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# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

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ACTIONAID ASSOCIATION

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## Foreword

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The year 2024–25 has been one of both challenges and opportunities for India and the world. Across our country, communities continue to grapple with the impacts of climate change, economic inequality, and recurring disasters. At the same time, renewed emphasis by the Government of India and state governments on inclusive development, women-led growth, and climate resilience has opened vital spaces for collaboration and collective action.

It is in this context that ActionAid Association has worked alongside communities to strengthen rights, build resilience, and advance justice. Our efforts have complemented national initiatives such as *Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan*, *Mission Shakti*, *MGNREGA*, *Abhiyan Basera*, and the *E-Shram* platform and various schemes and programmes ensuring that the most marginalized are not left behind. From securing land and housing rights for Dalit and tribal families to ensuring access to pensions and food entitlements, our interventions have reinforced national priorities while amplifying the voices of people at the grassroots.

This Annual Report documents the major outcomes of the year: the repair and strengthening of schools and homes in disaster-affected Kerala; education and protection for children from vulnerable families; social security and welfare linkages for thousands of informal workers; leadership building for more than 27,000 Human Rights Defenders across the country. Our work with women, NT/DNT communities, small and marginal farmers, fisherfolks, pastoralists and adivasi communities has helped advance dignity, equity and people's agency- values central to our national vision of social justice.

At the regional and global level, we are proud that voices from India's grassroots movements resonated at global platforms such as World Social Forum, contributing to advancing collective agendas for workers across the world, climate justice, people's resilience building and peace building initiatives. These exchanges reaffirm the interconnectedness of struggles and the importance of solidarity building across borders.

We acknowledge the leadership of communities who continue to inspire us with their courage and determination. We extend our gratitude to our partners, volunteers, staff, and supporters who have walked this journey with us. Above all, we remain deeply committed to working in partnership with governments, civil society, and social movements to realize a future of justice, dignity, and equality for all.

This Annual Report is a humble effort to present the glimpses of work that ActionAid Association team, volunteers, social justice and grassroots leaders, communities, and those associated with us directly and indirectly, have contributed towards bringing about positive changes in the lives of the vulnerable and marginalised.

Above all, we express our deepest gratitude to the communities we work with, the community-based organisations (CBOs), Human and Ecological Rights Defenders, and grassroots partners who, despite facing enormous challenges, continue to push the limits in

defending rights, building resilience, and shaping just futures. Their courage and determination remain the cornerstone of our work.

We are also profoundly grateful to our Donors and Supporters for their trust and solidarity and whose generosity makes it possible for us to stand with the most marginalised and to collectively advance the values of justice, dignity, and equality.

As you read through this report, we invite you to see not just the numbers and outcomes, but the stories of resilience and collective action that underpin them. They remind us that true change is possible when people come together—anchored in rights, driven by hope, and guided by the vision of an equitable and sustainable world.

Executive Director  
ActionAid Association

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## About ActionAid Association

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

ActionAid Association 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

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

### Our Mission

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

### Overall Goal

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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

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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.

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## Introduction

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The year 2024–25 marked a critical phase in ActionAid Association’s journey of advancing community-led solutions, supporting government initiatives and strengthening grassroots leadership. Working amidst recurring climate-induced disasters, deepening economic vulnerabilities, and entrenched inequalities, we stood alongside marginalized communities to secure their entitlements, defend their rights, and promote resilience. Our efforts complemented the efforts of Governments of various states and centre to inclusive development as articulated in policies and initiatives on education, social security, women’s empowerment, climate action, and poverty alleviation.

Ensuring continuity of education for children affected by displacement, migration, and disasters remained a core priority. More than 5,000 children accessed community schools, bridge centres, scholarships, and remedial classes. These initiatives reinforced the Government’s focus on learning recovery under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and campaigns to strengthen school infrastructure. The repair of Chekadi Government Primary School in Kerala, benefiting 108 tribal children, mirrored national efforts to improve educational outcomes for marginalized groups. Awareness drives against child labour and early marriage aligned with the National Child Protection Policy and strengthened child rights at the grassroots.

Informal workers, the backbone of the Indian economy, continued to face vulnerabilities. Through our Workers’ campaign and grounded efforts, we reached over 50,000 workers, amplifying awareness and linking thousands to pensions, ration cards, labour cards, and social protection and registrations. These interventions complemented the government efforts under the E-Shram portal, BOCW welfare schemes and state-level worker welfare boards, ensuring that entitlements reached the last mile and informal workers gained voice and dignity.

Our work with women reinforced the Government’s emphasis on women-led development, as highlighted in Mission Shakti, POSHAN 2.0, and schemes for women entrepreneurs. More than 15,000 women HRDs were trained in leadership and legal literacy, equipping them to engage in governance spaces. Livelihood initiatives in tailoring, coffee processing, mushroom cultivation, and beekeeping strengthened women’s economic independence, complementing the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM). Campaigns against gender-based violence, dowry abuse, and early marriage-built community awareness and supported survivors, reinforcing the Government’s efforts under the POSH Act, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and state-level women’s protection initiatives.

Denotified, Nomadic, and Pastoral communities, long excluded from mainstream development, were supported through identity documentation, pensions, and entitlements. These interventions complemented the Development and Welfare Board for De-Notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNC) and aligned with state-level efforts to extend social security and recognition. Our support for pastoralists facing climate stress and displacement reinforced national discussions on sustainable livelihoods and resilience for mobile communities.

Community stewardship of natural resources was strengthened through people's mobilization and Gram Sabha leadership. In Bihar, many vulnerable families applied for homestead land under the state's *Abhiyan Basera* scheme, while in Chhattisgarh, community leaders secured 10 check dams and soak pits under MGNREGA, restoring groundwater and ensuring year-round water access. Campaigns on PESA in Jharkhand raised awareness on constitutional rights, directly complementing the Government's agenda on strengthening local self-governance in Scheduled Areas. These outcomes reflected the synergy between grassroots mobilization and state-led frameworks for resource justice.

Through the People's Agenda for Just Futures Campaign, active in 200 districts, we created a deliberative platform where communities discussed land, housing, food security, and climate resilience. These campaigns complemented the Government's Panchayati Raj reforms, Jal Jeevan Mission, and housing schemes like PMAY by ensuring community participation and accountability. Local struggles against harmful industrial projects showcased how Gram Sabhas can work hand-in-hand with state systems to protect public health and natural resources.

Recurring floods, landslides, and cyclones across Bihar, Kerala, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, and Gujarat highlighted the urgency of climate resilience. ActionAid reached over 6,000 families with food, hygiene, and shelter kits, safe water, and education materials, reinforcing government-led relief measures under the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and state disaster response systems. Rehabilitation support, such as house and school repairs in Kerala, complemented state recovery plans. Our Climate Justice Campaign, spanning 21 states, advanced the discourse on just transitions, echoing the Government of India's commitments to climate resilience and sustainable development goals.

The year 2024–25 reaffirmed the power of collective action and partnership between communities, civil society, and the state. From education and women's empowerment to informal worker protection, land and resource rights, and climate resilience, ActionAid Association's interventions not only advanced community agency but also reinforced and complemented Government of India and state initiatives. Together, these efforts demonstrate that systemic change is possible when grassroots mobilization and public policy move in tandem, ensuring justice, dignity, and resilience for the most marginalized.



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## Our Engagement with Children - advancing their Education and Protection

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### **Promoting Public Education and Child Protection**

ActionAid Association's work with children from the marginalised communities has focussed on creating awareness on education; supporting enrolment of out of school and drop-out children; engaging with schools and local administrations to work on aspects of quality of education in schools; promoting STEM education; and issues of children's safety and protection to help prevent child labour and child marriage.

Some of the specific initiatives that have been supported in these areas during the year are shared below:

#### ***School enrolment campaigns:***

'Yes to School' campaign across states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Uttarakhand focussed on enrolment drives through identifying drop-out and out of school children. Meetings were organised with the parents, teachers and members of school management committees to discuss the issues with them.

In Uttar Pradesh, the initiative achieved significant outcomes in identifying and enrolling 6,172 Out-of-School Children (OoSC aged 6–14 years) and 5,136 Children with Special Needs (CWSN aged 3–6 years) across four districts of Uttar Pradesh—Gonda, Bahraich, Balrampur, and Shravasti. This was made possible through rigorous field surveys, household visits and regular community engagement. Volunteers played a vital role by supporting teachers, Shiksha Mitras, and Aanganwadi workers in reaching children in remote, marginalized areas such as slums, brick kilns, and seasonal migrant settlements. The initiative also focused on capacity building and activation of 2,724 Meena Manch groups, and supported the implementation of the Early Warning System (EWS) in 2,434 schools to prevent dropouts. In parallel, School Management Committees (SMCs) were reactivated and strengthened, and local volunteers from high-risk communities were mobilized to ensure sustained educational

outreach. Importantly, the evidence-based data collected by the team was utilized by UNICEF for advocacy at the state level, catalyzing broader recognition and response for inclusion of OoSC and CWSN in the education system. This initiative created a robust community-based foundation for systematic and inclusive education, demonstrating the impact of grassroots mobilization, teacher collaboration, and institutional engagement.

Alongside identifying out of school and children with special needs, focus was also on engaging and empowering adolescent girls through a holistic, community-driven approach focused on girl child issues, gender equality, safety and protection across 12 districts. A total of 500 adolescent groups have been formed across 500 Gram Panchayats in 10 districts, reaching 50,000 families, with girls emerging as peer influencers, educators and local activists. As a result, 703 out-of-school girls were mainstreamed into regular schooling while 1,497 adolescents and their families accessed government social protection schemes, with 2,069 applications supported.

In Bhubaneswar, enrolment drives were carried out across 22 slum pockets that supported identification of out of school children which were taken up for admission in schools.

In Kerala, 206 flood-affected children were supported with school kits. Identification of drop out children and re-enrolment efforts were carried out across 73 tribal villages resulting in several children getting enrolled into school and promoting inclusive education.

