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ActionAid Association (India)



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About ActionAid Association

ActionAid Association is a nationally registered organisation working with the poor and marginalised people in India since 1972. We are working across 25 States and three Union Territories through our 13 project offices. ActionAid Association is governed by an independent General Assembly and a Governing Board. Together with communities, supporters, institutions and government, we strive for equality, fraternity and liberty for all.

ActionAid is an organization that works in solidarity with the most marginalised communities to further Social and Ecological Justice. We believe in equality and justice for all and support the leadership and empowerment of the marginalised communities in their struggle for a life of dignity as equal citizens of India.

We draw inspiration and guidance from the Constitution of India and international covenants that envision a just and equal world.

Our Vision

"A world without poverty, patriarchy and injustice in which every person enjoys the right to live with dignity."

Our Mission

"To work in solidarity with the poor and participate in their efforts to eradicate poverty, patriarchy and injustice."

Overall Goal

A just social order brought about by the dispossessed claiming their right to dignity and identity through enhanced democratic participation and structural transformation. We strongly believe that an end to poverty can be achieved through purposeful individual and collective action led by the active agency of the people living in poverty and supported by solidarity, credible alternatives that address the structural causes and consequences of poverty.

Our Values

We reiterate our values and stress on ‘praxis’ in our work, in our effort to deepen our commitment to transform our organisational culture.

- Solidarity, camaraderie and sisterhood with the poor, the powerless and excluded women, girls, boys and men will be at the core of our struggle against poverty and injustice.
- ‘Personal is political’: without contradiction in the practice in private and public sphere.
- Courage of conviction, requiring us to be creative and progressive, bold and innovative – without fear of failure.
- Equality, justice and diversity, requiring us to work to ensure equal opportunity to every person, irrespective of caste, class, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, colour, class, ethnicity, disability, location, and religion.
- Humility and modesty in our conduct and behaviour.
- Transparency and accountability.
- Independence and neutrality from any religious or party-political affiliation.

Introduction

The year 2023 emerged as a stark reminder of the advancing impact of climate change, with record-breaking temperatures making it the warmest year on record. As heatwaves, erratic rainfall patterns, and environmental degradation persist, marginalized communities across India, particularly small farmers, tribal populations, and other marginalized communities, bear the brunt of these impacts.

Amidst these challenges, ActionAid Association has worked across 23 states in India, alongside frontline communities, including small farmers, tribal groups, nomadic pastoralists, fisherfolk communities, DeNotified tribes and informal workers in construction, sanitation, domestic work etc., to combat the effects of climate change and called for climate justice. This year, our efforts gained significant momentum as we brought together these communities, raising awareness, and facilitating adaptation and mitigation measures to address the climate crisis.

Through the People's Agenda Campaign spread over a period of six months from December 2023- August 2024, we engaged with communities and documented towards just futures, ensuring frontline voices can help in shaping inclusive programmes and policies. This extensive outreach effort culminated in the development of a national people's agenda document, reflecting the input of over 1.7 million participants across diverse communities and geographies.

Our commitment towards workers' issues has seen tangible results with the establishment of 12 new workers facilitation centres (WFC) across six states. Through these WFCs, we've provided support to over 10000 workers, ensuring access to essential socio-economic entitlements and welfare schemes, while also empowering individuals through vocational training and skilling for collective livelihood initiatives.

During the year we also engaged with supported Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and People's Organisations and provided leadership building, training and capacity building support. Presently, to these as per their needs we extend support to and closely work with 200 senior HRDs, and over 27,786 community-based HRDs. We also engaged with 81 People's Organisations. Our participation at the World Social Forum underscored our commitment to infusing new energy into global solidarities and People's formations, by emphasizing the climate crisis issues.

Child Rights with focus on Public Education and Child Protection

ActionAid Association continued to focus upon education, protection and participation of children across the states through ground actions and campaigns at local, district and state level. The interventions have strengthened community systems and volunteers to track the children's attendance and transition of ongoing school children. Community based efforts have strengthened our belief that children are ambassadors of change in the communities we work. Along with strengthening access to quality education, improving enrolment and attendance, our efforts have focused on strengthening local communities to activate the various child protection committees to ensure protection of children from discrimination, abuse and violence in both schools and the community. These included strengthening SMCs, protection committees at village, block and district level in order to prevent the incidents of abuse and violence against children and help in developing a child friendly atmosphere. Our engagement with children's collectives, clubs, adolescent groups helped to develop their perspective on gender equality, constitutional values, promoting ecology, etc.

State Engagement

In **Karnataka**, a discussion was held with the Chief Minister and Principal Secretary of the Social Welfare Department of the State on the issues of quality education in Ashrama Schools, Teacher Appointment, and creation of the model school in each taluk. The principal secretary agreed to conduct the district-wise meeting of the Deputy Commissioner and CEO of the district to review the present tribal development programs and education of tribal children. So far, the state authorities completed the Mysore, Chikkamagaluru, Dakshina Kannada and Kodagu district meetings. The education department conducted training for the Ashram School teachers and appointed Physical Education Teachers in Ashram School.

The state government of **Telangana** had launched initiatives to promote girls' education and reduce the dropout rates in government schools. Child Marriage and child protection is also an important concern in certain parts of Telangana, particularly in rural areas. ActionAid is ensuring the effective implementation of the government initiatives in the ActionAid intervention area. Secondly, the team is also conducting the interface meeting with government officials to fill the gaps in the initiatives so that the benefits could be ensured among the adolescent girls.

Campaigns

Back to school campaign was conducted in 11 states like **MP, Himachal, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, UP, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Bihar and Karnataka**. And a total of 15025 Out-of-school children (OOSC) and drop-out children have been mapped and 12328 OOSC and drop-out children have also enrolled in the school across the states. A total of 4832 children were also identified who were eligible for various social protection schemes and they have been linked to

government social schemes. Our selected volunteers and government officials have supported us in identifying the drop-out and OOSC children in vulnerable pockets in these states.



In Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand, **Back-to-School campaign** was organised in 45 villages, comprising 22 primary schools, 7 high schools, 3 junior high schools, 1 residential school, and 6 intermediate colleges. The program was

attended by a total of 6525 children, including 1960 girls and 1492 boys, along with 2583 women from women's groups, 258 men, and 232 volunteers and stakeholders (School Management Committee members, school teachers, Panchayat members, Anganwadi workers etc). The discussion was held with children on the importance of education, discussion was held with the stakeholders for environment building and ensuring the quality education for the children.

School enrolment and retention campaigns were conducted in Mysore district, **Karnataka**. Hamlet-level meetings were held with the community leaders to take action to enrol their children in schools. The bimonthly Hamlet-level meetings with the parents and children ensured the regularization of children to school. The talk on the importance of education empowered the community leaders to raise the issues faced by children in school. With the support of community leaders, we have identified 7th grade completed 144 children in the working areas. We oriented the parents and ensured children's enrolment in the school. Among them 62 were male and 82 were female. About 1556 women and 1356 men in the communities continuously participated in the discourse on education and childrights.

No. of drop-out/OOSC children identified		No. of drop-out/OOSC children enrolled	
Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
7792	7233	6454	5874

“Yes, to school and no to child marriage campaign” was carried out in 2 states, **Rajasthan** and **Bihar**. Our awareness efforts covered nearly 13 districts in two states. The ActionAid team reached out a total of 150000 populations in 13 districts. The ActionAid team along with community volunteers have identified 4200 Out-of-School and drop-out children in **Rajasthan** and **Bihar**. The primary objective of the campaign includes ensuring free, quality and inclusive education for all children and their protection from all forms of discrimination and violence. Through this campaign, further policy level engagement with government is being done with district administration for vulnerable children who are facing difficulty in getting back to school and conducting rigorous review through District Task Force's to ensure success of campaign.

Yes to Education and No. to Child Marriage campaign - Reach out		
Boys	Girls	Adults
95345	104007	94935

Scholarship campaign was launched in four states **Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Kashmir** and **Himachal Pradesh** to ensure that children from vulnerable communities can pursue their education without any hindrance. Before launching the scholarship campaign in all four states, the field workers, volunteers, change agents, and HRDs were oriented by the ActionAid team. State team has undertaken various activities like community meeting, *Nukkad Natak* (street plays), *Ratri Chaupal* (night meetings), interface with government officials, interaction with students, display of informative posters, and distributed pamphlets. A total of 21773 applications were facilitated for pre and post matric scholarship in 16 districts of four states.



In Uttar Pradesh, 5 districts covering 300 villages, 30 blocks and reaching out to 15000 students and 1 lakh people through the campaign. Uttar Pradesh team have conducted community meetings, Nukkad Natak, Chaupal, and interface with government officials. Team facilitated a total of 3000 student's applications in the state. Similarly, the campaign was conducted in 3 districts in Gujarat. The team in Gujarat interacted with students, government officials and they displayed informative posters and distributed pamphlets to spread awareness on scholarship programmes. During the campaign in Gujarat, the team has successfully reached out to more than 5 thousand students and successfully linked to 773 students under BOCW scholarship schemes. In Kashmir 25 schools in 5 districts were covered and approx. 1000 students were facilitated to fill the pre and post matric scholarship.

In Chamba district of **Himachal Pradesh**, a team along with HRDs and volunteers have organised *Aao Milke Scholarship Payein* campaign reaching out to 30 villages and 25 education institutions and connected with over 500 parents and 2000 students in the year 2023. The campaign has also facilitated 159 eligible students and helped them to apply for scholarship schemes. A total 931 children were supported with stationery and other recreational material during the year 2023.

The scholarship campaign in **Haryana** reached out to 100 schools and colleges to orient the students in Haryana. Team along with volunteers have facilitated 2000 students to apply for scholarships.

Campaign against Child Marriage

In Periyapatna and Hunsur, a **campaign against child marriage, violence against girls, and child labor** reached 250 people through street plays. In Chikodi Taluk, Belgaum district, meetings with parents, teachers, and children enabled 55 students from difficult backgrounds to receive exam training for residential schools, with 15 securing seats. A Kishori Sangha group was formed in four villages, involving 82 girls who received reproductive health education. The group helped prevent four child marriages and supported five children in continuing their education.

Campaign against early marriage, child labour and female infanticide was organised in Dabhoi, **Gujarat** to generate awareness in the communities. As part of this initiative, we successfully conducted a transect walk that covered 5 areas in Dabhoi, also conducted street plays. Transect walk helped in reaching out to large communities in the intervention area. During transect walk IEC materials was also distributed for awareness on the issues of early marriage, child labour and female infanticide. We successfully reached out to 2500 people in 5 areas of Dabhoi.

Awareness Campaign on Child Protection & POCSO Act (The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) was carried out in Raisen, Mandla and Rahatgarh districts of **Madhya Pradesh**. The children, especially adolescent girls were made aware on **children's right to protection** and the provisions POCSO Act. They were also oriented to identify early signs of abuse through good touch and bad touch concept. The teachers, parents, Anganwadi workers were also sensitized about POCSO Act. A total of 1448 people and 942 children were made aware of the Act in 40 villages in these three districts. We supported 67 girls in cases of child sexual abuse. The cases were presented in front of the Child Welfare Commission and filed under the POCSO Act. All the cases were supported through regular counselling. We intervened in 84 cases of minor girls related to abduction, child marriage and missing. All girls were rehabilitated in families or linked with state support, shelter and education. Education fees of 5 girls, who were children of survivor women, was supported through funds raised by Gauravi from individual donors. Alongside, around 10 girls (15 – 18 years) were linked with education and re-enrolled for the 10th Board exam. 13 girls (17 years) were supported in getting the Caste Certificate and with its support got admissions and scholarships at college level.

