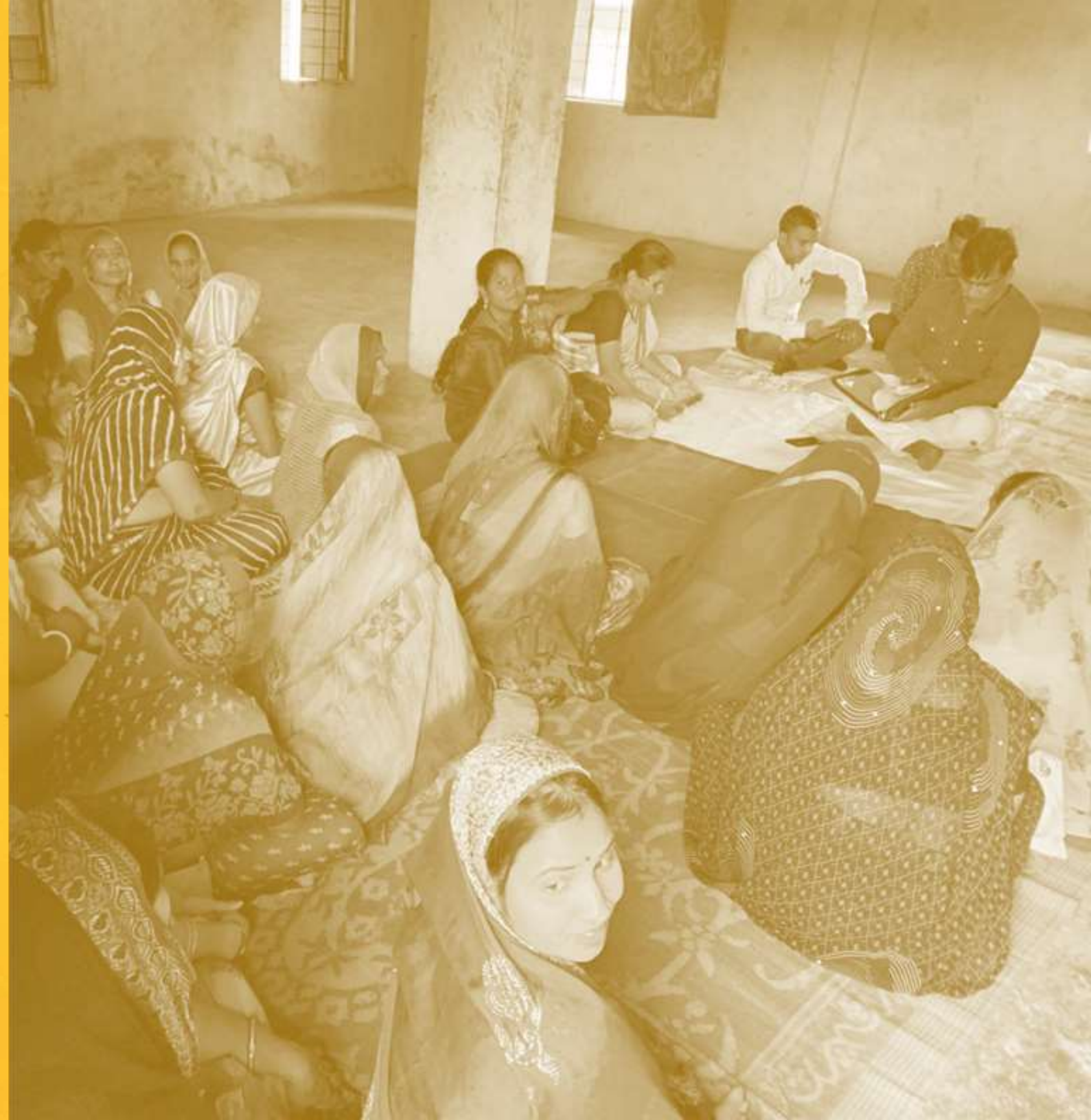


**Social Impact Assessment (SIA) of Digital Sakhi Programme  
Madhya Pradesh**  
Project Year: FY 2022-23  
**Submitted by: CRISIL Limited**  
November 2023



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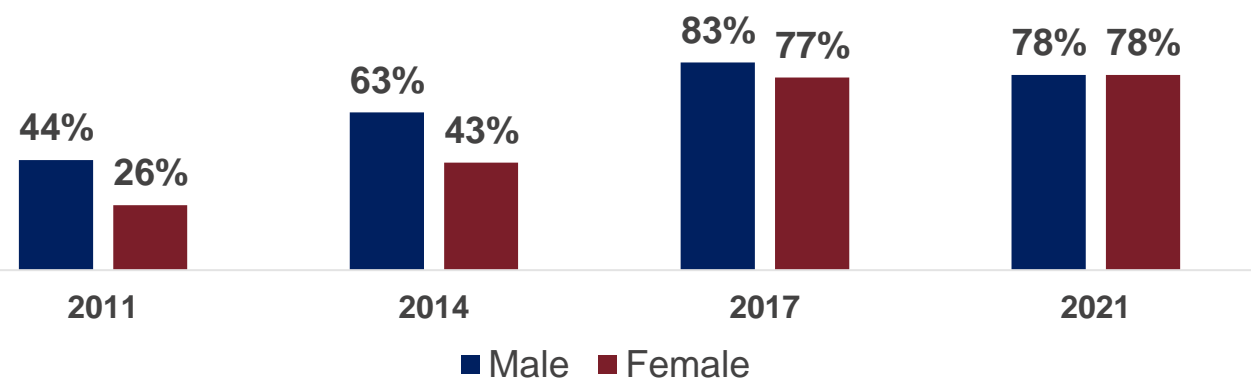
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- India has played a leading role in ushering in a transformative shift in the global digital payment arena.
- India's proactive initiatives, like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Aadhaar, small finance banks, and payment infrastructure, drive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

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



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

## Status of women in the rural entrepreneurship landscape

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



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

### Geographic Coverage

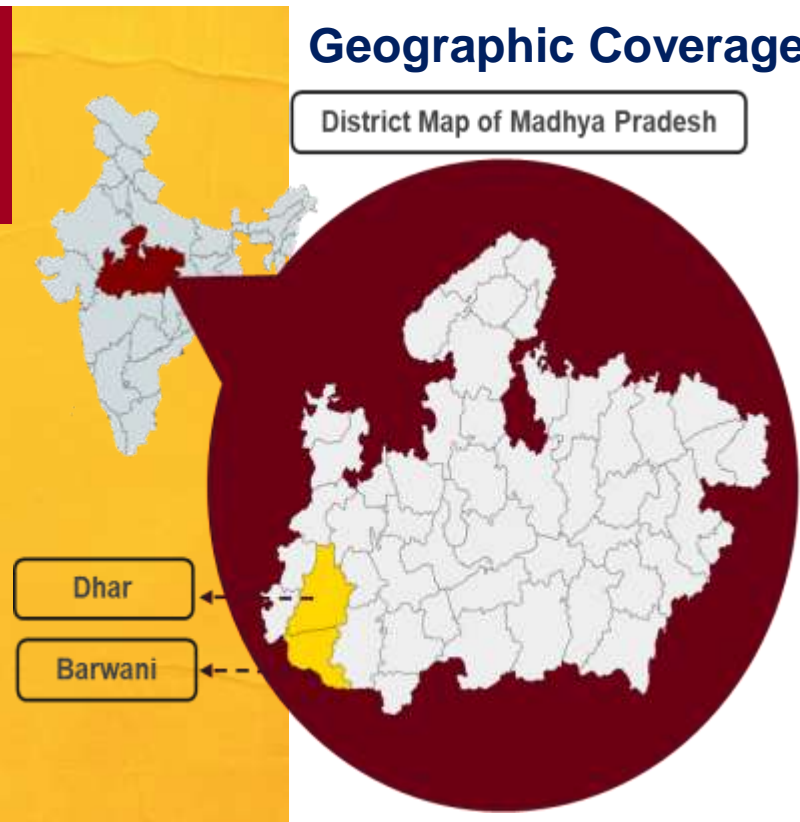
District Map of Madhya Pradesh

Villages part of Program Intervention – Across Dhar and Barwani

Anjad Revenue Area, Bagdi, Barmandal, Bhopawali, Bidwal, Chandwadiya, Dasai, Nagda, Gondikheda, Karod Kalan, Khuntpala, Kod, Kusawada, Labariya, Meghapura, Nipawali, Patolaya, Rajod, Sinduriya, Sajod, Sergarh, Dhanora, Dongargaon, Gandhawal, Julwaniya, Kari, Khedi, Mehatgaon, MohalayaFaliya, Nanijhiri, Naniniwali, Niwali, Ozar, Palwat, Piplaj, Prushkheda, Rui, Salun, Takli, Taloonbuzurg, Taloonkhurd and Tighali

Villages part of Impact Assessment – Across Dhar and Barwani

Anjod, Bidwal, Dasai, Gandhawal, Gondikheda, Julwaniya, Kuswada, Labaria, Nagda, Niwali, Ozar, Palwat, Rajod, Taloon, Talun and khedi

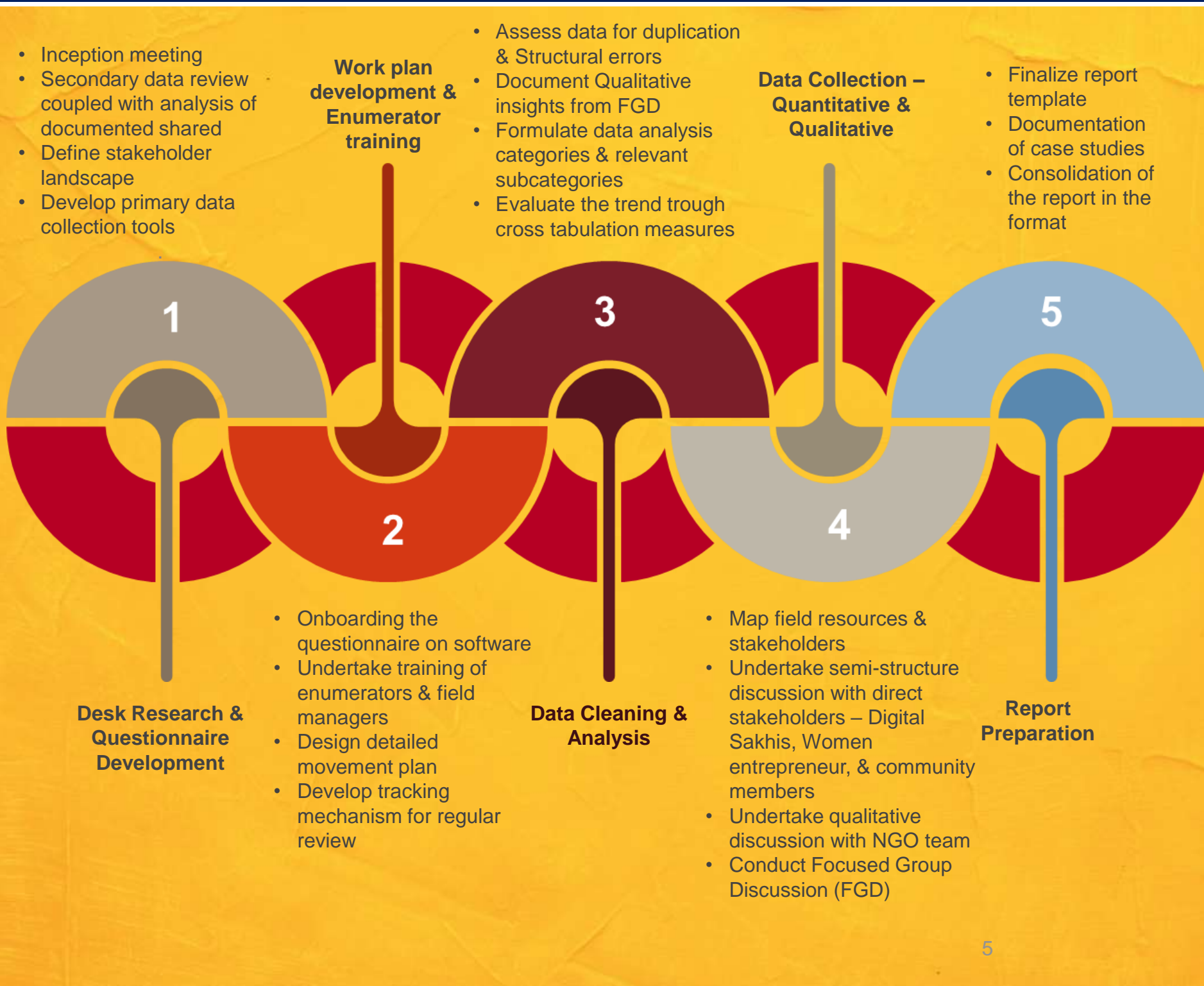


### L&T Finance & SEWA



- ❖ The interventions centers around financial literacy & digitization, enterprise development and livelihood enhancement interventions, specifically with rural women. The programme focuses on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 – Gender Equality, wherein women are identified from rural communities and trained extensively on DFL, leadership and technology.
- ❖ The intervention implementation began in 2018, the implementation partner was SEWA (Self-Employed Women’s Association) a voluntary organization that emphasizes the importance of social empowerment through economic enablement, and the ability of women leaders to work while maintaining the family unit. SEWA’s mission is to achieve full economic sustainability and self-reliance for its members
- ❖ 100 Digital Sakhis, who are extensively trained as a part of the intervention on digital financial literacy modules, reach out to the larger community to disseminate information on Digital Payments and other relevant government schemes including insurance. The intervention has another leg where 1000 women entrepreneurs (WEs) practicing Goat Rearing, Poultry, Dairy and Tailoring are chosen and up-skilled in their respective trades to yield better produce. These women are trained both in technical trades as well as enterprise development to extend holistic support. The WEs are also trained by Sakhis on digital financial literacy and additionally supported by them in case of facilitating linkages etc.