### ***School Infrastructure Development***

With support from Aditya Birla Capital Foundation, infrastructure development was carried out in 50 government schools (35 KGBVs and 15 Upper Primary Schools) in Shravasti, Bahraich, Gonda, and Balrampur districts of Uttar Pradesh. This included installation of 13 solar panels, construction of 10 separate functional toilets, provision of 200 classroom furniture sets in 20 schools, establishment of 13 digital classrooms, 25 library sets, 33 sports and recreational kits, and development of 25 kitchen gardens. These interventions led to a 10% increase in enrolment, with student numbers rising from 7,329 to 7,670, alongside improved attendance and reduced dropouts. Monthly meetings and trainings strengthened the role of School Management Committees and Meena Manch in school governance.

At Ayapakkam School, in Semmanchery in Chennai, ActionAid with support from Movate Technologies undertook school infrastructure development project. Two school libraries have been established with books and furniture to promote a habit of reading among children. A 10,000-litre water sump has been constructed along with four new toilet units in each school. WASH committees have been constituted involving teachers and children to ensure proper maintenance and functioning of the constructed infrastructure. An incinerator has been installed in the Semmancherry school and hygiene awareness sessions using theatre were conducted for girls.

### ***Children's Learning Centres:***

In Panipat district of Haryana, ActionAid established Ambedkar Learning Centres across 12 project villages providing a safe and engaging space for learning, play, and recreation. Approximately 350 out of school children attended the bridge classes and structured activities carried out by these centres. The centres are facilitated by trained volunteers, offering

opportunities for reading, games, and creative expression for children. Celebrations of important days like Independence Day, Children's Day, and Environment Day enabled children to showcase their talents through drawing, greeting card making, songs, speeches, and dance, offering platforms often missing in government schools in rural areas. The education volunteers are also helping children to connect to other essential services like health and nutrition and 799 children benefitted with these services. In addition, 116 pregnant and lactating women were successfully linked to necessary health services.

In Maharashtra, a Community Learning Centre was set up under the Anokhi Padhai initiative in Dharavi, Mumbai, supporting 120 marginalized children from local municipal schools. In order to address gaps in learning very high teacher-pupil ration, five-month bridge classes were held based on learning level plans, that raised the literacy from 32% to 89%, and enabled 89% of students to perform basic math operations. Also 34% of students (Grades IV–VI) achieved foundational English language skills. Children also learned shapes and colours in three languages and participated in an essay competition on *Sarvanche Ambedkar*. A total of 60 students engaged in STEM-based activities using recycled materials, later expanded to five nearby schools.

#### ***Promoting STEM Education***

Under Project Jigyasa, STEM education reached 29,380 students (Grades 7–10) in 116 government schools across Maharashtra and Goa. Science Clubs with 748 members conducted 348 activities, involving 3,832 students. The Intra-School Science Fair drew 1,680 participants (940 girls), showcasing recycled innovations. A career guidance program supported 600 Grade 10 students, while 47 digital labs with computers, 3D printers, and smart TVs enhanced tech access. A “Back to School” campaign in Ahmednagar re-enrolled 215 children, and 11 SMCs were trained on school development and local initiatives like solar lighting and Aadhaar drives.

In Gujarat, we advanced STEM-based education across 10 primary and 5 secondary government schools in Dahegam block, Gandhinagar district, promoting scientific temper and curiosity among marginalized students. The sessions focussed on building foundational awareness of interdisciplinary learning. STEM Clubs were formed to foster 21st-century skills through monthly activities, celebrations, and peer-led learning, enhancing students' leadership and communication. An Intra-School Science Fair held between 15 November and 15 December 2024 engaged 335 students who presented 163 innovative projects from 6 participating schools, reflecting strong engagement and application of scientific concepts.

In Chennai, with support from Movate Technologies, a total of 310 STEM kits (190 in Semmencherry, 110 in AIR Nagar) were distributed and integrated into school curricula, alongside the setting up of one SMART classroom and a science lab in Semmancherry. Two science fairs engaged 100 students in model-making and presentations.

#### ***Child Protection and preventing Child Marriage:***

In Karauli, Barmer, Bundi and Jaisalmer districts of Rajasthan, our efforts focussed on prevention of child marriage, child labour and unsafe migration. This initiative supported by UNICEF included organisation of community meetings, workshops, and media sensitization sessions with various stakeholders such as local authorities, education departments, child

rights bodies, police, NYKs volunteers, and traditional leaders. A total of 793 child protection functionaries were trained on issues related to the prevention and protection of children from child labour, child marriage, trafficking, and effective referral mechanisms for survivors. Awareness and capacity-building initiatives reached 7,489 individuals, including children, adolescents, parents, caregivers, and frontline workers, focusing on child protection issues and mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS). Furthermore, 1,32,785 community members, including traditional leaders, children, and adolescents, were sensitized on the economic exploitation of children, particularly concerning child labour, child marriage, and trafficking, across target districts. Additionally, 3,565 children and adolescents, especially from the most marginalized backgrounds, benefited from care services and social protection schemes helping prevent their separation from families and mitigating other protection risks.

From across these districts, 352 children at risk of child labour and child marriage were rescued and linked to protection services, ensuring their safety and access to support mechanisms. Further, in Karauli and Bundi, our teams facilitated formulation of District Action Plans for addressing concerns of children's safety and protection which were formally approved by the District Collectors in both these districts.

In Uttar Pradesh, engagement with 520 Panchayat-level Child Protection Committees (PLCPCs) enabled crucial interventions in preventing child marriage, child labour, and trafficking, leading to delaying or preventing more than 1,000 possible child marriages. The Social Behavioural Change–Child Protection (SBC-CP) module reached 29,510 people across 12 districts and 520 Gram Panchayats. Additionally, 26 district-level review meetings were held, and 9 districts developed annual action plans on adolescent issues, including Ending Child Marriage and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP). Group sessions on child rights, gender equality, and child marriage engaged 45,876 people, while 966 local influencers and leaders advocated for child protection. 90 youth- and women-led CSO networks were mobilized to challenge harmful gender norms. Celebratory events like Kanya Janmotsav welcomed 155 newborn girls, reinforcing positive perceptions of girl children. Over 7,800 people participated in International Girl Child Day activities, including symbolic initiatives such as *"Ek Din Ka Ziladhikari"* – District Collector for a day, to promote leadership among girls. To further strengthen legal literacy, 36 Samwaad dialogues and 19 trainings on POCSO and workplace harassment laws were organized to raise awareness and promote community accountability.

Additionally, over 1,000 adolescent girls were trained in self-defence, life skills, gender equity, leadership, and menstrual hygiene management, fostering greater confidence, awareness, and participation in public spaces and education.

During the year, 218 girls who received skill building trainings were connected with employment opportunities across the various districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Similarly in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh district, engagement with children and teachers served as platforms to discuss critical child rights related issues of child marriage, child labor, good touch–bad touch and the availability of child helplines. Efforts were made to link adolescent girls with government welfare schemes eg Gaura Kanyadhan Yojana and Sukanya Samridhi Yojana accounts were opened for some of them. Education access was further enhanced by

supporting enrolment of boys and girls in Ashram Schools located in Baluwakot and Charchum and children from the Raji tribal community in the Eklavya Model Residential Schools in Bajpur, Kalsi, Dehradun.

In Odisha, ActionAid and partners implemented wide-ranging interventions across urban slums and rural districts, focusing on education, adolescent empowerment and child protection. 50 children's clubs have been formed engaging 1,210 children on child rights, hygiene, and environmental awareness. Meetings were held with parents to sensitize them on issues such as child marriage and climate change, while engagement with adolescent girls focussed on discussions on menstrual health, gender-responsive public services and government schemes. Meetings were held with district-level Task Forces to review child protection programs. Trainings were conducted for district level officials including OSCPCS, SIRD, and the State Police Academy to develop collaborative actions to address the issue of child marriage. State wide campaign organised around Akshaya Tritiya across 20,000 villages helped create awareness against child marriage during the festive season reaching out to 3 lakh adolescents and 2 lakh community leaders. In Nayagarh district, 25 adolescents have been trained as para-legal volunteers who are aiding community-level monitoring and awareness on child protection.

The Odisha teams also conducted state-wide campaign across 25 districts and identified 1,45,459 children from single-parent or orphan backgrounds and helped 65,619 of these children to link to schemes such as scholarships, education support and late marriage incentives. Overall, this helped leverage over ₹58 crores support to these children.

In Hyderabad and Secunderabad, Telangana, ActionAid, in collaboration with the Telangana State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR), District Child Protection Unit, and District Welfare Office, implemented a multi-dimensional campaign to strengthen child protection mechanisms and promote safe, inclusive, and child-friendly environments across urban bastis and schools.

A research study on Child-Friendly Spaces covered 295 children (6–14 years), 150 parents, and included focus group discussions with community members and interviews with key stakeholders (police, ASHA, Anganwadi workers, and community leaders). Based on the findings, Child Protection Committees (CPCs) were formed and strengthened in five locations—Rasoolpura, Tukaram Gate (Waddera & Maratha Basti), Ambedkar Basti, and Mudfort Huts. Regular monthly trainings and orientations were conducted for CPC members to enhance their understanding of child protection norms.

Similarly, in partnership with the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, District Legal Services Authority and the Social Cyber Security Council, ActionAid carried out awareness and sensitization sessions across 32 locations—including 10 government schools, 4 colleges, 3 child care institutions, and 5 urban communities on cyber safety, legal provisions for protection and prevention of sexual harassment and workplace safety and on social welfare provisions. Resource persons from WCD, DLSA, SCSC, and ActionAid facilitated these sessions that reached out to over 2000 children and youth.

In total, 765 children were actively engaged through 27 child groups, each comprising 20–25 members. Regular study circles were conducted in bastis, focusing on child rights, safe/unsafe touch, good habits, life skills, and included fun activities, films, and games. A special emphasis was placed on reintegrating out-of-school children—30 children were successfully mainstreamed through the collective efforts of SMCs, schools, and parents.

As part of our adolescent empowerment initiative, 350 adolescent girls from 15 slums were mobilized into 17 peer groups, receiving orientation on menstrual hygiene, sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), financial literacy, career guidance, gender-responsive public services (GRPS), safety, and rights. In order to foster creativity and learning, a month-long Summer Camp was organized across 5 locations, with daily participation of 25–30 children. Activities included craft work, Paper Mâché, climate-themed drawings, films on good habits and body safety, and indoor games, providing children a joyful and educational space.

