

50 YEARS FORWARD NAVIGATING DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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FOREWORD

It is an honour to present UNFPA India's Annual Report 2024, marking an incredible milestone—50 years of improving lives across India, especially for women and girls. This year is not just a celebration of our achievements but also a stepping stone to help us navigate the future.

India stands at a critical moment. With the world's largest youth population, a growing elderly demographic, and promising economic growth, the country is navigating powerful megatrends: urbanisation, digital transformation, climate change, migration, and the rising participation of women in the economy. The choices India makes today will shape its path for generations to come.

At the heart of our work are the people we serve—the young girl unlocking her true potential through education, the mother receiving life-saving care, the men and boys empowering those around them, and the elderly living with dignity.

Together, we are building a future where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person can achieve their dreams.

For half a century, UNFPA India has worked side by side with the Government of India, state governments, civil society, and local communities to ensure no one is left behind. In our focus states—Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan—we have driven innovations in maternal health, offering high-quality technical support and outreach to marginalised groups. We are leveraging data and technology to inform decisions and provide new contraceptive options, expanding access and choices.



As we look ahead, we draw inspiration from three decades of advocacy shaped by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women. These milestones have made motherhood safer, given women greater choices, and brought about critical laws against domestic violence.

With renewed commitment and collaboration, UNFPA India will continue to foster innovation, build partnerships, and champion people-centered development. Together, we will ensure that India's demographic transformation leads to a future of empowerment, equality, and progress for all.

A heartfelt thank you to the Government of India, our state government partners, donors, private sector allies, civil society organisations (CSOs), researchers, and, most importantly, the communities we serve. Your unwavering support drives us forward, and together, we will build a brighter tomorrow.



ANDREA M. WOJNAR

**UNFPA India Representative and
Country Director Bhutan**



UNFPA INDIA AT A GLANCE

The mission of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled, ensuring rights and choices for all.

We work towards achieving **the three transformative results** by 2030.

ZERO

Preventable Maternal Deaths:

Strengthening healthcare systems to ensure safe pregnancies and deliveries.

ZERO

Unmet Need for Family Planning:

Expanding access to quality reproductive health services.

ZERO

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Harmful Practices:

Strengthening prevention and response mechanisms to end GBV and harmful practices such as child marriage and gender-biased sex selection.

Our work is guided by the principles of a human-rights based approach set in place by the **1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)**, and the imperative that no one is left behind.

WHERE WE WORK

With a national presence headquartered in New Delhi, UNFPA India has a strategic focus in the four programme states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan, where targeted interventions create high-impact, scalable solutions for reproductive health, gender equality, and youth empowerment.

In the second year of Country Programme 10 (CP-10), UNFPA India advanced its mission through:



Stronger government and private sector collaborations to enhance programme reach and sustainability with a focus on reaching those left farthest behind.



System strengthening initiatives for improving the quality and availability of response services with a focus on human-rights-based approaches.



Innovative solutions that improve access to maternal health, family planning, and GBV response services.



Evidence-based policy advocacy with diverse stakeholders, including local, state and national governments to advance UNFPA India's mandate.



Large-scale media engagement to drive awareness and action on population and gender issues.



Direct engagement with young people, equipping them with knowledge, skills, and platforms to shape their future and enable inter-generational impact.

THE 50 & BEYOND: A YEAR IN ACTION

“

My mom would chase the school bus whenever I missed it and drive me to the next stop, while my dad would lovingly oil my hair every weekend. There was no ‘man’s role’ or ‘woman’s role’ in our home—there were just roles and responsibilities shared equally.

-Kriti Sanon, Actor, Producer and Entrepreneur

”



Celebrating a landmark 50-year partnership with the Government of India and its leadership, both on the global stage and within, UNFPA India through a special commemorative event, honoured the country’s progress in averting maternal deaths, reducing child marriage, and promoting gender equality.

The event brought together an inspiring mix of distinguished changemakers, senior government officials, national icons, CSOs, think tanks, and partners. Among them were Meeta Rajivlochan, Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports; Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Executive Director; acclaimed actor Kriti Sanon; Pio Smith, UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Director; UN Resident Coordinator Shombi Sharp; and UNFPA India Representative Andrea M. Wojnar. Their insights reaffirmed that if India continues on this path, it will make significant strides toward achieving the three transformative goals—zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning, and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices.

Navya Meets Natalia: Two women, One conversation – Rights and Choices For Girls



UNFPA India believes in turning up the volume on youth voices through meaningful dialogues. The conversation between Navya Naveli Nanda and Dr. Natalia Kanem was a perfect reflection of that energy. Navya, a renowned social impact entrepreneur and advocate for menstrual health, brought her passion and fresh perspective to the table. Together, they explored the power of young India and the country’s bold progress in maternal health. The vodcast reached over 1 million people, emphasising that youth are not just the future but the powerful present driving transformation.

Spotlight: The 50 & Beyond Storybook and Film



In collaboration with the Outlook Group, UNFPA India unveiled the 50 & Beyond Storybook and Film—a compelling anthology of essays, reflections, and inspiring stories capturing five decades of impact. Through six thematic megatrends—harnessing the youth dividend, advancing reproductive health and bodily autonomy, bridging the gender digital divide, promoting positive masculinity, addressing demographic shifts in ageing, and tackling climate change—the book and film weave a narrative of progress and demographic change.

