, crucial for transitioning to higher educational or vocational opportunities.

Figure 9: New skills developed through stem labs (n=25)



* This is a multiple-choice question, and the total may not add exactly to 100%.

(v) Overall Impact

- The research team observed notable impact from the intervention. Majority of respondents (92%) found **improved learning environment to be beneficial**, with 8% rating it as highly impactful. Students attributed their improved learning levels to the STEM labs, highlighting that hands-on practical experience has greatly enhanced their understanding of concepts.
- Improved access to educational resources was deemed highly impactful by 92% of respondents. This underscored the importance of resource availability in enhancing educational success, suggesting a direct correlation between access to quality materials and improved student outcomes.
- 80% of respondents rated the **increase in student participation** as somewhat impactful. These results highlighted intervention's effectiveness in fostering greater engagement within classroom, encouraging students to be more actively involved in their learning processes.
- A substantial proportion of respondents (80%) rated **improvement in students' learning levels** as highly impactful. This pointed to notable advancements in educational quality, as intervention effectively enhanced academic performance and understanding.

- The decrease in the student drop-out rate was seen as somewhat impactful by 56% of respondents, while 36% regarded it as highly impactful. These perceptions indicated ongoing challenges in retention, suggesting that while progress was made, further strategies could be explored to address dropout rates comprehensively.
- The results also hinted at broader implications for educational policy and practice. The varied perceptions of impact suggested that tailored strategies might be necessary to address specific areas, such as student retention. Further investigations into underlying causes for dropout rates could inform more focused interventions, which might include mentoring programs, parental involvement initiatives, or personalized learning plans.
- The intervention's varied outcomes and impact levels opened pathways for potential collaboration with external educational bodies or local organizations. Such partnerships could galvanize support for further resource allocation or infrastructural improvements, ensuring sustained momentum in educational advancement and student retention efforts.
- With 94% of respondents from BPL families, infrastructural improvements and STEM lab installations offered substantive benefits by providing essential educational resources and environments previously unaffordable. This support helped mitigate financial barriers, facilitating enhanced learning and retention for economically disadvantaged students.

Table 3: Impact rating by the respondents (n=36)

PARAMETERS	1-Not impactful	2- Somewhat impactful	3-Highly impactful
Improved learning environment	0%	92%	8%
Better access to resources	0%	8%	92%
Increased participation of students	0%	80%	20%
Improved learning level of students	0%	20%	80%
Decrease in drop-out rate of students	8%	56%	36%

Overall, the intervention made progress in enhancing educational environments and outcomes. Access to resources and improvements in learning conditions proved particularly beneficial. However, the team recognized that continuous efforts in student engagement and retention remained necessary to sustain and expand upon the intervention's successes.

3.2. Comprehensive Support Initiatives for a Primary School Development

3.2.1. About the intervention

Under the "Community Development Project", DS Limited undertook a targeted intervention at the Government Primary School in Barota with the **aim of addressing critical infrastructural and educational deficiencies to benefit 120 students**. By **appointing one qualified teacher (all subjects) for primary classes**, the intervention sought to lower the student-teacher ratio and enhance the quality of education. The intervention also focused on **upgrading essential facilities**, providing access to clean drinking water and proper sanitation, to improve health and hygiene conditions.¹¹

3.2.2. Analysis and Findings

Below is a summary of key findings derived from both quantitative and qualitative surveys conducted with 21 students (n=21) from the Government Primary School in Barota, alongside insights from other stakeholders collected during field visits:

¹¹ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

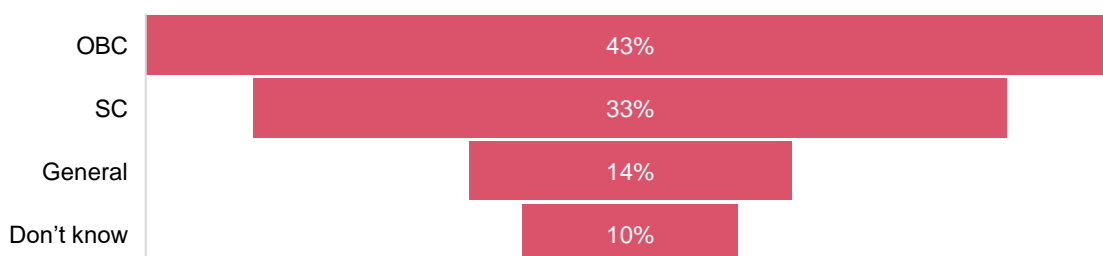
Government Primary School in Barota confronted numerous challenges that impeded its efficient operation. The sanitation facilities were inadequately maintained, whilst access to clean drinking water was severely restricted, posing health and hygiene risks. Moreover, there was a scarcity of qualified teachers, resulting in an elevated student-teacher ratio that diminished the focus on individual learning requirements. These compounded difficulties contributed to low enrolment figures, poor student retention rates, and a pervasive lack of enthusiasm from both the pupils and their parents.

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Profile of the respondents

- **Local Representation:** Every respondent (n=21) originated from the Barota Gram Panchayat, ensuring that survey findings are tied to local community dynamics and specific educational challenges faced within this demographic.
- **Social Category Composition:** The survey revealed that a portion of respondents comprised individuals from OBC category (43%), followed closely by those from the SC category (33%). Those belonging to general category made up 14% (Figure 11). This distribution highlights intervention's successful engagement with marginalised groups, emphasising its commitment to addressing educational inequalities and fostering inclusivity within historically underrepresented communities.

Figure 10: Social category of the respondents (n=21)



Gender Representation: Presence of female respondents at 57% against male respondents at 43% reflects gender balance approach of this study. This representation illustrates a conscientious effort to capture insights across genders, promoting gender equity and ensuring that both girls and boys are equally considered in educational development and planning.



Age Distribution: Predominantly, respondents were within the younger age group of 6-10 years (86%), while the remaining belonged to the 11-15 age bracket (14%). This age profile underscores a focus on early educational intervention, which is crucial for establishing foundational skills that are pivotal for successful lifelong learning and cognitive development.

- **Academic Year:** Most respondents were enrolled in the 4th (38%) and 5th grades (38%), followed by those in the 3rd grade (19%), with a smaller segment in the 6th grade (5%). These stages are critical for academic progress, where foundational knowledge is solidified, and pivotal learning milestones are achieved, contributing to better educational outcomes.
- **Economic Status:** A noteworthy portion of the participants (57%) came from families identified as living BPL, while 33% were uncertain about their economic status. The focus on BPL families aligns with broader systemic efforts to alleviate poverty and enhance educational accessibility, effectively addressing socio-economic impediments that may restrict access to quality education. This highlights the intervention's role in striving towards equitable educational opportunities for students from diverse economic backgrounds.

(ii) Enhanced Learning Outcomes

- During the interactions with a teacher from Government Primary School, Barota, it was highlighted that prior to the intervention, the learning levels **were notably low due to insufficient staffing and Pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) was 50:1**. With only two teachers for more than 100 students, it was challenging to offer personalised attention. The intervention addressed this staffing shortfall by appointing additional one teacher. This support has allowed teachers to focus more on individual students, thereby improving overall teaching quality.
- A teacher from the Government Primary School in Barota mentioned that, with appointment of an additional teacher, students received more individual attention. Smaller class sizes have improved understanding, performance, and strengthened student-teacher relationships.
- According to the Government school teacher, learning levels have improved considerably since the hiring of additional teachers, resulting in a favourable **pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) of 15:1 which is under the minimum PTR of 30:1** at the national level as per National Education Policy¹². This change has led to **better attendance, enhanced learning outcomes, improved English proficiency, and increased participation in cultural activities**. However, the enrolment of students decreased from 100 students in 2021 to 64 students in 2024.



With the support of an additional teacher, classrooms became more organized, and students who previously struggled to participate began engaging more in discussions and learning. This shift not only enhanced learning outcomes but also demonstrated how targeted support can make bring about change in education.

- As narrated by Govt. Primary School teacher, Barota, Karnal

- Despite, improved facilities and teaching resources, it was reported that school has an annual drop out of 10%. It was further shared by teacher that enrolment in school has declined because many students prefer to enrol in Saral Satya School, which is adjacent to Government Primary School supported by DS Limited.

(iii) Comfort in Attending Classes

- All respondents (100%, n=21) reported that they feel very comfortable attending classes following improvements to the school's infrastructure, such as access to safe drinking water and clean toilets. This positive feedback underscores the importance of basic amenities in creating a conducive learning environment. These improvements have alleviated health and safety concerns, allowing students to concentrate on their studies without distraction.
- Furthermore, all respondents stated that enhanced drinking water and sanitation facilities have improved their learning levels, as these amenities encourage regular school attendance, a situation which was not present before the intervention.

(iv) Better Health and Hygiene

- A substantial **95% of respondents reported having access to clean and well-maintained toilets** post-intervention. This availability has improved overall hygiene standards in the school.
- Similarly, **95% of respondents have access to safe and clean drinking water**. Previously, students had to bring their own water and grappled with limited access, resulting in sickness from dehydration.

¹² Source: https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

Image 1: Toilets constructed, Primary School, Barota



Image 2: Drinking water station, Primary School, Barota



- The presence of proper sanitation facilities has encouraged more girls to attend school regularly, addressing a major barrier from before the intervention.

(v) Safer Learning Environment

- Every respondent (100%) reported experiencing a safer environment due to construction & renovation efforts, such as covering open drains, constructing drinking water stations & toilet facilities leading to better learning experience. These improvements have effectively tackled basic infrastructure concerns, which previously posed health and safety risks.

(vi) Overall Impact

- Since all respondents are from Barota Gram Panchayat, the impact findings are deeply reflective of local dynamics. Infrastructure improvements, such as safer learning environments and access to amenities like clean water and toilets, directly benefited this localized group, as noted in their improved comfort and health standards.
- The high representation from marginalized groups (OBC and SC) suggests the intervention effectively engaged these communities, helping address educational inequities.
- With a higher representation of female respondents, the focus on basic amenities (e.g., clean toilets) positively contributed to the school attendance, particularly for girls. The infrastructure upgrades alleviated barriers that women often face in education, such as lacking sanitation facilities, which previously hindered regular school attendance as reported by the respondents.
- The young age group (6-10 years) being the majority aligns with early interventions focusing on foundational skills. Enhanced pupil-teacher interactions and better infrastructure during critical learning years are crucial for establishing strong educational foundations and fostering lifelong learning.
- With 57% from BPL families, improved school facilities like safe water, proper sanitation, and better classroom conditions addressed significant barriers these students faced. These enhancements helped level the playing field, promoting educational accessibility for those traditionally constrained by socio-economic impediments.

3.3. Establishment of Kindergarten

3.3.1. About the intervention

Under the 'Community Development Project', DS Limited established a **Kindergarten benefiting 30 children** aged between 3-6 years. This intervention provides essential foundational skills and supports comprehensive early development, preparing children more effectively for their future educational journey.¹³

3.3.2. Analysis and Findings

To assess the impact of this intervention, team deployed the qualitative approach to interact with project stakeholders. Below section provides an overview of key qualitative findings gathered during the field visits:

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

Before the introduction of the kindergarten, Barota village had limited structured early childhood education facilities. Children did not have access to age-appropriate learning environments or trained teachers to support their developmental needs. Consequently, many children **started primary school lacking basic literacy, numeracy, and social skills**, which made it challenging for them to adapt to and succeed in formal education. The absence of a kindergarten also resulted in **missed opportunities for holistic early learning**.

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Strong Foundation for Learning Through Structured Educational Activities

- Conversations with parents revealed that prior to the intervention, Barota and its neighbouring villages lacked facilities for early education, resulting in restricted opportunities for young children. The establishment of the kindergarten has bridged this gap, offering a setting where children can engage in collaborative and equitable learning experiences, transcending socio-economic boundaries.
- Additionally, insights from parents highlighted kindergarten's welcoming and inclusive atmosphere, which fosters interaction among children from diverse backgrounds, enabling them to learn and grow together in harmony.
- Parents further highlighted that **structured play and age-appropriate learning methods** employed at kindergarten have enhanced their children's speaking, reading, writing, and motor skills. Such activities have contributed to a well-rounded foundation, crucial for subsequent educational success.
- Moreover, the assessment indicates that activities conducted at kindergarten—such as learning alphabet, recognising numbers and shapes, developing phonemic awareness, understanding good and bad manners, reciting poems, and identifying names of fruits and animals—have played a role in **cultivating a solid academic foundation for their children**.

(ii) Preparedness for Primary School

- Kindergarten intervention has improved **children's preparedness for primary school** with parents expressing that their **children have transitioned into primary education with greater ease and confidence**. This smoother transition has been crucial in reducing early grades in dropout rates, as children feel more comfortable, capable and secure in their new learning environment.
- Parents shared that their children have acquired skills - **such as basic literacy, numeracy, and social interaction**- through their attendance at the kindergarten, laying a robust groundwork for future academic pursuits.

¹³ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP



As parents, we knew our kids' early years were important, kindergarten program really opened opportunities of learning for our kids. We didn't realise how much these years shape their future. Thanks to the intervention, we're now more involved in their learning, and it's amazing to see the difference it makes.

- As narrated by parents of students studying in Kindergarten, Barota, Karnal

(iii) Parental Awareness and Engagement

- Kindergarten intervention has led to **improved parental awareness and engagement** in their children's education. Parents reported that they **previously overlooked the importance of early childhood learning**, but the intervention has developed an interest and involvement.
- Furthermore, parents now actively participate in their children's educational journey and are cognizant of long-term benefits that early learning confers. This heightened engagement underscores importance of parental involvement in nurturing a child's development during their formative years.

3.4. Remedial Classes

3.4.1. About the intervention

DS Limited initiated an intervention as part of their 'Community Development Project, **targeting 101 students from classes 6 to 12** who were **struggling with foundational concepts in Math, Science, and English**. This intervention aimed to close the widening learning gap and prevent poor academic performance by offering free remedial classes after school hours. It also aimed to alleviate the pressure on teachers who couldn't provide adequate attention during regular school hours.¹⁴

3.4.2. Analysis and Findings

The following section presents an overview of key insights derived from a quantitative and qualitative survey conducted with 30 school students (n=30) and other stakeholders during the field visits:

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

Many students, especially those in Years 6 to 12, faced difficulties in grasping fundamental concepts in subjects such as Maths, Science, English, Hindi, History, and Political Science. These students frequently had limited access to additional academic support or after-school tuition, particularly in rural areas. Without intervention, this learning gap threatened to widen, potentially resulting in **poor academic performance, diminished confidence, and an increased risk of students leaving school prematurely**. Teachers were also challenged in providing adequate support to weaker students during regular school hours.

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Beneficiary Profile

- Gender and Age Distribution:** The gender distribution of respondents was predominantly male, accounting for 57% (n=30), while females represented 43% of the study respondents. The age range of respondents was varied, with 53% were within the 16 to 20 years age bracket, and the remaining 47% falling within the younger range of 11 to 15 years. This diversity in ages offers insight into the different educational stages and challenges faced by students across this spectrum.

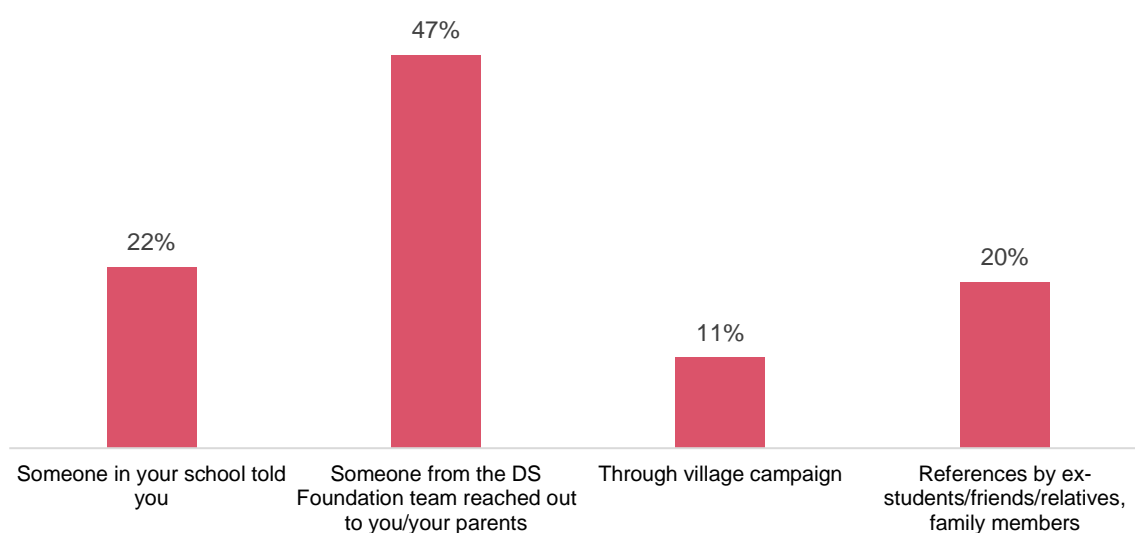
¹⁴ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

- **Education Attainment:** The students attending remedial classes spanned from 8th grade to 12th grade. The team noted that, majority were concentrated in 9th and 10th grades (23% each), followed by 12th grade (20%). This pattern shows emphasis on preparing students for critical board exams in 10th and 12th grades, reflecting the importance of these exams in their academic progression.
- **Economic Status:** 73% of respondents possessed a BPL card, emphasising the intervention's relevance and necessity for students from underprivileged backgrounds. The respondents conveyed that their financial constraints made participation in paid supplementary education (such as private coaching or additional tutoring), particularly challenging. This underlines the role of the remedial classes in providing accessible educational support to those who might otherwise be excluded due to economic barriers.