In a first-of-its-kind event, a Children’s Mock Parliament was held at Zilla Parishad High School, Secunderabad, engaging 150 students. 15 girls spoke on pressing issues such as education, environment, girl child protection, and livelihoods. Awareness activities—including rallies, signature campaigns, essay and drawing competitions, and pledge ceremonies—mobilized over 200 students to advocate for girl child rights and gender equality in Hyderabad’s government schools and slums. On National Girl Child Day 2024, a culmination event held at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Degree College brought together 200 students. 25 girls were felicitated for their outstanding participation in competitions. The event featured addresses by senior officials from the Directorate of Education, legal experts, women’s rights advocates, and school leaders. Children showcased their ideas through posters, elocutions, and creative presentations.

In Tamil Nadu, similar efforts were carried out in Semmancherry and AIR Nagar for prevention of child marriage, improvement of WASH infrastructure in schools and strengthening child protection systems. Child Rights Protection Committees were formed at school levels who engaged with students, parents, and community members through gallery workshops to create awareness and sensitisation. Through Ripple Activities children were engaged in classroom painting, joyful learning and provided mentoring support. Overall, efforts of our Tamil Nadu team resulted in preventing 8 children from becoming child labourers, preventing 4 child marriages and enabled provision of educational support including laptops and remedial classes for vulnerable children.

***Environmental Awareness among children:***

Various activities were carried out across states to build ecological awareness among children.

In Secunderabad, Telangana, sensitisation sessions were carried out with 300 children and youth focussing on impacts of climate change—including on health, housing, and education. Activities such as poster-making, rallies, and interactive sessions with environmental activists were held. Children aged 10–16 years visited dump yards and recycling sites, learning firsthand about climate change’s implications for vulnerable urban communities. These programs helped children connect environmental issues with their own lived realities of heatwaves, waterlogging, and urban drainage challenges.

In Sambalpur district, the Juba Sathi team led creative environmental education activities across five villages, reaching 520 children through 10 schools and 2 learning centres. Regular events such as reading days, drawing sessions, learning games, and tree plantation drives promoted literacy, self-expression, and ecological responsibility.

Heatwave Awareness Campaign (Apr–May 2024) was conducted across 46,257 Anganwadi Centres in 35,649 villages, reaching 4.76 lakh adolescent girls and 1.98 lakh boys. Adolescents installed 37,899 water pots and conducted awareness drives on climate change, ORS use, and water conservation.

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## Women and the World of Work

### Securing Workers Rights and Promoting Livelihoods

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Series of engagements and activities were carried out across states to promote fair working conditions, payment of minimum and equal wages, improved workplace standards for women workers across sectors etc. Capacity building and awareness initiatives were organized in collaboration with stakeholders, particularly targeting women and informal workers.

In Muzaffarnagar district, Uttar Pradesh, awareness drives carried out using e-rickshaws, primarily targeted agricultural labourers and rural workers. Cluster level meetings and community gatherings were organised during the awareness drives. Capacity-building trainings were conducted for members of workers' collectives on the Minimum Wages Act, Equal Wage provisions, and the Wage Code 2019. A significant outcome emerged from Kallarpur village, where sugarcane workers, previously paid only ₹30 per quintal for cleaning and loading, collectively bargained and were successful in increasing the rate to ₹45 per quintal.

The "MNREGA Jan Jagrukta Abhiyan", in the district helped raise awareness about various provisions under MGNREGA. The campaign helped several workers to get registered under the scheme and get employment ranging from 50-60 days in the villages.

In Kushinagar district, Uttar Pradesh, the focus has been on brick kiln workers. The brick kiln workers collective formed as part of project efforts in Kushinagar met with the Labour department officials and took up the issue of their long and expensive commute to the brick kilns along with the issues of timely payment of wages and facilities at the work sites. The Labour department promised to look into the issues. Targeted trainings and orientations were



also conducted for women workers, youth, and collective leaders at the brick kilns on various welfare provisions and accessing the same.

In Tamil Nadu, the focus has been on domestic workers and the issues raised were gender-based violence, minimum wages, housing rights, and constitutional entitlements. A key highlight was the Minimum Wage Campaign, which engaged 428 domestic workers in Chennai. The campaigners collected primary wage data from domestic workers during the campaign which was submitted to the labour department in their efforts to draft a policy for domestic workers.

In Odisha, work has focussed across the districts of Khorda, Balangir, Bhubaneswar, and Kendrapara districts. Challenges faced by workers were highlighted during important day celebrations for eg May Day, World Day Against Child Labour, National Girl Child Day, Anti-Child Labour Day, International Women's Day, Human Rights Day, 16 Days of Activism, World Habitat Day etc. Each of these events saw participation of scores of workers particularly women who raised the issue of workplace safety and the Sexual Harassment Act. More than 2,400 workers were provided information and training on labour provisions and various social security schemes distributed 800 informative leaflets at key labour hubs. Following this scores of workers directly engaged with Labour Department regarding registration with welfare boards.

***Workers Facilitation Centres: Enabling Workers access to schemes and welfare provisions:***

Central to providing support to workers across states was running of the Workers Facilitation Centres particularly across 12 districts of six states namely Rajasthan, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu. These centres play a critical role in providing facilitation support to informal sector workers across different sector – construction workers, agricultural workers, brick kiln workers, sanitation workers, domestic workers, home based workers, fish workers, other self employed people like pastoralists, nomadic communities etc. WFCs provided critical services including awareness on government schemes, assistance with registrations, and counselling support to workers in need/distress. During the year, the WFCs have supported scores of workers across these districts to register under various workers welfare schemes, provisions and boards for MNREGA registration, E-Shram portal registration, the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, Domestic Workers Welfare Board in Tamil Nadu etc. In addition, scores of workers were supported to secure Aadhar cards, birth certificates, disability pensions, old age pensions, and widow pensions etc.

Apart from providing support to workers who visit the Facilitation Centres, a network of community-based leaders have been trained to work as volunteers to support workers in need and distress and help resolve their issues. Further, a team of pro-bono lawyers has been created who are providing legal guidance and advice to workers and helping link with district level legal service authorities in instances of non-payment of wages to workers, delayed payment of wages, instances of gender-based violence at workplace, instances of child labour/bonded labour, atrocities, abuse, injuries at workplaces, PF issues etc. The WFCs have accordingly helped resolved several cases of non-payment/delayed payment of wages to workers.

***Some significant local wins include:***

- The WFC in Tarn Tarn Punjab, helped 20 brick kiln worker families secure INR 22.62 lacs of long pending unpaid wages. Engagements with employers at 89 brick kiln sites in Tarn Tarn and Amritsar in Punjab have encouraged adoption of ethical labour practices by the employers.
- The facilitation centres in Haryana helped job cards and employment access for 4,000 MNREGA workers in.
- 8 cases of gender-based discrimination cases were addressed in Delhi
- In Bhubaneswar, Odisha, 6 workers received INR 50,000 each as marriage benefits, 2 families received death benefits totalling INR 2.05 lakh and 63 applications were submitted for education support. In Sambalpur district, MGNREGA-funded pond renovation activities generated ₹3.2 lakh in wages for 25 labourers. In addition, 42 single women forest workers were successfully linked to forest produce markets, enhancing income through sustainable livelihoods.
- The Ana-sangathitha Shramika Mancha in Odisha consistently engaged with the Labour Department and their sustained efforts resulted in establishment and inauguration of two Shramik Pratiksha Kendra (Workers' Waiting Centers) at the labour hubs in Bhubaneshwar. The centers provide sheltered sitting facility for informal women workers along with drinking water and washrooms, where women and other workers can wait to be hired by contractors and people.
- In Tamil Nadu, in Dharmapuri, the WFC teams of ActionAid engaged with state and district level authorities, in the Labour departments and the 18 Unorganised Workers Welfare Boards in the state to take up issues of challenges faced by informal women workers. Petitions were submitted to demand wage reforms and put in place effective grievance redressal mechanisms. The engagements facilitated inclusion of single women in the Single Women Welfare Board through Gram Sabha resolutions.
- In Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh, with the support of network of lawyers 36 cases related to caste-based discrimination, bonded labour, labour atrocities, domestic violence, POCSO and wage theft are being handled.
- In Kushinagar district, Uttar Pradesh, workers' collectives of agriculture workers, construction workers, sanitation workers, and brick kiln workers have been formed with a total membership of 1,885 workers of which 54% are women. These collectives engage with labour departments and other relevant authorities to take up their issues. The collectives are in the process of forming a district-level workers' federation.
- In Rajasthan, our teams efforts focused on housing and identity documentation support for the rag pickers and homeless, helping 50 families access housing schemes, healthcare and education support wherein 3,413 individuals were assisted in obtaining Ayushman Bharat health cards and 465 children received scholarships under BOCW, enabling their continued education.
- As part of post-disaster recovery efforts in Wayanad in Kerala, training programmes were carried out for women workers building their knowledge on labour laws, feminist thought, and grassroots leadership. Exposure visits and sessions with welfare boards directly helped these women connect with state support systems contributing to building their resilience and recovery. Our teams also supported hundreds of women to access benefits of various welfare schemes, including pensions, ration cards, and E-Shram registration.

Overall, the Centres have helped significantly enhance the leadership and agency of informal workers, especially women and youth, through legal facilitation, grassroots leadership

development, and institutional convergence. The centres continue with renewed focus on gender justice, economic rights, and pushing for accountable governance for marginalized workers.

### ***Vocational Trainings and Skill Enhancement for Workers***

ActionAid's efforts in this area have focused on enhancing employability and financial resilience among women, particularly those from marginalised families, widows/abandoned women and young girls.

In Dharavi in Mumbai, a comprehensive entrepreneurship and financial literacy training programme was organised for 120 young women that covered aspects like business planning, budgeting, digital marketing and welfare provisions and schemes of the state and central government. All women who attended the training were provided with certificates aimed at improving their employability and confidence for self-employment. Based on specific interests expressed by women/girls, two course, one, a three month long tailoring course and another on baking was also conducted. 30 young women participants learned to bake cakes of various varieties and now exploring the possibilities for starting home-based businesses. The programme has successfully improved entrepreneurship skills, financial literacy, and access to government support, laying the foundation for building sustainable livelihoods. Efforts are underway to form Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to support these women to start their own microenterprises.

