

# Social Impact Assessment (SIA) of Digital Sakhi Programme Maharashtra

Project Year: FY 2022-23

Submitted by: **CRISIL Limited**

November 2023



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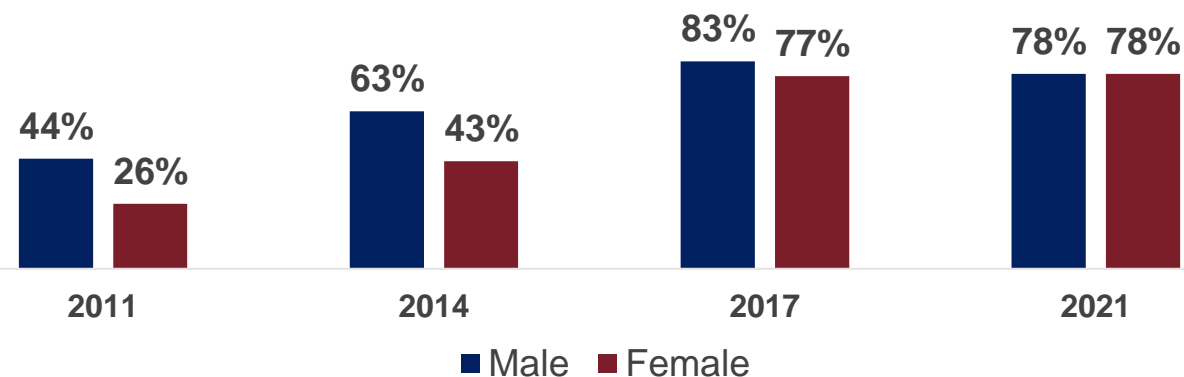
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## The Indian Journey to Digital Financial Inclusion

- India has played a leading role in ushering in a transformative shift in the global digital payment arena.
- India's proactive initiatives, like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Aadhaar, small finance banks, and payment infrastructure, drive digital financial inclusion.
- These efforts transformed Indian financial transactions, enabling easy and secure digital payments for individuals even in remote areas.
- India's pioneering role in this arena serves as a model for other countries aspiring to harness the power of digital finance for inclusive economic growth.

Gender-wise distribution of bank accounts in India from 2011 to 2021



- In 2021, 78% of Indians aged 15 and above had bank accounts, a significant increase from 44% in 2011, indicating improved financial inclusion, particularly for historically marginalized groups.

## Status of women in the rural entrepreneurship landscape

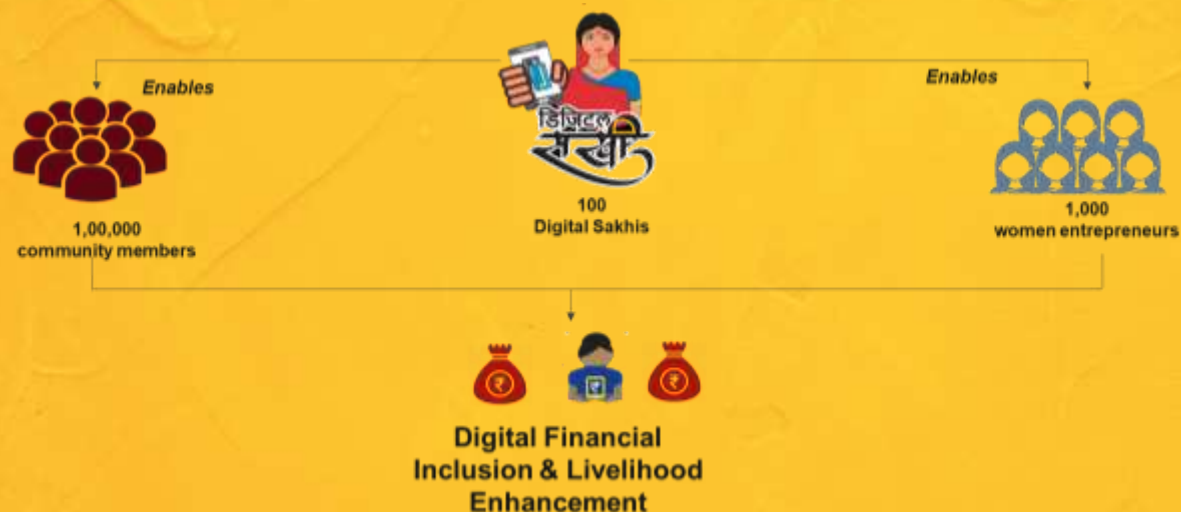
- Rural women indeed make up a significant portion of the rural labor force and are involved in a wide range of sectors, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and informal labor. Despite their active participation, their roles often tend to be more secondary or less visible, even though they perform a substantial amount of physical labor.
- However, much of the work performed by rural women falls within the **informal sector**, which is less regulated and **lacks formal recognition** including issues pertaining to **unpaid labour**.
- Despite their significant contributions, rural women often have **limited decision-making power** when it comes to matters related to agriculture, land ownership, and resource management.
- Providing these rural women with **knowledge and technology** empowers them to establish more sustainable sources of income and livelihood. **Entrepreneurship** empowers rural women economically by providing them with **income-generating opportunities**. This **financial independence** can contribute to poverty reduction and enhance the well-being of their families.
- Encouraging rural women to participate in entrepreneurship can challenge traditional gender roles and **promote gender equality**. It empowers women to have a say in decision-making processes and to access resources traditionally controlled by men.



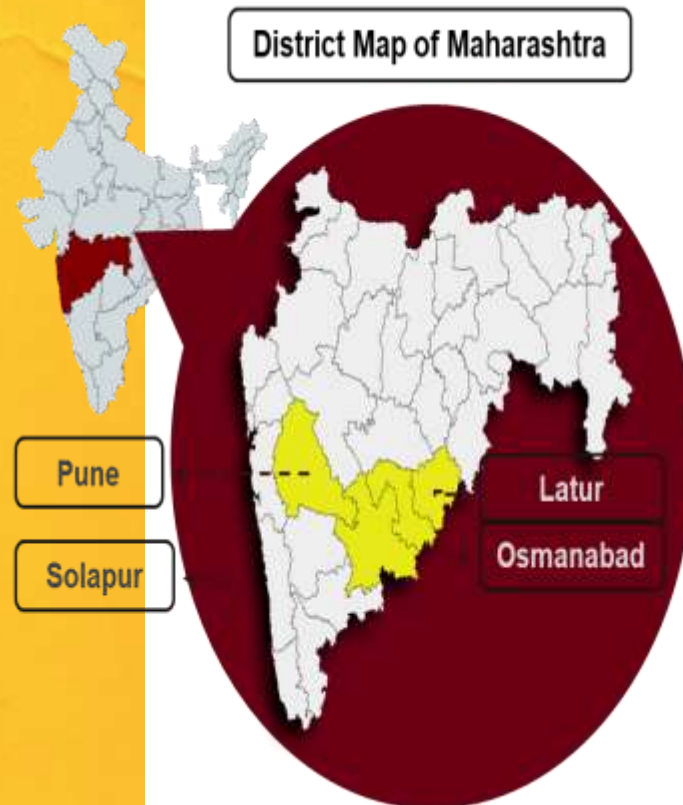


Digital Sakhi is a flagship programme of L&T Finance, which equips rural women with the skills and knowledge to confidently impart Digital Financial Literacy (DFL) training to people in their communities and nurture an ecosystem of digital financial inclusion.

### L&T Finance & AFARM



### Geographic Coverage



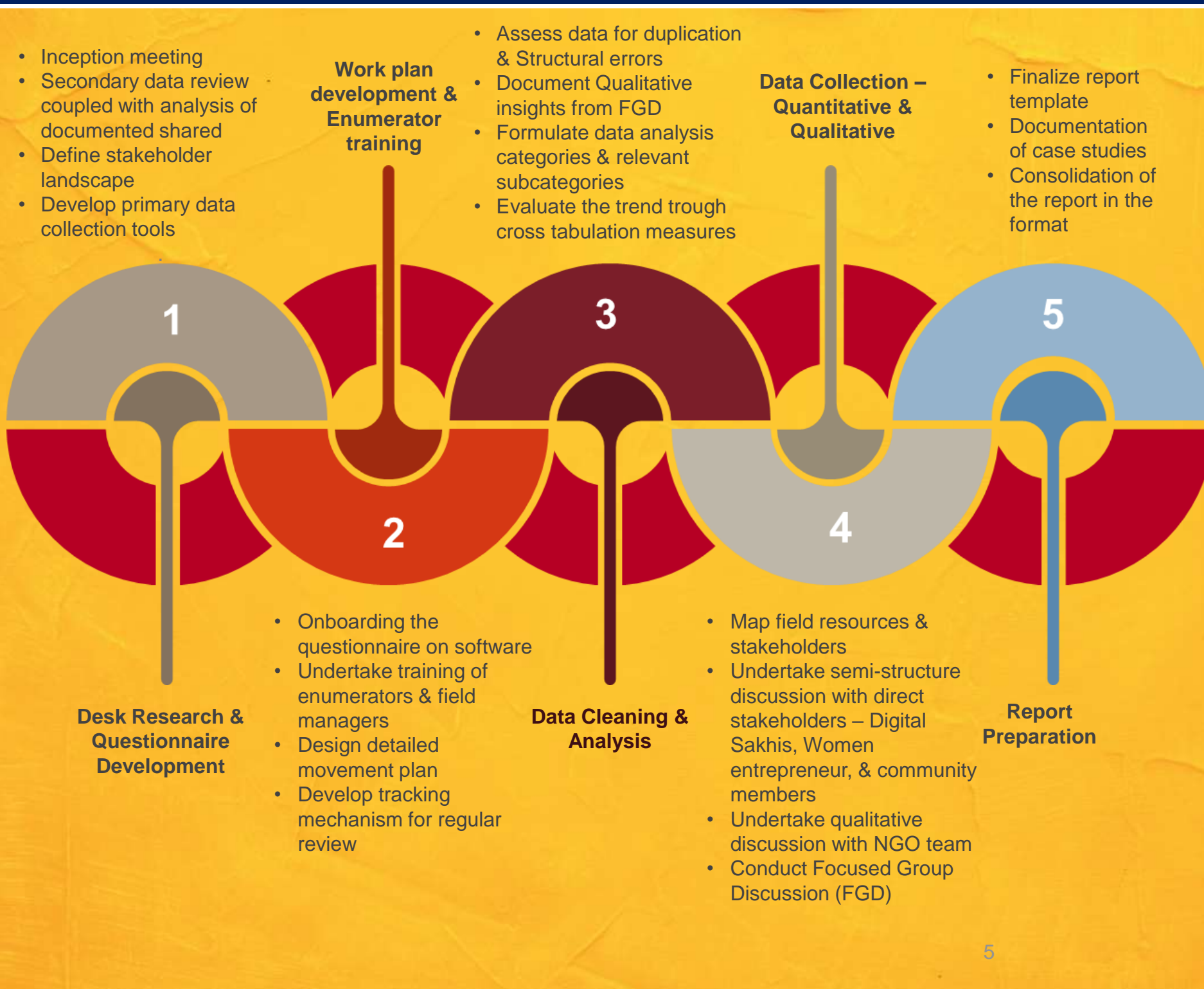
Villages part of Program Intervention – Across Pune, Solapur, Latur and Osmanabad

Betwadi, Birobavawadi, Borda, Borkheda, Borsuri, Bujrugwadi, Chikarde, Chikhali, Darganhalli, Darphal, Dhotri, Doddi, Ghoti, Gormale, Govindpur, Hawargoan, Kadethan, Kamegoan, Kardehalli, Kem, Khopodi, Korti, Mangrul, Massa (Kh), Mhalangi, Moha, Morwad, Nari, Nitur, Pargoan, Pondhwadi, Rathoda, Ravgaon, Roti, Ruibhar, Sawargaon, Shegali, Sonawadi, Tadmungli, Vadgoan, Vihal, Wagholi and Yatnal

Villages part of Impact Assessment – Across Pune, Solapur, Latur and Osmanabad

Betwadi, Borsuri, Chikhle, Dhotri, Ghoti, Gormale, Kardehali, Kem, Mangrul, Massa, Moha, Nari, Nitur, Pargaon, Ratoda, Ravgaon, Ruibhar, Sonwadi, Wagholi and Yatnal

- ❖ The interventions centers around financial literacy & digitization, enterprise development and livelihood enhancement interventions, specifically with rural women. The programme focuses on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 – Gender Equality, wherein women are identified from rural communities and trained extensively on DFL, leadership and technology.
- ❖ The intervention implementation began in 2020, the implementation partner was AFARM (Action for Agricultural Renewal in Maharashtra). Action for Agricultural Renewal in Maharashtra (AFARM) is a voluntary organization born out of an acute need for an Apex Institution to co-ordinate efforts of Civil Society Organizations in their tasks of providing water and agricultural extension services to villages in drought affected Maharashtra.
- ❖ 100 Digital Sakhis, who are extensively trained as a part of the intervention on digital financial literacy modules, reach out to the larger community to disseminate information on Digital Payments and other relevant government schemes including insurance. The intervention has another leg where 1000 women entrepreneurs (WEs) practicing Goat Rearing, Poultry, Dairy and Tailoring are chosen and up-skilled in their respective trades to yield better produce. These women are trained both in technical trades as well as enterprise development to extend holistic support. The WEs are also trained by Sakhis on digital financial literacy and additionally supported by them in case of facilitating linkages etc.



- L&T Finance engaged CRISIL Limited to undertake social impact assessment study for the Digital Sakhi Program in Pune, Osmanabad, Latur and Solapur.
- The main aim of this engagement was to assess the direct and indirect impact of the intervention on the beneficiaries and the respective households, including access to financial instruments and overall improvement in socio-economic standards
- We used a mixed-method, cross-sectional research approach for the study; the study captured beneficiaries' perspectives quantitatively, supplemented with qualitative focus group discussions to help corroborate and triangulate the findings.
- It involved assessment of direct programmatic interventions, evaluating the processes undertaken at each junction of implementation as well as the tangible and intangible impact of the intervention on the stakeholders.