Campaign on immunization and vaccination

ActionAid Association in collaboration with the District Medical and Health Office, **Hyderabad and Yadadri Bhuvanagiri districts in Telangana** conducted awareness **campaigns on “Universal Immunization and Vaccination”** aimed at combating vaccine hesitancy and promoting immunization in the low-income areas, including Bahadurpura, Kishan Bagh, Tadban, Kala Pathar, Puranapul, Sultan Shahi, Shahli Banda, Qazipura, Jahanuma, NS Kunta, Falaknuma, etc. of Hyderabad, and in 8 villages of Aler town, in Bibinagar and in Industrial area in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. We reached out to ASHA workers, ANMs, Anganwadi workers, district medical officers, college campuses, local communities, pregnant women, lactating mothers, parents of infants through door-to-door campaigns in different localities of Hyderabad. We also

reached out to around 8000 people in **Bhuvanagiri** district and different parts of old city of Hyderabad where immunization and vaccination is low.

Local level advances

Promoting STEM Education

ActionAid Association has been implementing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) education in **160 govt schools in Maharashtra, Goa, West Bengal and Gujarat reaching out to 40800 students** through specially trained 400 science teachers. The intervention focuses on grades 7th to 10th of government schools and engages students more proactively in analytical thinking, creative problem-solving, and building a career towards science, engineering, and vocational learning. Students were supported to prepare science and digital projects with the help of waste material. They were helped to understand the basic science applications in real life and learn to create, develop tools to solve society's real problems. The interventions have helped students to develop 480 creative science and digital models that were presented in the Science fairs organised in 160 government schools. The science fairs events helped in creating an encouraging child-centric environment in the schools. Some of the remarkable science projects prepared and presented during the science fair included the Robot Assistant, Electricity Generation from Waste, Smart Goggles for the Blind and a Railway Accident Prevention device, etc.

Strengthening school Education

We extended our efforts to reach-out to 11870 public schools in **Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Telangana** and **Bihar** and while expanding outreach in the community on improving. ActionAid team along with local community volunteers engaged with 10000 government schools in **Uttar Pradesh** providing training, capacity building, leadership building of school management committees, teachers. As a result, the participation of SMC and community has increased in the schools and related affairs thereby improving the quality of education, infrastructure, services and children's attendance and enrolment. The teams regularly engaged the frontline worker to create a support group for the village.

Our teams also helped school functionaries in developing the kitchen garden in schools in **Uttar Pradesh, and Telangana**. Some volunteers have also extended their support in playground safety to reduce the risk of accidents for students during playtime. Our teams have also formed 520 adolescent clubs in **Odisha** and 2350 adolescent groups consisting of 28000 members (boys and girls) in **Bihar**. These clubs and adolescent groups are working as a change maker on child protection issues in existing society.

ActionAid Association started a **computer laboratory in St. Anna School, Chennai, Tamil Nadu**, inaugurated on April 17, 2023. The school mainly reaches out to children from marginalized communities, including children from remote areas and families who cannot afford quality education for their children. The opening of a computer lab on the school's premises provides

students the tools, resources and opportunity to learn cutting-edge technology, expand their knowledge and reach their full potential.

Additional Classrooms were constructed for a School in Barmurikona Village, **Nalbari District, Assam**. Under this initiative, the construction of four classrooms on the 2nd floor has been completed. The construction of the brick wall for the second floor, plastering and painting of the walls of the classroom have been completed. The rooms are constructed to accommodate at least 40 students. Rooms are well-ventilated so that proper natural light and air can get into the rooms.

Interventions of child protection

Our regular interventions on awareness and capacity building on issues of **child protection** have helped in collectivising the marginalized communities across various states - **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Telangana, Kashmir, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Delhi**. AA team conducted orientations for adolescent group members to address the issues of children. The adolescent group members further conducted the meeting with group member, front line worker, and community member to enhance their capacity to work towards reducing the incidents of child marriage and child labour. Adolescent group members have been supporting various committees on child protection to reach out among the communities to sensitise them on child protection issues.



Orientations for adolescent group members, faith leaders, frontline workers, volunteers and Human Right Defenders and it has helped to prevent 2204 child marriages incidents, more than 300 child labour cases, 178 child trafficking cases in seven states of **Odisha, Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Telangana**. A total 800 rescued child labour were also followed up

in Bihar state by ActionAid team and volunteers to understand their status. A total of 12407 villages of the State were declared Child Marriage Free by Department of Women and Child Development in Odisha. These were the villages where ActionAid has been working for prevention of child marriage with the support of Unicef.

Trainings on **Financial literacy** were organised for adolescent girls in **Odisha** and **Bihar** in order to strengthen their financial skills. Around 10000 girls participated in these training which included 8000 girls in Odisha and 2000 in Bihar. They were oriented on various financial components like saving habits, banking, insurance, Employees' Provident Fund, Public Provident Fund, Medical insurance, loan, etc. We encouraged these girls to further orient the other group members on financial literacy and various components in the age of digital literacy. AA team also facilitated the formation and strengthening of 454 Panchayat level child protection committees, 46 block level child protection committees and 7 District Task Force on child marriage and dowry in **Bihar**.

Interventions on Child Health

A district level meeting on "Civil Society and Government Interface Meeting on Public-Funded Government-Owned Manufacturing of Vaccines and Free Provision to the Needy" was conducted in August 2023 in **Bhuvanagiri district, Telangana**. We printed IEC material (12000 pamphlets) regarding vaccination and immunization in coordination and in consonance with the DMHO, Hyderabad in 3 languages -Telugu, Urdu, and English, and distributed them to stakeholders concerned.

On September 2, 2023, a training program for Primary Health Centre and Community Health Centre Level ANMs and ASHA workers was conducted at the Urban Public Health Centre (UPHC), Uppuguda, **Hyderabad**. The participants included Deputy DMHO Dr. Laxman, 3 private doctors lead by Ans Fateen, specializing in CPR and basic life support, 10 volunteers and other Uppuguda medical staff, and 70 ANMs and ASHA Workers.

Study/ Research conducted

Several rapid assessments in states (**Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal**) have been done to understand the basic facilities availability in Government school as per RTE, Act 2009 by ActionAid also conducted consultations to assess the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), it brings to life the aims and commitments of the NEP. In this regard state level consultation on Gender Equity component in NCF was also held after the assessment in several states in India.

During the assessment, the team found that the continued three waves of COVID pandemic adversity affected the lives of vulnerable communities and their children. It has directly impacted the children's education. The situation led to many instances where child labourers and girls got married before they turned 18. Children also lost their interest towards education. Some of the children lost their parents too during the COVID they reducing them even more vulnerable.

Women and the World of Work

Securing Workers Rights and Promoting Livelihoods

ActionAid has been working with Informal Sector Workers with focus on women workers across the spectrum of occupations the vulnerable communities, particularly women workers- such as domestic workers, street vendors, bidi workers, home-based workers, construction workers, garment workers, agricultural workers, waste pickers, fisher workers, etc., to understand and assess gender-based inequalities and vulnerabilities faced by them, especially those related to violence and access to resources. Through our work, we continued to bolster the community institutions and enhance their capacities particularly of women workers so that they can engage with relevant authorities on their demand for decent wages, safe workspace and ascertain their rights as workers. In 2023, AAA reached out to a total of **1,47,401 men and 1,35,453 women informal workers**.



Notably, AAA launched '**Shramik Sathi**', a **Support App** for Migrant Workers to help migrant workers escape risk situations and support access to welfare entitlements. Through collectivisation efforts, **1,479 workers groups** were formed and establishment of **39 new workers collectives** was undertaken over the past year. These collectives span various sectors, including agriculture, construction, bricklaying, MNREGA, sanitation, ragpickers, mining, domestic work, vendors, and daily wage labor. The total membership across these collectives stands at **10,126 workers**, with women comprising 48% of the membership. A total of **12 Worker Facilitation Centres (WFCs)** were established across 12 districts in **Rajasthan, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh**. These centres offer a range of crucial services to workers, including awareness about various schemes and entitlements, assistance with online registrations, linkages to different schemes and referral services and provision of counselling. Over 10,000 workers visited the centres in during the year. Through **4,328 Social Security camps and awareness campaigns**, we reached thousands of informal workers, helping them secure access to entitlements. Major focus continues to be on ensuring women's rights as workers including decent work and wages, equal wages for equal work, making the women in informal sector aware about the provision of decent work conditions in their work situations, protection from sexual harassment and bondage, and social security, and supporting processes of their collectivization and mobilization. ActionAid Association continued to support the migrant workers in distress, provide information to them and facilitate access to grievance and redressal track incidences of child labour / bonded labours, rescue, liaison and dialogue with Govt, Officials for rehabilitations of bonded labours and child labours.

State Engagement

Workers' Agenda for Just Futures: During the People's Agenda process between December 2023 to April 2024 we engaged in the formulation of a dedicated document focusing on the Workers' Agenda for Just Futures at the **national level**. This document outlines key initiatives aimed at ensuring fair treatment and opportunities for all workers. It emphasized the importance of decent wages, comprehensive social security, safe working conditions, and equitable industrial relations. Moreover, it provides solutions of the specific challenges faced by various worker groups, including agricultural workers, sugarcane workers, plantation workers, fish workers, construction workers, gig workers, domestic workers, rural domestic workers, choultry workers, sanitation workers, rag pickers and sex workers.

In **Odisha**, after several rounds of demands submitted to labour department by Anasangathita Sramik Manch (ASM), (Informal worker's platform), the state saw **a hike in Variable Dearness Allowance** per day of all categories of employees – unskilled, semiskilled, skilled and highly skilled by Rs 7. We engaged with authorities in **Odisha** and stakeholders for issuing a special notification for the protection of homeless people.

In **Telangana**, after a delay of two years, pay slips were issued to NREGS workers in 17 Mandals of the Yadadri-Bhongir district. AAA had facilitated continuous engagement with government officials including the District Rural Development Officer (DRDO) for the same.

Land and shelters for urban poor

The **Odisha** government provided land right Certificate to slum dwellers under Jaga mission. We were able to liaison with the Department of Labour and employment in Odisha and Bhubaneswar Development Authority has plans to construct 3 shelters in 3 different labour hubs in Bhubaneswar for daily wage workers.

Representation in state level governing bodies

In **Rajasthan**, AAA is a member of the gig workers group at the state level that looks into the issues of this vulnerable community.

In **Uttar Pradesh**, a member of the *Dihadi Mazdoor Sangh* (Daily wage worker platform-a platform facilitated by ActionAid) represents the issues of the daily wage workers state level in the Building and Construction Workers Board.

In **West Bengal**, around 2000 domestic workers submitted a memorandum to the Labour Minister raising the issue of decent wages, maternity benefits, pension and regulation of their work and working conditions. They made posters, banners and placards to decipher their problems and demands at the New Secretariat Building of the Minister of Labour and the Labour Secretary. Over 1000 E-Shram portal registrations of domestic workers were done and they were also linked with SSY (Samajik Suraksha Yojana) throughout the year.

Studies and Researches

AAA, in collaboration with the London School of Economics, conducted a study on information access during the pandemic, focusing on informal migrant workers, titled "Asymmetry in Information Access and the Digital Divide in the Pandemic". The study examined how these workers use social and communications media, the reliability of information sources, and the

implications of technology disparities. It also explored ways to make vital information more accessible and actionable during crises. Results were discussed with stakeholders to advance workers' issues, dignified livelihoods, and safe migration.

Campaigns

In **Bihar** ActionAid Association conducted 4,328 Social Security camps to facilitate access to socio-economic entitlements. An awareness **campaign for informal workers** focused on the social security & welfare schemes reached 39,900 individuals directly and 26,250 indirectly.

In **Rajasthan**, we carried out **campaign for registration of informal workers** via the e-Shram portal and Building and Construction Worker Act. From January to September 2023, e-shram campaign enabled the registration of 5,000+ informal workers across 3 cities of Rajasthan. Facilitation desks were set up in places where workers live (these could be slums, at construction sites, resettlement colonies or on streets) where worker's congregate (nakas), their places of work (construction sites, street markets, recycling hubs etc.). A small team supported each worker to register on the portal after explaining the process, the supporting documents needed, its benefits and the need to be registered. A total of 990 informal workers got registered under BOCW through 4 Facilitation Centres. We were able to link 4782 informal workers with the government. social security schemes. A total of 17 mining workers got benefit from Rajasthan Silicosis Policy.