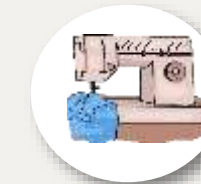
- L&T Finance engaged CRISIL Limited to undertake social impact assessment study for the Digital Sakhi Program in Pune, Osmanabad, Latur and Solapur.
- The main aim of this engagement was to assess the direct and indirect impact of the intervention on the beneficiaries and the respective households,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

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

Farmers

Women Entrepreneurs

Community Members

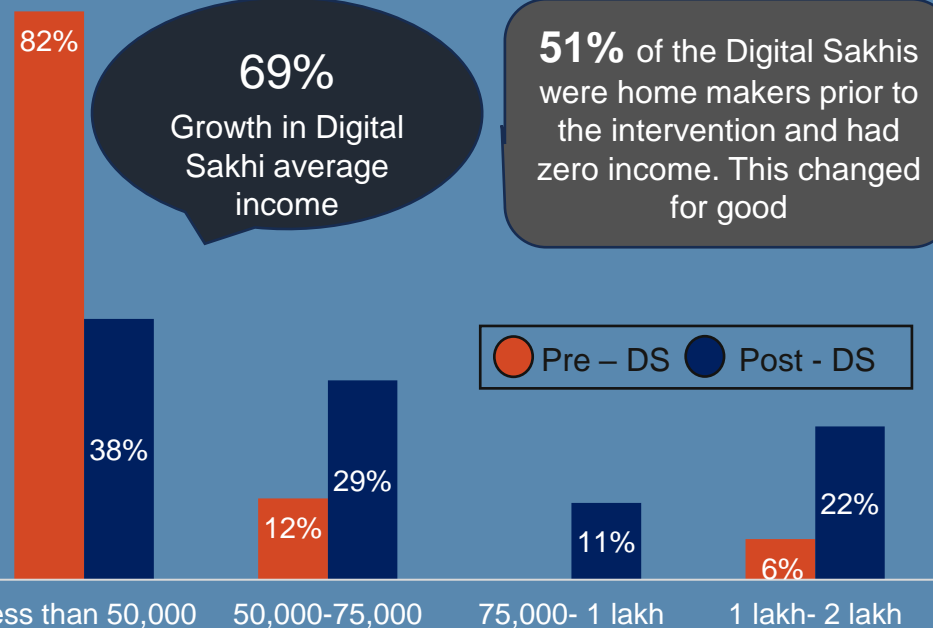


Stakeholders	Treatment Sample	Control Sample	Data Collection Tool
Digital Sakhis	55	-	Key informant interview
WE	80	20	Key informant interview
CM	200	67	Structured interview
CM	7		FGD
AFARM Officials	5		Key informant interview
L&T Finance CSR Team	1		Key informant interview

## Digital Sakhi



### Digital Sakhi income in INR



**69%**  
Growth in Digital Sakhi average income

**51%** of the Digital Sakhis were home makers prior to the intervention and had zero income. This changed for good

● Pre – DS ● Post - DS

➤ 98% have availed insurance

➤ 60% have availed credit facilities mostly from SHGs and banks

**100%**

➤ Smartphone with internet

➤ Bank account linked to smartphones

➤ Use UPI/digital mode of payment

Earlier **69%** of the transactions were cash based that now has dropped to **23%**.



## Women Entrepreneurship



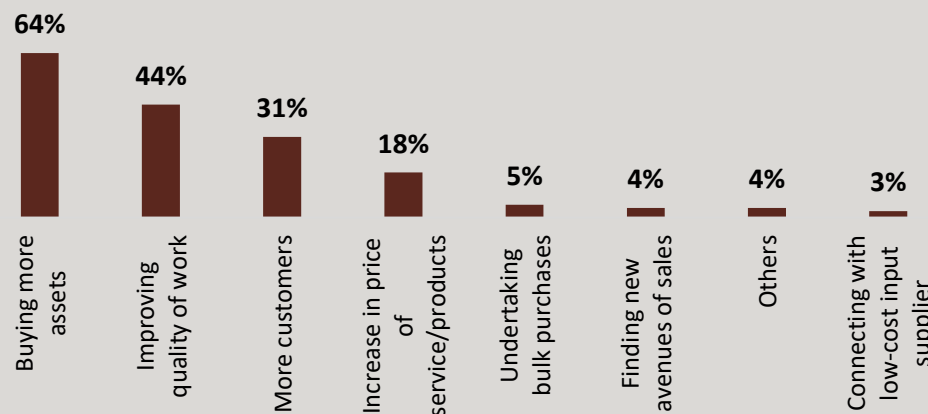
Tailoring business is the preferred choice across TG.

➤ Post intervention as well as compared to CG, a greater number of TG members have started earning more than INR 50,000 per year.

➤ Earlier the number stood at 14%, now that stands at 40% as against 29% of CG.

➤ Beneficiary enterprises recorded a 61% increase in revenue and an 81% growth in profits following the Digital Sakhi program.

### Reasons for increase in income



➤ 100% of TG respondents now have a smartphone with uninterrupted internet

➤ UPI is an emerging trend: 39% of TG and 19% of the CG use it

➤ 89% of TG and 57% of CG are aware of SHG and producer groups. Currently 83% of the TG and 48% of the CG are members of the same. For TG the number was 20% pre intervention

➤ 65% of the TG has taken loan as against 43%

➤ 63% of the TG has taken insurance as against 14% pre-DS and 38% of the CG

➤ 82% have enrolled themselves and family members in the government scheme

## Community Members



➤ 100% of the TG community members are aware about Digital Sakhis and ascertained that they were reached by the Digital Sakhis in their village

➤ 78% of the TG community members joined the program. The program was largely helpful in providing income opportunities (68%) and boosting their confidence (33%)

➤ As per the TG community members the Digital Sakhi initiative is well accepted by the male family members. Around 77% of them were extremely supportive while 22% were somewhat supportive

➤ 100% of the TG confirmed to have seen a digital seva Kendra in the village and 89% of them have used the services whereas 35% CG confirmed to have seen the digital seva Kendra and of that 68% have used the services



**39%**  
of TG have taken insurance

**38%**  
of TG have taken loan



### Awareness of digital modes of payment.

**51%**  
of TG

**11%**  
of CG

# Digital Sakhi





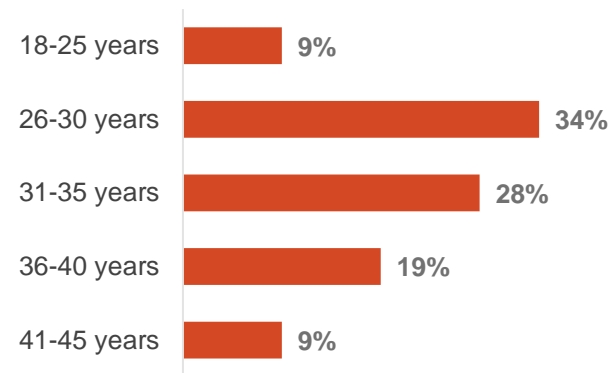


Parameters	Baseline (2018)	Assessment (2023)
Adoption of digital payment modes	17%	100%
Knowledge of government schemes	8%	96%
Contribution to family income	34%	87%
Sustainability of livelihood	34%	87% (40% run Digital Seva Kendra)
Better inclusion in family decision making towards expenses and savings	69% & 64% As a family together	92% & 89% As a family together

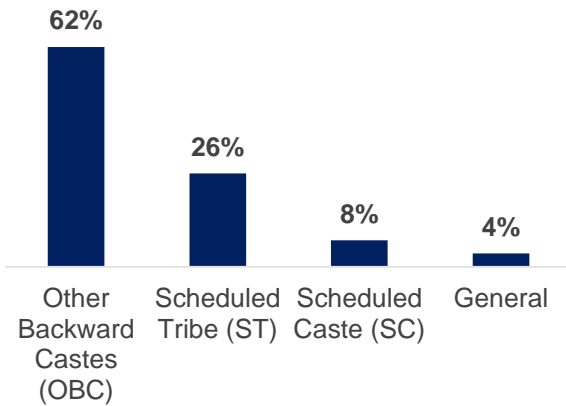




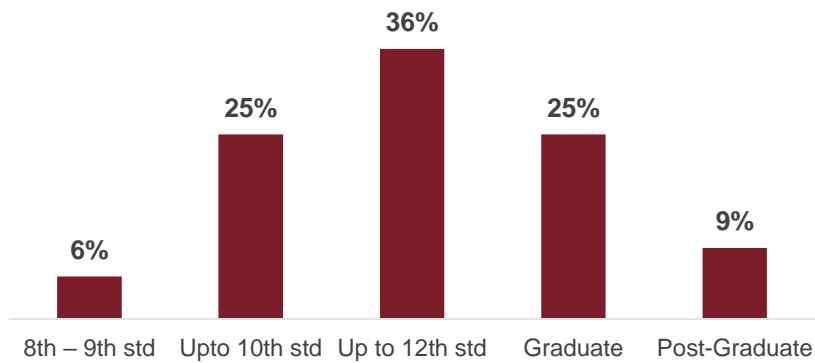
## Respondent Age group



## Respondent Social Category



## Education Levels



## Primary Source of Income of HH



**Small Business (40%)**



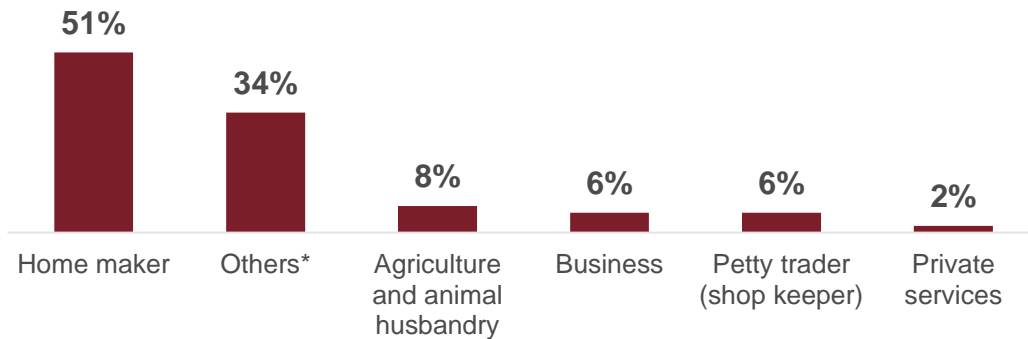
**Agriculture (30%)**



**Salaried job (17%)**

## Occupation of Digital Sakhi prior to the intervention

Others include farm labourers, student, cook, teacher, mahila preraak



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

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

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

**“It is neither easy nor acceptable for women to break traditions. Shifting one's mindset requires time and persistence.”**

82% of respondents earned less than INR 0.50 lakh

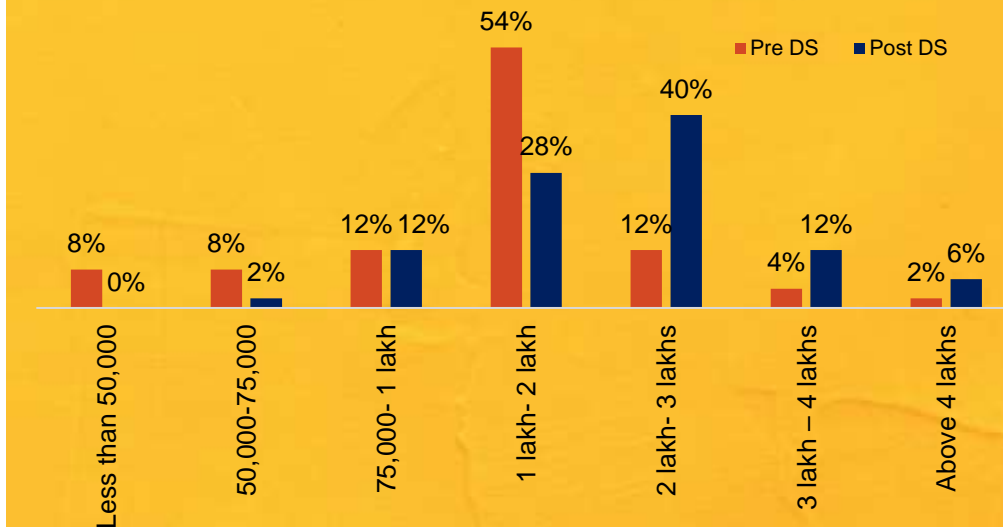
12% of respondents earned between INR 0.50 – 1 lakh

6% of respondents earned between INR 1 – 2 lakh

## Household and Asset Profile

- Digital Sakhi households had an even gender distribution, with an average family size of three male members and three female members.
- Digital Sakhis primarily saw growth in mobile phones with internet, refrigerators, mixer computers and washing machines post-intervention. The above assets are time savers and help the respondents improve their productivity.
- Among the families, 62% consist of all adult members being employed, while only 4% of the population relies on adult females as the primary earners.
- Minimum 1 female member is working across 100% families. While in 30% of families all members above 18 years are working