In Hyderabad, ActionAid Association has been working to enhance employability and livelihood options for Young Urban Women (YUWs) in Dharavi slums. A Community-Level Skilling Centre for Spoken English and Personality Development was inaugurated. Awareness outreach was conducted in schools and colleges on government technical courses, loans, and training opportunities. Financial literacy sessions were held for adolescent girls and women workers, particularly those pursuing skill-based vocations like beautician or fashion design. A total of 130 YUWs enrolled for skilling programmes out of which 5 women have initiated individual livelihoods through input support provided to them. Alongside, our teams are also supporting these women to access benefits of various social welfare schemes and entitlements.

In Tamil Nadu, our efforts have focussed on formation and strengthening of collectives of domestic workers, street vendors, and construction labourers. Over 200 women received vocational training in tailoring, organic farming, and micro-enterprises under initiatives like Pen Shakthi Vidiyal, backed by FSSAI registration and market linkages.

In Wayanad, in Kerala, ActionAid supported 175 women-led households with livelihood kits and has initiated women-led climate-resilient enterprises.

In Uttar Pradesh in Kushinagar, 18 new women's groups were formed to promote farming and small-scale production of various food products. Our teams helped organise skill-building trainings with support from the Rural Training Centre. Trainings included making of pickle, papad, jam, jelly, murabba, detergent, mushroom production, and machan vegetable farming. A total of 170 women were trained in two batches. In Ambedkarnagar, women also

received training in dhoopbatti and agarbatti packaging, enhancing their income-generating capacity.

**Focussing on Impact of Climate on lives and livelihoods of Workers**

In Bhubaneswar, Odisha the Awareness Campaigns on labour, domestic workers and social security schemes as well as climate were change carried out that covered of 4778 population (male-2010, female-2208 and others- 560).

The climate change campaigns aimed towards generating awareness on environment and ecology and calling towards establishment of a proper garbage disposal system in the city for a healthy environment.

In Chennai, a comprehensive report on street vendors was submitted to the SDMA, for considering their inclusion in disaster preparedness planning. The report was based on the socio-economic mapping of domestic workers and surveys on housing and social security gaps, that led to RTIs and collective demands for improved services.

In the state of Delhi, the government issued a landmark circular in response to a severe heatwave, following continuous follow up efforts by the Nirman Mazdoor Adhikar Abhiyan. With temperatures exceeding 46°C for over 55 consecutive days, the circular mandated all construction agencies and establishments to adopt protective measures such as shaded rest areas, access to drinking water and ORS kits, and mandatory breaks between 12 noon and 3 PM. This intervention safeguarded thousands of informal workers from life-threatening heat exposure.

In another critical development, the Delhi Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board released an ex-gratia payment of INR 8,000 to registered construction workers affected by the pollution-related construction ban under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). This was the result of sustained engagement by community leaders, leading not only to the reissuance of the payment after a three-year gap but also an increase in the amount from the previous INR 5,000.

In Uttarakhand, a signature campaign, "Drying Rivers and Our Responsibility," highlighted water scarcity caused by unchecked exploitation and infrastructure projects. Awareness drives on water conservation and afforestation were conducted in 60 villages, involving schools and Van Panchayats. Tribal women from the Sabla Sangathan revived traditional seed preservation practices, training younger generations to combat climate-induced agricultural challenges.

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## Gender Justice

### Addressing Violence Against women/girls

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This strand of work has focussed around creating gender awareness and sensitisation for building a gender just and harassment free environment for women at domestic and workplaces. Various activities were carried out across 300 districts of the country as part of campaigns organised on building gender equality.

In Sambalpur district of Odisha, in April 2024, leaders of women Beedi workers collectives, representing around 3,000 women workers from three panchayats of the district met with Honourable Union Minister Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan in Rairakhol. They presented their charter of demands to the Minister which included scholarship funds for higher education for their children, health insurance, regular medical check-ups, EPF coverage, housing under Awas Yojana, and the establishment of MSP and mandi facilities for non-timber forest products. The Minister promised support and several of these demands if fulfilled will help improve the welfare and livelihood security of these women Beedi workers and their families.

In Hyderabad, ActionAid was selected as an external committee member under the POSH Act, recognising its continued efforts since 2019 to promote safe and gender-just workspaces in both public and private sectors. The state office conducted over 300 awareness sessions across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, engaging unorganised women workers, educational institutions, trade unions, and corporates. These efforts have been acknowledged by District Collectors and the WCD Department. A state-level orientation on PSEA and Child Safeguarding was held on 3rd May 2024, with 55 team members, interns, and consultants participating. The workshop focused on deepening understanding of the POSH Act 2013, workplace harassment, gender stereotypes, and organisational safeguarding policies. Using case studies and short films, the training enabled participants to respond more effectively to sexual harassment and to foster inclusive and safe spaces within their work and communities.

In Ambedkarnagar district, of Uttar Pradesh gender sensitization programmes were carried out across villages which not only involved women but also community members, youth, panchayat members, health workers, teachers and others. Small group meetings involving 10 –20 women people were organised to discuss about gender-based violence, women's access to land and property, legal provisions and mechanisms to addresses violence against women, the role communities and panchayats can play in supporting women etc. Overall, the sensitisation initiative reached out to over 12,000 women and community members. Further,

on March 8th, Mahila Sammelan Diwas celebrated across districts of Jaunpur, Muzaffarnagar, Ambedkarnagar, and Sonbhadra, offered a platform for strengthening this resolve of collective efforts to create safe, healthy and dignified lives for women and girls. ing women to voice concerns, share experiences, and build solidarity.



In Odisha, a campaign on gender equality was carried out across Padampur and Gaisilet blocks of Bargarh district, where the discussions focused on domestic violence, early marriage, gender roles, girls' education and discrimination in farming and households.

In Uttarakhand, along with sensitisation meeting on gender justice and equality, efforts also focussed on biases and challenges in women's ownership over land and property. Women community leaders trained by us helped 25 single women successfully claim their legal rights to ancestral property. 14 other women were helped to complete land ownership registration. This has enabled women to access several schemes related to support for agriculture eg PM-Kisan Nidhi and Samman Yojna and above all a sense of great satisfaction among women in being recognised as farmers. s

In Uttar Pradesh, capacity-building sessions were held on key legal protections and health topics, including the Child Marriage Act, POSH, Domestic Violence Act, Dowry Prohibition Act, and Menstrual Hygiene Management. Across intervention areas, 120 community meetings helped address cases pertaining to gender-based violence, street harassment and issues of unequal wage payment. In Jaunpur, 27 cases of domestic and gender-based violence were addressed of which 20 were resolved through mediation; 7 were escalated to police (5 resolved) and 2 are ongoing in the court. Our teams will continue to support resolution of these cases to ensure justice to women.

### **16 Days of Activism against Gender Based violence**

Across the country, various activities were organised during the International Campaign on 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based violence from November 25- December 10, 2024. This included awareness activities including padyatras and meetings.

Similarly, across the country, women's collectives celebrated International Women's Day by organising conversations, dialogues and awareness programmes. All these events invited participation of officials from various departments like WCD, health, education, panchayat members, officials from Municipal Corporation, Police Station, Divisional Magistrate office etc and legal experts too. Discussions focused on gender-based violence, harassment and abuse while at work, early marriage and its impact on young girls, health services, legal protections, barriers to accessing government schemes etc. Across all locations, the events provided platforms for women to voice concerns, gain awareness, and strengthen solidarity around rights, protection, and empowerment.

In Navsari, Vadodara, and Tapi districts, about 500 members of the state level platform of single women namely Ekal Nari Shakti Manch came together for an interface with the concerned officials. Majority of these women belonged to tribal and PVTG communities. The officials praised the work of Ekal Nari Manch and pledged local and state-level support to help address key issues such as gender-based violence, street harassment, and access to services like the 181 Helpline by these women.

A postcard campaign was also launched in Navsari district on the occasion of International Women's Day. Women wrote postcards to the Chief Minister of the state, appealing increase in pensions and inclusion of all single women under the widow pension schemes that focussed only on widows.

### ***Engagement with Single women***

Single women who constitute the most vulnerable category even among women, has been an important focus area of ActionAid's work. Collectives of single women have been formed across various districts who organised various activities throughout the year to highlight and find redress to the specific challenges faced by these women.

In Gujarat, the state level platform of Single Women called Ekal Nari Manch supported by ActionAid launched a weeklong campaign across five districts to mark International Widows Day, reaching out to 7,000 single women. Meetings, workshops, conventions, and community events were conducted to provide space for single women to voice challenges and propose solutions and raise voice for inclusion of all categories of single women in pension scheme and increase in amount of pension. Leaders of the Manch also submitted their demand charter to the Governor, District Collectors and elected representatives in three districts to advance the agenda of single women.

In Telangana, as part of our state level engagement efforts with the government, International Widows Day was observed in Hyderabad and Secunderabad, focusing on strengthening the Ontari Mahila Hakkula Sangham (Single Women Rights Forum). The event brought together single women, civil society members, and community leaders, serving as a platform to present a charter of demands—including increased pensions, ESI medical coverage, housing rights, and scholarships for children—to key government officials, including Sri Anudeep Durishetty, IAS, and Sri Akkeshwar Rao.



Trainings were also organised for the members of *Ontari Mahila Sammakhya* on government schemes, entitlements, and mechanism for redressal of violence/abuse faced by women.

In Sambalpur district, two single women collectives have been formed which have a membership of 50 each coming from three Gram Panchayats in the district. During the year, trainings were conducted for the collective members on gender and property rights; domestic violence and its redressal mechanism, menstrual hygiene and livelihood programs for single women.

### ***Engagement with Young Urban Women***

Across 13 cities of the country (capital cities across 13 states) ActionAid has been supporting focussed interventions with young urban women with a view on specific challenges faced by these group of women in urban basties. City based collectives of these young women have been formed across these 13 cities called YUWA – Young Urban Women Alliance. During the year YUWA has been expanding its reach and membership to other districts of the country. Through initiatives like YUWA melas and capacity-building trainings, members of these collectives gained knowledge on body autonomy and integrity, financial and digital literacy, work opportunities, career guidance and orientation on sexual harassment and POSH Act etc.

In Hyderabad, a two-day residential workshop, “*Me to We – Walking Together*”, was held for 45 young leaders from five urban settlements, fostering collective leadership and community engagement. A leadership and visioning workshop saw 55 young women from 15 urban settlements explore their roles as active citizens.