#### Key Stakeholders (Across Pune, Osmanabad, Latur & Solapur)

Farmers



Women Entrepreneurs



Community Members



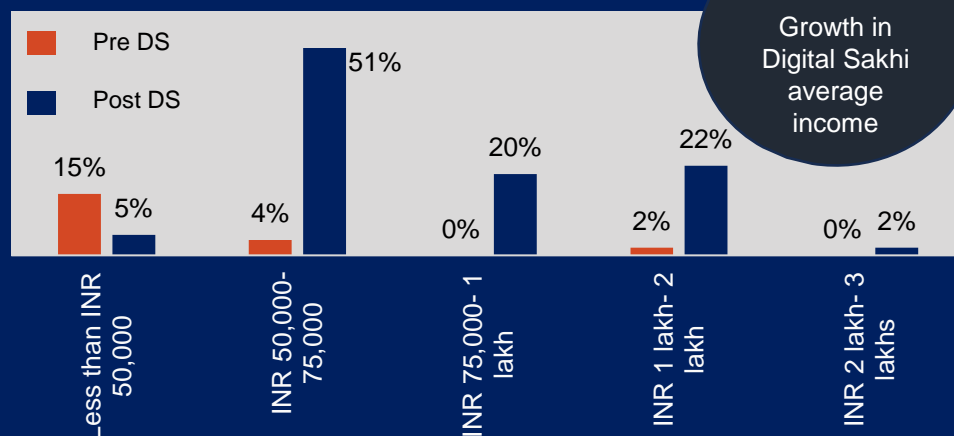
Stakeholders	Treatment Sample	Control Sample	Data Collection Tool
Digital Sakhis	55	-	Semi-Structured Interview (SSI)
WE	80	20	SSI
CM	200	67	SSI
CM	7	-	FGD
AFARM Officials	2	-	In-depth Interview
L&T Finance CSR Team	1	-	In-depth Interview

## Digital Sakhi



**57%** of the Digital Sakhis were homemakers prior to the DS and had zero income. This changed for good

### Annual income of DS Pre & Post –DS (in INR)



**248%**  
Growth in Digital Sakhi average income

- DS are now part of 91% of the household saving decisions and 89% of the expenses showcases the better inclusivity post DS
- Post DS, mode of savings are primarily banks and SHG. Saving cash at home has dropped from 25% to 9% post DS
- 60% have availed insurance
- 57% have taken a loan primarily from banks and SHGs
- 92% of DS earn return on their savings compared to 10% during pre-DS



**100%**

- Smartphone with internet
- Bank account linked to smartphones

**96%** of DS use digital modes of payment frequently

## Women Entrepreneurship



Tailoring business is the preferred choice across TG and CG

- Post DS around 51% of the women entrepreneurs earn more than INR 5,000 profit. The number pre-DS stood at 6%
- Earlier the number stood at 14%, now that stands at 40% as against 29% of CG.

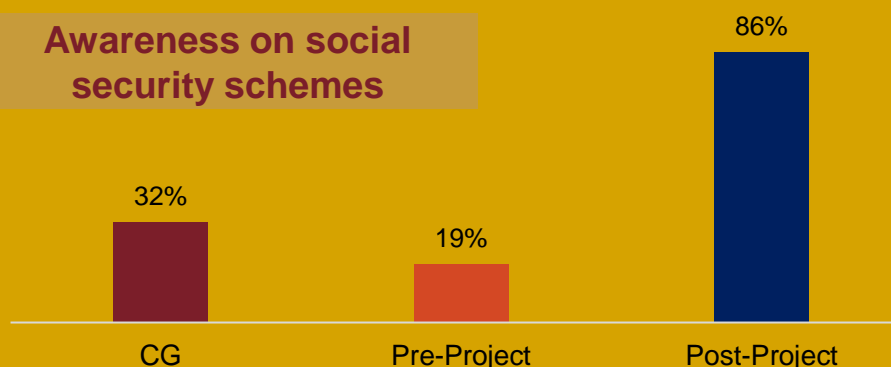
The growth in UPI transaction grew to **71%** from earlier **2%** at enterprise level

**66%** adopted new tactics in business



- Saving at home in the form of cash has dropped to 20% from earlier 37%. Majority of the saving is transferred to bank accounts and SHGs
- 62% have taken a loan primarily from banks and SHGs
- 38% have availed insurance
- 92% of the women entrepreneur manage to save every month
- 66% of the respondents believes that due to training their earning has increased in the range between 20-75%

### Awareness on social security schemes



## Community Members



- 90% of respondents from the TG indicated that their family members have joined the DS project. It highlights the project's effectiveness in not only engaging the primary participants but also drawing in broader community involvement.



- Increase in bank account ownership from 48% to 100%
- Increase in the usage of digital payment methods from 6% to 90%

- 53% of the TG have availed loan
- 97% of the respondents from TG thinks that financial knowledge through DS training helped them to great extent to get a better deal on loan
- 51% of the TG have availed insurance
- 66% of the respondents who availed insurance from the TG got advice from DS trainers/volunteers
- Post DS, Across community members women are involved in 85% of the household decisions on expenses and 73% in the saving decisions

Above  
**90%**  
Post-DS TG

**Awareness and enrollment on social security schemes**



# Digital Sakhi



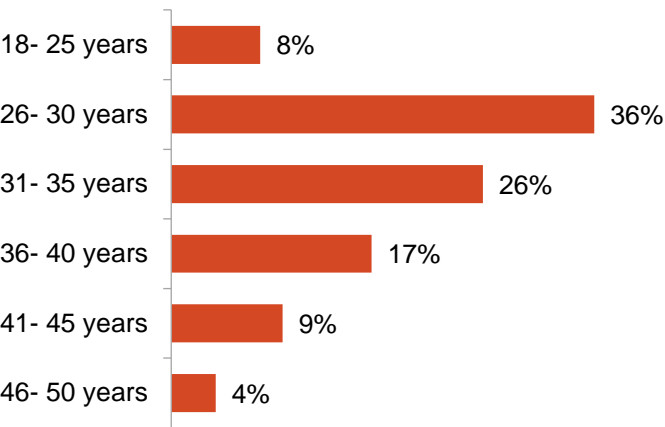


Parameters	Baseline (2018)	Assessment (2023)
Adoption of digital payment modes	4%	96%
Knowledge of government schemes	42.8%	89%
Contribution to family income	15%	39%
Sustainability of livelihood	72.8%	98% (19% run Digital Seva Kendra)
Better inclusion in family decision making financial decisions	31% As a family together	35% As a family together

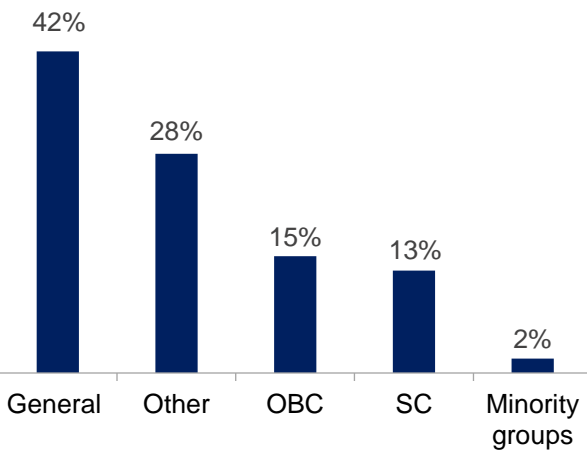




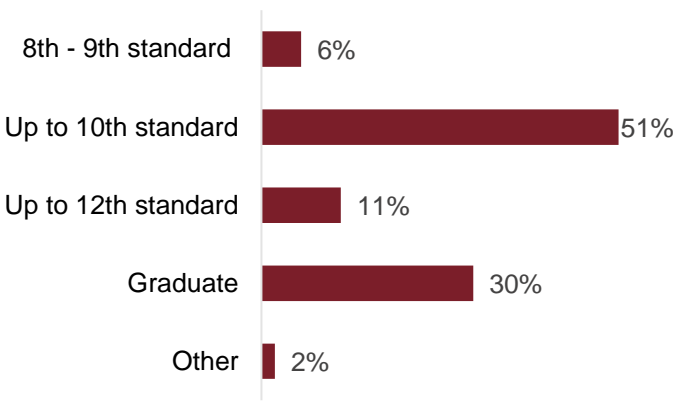
Respondent Age group



Respondent Social Category



Education Levels



Top 3 Primary Source of Income of HH



Agriculture  
(55%)

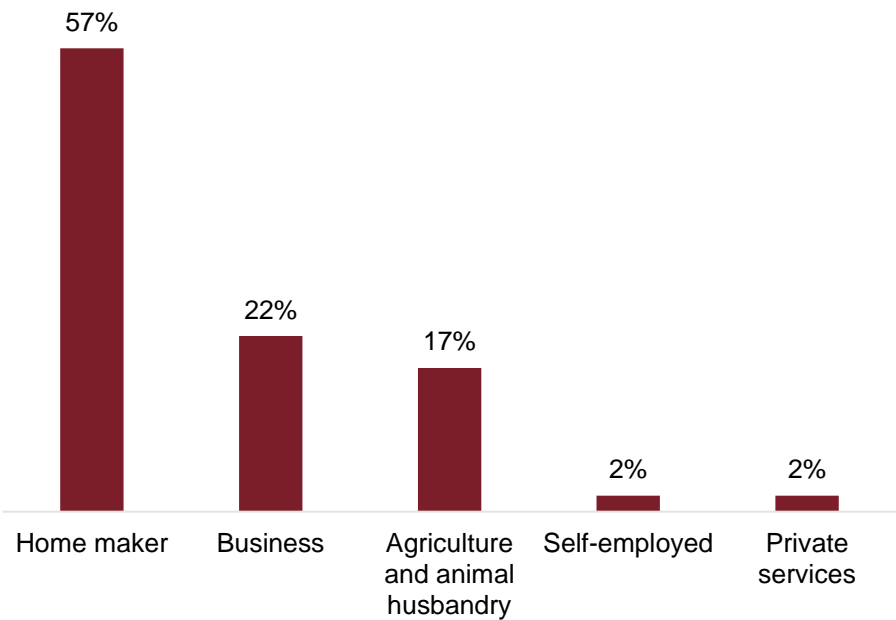


Business  
(25%)



Salaried job  
(13%)

Occupation of Digital Sakhi prior to the intervention



Prior to the Digital Sakhi intervention, the majority of women were homemakers and the top two reasons for not doing a job were low confidence (39%) and lack of skills (25%).

***“My family wanted me to engage in home-based work. However, I lacked confidence and did not know where to start. The training has been instrumental in addressing both the concerns.”-***

**Saraswati Bapu Kadam**  
**Digital Sakhi, Osmanabad**

The women found it challenging to imagine their earning potential, given the prevailing societal expectations of prioritizing family needs, and particularly the ingrained gender roles woven into the community's social structure

6% of the respondents earned less than INR 0.50 lakh

72% of the respondents earned INR 0.50 - 1 lakh

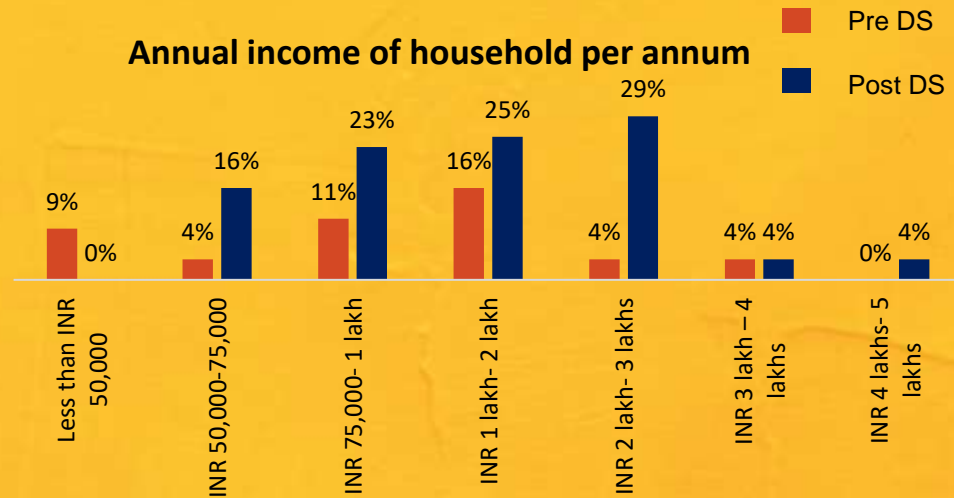
22% of the respondents earned INR 1 - 2 lakh

Household and Asset Profile

- Digital Sakhi households had an even gender distribution, with an average family size of three male members and three female members.
- Digital Sakhis primarily saw growth in mobile phones with internet, LPG stove, bicycle and two wheeler and mixer post-intervention. The above assets are time savers and help the respondents improve their productivity.



Annual income of household per annum



- All respondents (100%) received tablets during their training, indicating that the program successfully equipped participants with the necessary digital tools.