In **Odisha**, through the **social security campaign** we linked many informal workers to entitlement and schemes. A total of 2970 women on labour entitlements and social security schemes, health entitlements and vaccination and 46 workers benefited under various pension schemes. A total of 923 construction workers received their labour cards under building and Construction workers act and 1600 workers did their yearly renewals. A total of 90 workers got education benefits for their children. A total of 4 people received death benefits of Rs. 2,05,000/- each. Around 30 workers received marriage benefits for their children of Rs.50,000/- each and 10 workers received maternity benefits of Rs. 10,000/- each. A total of 280 domestic workers either got registered/ their registration is under process. We also supported 123 bidi women beneficiaries with Rs. 5000 each from the provision in the Beedi and Cigar Workers Act, in Sambalpur district.

In **Uttar Pradesh**, the "Mazdoor Bane Majboot" **campaign** focussing on construction workers, indirectly reached 4000 informal workers, while directly reaching 1700 individuals, raising awareness and facilitating access to government schemes.

In Hyderabad, **Telangana** more than 1500 labourers across 10 labour addas were made aware of workers' entitlements and health issues through pamphlets and posters. Registration of over 5000 workers from 15 districts of AP and Telangana was undertaken, integrating them into the social security system.

In **Tamil Nadu**, around 2,660 workers were made aware of health issues and socio-economic entitlements during the **campaign for informal workers** using street theatre and folk art. In Tamil Nadu, more than 2500 informal workers facilitated in accessing socio-economic entitlements such as pension, MGNREGA Job card, welfare board registration, PMJAY etc. This is to the tune of Rs 27,50,000/-. More than 500 informal sector workers organized into 5 workers' collectives based on occupation (domestic work, construction, sanitation and street vendors).

In **Kashmir**, our **campaign** focused on the social security of informal workers, particularly women, resulting in registrations for Indira Awas Yojana, E-shram, and PMJAY, benefiting 4503 individuals.

Over 1000 E-Shram portal registrations of domestic workers were done and they were also linked with SSY (Samajik Suraksha Yojana) throughout the year in **West Bengal**.

A total of 6000 construction workers in **Delhi** were supported to get registered under the construction workers' board.

Ground level advances

In **West Bengal**, we have been trying to amplify voices of informal workers particularly women workers through creating women led platforms in 6 districts (South and North 24 Parganas, Kolkata, Alipurduar, Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri). As of now multi-sectoral occupational groups like domestic workers, women farmers, MGNREGA workers, Fish workers, bidi workers, agricultural workers, tea plantation workers and home-based workers are engaged in this platform. We have been able to enhance skill and capacities of 4500 women workers through trainings and skill building programs of the state government.

Our efforts with sugarcane workers in **Maharashtra** have made significant progress. We organized a major assembly across five districts to address the wage concerns of sugarcane workers. Over 3,000 workers participated, raising the need of wage increase from the current Rs. 273 per ton to Rs. 500 per ton. This assembly marked a crucial step in voicing the workers' needs, and ongoing discussions aim to ensure fair compensation for their labour. In **Karnataka**, we facilitated discussions with 466 sugarcane workers focusing on improving working conditions and enhancing social security provisions. As part of our ongoing efforts, a baseline survey of 400 workers was conducted. We also engaged with labour inspectors and initiated dialogue with the labour commissioner to address social security concerns. As a result, a total of 861 women started to work, and they have completed 100 days of employment.

In **Mysore district, Karnataka** 114 community leaders (74 men & 40 women) were identified and oriented on the rural governance processes, MGNREGA- access to livelihood opportunities, and SCP/TSP provisions in the working area.

ActionAid organized 13 workers' conclaves, including events such as the Nirmaan Mazdoor Mahapanchayat in **Delhi**, the Haan Main Mazdoor Hun conclave in **Bathinda**, the MGNREGA Mazdoor Conclave in **Mansa**, and the Ustod Kaamgar Parishad in six districts in **Maharashtra** (Beed, Hingoli, Jalna, Osmanabad, and Nanded). Additionally, Women Workers Conclaves were held in **Parbhani** and **Indore**, and an MGNREGA Workers' Conclave took place in **Raisen, Karnal, Sonipat**, among others. These workers' conclaves saw the participation of 11,000 workers from various sectors.

Our engagement with the **fisherfolk** in **Bihar** has progressed. We have been working with fisherfolk across 7 districts of **Bihar**. We are in the process of formulating issues for sharing with relevant stakeholders. We conducted a state level convention on fishers in Patna, the capital of Bihar.

We have been facilitating the process of a state level registered collective of fishers. The major issues shared faced by fishers include compensation for loss and damage due to climate change and reforms in existing schemes for fisherfolks.

Upakulia Primary Matsyajeebi Samabay Samity Ltd, a Fisher Folk Producers Organisation (FFPO) based in Deshapran Block of **East**

Medinipur district, West Bengal has shown the way. FFPO, starting with 36 shareholders in May 2023, has gained momentum and currently the total shareholders stand at 394 due to help from National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) and ActionAid Association.



Workers Facilitation Centres: The **Worker Facilitation Centres (WFCs)** established across **12 districts in Rajasthan, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh**, offer a range of crucial services including awareness about various schemes and entitlements, assistance with



online registrations, linkages to different schemes and referral services and provision of counselling. Over 10,000 workers visited the centres in the past year, with construction workers, agriculture workers, daily wage workers, and domestic workers being the most represented categories. The mobile helplines received 958 calls, with half coming from women workers. Counselling has been provided for 129 cases related to land and

wages. Furthermore, the centres facilitated referrals for 690 individuals to access government services through various departments. The pre-existing Workers Facilitation Centre in **Muzaffarpur district, Bihar**, demonstrated remarkable success in addressing the issues faced by informal workers. Since the beginning of the year, the centre had received 595 distress calls from migrant and stranded labourers, successfully resolved 496 cases. Additionally, it attended to 168 calls from informal sector workers in the source area (Gaya), resolving 138 cases. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the centre had linked 1565 migrant labourers with cash relief and facilitated 1680 families in obtaining new ration cards. Moreover, 7879 Building and Other Construction Workers (BoCWs) had accessed their Labor Cards through the centre. Furthermore, 2578 families have been provided with MGNREGA Job Cards, and assistance has been extended to 2858 families in filling job applications. The application process for E-Shram Cards has also been provided, and 482 labourers have received agricultural tools through the Workers Facilitation Centre.

In **Rajasthan**, we have been running 2 Worker Facilitation centres, a total of 2381 families got benefit from Worker Facilitation centre. Worker's Facilitation Centre (WFC) in **Jaipur, Rajasthan** organised a capacity building workshop of informal workers, where they were trained on their issues. The Jaipur WFC had engaged with a dedicated team of lawyers committed to addressing the concerns of workers in the region. This group actively engages with worker-related issues in Jaipur and also



conduct regular field meetings in order to extend our outreach to workers, provide counsel, and offer assistance to resolve matters. Looking ahead, the WFC aims to intensify its efforts in the upcoming months, ensuring enhanced provision of aid and support to workers those in need.

Awareness on welfare programmes and entitlements and linkages to social security:

No. of community awareness trainings to all social groups on social security benefits	5,320
No. of Social Security Camps to facilitate informal workers to access schemes and entitlements	4,328
No. of informal workers registered under e-shram portal	40,276
No. of construction workers registered under BOCW Act	17,903
No. of workers who accessed the social security benefits (like PF/ PM JAY/ SASPFUW/Samajik Mukti Card)	3,662

Work on NREGA implementation:

In 2023, significant efforts were made to enhance the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), **enabling 39,513 individuals** to get work.

In **Uttarakhand**, women have been breaking stereotypes through our facilitation and 18 women worked as mates. In **Himachal Pradesh**, 70 community leaders monitored MGNREGA works across 35 villages.

In **Karnataka**, orientation and awareness meetings on MGNREGA provisions were held in villages, resulting in 861 women starting work and completing 100 days of employment. In **Rajasthan**, 2196 individuals received new job cards under MGNREGA and the Indira Gandhi Urban Employment scheme. We facilitated employment opportunities to 330 households under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in Sambalpur, **Odisha**.

Campaign on NREGA in **Uttar Pradesh** covered 40 villages and it made a total of 1403 people aware. As a result of the campaign, 332 applied for the job cards and a total of 1035 applied for the work. Of them, 287 got the job. A total of 400 workers raised demand for their previous payments.

In **Himachal Pradesh**, a similar campaign was organized and it covered 35 villages. Through this campaign Kaam Mango Abhiyan (Campaign on Demanding Work) we facilitated the application of 247 workers for work under MGNREGA and all of them got work near their wards and villages. A total of 70 community leaders were engaged in monitoring MNREGA works across 35 villages.

In **Madhya Pradesh**, a MGNREGA campaign was conducted in 25 villages where migration and trafficking of tribal women and girls are highly prevalent to ensure employment for women. Awareness on POSH Act provisions was also provided. Around 700 women received work for approximately 70 to 80 days. A slight reduction in women migration due to local employment opportunities was observed.

Supporting collective and individual livelihoods:

AAA has been providing comprehensive livelihood support through input support, skill building and vocational training, entrepreneurial capacity building and linkages with government schemes with a particular focus on empowering women to rebuild their individual and collective livelihoods. Input support is being provided to set up small scale businesses such as petty shops, tailoring units, flour and spice units, etc.

In **Gujarat**, a total of 47 women have received support to establish livelihood units. Among them, seven groups have been formed, including three collectives led by single women. Through a collective livelihood model, a flour mill and spice mill have been successfully set-up.



In **Rajasthan**, 25 families have been connected with off-farming livelihoods such as goat rearing, poultry farming, and mobile shop.

In **Jammu**, a group of five women has established a thriving tailoring boutique in Srinagar.



In **Maharashtra**, we have started a **Training cum Weaving Centre of Paithani Saree** in Shirdi district to empower tribal youth. The Training cum Weaving centre aims to train and support hundreds of tribal youths annually in the art of Paithani saree weaving, assisting in product marketing and fostering their entrepreneurial development. Seasoned artisans and craftsmen will be mentoring the participants, ensuring that the intricate techniques pass to the new generation.

In **Western Ghat region of Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra**, tribal communities carried out



bamboo plantations in 10 villages, covering more than 58 hectares. The bamboo plantation effort has its significance in increasing the forest cover and later on, supporting the livelihoods. On 9th and 10th of December 2023 we organised a training programme for bamboo artisans in Ahmednagar district. 28 tribal youths who were interested in taking up handicrafts made with bamboo participated in the training. The trainer taught how to make different types of caps, pen stands, flower pots, lamp stands, mobile stands etc. by using bamboo. On the first day they were taught how to do preparation and cutting of bamboo. On the next day they were taught how to design and decorate things. The training was fruitful for all the participants as they have started practicing their hands on bamboo and tools.

AAA, in collaboration with local organizations, supported 557 vulnerable families across 27 villages in Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur to restore their livelihoods post-pandemic. This aid, targeting mainly women, included training in skills, market awareness, and financial support for both farm and non-farm sectors, including traditional artisans and fisherfolk. Additionally, AAA and Gauhati University's Botany Department hosted a 2-day conference on biodiversity loss in Northeast India, discussing its effects on the livelihoods of around 130 participants from various sectors dependent on local ecosystems.