In Gujarat, ActionAid’s Young Urban Women (YUW) initiative supported leadership building and empowerment of young women across Ahmedabad, Surat, and Navsari through a series of targeted trainings and engagements. 35 young women leaders participated in a leadership workshop at Vandsa, while 40 women received livelihood training in Ahmedabad. 65 youth attended a session on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, and 25 women were trained in menstrual hygiene management. 60 YUWs participated in self-defence training in Ahmedabad. Leadership development sessions were also conducted for these girls along with exposure visit to Sakhi One Stop Centre to help gain insights into legal and psychosocial support for survivors of violence. All these interventions aimed at enhancing skills, awareness, and leadership among young women from marginalized communities living in urban informal settlements.

### **Research**

As part of its national initiative, ActionAid conducted a research study on water access across 13 Indian cities, including Hyderabad, supported by young urban women as data collectors and facilitated focus group discussions. The study aimed to assess the availability, affordability, and quality of potable water in urban slums, highlighting that water collection—a responsibility mostly shouldered by women—remains unpaid, time-consuming, and often dangerous due to risks of gender-based violence. The research also explored the socio-economic vulnerabilities of respondents, underscoring how climate change exacerbates water scarcity, particularly for poor women in slum communities.



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## Community Training and Capacity Building

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In 2024, ActionAid Association supported the training and capacity building of social and ecological justice defenders through various initiatives. A key vehicle for this work was the Social Movement Academy, which helped build mutual trust and strengthen the capacities of movement actors. Activities included training programs on various laws and skills building on conducting action research, communication, use of technology etc.

Training sessions were carried out across 150 districts of 15 states. Training areas included the following:

- Awareness on and mechanisms to access various social welfare schemes, laws and programmes for eg on POSH Act, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna, BSKY, Viswakarma Yojana, pension schemes, Rights of Persons with Disability Act, Prevention of Atrocities Act for SC/ST communities, Manual Scavenging Act, Equal Wage Act etc
- Training on governance processes and administrative procedures for enhancing the quality and availability of civic services and amenities like drinking water, sanitation, safety and security at public places.
- Training on forming collectives and self-help groups were also emphasized for building strong supportive networks to foster solidarity and collective action.

During the year, 1188 community based human rights defenders were identified and trained on the above-mentioned issues. The trained community leaders have been instrumental in monitoring effective delivery of services and programmes for the poor and the vulnerable in their communities. They are taking up local level issues related to the infrastructure, implementation of various government schemes and entitlements and also helping communities in drafting letters and applications for drawing the attention of concerned authorities for redressal of issues.

In Patdi in Gujarat, twenty-four community leaders have been trained and registered as paralegal volunteers in Rapar court, helping enhance grassroots level legal support to community members. Their efforts have also led to sanction of budgets for road and drainage infrastructure improvements in their villages. Further, with support from these community leaders, nine widows were helped with pension forms and five people with disability got their long pending Antyodaya cards in Rapar in Gujarat.

Growing awareness and engagement with support systems like 181 Abhyam and Nari Adalat has resulted in increased trust among women on these services and there has been increased reporting of domestic violence cases and support that women are getting in such cases.

In Chamoli, in Uttarakhand, the community leaders facilitated action on damaged drinking water lines, triggering repairs under the sanctioned ₹7.1 million fund.

In Udham Singh Nagar, efforts of community leaders enabled flood relief distribution and ₹5,000 compensation to the affected families.

In Punjab and Delhi, a collective of 133 trained strong community leaders including women are monitoring issues of informal sector workers. On May 1, 2024, they launched two helplines to provide immediate support to workers in distress.

In Rajasthan, during the reporting period we have made significant strides in improving access to social security schemes for sanitation workers, construction workers and mine workers respectively in Jaipur and Jodhpur. A total of 2,454 workers were successfully registered under the E-Shram portal, ensuring their inclusion in national-level welfare schemes. Additionally, 1,501 construction workers were supported with BOCW registration, granting them access to various entitlements such as health benefits, education support, and pension. Also, 1,515 workers in Jaipur were enabled to register and benefit from the Urban Employment Scheme, while 3,988 rural workers in Jodhpur were covered under MGNREGA, providing them with assured employment and income security.

In Banswara district of Rajasthan, our fellow and tribal leader, a district-level master trainer on Panchayati Raj, trained 569 community leaders and PRI representatives on PESA and FRA. These leaders engaged with district authorities (DLC, SDLC), prompting the administration to begin verifying pending Community Forest Rights (CFR) claims and accept new applications.

In Jagatsinghpur, trainings were conducted across 7 Gram Panchayats reaching out to 960 participants (839 women, 121 men) on government schemes like PMAY, SHG Farmer, BSKY, Biswakarma Yojana, and pensions.

In Haryana, consistent efforts and follow up by the community leaders led the state government to announce allocation of 100 square yard residential plots to more than 7,500 landless BPL families under the Mukhya Mantri Gramin Awas Yojna. This decision marked a major step in addressing land issues of marginalized communities.

In Chhattisgarh, community leaders played a pivotal role throughout 2024 in advancing community issues and accountability. In Parsada village (Raipur district), they mobilized villagers to address acute water scarcity, successfully engaging with rural administration for the construction of 10 check dams and 10 soak pits under MGNREGA. This intervention recharged groundwater, ensured year-round drinking water, and demonstrated a model of decentralized water governance. In Gobar-Nawapada village, community leaders facilitated a Gram Sabha, the decision helped to prevent environmental hazards and health risks for children studying in the school. These interventions strengthened the role of Gram Sabhas in safeguarding community resources and underscored the power of collective action.

In Bengaluru, Karnataka, ActionAid Association worked with communities, civil society partners, and government departments to address systemic barriers faced by urban informal sector workers in accessing social security schemes. These collective efforts resulted in restoring pensions for 172 individuals across four wards, and 150 new applications were filed, with 100 beneficiaries now receiving pensions regularly. 176 other workers were supported in getting their caste and income certificates enabling them to secure scholarship and other welfare benefits for their children and families. Engagement with local administration under

the Gruha Lakshmi scheme ensured 334 women received a total of ₹7.86 lakh in benefits, reinforcing livelihood stability and dignity.

### **National Conclave of Community Leaders**

The National Conclave brought together over 200 human rights defenders and representatives of people's organizations to share experiences and strategies, advance feminist and community-led approaches to social change and to celebrate the achievements of HRDs.

The event, organized by the National Academy of Social Movements, was attended by the Secretary General of the National Human Rights Commission. A total of 24 HRDs were felicitated for their contributions to climate justice, informal workers' rights, education, and dignity for people with disabilities.

Between April – June 2024, the Human rights Defender collectively carried out a nationwide campaign reaching across 200 districts meeting diverse communities and their organizations. The campaign helped create a space for deliberative analysis and collective action, ensuring that marginalized communities find space in democratic processes at the local level and advocate for their rights.

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## Engagement with Particularly Vulnerable communities

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In line with Government of India's focus on Sabka Saath, Sabka Vishwas, ActionAid has been engaging with particularly vulnerable communities like the NT/DNT communities, pastoral communities, forest tribes like Van Gujjar, persons with disabilities (PwDs), the elderly, widowed women, and individuals with chronic health conditions so that their issues of development find equal focus in all programmes and they are not left behind. This commitment of ActionAid towards enabling inclusive development for all was deepened further in 2024–2025 through a range of interventions that focused on ensuring access, dignity, and agency for these particularly marginalized and underrepresented groups.

In Rajasthan, training and capacity building of leaders from NTDNT community resulted in preparation of "People's Manifesto for NT-DNT communities" that was developed through participatory processes and extensive fieldwork by the community leaders. This manifesto was submitted to the Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan who instructed the concerned state level authorities to act on the issues raised. Regular follow ups and engagement with these authorities resulted in implementation of key initiatives including housing and distribution of homestead land to landless families in this community. In Jaipur 50 sq. ft of homestead land has been allocated to 50 DNT families who have been linked to the Pradhan Matri Awaas Yojana. In Bharatpur, 237 DNT communities have been allocated homestead land titles and these families can now settle down and have better facilities and access to education for their children. Another 70 DNT families of Gadia Lohar tribe in Tonk too have been given land and

housing entitlements. The process of processing of statutory documents required to ascertain identity and residence proofs which are critical steps for these communities to ensure access to state entitlements has also been expedited. Accordingly, during the year, the community leaders facilitated id cards for 2,060 DNT families crucial for availing government schemes.

In Gujarat, a focused campaign on access to housing schemes was conducted in two districts of Kutch and Mahesana. In Kutch's Rapar block, HRDs conducted a survey of 817 families from marginalized communities also including NT-NDTs who lacked homestead land or housing. Similar efforts were undertaken in 11 slum areas of Rapar town. The survey findings and data of homeless was shared with the local administration to help them in implementation of housing schemes and reaching out the left-out families. In Becharaji block, Mehsana district a survey of 183 NT-DNT families identified 78 families without homes or homestead land. The community leaders engaged with the district authorities to address these housing gaps. Similarly, the survey conducted by community leaders and volunteers in Patdi, Becharaji taluk, to assess the availability of Aadhaar and caste certificates, identified 55 NT-DNT families that lacked these identity related documents. The community leaders helped these families in filing applications and following procedures to get these statutory documents required to prove basic eligibility for accessing any scheme and entitlement.

On the occasion of International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralism, a state level youth fair of pastoral communities was organised in Gujarat in collaboration with MARAG, SAPA, ILC, and CAPA. This three-days **Pastoralist Youth Fair** themed “Building a Resilient Future for Pastoralism” brought together over 60 participants from community groups, CSOs, and academic institutions to discuss climate challenges, shrinking commons, and youth displacement from traditional livelihoods. Later, the **Maldhari Sansad** (People's Parliament) convened over 300 Maldhari community members to raise the issue of their access and protection and rejuvenation of pasture lands, resilience building, fostering youth engagement and strengthening policy engagement on their issues.

In Tamil Nadu, ActionAid supported the Narikuravar community—a historically excluded Denotified Tribe—in securing housing rights. Though previously allocated land in Thiruvannamalai in Chennai, the communities lacked legal ownership of their houses (patta). ActionAid conducted a legal documentation camp to help families obtain community certificates and submitted a petition to local authorities to provide land titles. The administration was very supportive and issued formal land tenures to 45 Narikuravar families thereby enabling the families to also avail benefits of several other welfare schemes provisions.