## Insurance

### Insurance availed

Pre intervention: **33%** Post intervention: **60%**

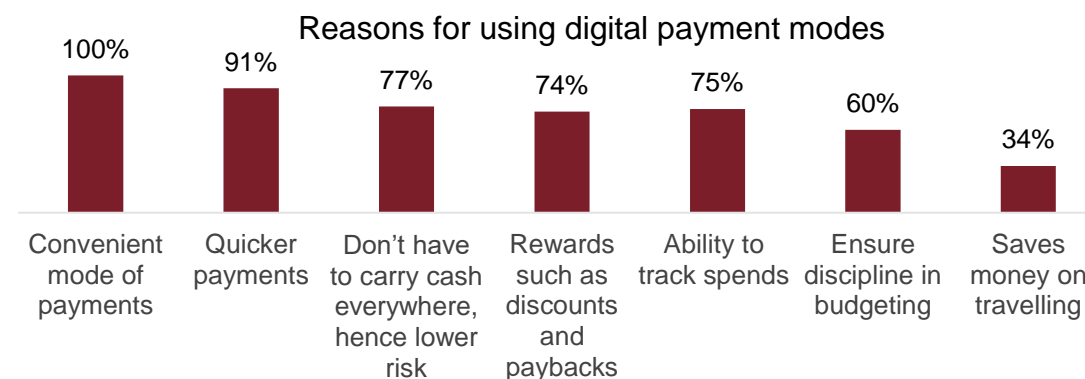
- 32% of those insured were previously unaware of insurance, emphasizing the program's role in educating about critical financial protection measures
- Most respondents (50%) were advised to take insurance by DS Trainers/Volunteers. The crucial role of DS underlines the importance of community-based education and guidance

## Loans

Pre intervention: **8%** Post intervention: **57%**

- Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that DS training had a significant positive impact on their ability to secure better loan deals, reinforcing the value of financial literacy programs

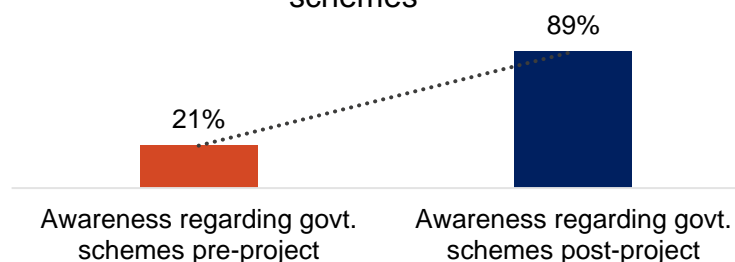
## Digital Payment Methods



- Bank accounts of **100%** of respondents are connected with smartphones
- **~57%** of the respondents have more than one bank accounts
- Among the payment methods, respondent's top 3 preferences are debit cards (76%), mobile banking (64%) and UPI payments (48%)

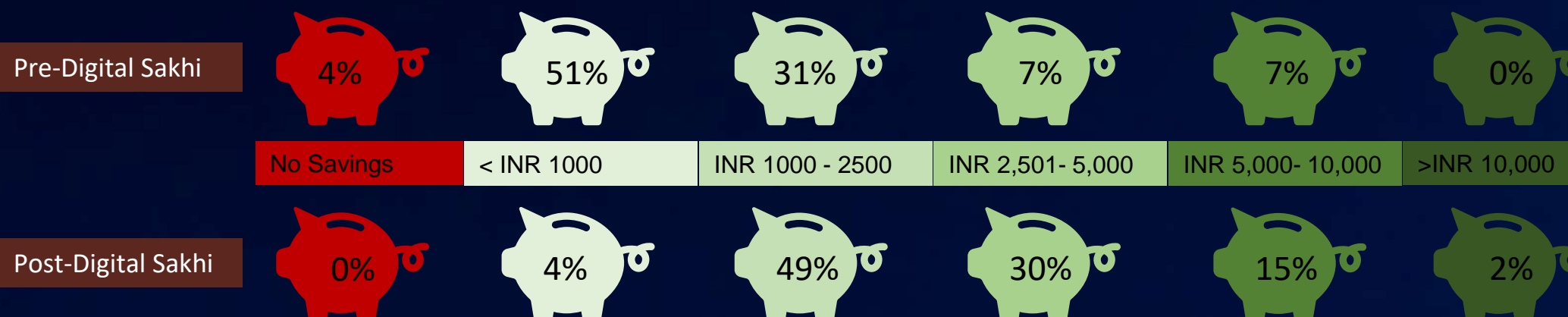
## Social security schemes

### Awareness regarding social security schemes



- The rise from 21% to 89% post intervention indicates the program's effectiveness in educating participants about the existence of such schemes
- 100% respondents said that the program played a major role in availing the benefits

## Household (HH) Level Savings: Pre-Post Analysis



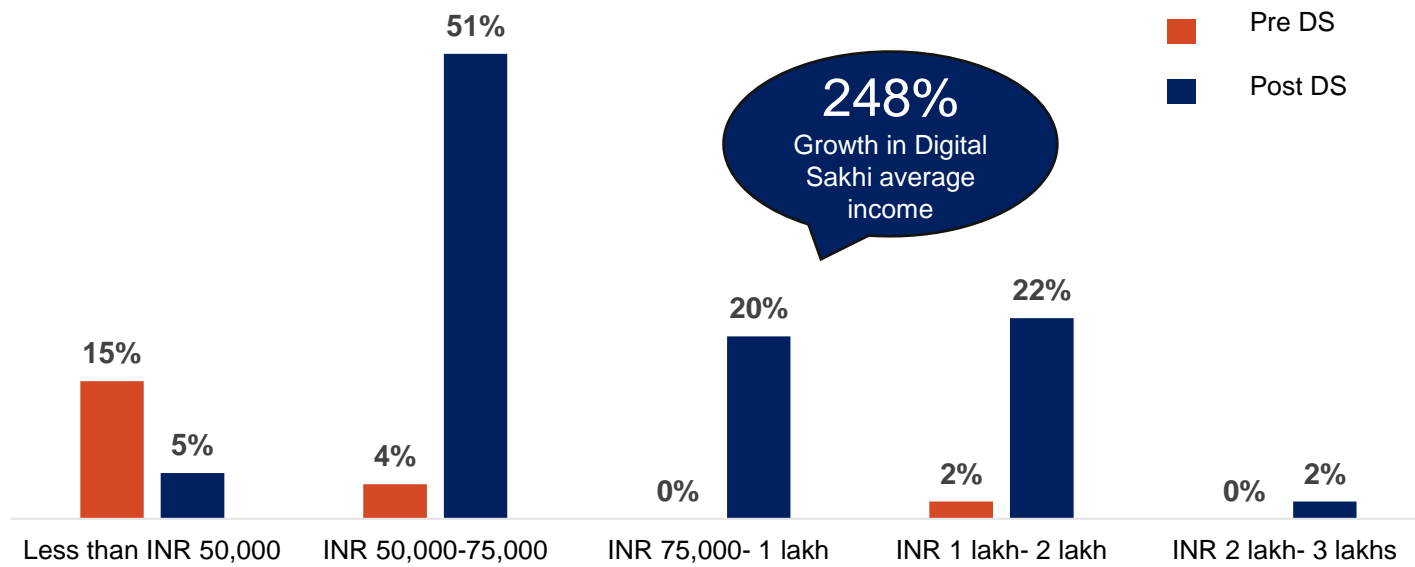
The data indicates a notable shift, the percentage of households with no savings has reached zero, while simultaneously, **96%** of households now manage to save more than **INR 1,000** per month. The average monthly savings have increased from INR 1,369 to **INR 3,490**.

- Around 98% of respondents save monthly, primarily to fund children's education, acquire vehicle for personal use, cover daughters' marriages, buy gold, and agricultural assets.
- Before the intervention, few preferred saving in banks, but digital literacy training increased confidence in this method. Now, 87% save in banks, up from 19%, while storing cash at home dropped from 25% to 9%. All respondents now earn interest on their savings post-program.
- Remarkably, Self Help Groups (SHGs) have emerged as a significant contributor to this trend, with their percentage increasing from a mere 6% to 62% following the intervention.



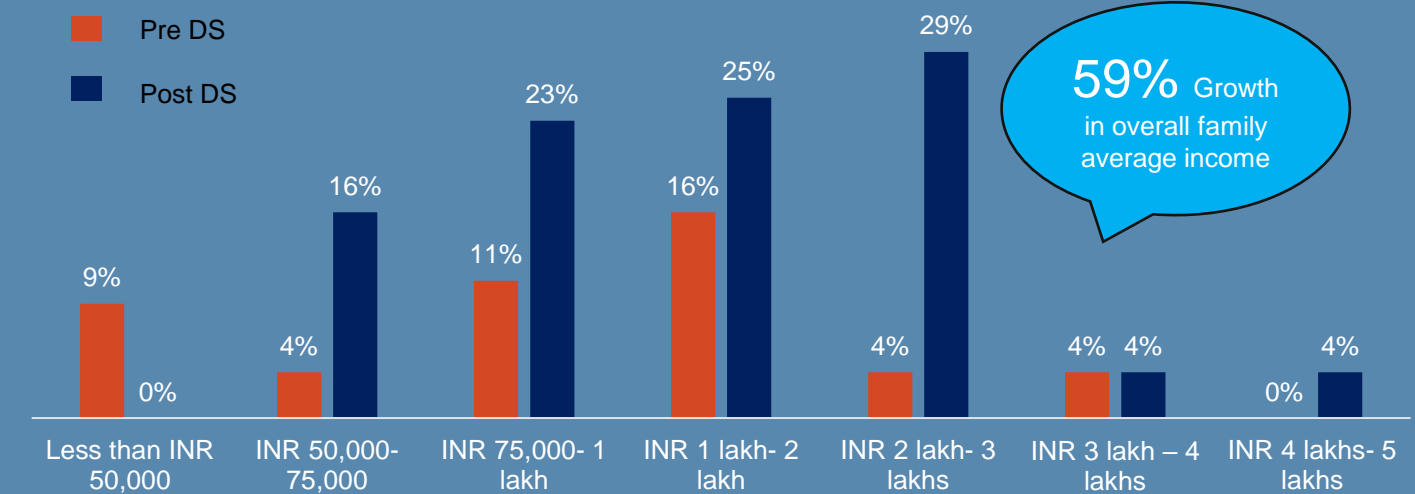


## Annual income of Digital Sakhis Pre & Post Project (in INR)



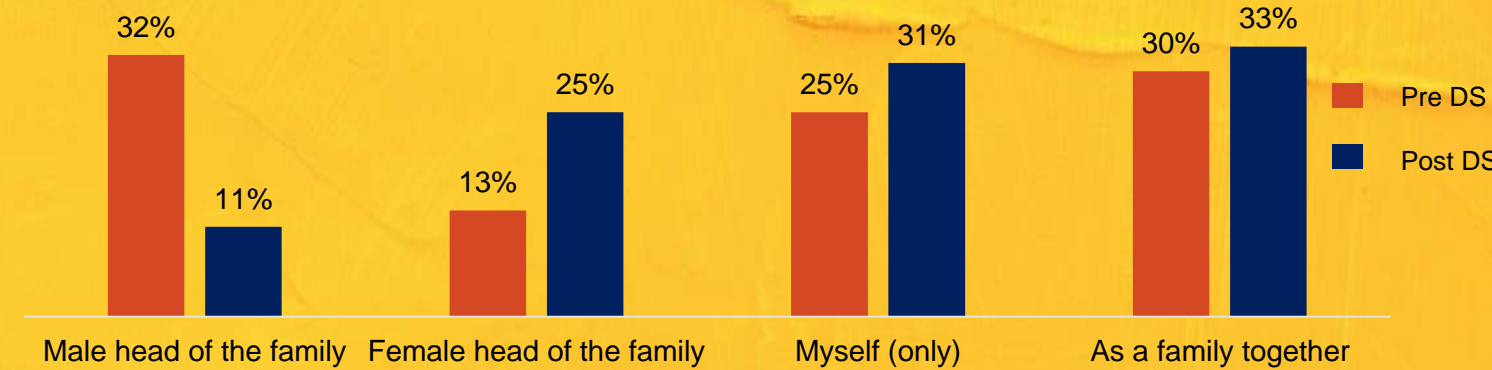
➤ There was a significant decrease in the % share of women earning less than INR 50,000 from 15% to 5% post training. Whereas, in the income brackets from INR 50,000 onwards, number of DS has increased, It proves the fact that income bracket has risen for majority of DS in rural areas.