In **Uttar Pradesh**, our livelihood interventions have reached a total of 5,000 households across 55 villages in Mahoba, Lalitpur, and Jhansi districts of Bundelkhand. In Lucknow, a group of 10 women has established an incense stick making unit, utilizing temple flowers as raw materials. This initiative not only provides a sustainable livelihood for the women involved but also contributes to environmental conservation by repurposing floral waste. In Lalitpur district, women entrepreneurs have expressed interest in producing eco-friendly leaf plates, and efforts are underway to support them through training and capital assistance.

Basant FPO, an all-women Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) comprises 3000 members and 962 Shareholders and an all women Board of Directors. The organization has obtained essential certifications including the GST certificate and seed certification license, enabling it to engage in producing, processing, packaging, and marketing agricultural products. It is also leveraging digital marketing strategies. Basant FPO has opened 58 outlets across three districts, creating 100 additional jobs in the process.

In **West Bengal**, Upakulia Primary Matsyajeebi Samabay Samity Ltd, a Fisher Folk Producers Organisation (FFPO) with 394 shareholders is being supported through the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC). FFPO is an initiative under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMSSY) that is trying to bring ecologically healthy, economically viable and socially inclusive development of the fishermen in this area.

In **Gujarat**, workshops, and training sessions have been conducted to enhance the capacity of women workers, individual livelihood groups, and collectives in various villages and areas of Vadodara, Sanand, Bavla, and Ahmedabad city, engaging a total of 345 participants in capacity building and vocational trainings such as tailoring, soap-making etc.

In Damoh district of **Madhya Pradesh**, with the support of our HRD, 8 women SHG groups involving 80 women have been formed under the National Rural Employment Mission. These women groups have been given the responsibility to run Public Distribution System Shops (PDS) in 8 villages by the Department of Food and Public Distribution.

In **Tamil Nadu**, 12 women from a relocation site were linked with the National Urban Livelihood Mission for support and they have now started their own small ventures such as vegetable selling, idli-dosa batter shop, petty shop etc.

Women's Rights (With a Focus on Women's Property)

We continued to work on the issues of violence and discrimination faced by the women from the marginalized communities. We worked towards building their capacities on existing acts, laws and schemes to help them in accessing justice. We also organized awareness sessions on understanding discrimination women face and challenging patriarchal norms. We worked with the state governments to highlight the challenges women face and came up with policy suggestions for improving women's lives.

State Engagement

At National Level

With the National Youth Policy 2021 open for further feedback, it was felt that understanding the changing needs and vision of the youth on the ground is vital. Discussions were held with young leaders focused on their recommendations for youth development aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Recommendations on health, protection, education, and sports were shared with the ministry.

No. of women collectives formed	1,901
No. of women trained on gender and patriarchy	13,643
No. of adolescents trained on menstruation hygiene and SRHR	1,26,082
No. of women who underwent leadership training	9,563
No. of women who claimed their property rights	854

State Level Engagement

In **Tamil Nadu**, sustained policy engagement, in collaboration with women's groups and organizations, led to the approval of the Tamil Nadu State Women Policy. On International Youth Day, a Manifesto for Empowering 'Young Urban Women' in Tamil Nadu was released which received the support of the State Human Rights Commission and the State Commission for Women.

We continued to work with the Women and Child Development Department of **Uttarakhand** for finalization of the **State Women Policy**. The draft prepared by the ActionAid Association has been submitted to the WCD for editing and review. The department has formed a committee of 8 members to finalize this policy.

In **Gujarat**, AAA along with Ekal Nari Shakti Manch and Gujarat Yuva Mahila Sangathan met the Chief Minister and Women and Child Development Minister to discuss issues of single and young women, submitting the draft National Single Women Policy and GRPS demands. AAA contributed to the revision of the Nari Gaurav Niti, 2005, to include the concerns of single women.



In **Odisha**, the State Transport Authority (STA) instructed Road Transport Officers (RTO) to issue e-challans against bus owners who prohibited women from boarding as first passengers. This directive followed a communication submitted by AAA to the Odisha State Commission for Women (OSCW), prompting their intervention.

Research and Studies

National Action Based Research on Clean and Accessible Water

A nationwide research study was conducted in 13 cities across India. It focused on the impact of water accessibility, availability, and quality of lives of girls and women, considering the effects of climate change. The study highlighted challenges in water supply quality and quantity due to

seasonal variations, exacerbated by climate change. It also identified community water taps as significant sites of violence and harassment.

Campaigns and Local level advances

In **Maharashtra**, although a law exists mandating joint ownership of houses by both spouses, compliance has been scarce. Through engagement with the administration, we've supported enforcement of joint ownership laws for houses, ensuring inclusion of wives/women as joint property owners. In **Uttar Pradesh**, our campaign has significantly increased awareness surrounding women's property ownership and inheritance rights. Utilizing engagement, community education, and grassroots mobilization, we've reached 500 villages across 16 districts, directly impacting the lives of 40,000 women. In **West Bengal's** CoochBehar district, the campaign centered on women's property rights and raised awareness about their entitlements. As a result, 100 applications for joint land titles were filed, with 30 receiving pattas.

The women's group from Askot, **Himachal Pradesh**, raised the need for the installation of a sanitary napkin machine during a government interface meeting. As a result, machines have been installed in four inter colleges: Bagrihaat, Askot, Baram, and Joljibi.

Collaborating with the District Administration of Jajpur in **Odisha** and UNICEF, we organized a non-traditional sports event for girls, aiming to address gender inequality through sports engagement. Mobilizing adolescent girls from the community, the event attracted 470 participants, including 350 girls and 170 boys, who competed in kabaddi and football.

Single Women

ActionAid is directly engaged with over 36,400 single women including widows, divorced, separated, abandoned women and half widows from marginalized communities. In **Gujarat**, a campaign with Ekal Nari Shakti Manch raised awareness about challenges faced by single women across 98 villages and urban areas in 19 blocks. We assisted 1120 single women in accessing social security schemes and linked them with various government initiatives (ATMA, Manav Garima, I Kisan portal, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Tribal Sub Plan etc.) Enrolment of 254 single women in the ATMA project was facilitated and 579 single women were connected with MNREGA. Inheritance rights were claimed by 257 women across 7 districts. In **Odisha**, 385 single women were facilitated in securing work under MNREGA. In **Bihar**, 25 single women were linked to various government schemes such as ration distribution, widow pension, and fruit plantation under the MGNREGA scheme. Additionally, 96 single women were connected to government development programs. In **Telangana**, the process of formation of a state-level federation for single women (Ontari Mahila Hakkula Sangham), is underway. A state-level workshop was conducted to address and consolidate the concerns of single women.

Livelihood Opportunities for single women:

These efforts aimed to support single women, especially in the post-COVID scenario, in securing livelihoods. Under the YUW project, we organized 63 skill enhancement and financial literacy training sessions, collaborating with Government of India technical training institutes and civil society organizations. In **Gujarat**, we



successfully registered 231 single women farmers on the I-kisan portal, facilitating their access to agricultural benefits. Additionally, 33 women farmers received essential farming kits through this registration, while 24 single women received livelihood support. In **Bihar**, 10 single women were supported for livelihood, with 6 receiving direct support of Rs. 10,000 each and 4 receiving supports from the horticulture department for vegetable cultivation.

Violence Against Women

Across the operational states, women who approached us for addressing issues of violence faced by them, we supported them in approaching the specific authorities VAW cases. We coordinated with Government institutions like Nari Adalat, OSCC, Suraksha Setu, SHE team, etc. We also organised conversation with family members, brothers, and parents of the violence affected women. 883 VAW cases like dowry, domestic violence and witch hunting were registered with appropriate authorities.

The **16 Days Violence Against Women campaign** reached over 35,000 individuals across 25 districts in 13 states. More than 50 schools and colleges were engaged, facilitating discussions on gender-based violence. In collaboration with Meet to Sleep – Blank Noise, the campaign explicitly supported the idea that women have the right to be defenceless in public spaces and express themselves freely and to claim this right, over 150 women and girls made their voices heard by sleeping in a public space. Dialogues with boys and men on Care Work, Sexual & Reproductive Health, Gender Based Violence and women sensitive public services were organized by the young women with the men in their communities. In 8 cities, YUWs were engaged in drafting and submission of Women's asks and submission of charter of demands. Community education through street play, silent march, candle march, signature campaign, and awareness programmes reaching to more than 10k population.



In **Madhya Pradesh**, the One Stop Crisis Centre 'Gauravi' in Bhopal, is being run by ActionAid. In 2023, the centre supported 1244 women. The centres provide rescue, relief, counselling, legal services and training and rehabilitation services for women survivors. Vocational skill training, entrepreneurial capacity building, job placement and livelihood support is being offered to women affected by violence. Another Training-Cum-Rehabilitation Centre was established in Indore.

In **Maharashtra**, we invested in training Bystanders which include auto drivers, vendors, bus conductors, etc. to intervene during the incidents of street harassment of women. Over 80,000 ByStanders have undergone the trainings. The initiative was recognised and felicitated by L'Oreal Paris.

In **West Bengal**, various campaigns were carried out to address abuse and sexual harassment at workplace. In collaboration with Kolkata Police, we carried out the Safe City Campaign engaging 1000 young urban women. A campaign on sexual and reproductive health rights was launched with 500 YUWs. As a result, ground level committees were set up to report violence incidents along with ward and GP level grievance redressal mechanisms in 4 districts of the state reaching out to more than 100000 people.

In **Karnataka** we engaged with 179 culturally oppressed Devdasi women across nine villages on their issues. We supported 6 women to access entitlements under Devadasi rehabilitation scheme.

In **Odisha** and **Jharkhand** various meetings with government officials, panchayats and community members were undertaken for prevention of **Witch Hunting**. Ten cases of witch-branding were brought to the Odisha State Commission for Women for rehabilitation and linkage with government schemes.

Engaging with Young Urban Women

Our engagement with Young Urban Women (YUW) has yielded significant impact through various initiatives and campaigns. We facilitated 308 consultations at city, district, and state levels, along with 52 capacity-building workshops. Recommendations from YUW leaders have been submitted to relevant government departments. Meetings with the Labour Department resulted in the registration of over 5000 women informal workers under the E-shram portal. Awareness programs on government schemes for women were also conducted. In **Tamil Nadu** and **Delhi** interventions by young girls' leaders addressed safety concerns, led to the installation of CCTV cameras and street lights in community blocks. YUW members were also linked with institutions and authorities at district and state levels, fostering collaboration with entities like the State Commission for Women and local police stations. Regular awareness meetings encourage young women to share workplace difficulties, resulting in the identification of 255 cases across 13 cities.

The YUW members organised campaigns around 16 days' activism against gender-based violence; Menstrual Hygiene; Workers Day; One Billion Rising; International Women's Day in slums of 13 cities. These campaigns covered more 15000 populations, where they organised different awareness programs like- postcard campaign, signature campaign, suggestion box-follow up was done through door-to-door awareness campaign by pasting stickers on gender-based violence, submitted demands with the state women commissioner office to create a safe city for women. In this campaign the YUW members also involved their community stakeholders like-ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist), ICDS workers, slum president & secretary. The community was also made aware of gender issues, patriarchy and women rights aspects. Information on legislation to protect women was also shared.



YUW leaders are planning to expand their work to other cities and districts, aiming to establish a State YUW Collective. In **Tamil Nadu**, the Young Urban Women Federation, established with our support, organized events and engaged with government officials on International Youth Day. They presented a "Manifesto on Empowering Young Urban Women" to call for policy changes addressing the unique issues of young urban women. In **West Bengal**, regular campaigns led by adolescent leaders on gender were conducted in six districts, along with school-based orientations on gender-based transformative behaviour for 10,000 children across 137 schools.

Strengthening Human Rights Defenders (HRDs)

ActionAid Association (AAA), India has a long history of supporting People's Organisations and building strong community leadership and their agency while supporting them to address issues of access to entitlements and welfare programmes. ActionAid supported in capacity building, training, skilling and leadership building of Human Rights Defenders (HRD) and People's Organisations.