Similarly, ground level campaign and engagement with authorities in Jamkheda taluka of Karjat district in Maharashtra resulted in highlighted the issues of inaccessibility of NT DNT communities in these areas to various schemes and welfare programmes including that related to health, livelihoods, welfare schemes etc.

In Kashmir, ActionAid Association's work with Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic (NT) and Denotified (DNT) communities focusses on the Gujjar, Bakarwal and Chopan populations. Interventions covered five districts namely, Srinagar, Pulwama, Bandipora, Budgam, and Kupwara and

reaching 15 forest-dwelling and tribal communities through awareness activities on the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006. Around 150 individual and community claims were facilitated, alongside engaging with local administration towards advancing Community Forest Rights (CFRs) to secure grazing lands, forest produce, and water access, health support for their livestock and education for children of these communities. Eligible households were supported in renovating traditional mud huts under FRA entitlements, improving safety and living conditions for nomadic families during seasonal migration.

**National Study to assess the status of Women from Nomadic and Denotified Tribes (NT-DNT) in India:**

This study supported by the National Commission for Women, examines the lived realities of women from Nomadic, Denotified, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes across multiple Indian states. The objective was to document systemic discrimination, socio-economic deprivation, and gender-specific vulnerabilities faced by women in these communities, with a focus on access to education, healthcare, housing, and livelihood opportunities. A sample of 3,000 women from diverse geographies was surveyed, complemented by focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Findings reveal high levels of poverty, exclusion from social protection, lack of political representation, and exposure to violence and exploitation of women from these communities. The study also brought forth the community's perspective on significant issues and need for inclusion of NT-DNT women in welfare schemes. Despite constitutional guarantees, implementation of protective legislations and schemes remains inadequate. The report recommends targeted interventions, affirmative action, improved access to entitlements, and recognition of community-specific rights to enable NT-DNT women to live with dignity and equality.

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## Land, Forest, Water

### Protecting and Promoting the Commons

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During 2024–25, ActionAid Association's work has focussed on engaging with the communities, local governments and departments to protect and rejuvenate land, water bodies and forests and promote ecological diversity and climate-resilient livelihoods. We continued to provide training and capacity building support to communities and small and marginal farmers on ecological farming and restoring natural ecosystems. 575 farmers (including 288 women) practicing natural farming methods across 315 acres were supported also promoting seed-sovereignty initiatives conserving more than 1,100 paddy varieties and multiple millet types. Water conservation and restoration efforts included the renovation of ponds, creation of farm ponds, and plantation drives across 40 hectares of common lands with plantation of over 62,000 saplings. Climate justice campaigns reached more than 200,000 people, securing over 100 panchayat resolutions in favour of community-led conservation. The Basant women-led Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) in Bundelkhand grew to over 2,700 members, operating 58 sales outlets and 38 resource centres, reducing input costs by up to 25% and increasing price realisation by 20–30%. These interventions are

not only advancing community ownership over ecological restoration but also creating sustainable, gender-inclusive livelihood pathways for tribal, pastoralist, and marginal farming communities.

Climate Justice Campaign was conducted across the states to generate awareness among vulnerable communities about climate change, environmental degradation and its impact in their lives and livelihoods, while promoting community-led actions for sustainable resource management, and build resilience.

The Climate Justice Campaign reached over 2 lakh people through 500+ meetings in Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, raising awareness on climate impacts and pressing for policy action and compensation for affected communities. Over 100 panchayats passed resolutions demanding urgent climate justice. A parallel initiative trained 120 young women leaders (YUW) on climate justice, including the recent Supreme Court judgment affirming protection from climate change impacts, leading to 30 community meetings with 578 women and girls. In Panipat, the “Act for Climate Justice” campaign engaged 2,444 people in 12 villages through 94 meetings, sensitizing them on their rights and the link between climate impacts and constitutional guarantees.

In Uttar Pradesh, the campaign incorporated a blend of community engagement activities including awareness meetings, and awareness walks alongside seminars aimed at deepening people’s understanding of climate justice, loss and damage, and environmental conservation. Plantation drives were carried out across 13 Gram Panchayats in Ambedkarnagar and Jaunpur alongside ponds and river. The Forest Department provided 16,000 saplings. In Sonbhadra, 23 farm ponds and water harvesting structures were revived under MGNREGA, enabling fish farming and sustainable livelihoods. Complementing these efforts, Meena Manch – children’s groups led a week-long climate resilience campaign across 44 blocks in four districts of Devipatan division, raising awareness on climate change impacts on children’s education, health, and nutrition, and promoting local, climate-smart solutions. These initiatives strengthened community participation in protecting natural resources and building resilience to climate risks. The Climate Justice Campaign has not only strengthened local ecosystems but also fostered a sense of ownership among communities, ensuring that environmental conservation is embedded in everyday life.

In drought-prone Bundelkhand, Uttar Pradesh, ActionAid Association has strengthened women’s economic and leadership capacities through Basant Farmers Producer Organisation (FPO). It is the state’s first all-women-led FPO, now representing 2,700+ small and marginal farmers across five blocks in Jhansi, Lalitpur, and Mahoba. Supported with capacity building, technical inputs, and market linkages, Basant FPO has become a registered, GST-compliant rural enterprise operating under the BASANT brand, with 58 sales outlets and 38 community farmer resource centres, generating 157 direct jobs, mostly for women. Through bulk input procurement, members reduced costs by up to 25%, while collective marketing increased price realization by 20–30%. Sustainable livelihood prototypes which include 54 multilayer farming units, 111 seed production units, goat and poultry mother units. These have helped in improved incomes, with many women earning ₹50,000–₹90,000 per cycle. Farmers receive training from institutions such as IGFR and Krishi Vigyan Kendras on climate-resilient agriculture, water conservation, organic inputs, and soil health. To support local value



addition, Basant has set up small agro-processing units for dal milling, oil extraction, atta chakki and automatic pouch packing machine, increasing income and generating jobs. These facilities clean, sort, grind, and package pulses, flour, and spices, including green gram, black gram, pigeon pea, chickpea, lentil, wheat, turmeric, coriander and chilli. The products are sold through Basant Community Farmer Resource Centres (BCFRCs), retail stalls, and direct wholesale linkages. A total of 38 BCFRCs, managed by women, have been developed to decentralize operations and expand reach.



The FPO's success is not just economic but social too. Women members now actively participate in household budgeting, asset management, and children's education decisions, shifting their role from unpaid farm labour to recognized entrepreneurs and decision-makers. Basant's inclusive governance, digital bookkeeping, and transparent systems have won it the Bundelkhand Best Progressive Women FPO Award from Rani Laxmibai Central Agricultural University. By linking with agriculture, horticulture, veterinary, and banking institutions, Basant FPO has embedded itself as a sustainable, community-owned model that is transforming rural women's economic agency and social status.

In Uttarakhand, a signature campaign, "Drying Rivers and Our Responsibility," mobilised communities to address water conservation, forest protection, and disaster risks, reaching over 60 villages. Activities in schools and communities led to the plantation of over 1,000 trees, prevention-focused forest fire drives, and public commitments to plant four trees for every tree cut. Through these efforts, local voices, especially women and youth, played a central role in shaping community-level and policy-oriented actions for climate resilience and environmental justice. The Seed Ball Campaign produced and dispersed more than 5,000 seed balls to restore forest cover and reduce wildlife encroachment into human settlements, while traditional seed preservation practices were revived in several villages. Tribal women from the Sabla Sangathan took up initiatives to revive traditional seed preservation practices, training younger generations to combat climate-induced agricultural challenges. The Nadi

Samwad Yatra mapped and initiated the restoration of traditional water sources, with 19 villages repairing and cleaning these critical resources.

In response to the intensifying climate crisis in Kashmir, ActionAid Association launched the Climate Justice Campaign across five districts including Bandipora, Budgam, Ganderbal, Kupwara, and Baramulla focusing vulnerable communities, particularly women, youth, and fisherfolk, towards ecological protection and resilience. Through awareness drives and school-based programs, over 65 schools and 3,000 students were sensitized on issues such as plastic pollution, wetland loss, and shifting weather patterns, with many students taking on roles as “environment ambassadors” in their localities. Community consultations and collaborations with experts, including the Central University of Kashmir and leading environmental activists, generated actionable recommendations on afforestation, waste management, wetland restoration, and climate-resilient agriculture. Plantation and clean-up drives were initiated, alongside state engagement for wetland restoration and Dal Lake rehabilitation, combining pollution control, invasive species removal, and sustainable livelihood support for lake-dependent communities and fisherfolks in Habbak Shanpora. The campaign has built a collaborative network of academics, activists, and community leaders, while enhancing climate literacy in high-risk zones and amplifying the voices of marginalized groups.

In Tamil Nadu, our teams engaged with state institutions, communities, and grassroots networks to integrate vulnerable groups into climate and disaster planning. The Street Vendor Collective worked with the State Disaster Management Authority to highlight urban informal workers’ vulnerabilities, leading to a socio-economic report and their inclusion in disaster risk reduction frameworks. At the Joint Climate Change Summit in Chennai, ActionAid and partners presented community-led climate priorities, advocating for inclusive state-level environmental planning. Capacity-building efforts included an intensive workshop with the Hume Centre for Ecology and Wildlife Biology, training staff and community leaders on climate inequality, carbon footprints, and vulnerability mapping, complemented by field visits to study rural resilience models for urban adaptation. In rural areas, our ground leaders took up MNREGA linked plantation drives, forest rights awareness, and traditional eco-practices to help strengthen local climate resilience and advocacy in 20 Gram Sabhas.

In Rajasthan, climate justice campaign was conducted across Banswara, Dungarpur, and Jodhpur districts of Rajasthan. Centred around empowering local communities through the strategic use of Gram Sabha resolutions, the campaign aimed to safeguard the environment, livelihoods, and natural resources in the face of climate change. A total of 450 community-based Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) were trained on climate justice and governance, leading efforts in 290 Gram Panchayats. These Gram Sabhas passed resolutions to protect community forests and regulate resource extractions. In 230 cases, resolutions specifically invoked the Forest Rights Act (2006) and PESA Act (1996), demanding recognition of Community Forest Rights (CFRs) and action against deforestation.