## Annual income of Digital Sakhis Pre & Post Project (in INR)

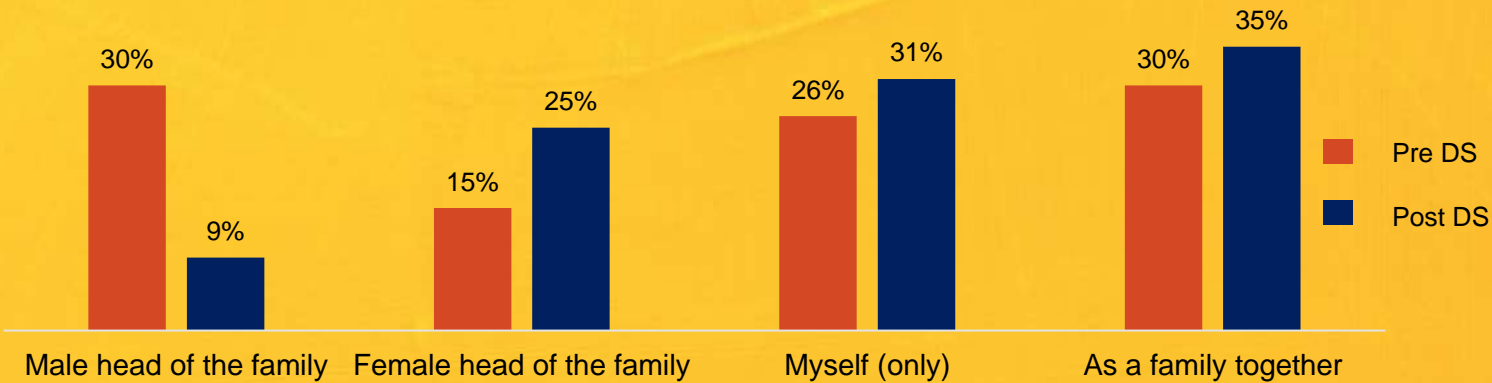


## Evaluating the overall change in decision making pattern among the respondents

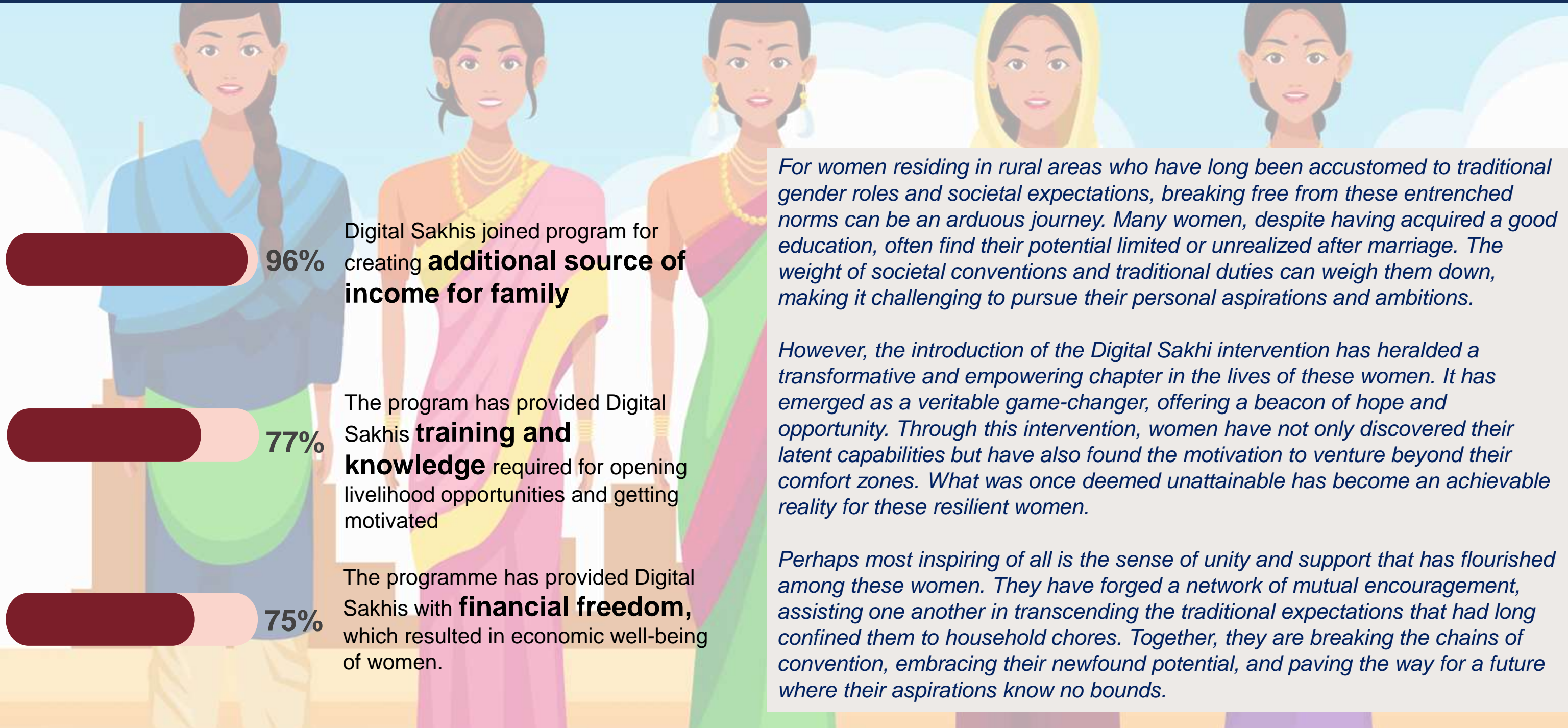
### Decision making related to expenses



### Decision making related to saving



- Household-level decision-making is undergoing a shift toward greater inclusivity. Before the program, approximately 30% of household expenditure decisions were collectively made by the family; this figure now stands at 33%.
- The program boosted the confidence of Digital Sakhi participants, gaining trust from their families in decision-making, especially regarding savings. Family decisions in this context increased from 30% to 35%.
- About 91% of Digital Sakhi individuals create household budgets, but for the rest, maintaining this practice is challenging due to limited family involvement.



*For women residing in rural areas who have long been accustomed to traditional gender roles and societal expectations, breaking free from these entrenched norms can be an arduous journey. Many women, despite having acquired a good education, often find their potential limited or unrealized after marriage. The weight of societal conventions and traditional duties can weigh them down, making it challenging to pursue their personal aspirations and ambitions.*

*However, the introduction of the Digital Sakhi intervention has heralded a transformative and empowering chapter in the lives of these women. It has emerged as a veritable game-changer, offering a beacon of hope and opportunity. Through this intervention, women have not only discovered their latent capabilities but have also found the motivation to venture beyond their comfort zones. What was once deemed unattainable has become an achievable reality for these resilient women.*

*Perhaps most inspiring of all is the sense of unity and support that has flourished among these women. They have forged a network of mutual encouragement, assisting one another in transcending the traditional expectations that had long confined them to household chores. Together, they are breaking the chains of convention, embracing their newfound potential, and paving the way for a future where their aspirations know no bounds.*



A woman is standing behind a glass display case in a jewelry shop. She is wearing a dark t-shirt and a patterned shawl. The display case is filled with various jewelry items, including necklaces and earrings. Behind her are shelves filled with more jewelry and boxes. The entire image has a warm, yellowish-orange tint.

# Women Entrepreneurship



Parameters	TG - Baseline (2018)	TG - Assessment (2023)
Adoption of digital payment modes	15%	100%
Participation in financial decision making	26% As a family together	40% As a family together
Household saving (Less than INR 1,000 per month)	49%	7%
Awareness on access to formal sources of financial services	41%	100%
Awareness of social schemes	Below 10%	86%



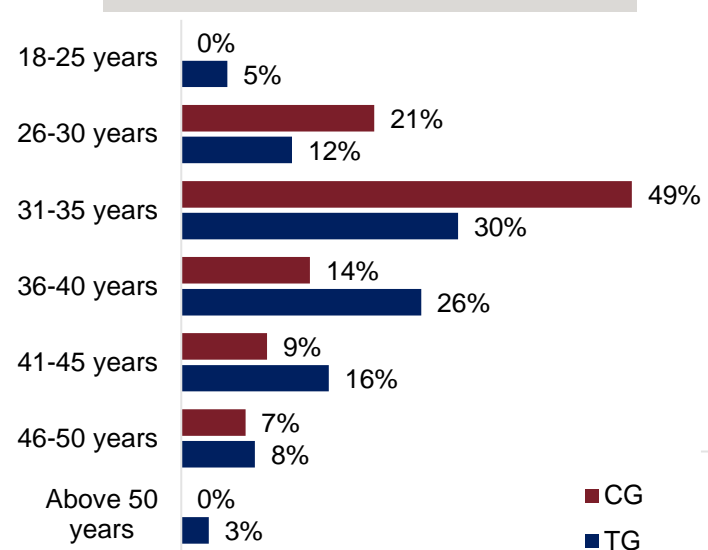


## Gender Distribution

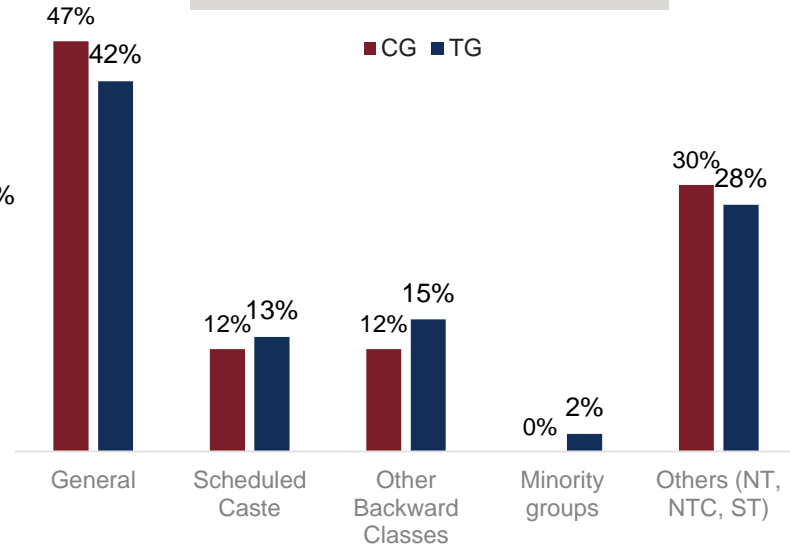


100% women respondents

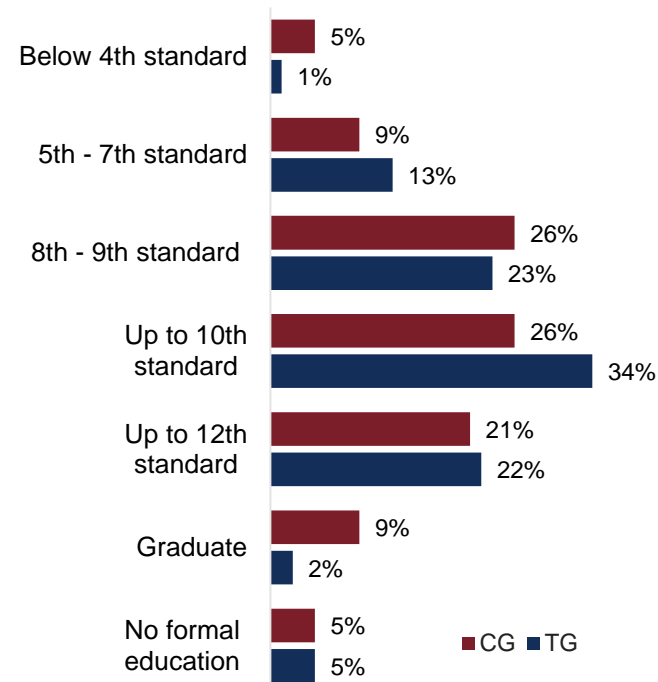
## Respondent Age group



## Respondent Social Category



## Education Levels

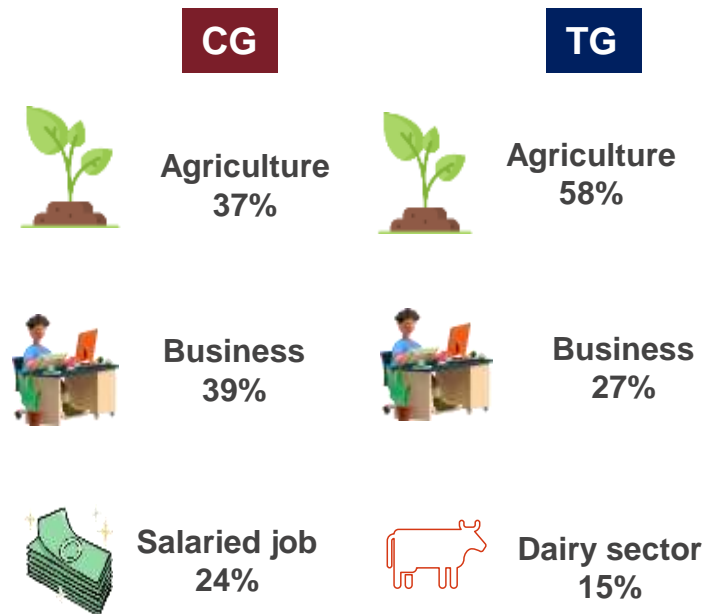


Prior to the Digital Sakhi intervention, the majority of women were homemakers. Post intervention, there has been a notable enhancement in the average household income.

***"The challenge faced by women was deeply rooted in the prevailing societal norms and expectations that had been woven into the fabric of their community's social structure.."***

The women encountered difficulty envisioning their income-generating capabilities, influenced by entrenched societal norms that emphasized meeting family needs and adhering to traditional gender roles within the community's social framework.

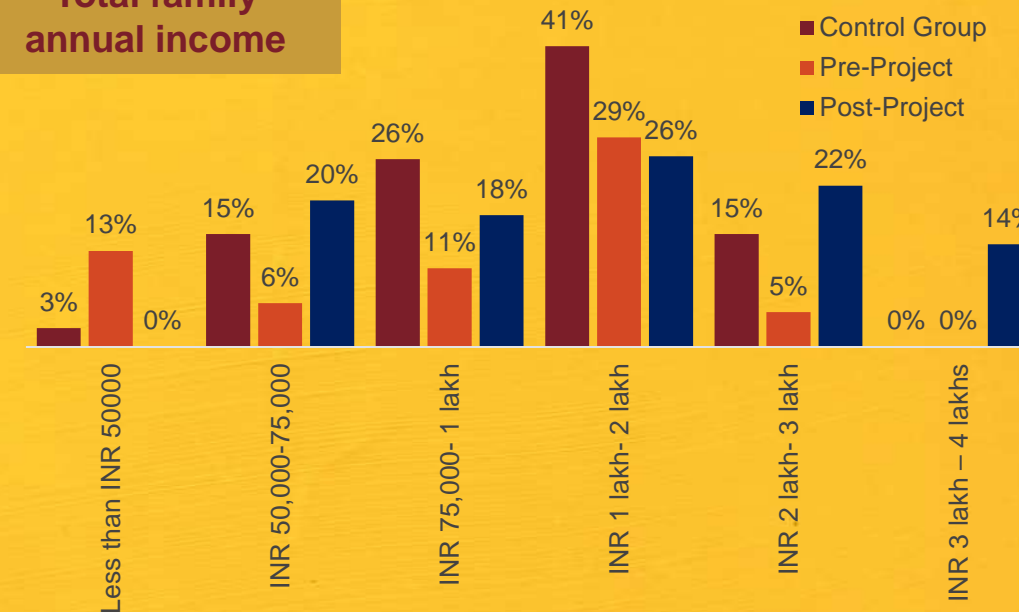
## Top 3 Primary Source of Income of HH



## Household and Asset Profile

- The treatment group (TG) households had an **even gender distribution**, with an average family size of two male members and three female members.
- The TG also saw growth in smart phone with internet, LPG stove, bicycle, and two-wheeler post intervention. The above assets are time savers and help the beneficiaries improve their productivity.
- The majority of TG primarily depended on agriculture (58%) and sole dependency on the occupation was a concern. The intervention has been successful in reducing the sole dependency to certain extent

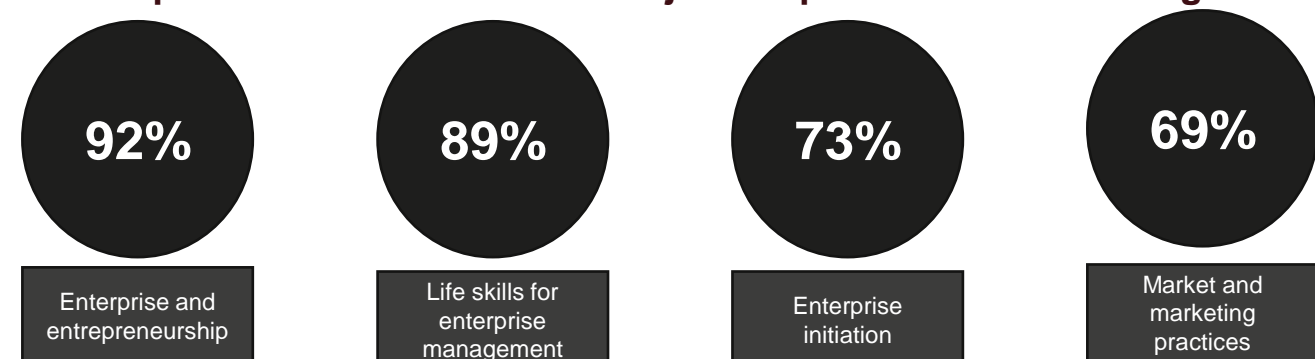
## Total family annual income



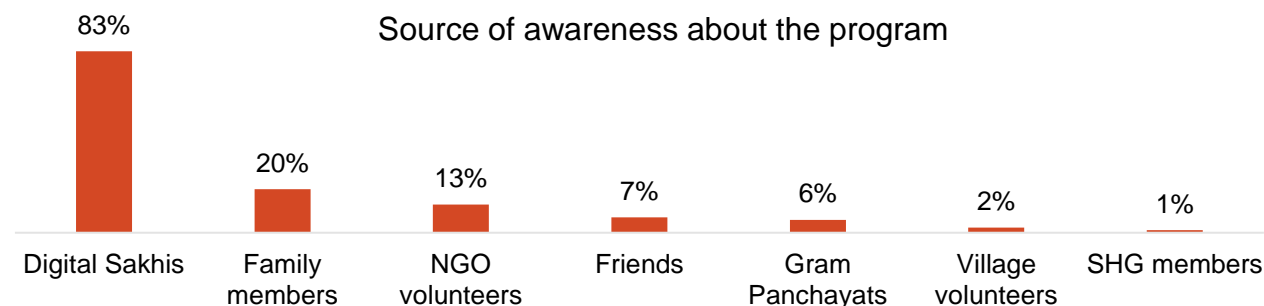
- The benefits derived from exposure visits, such as knowledge enhancement (100%), best practices guidance (87%), and networking (53%), correspond to the reasons for joining the program, such as to learn new business skills (99%), and networking (56%). Exposure visits seem to have effectively fulfill these requirements of WE.