## Average annual income of the household in INR



- The intervention has instilled confidence (64%), helped develop strong network (30%), provided relevant skills (22%) and hand holding and guidance support (18%) to Digital Sakhis



### Insurance

• **Insurance availed:**

Pre intervention: **2%** Post intervention: **98%**

- Accident insurance saw a significant increase post-intervention, likely due to its lower premium costs

### Loans

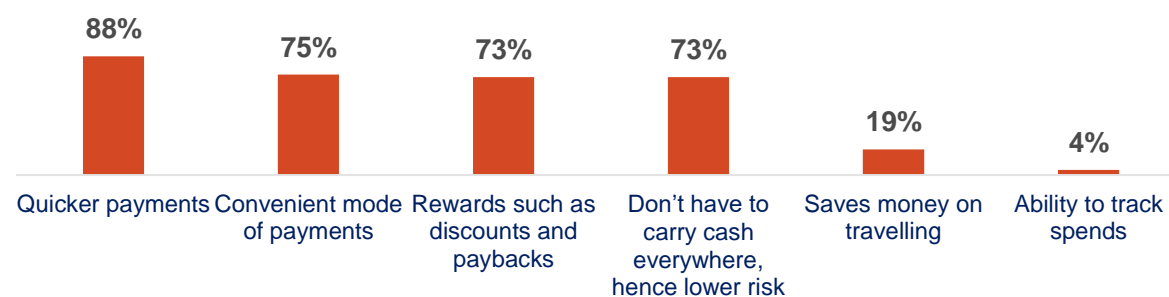
• **Insurance availed:**

Pre intervention: **4%** Post intervention: **60%**

- The preferred choice for loans is SHGs as it gives them the comfort of procuring the loan on flexible payment terms, at affordable interest rates and with minimal documentation

### Digital Payment Methods

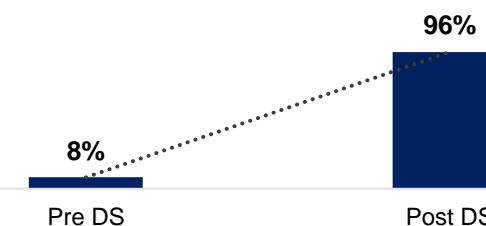
Reasons for using digital mode of payments



- **100%** respondents are positively confident of using the digital mode of payments.
- **100%** of the respondents use UPI/digital mode of payment as their preferred mode of transaction.
- **100%** bank account linked to smartphones and use digital payment methods.

### Government schemes

Awareness regarding government schemes

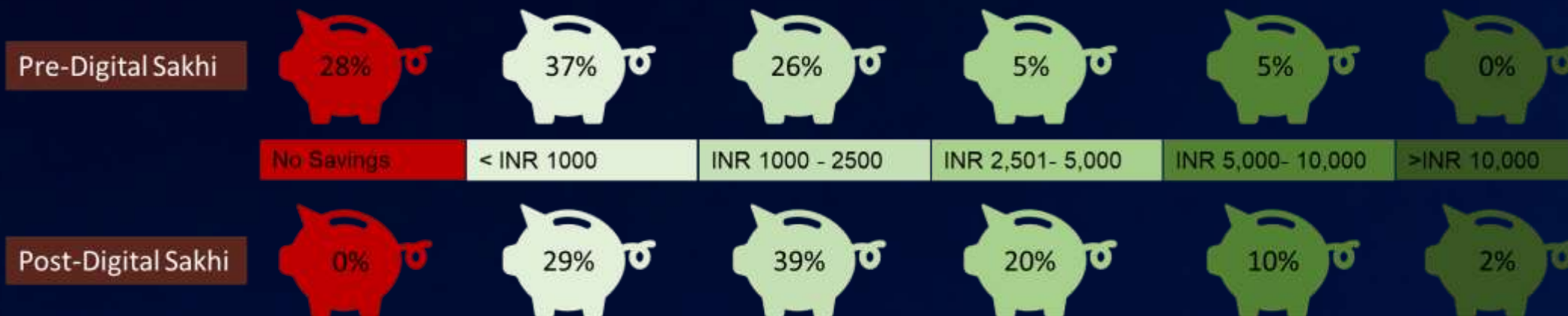


• **Awareness regarding government schemes:**

Pre intervention: **8%** Post intervention: **96%**

- Underscores the program's success in educating participants about these schemes. 100% respondents said that the program played a major role in availing the benefits.

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



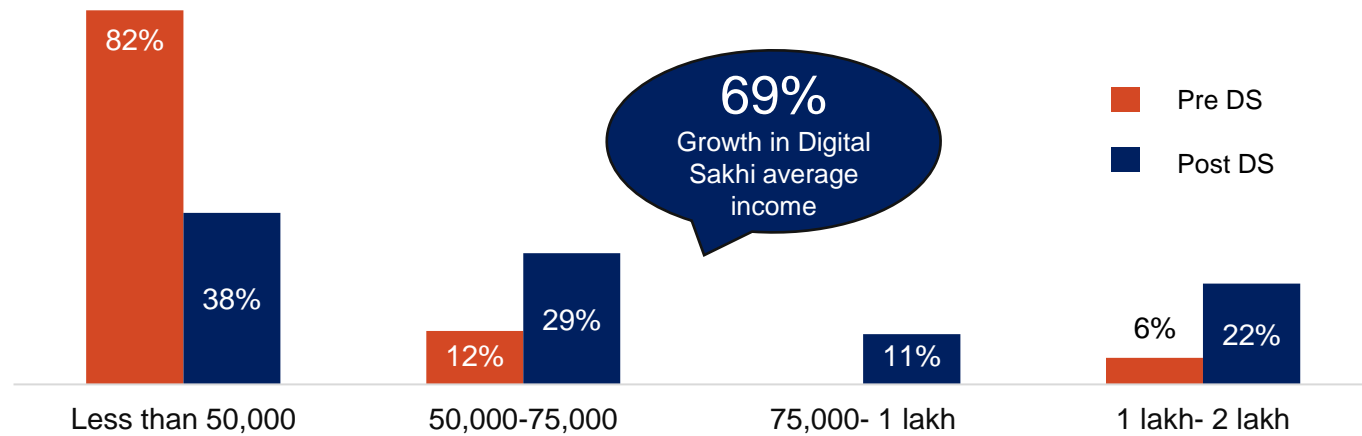
The data indicates a notable shift: the percentage of households with no savings has reached **zero**, while simultaneously, **71%** of households now manage to save more than INR 1,000 per month. The average monthly savings have increased from INR 1,596 to **INR 2,264**.

- Around 78% of respondents save monthly, primarily to fund children's education, acquire assets, cover daughters' marriages, and buy gold, vehicles, and agricultural assets.
- Before the intervention, most preferred saving in banks, but digital literacy training increased confidence in this method. Now, 86% save in banks, up from 49%, while storing cash at home dropped from 35% to 8%. All respondents now earn interest on their savings post-program.
- Remarkably, Self Help Groups (SHGs) have emerged as a significant contributor to this trend, with their percentage increasing from a mere 9% to 39% following the intervention.



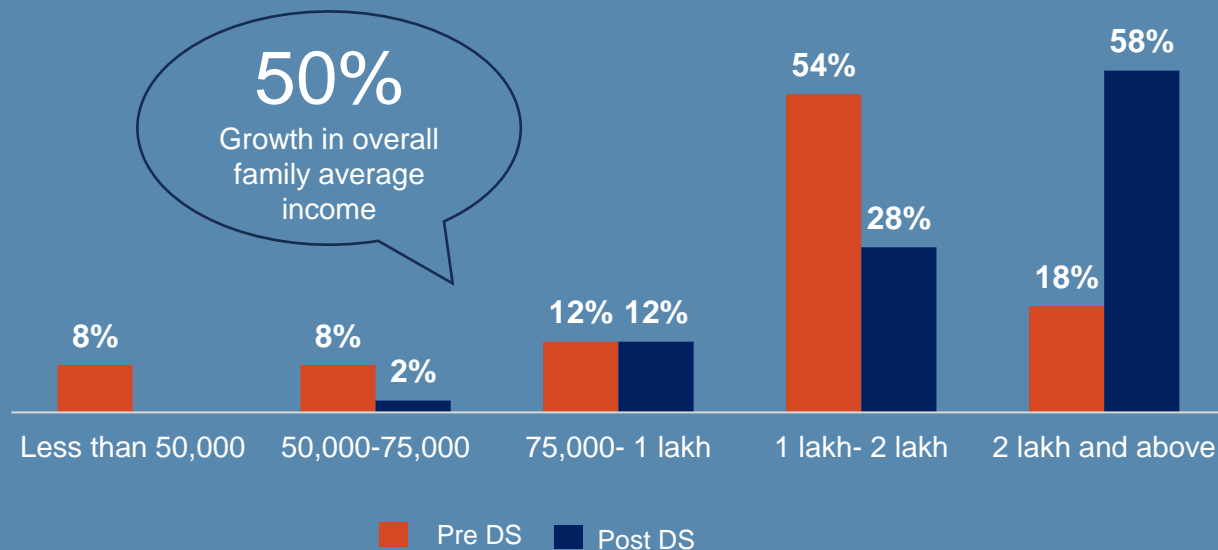


### Annual income of Digital Sakhis Pre & Post Project (in INR)



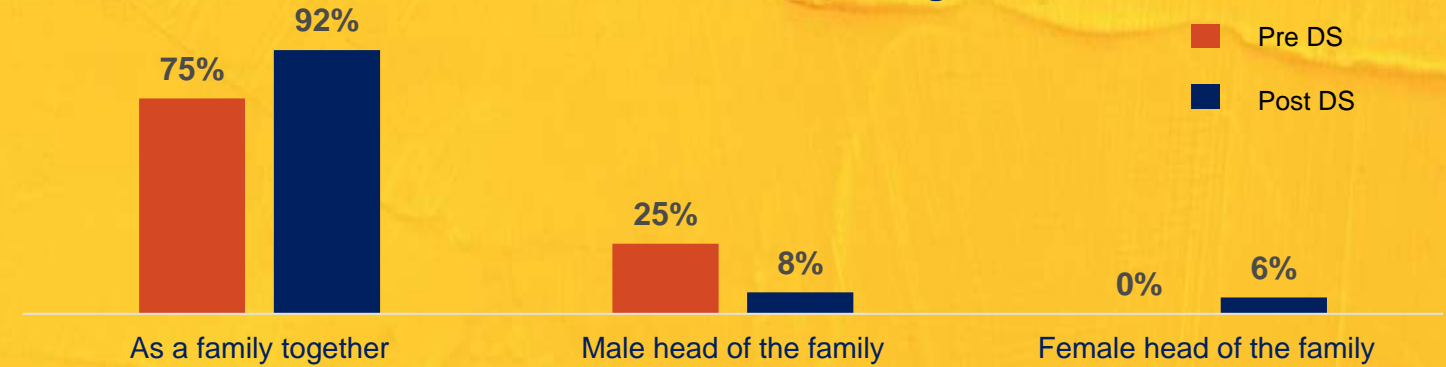
Prior to the introduction of the Digital Sakhi program, **57% of women** had no source of income. Among those women engaged in economic activities, their average monthly earnings stood at **INR 3,600**. Following the implementation of the Digital Sakhi program, this average income has seen a substantial **69% increase**.