(ii) Awareness About the Intervention

- The dissemination of information regarding remedial intervention was varied, showcasing a communication strategy tailored to reach various segments within the target audience. Approximately 47% of students became aware of intervention directly through interactions with project team from DS Limited in the field. This direct engagement highlights team's proactive approach in community outreach, ensuring that essential information permeated throughout intended demographic.
- Furthermore, 22% of respondents reported that their awareness was initiated via interactions with personnel at their schools. This figure underscores the role of educators and school administrative staff in bridging the gap between external educational interventions and students, effectively acting as conduits for opportunities outside regular curriculum.
- Additionally, 20% of participants learned about intervention through informal networks - ex-students, friends' relatives, or direct family members. This percentage illustrates the importance of word-of-mouth as a powerful tool in community settings, where social ties can greatly influence the dissemination of crucial opportunities.
- This blend of official channels and informal networks not only reflects a multifaceted communication strategy but also highlights the intervention's deep-rooted penetration into the community's fabric. By leveraging such a varied mode of information distribution, the intervention effectively reaches economically disadvantaged students who might otherwise be unaware of available academic support.

Figure 11: Sources of awareness about the intervention (n=30)



(iii) Improved Academic Performance, Attendance and Communication Skills

- With 34% of students (n=30) citing an improvement in their marks, the intervention's impact on **academic performance is positive**. This improvement indicates that the additional resources and structured support provided through the remedial classes have effectively enhanced students' understanding of their subjects, contributing positively to their grades.

- A similar portion, 31% of the respondents, reported **enhancement in their learning levels**. This highlights the intervention's effectiveness in not only improving comprehension but also fostering better retention of subject matter. Students attributed this progress largely to the Remedial classes supported by DS Limited during the interactions. These sessions have aided their understanding of various subjects, making them more confident in expressing and resolving their doubts with teachers. Furthermore, students mentioned that when the school syllabus was not fully covered, the remedial classes were instrumental in ensuring its completion. The targeted interventions are evidently closing the educational gaps that had previously hindered students' academic progression, allowing them to grasp concepts more robustly.
- Moreover, 14% of respondents expressed an **increase in confidence regarding their academic subjects**, attributing this newfound assurance to the remedial support. The boost in confidence has been pivotal, not only enhancing their grasp of the material but also motivating them to engage more fully with their school curriculum, thus leading to improved attendance.



Before, I often felt lost and unsure about my academic subjects, but now, I have gained confidence. This has helped me understand the subjects better and made me more eager to participate in school activities. My attendance has improved too, because I actually look forward to learning now.

- As narrated by student studying in Remedial Classes, Karnal

-
- Another 14% indicated that they have **developed better communication skills**. This aspect of improvement underscores how remedial classes have facilitated growth in students' abilities to articulate thoughts and interact effectively with both peers and educators. Enhanced communication skills are essential for fostering a collaborative learning environment and promoting student engagement.
 - However, only 7% of students noted a rise in classroom participation. This suggests that while other areas saw notable impacts, actively engaging students remains a challenge. The findings hint at potential need for more dynamic and interactive teaching approaches that can draw students into the learning process, encouraging them to contribute more actively during lessons.

(iv) Accessible and Cost-Free Support Provided through the intervention

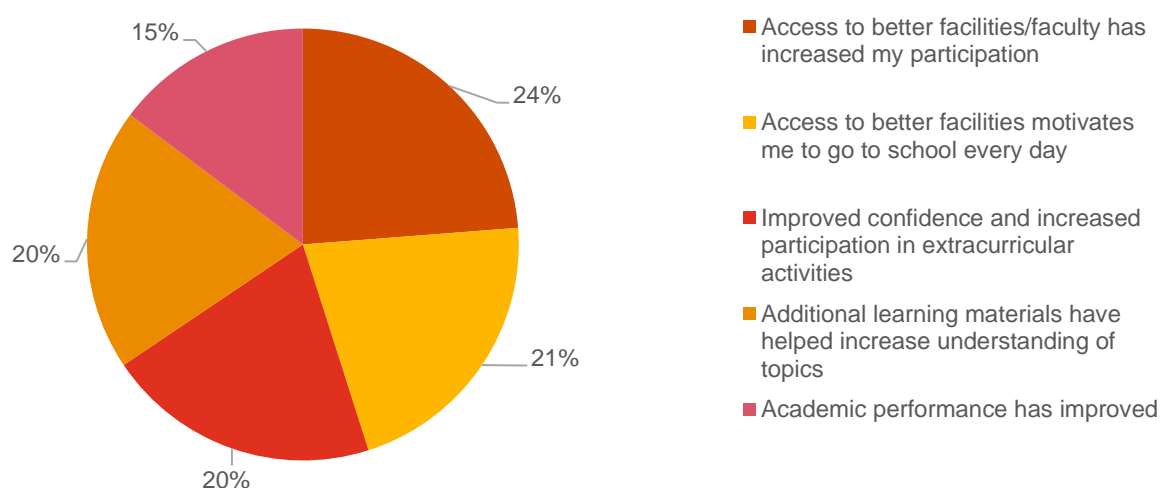
- Observations revealed that **majority of the participating students were from BPL backgrounds**, facing financial barriers when contemplating paid supplementary education, with **fees typically ranging from INR 500 to INR 1,200 per subject**. The provision of free remedial classes by the DS Limited thus emerged as **a lifeline, offering valuable academic assistance at no cost**.
- This intervention has successfully bridged the gap for economically disadvantaged students, granting them access to necessary educational support that would otherwise be beyond their financial reach. By removing economic barriers, the intervention ensures that students can focus on learning and development, thereby promoting equity in educational opportunities.
- The respondents highlighted several areas where they received complimentary assistance through the intervention, underscoring its comprehensive support approach:

- The provision of **additional study material was recognized by 22%** of the respondents, indicating a focus on enhancing learning resources. As stated by respondents, **access to supplementary materials can improve students' understanding of subjects, allowing students to explore more topics deeply and reinforce classroom learning**. This support is crucial for students who may lack access to such resources at home.
- **Supplementary education support, acknowledged by 21% of respondents**, highlighting the intervention's emphasis on tailored learning support. The **remedial classes have helped in addressing the individual learning gaps**. The respondents acknowledged that this support is **beneficial for students preparing for their exams**.
- The **involvement of mentorship and career guidance, noted by 19% of students**, underscores the **intervention's commitment to holistic development**. This support helps students navigate **academic and career paths, offering insights into future opportunities and aspirations**. By providing mentorship, the intervention not only supports students in their current academic pursuits but also prepares them for life beyond the classroom, helping them to identify personal strengths and align them with potential career trajectories. Such comprehensive support is critical in shaping well-rounded individuals who are equipped to make informed decisions about their futures.
- **Access to digital learning tools, as reported by 17% of students**, reflects the intervention's adaptation to modern educational needs. Classes conducted through digital resources such as **online videos and usage of smart boards** have **enhanced learning experiences by providing interactive content** and enabling self-paced study. This intervention is particularly relevant in today's technology-driven world, where digital literacy is essential for academic and career success.

(v) Overall impact

- On probing the students about the **most impactful benefit of remedial classes**, team noted that the introduction of remedial classes has **increased classroom participation** for students (24%), while motivating them (21%) to **attend school more regularly**. The intervention's holistic approach has also boosted **students' confidence**, with 20% engaging more actively in extracurricular activities like exhibitions and projects. Additionally, 20% of students reported that access to supplementary learning materials has deepened their understanding of various subjects, and 15% observed a marked improvement in their overall academic performance. Together, these outcomes underscore the intervention's success in fostering an enriched and supportive educational environment.

Figure 12: Benefit received through Remedial Classes (n=30)



- 100% of the respondents agreed that the intervention has been impactful in their holistic development and has been helpful in reducing the education inequality.
 - Team also probed respondents on the perceived impact of the remedial classes on various aspects of students' educational experiences. This analysis has been carried out based on the percentage of students who rated different indicators as "Not at all impactful", "Somewhat impactful," and "Highly impactful":
 - **Improved learning levels:** With 97% of respondents rating improved learning levels as "Highly impactful," it is evident that the intervention has had a profound effect on academic performance. This suggests that the support provided through remedial classes has **successfully addressed learning gaps and enhanced students'** understanding of subject matter.
 - **Improved confidence level:** 90% of respondents rated **improved confidence levels** as "Highly impactful," highlighting that the intervention has encouraged the students in boosting their confidence.
 - **Increased interest, participation, and attendance in school:** 87% of students rated that the increased interest, participation, and attendance to be "Highly impactful," indicating that the intervention has **made school more engaging**.
 - **Access to better facilities:** 100% of respondents rated **access to better facilities** as "Highly impactful" This **underscores the intervention's positive impact on the educational infrastructure** available to students. Improved participation in extracurricular activities: With 97% of students rating improved participation in extracurricular activities as "Highly impactful," it is noted that the intervention supports holistic development.
- 67% indicated that their **learning levels would have declined without this intervention**.
 - **17% mentioned they would have had limited access to high-quality facilities**.
 - **7% noted that their attendance would have decreased**.
 - Another **7% stated they would have experienced a lack of confidence without the support** of the remedial classes.
 - **3% reported that the likelihood of dropping out would have increased**.

The high rating across all indicators reflects the **intervention's effectiveness in not only improving academic performance but also boosting confidence, participation, and access to quality facilities**. These outcomes suggest that the intervention plays a crucial role in empowering students from disadvantaged backgrounds, enhancing their educational journey, and preparing them for future success.

Table 4: Impact rating by the respondents (n=30)

Parameters	1-Not at all impactful	2- Somewhat Impactful	3-Highly Impactful
Improved learning levels	0%	3%	97%
Improved confidence level	0%	10%	90%
Increased interest, participation & attendance in school	0%	13%	87%
Access to better facilities (digital classes, additional learning materials, better facilities, etc.)	0%	0%	100%
Improved participation in extracurricular activities	0%	3%	97%

3.5. Set up of a Computer Centre

3.5.1. About the intervention

As part of the 'Community Development Project', DS Limited established a **computer centre enabling 54 students to benefit from complimentary classes**. This intervention aimed to target the lack of computer access and education prevalent among students in the region. Through this intervention, DS Limited aimed to equip students with essential skills, bridging the gap between their current education and future requirements in a digitised world.¹⁵

3.5.2. Analysis and Findings

The section below presents a summary of the key insights obtained from a survey that combined quantitative and qualitative methods. This survey involved 30 school students (n=30) and additional stakeholders during field visits.

A. Challenges Before the Intervention:

The survey revealed that digital literacy posed a challenge among the student population, primarily due to the lack of access to computers and inadequate computer education. The absence of dedicated computer labs in schools coupled with a shortage of trained instructors, has left students ill-equipped to meet the digital demands expected in higher education and the contemporary job market as mentioned by DS Limited Team. In today's swiftly digitising world, this deficiency has resulted in school students lacking crucial skills indispensable for their future academic pursuits and professional careers as highlighted by computer class teachers. The situation underscores a pressing need for educational institutions to integrate comprehensive digital literacy interventions, which would include the provision of up-to-date technological infrastructure and targeted training for both educators and learners.

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Profile of the Respondents

- **Geographical Representation:** The respondents hailed from a range of villages, with majority of the respondents from Barota (47%) and rest from nearby villages (Figure 13). This distribution underscores the intervention's geographic reach and its strategic efforts to engage a multitude of communities throughout the district.
- **Social Category:** The respondents' socio-economic backgrounds were varied, with 40% from the general category and rest from SC/BC (A) and OBC (Figure 14). This array of categories reflects the intervention's commitment to inclusivity, demonstrating a deliberate approach to engage individuals from different social and economic standings. By embracing such diversity, the intervention aims to bridge the socio-economic divide, providing equal opportunities across different sectors of society.

Figure 13: Gram Panchayats of the respondents (n=30)

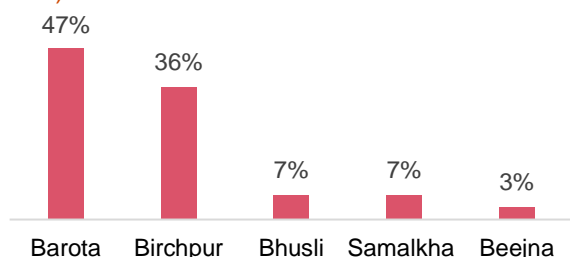
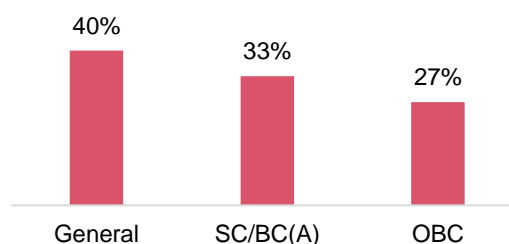


Figure 14: Social Category of the respondent (n=30)



¹⁵ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

- **Age Category:** Majority of respondents (83%) were aged between 16 and 20, followed by those aged 11-15 at 23% and those over 20 at 13%. This age distribution highlights the intervention's focus on adolescents and young adults, a demographic often poised at crucial junctures in education and career development.
- **Education Attainment:** Participants included a broad spectrum of individuals pursuing education or professional aspirations, ranging from students in Year 9 to graduates, as well as professionals and homemakers aiming to acquire computer skills. Notably, 37% were engaged in higher education pursuits. This underscores the intervention's appeal to those seeking to bolster their educational credentials and enhance their employability, underscoring its role in fostering a digitally literate workforce ready to meet the demands of the modern job market.
- **Economic Status:** The intervention primarily served individuals from BPL households, with 80% of respondents falling within this category. This highlights the intervention's focus on supporting economically disadvantaged groups who might otherwise face barriers to accessing digital and educational resources. By targeting this demographic, the intervention plays a crucial role in reducing educational inequities and fostering social mobility through improved access to digital literacy.

(ii) Awareness About the Intervention

- The students gained awareness about this intervention through various sources:
 - 35% of respondents (n=30) learned about this intervention directly from the project team members of DS Limited, highlighting the team's active role in outreach and engagement.
 - 28% of respondents were informed through personal networks, indicating the intervention's positive reputation and the effectiveness of word-of-mouth communication.
 - 25% of the respondents reported that they became aware of the intervention through village campaigns, demonstrating the impact of local community outreach efforts in raising awareness.
 - Remaining 13% of respondents shared that they learned about the intervention through connections at their school, underscoring the importance of educational institutions as partners in disseminating information.

(iii) Access to Digital Literacy and Computer Usage:

- Majority of respondents (60%) revealed that prior to participating in the intervention, they had never utilised computers due to lack of access. Among the 40% who had previous experience with computers, 67% resorted to using them at school, 25% at home, and a mere 8% at college. Notably, those who accessed computers in school indicated restricted usage, typically limited to once or twice a week.

This underscores the importance of this intervention in bridging gaps in access to technology, providing participants with daily opportunities to engage with digital tools. Such consistent exposure is likely to enhance their proficiency and confidence in using technology effectively. Students reported that the **computer classes consisted of adequate number of computers**. As the classes were conducted in batches, **each student had access to one computer at a time**.

Figure 16: Access to computer usage (n=30)

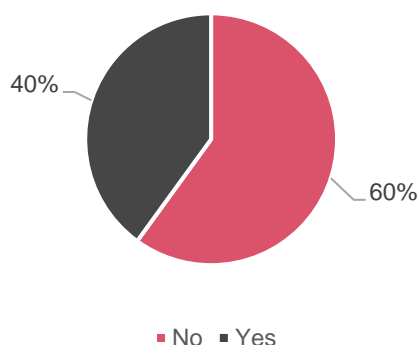
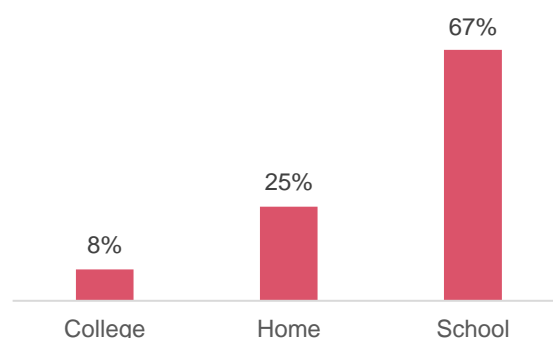


Figure 15: Respondents who have used computers before the intervention (n=12)



- Respondents expressed that association with the intervention has contributed to their computer usage habits, offering them daily access to computers. This regular interaction provides them with an **opportunity to reinforce their digital skills and integrate technology into various aspects of their personal and educational lives**. The transition to daily computer availability marks a pivotal shift in equipping individuals with essential digital competencies, which are indispensable in the modern information era.
- After joining the computer classes facilitated by the DS Limited, an overwhelming **87% of respondents reported feeling "very comfortable" with computer usage**. The remaining 13% acknowledged developing a level of confidence, albeit recognising they are still traversing the learning curve. This feedback illustrates the intervention's effectiveness in not merely teaching computer skills but fostering a genuine sense of empowerment among participants. The learning environment created by the foundation appears to be conducive to building both technical proficiency and self-assurance among individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Coming from a financially weak family, I never imagined using a computer. Because of DS Limited supported free of cost classes I am able learn basic functioning of computers. It has been a great learning experience



- As narrated by student studying in Computer classes, Karnal

- A vast majority (**97% of respondents**) indicated they encountered no difficulties during the computer classes, which speaks volumes about the intervention's accessibility and user-friendly approach. However, the remaining 3% identified commuting from their villages as their primary challenge, highlighting an area for potential improvement regarding logistical support. This feedback suggests a need to explore solutions that could further alleviate commuting difficulties, such as shuttle services or remote learning options, ensuring even greater inclusivity and ease of access for all participants.