## The respondents mentioned four major components of the training

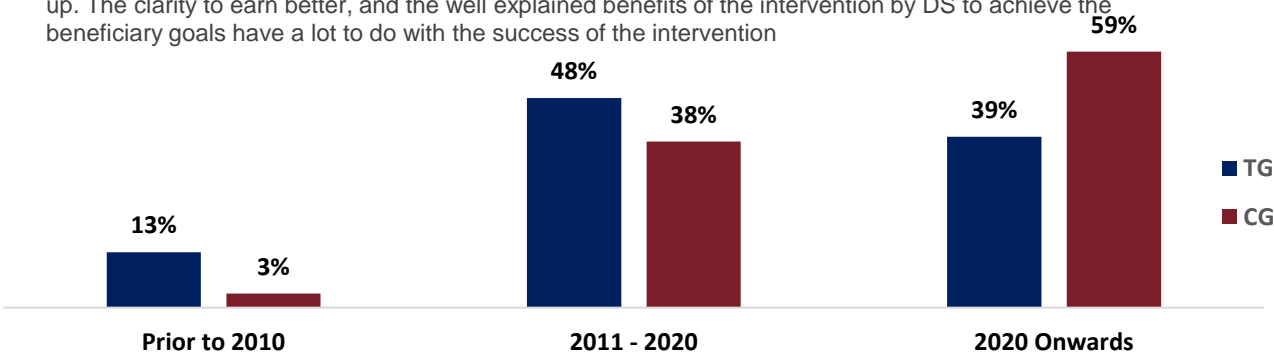


### Source of awareness about the program



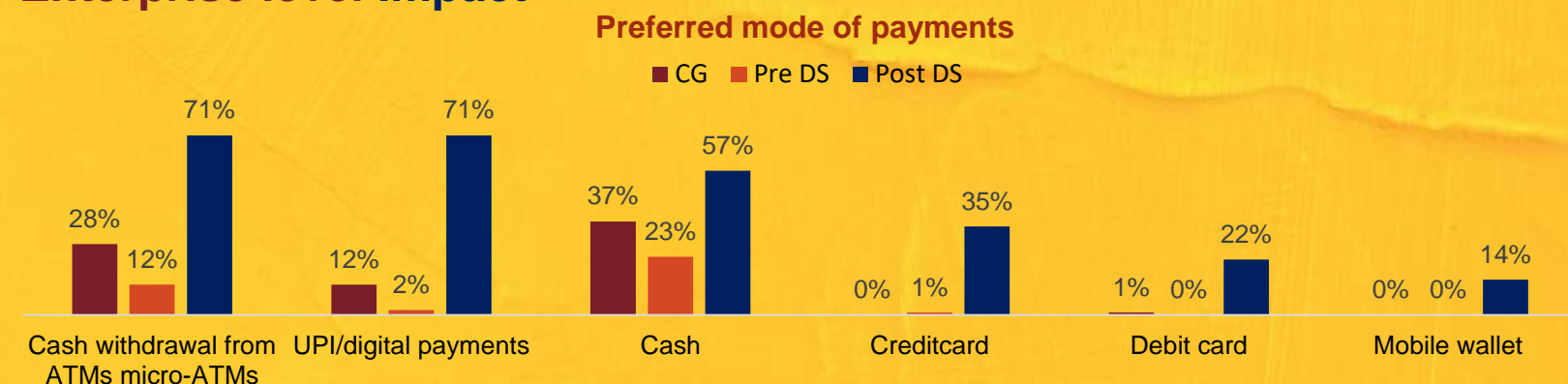
### Age of enterprise

This demonstrates the need & demand of the program for women entrepreneurs irrespective of the age of set up. The clarity to earn better, and the well explained benefits of the intervention by DS to achieve the beneficiary goals have a lot to do with the success of the intervention



The program's attractiveness is driven by various factors that align with the women's aspirations and needs. Networking opportunities are a key driver, with 55% of women indicating it as a reason to join. This resonates with the need for community support, particularly in addressing challenges such as limited networking and mentorship. Additionally, the importance of hand-holding support and guidance is evident, with 56% of women seeking this from the program. The emphasis on learning new business skills, identified by 97% of women, reinforces the project's role in capacity-building and skill enhancement, addressing the challenge of poor business knowledge.

## Enterprise level Impact

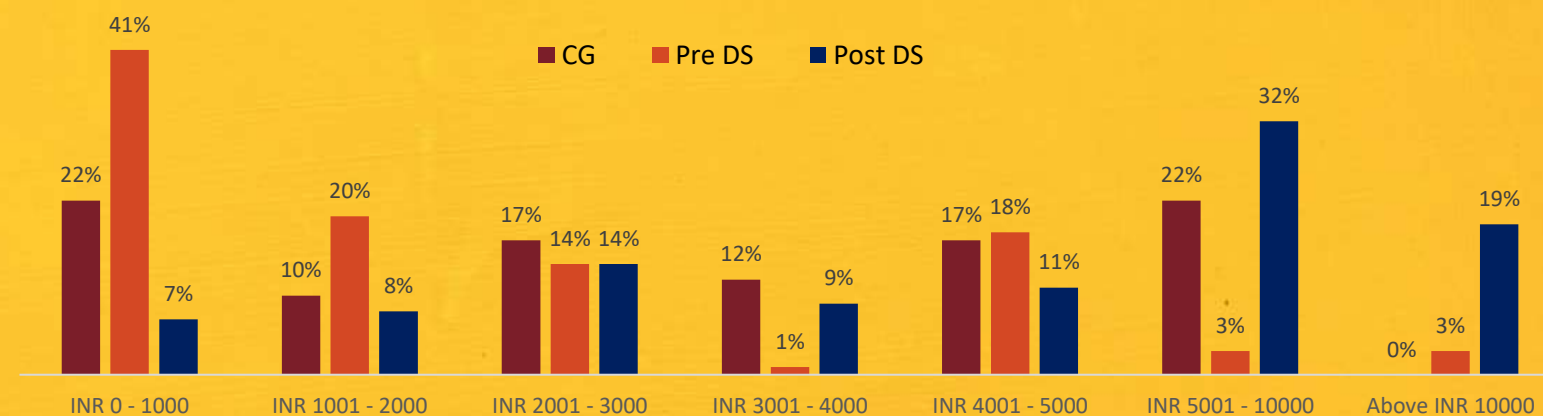


- More respondents from post-project (57%) prefer cash payments over the CG(37%), but it's not the primary choice for the target group.
- The TG shows an increased inclination towards digital modes like UPI payments (71%) which was just 2% before the project and 12 % for CG, proving the impact of program in promoting digital transactions

## Adoption of digital transactions

- CG & TG, both groups consider convenience and quicker payments as important factors.
- 81% respondents from the TG actively educate their staff about digital payment methods, compared to 30% of the respondents from CG

### Contribution to business: Profit per month

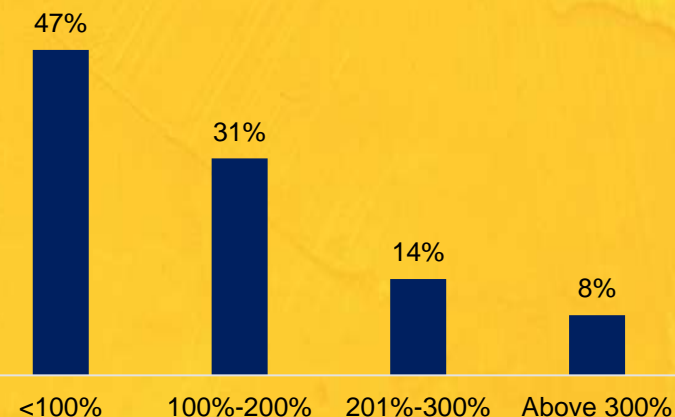


- Post-Project, there is a noticeable increase in the percentage of beneficiaries earning higher monthly incomes, with a significant shift from the lower income categories to the higher ones.
- The majority of beneficiaries attribute a significant percentage of their increased income to the training received, with 52% reporting more than 68% increase, highlighting the substantial impact of the Digital Sakhi Project on their income generation capabilities.





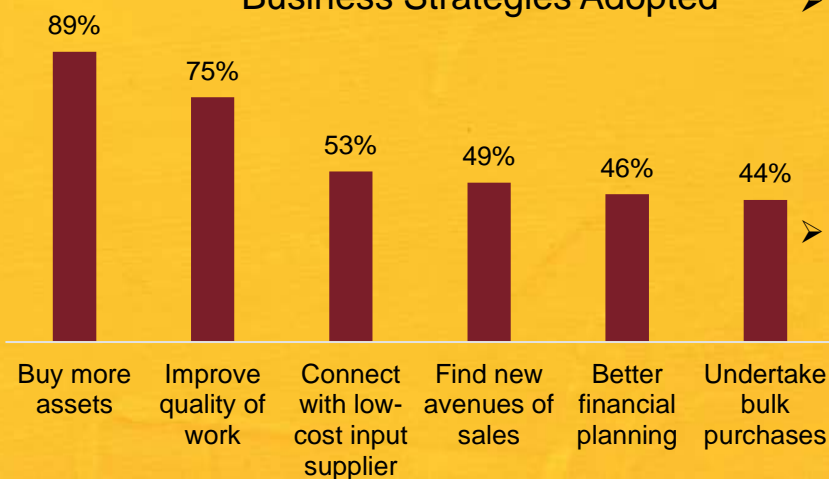
Customer Base Growth



- The intervention was successful in conveying the importance of customer base growth and its impact on revenue and profits
- From the quantitative analysis, we have observed that there is a sharp **(More than 100%)** increase in the customer base of the respondents especially in the case of business and animal husbandry

- Out of the sampled beneficiaries, 36% initially had zero pre-project revenue, which then experienced a significant increase post-project
- The growth in businesses are clear outcomes of the training imparted to the women entrepreneurs on developing network and segment knowledge
- The WE training had a substantial impact on beneficiaries' businesses, with the majority attributing their success to improved knowledge of business planning.

Business Strategies Adopted



- Buying more assets has been a key strategy deployed by most of the beneficiaries and it has worked and the same can be seen in increase in customer base and revenue
- The other business strategies adopted by the women entrepreneurs showcases their focus on improving quality of work

## Case: Impact of intervention on women entrepreneurs

### Tailoring – The most preferred business with wide acceptance due to its flexibility and no dependence

- The training on new designs which wasn't known to women entrepreneurs earlier has added value and confidence in their own work. They have been able to improve the quality of product and also diversify their offerings has acted as an additional pill factor for new and existing customer base.
- Few of them has now started purchasing their raw material such as thread, button, laces etc., from the wholesale market which has helped them reduce their cost to a larger extent. Along with tailoring, a few of the respondents have also started their own cloth and retail shop that sell sari, dresses, ancillary products such as cosmetics as well as tailoring related materials, thereby catering to the larger value chain and more footfalls



Customer satisfaction



Increase in product quality



Improved product diversification



Better product pricing



### Goat Farming/Animal Husbandry/Poultry

- The knowledge of feed, timely vaccination, and proper selling strategies during peak season has led to better realizations for this segment of businesswomen
- The increase in production was the result of training provided under the programme about feeding and regular vaccination of the animals.
- Further, the knowledge about checking the weight and the location of the exact market of sale helped the women entrepreneurs to obtain a better bargaining position and price.
- Knowledge on improved health management and proper care & maintenance of animals further helped in increasing the quality of the milk and meat.
- The better realization post intervention has proved vital in developing confidence of expanding and growing business size

### Grocery Store

- Grocery stores are generally at the front of the women entrepreneurs' house and give the flexibility to manage business and household chores at the same time
- As the store responsibilities are shared among family members, it becomes convenient to manage the business.
- The intervention has made the stores more digitally savvy accepting payments through various modes of payments, this makes them more customer-friendly leading to improved footfalls





- Investment in enterprise: TG has a higher proportion of respondents in the INR 51,000 - 100,000 range (0% in CG & 14% in TG) and above 1 lakh range (0% in CG & 3% in TG) compared to the CG.
- Most beneficiaries required physical space as an investment to set up their businesses, followed by inventory and raw materials. Showcasing the intent to start a professional brick and mortar set up with dedicated working hours
- 66% of the respondents from TG adopted new tactics in business. Among those, most beneficiaries focused on improving the quality of their work (75%).
- Many also sought to connect with buying more asset (89%) and connecting with low-cost supplier (53%), indicating a commitment to business growth and efficiency

## Loans

➤ Loan availed - TG: **62%** CG: **51%**

### ➤ *Impact of intervention in facilitating access to loans for beneficiaries*

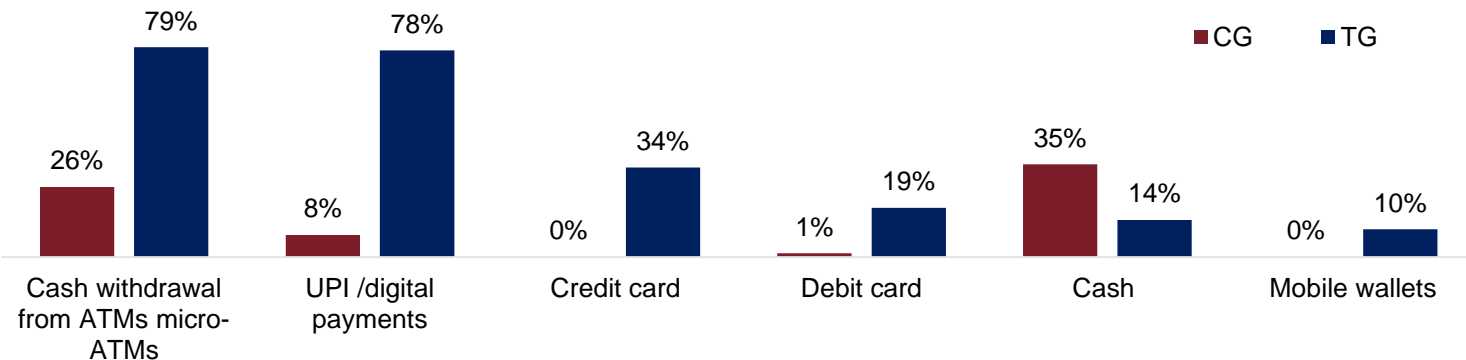
- Most beneficiaries (77%) who took loans in the TG did so after participating in the WE trainings, suggesting that the trainings may have increased their knowledge and empowered them in decision to seek loans.
- The TG demonstrated more diversified sources of loans, including SHGs (50%) and MFIs (21%), suggesting that the program empowered participants to explore different options.
- Post-project, a significant percentage of beneficiaries opted for loans from formal sources (banks and SHGs) due to lower interest rates. This indicates improved financial decision-making influenced by the trainings.
- 84% received financial knowledge on loans in WE training.
- 98% of respondents believe that the financial knowledge they acquired through the training positively influenced their ability to secure better loan deals.