National level advances

A national **HRDs' conclave** was organised to recognise, celebrate and facilitate shared learning among People's Organisation, HRDs, social groups, and community representatives. Discussions focused on addressing injustice, advancing access to the schemes and entitlements, feminist approaches to development, and climate justice. The participants discussed future strategies and action plans to strengthen community services and supporting poor and marginalized to access entitlements and welfare programmes. HRDs and Peoples' Organizations were felicitated for their contributions to social change, climate justice and community service. Further 5 HRD conclaves were organised across various states with the same objective.

Local Level advances

We aim continuously to build capacities and strengthen People's Organisations, workers' collective community-led organisations and HRDs. We organized trainings, orientations, capacity building and leadership development program in each state. The training was scheduled in the clusters and participants from each state attended the capacity building training and workshop. The main purpose of the training was to train the participants on the concept of human rights, social issues and government schemes. We built their capacity to take on leadership roles in their respective communities.

A total of 200 HRDs were identified from 20 states across the country. These 200 core HRDs



across the states have identified more than 27,786 community based HRDs and engaged them. All selected community based HRDs have been oriented on various social issues through meetings, training and workshops. A total of 20321 out of 27,786 community based HRDs were trained on a multitude of issues across the country.

In 2023, a total of 695 training workshops were organized across community, district, and state levels, covering a wide range of topics essential for empowerment and capacity building. These

sessions encompassed leadership training, fundamental human rights principles, and comprehensive insights into various government schemes and entitlements, including MGNREGA, Forests Rights Act, SCP/TSP Provisions, SC&ST Act, and the 73rd and 74th Amendments, along with PESA. Additionally, participants gained knowledge on laws concerning violence against women and children, such as the Domestic Violence Act, Nirbhaya Act 2013, and POCSO. Awareness meetings were conducted on scholarship schemes, social security provisions, the formation and functioning of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), the RTE Act, and School Management Committees. Environmental issues, health schemes, gender equality, and women's rights were also addressed.

HRDs received support in terms of acquiring new skills and knowledge which contributed to shaping up their approach and actions. Training on digital literacy resulted positively in socio-economically marginalized groups as they could access online registration of schemes and services and could upgrade their knowledge on accessing many more. AAA enabled HRDs to come together and build cluster networks to strategize their movement and amplify their voices.

Engagement with NT/DNTs

ActionAid India has been working to empower the extremely vulnerable communities to access their entitlements over land, restoring rights of women and girls, and ensuring their safety, education and protection for their children.

State Engagement



In partnership with Rajasthan Raika Vikas Sangathan, ActionAid Association organized the **National Convention on Nomadic Pastoralism** in Jaipur, bringing together nomadic pastoralist communities from 13 states. Around 60 leaders from groups like Rabari, Raika, Gujjar, and Gadariya engaged in discussions with academicians, community organizations, and policymakers on issues such as interstate permits, climate change, and livestock health. Key leaders addressed challenges like diminishing pasturelands, and upcoming government initiatives were shared. The event also featured a community interface with notable representatives, including Dr. Bharti Pawar, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs; Mr. Joraram Kumawat, Cabinet Minister, Animal

Husbandry and Dairy; and Mr. Otaram Devasi, State Minister, Panchayat Raj Institution, Rajasthan Government, amongst other.

As a followup of the conference leaders of pastoral communities with colleagues from **ActionAid Association met with Shri Purshottam Rupala, Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India**, to share concerns of the communities. He was presented a copy of “Nomadic Pastoralists Agenda for Just Futures” - a compilation of the tasks made by ActionAid Association from the convention held in Jaipur in February 2024, convention in Ranchi in August 2023 and numerous smaller consultations across various states.



Earlier Rajasthan state had no policy for DeNotified Tribe (DNT) or Notified Tribe (NT). ActionAid Association and Ghumantu Sajha Manch regularly engaged with government officials and Institute of Development Studies (IDP) to draft DNT policy. The **Rajasthan government announced the DNT policy** on 31st August 2023. Further in Jaipur, Rajasthan, a meeting with Rajasthan State cabinet minister Mr. Pratap Singh Khachariyavas (Food and Supply) was held on 2nd September 2023. Informal workers belonging to the DNT community met him. After interaction with the minister, PDS cards have been approved for 77 families.

A state level platform namely "Vicharti Vimukt Jati Adhikar Sangathan" has been formed in **Gujarat**. We organized a **state level consultation of NT/DNTs**, where 38 community leaders from 7 districts of Gujarat participated and discussed ground issues of different DNT/NT communities, particularly the adverse impact of climate crisis on the community and developed plans for ground interventions and policy actions.

Campaigns and ground advances

Campaigns for awareness Forest Rights Act were carried out across various districts of **Kashmir**. The campaigns reached out Nomadic tribes of Kashmir region Gujar and Bakarwal tribes. They were made aware about the provisions of FRA and procedures required to file claims under the Act.

In Gujarat, we conducted awareness campaigns in villages and slum areas within the Anjar Block, specifically targeting NT/DNT communities. During these campaigns, Communication (IEC) materials were distributed to create awareness about the government available schemes. This campaign also emphasised the importance of education in these communities, and this resulted in drop-out DNT children returning to schools.

In **Rajasthan's** Tonk district, Devli Municipal Corporation allocated 50 square feet of land to each of the 87 Gadia Lohar families (NT/DNT). Additionally, Tonk allotted 5.63 bighas and 2 bighas of land to NT and DNT communities in 18 Gram Panchayats of Uniyara and 11 in Niwai block. Our

continuous efforts facilitated this process, resulting in various benefits for these communities: 1012 DNT families received residential certificates, 205 workers were registered on the e-Shram portal, 49 families got ration cards, 493 were registered under pension schemes, 896 received caste certificates, 386 got Aadhar cards, and 309 families obtained work through MGNREGA. We also helped 169 DNT children get birth certificates, 97 families were linked to the Ujjwala scheme, and 56 DNT families received homestead land pattas. A total of 1674 DNT families gained access to potable drinking water, 277 families benefited from the Janani Suraksha Yojana, and 12 DNT women leaders contributed to the Village Development Plan. Seed banks were established in 7 villages, and 75 DNT families secured work under the Indira Gandhi Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme for 70 days.

In Gujarat, we distributed relief NT/DNT communities during emergency support after Biparjoy cyclone. A total 36 HRDs from NT/DNT communities actively raised their issues at panchayat, block and District level.

In Muzaffarpur district, Bihar, we distributed Ration kits and Tarpaulin sheets to 90 DNT families in Muzaffarpur district. Vimukti Diwas was celebrated with the DNT community in Samastipur and Muzaffarpur in Bihar. With the support from Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the Women and Children from the community were linked with Yojanas like Ann Prashan (Grain Initiation Ceremony), Godh Bharai (Baby Shower), supplementary nutrition etc.

In Uttar Pradesh, 142 DNT families received entitlement on common Land for the cemetery processes at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. 180 tribal families got possession over land under FRA in Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh.

Public Finance

ActionAid has been working with community groups and youths to build their capacity, skills and leadership in order to contribute towards developing village and area development plans and promoting transparency in public budgets and finance. We engaged with gram sabhas and local bodies to strengthening their participatory and community centred planning. Meetings and trainings were conducted on SCP and TSP, PESA and FRA with women and youth leaders of the communities.

Campaign

The **Adivasi Budget Abhiyan**, a campaign to promote the enactment of Tribal Sub Plan (TSP), was initiated by ActionAid Association in collaboration with various People's Organisations, including Eklavya Adivasi Sangathan, and with the support of tribal community leaders, is active in many tribal regions of Maharashtra. The campaign was launched on April 18, 2023, in Shirdi, Nasik, to raise awareness about the importance of the TSP among tribal communities, holding consultations with tribal community members to take their views and suggestions to draft a document listing issues faced by the community, and engaging with policymakers to push for the enactment and implementation of the plan in the state. At least 100 tribal community leaders

from 80 blocks across 15 districts in Maharashtra attended the campaign's launch event. So far, the initiative has reached out to 10,000 people through public forums and social media platforms throughout the state's tribal belts. We held five awareness sessions for 180 community-based human rights defenders across five districts. Before submitting the final draft of the community demand charter to policymakers, the campaign hopes to increase community engagement and gain the support of at least 5,000 tribal leaders across the state in one year. Communities were eager to launch the campaign in **Maharashtra** as they were concerned about inadequate budget allocation for developmental and social security projects, monitoring and utilization of allocated funds, delays in project implementation, lack of community participation, and lack of inclusion of their perspectives in developmental project implementation.

Local Level Advances

Community Consultations of communities were organised in various blocks of Sundargarh district, to enhance the understanding of local community leaders on **the Provisions of PESA and Fifth Scheduled Area**. A plan was devised to continue engaging local community leaders in their respective Adivasi samaj. The community leaders expressed their commitment to bring together members of the samaj and conduct regular Gram Sabha meetings. They acknowledged the benefits received by many through communications to the Governor and reaffirmed their intention to write to the Governor for necessary actions in cases of violations of PESA and the Fifth Schedule provisions. In another meeting in Lahunipara block, 175 Gram sabha members from 20 villages participated and deliberated upon various significant issues of the tribal communities like recognition of IRF, CFR, revival, and promotion of millets as ecological farming mobilising resources from Millet Mission, pollution in river Brahmani, deepen work on ecological farming, monitoring of the schemes and programmes of government, linkages with different schemes and entitlements. On 5th September 2023, the leaders of different Adivasi samaj together joined in a meeting at Vedavyas, Rourkela, the origin of the river Brahmani and discussed the issues of pollution and over exploitation of water. As many as 10 leaders from different Adivasi sangathan joined this meeting and shared their demands of making Brahmani pollution free.

In the **Birsa block of Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh**, over 200 Panchayat and Janpad members were trained on the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) and the Forest Rights Act by our HRDs.

Social Welfare and Entitlements

Securing access to Social Entitlements and Welfare Schemes							
Aadhaar Card	Birth Certificate	Disability Pension		Old Age Pension		Widow Pension	
9,130	5,871	Applied	Received	Applied	Received	Applied	Received
		4,457	4,013	13,183	11,541	10,086	7,345

ActionAid Association (AAA), in collaboration with the Department of Health Services in the districts of Kupwara, Pulwama and Budgam in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, has worked to ensure old age pensions for senior citizens in these districts, The total reach of the beneficiaries by AA for old age pension was 2,730, of which 1,700 obtained benefits from the scheme. The beneficiaries included 935 females and 765 men.

In Mudigere 170, in Kolar 148, in Chamarajanagar district 58 community based HRDs oriented on the Karnataka Scheduled Caste Sub Allocation and Scheduled Tribe Sub Allocation Plan. Under the Tribal Sub plan 48 community members accessed Rs.4 lakhs subsidy to start self-employment. 183 women accessed support to start dairy farming -accessed Rs.90000/-each person.

In Kolkata, we organised 14 meetings to discuss the effective implementation of the Duare Sarkar programme by the state government. The focus of these meetings was to explore ways in which individuals could maximise the benefits of the programme. Discussions included concerns about the inadequate distribution of rations, pension schemes and strategies for approaching the relevant authorities. Discussions were also held on the importance of opening zero-balance bank accounts, with a particular focus on engaging with the authorities at the Punjab National Bank.

In Rajasthan, 451 families were supported to Jan Dhan Yojna; 1083 families have been provided with MGNREGA job cards in the state. 3765 families have got job/work under MGNREGA, 1246 families have been linked with PM Ujjwala Yojana, around 200 single women facilitated access to pension scheme, 323 senior citizens have been linked with oldaged pension and 126 BPL families have been linked with LPG connection under Prime Minister Ujjwala Plan.

People's Agenda Campaign

ActionAid Association initiated People's Agenda Campaign across India, to listen to communities, social groups and classes to understand the issues vulnerable people were facing on the ground and explore the solutions that they see and engage in to bring sustainable change. The aim was to create an agenda for action in order to make things better for vulnerable communities, local ecologies and



the whole country. As part of the campaign, meetings at village, hamlet, and urban *basti(es)* were conducted to understand the people's issues.