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

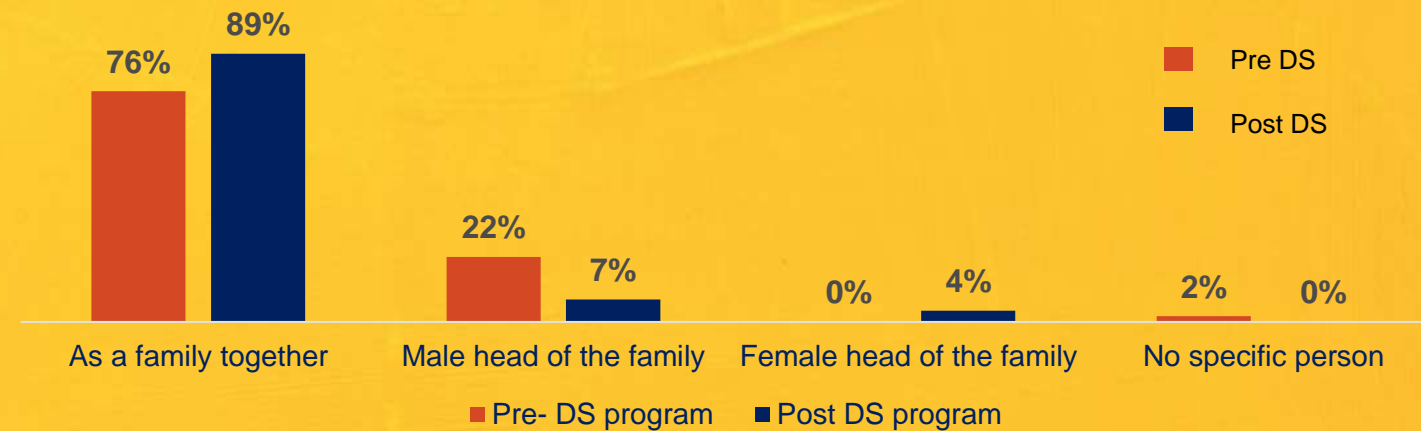


### Evaluating the overall change in decision making pattern among the respondents

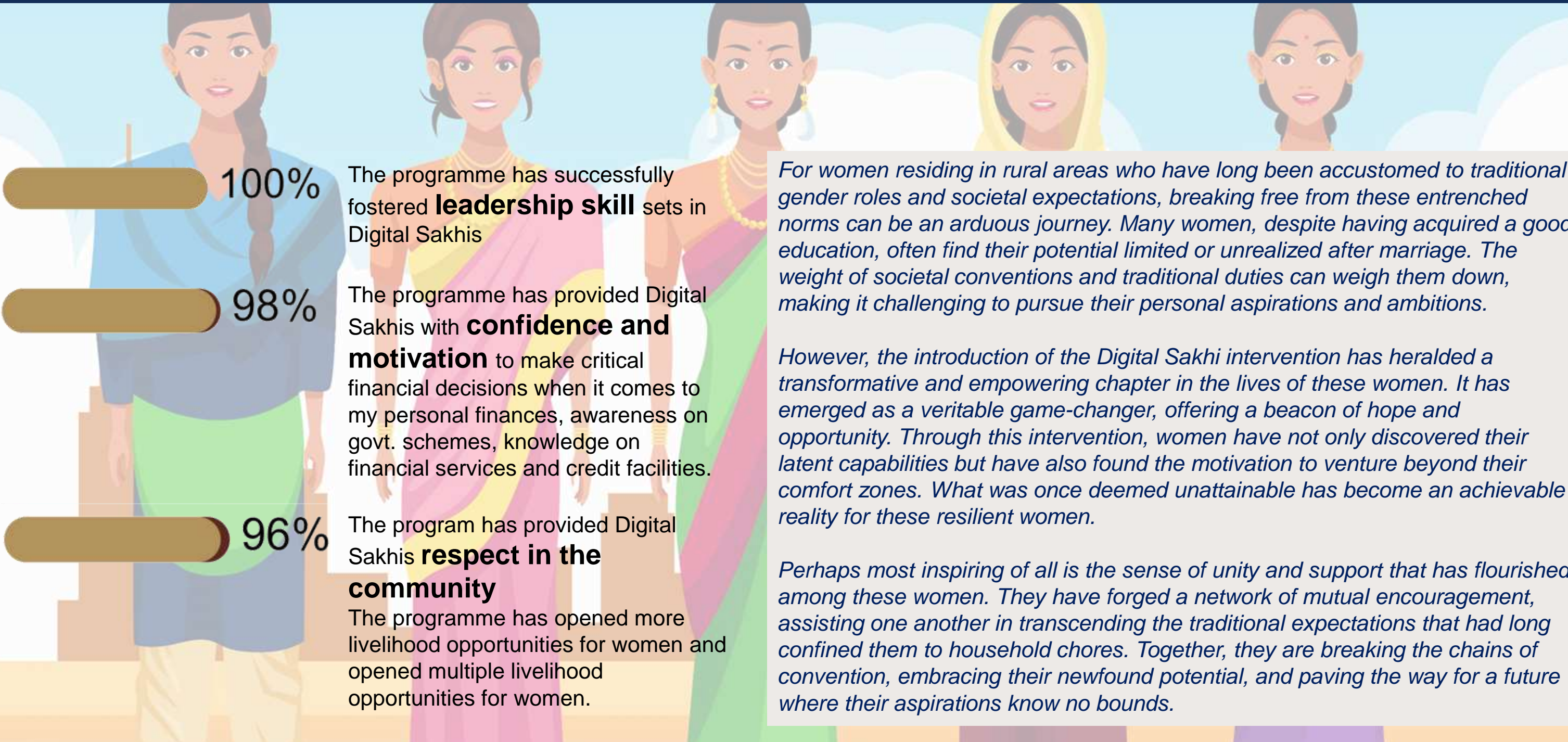
#### Overall decision making



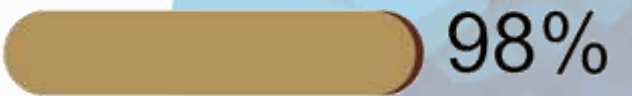
#### Decision making towards utilization of the savings



- Household-level decision-making is undergoing a shift toward greater inclusivity. Before the program, approximately 75% of household expenditure decisions were collectively made by the family; this figure now stands at 92%.
- The program boosted the confidence of Digital Sakhi participants, gaining trust from their families in decision-making, especially regarding savings. Family decisions in this context increased from 76% to 89%.
- About 71% of Digital Sakhi individuals create household budgets, but for the rest, maintaining this practice is challenging due to limited family involvement.



The programme has successfully fostered **leadership skill** sets in Digital Sakhis



The programme has provided Digital Sakhis with **confidence and motivation** to make critical financial decisions when it comes to my personal finances, awareness on govt. schemes, knowledge on financial services and credit facilities.



The program has provided Digital Sakhis **respect in the community**  
The programme has opened more livelihood opportunities for women and opened multiple livelihood opportunities for women.

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

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

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





# Women Entrepreneurship



Parameters	TG - Baseline (2018)	TG - Assessment (2023)
Adoption of digital payment modes	19%	24%
Impact on overall business (trade volume, profitability etc.) (Per month)	Revenue: INR 3,060 Profit: INR 1,750	Revenue: INR 10,600 <b>Revenue Growth: (246%)</b> Profit: INR 4,700 <b>Profit Growth: (169%)</b>
Family income	37% earned more than INR 1 lakh annually	85% earn more than INR 1 lakh annually
Participation in financial decision making	77%	94%
Awareness on access to formal sources of financial services	28%	88%

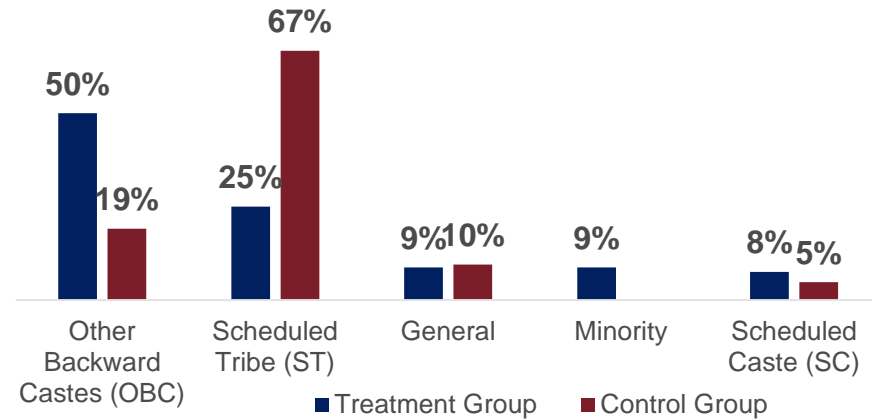




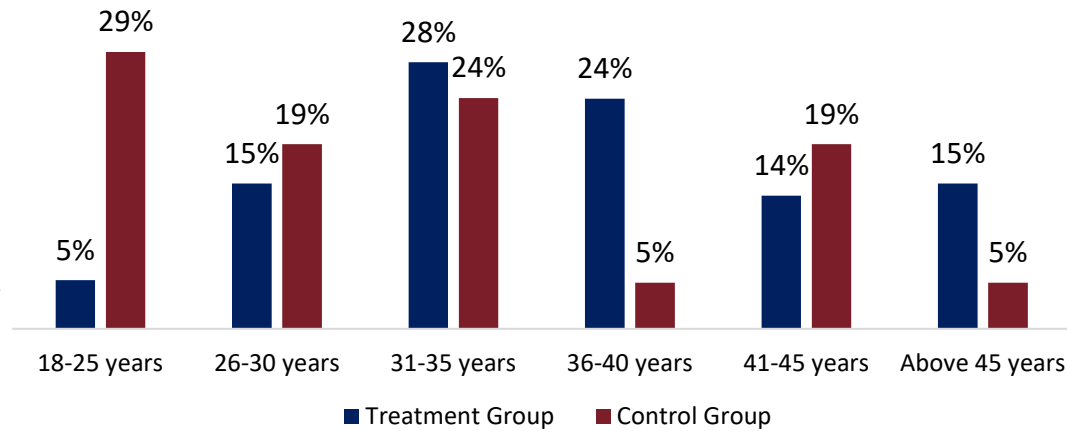
## Gender Distribution

100% women respondents

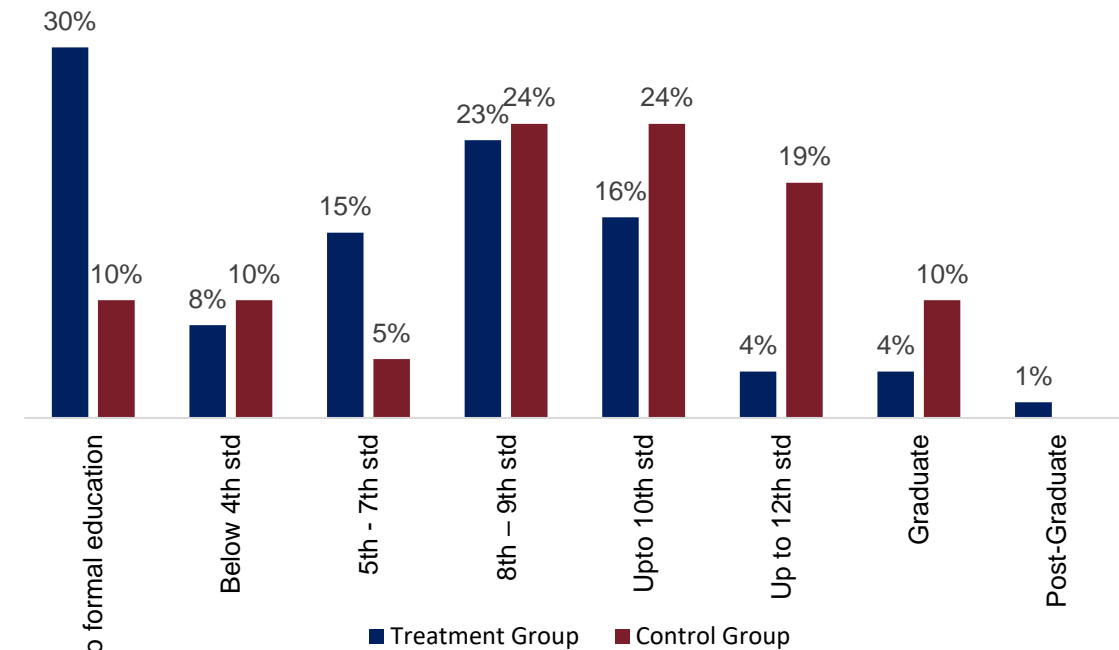
## Respondent Social Category



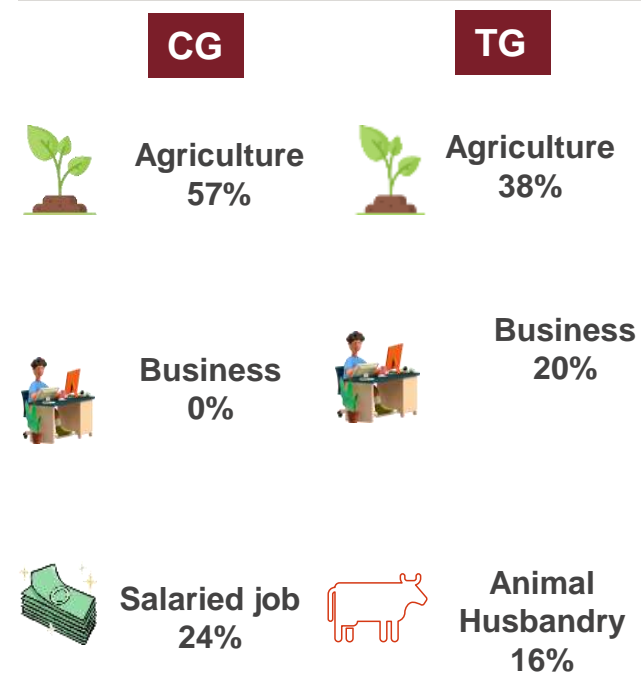
## Respondent Age group



## Education Levels



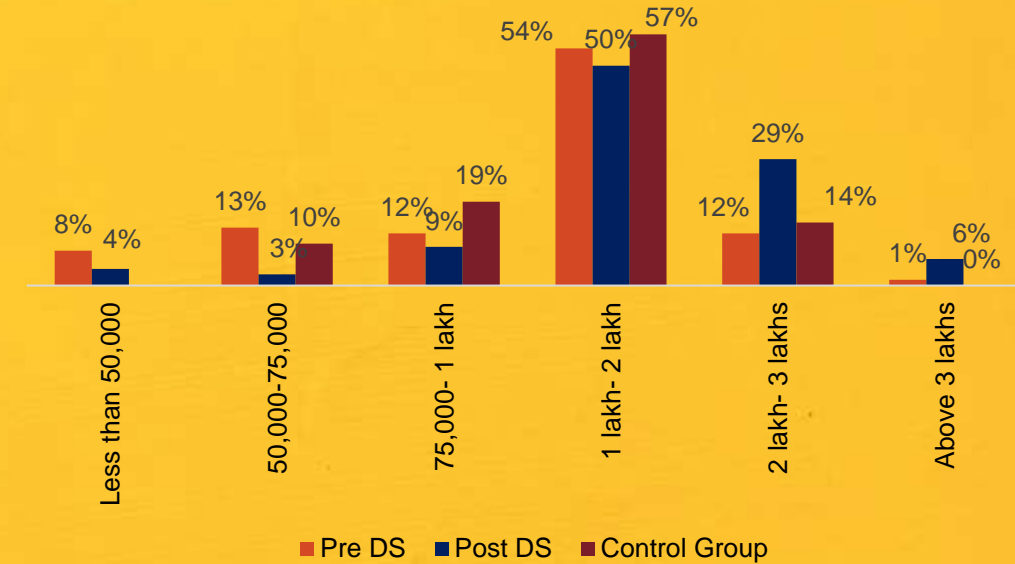
## Primary Source of Income of HH



## Household and Asset Profile

- The treatment group (TG) households had an **even gender distribution**, with an average family size of three male members and three female members.
- The TG also saw growth in smart phone with internet, LPG stove, bicycle, refrigerator and two-wheeler post intervention. The above assets are time savers and help the beneficiaries improve their productivity.
- In the target group (TG), 15% of families have more adult males working, while only 4% have more adult females working. In the comparison group (CG), 14% of families have more adult males working, whereas 19% have more adult females working.
- In TG, 1% of families have adult females as sole bread earners.