Similarly, in Gujarat, the climate justice campaign was advanced through mass awareness drives, capacity building workshops and large-scale tree plantation. Climate justice awareness drives reached 7,186 people across 112 villages in 14 blocks, leading to commitments for plantation and maintenance during Gram Sabhas. Over 46,000 trees were planted in



collaboration with panchayats, communities, forest departments, educational institutions, and KVKs. Capacity-building programs at village, block, district, and state levels trained 237 community leaders and HRDs on climate justice and just transitions, while a dedicated session at KVK Tapi linked climate crisis to agriculture. A two-day state-level workshop with Paryavaran Mitra resulted in a six-month climate justice action plan, strengthening grassroots action for environmental restoration and resilience.

In Bargarh district, Odisha, 575 farmers (288 women and 287 men) are practicing ecological farming over 315 acres. This includes the use of indigenous seeds, climate-resilient methods, and sustainable practices from seed treatment onwards. Dietary diversity has improved, with millets now included alongside rice. The role of women farmers has gained recognition across 17 villages, with gender equality campaigns sparking discussions on women's unpaid labour and rights in agriculture and households. Community-based seed preservation has also advanced, with three seed banks established in Bargarh and eight across the Desi Bihana Surakshya Mancha (DBSM) network. These banks now conserve over 1,100 paddy varieties, 25 types of millets, and several varieties of pulses and vegetables. Desi Seed and Food Festivals were held in Kathumal and Bargarh to raise awareness and celebrate these achievements. Over 355 organic farmers participated, promoting poison-free food, debt-free farming, and sustainable agriculture.

In Sambalpur, Odisha, we have formed two Women Farmers Producer Groups who have adopted natural farming. Two women entrepreneurs expanded businesses, and three SHGs received agricultural machinery via DBT. Two Bio-Resource Centers were established to promote sustainability. Additionally, 310 farmers were linked to agricultural schemes, 290 to the Millet Mission, and 209 to the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.



In collaboration with Forest Rights Committees (FRCs), 1,500 saplings were planted on 40 hectares of CFR land in Meghpal and Chhamunda. MNREGA resources were mobilised for renovation of a pond in Rantal village.

On 21st June 2024, Rantal village in Sambalpur was officially recognized as a fully organic village in the presence of officials from the agriculture and horticulture departments. This milestone has inspired surrounding communities to adopt natural farming practices.

Similar practises of natural farming have been adopted by farmers in Sundergarh and Bargarh. Millets are being produced by these farmers who sold these at the government mandis. In Bargarh, women prepared 9,000 indigenous seed balls which were dispersed across villages to support reforestation.

In Bihar, Environmental awareness drives in Patna's slums and schools led to the plantation of 500 saplings, art competitions with children, and community discussions on climate resilience and sustainable practices.

In Hyderabad, Telangana, awareness drives and regular sensitisation programmes were held to highlight the impact of climate change on urban communities, especially vulnerable slum dwellers. Poster competitions and interactive sessions were taken up with children and youth. Exposure visits to dumping yards and recycling sites helped deepen children's understanding of urban climate impacts. The focus remained on how extreme weather—such as incessant rains, heatwaves, and drainage issues—disproportionately affecting marginalized communities. In Secunderabad, Telangana, young women leaders participated in a climate action workshop, engaging in interactive activities to understand how everyday actions affect the environment and developing individual and community action plans to address climate change impacts. On World Environment Day, ActionAid Association organised a state consultation on 'Climate Change and Urbanisation' in Hyderabad, bringing together stakeholders and community voices, including women and children, to discuss the effects of rapid urbanisation and climate change on urban slum dwellers.

In Bengaluru, Karnataka, ActionAid advanced urban biodiversity conservation and water management through targeted research and community engagement. Small pieces of action research helped highlight issues such as lake fencing violations, inefficiencies in 15 BBMP sewage treatment plants, rainwater harvesting potential along Namma Metro for six lakes, online monitoring gaps in STPs, and year-long documentation of fishkills and biodiversity. Findings prompted significant action, including two Suo-moto cases by the National Green leading to BBMP transferring STP operations to BWSSB.

Lake walks were carried out along four Bengaluru lakes which were guided by naturalists and bird experts. This is part of the Lake Conservation Groups that ActionAid is promoting to create awareness on lake biodiversity. Along with school, college and university students; citizens, officials from BBMP, BWSSB, and KSPCB also participated in the walks and addressed specific lake issues. New bird records included 11 species at Chunchaghatta Lake, 15 at Doddakallasandra, and 14 at other lakes were added to the respective checklists at eBird.org.

In West Bengal, members of the 6 eco clubs are taking the initiative in creating awareness on global warming, climate change and natural farming. They mobilised communities on June 5<sup>th</sup>, on the World Environment Day and carried out afforestation drives planting gooseberries, betel nuts and dragon fruit saplings.

In Canning II, South 24 Parganas, 330 farmers from 10 villages have been organized into 11 Farmers Interest Groups (FIGs) and integrated into *Krishani Agro Farmers Producer Company Limited*, formally registered on 24 August 2023 with 10 farmer-directors and 230 shareholders (minimum 100 shares at ₹10 each). Leadership, business, and organic farming training was provided, and five directors undertook an exposure visit to Khejuri. The AGM finalised its work plan for 2024-25 with support from the Agriculture Department which along with seed production and sustainable agriculture also focusses on taking up certification and market-aligned pricing. The FPC is moving towards financial self-sufficiency through units such as turmeric dust, fodder selling, vermi-compost, and catfish cultivation, poultry, duck rearing

and with a paddy processing unit in progress.

In East Medinipur, where agriculture and fishing form the backbone of the rural economy, the *Upakulia Primary Matsyajeebi Samabay Samity Ltd*—a Fisher Folk Producers Organisation (FFPO) under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)—has rapidly expanded from 36 shareholders in May 2023 to 750 by year-end, with support from NCDC and ActionAid Association. To strengthen capacity, two major trainings by NCDC engaged 130 members on PMMSY, fish feed, and Indian Major Carp breeding, while two members completed a one-month training at the LINAC–NCDC Fisheries Business Incubation Centre. Business activities began with leasing two 100-decimal water bodies for Indian Major Carp cultivation, generating ₹18,53,925 in revenue and ₹4,37,000 in profit by December 2024, marking a significant step toward sustainable and profitable fisheries-based livelihoods.

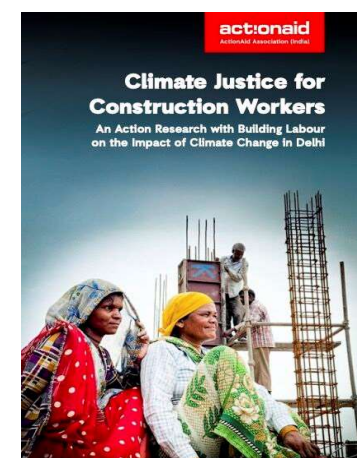
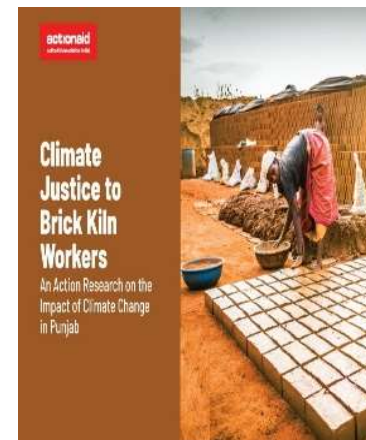
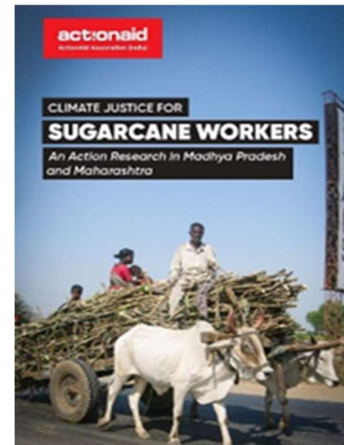
## Research undertaken during the year

ActionAid Association undertook three participatory action research studies in 2024–25 to highlight the disproportionate impact of climate change on marginalized workers.

***Climate Justice for Sugarcane Workers:*** The study engaged 954 workers in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, documenting how erratic weather, heat stress, and unseasonal rains disrupted harvesting cycles, reduced incomes, and worsened health—especially for women—while calling for urgent policy measures on healthcare, income security, and social protection.

***Climate Justice to Brick Kiln Workers:*** This study in Punjab surveyed 500 workers across 10 districts, revealing extreme heat, poor air quality, and erratic rainfall causing widespread illness, lost wages, and unsafe living conditions; it recommended climate-resilient infrastructure, wage guarantees, and legal protections.

***Climate Justice for Construction Workers:*** The study on climate justice in Delhi surveyed 630 workers and held 20 focus group discussions, finding that over 90% face heatwaves, air pollution, and rainfall disruptions that compromise health, productivity, and earnings. Across all studies, findings underscore the urgent need for inclusive climate justice frameworks, structural reforms, and worker-centred policies that safeguard dignity, health, and livelihoods in the face of intensifying climate crises.



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## Humanitarian Response to Natural Disasters

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In 2024–25, India witnessed a series of devastating disaster including landslides, floods, cyclones, hailstorms, and climate extremities that disrupted lives and livelihoods, particularly among marginalised communities. From the massive landslide and floods in Wayanad, Kerala, to recurring floods in Bihar, Assam, Gujarat, and Himachal Pradesh, from cyclone damage in Odisha and West Bengal to the land subsidence crisis in Joshimath, Uttarakhand, ActionAid Association stood with affected communities in their most difficult times.

Our interventions went beyond immediate relief to address long-term recovery and resilience. Relief kits, dry rations, shelter support, hygiene essentials, and educational materials reached thousands of families across states, prioritising women, single women, children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. Transparent, community-led processes ensured dignity and accountability at every stage of distribution.

Alongside relief, ActionAid supported rehabilitation and livelihood recovery. In Kerala, disaster-hit women rebuilt their lives through mushroom units, beekeeping, tailoring, and coffee processing initiatives, while damaged homes and schools were restored to safety. In other states, targeted interventions, such as education kits in Andhra Pradesh, unconditional cash transfers in Manipur, and winter and heatwave relief in Delhi and Bihar, helped communities adapt to climate-induced challenges.