State	Number of Districts Reached	Number of Villages Covered	Number of cities/small towns Covered	Total Number of Community Meetings held	Nos of Participants in the meetings
24	362	27,507	272	45,622	1,722,427

ActionAid Association facilitated a meeting between Kishan Swaraj Samiti- a peasant organisation, and prominent media outlets in East Medinipur, West Bengal to discuss the issues that they face and take those to relevant quarters.



One thousand tribal leaders from five districts of Rajasthan gathered in Pali district to discuss their local development concerns as part of the People's Agenda Campaign. This campaign is an initiative undertaken by ActionAid Association to listen to vulnerable communities, social groups and classes to understand the issues people are facing on the ground and explore solutions.

Land, Forest, Agriculture, Water

Protecting and Promoting the Commons

ActionAid Association has been working on the issues of land, water, forest and commons across the states. In the year 2023, we have strengthened marginalised people's agency to work towards access and control over commons – land, water, forest. Through campaigns and awareness programmes, we reached out to more than 1,55,839 people. Training and capacity building programmes were organised for community leaders, youths and women to develop their understanding on the issues of land – agricultural, homestead, commons – grazing, pastoral, etc. procedures of filing applications and engaging with the local authorities.

Across 15 states, we conducted campaigns for awareness and facilitating applications for land under Forest Rights Act (FRA). Around 14000 IFR (Individual Forest Rights) and 1448 CFR (community Forest Rights) were filed by tribal and other forest dwelling communities. A total of 2427 IFR and 124 CFR claims were received by the eligible people. We engaged with forest rights committees and strengthened their understanding on FRA and their role, as these play a significant role in processing the claims at village level. A total of 21400 people were facilitated to apply for homestead land in rural areas, whereas around 2500 applied in urban areas. Around 4900 people received homestead land titles in rural areas and 1452 in urban locations. A total of 17173 landless people applied for agricultural land. A total of 2264 received agricultural land.



Campaigns were organised to promote sustainable agriculture and sensitizing communities to adopt farming practices that enrich soil quality and are in sync with the ecology and local climate. Skill building training on sustainable agriculture benefited more than 6500 farmers across various states and also learnt about usage of

indigenous methodologies such as mixed farming, indigenous pest control practices, producing organic manure, conservation and usage of indigenous seed varieties, multi-layer farming models, etc. Seed banks and grain banks were facilitated among the marginalized communities that can help them for conservation and exchange of indigenous varieties and access to food grains during lean periods.

ActionAid Association supported farmers' groups collectivising them for collective entrepreneurship through 3 Farmers Producers Groups, having a membership of around 4000 farmers. Basant is the first women-led FPO in Bundelkhand and has moved forward in getting license for seed production. We are supporting 8 FPOs in total, helping them to advance towards enterprise building.

Further advances have been made in the direction of protecting and promoting ecology. Capacity building of HRDs on the issue of climate change and ecological justice was carried out across the states. Through community volunteers and HRDs we have engaged in monitoring and raising voices for protection and improving water quality of around 200 lakes. Our interventions have led to preservation and rejuvenation of around 100 water bodies across various states.

Land (FRA, Agricultural & Homestead land)

State engagement

We continued to support marginalised landless communities to access commons & homestead land. The frontline team members along with community volunteers and community leaders helped the families in filing the applications and followed procedures with the local administration.

Commons & Homestead Land

In Uttar Pradesh, land pattas were allotted to several villages Bahraich district in 1972, but possession was not provided at the time. Through sustained follow-up and engagement with local authorities, 159 families have recently received possession of 434 acres of land. In Ambedkar Nagar and Jaunpur districts, 45 families in each district received claims for 2 biswa of land each.

In Villupuram and Kallakuruchi districts of Tamil Nadu, historically marginalized communities have faced challenges in reclaiming Panchami lands. In 2023, approximately 2,500 applications were filed for the reclamation of these lands and through the collective efforts and procedural facilitation by community leaders, the revenue authorities have granted pattas to 338 families.

In Barmer district of Rajasthan, two village Gram Panchayats have passed resolutions to allocate approximately 10 bighas (about 6.19 acres) of land to the Kalbelia community, which is part of the DNT group.

In Mysore district, Karnataka, the KAMBO (a CBO) identified 3,200 homeless families across HD Kote, Nanjanagudu, Hunsuru, and Periyapatna taluks. Community groups engaged with local, district, and state authorities to address the issue and the government allocated funds to construct houses for 864 families, providing Rs. 3.75 lakhs per house.

The KAMBO network also raised the issues of housing with the rural department officials and tribal department officials. 1,813 houses were built for tribal communities, with the government providing Rs. 1.75 lakhs per household from the Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation and Rs. 2 lakhs from the Integrated Tribal Development Department.

In Kolar district, Karnataka, 520 marginalized families in 8 villages have lived on the outskirts of revenue and Gramathana land for generations. Following orientation on Karnataka Land Reforms Act and recent policy changes 50 community leaders engaged with Panchayats to pass resolutions in Ward Sabha and Grama Sabha aimed extending the Gramathana area and initiating survey and site mapping by Taluk officials to recognize the families' housing rights. The Panchayat has agreed to conduct these meetings to advance the process.

Forest

In Udham Singh Nagar and Champawat districts, **Uttarakhand**, long-standing residents of Gotha,



Khattos, Vangram, and Van Tongya villages faced threats from land mafias issuing fake eviction notices. The issue was raised with concerned authorities and the Chief Minister issued a letter assuring no evictions in these settlements. The administration granted revenue village status to three villages, including Gram Van Tongiya, benefiting around 700 families. Additionally, notifications were issued to convert 7 more villages into revenue villages, benefiting approximately 1,500 families.

Efforts in Bahraich and Sonbhadra of UP have resulted in the formation of Forest Rights Committees in 10

villages and the conversion of 5 forest villages into revenue villages, enabling access to government services. So far, 1,385 Individual Forest Rights (IFR) claims have been filed.

In South Rajasthan, a public hearing with FRC members, tribal leaders, and government employees led to plans for addressing delays in IFR and CFR claims. As a result, 180 villages were designated for CFR claims, with 173 claims filed by January 2024. Of these, 48 CFR claims were rectified, granting access to resources such as nistar, hunting, and fishing. Seven villages received CFR territorial rights, and 94 families secured Individual Forest Rights, with 153 IFR claims submitted. 3 new FRCs were formed and 140 FRC members were oriented on FRA provisions.

In HD Kote, Hunsuru, and Periyapatna Taluks of Mysore district, Karnataka, tribal communities were supported to file a total of 105 Community Rights (CR) claims and arrange meetings with officials to advance the process. The revenue department conducted surveys, resulting in the approval of 22 CR claims, with the remaining under follow-up. Additionally, 544 IFR Claims were approved. The SARAGURU Jenu Kuruba Tribal Communities successfully highlighted their issues related to



rehabilitation and CFR claims. The KAMBO network helped them in following administrative procedures and facilitated interface meetings with the authorities. With the support of District Administration, 152 tribal families from the Jenukuruba, Soliga, and Yerava communities received land.

Campaign

Campaigns were organised across the states to generate awareness, build community capacities and accelerate momentum for accessing Forest land, agricultural and homestead land. These campaigns focused on generating awareness, facilitating filing of claims and applications and also following up the status with the panchayats and local administration.

In 5 districts of Western Rajasthan, 20-day long campaign, “Bhagidari yatra” was initiated by civil society organizations on the issue of land and other entitlements. Particularly in six blocks of Barmer District, 5000 families discussed the issues of land and housing for marginalized communities. A document consolidating people’s perspectives was shared with the Chief Minister.

In Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand, a campaign on women's access to land was held in 2023 across 15 villages. The campaign saw 1,017 participants, including 750 women and 267 men. It emphasized including women's names in land records and the benefits of registering land in women's names.

In Coochbehar, West Bengal, campaign focused women's access to land and implementation of were organized in Jhargram and Purulia. These initiatives raised awareness, empowered women to assert their land ownership, and led to increased social recognition; while tribal groups identified hurdles faced in claiming forest rights.

In HD Kote, Hunsuru, and Periyapatna Taluks of Mysore district, Karnataka, approximately 100 hamlet-level consultations on FRA were conducted, with around 2,090 participants, 60% of whom were women. Community leaders engaged with FRA committees and Gram Panchayats to convene Grama Sabhas. The resolutions from these Grama Sabhas and FRA committee reports were submitted to the relevant departments.

Local Actions

In Barmer and Bharatpur districts of Rajasthan, 118 families applied for homestead land. In Barmer, 22 families have already started relocating to their allocated land, while in Bharatpur, 30 families have been granted homestead land. Efforts are ongoing to secure pattas for all beneficiaries, including 46 families from the Mirasi and Fakir communities.

In Mudigere Taluk, Chikmagalur district, Karnataka, 157 homeless line-house coffee estate labour families applied for homestead land in 2022-23. Due to the community-led efforts in early 2023, the Tahsildar identified 19.2 acres of government revenue land across 4 Panchayat areas. Consequently, 64 families in Nandipura, 15 families in Karbail Makonahalli, and 48 families in Esgal Panchayat received 1200 sq. ft. homestead plots.

In Kabbur village of Chikkodi taluk, Belgavi district, the 56 marginalised families accessed their 0.50 acres of land.

In Rajasthan, 132 FRC committee members received orientation on their roles and responsibilities, and the procedure for filing Community Forest Rights (CFR) claims. This training aims to help secure Territorial Rights for their communities and contribute to the Conservation, Protection, and Management of Forests. Additionally, 25 committees in Banswara district utilized the Grievance Redressal mechanism at block and district levels.

In West Bengal, tribal communities were supported in filing claims under the FRA. In Purulia, Jhargram, and West Burdwan, 36 FRCs were facilitated involving 540 community leaders (360 men and 180 women). A total of 17 trainings and numerous pocket meetings were conducted in these districts to map land and submit necessary documents to the administration.

In Madhya Pradesh, the campaign facilitated meetings on Individual Forest Rights (IFR) and Community Forest Rights (CFR), training over 1,250 community HRDs on the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and the processes for filing claims. Village Forest Rights Committees were mobilized to support the claims process, which is ongoing in 51 villages. Gram Sabha resolutions have been passed, and forest area mapping has been completed to and the process of filing community claims is going on.

In Sonbhadra, a two-day training program on Forest Rights was conducted for Village Forest Rights Committees from 30 villages, resulting in the successful submission of 249 IFR claims. Regular meetings and orientations have strengthened community institutions like Gram Sabhas in Bahraich and Sonbhadra.

Ecological farming

ActionAid has been actively promoting ecological farming in several districts of **Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Manipur**, etc.

The ground actions in Sambalpur, Odisha included community meetings with the farmers focusing upon awareness generation on ecological farming and benefits of cultivating indigenous crops and conservation of seeds.

Farmers were oriented on preparing organic manure, pest control using indigenous practices. Campaigns were organised across these states to sensitize farming communities about the ill-effects of chemicalised farming and generate awareness on ecological farming. The farming communities are engaged in conservation of indigenous varieties of seeds through seed banks. In order to strengthen food



security and eliminate malnutrition, grain banks and kitchen gardens have been promoted in the project villages across states.

No. of Farmers trained in organic farming practices	7,443
No. of cooperative members undergone skill building trainings	800
No of collectives of women farmers	394
No. of Men Farmers linked with agri-schemes	4750
No. of Women Farmers linked with agri-schemes	2995
No. of villages where Seed Banks were established	125
No. of families benefited from Seed Banks	3,731

ActionAid organised a convention of the agricultural farmers and fish-farmers **in East Medinipur, West Bengal**, in the context of climate change and ecological crisis. Around 1000



fish workers who are engaged in fish collection, catching-selling and vending of fish in the market as well as agricultural labourers participated to discuss the impact of climate change on their life and livelihood.