(iv) Prepared Students for Educational and Career Opportunities

- A compelling 87% of respondents expressed belief that **computer skills such as basic usage (exploring the internet, application form filling), MS Office, paint etc.** acquired through the intervention would enhance their employment opportunities. This indicator highlights the profound impact of digital literacy in today's job market, where proficiency in technology is often a prerequisite for many career paths. The training has **evidently empowered respondents by equipping them with valuable skills**, thereby increasing their marketability and readiness to seize professional opportunities. The emphasis on practical computer skills not only addresses immediate employability needs but also sets a foundation for long-term career success, enabling individuals to adapt to the evolving demands of the digital age.
- A noteworthy **97% of respondents** reported that the **computer classes had positively influenced their academic performance** and broadened their overall knowledge base, ultimately boosting their self-assurance. This result underscores the transformative effect of integrating technology into educational pathways, providing students with tools that enhance learning efficiency and content mastery. The infusion of digital literacy into their educational experience has likely augmented their comprehension and retention of knowledge, fostering a sense of confidence that translates into improved academic achievements. The intervention's focus on creating a supportive learning environment has proven successful in cultivating both technical skills and intellectual growth, equipping students to navigate their educational journeys with enhanced capability and self-belief.

(v) Overall Impact

As reported by the respondents during the survey, below is the analysis of the perceived impact of the computer classes offered under the intervention:

- **60% of respondents** reported that they have experienced an improvement in **computer proficiency** "**Somewhat impactful**" and **40% rating it as "Highly impactful,"** this represents that the intervention has been effective in enhancing the technical skills.
- **90% of respondents** rated that their confidence has **increased in using technology as "Highly impactful."** Highlighting that the intervention has supported in empowering students to feel comfortable and self-assured when interacting with digital tools, which is crucial for both academic and professional settings.
- Similar to computer proficiency, **60% of respondents** found the enhancement in their ability to complete tasks "**Somewhat impactful**," while **40% rated it as "Highly impactful."** This reflects the intervention's effectiveness in equipping students with practical skills. These skills play an important role in their studies and to pursue job opportunities.
- **90% of respondents** rated the **improvement in digital literacy as "Highly impactful,"** indicating a major advancement in their ability to navigate and understand the utility of it in day-to-day life.
- Further, **90% of respondents** found the **improvement in opportunities for further education or career advancement "Highly impactful"** to highlight the intervention's role in opening new pathways for students. During discussions, students shared that they secured job at Jan Seva Kendra and pursued further education after completing computer courses. This highlights the project's broader influence in equipping individuals with practical knowledge and vocational skills, thereby increasing their employability and encouraging economic independence. The project has facilitated in building confidence and self-reliance among participants, positioning them as active contributors to their communities.

Table 5: Impact rating by the respondents (n=30)

Parameters	1 = not very impactful	2=Somewhat impactful	3=Highly impactful
Improved computer proficiency	0%	60%	40%
Developed confidence in using technology	3%	7%	90%
Enhanced ability to complete academic or professional tasks	0%	60%	40%
Improved overall digital literacy	3%	7%	90%
Improved opportunities for further education or career advancement	3%	7%	90%

3.6. Career Counselling

3.6.1. About the intervention

As part of DS Limited's 'Community Development Project', career counselling was provided to 100 students who had passed their 12th standard. This intervention sought to offer the mentorship and other necessary support to help students make informed choices for their futures.¹⁶

3.6.2. Analysis and Findings

The section below provides a summary of key insights gathered from a quantitative survey involving 32 students (n=32) and qualitative interactions with diverse project stakeholders during field visits:

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

Before the intervention the students completing their 12th, standard had **limited awareness** about career opportunities, higher education options, and vocational pathways. There was **no formal career guidance** mechanism in place, which often resulted in students **making uninformed decisions about their future**. Many

¹⁶ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

capable students **either dropped out or chose suboptimal courses due to lack of direction**, guidance, and mentorship, affecting their long-term prospects.

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Profile of the Respondents

- **Geographical Representation:** Majority of respondents are from Barota (50%) and Birchpur (44%), with a smaller representation from Samalkha (6%) Gram Panchayat. These geographic spread underscores the intervention's substantial outreach within these communities.
- **Gender Composition:** The gender distribution indicates a predominance of female participation (63%), with males constituting 38% of the respondents. This suggests a marked interest from female students and illustrates the intervention's ability to empower women through education and career guidance.
- **Social Category:** The respondents included considerable representation from SC at 41%, followed by 38% from the General category and 22% from OBC. This distribution reflects the intervention's inclusive strategy, aiming to reach students across varied social strata.
- **Age demographics:** Majority of respondents are aged between 16-21 years (81%), with smaller groups aged 21 years and above (13%) and 11-15 years (6%). This indicates a clear focus on young adults at a critical stage of transitioning from education to employment.
- **Education Attainment:** Nearly half of the respondents (44%) have completed their education and are actively seeking employment.
- **Economic Category:** A large majority (72%) of respondents hold BPL cards, underscoring the intervention's emphasis on supporting economically disadvantaged individuals.

(ii) Awareness About the Intervention

- 53% of respondents came to know about the career counselling intervention through interactions with DS Foundation team members. This underscores the effectiveness of DS Limited's direct engagement and outreach efforts, highlighting their strong communication strategies and presence in the community.
- With 35% of respondents informed about the intervention by acquaintances in schools, the role of educational institutions as critical information channels becomes apparent. This highlights the importance of institutional partnerships in effectively disseminating intervention details. Schools are evidently instrumental allies in circulating information, pointing to the value of leveraging academic environments for outreach.
- Although only 9% of respondents learned about the intervention through referrals from ex-students, family, relatives, and friends, this channel's impact shouldn't be underestimated. The personal networks, albeit smaller, reflect the intervention's positive reputation. This encourages organic word-of-mouth promotion, underscoring the intervention's favourable reception within the community.

(iii) Addressing Students' Need

- 97% of the respondents stated that they felt the need for the career counselling session. This clarifies that the intervention is particularly relevant and responsive to students' needs. The extensive engagement reveals a clear gap filled by the intervention, highlighting its crucial role in fulfilling educational and professional guidance.
- 46% felt the support of the intervention primarily for seeking career guidance, indicating a strong demand for direction in career planning. Followed by 39% of students keen to explore educational opportunities, the focus is clearly on expanding academic horizons. The remaining 15% are aiming to overcome career-related confusions or anxiety, suggesting the intervention's role in addressing mental well-being alongside professional advice.

(iv) Increased Awareness of Opportunities and Career Guidance:

- Student interactions revealed that the sessions increased awareness and provided valuable career guidance. Topics covered in the intervention included career options and prospects, job market trends and demands, educational pathways and requirements, interview and resume preparation, and personality and aptitude assessments. These comprehensive subjects indicate a rounded approach to career preparedness, equipping students with a robust toolkit for their future pursuits.
- 56% of respondents participated in at least 1-2 sessions, 38% attended 3-4 sessions, and the remaining 6% engaged with 5 or more sessions. This varied engagement illustrates differing levels of commitment and interest among respondents.
- A substantial 81% of respondents indicated that sessions were conducted by guest faculty or private career counsellors, while 19% benefitted from school counsellors or teachers. This variety of presenters brings diverse perspectives and expertise, enriching the counselling experience and catering to different student needs.
- Respondents added that guidance received through the intervention enabled informed decision-making about future courses, career paths, and vocational options. This practical guidance appears to empower students to take actionable steps towards their career aspirations.



The career counsellors introduced us to a variety of career paths and higher education options that I hadn't considered before. They helped me understand our strengths and interests, which made it easier to focus on paths that suited us best. Having mentors to guide us through the process made huge difference.

- As narrated by participant of Career Counselling session, Karnal

(v) Overall Impact

- **84% of respondents (n=30)** found the intervention's topics both **adequate and helpful**. This suggests the content effectively meets the students' informational needs, indicating alignment between curriculum and participants' expectations. The positive reception of topics highlights the intervention's relevance and efficacy in content delivery.
- Moreover, **78% of respondents** reported that the **sessions enabled them to identify previously unknown or unclear opportunities**. This reflects the intervention's success in broadening students' horizons and unveiling potential career paths that were not previously considered.
- Regarding relevance, **56% perceived the information as highly relevant**, while 44% found it somewhat relevant. Despite differing perceptions, it indicates that majority of participants see intervention as pivotal to their career development.
- The intervention has facilitated practical experience, with **92% (n=13) securing unpaid internships** and 8% obtaining paid internships with stipend of INR 9,000 per month and above. This showcases its effectiveness in establishing pathways for real-world experience.
- Lastly, **44% reported high impact in gaining clarity on career goals and options**. While many benefitted greatly, there remain opportunities to enhance this clarity for a broader audience, refining strategies to further draw attention of more attendees.

3.7. Organisation of Medical Camps

3.7.1. About the intervention

As part of DS Limited's 'Community Development Project', medical camps were organised aimed at improving community health. Eye care was a focal point, with 18 camps held at the Primary Health Centre in Barota Village, benefiting 2,352 patients. Services included 241 cataract surgeries, 1,082 pairs of spectacles provided, and 1,306 sets of medicines dispensed. Partnering with Ishwar Charitable Trust, surgeries were facilitated in Noida, ensuring comprehensive care by covering associated costs for patients.

General medical camps complemented the initiative, featuring daily outpatient services and mobile medical vans visiting surrounding villages. In collaboration with the PHD Rural Development Foundation, eight camps specifically addressed gynaecological issues, consulting 1,870 patients through OPD services and 167 through gynaecology. A gynaecologist was appointed to focus on health concerns of adolescent girls and women. These camps were held every Friday, further extending medical aid to 12 neighbouring villages¹⁷.

3.7.2. Analysis and Findings

This section presents the key findings, emerged from quantitative interactions carried out with local community members (n=21) and other key stakeholders to understand the impact of medical camps.

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

Prior to the intervention, the PHC existed but was largely inaccessible to community members due to a lack of information and the frequent unavailability of doctors. Community members revealed that many villages lacked nearby medical stores, forcing them to travel to Karnal for even basic medical needs. This persistent challenge underscored a gap in government healthcare provisions, making traveling to Karnal both time-consuming and costly, thus highlighting the urgent need for enhanced local medical infrastructure and services.

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Profile of the Respondents



Gender Composition: 43% of the respondents were female whereas 57% of the respondents were male. Gender distribution of the respondents is represented in Figure 18.



Age Category: Majority of the respondents 66% were from age group of 51 years and above whereas 19% were from the age group of 41-50 years. The varied age group impacted from the intervention has been illustrated in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Age distribution of the respondents (n=21)

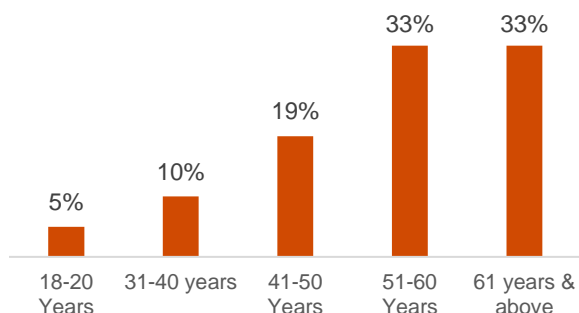
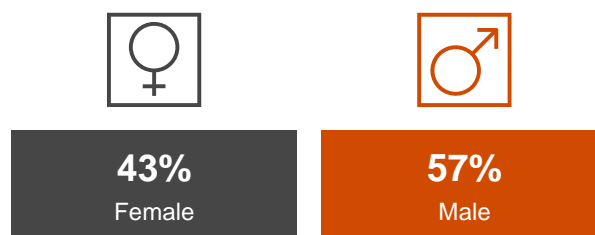


Figure 18: Gender distribution of the respondents (n=21)



¹⁷ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

- **Economic Category:** 76% of respondents are BPL cardholders, while 24% were unaware of their family's card type. It was noted that the majority of those unaware were women. Regarding annual household income, a substantial 95% of respondents reported earning less than INR 2,00,000 per year, indicating that majority belong to the low-income bracket. This suggests that these respondents likely face financial constraints, which could impact their ability to access various health services and treatment, underscoring the need for intervention.

Figure 19: Social category of the respondents (n=21)

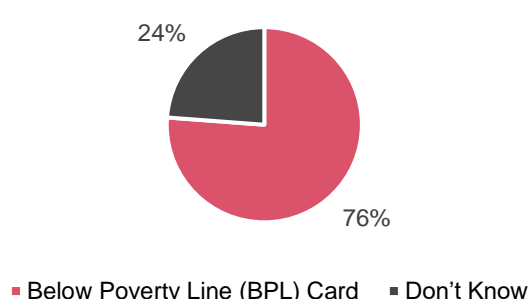
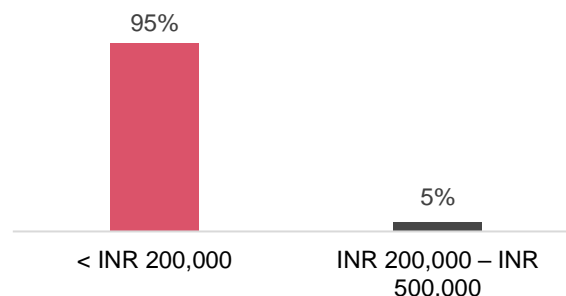


Figure 20: Annual income of households (n=21)



(ii) Enhancing Community Healthcare Access

- **Every respondent (100%) reported being aware of this health intervention by the DS Limited.** All of them had utilized the services provided by the medical camps held in their village and at the PHC, Barota. This widespread awareness and service utilization underscore the intervention's successful reach and its vital role in addressing the community's healthcare needs.

Figure 21: Type of services availed through medical camps

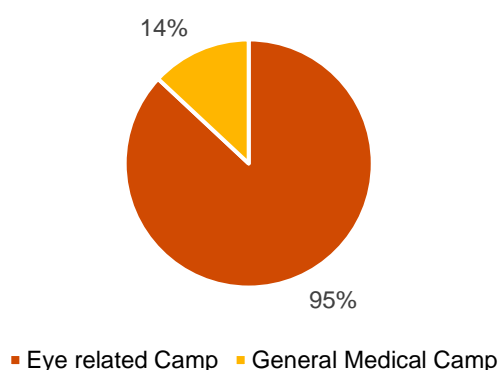
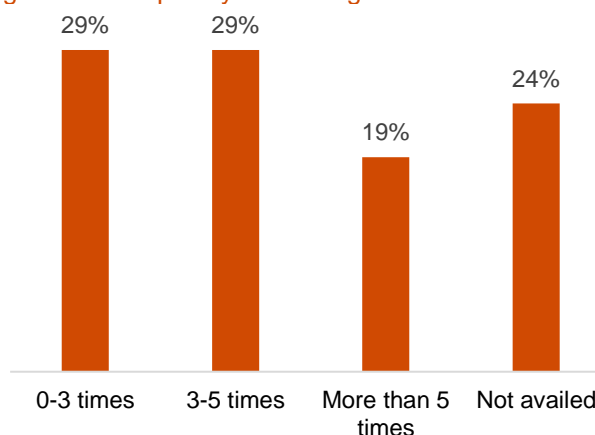


Figure 22: Frequency of availing the services

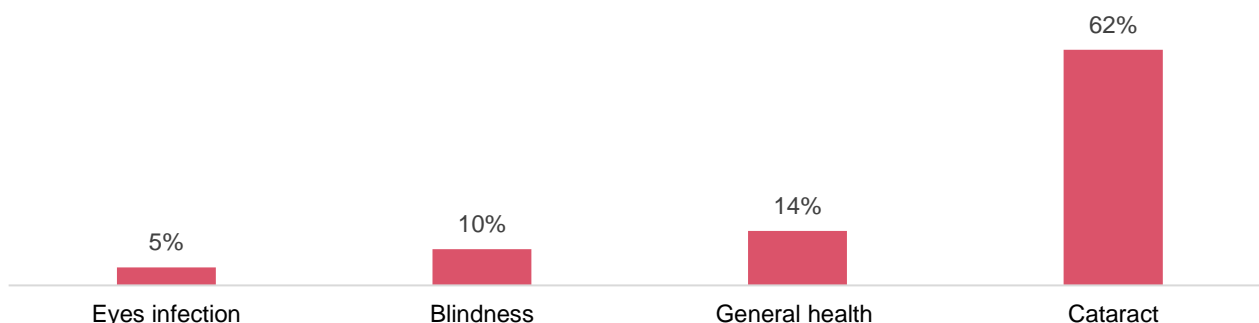


- The survey data revealed that **95% of respondents had benefited from eye-related medical camps**, highlighting the substantial impact on the community. In discussions, it was emphasized that majority of community members had gained from these camps, indicating their critical role in providing accessible healthcare. Nevertheless, **58% of respondents reported utilizing the medical camp services up to five times since the intervention's inception**, while a **notable 24% indicated they had not taken advantage of these services** (Figure 23). This gap presents an opportunity to explore and address the barriers preventing some individuals from accessing these beneficial camps.
- Karnal offers both private and government healthcare facilities that provide similar treatments, but these options are often costly and time-consuming. Patients are required to book appointments and complete registration processes for outpatient department (OPD) visits, which can be cumbersome. As a result, what

should be a straightforward process to see a doctor for routine check-ups frequently consumes an entire day, creating barriers for those seeking timely and efficient medical care.