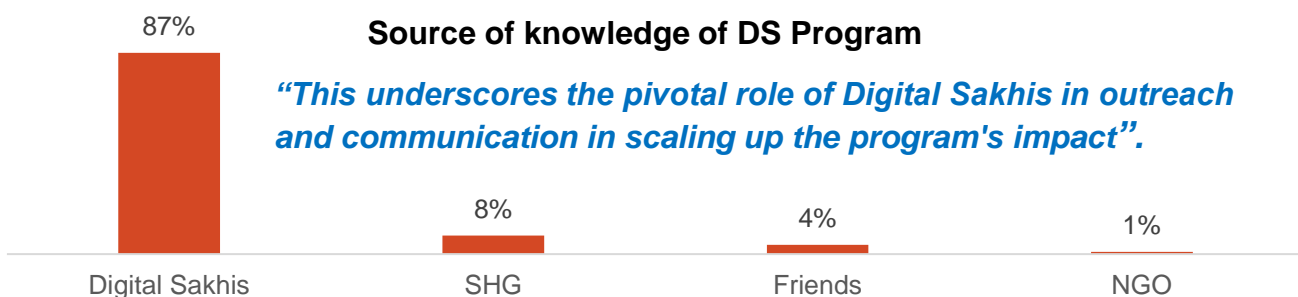
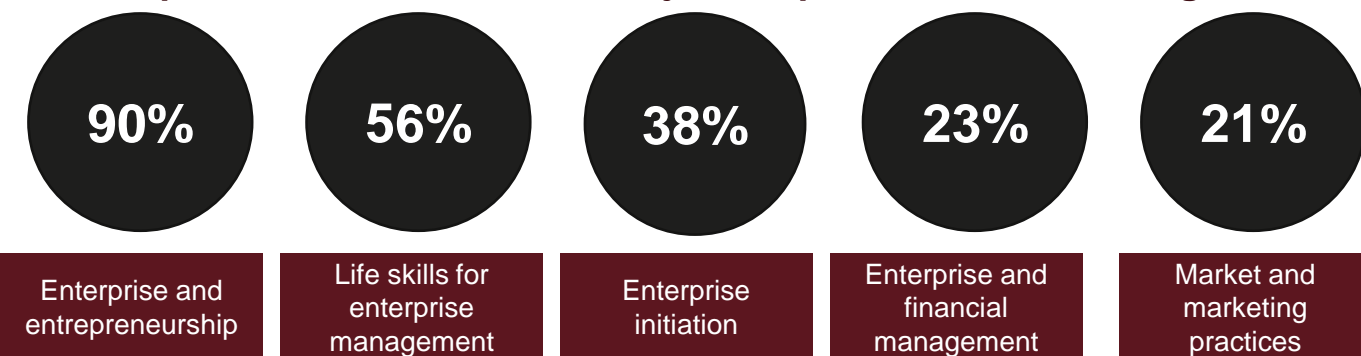
## Average annual income of the household in INR



- According to the recipients, the intervention assisted them in acquiring new skills (78%), offered hands-on guidance (55%), and facilitated the establishment of a network (15%).



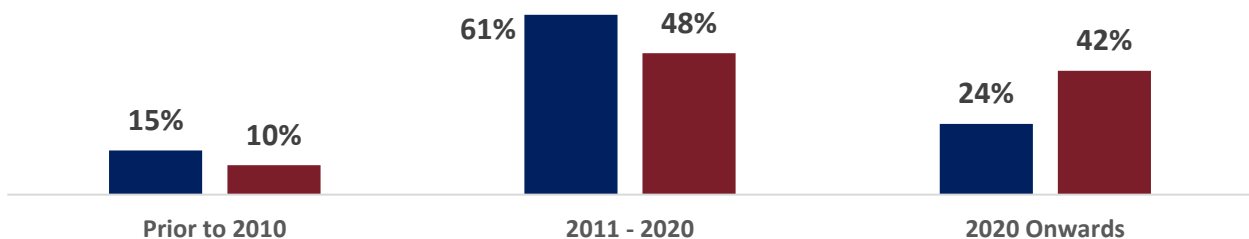
**The respondents mentioned five major components of the training**



*“This underscores the pivotal role of Digital Sakhis in outreach and communication in scaling up the program's impact”.*

**Age of enterprise** ■ TG ■ CG

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

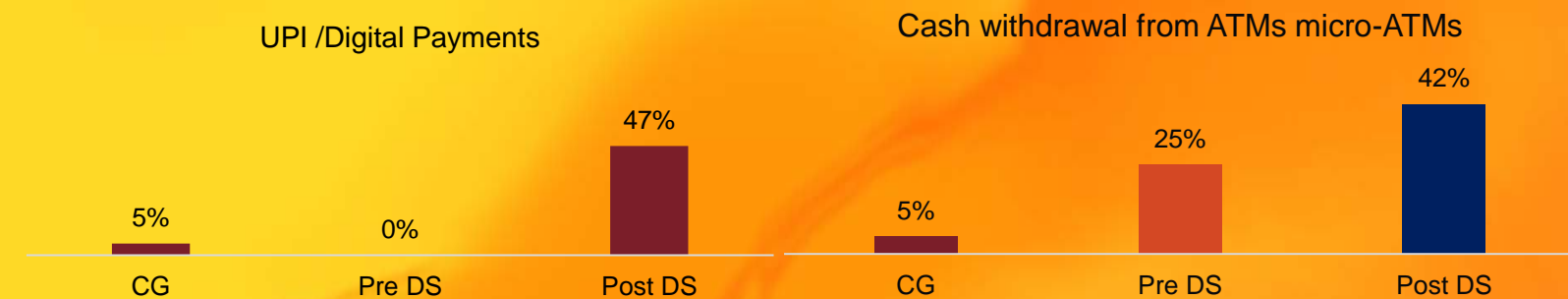


- Women find the program appealing because it aligns with their aspirations and needs. 16
- The focus on learning new business skills, mentioned by 78% of women, highlights the project's role in building capacity and enhancing skills to overcome the challenge of limited business knowledge.
- Additionally, 55% of women appreciate the program's hands-on support, and 15% join for networking, addressing the need for community support in overcoming challenges such as limited networking and mentorship.

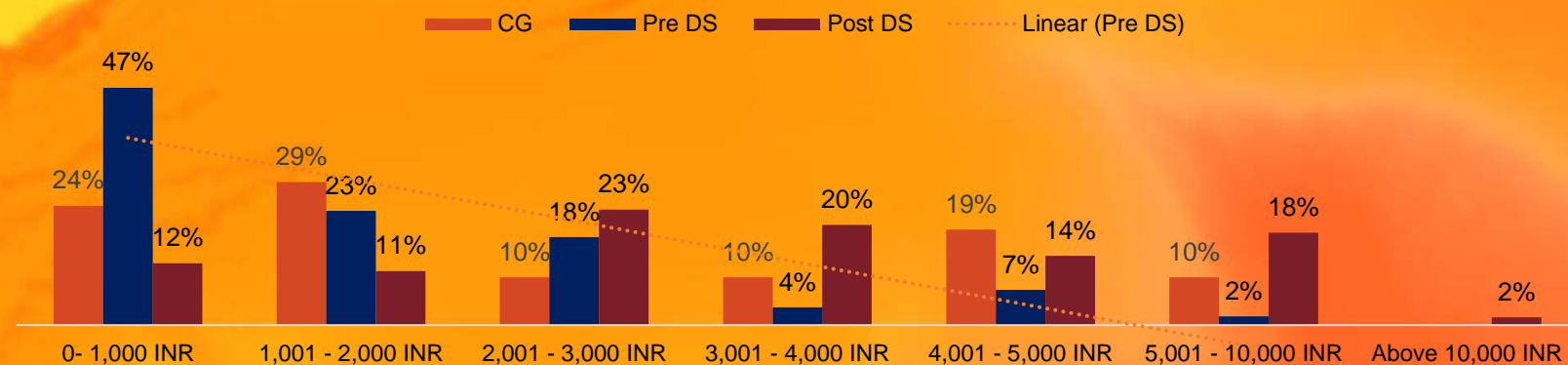
**Enterprise level Impact**

**Reasons for Adopting Digital Transactions**

- The only reason for higher TG understanding of digital payments is because of Digital Sakhis (94%) and trainers (13%). Currently 25% of the TG uses digital mode of payment as against 6% of CG.
- TG exhibits a growing preference for digital methods, such as UPI payments (47%), marking a significant shift from 0% before the project. This underscores the program's influence in promoting digital transactions.
- The TG values the ability to avoid carrying cash (91%) and digital payments being convenient modes of payment (73%)
- Over 90% of the TG acknowledges the speed of digital payments. Additionally, 55% attribute the adoption of digital payments in the TG to incentives like discounts and paybacks.



**Contribution to business: Profit per month**

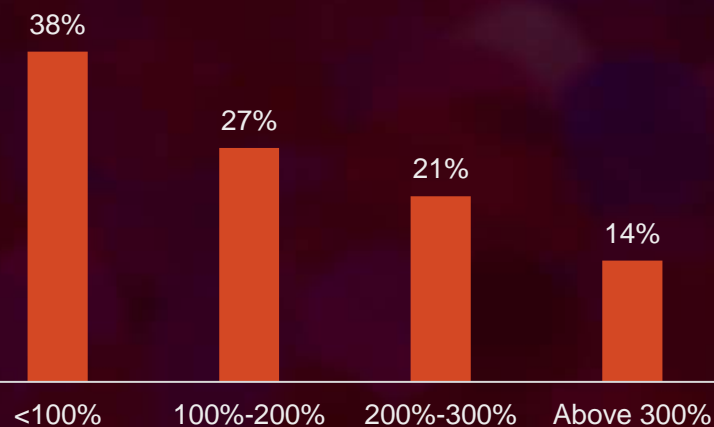


- Post-Project, there is a noticeable increase in the percentage of beneficiaries earning higher monthly incomes, with a significant shift from the lower income categories to the higher ones.
- The majority of beneficiaries attribute a significant percentage of their increased income to the training received, the growth of 85% in average income, highlights the substantial impact of the Digital Sakhi Project on their income generation capabilities.



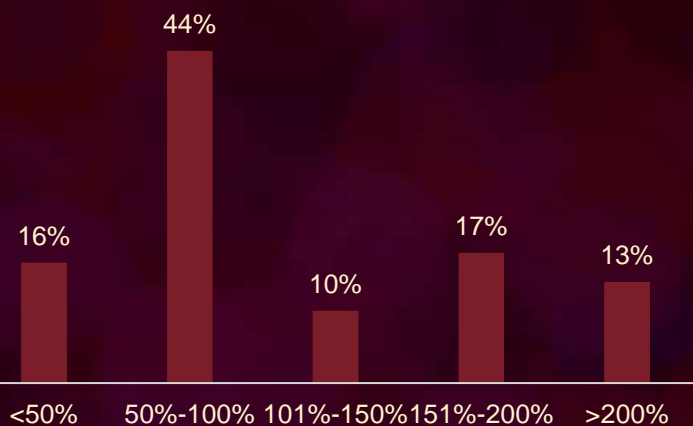


### Customer Base Growth



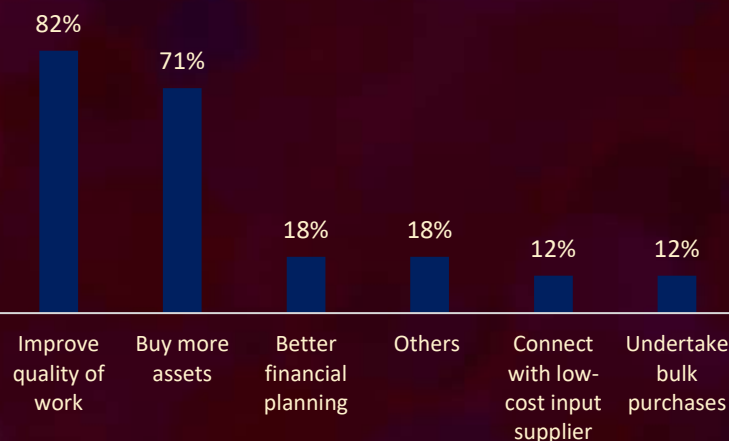
- The intervention was successful in conveying the importance of customer base growth and its impact on revenue and profits
- From the quantitative analysis, we have observed that there is a sharp (**More than 100%**) increase in the customer base of the respondents especially in the case of tailoring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

### Revenue Growth



- The growth in revenue reflects the positive impact of the increase in the customer base
- The growth in tailoring, and goat rearing are clear outcomes of the training imparted to the women entrepreneurs on marketing, segment knowledge and selling techniques

### Business Strategies Adopted



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

### Case: Impact of intervention on women entrepreneurs

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

- The training on newer designs has brought added value and confidence to women entrepreneurs who were previously unfamiliar with them. This has enabled them to enhance product quality and diversify their offerings, serving as an additional attraction for both new and existing customers.
- Some individuals have begun sourcing their raw materials like thread, buttons, and laces from wholesale markets, leading to significant cost reductions. In addition to their tailoring services, a few respondents have ventured into establishing their own clothing and retail stores. These shops offer a variety of products including saris, dresses, cosmetics, and tailoring-related materials, contributing to a broader value chain and attracting more customers.