Another **convention of the Women Informal Labourer on the theme**

of “Climate change, Gender and labour” in Cooch Behar where 800 women members from 5 blocks of Cooch Behar joined the discussion on climate change and its effect on women. Women worker representatives spoke on issues like oppression, wage disparities, unfavourable working conditions, absence of dignified social security linked with disaster and climate change.

Local level actions

In 24 South Parganas, West Bengal, we reconstituted 11 Farmers Interest Groups comprising 330 farmers from 10 villages. The cluster groups were revived for functioning in FPC, constituting 60 members. On 24th of August, 2023 the FPC named Krishani Agro Farmers Producer company Limited was registered under the Companies Act of 2013. It has 10 boards of directors who all

are farmers. Leadership and business training was given to the board of directors. The government officials conducted a meeting with the FPC members, received training on organic farming and vermi-compost. 5 FPC board of directors have taken an exposure visit to Khejuri (Kishan Swashakti Farmers Producer Company), have gained knowledge on conducting the formalities of the company and shared their own experiences with each other. The company has 230 shareholders, who have purchased shares worth rupees 1000. Each share of the company is worth rupees 10, and it was mandatory for each shareholder to purchase at least 100 shares of the company. With assistance from the ActionAid association, the annual general meeting was conducted, and the Agriculture Department was invited. The work plan for 2024 and the future goals of the company were discussed. The meeting was of great success as the farmers started to ponder upon sustainable agricultural practices. The FIG members have received more intensive training from the government. Around 200 farmers have received assistance from the government, which most importantly includes paddy seeds.

The members of the 6 eco clubs constituting 180 members in total, are initiated with two orientations on climate change and organic farming. The children are pondering upon new ideas after the successful completion of the orientation. The eco club members have initiated kitchen gardening at 2 schools and in 2 villages. They have conducted the plantation activity on their own with some guidance. There was an awareness campaign conducted by the eco club members about global warming and climate change.

On the occasion of World Environment on 5th of June, the members of Eco Clubs and other children from the community came together to conduct a campaign on afforestation. Saplings were distributed to make the campaign successful. In this instance, two FIG groups were provided with ginger seeds to scale their group business. 110 eco club members also received saplings of Gooseberries, betel nuts and dragon fruit, to accelerate their interest in plantation activities.

Around 70 women have been trained on organic and sustainable farming in Bharatpur district of Rajasthan, among these 67 women are practicing sustainable farming. Meanwhile, in Kharia village, 15 families received support for agriculture, specifically in vegetable cultivation. These families successfully cultivated vegetables during the winter season, significantly augmenting their monthly income by approximately Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 12,000. 46 families have been linked with the government. agriculture schemes in Bharatpur district and a woman collective has been formed in Bharatpur district of Rajasthan. A total of 77 women farmers linked with agri-schemes such as kisan credit card, input support in **Bharatpur, Alwar and Banswara district of Rajasthan**. 25 families have been linked with off farming livelihood like goatary, poultry, etc.

Revival and promotion of millets as part of ecological Farming: There has been effort for revival of millet cultivations like *Mandia, Kangu, Kodoin* in 70 villages in Lahunipara block of Sundargarh district. Following to the persistent effort by community based HRDs and exposure of the farmers to the meetings of Odisha *Desi Behan Surakshya Mancha*, 500 Adivasi farmers including the *Paudi Bhuyan & Munda* communities have cultivated millets in 1000 acres of land under Millet Mission project (an initiative of Government for the promotion of millets cultivation in the state).



Further during the quarter from July to December, because of the persistent effort by the community members and HRDs, the 1000 Paudi Bhuyan &

Munda farmers have cultivated millets in 300 acres of land. Further, HRD working in the district has been motivating the farmers to sell the millet products in the nearest mandi of government to get the declared MSP.

Basant FPO

BASANT, a livelihood initiative implemented by ActionAid Association has opened 58 outlets across three districts of Bundelkhand region. Through this expansion, 100 jobs have been created for women for managing these outlets for the selling of BASANT products, such as lentils, chilli, turmeric and other spices. On-going training of these women entrepreneurs are being carried out so that they are able to communicate with and handle customers confidently.

Seven livelihood prototypes have been put in place in order to bring economic opportunities to the most marginalized communities, while being environmentally sustainable and expanding livelihood models and entrepreneurship spirit among the community. These include: Goat rearing model, Multilayer vegetable cultivation, Production of bio-inputs, Seeds production model, Developing nutrition gardens, Backyard poultry model and Horticulture cultivation



model.

Village based capacity building programs were organized for 2500 women farmers engaged in different models and focused on preparing organic manure and pesticide. Plastic drums with a capacity of 35 litres were provided so that the organic pesticide can be stored safely. Agriculture scientists and experts of Indian Grassland and Fodder Research Institute are engaging with the women farmers through weekly meetings to provide them technical support and guidelines for the different models. 150 women farmers (139 for wheat and 11 for green peas) were engaged in seed production of local varieties during the winter crop cycle.

Climate Justice

Climate change is a critical global crisis that affects all aspects of life, but its impacts are disproportionately felt by marginalized communities. These communities, often already vulnerable due to socio-economic inequities, face the brunt of extreme weather events, resource scarcity, and environmental degradation. Despite contributing the least to global greenhouse gas emissions, they suffer the most from its consequences, making climate justice an urgent priority.

National engagement

ActionAid organised national conventions and summits on climate change in collaboration with other civil society organisations, academics, activists, government departments.

Shimla Climate Meet was organised from March 19th to 21st, 2024 to discuss the Impact of Climate Change and Challenges faced in Northwestern Himalayan Towns. The "Shimla Climate Meet" covered a wide range of topics, including the impact of climate change on the Northwestern Himalayan Region, challenges posed by the current development



model, land use patterns and building typologies, governance issues, disaster risk reduction strategies, and the implications of climate change on Himalayan agriculture. Experts, climate activists, representatives from marginalized groups living in Himalayan region, intellectuals, academicians, government officials, educational institutions and other community-based organisations and other stakeholders from across the region participated and deliberated the pressing issues of climate change and its impact on North-western Himalayan towns. The conference jointly organised by Shimla Collective, Human Development Organization, Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research and ActionAid Association, served as a platform for meaningful dialogue and collaboration.

A 3 day-long **Conclave on climate change**, Impacts and Challenges was organised in **Lucknow** jointly by ActionAid Association, Vigyan Foundation, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow, Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research. Govt officials, eminent environment experts, academicians, civil society organizations, students, youths and community leaders

across the state participated and collectively discussed the impact of climate change with a focus



on heatwave and drought on urban poor, informal workers in cities and towns. As a follow up of the conclave we met Dr Arun Kumar, Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Uttar Pradesh and apprised him of the deliberations at the conclave and ActionAid Association's plans for a campaign on climate change in

Uttar Pradesh. The recommendations that emerged at the meeting were shared and the Honourable Minister assured his full support and cooperation for the campaign and said that his ministry would consider the recommendations.

Chennai Climate Summit, was organised by ActionAid Association in collaboration with Thozhamai and Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research on 26th- 27th March 24 in Chennai to create awareness and people-based solutions on the aspects of urbanisation, development, governance, and the way to deal with the phenomenon of climate change. Academicians, researchers, civil society organizations, experts, and government representatives participated and discussed their views and need for action to address the emerging issues.



We organised a two-days long consultation in collaboration with the Botany Department of Gauhati University on the critical subject of **shrinking biodiversity in the Northeastern region** of India, with a special focus on the impact it has on the livelihoods of communities, whose lives are inextricably tied to the state of the environment. Around 130 people participated in this conference and discussed the impact and repercussions on farmers, jhumias, fisherfolk, pastoralists, and others whose lives, livelihoods, and vocations are woven into the fabric of ecosystems and climate. A cross-section of participants from across civil society, media, NGOs, academia, and knowledge institutions actively participated in these discussions. An exhibition of some samples representing the biodiversity of the NE Region was also displayed to animate discussion on this crucial matter.

Campaigns and Local Level Actions towards Mitigation and Adaptation

ActionAid Association initiated a Climate Justice campaign across the states to understand the impact of climate change on the lives and livelihoods of the marginalized communities, linking

their lived experiences with current climate change discourse. Further, it included sensitising



school children, students, citizens' groups, academics, architects in cities to facilitate formations of solidarity groups to engage on national and global policies. Our engagement with the frontline communities that included Pastoralists and NT/DNTs, Sugarcane cutters and plantation workers among agricultural workers, fisherfolks and coastal communities and construction workers, street vendors among informal workers, to understand, adapt and articulate their asks for loss and damage. Participatory action studies are being conducted to help in developing policy frameworks for loss and damage.

Just a month before the flash floods and landslides caused by heavy rain in Himachal Pradesh in August 2023, AAA released a study that found that 85% of people in Chamba district experienced an increase in the frequency or

severity of natural disasters like drought, floods, or landslides. The study highlights the impact of climate change on the Gujar pastoral community's livelihood, particularly on their access to water and food resources, as well as the severe effect of extreme weather events on the livelihoods of the Gujar community and their ability to adapt to climate change. AAA's team conducted in-depth research to understand better how this community perceives climate change and to capture their firsthand experiences of its repercussions.

On World Environment Day, we launched a campaign titled "Act for Climate Justice" in June this year. The Campaign aims to raise awareness among vulnerable communities about the impacts of climate change and empower them to call to mitigate losses. The campaign outlines a multi-faceted strategy encompassing understanding, documentation of loss and damage, creating a charter of issues, establishing pro-people reparatory and compensatory



mechanisms, and robust policy engagement. The campaign has already completed its second action research titled "Climate Justice for Sugarcane Workers in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh". Other ongoing action research includes: "Climate Justice for Agriculture Workers in

Punjab – An Impact Assessment of Sidhi Bijai Scheme”, “Climate Justice for Brick Kiln Workers in Punjab and Maharashtra”, and “Climate Justice for Construction Workers in Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra”

As a part of campaign on Climate Change the community took awareness campaigns and plantation drives of fruit bearing trees in their own garden and public places. The children were orientated on the interconnectedness between local biodiversity and climate change. We have promoted School-based Eco Clubs in 10 schools, among these 4 clubs comprising 150 children who were engaged in vegetable gardening. Children were oriented with the interconnected issues around farming-biodiversity and climate change. The students also interact with their parents and fellow farmers on these issues. As a result of the engagement of the Eco-clubs, vegetable gardens have been developed in two schools. This has helped in the orientation of children on ecological justice.

A seven-day residential school entitled “**Urban Action School**” on the various factors of the urban rural continuum was jointly organised by ActionAid Association, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung and Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) in Thrissur from 20th to 26th November, 2023. The course was meant for policy makers, urban practitioners, researchers and people working in civil society organisations. A combination of sessions by experts, group discussions and field work, the course sessions covered the blurring lines between the urban and rural and the framing of the urban rural continuum. The changes in the livelihood patterns, migration, access to services, impacts on marginalised communities and more were discussed during the school.

A two-day consultative engagement with a group of stakeholders including academics, civil society actors, and representatives of some of the affected communities was held in December 2023. It was conducted in collaboration with the Centre for Social Work Studies of Dibrugarh University. The consultation titled ‘**Visualising an Equitable and Vibrant Society- Round Table on the Land and Livelihood**’ was held on 20th and 21st December 2023 in the auditorium of Dibrugarh University Guest House. This conference could capture the issues on the ground and set a realistic and workable vision to address the challenges.

On World Water Day, together with the Centre for Child and Women Development, ActionAid Association held an awareness programme with young women in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, to raise awareness among people in various localities about the importance of fresh water and how to protect water resources.