- The **majority of respondents (62%) have utilised the cataract surgery services offered by the medical camps, either for themselves or their family members.** Furthermore, 14% of respondents have engaged with the general medical camps. According to the doctor, a Mobile Medical Van visits Barota Village weekly to distribute medicines. In addition, medical camps are organised in five other intervention villages, with doctors visiting to provide essential healthcare services directly to the community, thereby improving accessibility and healthcare delivery across the region.

Figure 23: Type of services availed by respondents



(iii) Enhancing Community Health Through Medical Camps

- The **medical camps have benefited the community** by enabling individuals to prioritise their health without facing financial barriers. The intervention ensures that no one is deprived of essential healthcare services due to economic constraints. The **cataract surgeries, administered as a comprehensive three-day procedure, covered all associated costs**—including treatment, meals, accommodation, transportation, and expenses for an accompanying attendant—courtesy of the DS Foundation. This compassionate approach not only alleviated the financial burden on patients and their families but also fostered a sense of security and well-being throughout the community, underscoring the intervention's vital role in promoting equitable healthcare access.



- Community interactions revealed that residents frequently suffered from seasonal illnesses and diarrhoea during weather changes. The introduction of medical camps has eased these issues by providing prompt healthcare access. **Each camp is promoted through WhatsApp groups shared with frontline workers, who then inform the community, attracting 100-120 people** seeking medical assistance at each event. Community members highlighted that awareness efforts by frontline workers have been crucial in encouraging them to utilise these services. Despite holding Ayushman cards, some individuals still opt for private hospitals for certain treatments. However, the effectiveness of the treatments offered at the medical camps has been so substantial that relatives from neighbouring villages have also started seeking medical



For a long time, I struggled with poor vision that made daily activities challenging. The surgery not only restored my sight but also eased my financial burden—something I could never have afforded on my own. .

- As narrated by an old man during discussion, Barota, Karnal

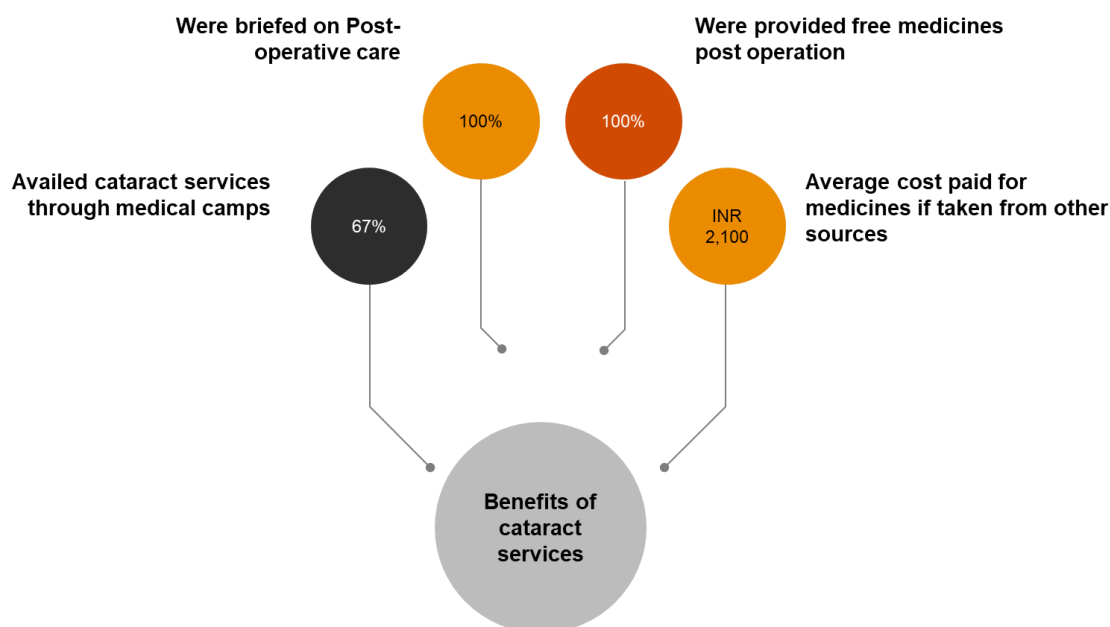
care there. This exemplifies the intervention's substantial impact in improving community health and accessibility to reliable medical care.

- Before the intervention, individuals from lower economic backgrounds, unable to afford private hospital fees, frequently travelled to government hospitals in Karnal for healthcare services because the PHC lacked the capacity to provide necessary medications. This often **entailed arriving at the hospital as early as 5 am and enduring wait times of five to six hours in outpatient departments before receiving treatment**. The introduction of medical camps has reduced these burdens, **cutting down the time community members spend travelling and waiting**. By delivering healthcare directly to them, these camps have enhanced access, efficiency, and convenience, empowering individuals to address their medical needs promptly and easing the logistical challenges previously faced in seeking care. This initiative has profoundly impacted the community's health-seeking behaviour, offering accessible and timely medical support to those who need it most.

(iv) Eye Care Medical Camps

- A total of **241 individuals benefited from cataract surgeries offered by the eye care medical camps**, reducing the financial burdens previously associated with these procedures. Cataract surgery is crucial as it addresses blindness issues that tend to occur with age, necessitating timely treatment. Most beneficiaries are BPL cardholders, highlighting their lower economic status and underscoring the need for free or subsidised healthcare.
- **All respondents (100%) reported that**, following their surgeries, they were able to **participate more effectively in income-generating activities**, illustrating the intervention's transformative impact not only on their health and vision but also on their economic well-being and quality of life. By restoring vision, these camps have empowered individuals to improve their productivity and financial stability, fostering a more resilient community.

Figure 24: Overview of Cataract services provided under intervention



- During discussions with the community, it emerged that **private hospitals typically charge between INR 5,000 and INR 35,000 for cataract operations, with additional costs for medications**. This financial burden is significant for many, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Survey data further revealed that respondents undergoing cataract or other eye-related surgeries spent an average of INR 17,000 per treatment. These expenses underscore the pressing need for affordable healthcare solutions, highlighting the importance of interventions like the eye care medical camps. By offering **these services at reduced or no cost, the intervention has alleviated financial stress for many community members**, enabling them to receive critical vision care without compromising their financial stability.

Cost of same procedure in other government/private hospitals in Karnal

5,000 – 35,000
INR

^Enhancement of economic well-being



Cost of same procedure through Medical Camp

0
INR

(v) Overall Impact

- The respondents were asked to **rate the different parameters pertaining to the medical camps on a 5-point scale** (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest). The analysis **indicates that the medical camps are rated highly by all respondents** with majority of them giving the ratings of 4 or 5 on all the parameters. The detailed breakdown of the responses are as follows:

Table 6: Ratings given by respondents on various parameters

PARAMETERS	SCALE 1	SCALE 2	SCALE 3	SCALE 4	SCALE 5
Doctors and staff	0%	0%	10%	24%	67%
Quality of treatment	0%	0%	5%	38%	57%
Medical equipment	0%	0%	5%	29%	67%
Cleanliness and Hygiene	0%	0%	0%	38%	62%
Timeliness of services	0%	0%	0%	38%	62%

- When discussing the likelihood of recommending medical camp services to others, a substantial 52% of respondents rated the services as 5, the highest mark on the scale, indicating strong approval and endorsement. The remaining 48% assigned a rating of 4, still demonstrating a high level of satisfaction. This overwhelmingly positive feedback showcases the effectiveness of the medical camps, reflecting their pivotal role in providing quality healthcare within the community.

3.8. Common Service Centres (CSC) Camps

3.8.1. About the Intervention

As part of 'Community Development Project', a comprehensive and free-of-charge camp was established at the Barota project site to enhance access and eligibility for various government social welfare schemes. This intervention aimed to effectively connect community members with essential support services. In total, **72 CSC camps were held, successfully serving and benefiting 693 individuals from the community**¹⁸.

3.8.2. Analysis and Findings

This section summarises the findings from our quantitative interactions with 8 respondents (n=8) and qualitative discussions with CSC in-charge and community members to understand the impact of this intervention.

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

Before the intervention, community members **lacked awareness about government welfare schemes** and, even when informed, were uncertain about **how to access or benefit** from them. According to the CSC in-charge, residents faced numerous challenges as they had **to travel to Karnal for even minor matters**, compounded by inadequate roads and transportation facilities. This situation highlighted **barriers to accessing essential digital services and underscored the need** for enhanced outreach to ensure community members can fully utilize available welfare interventions and support.

¹⁸ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Profile of the Respondents



Gender Composition: 100% of the respondents were male during the data collection.



Age Category: Majority of the respondents (50%) were from age group of 31-40 years whereas 20% were from the age group of 21-30 years. The varied age group impacted from the intervention has been illustrated in Figure 25.

Figure 25: Age distribution of the respondents

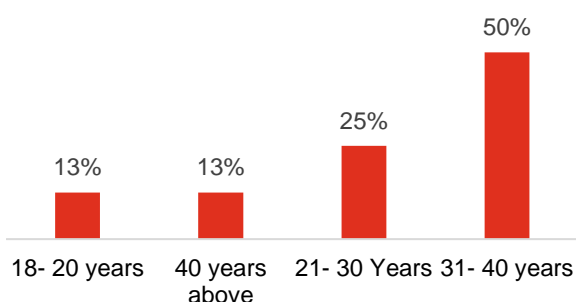
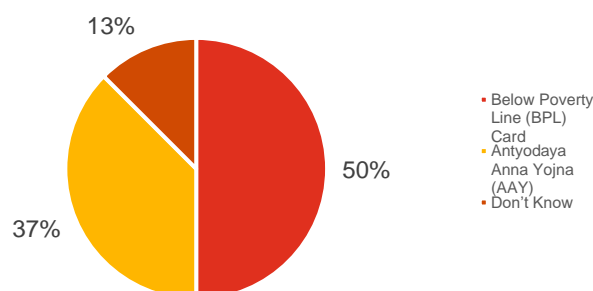


Figure 26: Social Category of the respondents



- **Economic Category:** Out of the individuals surveyed, half of the respondents are classified as Below Poverty Line (BPL) cardholders, signifying their eligibility for various government subsidies and welfare schemes targeted at economically disadvantaged groups. This underscores the community's need for ongoing support to meet their basic living requirements. Additionally, 37% of the respondents hold Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY) cards. The AAY scheme is specifically designed to assist the poorest among the poor in obtaining food security by providing highly subsidised food grains. The prevalence of these cards within the community highlights the depth of economic hardship faced by its members, reflecting a substantial reliance on government assistance for essential resources.

Regarding annual household income, 88% of respondents reported **earning less than INR 20,000 per month**, indicating that majority belong to the **low-income bracket** highlighting the CSC centre's role in reaching economically disadvantaged groups. This correlation emphasizes the targeted benefit of CSC centers in providing essential services, awareness and resources to individuals who might otherwise struggle to access such support, effectively addressing socio-economic inequalities within the community.

- **Education Attainment:** A notable segment of the respondents consisted of those who had attained educational qualifications, with 38% having completed their undergraduate studies and an equivalent percentage finishing high school. This highlights a relatively educated demographic within the community, capable of navigating societal and employment challenges with the knowledge and skills acquired during their educational journey.

Figure 27: Education Qualification of respondents

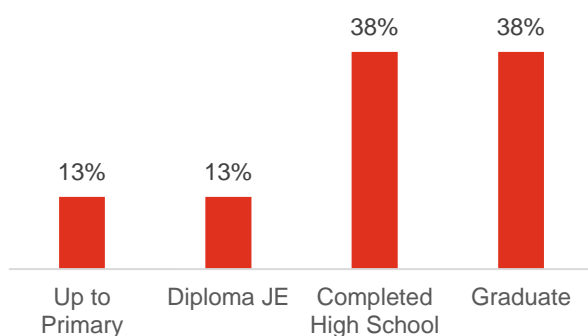
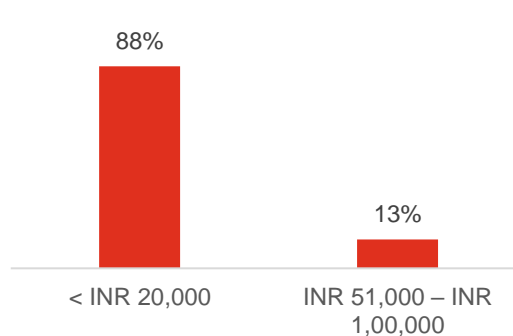


Figure 28: Monthly income of households



(ii) Increased Awareness and Accessibility through CSC Camps

- All respondents (100%) were aware of the CSC camps organized in their village as part of the intervention, and every individual surveyed had utilized the services offered. The community learned about these CSC camps through village meetings organized by DS Foundation team, information exchanged through WhatsApp groups, and banners displaying details about the various schemes and camp specifics at multiple locations in Karnal.

Figure 29: Number of times availed services

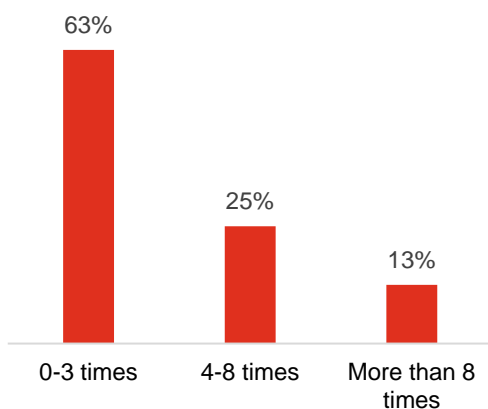
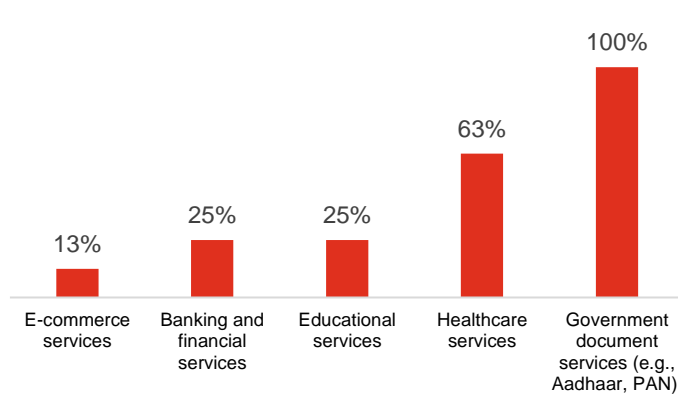


Figure 30: Type of services availed through camps



- 63% of respondents have accessed the services provided by CSC camps up to three times, while 13% have utilized these services more than eight times. Most respondents took advantage of the camps to obtain essential government documents like Aadhaar and PAN cards. Previously, individuals had to travel to Karnal and incur additional costs to process these documents, making the convenience and cost-effectiveness of the CSC camps a crucial benefit to the community. This local access has alleviated financial and logistical burdens, highlighting the positive impact of the intervention in streamlining bureaucratic processes for residents.



"In our village, we had no local facility to update Aadhaar or make PAN cards, forcing us to travel to Karnal, which would take an entire day. If the website crashed, we'd return home with nothing accomplished. I once paid INR 300 to update my Aadhaar in Karnal, but here at this CSC, it was done for just INR 50".

- As narrated by community member during discussion, Barota, Karnal

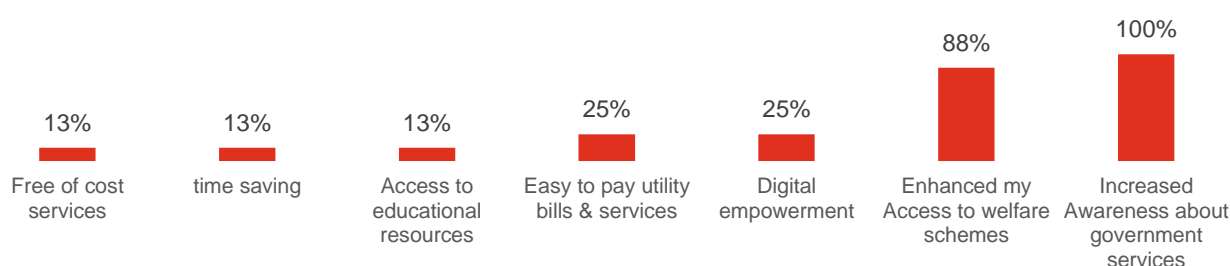
However, community members identified website-related issues as a major challenge when accessing services. Technical difficulties frequently forced them to spend an entire day waiting for resolutions to web-based problems. These persistent website hang-ups not only consumed time but also posed a barrier to

efficient service access, highlighting the need for improved digital infrastructure and support to enhance user experience and service delivery.