Customer satisfaction



Increase in product quality



Improved product diversification



Better product pricing



#### Goat Farming/Animal Husbandry/Poultry

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

#### Grocery Store

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





- Investment in enterprise: TG has made a business investment that is 15% higher than the CG.
- The majority of beneficiaries needed to invest in physical space to establish their businesses, with assets, inventory, and raw materials following suit. This demonstrates their intention to initiate a professional brick-and-mortar setup with dedicated working hours.
- Among those, most beneficiaries focused on improving the quality of their work (82%).
- Many also sought to connect with buying more asset (71%) and better financial planning (18%), indicating a commitment to business growth and efficiency.

## Loans

➤ Loan availed - TG: **65%** CG: **43%**

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

- Most beneficiaries (88%) who took loans in the TG did so after participating in the WE training, suggesting that the training may have increased their knowledge and empowered them in decision to seek loans
- The TG were more comfortable in securing loans from the SHGs: 83% of the beneficiaries took loans from SHGs followed by banks (17%), suggesting that the program empowered participants to explore formal options.
- Post-project, a significant percentage of beneficiaries opted for loans from formal sources (banks and SHGs) due to lower interest rates. This indicates improved financial decision-making influenced by the training.
- 89% received financial knowledge on loans in WE training
- 94% of respondents believe that the financial knowledge they acquired through the training positively influenced their ability to secure better loan deals

## Insurance

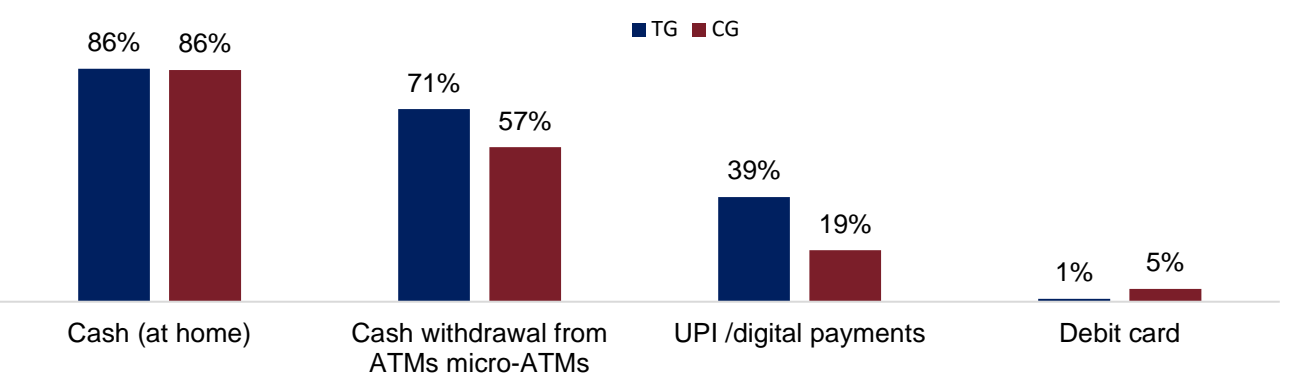
➤ Insurance availed - TG: **63%** CG: **38%**

### Impact of intervention in facilitating access to insurance for beneficiaries

- The data suggests that the DS program has effectively heightened awareness about insurance products, boosted the adoption of insurance, and cultivated a robust belief in the significance of insurance among beneficiaries. Life insurance emerges as particularly vital for financial protection, with beneficiaries expressing their intent to continue investing in various types of insurance in the future. This signifies a positive influence on their financial risk management.
- Post-project, there is a significant increase in the uptake of various insurance types, with accident insurance, life insurance and health insurance being the most prominent choices among beneficiaries.
- DS Trainers/Volunteers play a significant role in advising beneficiaries to take insurance policies, indicating the effectiveness of the DS program in spreading awareness and facilitating insurance enrollment.



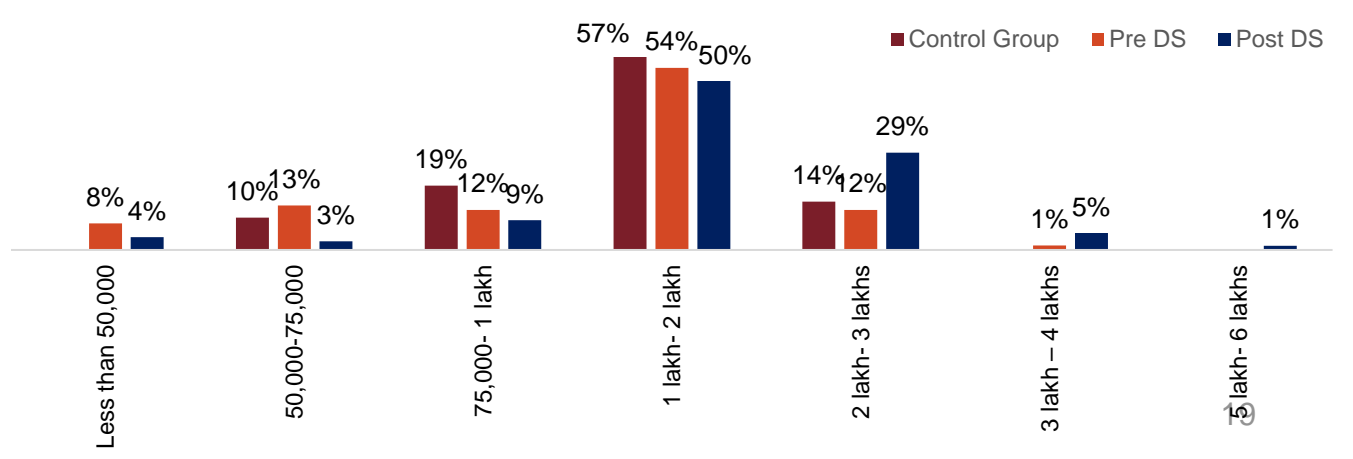
## Digital Modes of Payment



For family members of TG & CG, cash at home (86%) is the predominant mode of transaction followed by cash withdrawal from ATM and micro-ATM. UPI /digital payment has shown improvement. For TG it stands at 39% and CG 19% much more acceptance than debit card usage

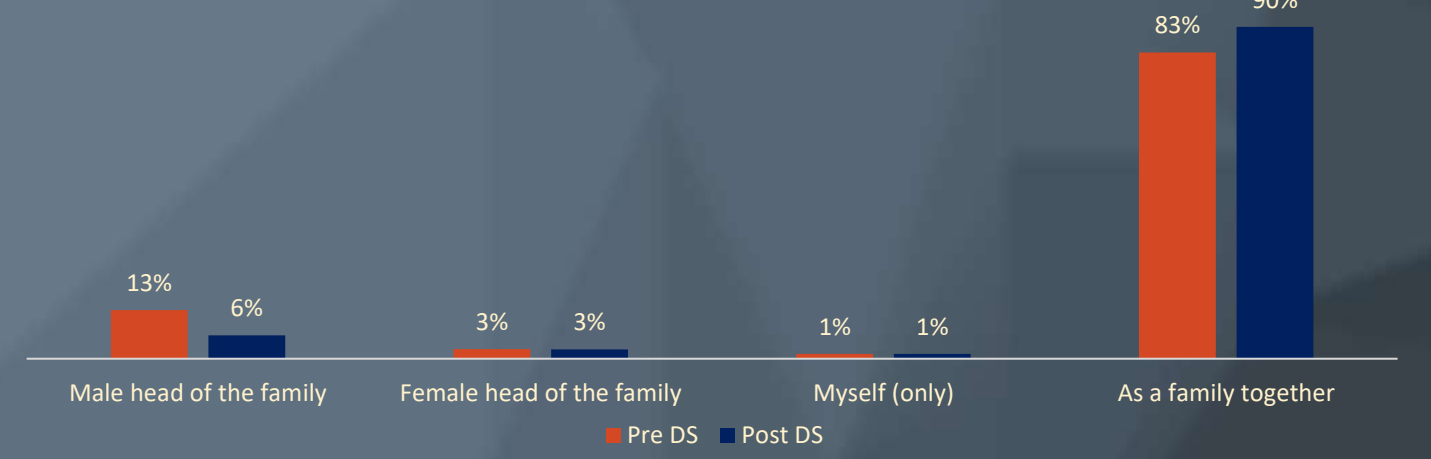
The TG shows significantly higher confidence levels (73%) in using digital modes of payment within the household, reflecting the effectiveness of the Digital Sakhi Project in boosting confidence.

## Total income of family

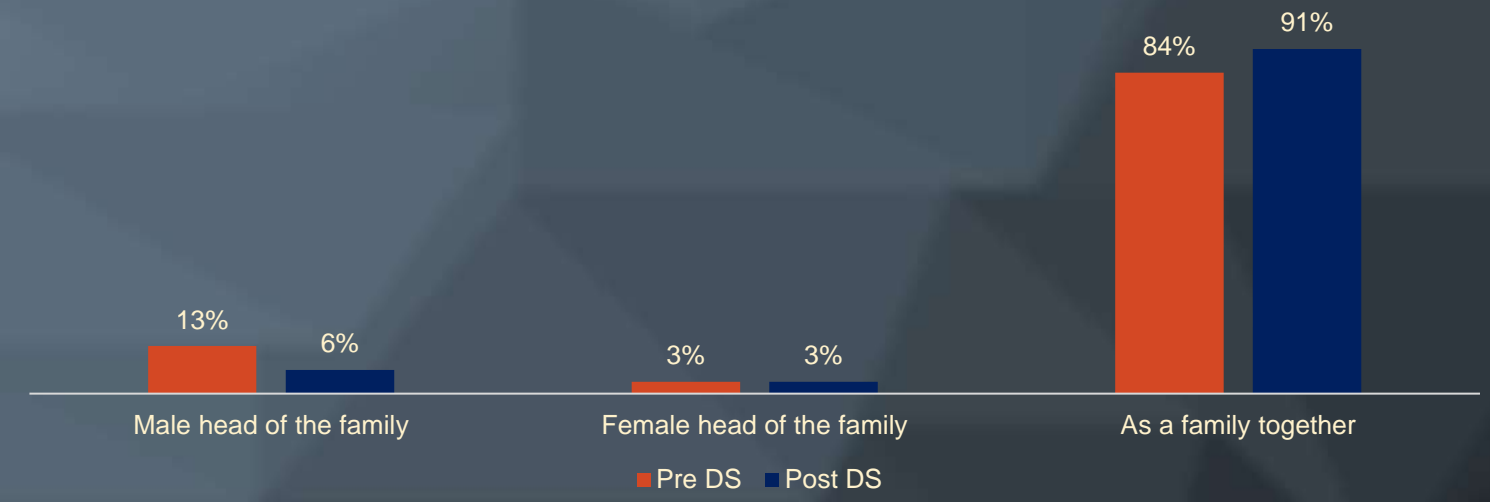


- All respondents from the treatment group stated that their businesses contribute a lot to support household expenses.
- Beneficiaries attribute increased income to various factors, with improving the buying more assets (64%) being the most cited reason, followed by improving quality of work (44%), more customers (31%).