Through these efforts, ActionAid reaffirmed its commitment to a rights-based, people-centred approach to humanitarian response, prioritising the most vulnerable, fostering women's leadership, and strengthening community resilience in the face of escalating climate crises.

### **Grounded Efforts**

#### **Landslide and Flood Response in Wayanad, Kerala**

On 30 July 2024, Wayanad district witnessed one of its worst natural disasters in recent history. A massive landslide in Chooralmala, Meppadi, claimed numerous lives and wiped-out entire settlements, while relentless rainfall triggered severe flooding across all 23 panchayats. Homes, crops, roads, and community infrastructure were destroyed, leaving thousands displaced, particularly among tribal communities, daily wage workers, and families living below the poverty line.

#### ***Relief support:***

ActionAid Association launched an immediate relief response, prioritising women, single women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Food, clean water, shelter, hygiene supplies, and essential household items were distributed through a transparent, community-led process in coordination with panchayats, ward members, and tribal promoters. Our relief support to reached out to over 1,400 families across 9 panchayats. Need-based relief kits including dry rations, hygiene items, and safety essentials were prepared and distributed among the needy families.

- 975 families were provided Dry Ration kits and Sanitation kits.
  - 151 families were supported with Household kits.
  - 191 families were given Dry Ration and Safety kits.
  - 130 families were supported with high quality cots and mattresses.
  - 206 students were provided education kits enabling them to resume schooling with dignity.
- Relief efforts were complemented by information-sharing, accountability mechanisms, and safe distribution practices to ensure equity and dignity.

### ***Livelihood support for swift recovery***

Recognising the long-term impact on livelihoods, ActionAid initiated recovery programmes in the severely affected panchayats of Pozhuthana and Thariode. Over five months, families were supported through skill development, asset distribution, women's economic empowerment, and market linkages, with special focus on women-headed households and self-help groups.

- *Mushroom cultivation units:* A total of 70 vulnerable women were supported through the establishment of 22 mushroom cultivation units, complemented with training, assets, and packaging support. Beneficiaries successfully launched production, with growing demand from panchayats and wider markets. Registration under FSSAI further enabled them to sell legally and expand their reach, marking a significant step toward financial independence and long-term livelihood sustainability.
- *Coffee Processing Units:* ActionAid supported the establishment of a coffee processing unit, benefiting 7 most vulnerable women identified through a participatory process with Panchayat representatives. High-quality machinery was procured, and regulatory approvals were secured with local support. A three-day training by the Coffee Board equipped participants with skills in processing, hygiene, packaging, and marketing. Exposure visits to successful units in Wayanad provided practical insights into operations and business strategies.
- *Beekeeping initiative:* A total of 20 women from flood and landslide-affected areas were supported to start Beekeeping units. They were provided 10 bee boxes, along with comprehensive training and resources to establish and maintain their apiaries. This intervention not only provided an alternative source of income but also promoted environmental sustainability and biodiversity. The beneficiaries were linked with local markets to ensure the sale of honey and related products, enhancing their economic independence.
- *Tailoring and Stitching Unit:* The tailoring and stitching unit was started to create additional livelihood opportunities for women. Five beneficiaries received training and equipment, enabling them to produce garments and other stitched products for local markets.

These initiatives contributed to the economic empowerment of women, fostering self-reliance and community development.

### ***Rehabilitation support***

In Wayanad, alongside livelihoods, rehabilitation of community infrastructure was prioritised. ActionAid, in partnership with government agencies, supported the repair of homes, restoration of schools, ICDS and community centres, and improvement of water and sanitation facilities. These interventions ensured that disaster-affected families could



gradually return to normalcy while building greater preparedness against future climate shocks.

*Housing repairs:* Repair work was carried out in 85 houses to address long-standing leakages and making living conditions secure, especially for children and the elderly. Beneficiaries reported improved comfort and resilience during subsequent rains.

*School repair:* Chekadi Government Lower Primary School in Pulpally Panchayat was renovated. The school, with a student population of 108, mostly from tribal communities, had a leaking library roof, damaged furniture, and unsafe flooring. Comprehensive repairs were undertaken, including roof waterproofing, new tiling, painting and providing new desks and benches.

### ***Cyclone response***

In **Odisha**, as part of the **Dana cyclone response**, awareness campaigns were conducted on cyclone preparedness, targeting vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women-headed households, persons with disabilities, and children. A total of 632 affected families were provided dry rations and hygiene kits—200 in Balasore, 300 in Bhadrak, and 132 in Kendrapara. The intervention offered critical support in cyclone affected areas where disasters displace communities, strain resources, and heighten health risks, complementing government aid and helping families recover with dignity.

On 27<sup>th</sup> May, a **cyclone** devastated parts of North and South 24 Parganas, **West Bengal**, including Hasnabad, Bagda, and Bongaon. ActionAid Association swiftly assessed the impact and provided relief in worst affected 15 villages. Tarpaulins and wash kits were distributed to affected families, offering urgent shelter and hygiene support in the disaster's aftermath.

### ***Flood Response***

In 2024, **Bihar** witnessed one of its worst **floods**, triggered by heavy monsoon rains and the release of water from the Koshi River barrage, devastating districts like Supaul and Purnea. ActionAid, with volunteers, supported 2,000 families (1,000 in each district) with dry rations, hygiene kits, and shelter kits, prioritising women, single women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Relief camps ensured dignity and transparency with safe drinking water, separate toilets, first aid, seating, IEC materials, and transparency boards. Random kit checks and public announcements-built community trust, making the response inclusive, accountable, and equitable.

In **Gujarat**, ActionAid intervened to support the most vulnerable populations including single women, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and bonded labourers in wake of the devastating **floods** in Vadodara district. A total of 100 flood-affected families were provided dry ration kits, ensuring essential food support during the crisis. These included 39 single women, 15 persons with disabilities, 29 elderly individuals, and 17 bonded labourers.

In **Assam**, following the devastating **floods** in Goroimari and Majortop Char of Assam's Kamrup District, ActionAid provided targeted relief to 70 of the most vulnerable families. Each family received three bathing soaps, a blanket, and a mosquito net, addressing urgent needs for hygiene, warmth, and protection against waterborne diseases. Primarily the low-income

families, elderly individuals, and persons with disabilities, were targeted based on the extent of loss of houses, crops, livestock, and essential belongings.

In **Andhra Pradesh**, in the aftermath of the **floods**, many students lost their school books, bags, and essential study materials, which were submerged in the floodwaters. The damage to educational resources was particularly devastating for students preparing for the State Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Board exams. In coordination with local education authorities, ActionAid identified the urgent need for academic support and distributed All-in-One SSC study materials to 785 students across 7 government schools. This intervention enabled affected students to resume studies and prepare for their exams despite the disaster's impact.

In 2024, **Himachal Pradesh** witnessed devastating **floods** triggered by heavy monsoon rains, causing widespread destruction across the state. A total of 110 children, affected by floods in Kendol Panchayat of Solan district were supported with the stationery and bags.

#### **Joshimath land subsidence**

In Joshimath, Uttarakhand, ActionAid supported tribal communities affected by land subsidence and unplanned development. Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) helped displaced families to engage with the local administration for fair compensation and reconstruction under state rehabilitation schemes, leading to partial government commitments, including prefabricated housing. HRDs also conducted a climate impact survey highlighting forest fire damage and road construction under PMGSY, which prompted administrative orders for reforestation and infrastructure repairs. Additionally, they restored drinking water supply in Bheta-Bharki villages after road construction damaged pipelines.

#### **Climate extremities – relief response**

In Delhi, during the harsh winter of 2024–25, ActionAid Association, with support from Give India and local networks, provided blankets to **475 women headed families** living in slums, makeshift shelters, and construction sites across Delhi.

In Muzaffarpur district, **Bihar**, where summer temperatures exceed 45°C, ActionAid Association supported vulnerable communities in six panchayats of Musahari block through targeted relief and awareness initiatives to counter the situation of extreme **heatwaves**. Awareness sessions reached families with guidance on malnutrition prevention through sattu consumption, Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) prevention, fire safety measures, and hydration/heatstroke protection. Relief distribution included insulated water bottles for 146 schoolchildren to prevent dehydration, 1 kg sattu for 142 families to improve nutrition and energy during heat waves, and cotton towels for 100 individuals to maintain hygiene and stay cool. The intervention not only addressed immediate needs during extreme heat but also built community capacity to manage health and safety risks in future summers.

#### **Publication**

On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025, ActionAid launched the book titled '**Revisiting Super Cyclone 1999: Review, Reflections & Way Ahead**' in a state-level event in Bhubaneswar. The publication highlights community resilience in the face of disasters and offers key recommendations to strengthen disaster response, including expanding and maintaining cyclone shelters,



increasing green cover like mangroves, enhancing relief quality, livelihood support, and psychosocial care. The event drew wide media attention, with messages of support from Odisha's Deputy Chief Minister Srimati Pravati Parida and Ministers Suresh Pujari and Prithiviraj Harichandan.

### **Support to Stateless people**

ActionAid Association, in partnership with UNHCR and in close collaboration with Mission Vatsalya, the Directorate of Health Services, and the Directorate of Education, worked with stateless people (People of Concern) and host communities in Jammu to support peaceful coexistence and resilience. Interventions reached 1800 stateless households and 35 households from local communities who were supported through distribution of tarpaulins. Also, 2,000 dignity kits were provided to 1,559 women and 441 adolescent girls, while 1,402 children (557 in school and 845 out of school) received education kits to continue their learning. 20 women were trained in embroidery skills and 13 youth groups were supported with sports material to encourage positive engagement and prevent substance abuse. In collaboration with Mission Vatsalya, 28 children were restored and reintegrated through CWCs and JJBs, while 1,487 individuals were supported with health referrals. Additionally, gender-based violence referral services was extended to 58 women and mental health and psychosocial support was provided to 78 children, ensuring their protection and well-being.

In Punjab, engagement was with 170 families in Dera Bassi, supporting them with health and education referrals. The Bridge Centres run by our teams supported learning and creative activities with 100 children. Health interventions helped to achieve 100% vaccination coverage for children and pregnant women, with OPD camps and awareness sessions on hygiene and family planning further strengthening access to care.