(iii) Benefits received through CSC Camps

- The discussions with respondents underlined the impact of the CSC camps on the community. Residents have benefited from various schemes, such as enrolling for and receiving an INR 1,000 stipend for refraining from burning stubble, along with acquiring free bus passes for government services covering 1,000 kilometres for BPL cardholders. Previously, updating Aadhar information necessitated travel to Karnal and incurred a service charge of ₹300, whereas, due to the CSC camps, residents now pay only the official fee of INR 50. In addition to financial savings, these camps have increased community awareness of numerous government schemes, encouraging local community to apply for and utilise the assistance available. This reflects the considerable impact of the CSC camps intervention in empowering community members through improved access to resources and information.

Figure 31: Benefits of CSC camps



- All respondents (100%) felt that their awareness of government services had increased**, while 88% reported improved access to welfare schemes after participating in the CSC camps organized by the DS Limited. Additionally, 25% highlighted the digital empowerment gained through these camps. By providing direct access to vital resources, the intervention plays a central role in empowering local residents and enhancing their quality of life, underscoring the DS Limited's commitment to community upliftment and sustainable development.
- The camps provided information on various schemes such as Ayushman, Widow, Old Age, and Kisan Insurance for crops. Details about camps were shared via WhatsApp groups consisting of 20-25 people, and during specific times, like COOP-Postal, the maximum number of people visited the centers. Although the site sometimes hangs, there are no delays in services at these CSC camps.
- These camps have been beneficial for the community members in saving their time and cost as well because their travel to Karnal has been reduced due to the availability of digital services nearby their village. They were able to pay their utility bills, taxes and access to other schemes especially agricultural schemes.

(iv) Overall Impact:

- The respondents were asked to rate the different parameters pertaining to the CSC camps on a 5-point scale (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest). The responses recorded **indicate that the CSC camps are rated highly by all respondents** with majority of them giving the ratings of 4 or 5 on all the parameters. The detailed breakdown of the responses are as follows.

Table 7: Ratings by respondents on various parameters

PARAMETERS	SCALE 1	SCALE 2	SCALE 3	SCALE 4	SCALE 5
Increased Confidence	0%	0%	25%	13%	63%
Improved Satisfaction Level	0%	0%	0%	13%	88%

3.9. Infrastructure Support- Drain Work, Road Construction and Solar Lights Installation

3.9.1. About the Intervention

In the first year of intervention, the DS Limited launched several interventions to boost the village's accessibility and connectivity following approval from District Collector, Karnal. These efforts included covering an open drain and cleaning the vicinity of the government school to enhance safety and hygiene. Additionally, a 150-metre road was constructed with interlocking tiles to connect to the Kalki Temple, improving local mobility. Moreover, 150 solar lights were installed throughout the village, with ongoing maintenance handled by the community to ensure sustainability¹⁹.

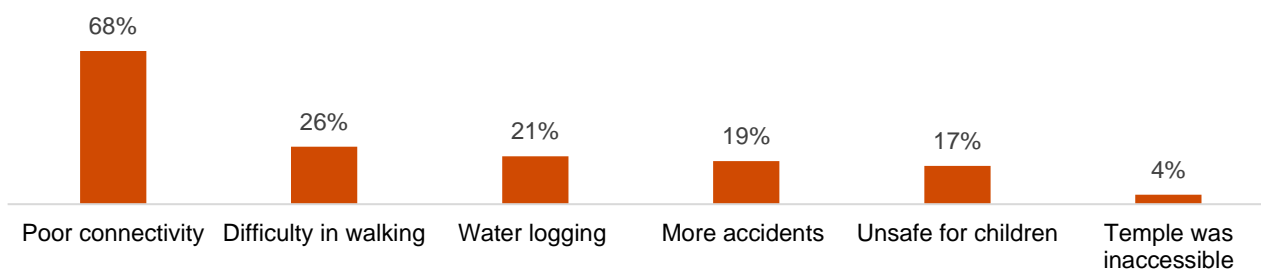
3.9.2. Analysis and Findings

This section presents the findings from quantitative interactions with 47 respondents, supported by qualitative insights gathered from discussions with community members to assess the impact of this initiative.

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

Before the intervention, the community faced challenges primarily due to **inadequate connectivity** within the village. A notable 68% of respondents identified poor connectivity, resulting from the **lack of roads and proper lighting, as a major issue**. The absence of streetlights made nighttime travel within the village difficult and dangerous. During the monsoon season, the **influx of reptiles and insects posed additional hazards**, especially to children. Additionally, 26% of respondents pointed to **waterlogging as a major concern** during this season, while 19% reported that poor connectivity and the absence of lighting contributed to an increase in accidents within the village. These challenges highlighted the urgent need for infrastructure improvements to ensure safer and more accessible living conditions.

Figure 32: Challenges faced by the community



B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Profile of the Respondents



Gender Composition: 47% of the respondents were female whereas 53% of the respondents were male. Gender distribution of the respondents is represented in Figure 34.



Age Category: Majority of the respondents **40%** were from **age group of 31-40 years** whereas **21%** were from the age group of **21-30** years. The varied age group impacted from the intervention has been illustrated in Figure 33.

¹⁹ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

Figure 33: Age distribution of the respondents (n=47)

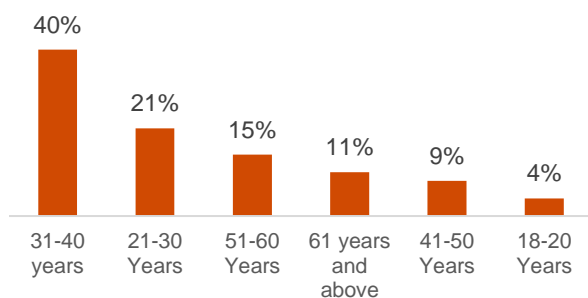


Figure 34: Gender distribution of the respondents (n=47)



Figure 35: Social category of the respondents (n=47)

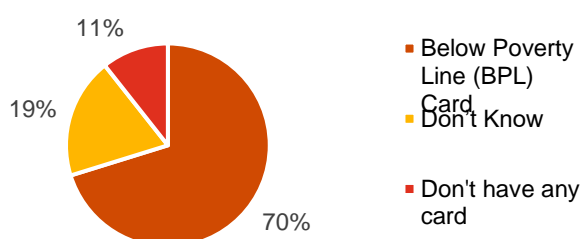
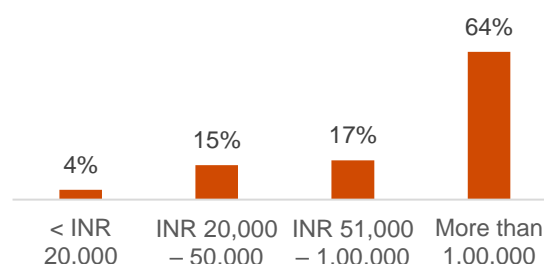
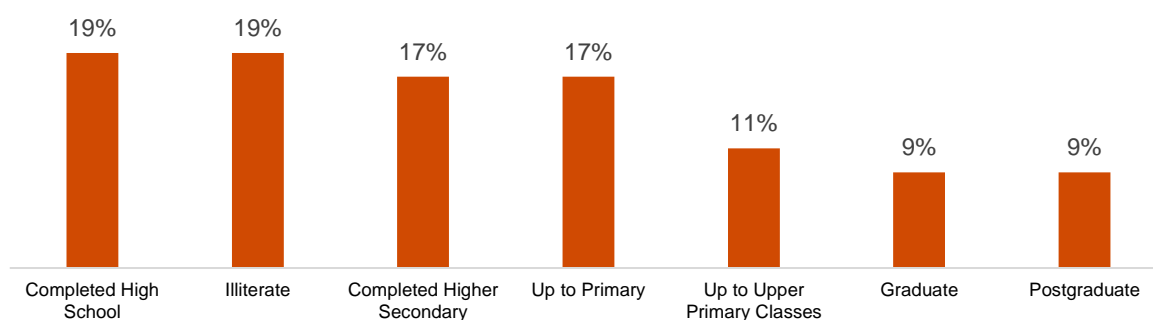


Figure 36: Monthly income of households (n=47)



- **Social Category:** A sizable 70% of respondents hold Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards, reflecting their economic status. Notably, majority of individuals unaware of their card type were women, highlighting potential gaps in information dissemination and accessibility for female community members.
- **Economic Status:** In terms of household income, 64% of respondents reported earnings exceeding INR 1,00,000 per month, suggesting that a large portion of the population falls within the middle-income bracket. Additionally, 17% of respondents indicated a monthly household income ranging from INR 50,000 to INR 1,00,000, as illustrated in Figure 36. This income distribution provides insights into the community's economic landscape, highlighting a diverse range of financial situations among households.

Figure 37: Education Qualification of respondents (n=47)

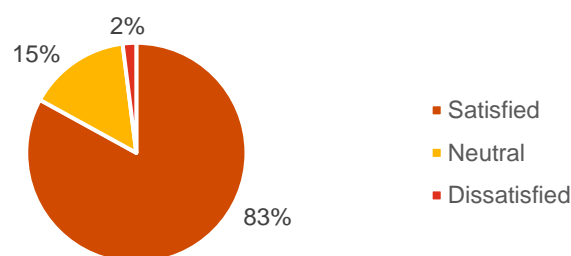


- **Education Attainment:** The data on educational attainment reveals a diverse range of education levels among respondents. 19% of individuals have completed high school, while an equal percentage are illiterate, indicating a gap in basic education access within the community. Further 17% have completed higher secondary education and another 17% have only completed up to primary education, suggesting a drop-off in continuing education beyond early schooling years.

(ii) Infrastructure Improvement through Construction of Road

- As part of the initiative, a **150-metre road was constructed linking the village to the temple**. 72% of respondents agreed that **this development has improved transportation**. Additionally, 9% of respondents strongly agreed, further validating the positive impact on local transportation. However, 19% of individuals remained neutral, possibly indicating varied experiences with improvements or a lack of direct benefit.
- Community members have expressed that the newly constructed road, which directly connects the village to the temple, has enhanced accessibility and convenience for them. The temple, being a central and culturally significant destination within the community, experiences a high footfall, particularly during festivals and religious ceremonies.
- The data regarding the quality of road infrastructure set up by the DS Foundation reflects predominantly positive feedback from the community. Notably, 47% of respondents rated the infrastructure at the highest level, Scale 5, indicating a high level of satisfaction with the quality of the roads. An additional 36% provided a rating of Scale 4, further underscoring the positive reception of the road improvements.

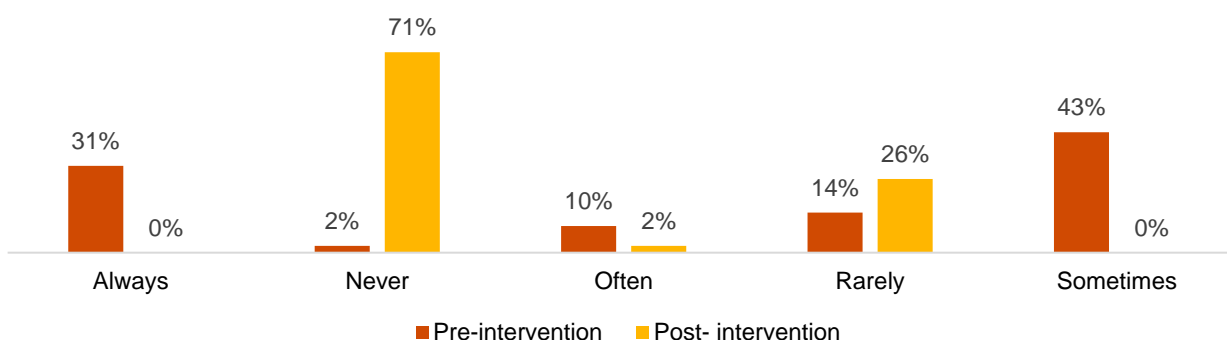
Figure 38: Satisfaction level about quality of road infrastructure



(iii) Drainage System Renovation and its impact

- As part of the intervention, infrastructure improvements were carried out in FY 2021-22, including the repair of an open drain system adjacent to the Government Senior Secondary School, Barota boundary. As per survey, **91% (N=47) of respondents were aware of the drainage renovations in their village carried out by DS Foundation**, and **88% confirmed that the drainage system is currently functioning effectively**. During discussions, community members shared that prior to these improvements, students faced numerous challenges, particularly during monsoons when crossing the drainage posed difficulties and safety risks.
- The data indicates improvement in waterlogging issues following the intervention, particularly with the implementation of a new drainage system. Before the intervention, **31% of respondents experienced waterlogging issues consistently, while 43% reported it occurring sometimes, reflecting frequent disruptions in the area**. Post-intervention, the scenario changed considerably.

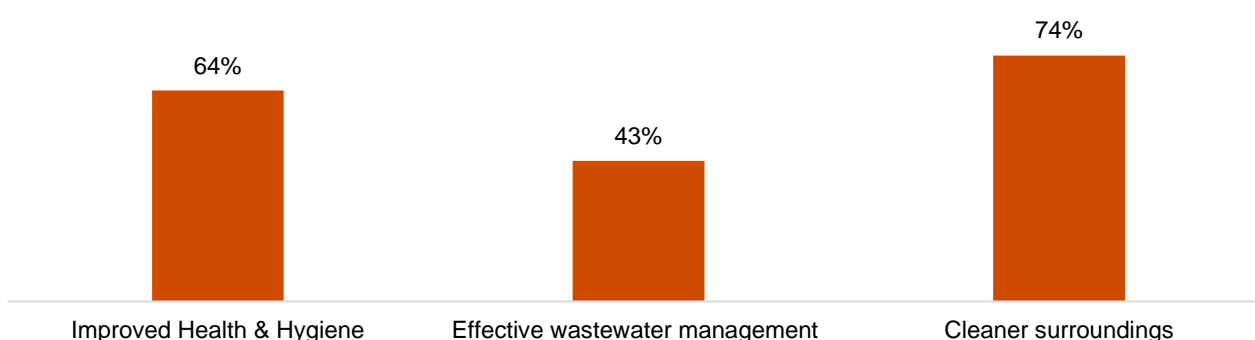
Figure 39: Changes in waterlogging issues



- Notably, those experiencing waterlogging 'always' and 'sometimes' dropped to 0%, highlighting a complete resolution of constant and occasional issues. The category of 'often' reduced to a mere 2%, indicating minimal residual waterlogging occurrences.
- 38% (n=42) of respondents **acknowledged the presence of waterborne diseases**, indicating that waterlogging had a tangible adverse impact on public health. Conversely, 31% of respondents reported no prevalence of such diseases, suggesting that these individuals did not experience or were not aware of health impacts linked to waterlogging.

- The acknowledgment by nearly two-fifths of respondents highlights the importance of interventions that address environmental factors contributing to disease prevalence, underscoring the need for improvements in sanitation and infrastructure to mitigate health risks.
- **94% (n=16 i.e. 38% of 42) of respondents reported a decrease in such diseases**, highlighting the system's effectiveness in alleviating public health concerns associated with stagnant water and poor drainage. The data highlighted role of drainage intervention in promoting healthier living conditions by reducing the incidence of water and mosquito-borne diseases.
- Majority of respondents, **74%**, have noticed cleaner surroundings, indicating that drainage system effectively reduces the presence of stagnant water and debris leading to a healthy environment. Additionally, 64% of respondents reported improvements in health & hygiene, highlighting the system's role in preventing water and mosquito-borne diseases. Moreover, 43% of respondents noted effective wastewater management, highlighting the system's capacity to efficiently handle waste materials and prevent waterlogging, thereby supporting sustainable environmental practices.

Figure 40: % of respondents on Impact of drainage renovation



(iv) Solar Lights Installation and its impact

- **87% (n=47) respondents were aware about the installation of solar lights carried out by DS Foundation.**
- A substantial 91% (n=47) of respondents confirmed that the installed solar lights provide adequate illumination for the area. This indicates that the intervention effectively addressed visibility issues, contributing to a safer environment. Community members have noted an impact following the installation of streetlights throughout the village, particularly concerning the safety and well-being of children. Previously, the absence of adequate lighting meant that children playing outside in the evening were at a higher risk of injuries due to insufficient visibility. This not only restricted their ability to enjoy outdoor activities but also heightened parental concerns over safety. Since the intervention, the presence of streetlights has markedly reduced the incidence of such injuries, creating a safer and more secure environment for children and families alike.
- **96% (n=47) respondents reported feeling safer post-installation compared to before.** This suggests that the enhanced lighting has had a positive psychological impact, likely deterring potential criminal activities and increasing residents' confidence when moving around at night.
- Another **91% (n=47) believed that incidents of crime or eve-teasing have decreased following the intervention.** This highlights the solar lights' role in bolstering security through increased visibility and deterrence of unlawful behaviour. Majority of respondents, 77% (N=43), reported that there have been no such incidents since the lighting intervention, suggesting a substantial positive impact on community safety and deterrence of unlawful activities.
- The **unanimous report (100%) of no streetlights prior to the intervention underscores the transformative impact of the solar lighting intervention**, marking a shift from no lighting to effective nighttime illumination.
- Approximately **30% of respondents reported that repairs were completed in less than one day**, indicating efficient and responsive maintenance for a portion of the lighting system and likely contributing

positively to uninterrupted safety and illumination. **49% of respondents indicated that their lights have not been repaired yet, which highlights a major gap in maintenance and service provision.** It was mentioned by the Project team during the discussion that since it has been more than 3 years so all the batteries need to be replaced to make it functional.