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



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



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



# Community Members

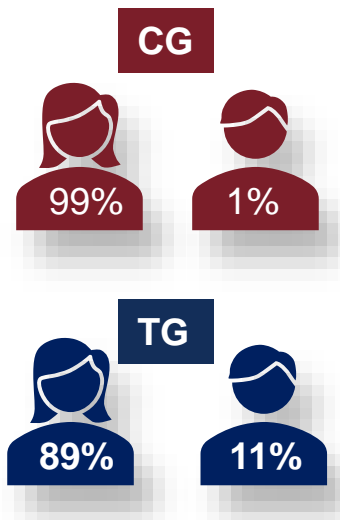




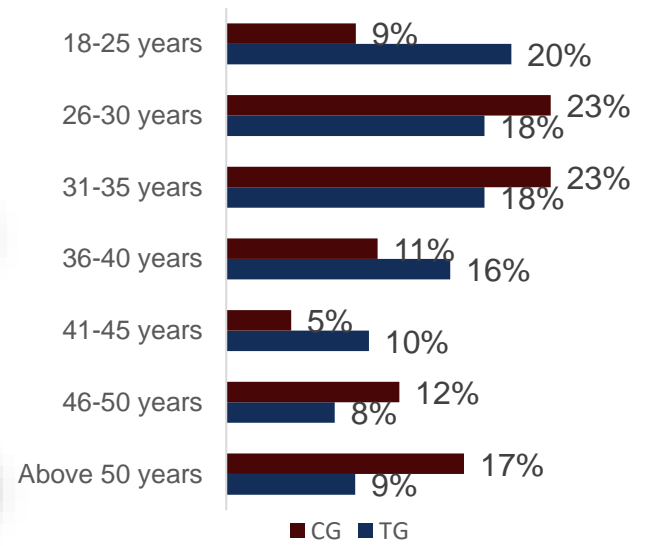


- ❖ The number of respondents having bank account have moved up to 87% in treatment group compared to 83% in the control group.
- ❖ Earlier 2% of the TG respondents had their bank account linked to their smartphones. The percentage improved to 56% post-intervention.
- ❖ Earlier 3% of the TG were aware of digital modes of payment, now the percentage has improved to 51% vs. 11% of the control group.
- ❖ Out of the beneficiaries who are aware of digital modes of payment, 54% are confident in the usage of digital payment methods.
- ❖ Extent of awareness of digital payment methods among men and women
  - ❑ Male Respondents: **67%**
  - ❑ Female Respondents: **50%**
- ❖ Smartphone share: **57%**
- ❖ (98% of the Community members who have smart phone also have active internet connection)

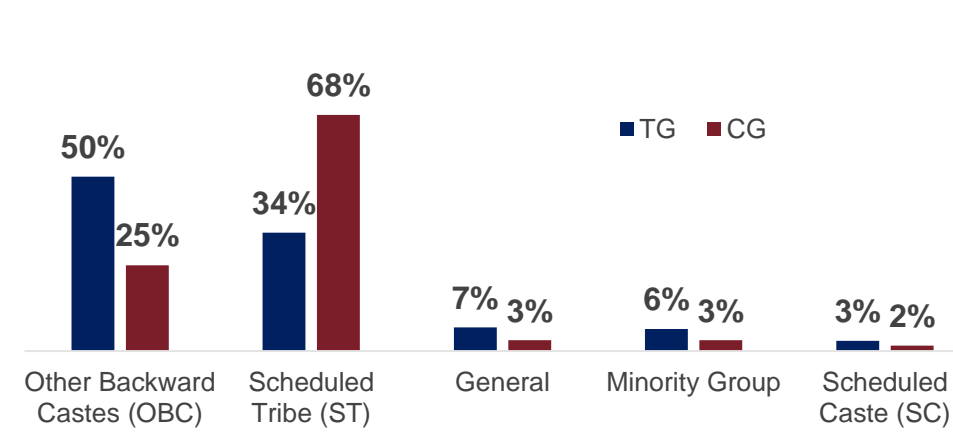
## Gender Distribution



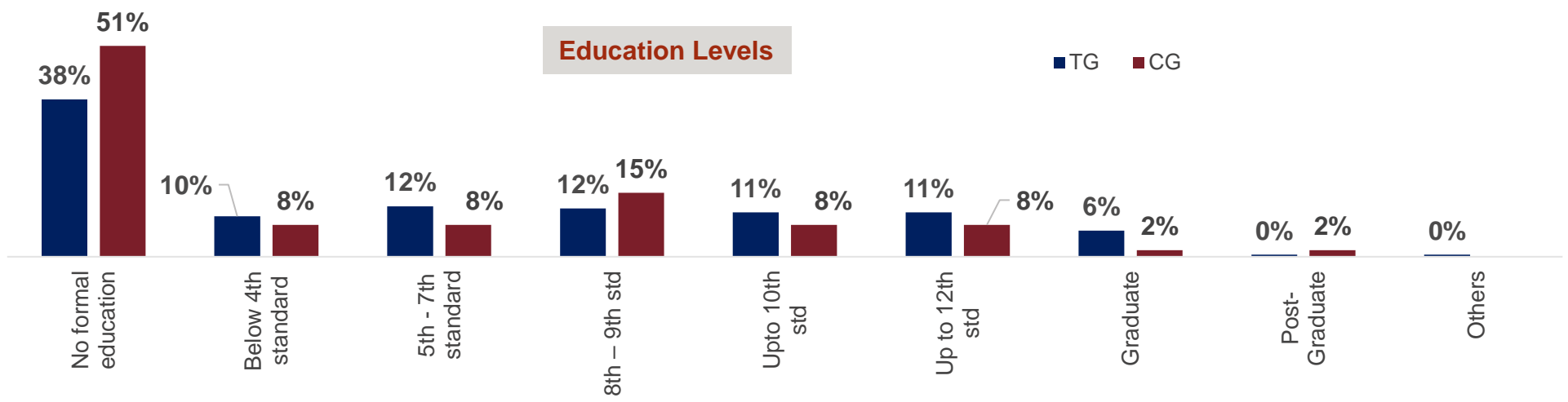
## Respondent Age group



## Respondent Social Category



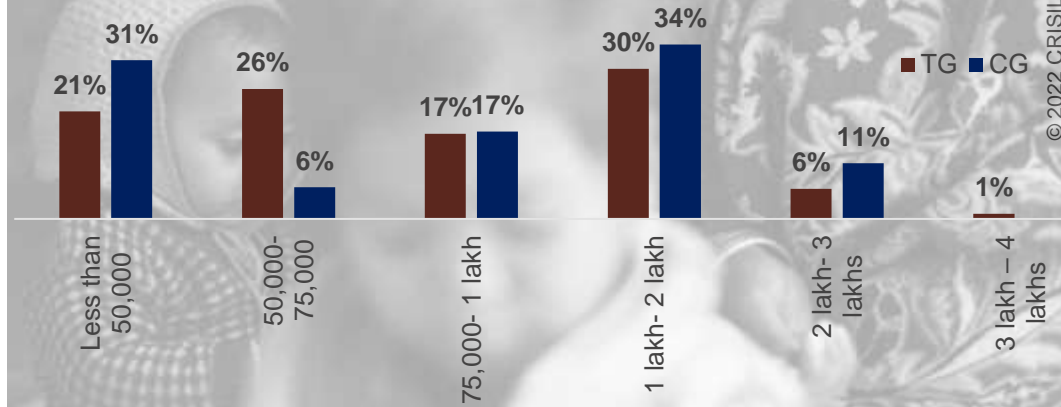
## Education Levels



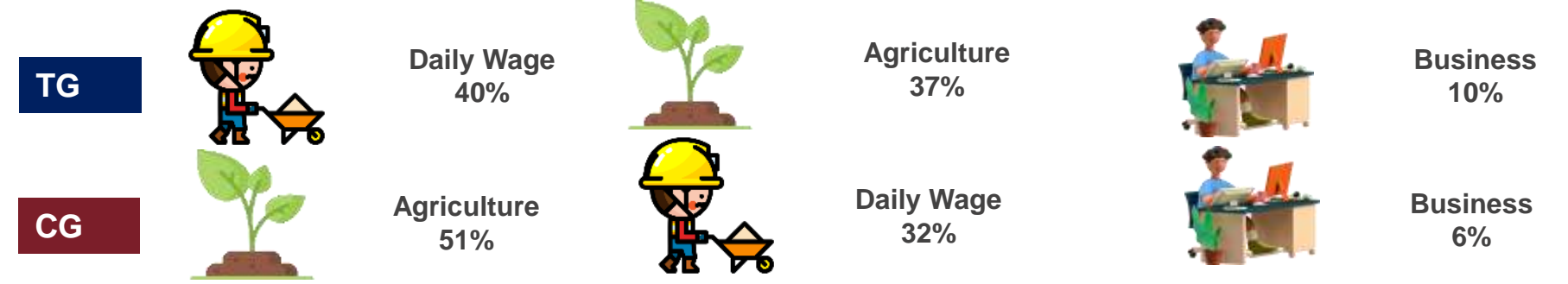
## Household and Asset Profile

- Both the treatment group (TG) and control group (CG) households had an **even gender distribution**, with an average family size of three male members and three female members.
- The TG also saw growth in two-wheelers, bicycle and mixer post intervention. The above assets are time savers and help the respondents improve their productivity.
- In the TG, 28% of families had more adult males working, whereas only 3% had a higher number of adult females working. In the CG, 29% of families had more adult males working, and 5% had more adult females working. Furthermore, in the CG, 2% of families depended solely on adult females as the primary breadwinners.

## Average annual income of the household in INR



## Top 3 Primary Source of Income of HH



- 96% respondents from the TG have perception that there is a change/ growth in the profession of women in the recent years as against 17% from CG. The TG's significantly higher perception of change suggests that the project has had a substantial impact on empowering women and altering their roles within the community.

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



**“Irregular income is a major hurdle for implementing household budgeting practice.”**



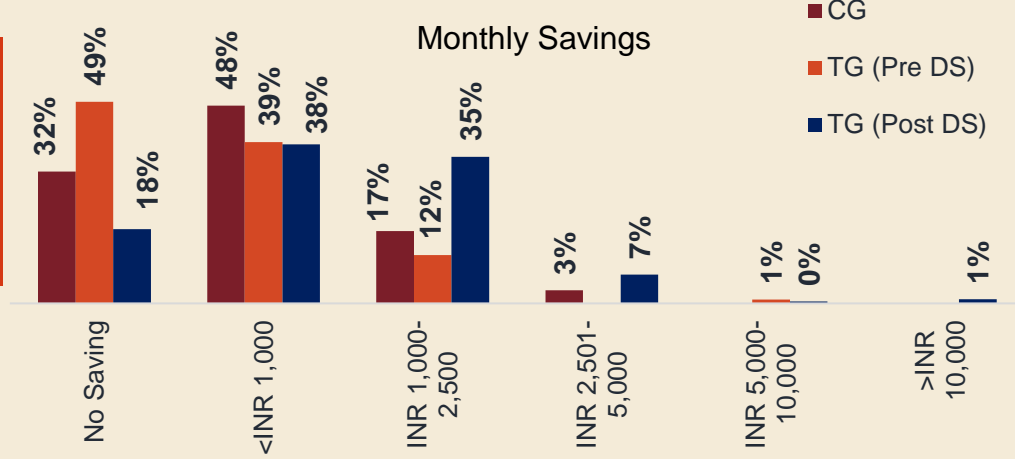
HH Level Budget post intervention



- 78% of respondents noted family involvement in the DS project, showcasing its success in engaging both primary participants and broader communities, creating a positive ripple effect within families.
- Joining the project has resulted in providing income opportunity (68%), in boosting the confidence (33%) and recognition and respect in society.
- 100% respondents visit the Digital Seva Kendra and receive assistance related to Aadhaar services, government forms, certificates, and banking transactions.

**Monthly savings, mode of saving and return on savings**

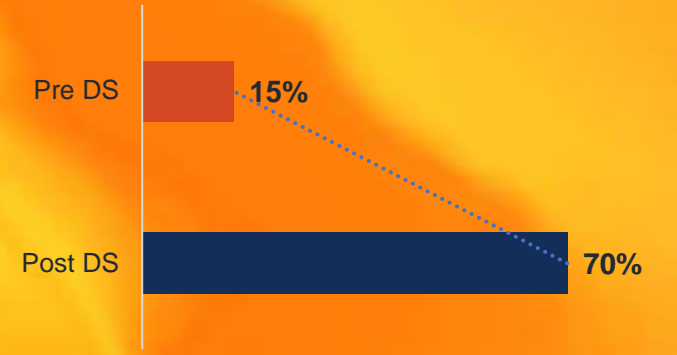
**Average monthly savings:**  
 Control Group: ~INR 780  
 Pre-Project TG: ~INR 1,030  
 Post-Project TG: ~INR 1,411



- The project led to a notable positive shift in the INR 1,000 - 2,500 category, indicating improved saving habits. The significant drop in the **"No Saving"** category underscores the success in promoting savings habits.
- Significant increase in savings in banks (42% to 80%) and SHGs (6% to 76%) shows a shift towards formal institutions, reflecting greater trust possibly due to project-provided financial literacy.