## Insurance

- The data indicates that the DS program has been successful in raising awareness about insurance products, increasing insurance uptake, and fostering a strong belief in the importance of insurance among beneficiaries. Life insurance appears to be particularly crucial for financial protection, and beneficiaries' express intentions to continue investing in various insurance types in the future, indicating a positive impact on their financial risk management.
- In TG, 38% have taken an insurance, among which 75% were aware before DS program. In CG, 58% have taken an insurance.
- Post-project, there is a significant increase in the uptake of various insurance types, with life insurance and accident insurance being the most prominent choices among beneficiaries.
- DS Trainers/Volunteers play a significant role in advising beneficiaries to take insurance policies, indicating the effectiveness of the DS program in spreading awareness and facilitating insurance enrollment.

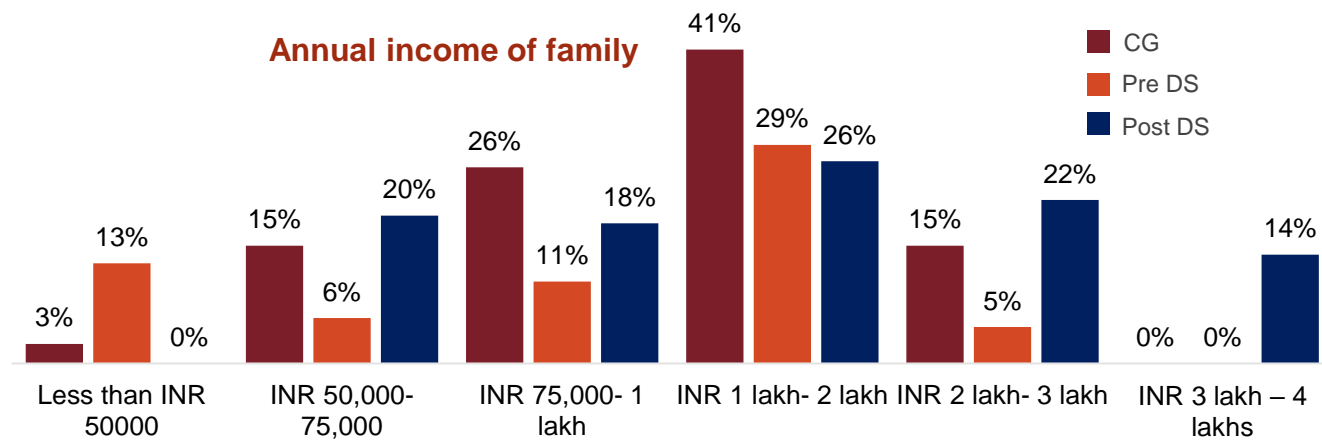


## Preferred mode of payment



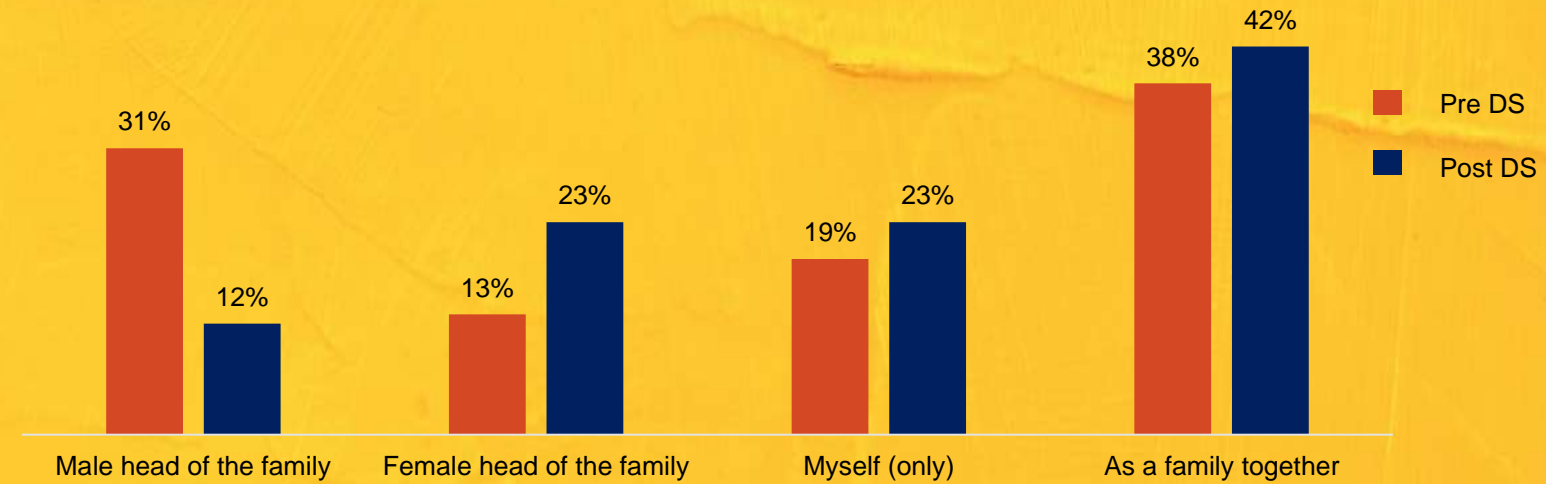
- The TG shows a more significant shift towards UPI/digital payments (78%) and a higher usage of debit & credit cards (53%) compared to the control group.
- The TG is more likely to use digital modes of payment always (90%) compared to the CG (51%)
- The CG exhibits a higher percentage of households that never use digital modes of payment (69%), while the TG has a lower percentage (10%) in this category
- The TG shows significantly higher confidence levels (95%) in using digital modes of payment within the household compared to the CG (65%), reflecting the effectiveness of the Digital Sakhi Project in boosting confidence

## Annual income of family

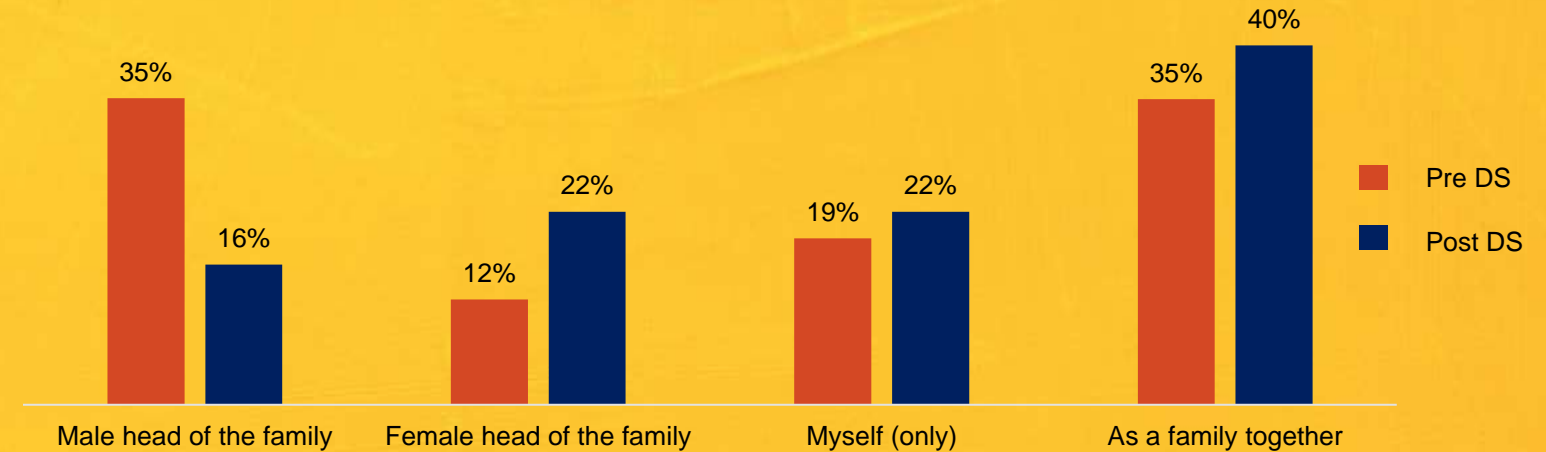


- All respondents from the treatment group stated that their businesses contribute a lot to support household expenses.
- Beneficiaries attribute increased income to various factors, with improving the buying more assets (89%) being the most cited reason, followed by improving quality of work (75%), connecting with low-cost input suppliers (53%).

## HH Decision Making for utilization for savings: Pre- Post project Analysis



## HH Decision Making in case of expenses made: Pre- Post Project Analysis



- After the completion of the project, a distinct transformation has taken place in the dynamics of decision-making regarding household expenditures and savings.
- This transformation is marked by a substantial reduction in the percentage of decisions exclusively made by the male head of the family, accompanied by a notable increase in decisions made collaboratively by the family members or by the beneficiaries themselves.
- This shift in decision-making dynamics signifies a more equitable distribution of influence within the household, promoting greater inclusivity and financial participation among all family members.

# Community Members



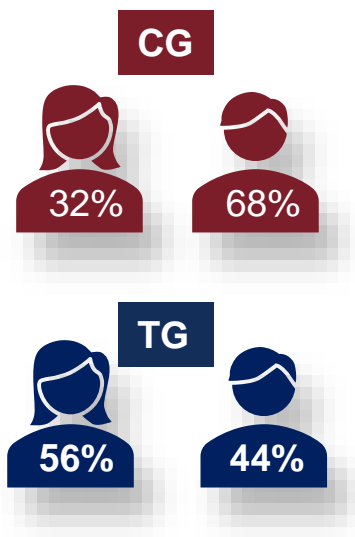




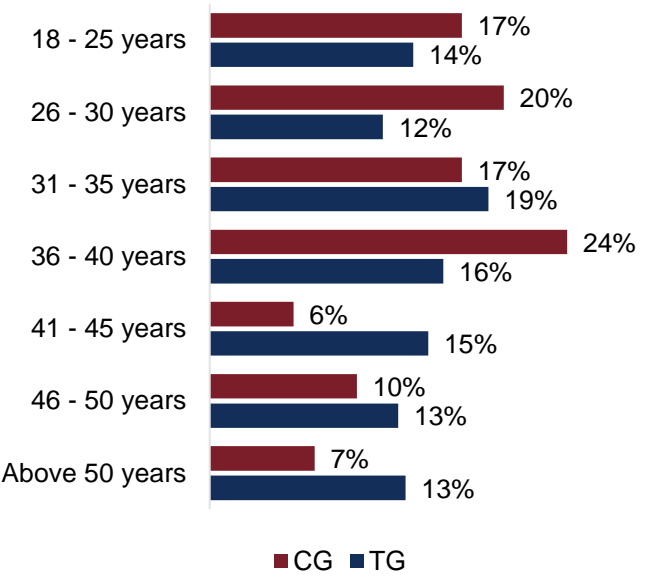
- ❖ The project's success in increasing bank account ownership from 48% to 100% highlights a significant accomplishment in achieving financial inclusion.
- ❖ The remarkable increase in smartphone-linked bank accounts from 39% to 95%
- ❖ The number of respondents aware of digital modes of payment has moved up to 93% compared to 8% pre-intervention
- ❖ UPI saw the fastest growth from 19% to 92% and was the one of the most used digital mode of payment by the community members
- ❖ The remarkable increase in savings deposited in banks from 11% to 68% and SHGs from just 2% to 58% indicates a significant shift towards formal financial institutions
- ❖ Around 53% of the TG have taken loan post the intervention as against 29% of the CG respondents
- ❖ Social security scheme awareness improved from 20.5% to 92% among community members and the same can be attributed to efforts put in by the digital sakhi's through their door to door visits and group meetings
- ❖ The project's awareness campaigns are highly effective, with 98% of participants being aware of the conducted camps, underscoring the success of its communication strategies