Figure 41: Time taken for lights to be repaired

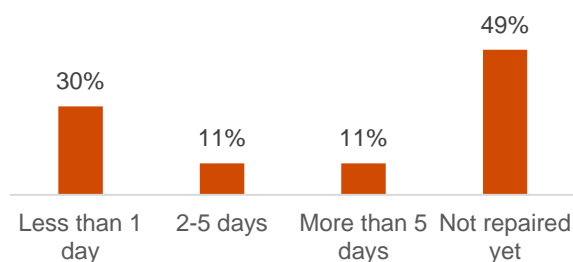
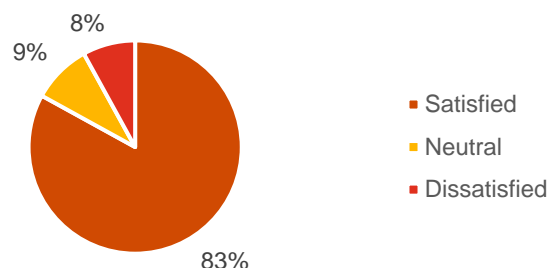


Figure 42: Satisfaction level of respondents



- A substantial **57% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the system's reliability, and an additional 26% were very satisfied, collectively representing 83% of the community members who find the solar lighting system dependable.** Overall, the data showcases a largely favourable reception of the solar lighting's reliability, highlighting the success of the intervention in meeting community expectations and demonstrating the value of the infrastructure in enhancing local safety and functionality through dependable performance.

3.10. Establishment of A New Sports Complex

3.10.1. About the Intervention

As part of the Community Development Project, a new sports complex was constructed at the mini stadium, Barota for providing wrestling training to 70 boys and girls. A coach was appointed to provide wrestling training. The new sports complex was handed over to Baba Muni Khusti Akhada in Village-Barota²⁰.

3.10.2. Analysis and Findings

To assess the impact of this intervention, qualitative assessment was carried out with key stakeholders during the field interactions. Below section summarises the key findings emerged from such interactions:

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

The previous state of the sports complex presented crucial challenges, as it sorely lacked essential facilities and infrastructure. Without electricity, athletes were unable to train during the evenings or utilise modern equipment that requires power. The absence of a gym limited the opportunities for strength and conditioning exercises, which are vital for athletes' performance. Similarly, the lack of a reliable water supply and sanitary toilets made it difficult to maintain basic hygiene and comfort for both athletes and staff. Additionally, the unavailability of wrestling mats and other necessary equipment left athletes ill-prepared for training and competitions. These substantial gaps in infrastructure underscored the urgent need for comprehensive development to create a functional and supportive sports environment.

B. Summary of the Impact Created

DS Limited's intervention, provided all essential facilities required for a proper training and coaching, boosting the morale and participation of athletes, including female wrestlers who are newly encouraged to engage in training here. DS Foundation collaborated with community members, including Pradhan Ji to identify the specific

²⁰ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

needs of the complex users. Through meetings to understand these requirements, necessary facilities and support were provided.

- **Ensuring timing of the classes to build the discipline:** The sports complex offers 2.5 hours of structured classes dedicated to wrestling training. Sessions are held in the morning from 5 to 8 a.m. and in the evening from 4:30 to 8 p.m., providing athletes with ample time to hone their skills and engage in rigorous practice. These thoughtfully scheduled classes accommodate both student and professional athletes, balancing their educational and athletic commitments.
- **Boost in Health and Stamina Through Nutrition:** An integral part of the intervention's success is its emphasis on nutrition, particularly the inclusion of almond drink and other nutritious diet drinks. A comprehensive diet chart has been implemented to ensure the athletes receive optimal nutrition for peak performance. The diet plan includes a variety of nutritious foods, tailored to meet the specific needs of wrestlers. By focusing on a balanced intake of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals, athletes can maximize their energy levels, recovery, and overall health.

This nutritional boost has led to noticeable improvements in the health and stamina of the wrestlers, equipping them with the energy and resilience needed for intense training sessions. By prioritizing diet, the intervention supports the athletes' physical development, contributing to their overall performance and well-being. Through these comprehensive enhancements, the intervention is creating a more conducive environment for practice, ultimately driving the success and growth of wrestlers across the nation.



"Before the new sports complex was built, my parents couldn't afford coaching or training because of high fees of trainers. Now, this complex has provided me with a platform to showcase my skills and compete with international-level players. Previously, we had to go outside for toilets and changing clothes, but now, everything we need is right here."

- As narrated by a wrestler of sports complex, Barota, Karnal

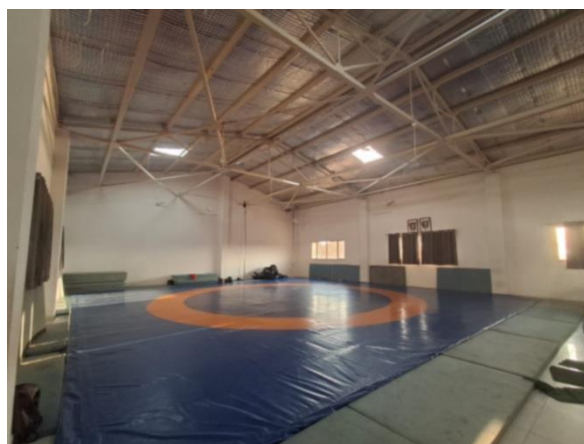


Nationwide Participation: The sports intervention has witnessed remarkable engagement, ensuring participation of 17 students at State Level competitions. This diverse participation highlights the intervention's broad appeal and its ability to unify athletes from varied backgrounds under a common goal of excellence in wrestling. Such widespread involvement also fosters camaraderie and cultural exchange among the athletes, enriching their training experience.

The intervention's profound impact is evident in the remarkable achievements of its students on international stages. Notably, one of the standout athletes has showcased their skills in Oman and Jordan, securing a Bronze Medal at the Sub Junior Asian Championship. Another student has competed in prestigious international level championships, leveraging their experience to now contribute professionally within the Indian Railways.

Moreover, the intervention has nurtured a cadre of champions, with students attaining victories at various competition levels, including under-11 and under-19 championships, as well as Asian and world-level contests. These accomplishments reflect not only their individual talents and perseverance but also the holistic support system provided by the intervention, fostering an environment where young athletes can thrive and reach their full potential. Through their victories, these students have elevated the stature of Indian sports on the world stage, demonstrating the intervention's crucial role in shaping future champions.

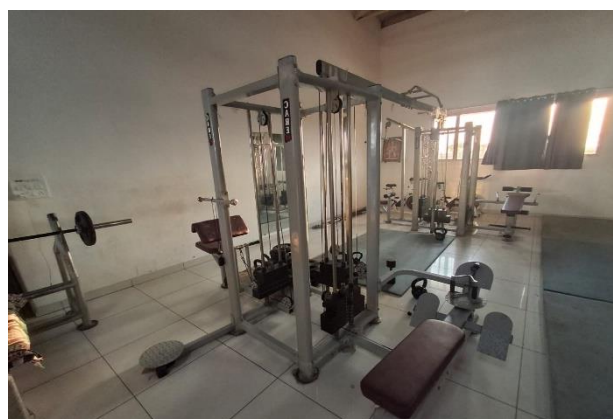
Image 3: Wrestling mat provided under project



- **Improved Infrastructure and Impact on Training:**

Previously, the sports complex grappled with infrastructure limitations, notably the unavailability of water facilities. However, with recent upgrades, including the installation of water systems, athletes now have access to essential resources necessary for maintaining hydration and hygiene. Additionally, the introduction of trained coaches and enhanced facilities has dramatically improved the quality of practice sessions. These developments have directly contributed to better performance outcomes for the wrestlers, allowing them to focus solely on refining their techniques and strategies.

Image 4: Gym provided with advanced equipment



- **Free Facilities Provided:** The sports complex now offers a range of facilities free of charge, including mats, gym access, and a specialized diet plan featuring walnuts, almonds, fig, and glucose in water. These provisions, along with free electricity from Barota, have made the facility highly accessible, removing financial barriers for the athletes and allowing them to focus entirely on their training and progression in sports without the stress of costs.
- **Enhanced Facilities for Female Athletes:** The intervention has made strides in improving facilities for female athletes, addressing critical needs such as toilets and changing rooms that were originally lacking. This enhancement provides a secure and comfortable environment for female wrestlers, encouraging increased participation. With appropriate amenities now in place, they can train confidently and focus on their performance without any distractions.

3.11. Support in Agriculture

3.11.1. About the Intervention

Under the Community Development Project, two types of interventions were implemented to support farmers, including the following:

- **Promotion of Natural Farming:** Ten farmers were selected to participate in natural farming through the Farm Field School intervention. To demonstrate the advantages of natural farming, exposure visits were organised. Additionally, four farmers engaged in the direct seeding of rice scheme, while another four benefited from the line sowing technique, a GAP practice for cultivating paddy²¹.
- **Raising Awareness on Stubble Burning:** To address the issue of stubble burning in paddy cultivation, the DS Limited initiated a campaign to prevent this practice. DS Limited (through DS Foundation) is actively supporting farmers and fostering awareness about the application of spray decomposers on paddy crop residues. As a result, 69 farmers embraced the decomposer spray method, with the intervention spanning a total of 290 acres of farmland²².

3.11.2. Analysis and Findings

The impact of these interventions was assessed using a mixed method approach which involve quantitative interactions with 23 farmers (n=23) and qualitative interactions with other related stakeholders during the field. Below section summarises the findings based on our assessment:

²¹ Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23

²² Source: Project Annual report- 2021-22 & 2022-23
Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

A. Challenges Before the Intervention

According to the farmers, major challenge in adopting the natural farming was **lack of awareness**. Many farmers were **not fully aware of natural farming techniques** or the potential benefits. Traditional practices and **dependency on chemical-intensive farming** were deeply entrenched, making the transition to natural methods daunting without proper education and training. Although natural farming can be cost-effective in the long run, the **initial transition required investments in new techniques, seeds, and possibly even equipment**. This **financial burden was a deterrent** for small and marginal farmers who were already operating with slim margins.

B. Summary of the Impact Created

(i) Profile of the Respondents



Gender Representation: All (100%) respondents were male, as agricultural activities in each household are predominantly managed by male members.



Age Category: Majority of the respondents 39% were from age group of 31-40 years whereas 30% were from the age group of 51-60 years. The varied age group impacted from the intervention has been illustrated in Figure 44.

- **Education Attainment:** Majority of respondents, representing 39%, have achieved a Higher Secondary education level, indicating a relatively high completion rate at this stage. Graduates make up the second largest group, comprising 22% of respondents. This suggests a portion of individuals pursuing higher education beyond secondary school.
- **Social Category:** The data reflects a nearly even distribution among respondents, with 48% holding BPL cards and 52% classified under the general category.
- **Land Ownership:** The largest group (52%) owns between 2 to 5 acres of land. This suggests that most individuals operate small to medium-sized farms, which may cater to diverse agricultural activities. Those with land holdings of more than 5 acres represent 17%, showcasing a minority with relatively large farm operations that may be more commercially or productively oriented.
- **Economic Status:** The income distribution among the surveyed households reveals a predominance of higher income groups, with **48% earning more than INR 2,50,000 annually**. 35% of respondents have incomes between INR 1,00,001 and INR 2,50,000, indicating a substantial segment of households with moderate earnings

Figure 43: Age distribution of the respondents (N=23) Figure 44: Education Qualification (N=23)

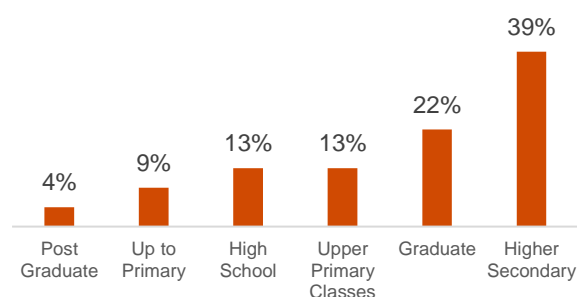
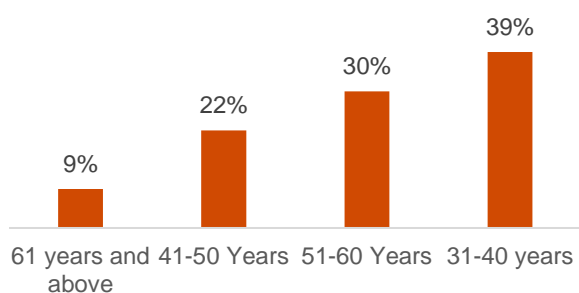


Figure 45: Social category of the respondents (N=23)

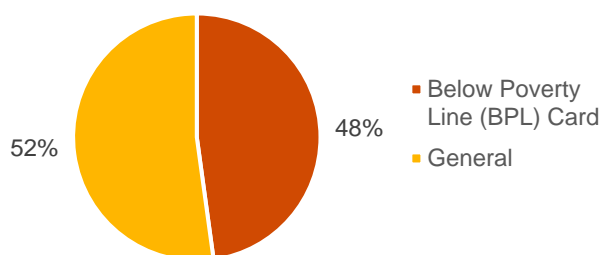


Figure 46: Average Landholding (N=23)

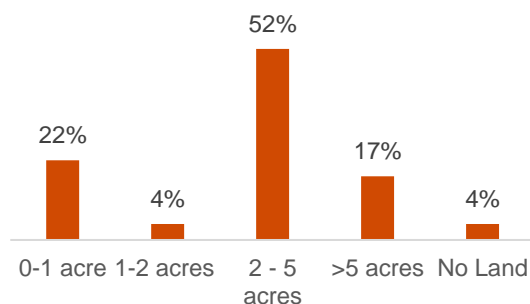


Figure 47: Annual Agricultural Income (N=23)

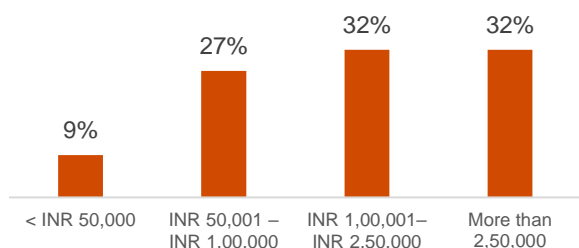
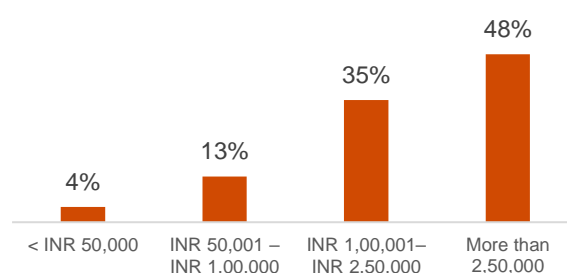


Figure 48: Annual Household Income (N=23)



(ii) Awareness about intervention and sources

- 100% of the respondents were aware about the intervention by DS Limited. A substantial 95% have participated in **awareness sessions**, underscoring the widespread dissemination of information. Additionally, **77% of respondents** have been involved in **technical workshops on vermicomposting and efforts to prevent stubble burning**, showing significant interest and engagement in sustainable farming practices.

Figure 49: Activities carried out (N=23)

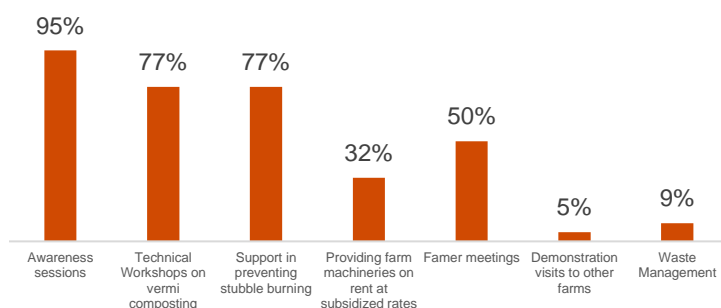
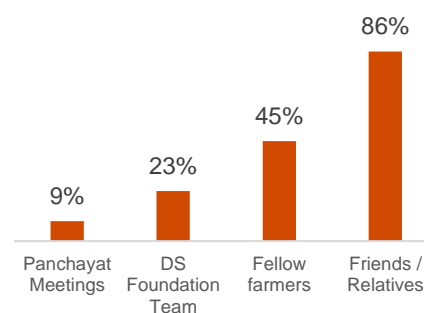


Figure 50: Source of information

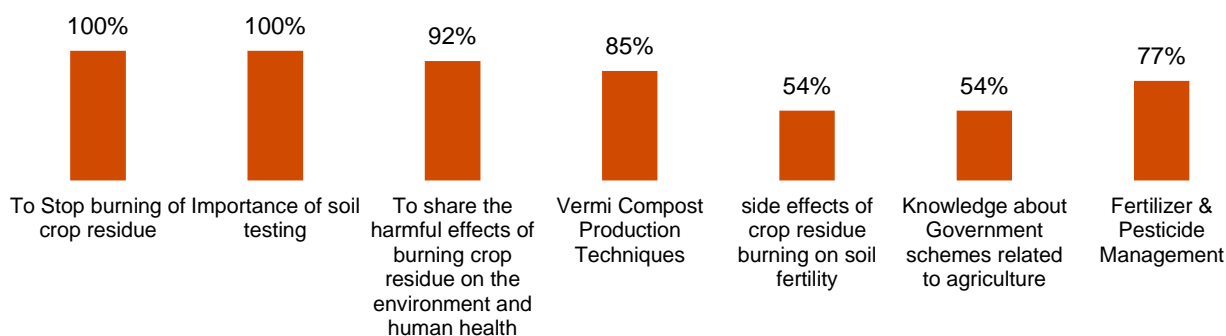


- The most **common source of information about DSL interventions is through friends and relatives**, accounting for 86% of respondents, highlighting the importance of personal networks in disseminating information. Fellow farmers also play a major role, with 45% of respondents citing them as a source of information. The DS Foundation Team directly informed 23% of respondents, indicating a targeted but smaller outreach.