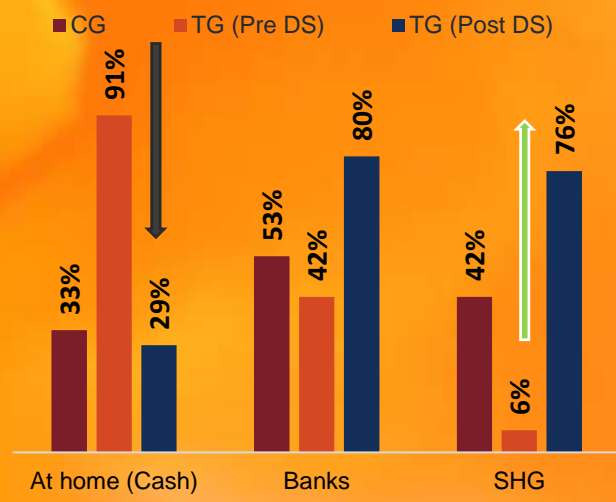
**Increased intention of saving**

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

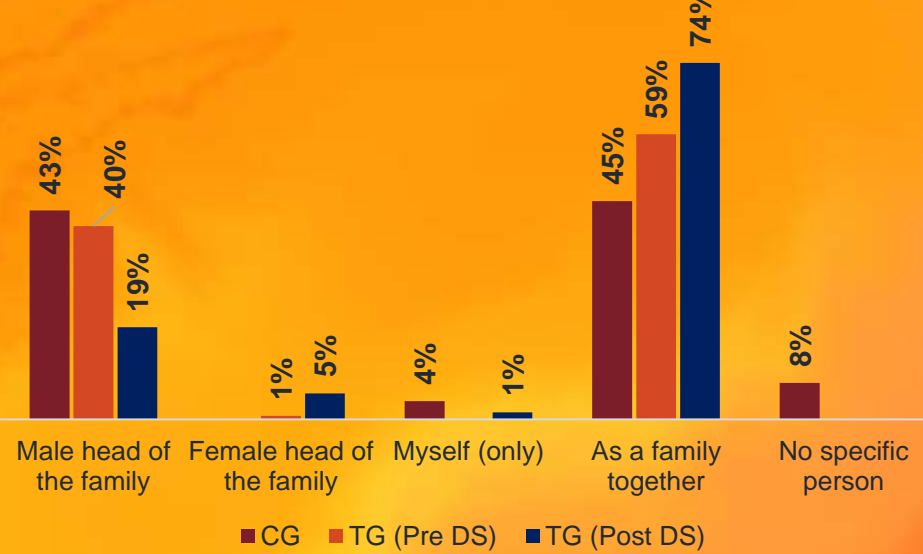


**Preferred mode of saving**

- The remarkable increase in savings deposited in banks from 42% to 80% and SHGs from just 6% to 76% indicates a significant shift towards formal financial institutions.
- This shift suggests greater trust in these institutions, possibly due to the financial literacy provided by the project.
- The increased savings in SHGs also underline the effectiveness of community-based financial initiatives.
- 33% of the respondents from CG save money at home in the form of cash which is higher than respondents from TG after the project



**Decision making in family related to expenses**



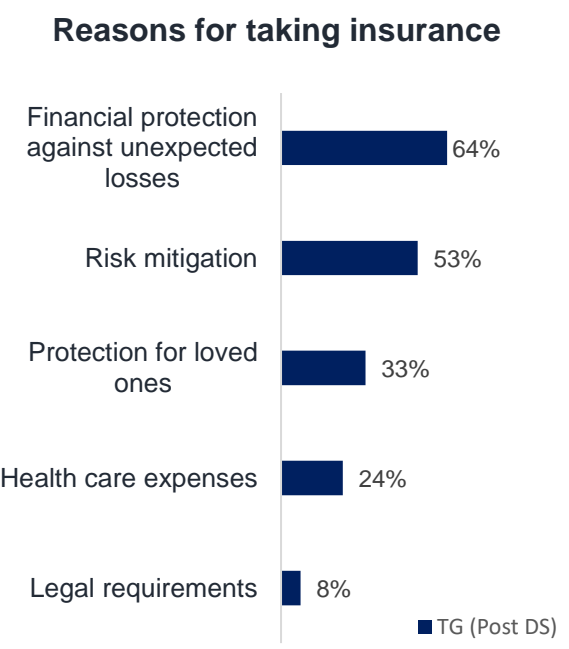
**87%** women respondents are actively involved in managing household finances post intervention

Uptake of Loans	CG: 20%	TG (Post-project): 38%
Loan amount taken (average)	CG: ~INR 26,000	TG (Post-project): ~INR 50,000

- Of the TG respondents who have taken a loan, 99% have taken it post DS.
- 98% of the TG respondents who have secured a loan believe that financial knowledge through DS training helped them to a greater extent to get a better deal on loan.
- On average, TG respondents with a loan have managed to save a meaningful amount of approximately INR 1,800 on their loans.
- Following the implementation of the Digital Sakhi program, there has been a rise in the use of banks and MFIs for obtaining loans, suggesting an enhancement in access to formal financial institutions.
- Post-DS, there is a diversification in the types of loans taken, indicating that community members are now accessing a wider range of financial products to meet their specific needs.

Uptake of Insurance	CG: 29%	TG (Post-project): 39%
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- A significant 81% of respondents within the target group sought advice from DS trainers/volunteers, indicating an evident increase in the role played by the Digital Sakhi program
- A noteworthy 64% recognize the importance of insurance for financial protection, indicating the project's impact on enhancing risk management.
- 53% now see insurance as key for risk mitigation, highlighting the project's impact on understanding the importance of a financial safety net.
- 24% consider insurance vital for catering to healthcare expenses.



### Digital mode of payments

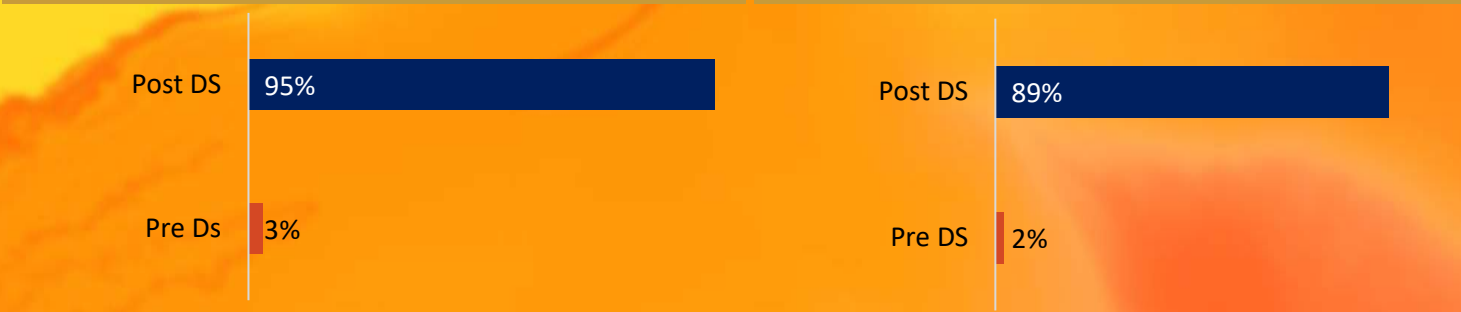
➤ Awareness about digital payment modes from 3% to 51% signifies the project's effectiveness in raising digital literacy and awareness.



- Increase in smartphone-linked bank accounts from 21% to 56%
- Increase in the usage of digital payment methods from 0% to 25% among TG.
- **2% to 52%** rise in using bank services through DSK signifies the effectiveness of the project in promoting access to government services and financial transactions.

### Awareness on social security schemes

### Enrollment in social security schemes



### Training Camps

- 72% of the respondents attended the educational sessions under the intervention.
- Around 39% of the participants suggested the introduction of more modules while very few (7%) suggested increasing the duration of the camps revealing that most of the participants found the current program apt to their requirements and covering most of the topics in the right manner
- The suggestion to reduce the duration of camps (7%) by limited participants suggests the interest in the way sessions were conducted and how well they were received by the majority of the participants





**Relevance:**

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

**Coherence:**

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

**Efficiency:**

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

**Effectiveness and Impact:**

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

**Sustainability:**

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

SDG Goal		Target	
	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	1.4	By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance
	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	4.3	By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
		4.4	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	5.5	Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
		5.b	Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	8.3	Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
		8.6	By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	9.3	Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets
	Reduce inequality within and among countries	10.2	By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	26 17.17	Encourage and promote effective public, public, private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships



<b>Utilizing the digital medium for upskilling</b>	<b>Creating awareness among family members</b>	<b>Catering to challenges in budget preparation</b>	<b>Fostering robust ecosystem</b>	<b>Fostering Digital Financial Literacy among youth</b>
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<p>Digital Sakhi program participants, proficient in digital literacy and tablet use, are ideal for advanced digital skill development.</p> <p>With the use of shorter interactive course material like customized YouTube videos by L&amp;T Finance or specialized online courses, aiding individuals in exploring new business opportunities or improving their skills, like adding mobile repair services or expanding their current shop offerings.</p>	<p>Prioritizing the awareness and education of male household members is essential.</p> <p>Providing training on sharing domestic responsibilities will empower women to allocate more time to their entrepreneurial pursuits.</p> <p>Recognizing the significance of household-level behavioral change is crucial to ensure the sustainability of intervention benefits and garner support from all household members</p>	<p>Inconsistent income and limited family support pose challenges in budget preparation.</p> <p>Despite individuals being mindful of their expenses and having spending awareness, they face challenges in formally creating household budgets.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to enhance awareness and leverage smartphone budgeting applications as a valuable alternative approach.</p>	<p>Women entrepreneurs face difficulties in establishing forward market connections, particularly in businesses like goat farming, poultry, and occasionally animal husbandry.</p> <p>Integrating both forward and backward market connections could greatly enhance the intervention's effectiveness. This entails not only linking them with potential buyers but also ensuring a seamless supply of essential resources to support their businesses.</p>	<p>The current intervention, with its proven effectiveness, stands at a pivotal juncture where strategic expansion can significantly enhance its impact. A forward-looking approach involves extending the program's reach to school/ college campuses, presenting an opportunity to broaden the coverage of beneficiaries and regions. By venturing into school and colleges, the intervention recognizes the unique potential of reaching students during a formative period of their lives.</p>
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<b>Partnerships and collaborations</b>	<b>Adopting a saturation-based approach</b>	<b>Collectivization and institutionalizing businesses</b>	<b>Decision making via landscape analysis</b>	<b>Focusing on Entrepreneurship component</b>
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<p>To explore collaborations and tie up with other institutions to spread digital financial literacy across age classes and age groups. The tie-up can help build the capacity of qualified financially literate forces creating more awareness and opportunities. The existing digital sewa kendra set up can also be explored for tie-up with other institutions and work as a hub and spoke model for offering various services and making them more viable and self-sustainable.</p>	<p>Embracing a saturation-based approach for Digital Financial Literacy signifies a deliberate and all-encompassing strategy aimed at reaching and educating an entire demographic or geographic area comprehensively.</p> <p>This approach involves the systematic deployment of a wide array of strategies targeted at both horizontal and vertical penetration of Digital Sakhi interventions in and around the locations already selected for implementation.</p>	<p>There is potential to explore avenues where DS/women entrepreneurs can pool their skills and efforts to establish a cooperative venture.</p> <p>By coming together, women entrepreneurs can amplify their collective voice, leading to increased bargaining power. This strength in numbers allows them to negotiate better terms with suppliers, buyers, and other stakeholders.</p> <p>A parallel approach can be adopted for the mapping exercise of DSK, focusing on enhancing access to services and optimizing the effective utilization of the DSK infrastructure.</p>	<p>Many women entrepreneurs focus on a single trade within their regions, which can lower trade profitability and result in unpredictable income.</p> <p>Conducting a landscape analysis and redirecting the selection process towards more profitable trades can contribute to the development of a thriving community of entrepreneurs with diversified and sustainable income sources.</p>	<p>Developing a comprehensive booklet or digital guide represents a proactive initiative aimed at highlighting avenues for skill enhancement within the beneficiaries' existing trades. This resource not only sheds light on current opportunities but also offers valuable insights into emerging business trends.</p> <p>By serving as a reservoir of information, it becomes an invaluable asset for those seeking to broaden their skill sets and explore new horizons within their industries.</p>
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**Case study 1: Ms. Neetu, 38, DS, Barwani, MP**

Ms. Neetu, aged 38, prior to Digital Sakhi intervention was a homemaker and also assisted her husband in his mobile repair shop. She learned about the Digital Sakhi program through an NGO and decided to join. Following her training, initially she felt a bit shy in doing door to door visits. However, she has since transformed into a courageous woman with excellent communication skills and is regarded as a role model in her village.

She took a loan to the tune of INR 40,000 to start Digital Seva Kendra. Her center offers various services, including Aadhaar services, assistance with government forms and identity card applications, as well as services related to deposits, withdrawals, insurance enrollment, and government schemes.

Now her monthly income is INR 15,000 per month and her family income has also risen from less than INR 50,000 to more than INR 200,000.

**Case study 2: Ms. Poonam, 21, DS, Rajod, MP**

Ms. Poonam, aged 21 post completion of her graduation joined the DS program and it was smooth due to her single status and support from her parents. Post the program, Poonam took loan of INR 25,000 for the set up of Digital Seva Kendra.

Her center is equipped with essential tools such as a computer system, photocopy machine, scanner, and printer, where she also provides computer training to local residents.

Presently, Poonam's monthly earnings range between INR 8,000 and 10,000, leading to a remarkable 90% increase in her family's monthly income to INR 19,000. After covering personal and DSK expenses, she manages to save INR 1,500. Her achievements serve as an inspiring example for young schoolchildren and fellow villagers, demonstrating the possibilities of achieving financial independence at a young age



**Case study 3: Raj Kunwar, 35, WE, Dasai, MP**

Before her involvement with the L&T Finance women entrepreneur program, Ms. Raj Kunwar was a homemaker who primarily cared for the family's cattle. However, she soon realized that the traditional methods she had been using for animal husbandry were not effectively contributing to her family's income.

The training was instrumental in enhancing her understanding of various cattle breeds and their proper care. She gained insights into the correct nutritional requirements for cattle and learned about medications that could improve milk production, with consultations from veterinarians.

*“At present, the monthly income ranges between INR 8,000 to 10,000. While utilizing animal dung as organic fertilizer for farms, has helped in initiating the cultivation of organic vegetables”.*

**Case study 4: Durga Rathore, 40, WE, Labaria MP**

Before joining the women entrepreneur program, Ms. Durga Rathore worked as an agricultural laborer during the season and was a dedicated homemaker otherwise.

From her early years, Durga had nurtured tailoring as a hobby. Unfortunately, a lack of knowledge and resources hindered her from fully exploring her passion. A positive turning point transpired in her life when she encountered the Digital Sakhi intervention in her village, affording her the opportunity to pursue the longstanding passion she had always aspired to fulfill.

Durga's journey in tailoring took her to new heights as she delved into the intricacies of the craft, experimenting with innovative designs and techniques. Currently, she earns a monthly income ranging from INR 5,000 to 7,000. With this increased income, she is able to invest in her children's education, bringing about positive changes in her family's life.



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