In Bharatpur district, Rajasthan, 19 villages are involved in the implementation of drinking water supply schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission, ensuring access to safe drinking water. This initiative has benefited 858 families, all of whom belong to DNT/NT/SNT communities. Additionally, there are water monitoring committees established within these project villages, totalling 12 committees. The combined membership of these committees amounts to 48 individuals, with 17 members representing DNT communities. Previously, DNT communities were not included or considered in any committee roles. However, following ActionAid intervention, these communities are now actively involved and considered in various government and community-level committees established within the villages and urban areas, including slums where ActionAid operates.



World Environment Day was celebrated on June 5th, 2023 in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand to spread awareness. Collaborating with the Forest Department, tree plantation drives were conducted in 21 villages. The Forest Department distributed 520 plants - Tejpatta, Amla, Harad, Baheda, Bael, Bai. Phalavat. Timal. etc.. to women groups and individuals for plantation in community and



personal lands. Alongside tree plantation, awareness campaigns on Environment Day and cleanliness were also initiated. Children and women actively participated in these campaigns. The famous weeklong festival Harela was celebrated from July 17th, 2023, in collaboration with Gram Panchayats, Forest Panchayats, and organizations. Plantation of around 15000 fruit bearing plants was carried out during

the plantation drives in 35 villages.

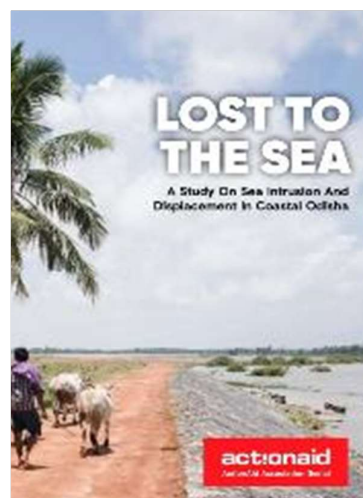
In Tamil Nadu, an awareness programme on public hygiene was conducted where the importance of maintaining a green environment was emphasised, including avoiding plastic products and ceasing to use plastics. A resolution was passed through the Gram Sabha in Gingee (Kandachipuram Taluk) to plant saplings. So far, 600 tree saplings have been planted in government schools across 19 villages.

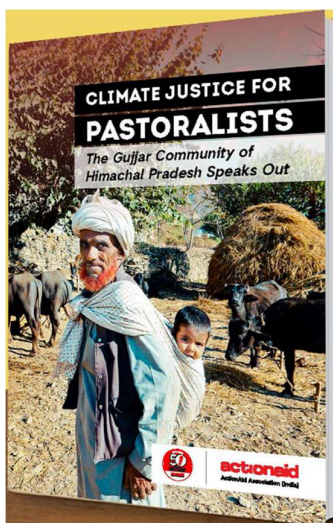
In Delhi NCR, 14 ponds spanning 9.22 hectares across 11 villages have been rejuvenated since 2019, with ongoing efforts in 4 new villages covering 4.606 hectares. The work included Desilting, cleaning, layering, creation of bird island, introduction of a double-layer water filtration system utilizing jute bags filled with mud. At the same time, since 2019, 3700 trees have been planted, Active involvement of local communities through the formation of community groups. 4 Ponds having a total of 2.03 hectare of land rejuvenated in the year 2023. The rejuvenated ponds have a total capacity of about 495.16 gallons of water. And have a collective recharge potential of 57.07 cr. litre of water per year. One acre land area was developed as a green belt in these pond sites. We introduced a double-layer water filtration system utilizing jute bags and also the concept of Bird Islands while rejuvenating the pond. Active involvement of local communities has been ensured through the formation of community groups and engagement in various activities.



Study and Research

- A study titled “Lost to the Sea” was conducted by ActionAid Association. The study was conducted with the coastal communities affected by seawater intrusion and displacement in Odisha to understand their vulnerabilities and impact.
- An Action Research was initiated to study the adverse effect of Climate Change on Sugarcane Cutters in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. The study is under in continuation.
- We conducted an Action Research with the construction workers in Delhi. The Research looked into the impact of climate change on these communities and examined the specific economic and non-economic losses they endure due to erratic climate events and the disruptions caused because of climate change on their livelihoods, health, and wellbeing. The study highlights critical areas where urgent actions were needed.





- ActionAid Association conducted an Action Research on the impact of climate change upon Pastoralist communities in Himachal Pradesh. Titled as 'Climate Justice for Pastoralists: The Gujjar Community of Himachal Pradesh Speaks Out' the report of the action research was released on the occasion of world environment day 2023 in Chamba.
- An Action Research on Ensuring Rights, Equity, and Well-being in being conducted and under process on the impact of climate change on agriculture labour in the state of Punjab. The study titled Upholding Climate Justice for Agriculture Labour in Punjab.
- The Action Research titled 'Climate Justice for Brick Kiln Workers in Punjab' was conducted by ActionAid. It explores how climate change exacerbates the vulnerabilities of brick kiln labourers, focusing on heat stress, erratic rainfall, and inadequate infrastructure. The action research outlines their socio-economic challenges, including precarious employment, exposure to unsafe working conditions, and lack of formal labour protections.

Persons of Concern (PoCs)

ActionAid has been engaging with the PoCs, addressing various issues including education, child protection, critical healthcare, and livelihood opportunities. Our efforts have extended to approximately 12200 PoCs across 6 locations in the states of Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and UT of Jammu. The interventions include:

- Cash based support for food and other basic needs - focusing upon single women and children
- Child Protection through children's learning centres - (17 centres reaching out to 1450 children)
- Enabling children's education
- Addressing women's issues - awareness and capacity building on menstrual hygiene, women's health, child marriage, protection from gender-based violence

- Supporting access to services (ICDS, health care, drinking water)
- Skilling and providing livelihood support to elderly and PWDs
- Emergency Support (Ration support during flood and fire incidents, construction of shanties, education centre, etc)

We actively facilitated access to public services, particularly healthcare and education, ensuring the well-being and development of the refugee population. We provided labour market guidance, placement assistance, Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) training, soft skills training, and microgrants to facilitate livelihood creation. In 2023, a total of 71 refugees secured job offers, while 24 others received financial support for livelihood activities after EDP training.



Additionally, 144 refugees received guidance on labour market opportunities. In order to promote hygiene and dignity, sanitary materials including pads, soap, and underpants have been provided on a monthly basis. Dignity kits and bathroom/hygiene kits have also been distributed, benefitting 535 vulnerable women and adolescent girls. Seventeen learning centres are operational, providing daily supplementary education to 1450 children across 6 locations. School dress and bags have been provided to these children, and infrastructure support has been

extended to five government schools in the form of ceiling fans. Efforts have been made to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), with community participation being encouraged. Child protection services have been provided, with community-based mechanisms in place. Fun activities have been organized for children, and interventions with child welfare committees and district authorities have been conducted. Adequate food aid has been provided during emergencies, benefiting 600 families. Shanty repairing and emergency response measures, including fencing, water drainage, and provision of essentials, have been implemented. Safe drinking water has been provided through trucking and water well construction. Cash-based interventions have supported girls' education, elderly individuals, persons with disabilities, and women at risk. Financial support has been provided to vulnerable refugees to meet immediate needs.

Research and Studies

The following participatory action studies on issues of PoCs were conducted

- A study titled 'Women refugee voices from Asia and Africa; traveling for safety' was conducted. The study report captured the issues of safety and security faced by women refugees.
- ActionAid conducted a study titled 'Refugees' access to Education, Healthcare and Livelihoods' with the support from National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). It is the first National Study covering all refugee groups in India, with focus on access to education, healthcare and livelihood.



Emergency Response

In the year 2023 ActionAid Association responded in the major emergencies with humanitarian support and supported more than 46000 people. These included Floods in Assam, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Bangalore, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Punjab and cyclone response in Gujarat. We also intervened in the humanitarian crisis in Manipur and the landslide in Joshimath, Uttarakhand, also supported fire victims in Bihar.

बाढ़ प्रभावित दिहाड़ी मजदूरों की मदद को आगे आई एक्शन ऐड संस्था

विश्व मानव संवाददाता मुजफ्फरनगर। एक्शन ऐड एसो. शिऐशन संस्था ने आज छपार के क्षेत्र के गांव खामपुर और बढीवाला में गत माह काली नदी से प्रभावित खेतों में आई बाढ़ के कारण बटाई मजदूरों के परिवारों के लिये सुखी राशन किट का वितरण किया गया। एक्शन ऐड के जिला समन्वयक कमर इतेखाब ने बताया कि संस्था के प्रेरकों द्वारा जनपद मुजफ्फरनगर के पुरकाजी, सदर, चरथावल, बघरा एवं शाहपुर विकास खंड के गांवों में ऐसे मजदूर चिन्हित किये, जिन्होंने बटाई या चौथाई पर खेत लिए हुए थे, किंतु अचानक भारी बरसात से उनकी फसल बर्बाद हो गयी है। आज खामपुर एवं बढीवाला गांव में ऐसे ही करीब 100 असंगठित मजदूरों को संस्था की तरफ से राशन किट वितरित की गई है। इनमें एकल महिलाएं भी



सम्मिलित थीं। सभी परिवारों की आर्थिक स्थिति काफी दयनीय है। उक्त राशन किट में 1 बाल्टी, मग, 6 सैनेटरी पैड, 1 दूध पेस्ट, ब्रश, 5 किलो चावल, 5 किलो आटा, 1 किलो अरहर दाल, 1 किलो चीनी, 1 लीटर तेल, 1 किलो नमक 4 डेंटल साबुन, 4 रिन साबुन, हल्दी पाउडर, मिर्च

पाउडर, धनिया पाउडर, साबुन, सैनिटरी पैड आदि सामान दिया गया है। इस दौरान ग्राम प्रधान खामपुर मोहम्मद आमिर, बढीवाला प्रधान इश्माद अहमद, एक्शनऐड के प्रेरक, मनोज, मो. हसन, मोनिस, फेज, फारूख, दल सिंह, धर्मवीर, ओमपाल आदि उपस्थित रहे।

In Gujarat cyclone 790 ration kit, 1000 tarpaulin and 200 sanitary pads were distributed as emergency support after Biparjoy cyclone to marginalized groups. In Bihar, ActionAid Association supported with ration kit, hygiene kit, shelter materials, household items to 314 people in Muzaffarpur, Sitamarhi and Patna who were affected by incidents of fire breakout. Education material was provided to 600 children including girls and boys in equal numbers to support them to continue their education. Around 100 families were provided drums to store potable water.



We responded to Michaung cyclone affected families in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. In Tamil Nadu, 4965 families were provided dry ration kits (3799), bedsheets and mats (500), tarpaulin (300) and hygiene and dignity kits (366). Dry ration kits and tarpaulin sheets were provided to around 1700 families in these states focusing upon women headed and vulnerable families.

Research and Studies

In wake of the impact of Biparjoy cyclone upon the poor and marginalised communities, we conducted participatory research to understand the impact of extreme climatic events on vulnerable communities, analyse climate induced loss and damage – both economic and non-economic on vulnerable communities, in Rajasthan and Gujarat and work towards creating a framework for compensation of loss and damages occurring due to climate change and related extreme weather events. The study covered two districts each of Rajasthan and Gujarat. The



research highlighted the need of strengthening the mechanism for Disaster preparedness and response, strengthening early warning systems, promoting community-based disaster preparedness initiatives that empower local communities, enhancing the capacity

of local authorities, first responders, and community volunteers in disaster response, need to invest in resilient infrastructure and critical facilities, such as cyclone shelters, flood embankments, drainage systems, and emergency communication networks, promoting sustainable natural resource management practices, including afforestation, watershed management, soil conservation, and water harvesting techniques, to enhance ecosystem resilience, regulate water availability, and mitigate the impacts of climate change-induced

disasters. The study also highlighted the need to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation considerations into relevant policies, plans, and programs across sectors such as agriculture, water resources, urban planning, health, and education, ensuring a holistic and coherent approach to building resilience and reducing vulnerabilities.