(iii) Training and issues covered during training

- 61% of the respondents agreed to participate in training organised by DS Limited on natural farming. During the discussion, community members revealed that over the past four to five years, agricultural training sessions focused on natural farming practices were provided.
- The data indicates a comprehensive awareness among respondents regarding environmental and agricultural practices. Notably, **100% of respondents recognize the importance of stopping crop residue burning and conducting soil testing, underscoring universal awareness of these critical issues.** 92% are aware of the harmful effects of burning crop residue on the environment and human health, reflecting a high understanding of its broader impacts. Similarly, 85% are knowledgeable about vermicompost production techniques, emphasizing interest in sustainable practices. However, awareness about the side effects of crop residue burning on soil fertility is comparatively lower, reported by 54% of respondents. **Community members indicated that they initially received training on making Jeeva Amrut, a natural alternative to chemical-based fertilizers, to minimize reliance on synthetic inputs. However, they have since ceased its usage due to experiencing lower productivity.**

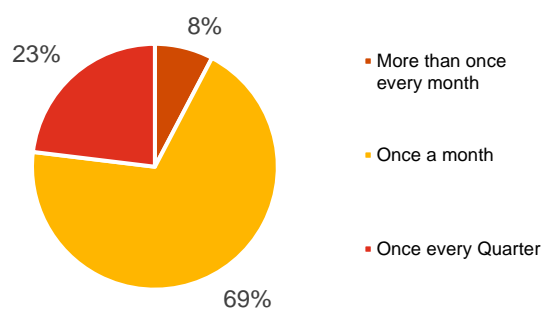
Figure 51: Topics covered during training (n=23)



(iv) Frequency of trainings and its usefulness

- Majority of respondents (69%) were part of training sessions on monthly basis, indicating a consistent and regular approach to skill development and knowledge enhancement. Conversely, 23% participated in trainings once every quarter and only 8% received training more than once every month. Overall, the prevalent monthly training schedule highlighted an effective balance between regular engagement and assimilation of new techniques or information. During the interaction, participants noted that monthly meetings were conducted to discuss challenges encountered in implementing natural farming practices, along with other related issues.

Figure 52: Frequency of trainings provided



- 92% of respondents (N=13) reported finding the training sessions extremely beneficial.** During discussions, participants expressed that these trainings have substantially enhanced their knowledge and understanding of the technical aspects of natural farming.

(v) Farmers practicing natural farming and crops growing

- During the discussion, it was highlighted that **10 farmers were initially chosen to promote natural farming, with a focus on training them to cultivate zucchini.** While the farmers successfully produced zucchini (popular summer squash known for its versatility in cooking) for one year, they encountered hurdles due to the absence of an effective marketing platform. The lack of a Farmers' Producer Organization (FPO) to assist in market access further compounded the issue, leaving the farmers unable to capitalize on their produce. The limited market in Karnal, a smaller city, restricted opportunities for selling such niche vegetables, presenting substantial challenges for those attempting to venture into new agricultural products. This situation underscores the **need for stronger infrastructure and support systems to facilitate market connections for alternative crops**, allowing farmers to sustain and expand their endeavours in natural farming.
- 8–9 farmers were taken on exposure visits and demonstrations at other farms to learn innovative techniques for cultivating natural fruits. **Farmers were taken to the Indo-Israel Project on natural farming in Faridpur, Punjab.** Apart from this, over the course of 2-3 years, soil testing was conducted to their farmland and provided soil testing cards to farmers, with the objective of helping them understand optimal cropping patterns as advised by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK).

Figure 53: Number of crops harvested in a given year

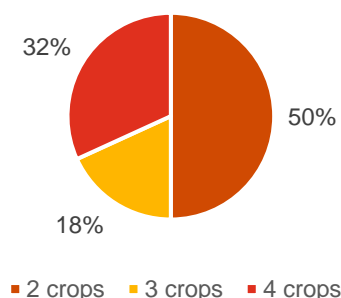
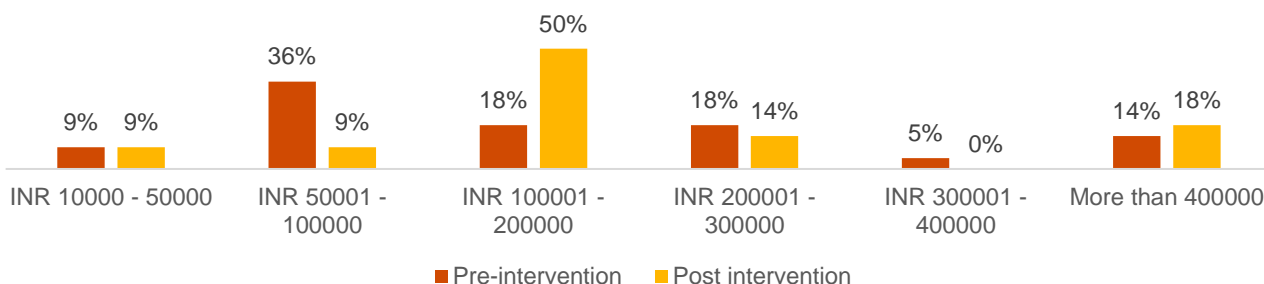


Figure 54: Average savings per harvest

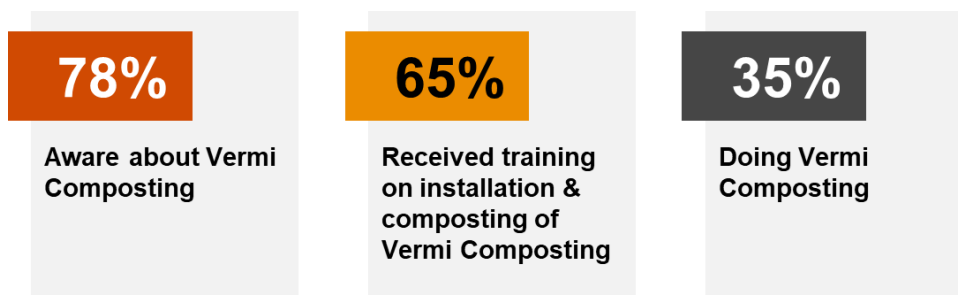


- The data illustrates the impact of the intervention on farmers' savings per harvest, demonstrating an improvement in financial outcomes post-intervention. Before the intervention, **only 18% of farmers reported savings in the INR 100,001 - 200,000 range, which increased to 50% post-intervention.** Additionally, the **category for savings of more than INR 400,000 saw an increase from 14% to 18%, reflecting enhanced financial resilience among farmers.** There was a notable reduction in the number of farmers saving between INR 50,001 to 100,000, from 36% to 9%. Overall, the intervention has clearly enhanced the economic stability and savings capacity of farmers, facilitating greater financial growth and security.

(vi) Adoption of Vermi Composting

- During the initial year of the intervention, farmers received comprehensive training on vermicompost production techniques. Although they had pre-existing knowledge about vermicomposting, actual implementation was limited. Several farmers, particularly those with dairy operations, opted to use composted manure directly from their businesses as a convenient fertilization method for their fields. Community members indicated that the availability of fertilizers at subsidized rates often discouraged the adoption of vermicomposting, as the cost-effective inorganic alternatives provided a simpler solution.

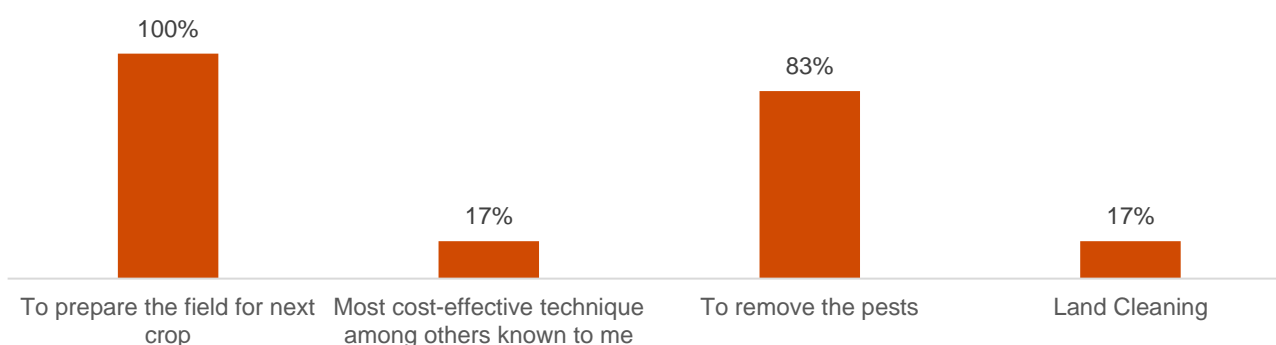
- **35% of respondents are practicing vermi composting through pit method.** Half of the respondents (50%, N=8) were producing vermicompost in the range of 0-1 quintal, while the remaining 50% were producing between 2-5 quintals. This equal distribution suggests a varied adoption and scale of vermicomposting practices. While half of the farmers produce minimal amounts, potentially using it for personal or small-scale agricultural needs, the other half engages in more substantial production, possibly indicating a higher commitment to organic farming methods or a greater demand for compost.



(vii) Practicing Stubble Burning and reasons

- The data reveals that 50% (n=6) of the respondents used stubble burning as a method for crop residue management as recently as the last harvest season, indicating that it remains a prevalent practice for some farmers. In contrast, each of the remaining respondents ceased using burning either 1, 2, or 3 years ago (17% each), reflecting a gradual decline in the reliance on this method over time. This trend suggests a shift towards alternative practices among a portion of the farmers, while others continue to use burning, highlighting the need for continued outreach and support to encourage sustainable residue management methods.
- It was noted during discussion with community members that burning crop residue is an immediate, cost-free method, making it the simplest way to ready their fields for the next crop within a month. They expressed concerns that alternative land preparation methods are time-consuming, occasionally preventing them from preparing the land in time, which can lead to financial losses.

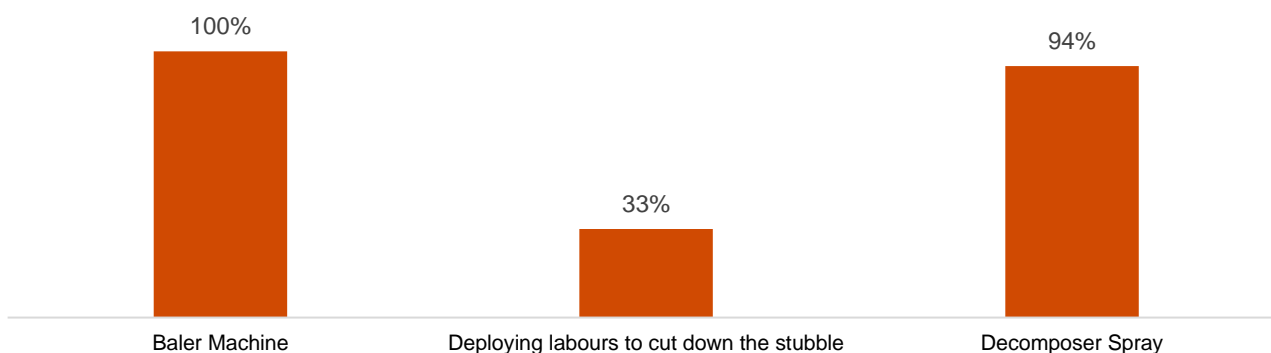
Figure 55: Reasons for currently burning the crop residue post-harvest



- As per survey data, **all respondents (100%- n=6) who burn crop residue do so primarily to prepare the field for the next crop.** Additionally, 83% cite pest removal as a key reason, indicating that stubble burning is viewed as an effective pest management strategy. Conversely, only 17% consider stubble burning the most cost-effective option or use it for land cleaning. This underscores the need for sustainable alternatives that address these specific motivations, potentially reducing reliance on burning practices.
- Since the commencement of the intervention in 2021, **78% (n=23) of respondents have adopted alternative crop residue management techniques instead of burning stubble.** However, 22% continue to rely on traditional stubble burning practices. The discussion revealed that, while many farmers experimented with alternative methods, they encountered delays in preparing their fields for the next crop. This was primarily due to the limited availability of necessary equipment during critical time periods.

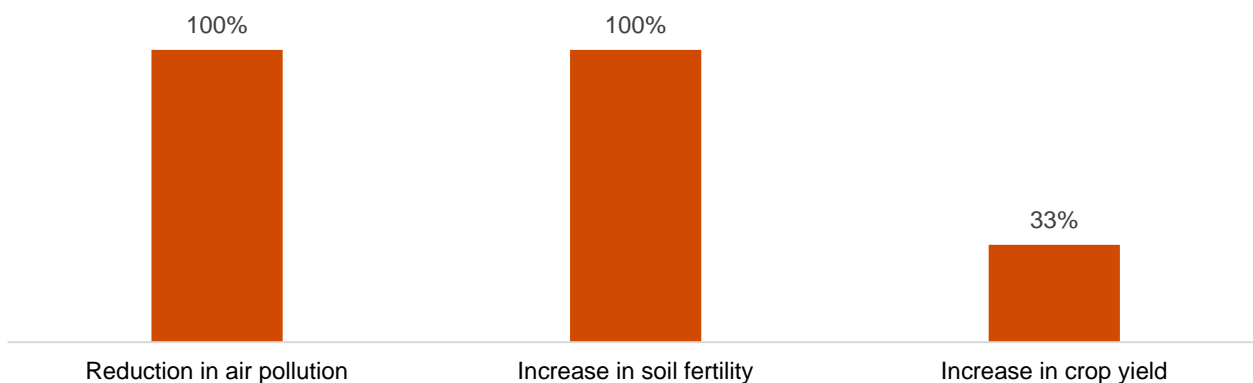
- According to the data provided by the DS Foundation team, 65 farmers have received a government incentive of INR 1,000 each for refraining from stubble burning. The community has shared that Agriculture Department at block level conducts inspections, and the incentive amount is transferred to the farmers' accounts based on this verification.

Figure 56: Alternative method used for crop residue management



- All respondents (100%-N=18) have utilized baler machines as an alternative method for crop residue management, demonstrating their intent to transition away from stubble burning.** However, farmers indicated that the availability of baler machines for rent is limited, with only a 1–2-month window to prepare the land for the next crop. Despite advance bookings, there is a high likelihood of experiencing a wait time of up to a month for access to these machines.
- Additionally, **94% (N=18) of respondents used decomposer sprays, reflecting an inclination for this ecological option. Introduced as part of the intervention, decomposer spray served as an alternative method for crop residue management.** However, farmers typically used it only once or twice, citing the time-intensive process and the need for multiple applications to achieve desired results. Consequently, many have opted for baler machines or reverted to stubble burning. Community members suggested that baler machines could be offered at subsidized rates or that the government should provide more machines, ensuring timely access for all farmers without delaying the next crop cycle.
- Only 33% of respondents rely on labor to manually cut down stubble, indicating that mechanized and chemical methods are favoured for their efficiency and effectiveness. Securing labor in the desired numbers is challenging, given the high costs and demand during the cropping season. Farmers often need to pay extra to ensure they have the necessary workforce to begin cropping on schedule.
- According to the community members, **primary motivation for not burning stubble among 78% (N=18) of respondents is the awareness of the harmful effects on health, indicating that health concerns are a major deterrent.** Meanwhile, 22% attribute their choice to the awareness campaigns led by DS Foundation, highlighting the organization's role in promoting sustainable practices. This suggests that although direct health impacts are the leading factor, educational initiatives also play supportive role in influencing farmer behaviour.

Figure 57: Impact of avoiding stubble burning



- All respondents (100%- N=18)) have observed two major impacts from avoiding stubble burning and adopting alternative management techniques: reduction in air pollution and increase in soil fertility. These outcomes suggested that the interventions by DS Foundation have fostered environmentally friendly practices, enhancing both local air quality and land productivity. Additionally, 33% of respondents reported an increase in crop yield, indicating that along with environmental benefits, there may be potential for improved agricultural productivity, although this effect is less universally experienced among the surveyed farmers. Farmers acknowledged challenges stemming from the limited availability of machines, yet they expressed a strong desire to adopt environmentally friendly techniques to address stubble burning.