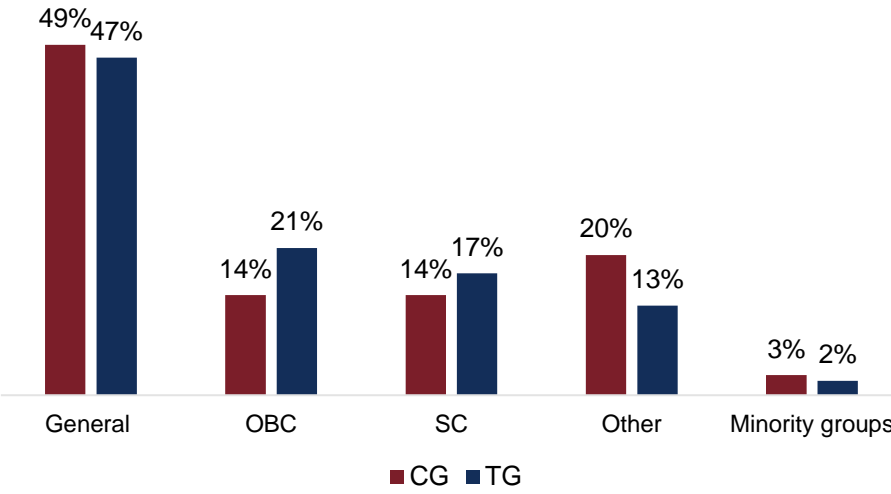
Gender Distribution



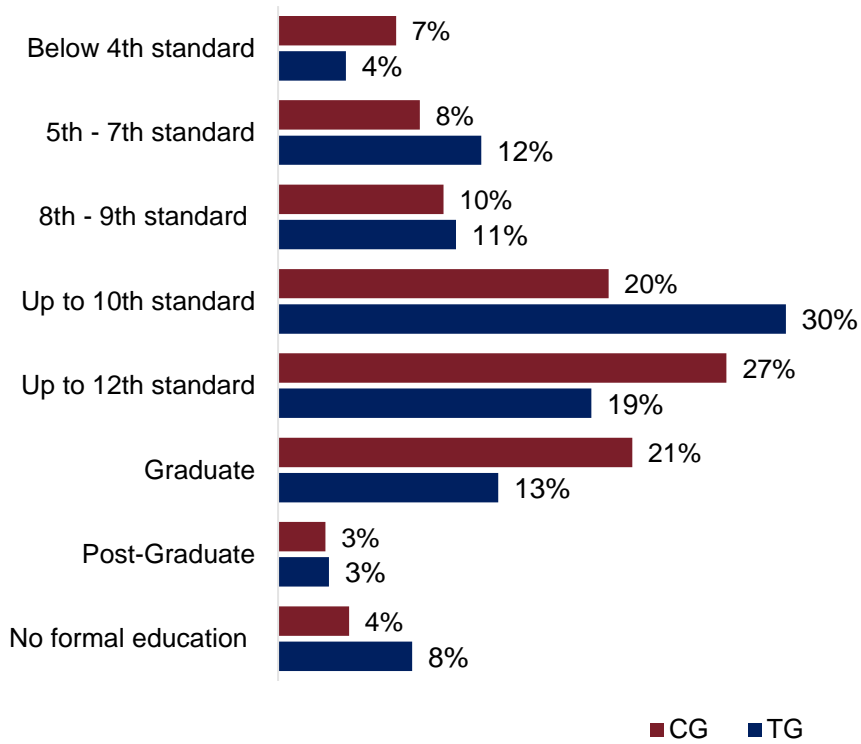
Respondent Age group



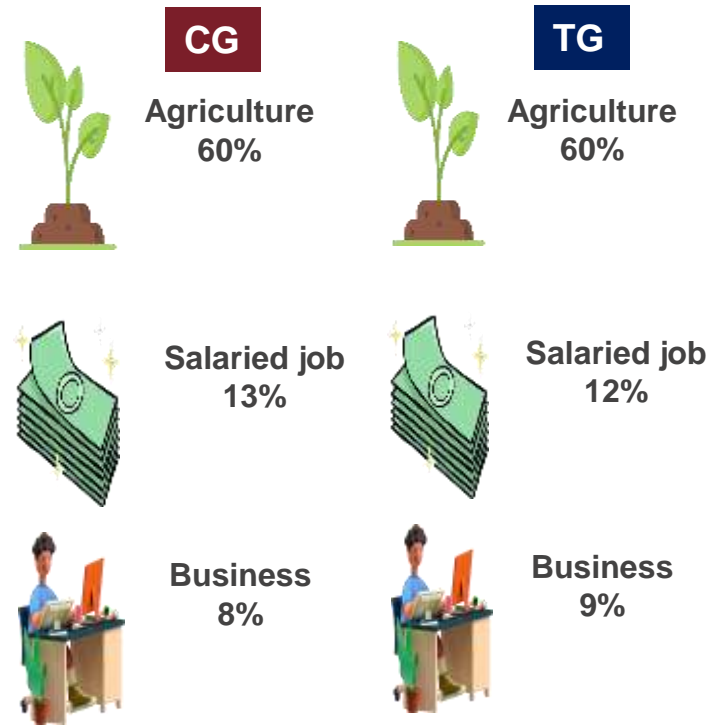
Respondent Social Category



Education Levels



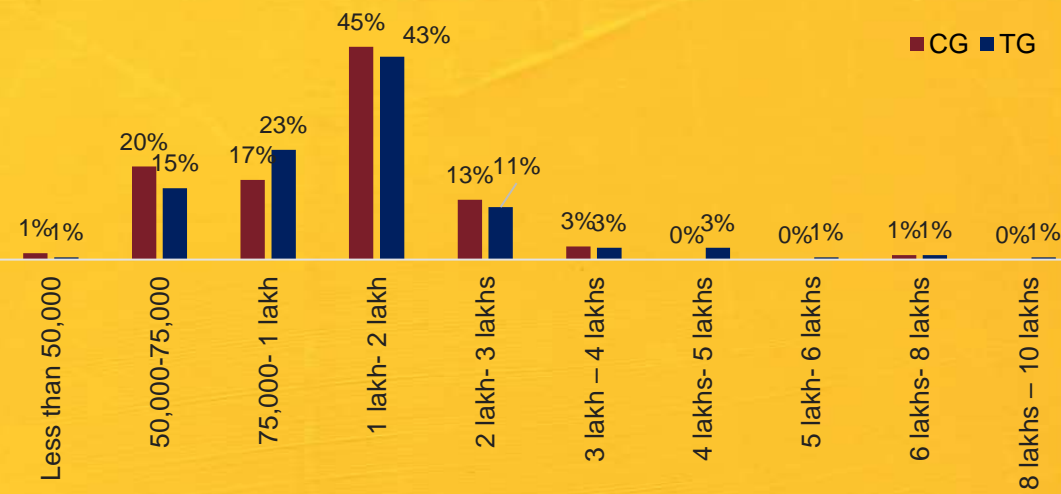
Top 3 Primary Source of Income of HH



Household and Asset Profile

- Both the treatment group (TG) and control group (CG) households had an **even gender distribution**, with an average family size of three male members and three female members.
- The TG also saw growth in mobile phone, bicycle and LPG stove post intervention. The above assets are time savers and help the respondents improve their productivity.
- In TG 30% of families had more adult males working population compared to 35% in CG. In CG 2% of families had more adult females working population compared to none in TG.

Average annual income of the household in INR



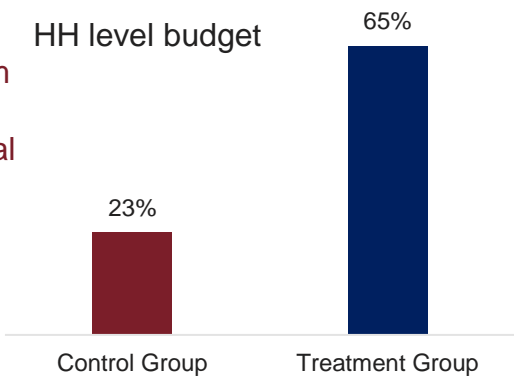
- 99% respondents from the TG have perception that there is a change/ growth in the profession of women in the recent years as against 45% from CG. The TG's significantly higher perception of change suggests that the project has had a substantial impact on empowering women and altering their roles within the community.

*"The progress of a country is not solely determined by its economic wealth but also by the condition of its women, who constitute half of the population." - Sheikh Hasina*



Household level budgeting

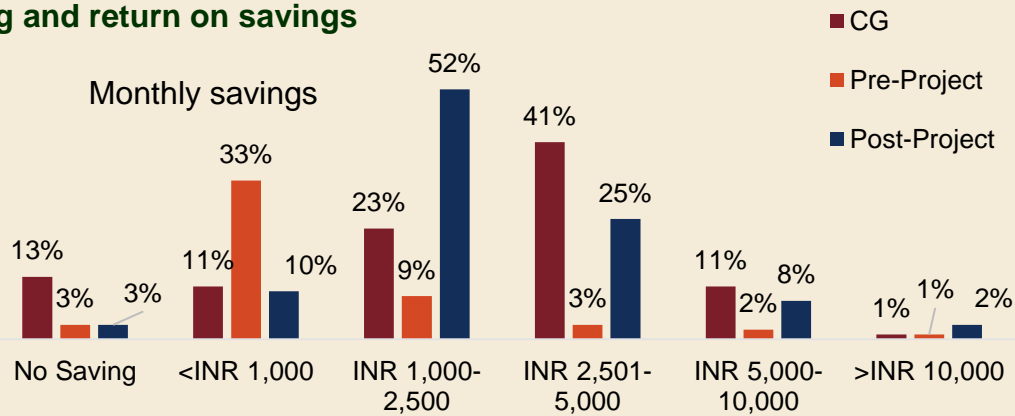
Compared to control group, the higher number of respondents from the treatment group (65%) preparing household-level budgets indicates that the project has been successful in promoting financial awareness and responsible financial management among the participants



- 90% of respondents noted family involvement in the DS project, showcasing its success in engaging both primary participants and broader communities, creating a positive ripple effect within families.
- Joining the project has resulted in boosting the confidence (92%) and in providing income opportunity (56%) and recognition and respect in society (47%).
- 100% respondents visit the Digital Seva Kendra and receives assistance related to Aadhaar services, government forms, certificates, and banking transactions.

Monthly savings, mode of saving and return on savings

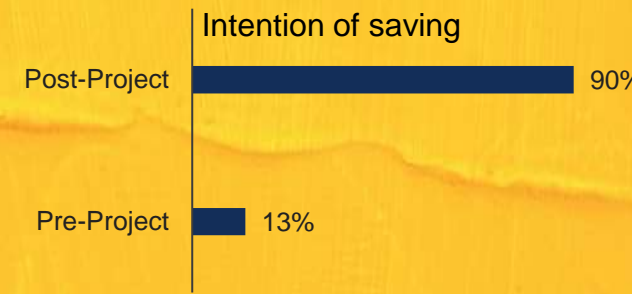
On an average monthly savings:  
Control Group: ~INR 3,200  
Pre-Project: ~INR 1,400  
Post-Project: ~INR 3,500



- The project led to a notable positive shift in the INR 1,000 - 2,500 category, indicating improved saving habits. The significant drop in the "No Saving" category underscores the success in promoting savings habits.
- The substantial difference between CG and TG (both pre- & post-project) indicates that respondents from CG are also behind in terms of monthly saving. This shows that the program is reaching out to those who needs knowledge on digital financial literacy..
- Only 2% of respondents from CG falls under 5% to 7% return on savings bracket, as compared to 20% TG post-project respondents

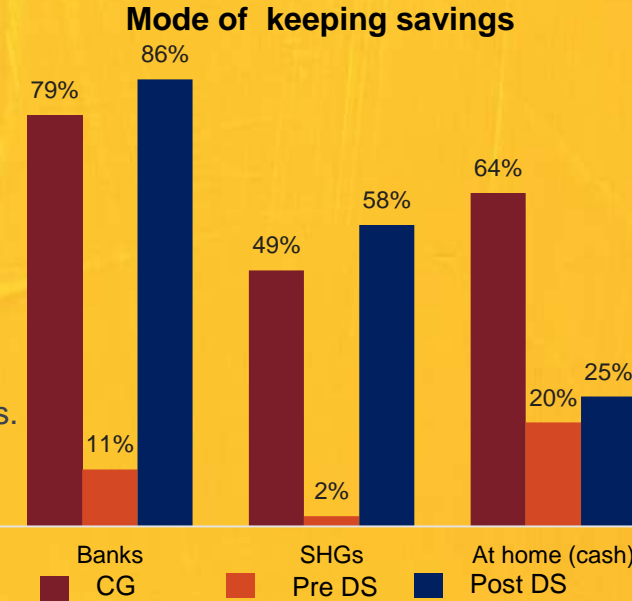
Increased intention of saving

- The substantial increase in the percentage of respondents intending to save after the project highlights the project's success in not only increasing awareness about the importance of savings but also inspiring participants to take proactive steps towards financial security and stability.

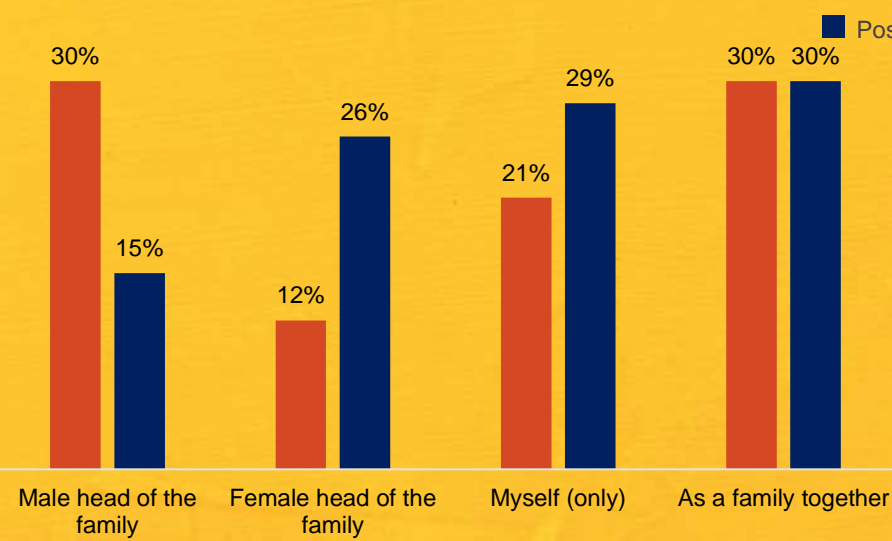


Preferred mode of keeping saving

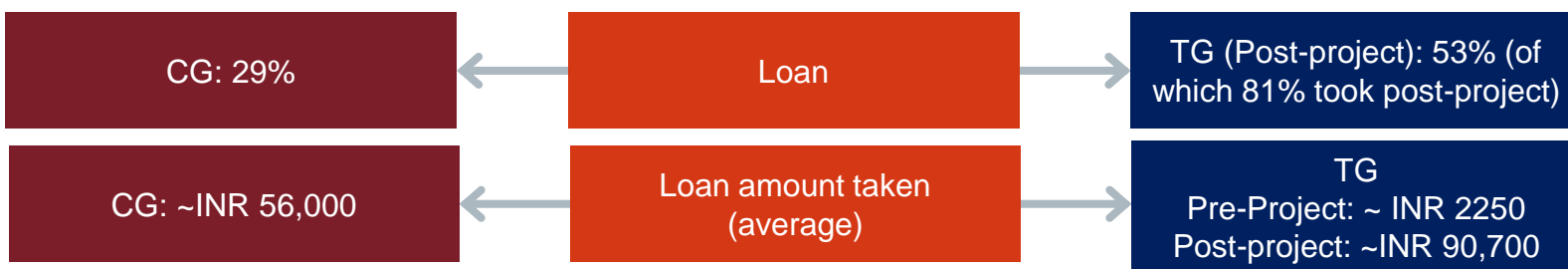
- The remarkable increase in savings deposited in banks from 11% to 86% and SHGs from just 2% to 58% indicates a significant shift towards formal financial institutions.
- This shift suggests greater trust in these institutions, possibly due to the financial literacy provided by the project.
- The increased savings in SHGs also underline the effectiveness of community-based financial initiatives.
- 64% of the respondents from CG save money at home in the form of cash which is much higher than respondents from TG after project



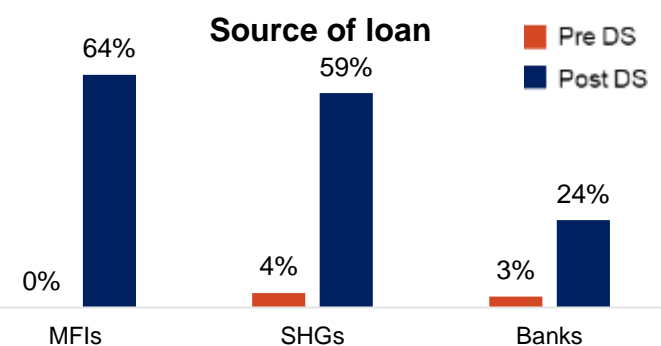
Decision making in family related to expenses



93%  
women respondents are actively involved in managing household finances post intervention



- Of the TG respondents who have taken loan, 83% have taken it after the DS initiative
- 97% of the respondents from TG thinks that financial knowledge through DS training helped them to great extent to get a better deal on loan
- The data reveals a compelling and tangible financial impact stemming from the involvement of Digital Sakhis in assisting respondents. On average, each respondent has managed to save a meaningful amount of approximately INR 11,000 on their loans, thanks to the guidance and support provided by these digital facilitators.