4. IRECS Analysis

Basis the interactions with the key stakeholders and desk review, the impact of the project was also assessed on the IRECS framework parameters. The IRECS analysis summary has been presented in below table:

Table 6: IRECS Analysis



Parameter	Assessment from Study
Inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project exemplifies inclusivity by actively engaging beneficiaries from marginalised and vulnerable segments of society, regardless of gender, age, or socio-demographic background. The project specifically focuses on individuals from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households, ensuring that economically disadvantaged groups have access to educational and digital resources. For example, 80% of respondents benefiting from the computer center intervention were from BPL households, highlighting the project's commitment to reducing educational inequities The establishment of CSC camps has significantly enhanced access to government welfare schemes for marginalized community members. These camps have reduced the need for travel to distant locations like Karnal, thereby saving time and costs for residents, and have increased awareness of various government schemes The remedial classes intervention targets students struggling with foundational concepts, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds. By offering free after-school classes, the project addresses learning gaps and supports students who might otherwise lack access to supplementary education. The project has upgraded essential facilities in schools, such as sanitation and drinking water access, benefiting students from marginalized communities. This intervention aims to improve health and hygiene conditions, thereby supporting a conducive learning environment for all students. The sports complex intervention has enhanced facilities for female athletes by providing essential amenities like toilets and changing rooms, which were previously lacking. This improvement encourages increased participation and provides a secure environment for female wrestlers, promoting gender inclusivity in sports. The kindergarten intervention has improved parental awareness and engagement in early childhood education, particularly among families who previously overlooked its importance. By fostering an inclusive learning environment, the project supports children from diverse socio-economic backgrounds in their early educational journey.
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is highly relevant due to its tailored approach to addressing community-specific challenges and needs. The remedial classes intervention addresses the educational priorities of students struggling with foundational concepts. Analysis shows that 97% of respondents rated improved learning levels as "Highly impactful," indicating that the intervention effectively meets the academic needs of students. The computer center meets the demand for digital literacy, with 90% of respondents rating the improvement in digital literacy as "Highly impactful." The medical camps, including eye care services, address critical healthcare needs. The camps provided 241 cataract surgeries and 1,082 pairs of spectacles, significantly reducing financial burdens for economically disadvantaged individuals. The promotion of natural farming and stubble burning awareness campaigns align with farmers' priorities for sustainable practices. Quantitative insights reveal that 100% of

Parameter	Assessment from Study
	<p>respondents observed a reduction in air pollution and an increase in soil fertility, indicating that the project effectively supports farmers in adopting environmentally friendly techniques.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The installation of solar lights and road construction meet the community's need for improved safety and connectivity whereas the career counselling intervention supported students in making informed decisions about their futures.
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The educational interventions, including remedial classes and infrastructure support, have effectively addressed beneficiaries' expectations for a better learning environment. Quantitative data shows that 92% of respondents rated the improved learning environment as "Highly impactful," and 87% noted increased interest, participation, and attendance in school, indicating that the project successfully enhances educational engagement. The computer center intervention has effectively met the expectations for improved digital literacy. Insights reveal that 90% of respondents rated the development of confidence in using technology as "Highly impactful," demonstrating the project's success in equipping students with essential digital skills. The medical camps have effectively addressed the community's expectations for accessible healthcare services. Study indicates that 88% of respondents rated their satisfaction level with the medical camps as "Highly impactful," showcasing the project's effectiveness in providing quality healthcare and meeting beneficiaries' health needs. The installation of solar lights and road construction have effectively met the community's expectations for improved safety and infrastructure. Quantitative analysis show that 96% of respondents reported feeling safer post-installation, highlighting the project's success in enhancing community safety and connectivity. The career counselling intervention has effectively addressed students' expectations for guidance on future educational and vocational paths. Quantitative data reveals that 78% of respondents reported that the sessions enabled them to identify previously unknown opportunities, demonstrating the project's effectiveness in supporting informed decision-making and career development.
Convergence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has effectively converged with government initiatives and local institutions to enhance service delivery. For instance, the Common Service Centres (CSC) camps were established to connect community members with government welfare schemes, reducing the need for travel to distant locations and facilitating easier access to services. This collaboration underscores the project's alignment with government efforts to improve digital service accessibility and support for marginalized communities. The project's initiatives in promoting sustainable agricultural practices, such as the use of decomposer sprays for stubble management, demonstrate convergence with government agricultural policies aimed at reducing environmental impact. The project's interventions, such as the establishment of sports complexes and educational facilities, foster strong relationships between community members, local leaders, and project implementers. This convergence of interests and efforts enhances community cohesion and ensures that interventions are tailored to meet the specific needs and priorities of beneficiaries, thereby strengthening the project's impact and sustainability.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The installation of solar lights and infrastructure improvements, such as road construction, involve community members in ongoing maintenance efforts. By engaging the community in the upkeep of these facilities, the project fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, which is crucial for sustaining the benefits of improved infrastructure.

Parameter	Assessment from Study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project's initiatives in promoting natural farming and stubble management have encouraged farmers to adopt environmentally friendly techniques. By aligning with government policies and providing resources for sustainable practices, the project supports farmers in continuing these practices independently, ensuring long-term environmental and economic benefits. • It is further recommended to establish a Farmers' Cooperative for sustainable stubble management highlights the project's focus on creating self-sustaining local institutions. By providing farmers with baler machines at subsidized rates and negotiating reduced costs with manufacturers, the cooperative model ensures that farmers can continue adopting sustainable practices independently. • Similarly, the computer center initiative needs to have plans to introduce advanced courses like Tally and Artificial Intelligence (AI), aligning the curriculum with current job market demands. By equipping students with practical, in-demand skills, the project enhances their employability, ensuring that the educational benefits are long-lasting and relevant to future career opportunities.

5. Project Recommendations

- **Teacher training for effective implementation:** To enhance the effectiveness of STEM labs and interventions, it is recommended to provide comprehensive training for teachers as part of the initiative. Empowering educators with the necessary skills and knowledge will ensure they can effectively facilitate STEM learning experiences and guide students in exploring these subjects. Teacher training should focus on familiarising them with the innovative STEM technologies, teaching methodologies, and hands-on activities to encourage engaging learning environment. By investing in teacher development, the project can further maximise its impact, inspiring students and equipping them with the skills needed for future success in STEM fields.
- **Transportation assistance to strengthen Kindergarten access and attendance:** As part of the kindergarten intervention, parents shared that it is often difficult for them to pick up and drop off their children due to work commitments or household responsibilities. To address this challenge and enhance the reach and effectiveness of the intervention, it is recommended that transportation support be provided. This would ensure regular attendance, ease the burden on families, and make the initiative more accessible and impactful for the community.
- **Linking education for greater career outcomes:** To enhance the impact of the career counselling intervention by DS Foundation, it is recommended to establish strong linkages with colleges and companies to streamline pathways for higher education and employment. By inviting academic institutions and industry partners to participate directly in the intervention, the intervention can facilitate smoother application processes, offer more structured opportunities, and bridge the gap between students' aspirations and available prospects. Strengthening these collaborations will build on the intervention's current success—broadening access to internships, increasing clarity on career options, and ultimately ensuring more tangible outcomes for participants.
- **Integrating additional courses into the existing compute intervention:** The computer classes initiative by DS Foundation, provides courses in Microsoft Office and basic computer skills, has been well-received by students. To further strengthen its impact and align the curriculum with current job market demands, it is recommended to introduce additional advanced courses. Based on student feedback, modules such as Tally, usage of Artificial intelligence, and other job-oriented applications should be included to enhance employability and equip students with practical, in-demand skills for the evolving digital landscape
- **A Unified Framework for Scalable and Sustainable Village Development:** It was observed that the project had been implemented through multiple small initiatives, making it challenging to attribute the large-scale impact. To enhance its effectiveness, adopting a unified strategy that consolidates efforts across thematic areas such as education, health, agriculture, and infrastructure development is essential. Developing a comprehensive Community Development Project that addresses village needs across these areas is recommended. Creating a village development plan with input from key informants can ensure the project is both impactful and relevant. During the discussion, community highlighted requirements of **(a) Community Marriage Hall; (b) Boundary wall & installation of gate at the entrance of crematorium (known as Shivpuri); (c) Skill development programme for local youth; (d) additional Wrestling Mat for the sports complex and (e) create an additional Arena (Akhada) to accommodate more wrestlers.** By assessing such requirements (needs) before launching scalable pilot projects in key sectors can serve as models for broader implementations, supported by a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to enable adaptive management and continuous improvement. This strategic approach promises a focused, impactful, and sustainable path to enhancing community well-being.
- **Establishing a Farmers' Cooperative for Sustainable Stubble Management:** Stubble burning in the Karnal region, where rice and wheat predominate, poses severe environmental challenges, including air pollution and soil degradation. To address this issue, the creation of a Farmers' Cooperative is recommended. This initiative aims to provide farmers with baler machines at subsidized rates, facilitating



a shift towards sustainable practices that enhance soil health and productivity. The cooperative will work to negotiate reduced costs with manufacturers, ensuring that baler machines remain affordable for farmers. A strategic distribution plan will ensure timely access to machinery. Additionally, the cooperative will engage with government departments to advocate for increased support and resources, building partnerships to expand the fleet of machines and meet the growing needs of the farming community. By empowering farmers with the necessary tools, this initiative promotes both environmental and economic benefits.

- **Providing Marketing Platforms through developing an FPO:** To support farmers practicing natural farming and cultivating zucchini as a part of the project, it is recommended to establish a Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) focused on enhancing market access and linkages. By developing a unified marketing platform, the FPO can streamline the sale of crops produced, ensuring fair pricing and greater visibility in the market. This initiative will empower farmers by equipping them with the tools and resources needed to navigate market challenges, negotiate better deals, and reduce dependency on middlemen. Additionally, the FPO will provide training on best practices for packaging and branding, thus increasing the appeal and demand for crops especially for zucchini. Through collaborative efforts and shared expertise, the FPO will foster a community of farmers who can collectively drive growth and innovation, ultimately leading to increased income stability and sustainability.
- **Increased Community Involvement:** There is need to strengthen community involvement in planning and implementation processes to ensure that interventions are tailored to the specific needs and priorities of the community. This could involve forming community advisory boards or committees to provide input and guidance on project activities. This will also help in addressing the resistance shared by the local community noted during the field visits. Regular discussions with the local community to discuss project goals and gather feedback will foster a sense of ownership among community members. Utilising Whatsapp groups (existing/new), local radio, and community newsletters can also keep beneficiaries informed about project activities, successes, and opportunities for involvement.

6. Case Studies

Following case studies have been gathered based on our discussions from stakeholders during the field:

Case Story #1: Empowering Dreams

Saloni (Name changed), a determined 22-year-old girl hailing from a modest lower-income family, has carved a niche for herself in the competitive world of wrestling. Despite the financial constraints that encumbered her family, Saloni's invincible spirit and fervent passion for the sport have propelled her to international arenas, where she has proudly represented her country and emerged as an Asian medallist. Recently, she has been selected as an employee in the Indian Railways, a testament to her hard work and perseverance.

Growing up, Saloni faced challenges due to her family's financial limitations. Her parents were unable to afford the costs associated with professional coaching and participation in high stakes wrestling competitions. However, Saloni's life took a transformative turn when she gained access to a specialized coaching program dedicated to nurturing young female athletes from disadvantaged backgrounds under the project implemented by DS Foundation.

The coaching provided through newly constructed sports complex and advanced equipment played a pivotal role in Saloni's journey to success. By offering a comprehensive package that included free-of-cost coaching, nutritious diets, and state-of-the-art training facilities, the intervention alleviated the financial burden on Saloni's family and enabled her to concentrate solely on her training. The provision of well-balanced meals significantly improved her diet, enhancing her stamina and overall performance on the mat.

Moreover, the intervention prioritized creating a supportive and conducive environment for female athletes. Facilities such as separate toilets and changing rooms contributed to a sense of security and dignity, allowing Saloni to pursue her sport without additional stress or discomfort. Her skills polished and her confidence bolstered, she competed at the international level with distinction, clinching a prestigious medal in an Asian tournament.

Saloni's dedication and success in wrestling were recognized beyond the sports community, culminating in her selection as an employee in the Indian Railways in 2024. This opportunity provides her with a stable income, ensuring financial security for her family and enabling her to focus on furthering her wrestling career alongside her professional responsibilities. Saloni's story is an illustration of how adequate support and resources can transform adversity into achievement. Her journey from a small-town girl with big dreams to an international athlete and now a Railway employee stands as an inspiring testament to the potential within each individual, waiting to be unleashed with the right support. Saloni continues to inspire her peers, proving that no dream is too big when backed by resilience, opportunity, and unwavering ambition.



Case Story #2: Transforming Lives through Accessible Healthcare

The healthcare intervention was launched by DS Limited to bridge the gap in accessing the healthcare services for community members. Through collaborations with hospitals and organisations, the intervention has brought essential medical services directly to the community, transforming health landscape and enhancing quality of life.

The focus of this initiative was organization of various medical camps offering free healthcare services, with a special emphasis on eyecare services especially cataract surgeries. Cataract, a common ailment among the aging population, often impose severe limitations on daily activities and independence due to impaired vision. Recognizing this challenge, the intervention managed to conduct 241 cataract surgeries at no cost to community members, alleviating a heavy financial burden that would otherwise have been insurmountable for many.

In addition to surgeries, the intervention has also provided free medicines and spectacles, further supporting the villagers' path to recovery and self-sufficiency. By eliminating the travel time and expenses associated with visiting private hospitals in Karnal, access to healthcare has been simplified, enabling families to focus on recovery rather than logistical or financial concerns.

This initiative has not only restored the vision of many individuals but has also reinstated their ability to engage fully in daily activities. Tasks that were once daunting due to poor eyesight have become manageable, and the newfound independence has boosted community morale and productivity.



In essence, this intervention is a testament to the transformative power of healthcare accessibility. By bringing medical services to the doorstep of villagers, it has initiated a ripple of positive change, enhancing both physical wellbeing and financial security within the community. The collaboration with multiple stakeholders stands as an example of how targeted interventions can break down barriers, offering a healthier, more vibrant future for all.

Case Story #3: Parent's perspective on the kindergarten initiative

My daughter, Ananya (name changed), who is 4 years old, was among the first group of children to enroll in the DS Limited supported Kindergarten. Prior to this, she had limited exposure to structured learning environments, and most of her interactions were confined to our home.

Initially, I had some reservations about enrolling Ananya in kindergarten. Like many parents, I was concerned about how she would adapt to a new environment and whether the transition would be smooth. However, the design of the program, emphasised foundational skills and early developmental support, reassured me that it was a step in the right direction for her future educational journey.

Since enrolling her in kindergarten, I have observed several positive changes in her. I have observed her social skills have largely improved. Ananya was a very quiet kid, she has become more sociable and is now more comfortable interacting with children her age. The kindergarten's focus on collaborative activities has helped her develop friendships and learn the importance of sharing and teamwork.

Her communication skills have been enhanced. Previously, Ananya was somewhat reserved in expressing herself. However, the games, poems and exercises at the kindergarten have improved her vocabulary and ability to articulate her thoughts and feelings. Kindergarten curriculum includes a variety of activities designed to stimulate cognitive growth. Ananya has shown increased curiosity about day-to-day activities and problem-solving skills, often asking questions and showing enthusiasm for learning new things. Moreover, Ananya has experienced emotional growth. The nurturing environment of the kindergarten has helped her become more confident and independent. She is better at managing her emotions and is more resilient when faced with challenges.

The kindergarten has been helpful in laying a strong foundation for her future education and personal growth. As a parent, I am incredibly grateful for this initiative, which has not only benefitted my child but also developed a sense of community amongst parents and educators. The positive changes in Ananya are a testament to the success of the Community Development Program, and I look forward to seeing how she continues to thrive as she progresses through her educational journey.

Case Story #4: From struggle to success through remedial classes

Anjali, a 14-year-old student in grade 9, like many of her peers, struggled with foundational concepts in Mathematics, Science, and English. Her situation was compounded by the **limited educational resources** available in Barota village and the inability of her schoolteachers to provide individualised attention during regular classes.

With her coming from economically marginalised background and parents having limited educational qualification, Anjali had no access to additional educational support. The lack of understanding of fundamental concepts in core subjects affected her confidence, leading her to believe that she might never catch up with her classmates. This created a cycle of poor performance and low self-esteem, with a looming risk of dropping out before completing her education.

After getting associated with the free of cost remedial classes after school, it was a beacon of hope for Anjali and many others. The classes were conducted by educators who provided personalised attention and tailored lesson plans to meet the needs of each student. The educators used interactive teaching methods, making learning more engaging and easier to understand. She was particularly motivated to learn with storytelling approach used in English lessons, which helped her grasp the subject with ease.

Within few months, she began to show improvement in her understanding of core subjects. The foundational knowledge she gained boosted her confidence, enabling her to participate actively in her regular school classes. Her grades improved significantly, and she no longer feared exams. Beyond academics, the intervention transformed Anjali's outlook towards education and her future. She became more optimistic and set her sights on pursuing higher education, something she had never dared to dream of before.

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