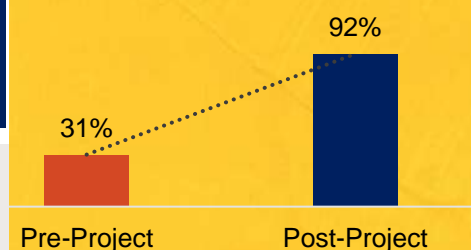
- There is an increase in the utilization of banks and MFIs as sources of loans after the Digital Sakhi program, indicating improved access to formal financial institutions.
- Post-Project, there is a diversification in the types of loans taken, indicating that community members are now accessing a wider range of financial products to meet their specific needs.



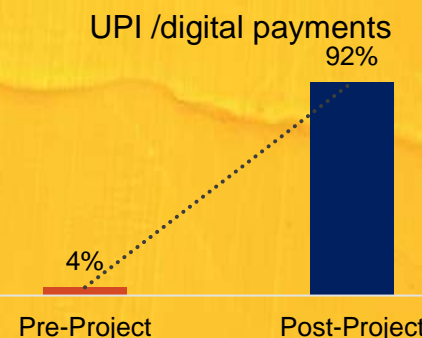
- 66% of the respondents from the TG got advised from DS trainers/volunteers and 51% of the respondents got advised from insurance officials, showing the sign of increased role of DS
- 88% see insurance as crucial for financial protection, showing project's impact on risk management
- 80% consider insurance vital for healthcare costs, showing the project's success in educating about financial preparedness for medical emergencies
- 69% now see insurance as key for risk mitigation, highlighting the project's impact on understanding the importance of a financial safety net

## Digital mode of payments

Cash withdrawal from ATMs micro-ATMs



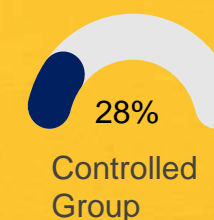
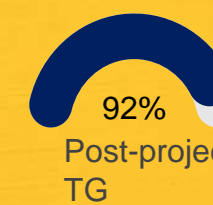
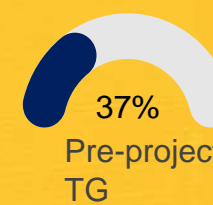
- **From 4% to 92%** increase in UPI/digital payments) usage indicates a significant transition towards digitization.
- Substantial growth from **31% to 92%** in ATM/micro-ATM withdrawals also underscores the increased utilization of formal financial channels.



- The remarkable increase in smartphone-linked bank accounts from 39% to 95% showcases the project's role in enhancing digital access and connectivity.
- The significant jump in awareness about digital payment modes from 18% to 93% signifies the project's effectiveness in raising digital literacy and awareness.
- The increase in the usage of digital payment methods from 6% to 90% underscores the project's impact on transforming financial behavior. This transition signifies a shift towards convenience, efficiency, and financial empowerment through digital avenues.
- **3% to 45%** rise in using bank services through DSK signifies the effectiveness of the project in promoting access to government services and financial transactions.

## Awareness on social security schemes

## Enrollment in social security schemes



## Training Camps

- 78% of the respondents attended three to six trainings
- The high percentage of participants (73%) suggesting the introduction of more modules indicates their appetite for a comprehensive learning experience.
- The suggestion to increase the duration of the camps (59%) reveals a thirst for in-depth learning and a desire for thorough coverage of subjects.
- Participants' preference for incorporating activities (59%) underscores the importance of interactive and practical learning approaches
- The suggestion to reduce the duration of camps (49%) could stem from participants' time constraints or a desire for condensed yet impactful learning sessions.





## Relevance:

- A significant proportion of the primary beneficiaries, including the Digital Sakhis and Women Entrepreneurs, fall within the age bracket of 26-40 years. This ensures enduring impact and widespread benefits from the program's initiatives. Traditionally, women faced substantial barriers in participating in financial decision-making within households due to prevailing gender biases. Even with good educational qualifications, women's roles were often confined to domestic spaces in the sampled villages. Consequently, the program has effectively addressed inherent gender discrimination by equipping more women with essential knowledge and information.
- Engaging with community members has notably heightened awareness regarding digital financial inclusion and government schemes. Simultaneously, it has prompted recognition of the potential held by women in their respective villages, instilling a newfound sense of confidence, self-reliance, and pride among them

## Coherence:

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously approved the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This comprehensive agenda, comprised of 17 interlinked goals, is aimed at achieving a universal and transformative impact while ensuring that no one is left behind. The evaluation emphasizes the program's harmonization with global benchmarks, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and aligns seamlessly with the government's strategic vision for advancing digital financial inclusion. Furthermore, the program's objectives closely mirror the Digital India initiative, which stands as the flagship program of the Government of India. This overarching initiative seeks to propel India towards a digitally empowered society and a robust knowledge-based economy.

## Efficiency:

- The program strategically engaged Digital Sakhis, individuals who were drawn from the very communities they serve. This enhanced community involvement significantly, resulting in improved operational efficiency. Each Digital Sakhi was assigned a specific target of reaching out to community members, ensuring broader coverage. While there have been isolated instances of attrition, the overall numbers remain limited, as indicated by discussions with the Sakhis.
- Conducting community camps, in addition to door-to-door visits, has further bolstered efficiency in reaching a larger audience. Some Sakhis have successfully leveraged similar gatherings and meetings, while others could incorporate this as an additional component of their interventions.

## Effectiveness and Impact:

- The positive uptake of knowledge, increased financial stability and subsequent behavioral shifts among the Sakhis, entrepreneurs, and community members underscores the substantial impact on beneficiaries' lives.
- Both Digital Sakhis and Women Entrepreneurs have actively engaged in economic activities, resulting in improved earnings. Increased motivation and exposure have empowered women to seek better avenues for income generation. Positive changes have been observed in household budget management, enhanced contributions to household income, regular and improved saving practices, and increased adoption of government schemes, among other notable improvements.
- Across various stakeholder segments, the shift in decision-making at the household level attests to the intervention's effectiveness in mitigating gender disparities..

## Sustainability:

- The intervention's sustainability hinges on the cumulative impact generated through knowledge dissemination.
- Educating Digital Sakhis, who are integral members of the community, holds a multiplier effect at both household and community levels. The community's recognition of their role in the development process further bolsters this impact.
- The establishment of Digital Seva Kendras further strengthens the case for sustainability, as the presence of infrastructural facilities enhances visibility within the community. However, for women entrepreneurs, beyond training and capacity building, the establishment of market linkages is crucial to ensure the intervention's long-term sustainability.

SDG Goal		Target	
	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	1.4	By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance
	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	4.3	By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
		4.4	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	5.5	Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
		5.b	Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	8.3	Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
		8.6	By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	9.3	Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets
	Reduce inequality within and among countries	10.2	By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	17.17	Encourage and promote effective public, public, private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships



### Utilizing the digital medium for upskilling

Digital Sakhi program participants, proficient in digital literacy and tablet use, are ideal for advanced digital skill development.

With the use of shorter interactive course material like customized YouTube videos by L&T Finance or specialized online courses, aiding individuals in exploring new business opportunities or improving their skills, like adding mobile repair services or expanding their current shop offerings.

### Creating awareness among family members

Prioritizing the awareness and education of male household members is essential.

Providing training on sharing domestic responsibilities will empower women to allocate more time to their entrepreneurial pursuits.

Recognizing the significance of household-level behavioral change is crucial to ensure the sustainability of intervention benefits and garner support from all household members

### Catering to challenges in budget preparation

Inconsistent income and limited family support pose challenges in budget preparation.

Despite individuals being mindful of their expenses and having spending awareness, they face challenges in formally creating household budgets.

There is an opportunity to enhance awareness and leverage smartphone budgeting applications as a valuable alternative approach.

### Fostering robust ecosystem

Women entrepreneurs face difficulties in establishing forward market connections, particularly in businesses like goat farming, poultry, and occasionally animal husbandry.

Integrating both forward and backward market connections could greatly enhance the intervention's effectiveness. This entails not only linking them with potential buyers but also ensuring a seamless supply of essential resources to support their businesses.

### Fostering Digital Financial Literacy among youth

The current intervention, with its proven effectiveness, stands at a pivotal juncture where strategic expansion can significantly enhance its impact. A forward-looking approach involves extending the program's reach to school/ college campuses, presenting an opportunity to broaden the coverage of beneficiaries and regions. By venturing into school and colleges, the intervention recognizes the unique potential of reaching students during a formative period of their lives.

### Partnerships and collaborations

To explore collaborations and tie up with other institutions to spread digital financial literacy across age classes and age groups.

The tie-up can help build the capacity of qualified financially literate forces creating more awareness and opportunities. The existing digital sewa kendra set up can also be explored for tie-up with other institutions and work as a hub and spoke model for offering various services and making them more viable and self-sustainable.

### Adopting a saturation-based approach

Embracing a saturation-based approach for Digital Financial Literacy signifies a deliberate and all-encompassing strategy aimed at reaching and educating an entire demographic or geographic area comprehensively.

This approach involves the systematic deployment of a wide array of strategies targeted at both horizontal and vertical penetration of Digital Sakhi interventions in and around the locations already selected for implementation.

### Collectivization and institutionalizing businesses

There is potential to explore avenues where DS/women entrepreneurs can pool their skills and efforts to establish a cooperative venture.

By coming together, women entrepreneurs can amplify their collective voice, leading to increased bargaining power. This strength in numbers allows them to negotiate better terms with suppliers, buyers, and other stakeholders.

A parallel approach can be adopted for the mapping exercise of DSK, focusing on enhancing access to services and optimizing the effective utilization of the DSK infrastructure.

### Decision making via landscape analysis

Many women entrepreneurs focus on a single trade within their regions, which can lower trade profitability and result in unpredictable income.

Conducting a landscape analysis and redirecting the selection process towards more profitable trades can contribute to the development of a thriving community of entrepreneurs with diversified and sustainable income sources.

### Focusing on Entrepreneurship component

Developing a comprehensive booklet or digital guide represents a proactive initiative aimed at highlighting avenues for skill enhancement within the beneficiaries' existing trades. This resource not only sheds light on current opportunities but also offers valuable insights into emerging business trends.

By serving as a reservoir of information, it becomes an invaluable asset for those seeking to broaden their skill sets and explore new horizons within their industries.



**Case study 1:**  
 Prajakta Kishor Pawar, a 24-year-old graduate from Wakhroli Village, Osmanabad district, Maharashtra, has become a catalyst for digital literacy in her community. Motivated by the prospect of additional income and personal development, she actively engaged in a program facilitated by an NGO. Through 40 door-to-door visits, 20 awareness camps, and numerous group discussions, Prajakta educated over 200 women on budgeting, savings, digital transactions, and government schemes. Inspired by the training, she transformed from a homemaker to an entrepreneur, establishing a Digital Sewa Kendra. Earning INR 20,000 monthly, she aspires to enhance her BFSI knowledge, aiming to become an insurance agent alongside her business for increased income and improved family well-being.



**Case study 2:**  
 "My name is Akila B Hashan Madiwale, and our family has a history of traditional farming. Previously, our annual income ranged from ₹30,000 to ₹40,000. However, after receiving training, we diversified into animal husbandry and began producing and selling organic fertilizers from our village home. This training has significantly boosted our income, which now stands at ₹200,000 to ₹250,000 per year, a substantial improvement compared to our previous earnings. I believe that further expanding this training could make a significant difference in our community over time."

**Case study 3:**  
 My name is Sarita Dutta Karanje, and I am 34 years old. Before participating in the Digital Sakhi program, my economic situation was quite precarious. I was not engaged in any work prior to the training. After attending the program in Pune, I disseminated digital knowledge to all the women in my village. I have also established a Digital Seva Kendra. Now, we comfortably earn a monthly income ranging from ₹7000 to ₹10000. This has greatly contributed to the support of our family, and now our children are able to attend private school.



**Case study 4:**  
 My name is Varsha Udhav Aware. Previously, I used to do tailoring work at home, earning around ₹1500 to ₹2000 per month. After undergoing entrepreneurial training, I opened my own shop in my village. It has been performing exceptionally well, generating profits. Now, I provide tailoring training to the girls in my village, and as a result, our monthly income has increased to ₹14000 to ₹16000.





"Investing in women's lives is an investment in sustainable development, in human rights, in future generations - and consequently in our own long-term national interests." - Michelle Bachelet