The Business Case for Empowering Women: Private Sector Commitment to Advancing Women's Health and Rights in the Workplace



India's dynamic private sector is advancing its commitment to women's health and rights in diverse and innovative ways. These solutions benefit all workers and help the bottom line. This Coalition can be a powerful engine for sharing best practices and inspiring change across workplaces in India.

- Dr. Natalia Kanem, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of The United Nations Population Fund



The private sector plays a pivotal role in advancing gender equality and ensuring women's health and well-being in the workplace. Recognising this, UNFPA India hosted a high-level private sector roundtable in Mumbai, where it officially launched the India Chapter of the Coalition for Reproductive Justice in Business (CRJB). This initiative aims to integrate reproductive health into corporate strategy and operations, encouraging companies to adopt policies and practices that support the well-being of women employees.

For the first time, the roundtable brought together leading private sector players with a combined market capitalisation and valuation of \$152 billion and an estimated 171,095 women in their workforce—marking a significant step toward fostering inclusive and gender-responsive workplaces.

Street Theater on Gender-Based Violence Sparks Conversation at the Historic Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus Station in Mumbai



The celebrations extended to Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, where commuters were captivated by a powerful street play, *'Aamcha Shariravar, Aamcha Adhikar'* (My Body, My Right). Organised by the CSO-led coalition Girls Count and the Dalit Mahila Vikas Mandal (DMVM), the event raised crucial community awareness about gender-based violence (GBV) and the harmful practices that women and girls face. It also sent a strong message about the value of the girl child.


The South Asia 'Laadli' Media and Advertising Awards for Gender Sensitivity: A Glittering Night of Awarding Gender-Equal Narratives



Recognising the media's profound influence in shaping perceptions, challenging discriminatory norms, and driving social change, UNFPA's Executive Director, Dr. Natalia Kanem, and renowned actor Ratna Pathak Shah, the event's Chief Guest, presented the accolades at the 14th edition of the Indian Laadli Media and Advertising Awards for Gender Sensitivity and the 4th South Asian Awards.

Established by UNFPA India and Population First, the Laadli Awards celebrate excellence in journalism, literature, cinema, and advertising that challenge gender biases and promote an inclusive narrative. This year's ceremony honored 42 outstanding contributions from across India, alongside 14 journalists from South Asian nations, reinforcing the media's critical role in advancing gender equality.


Honouring India's Milestones in Maternal Health



India's monumental efforts in reducing the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) by an impressive 70% between 2000 and 2020 has positioned the country to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target of an MMR below 70 per 100,000 live births before 2030. This remarkable progress has saved the lives of thousands of women across the country, particularly those from marginalised communities.

The Government of India's (GoI) extraordinary leadership in advancing maternal health and family planning was recognised through a special felicitation by the UNFPA Executive Director, Dr. Natalia Kanem, during her visit to India. She reaffirmed UNFPA's steadfast commitment to supporting India's efforts in advancing the health and well-being of women, girls, and young people.

Youth Power Unleashed: Young People in the Driver's Seat



UNFPA India's young changemakers exemplify the resilience, innovation, and leadership needed to propel India's growth and achieve the SDGs.

Four dynamic young advocates—Kavita, Munna, Priyajit, and Shivani—embodied the spirit of youth leadership and the aspirations of young India. Sharing their journeys of resilience and impact, they demonstrated the transformative power of unlocking young people's potential. Joining the conversation was actor and body positivity advocate Huma Qureshi, adding her voice to the dialogue.

The celebration also saw the participation of key government and UN leaders, including Ms. Meera Srivastava, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW); Shri Nitesh Kumar Mishra, Joint Secretary and Chief Vigilance Officer, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS); UN Resident Coordinator Shombi Sharp; and UNFPA India Representative Andrea M. Wojnar. Their presence reaffirmed a shared commitment to ensuring that young people are not only included in decision-making but also actively shape the future.

Indian women grassroots leaders in the spotlight at UN Economic and Social Commission for Population and Development (CPD) 57



Supriya from Tripura, Hema Kumari from Andhra Pradesh, and Neeru Yadav from Rajasthan exemplified what is possible when women take the lead in local governance. The three elected women representatives from India shared how they're improving the lives of women and girls at the 57th session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Population Development (CPD57).

The event, 'Localising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Women in Local Governance in India Lead the Way,' was organised by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN, UNFPA India, and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) with an aim to share India's experiences with local government councils (Panchayat Raj Institutions), focusing on promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, poverty reduction, and inclusive development.



“

Empowering women at the grassroots level is pivotal for the advancement, vibrancy, and deepening of democracy and accelerating progress on the SDGs.

-Shri. Vivek Bharadwaj, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India

”



SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

EMPOWERING CHOICE, EXPANDING ACCESS

The journey of motherhood should be one filled with joy, hope, and safety, not risk and fear. Every mother deserves to bring life into the world with confidence, knowing that her health, her baby's health, and her well-being are prioritised.

Building on this vision, in 2024, UNFPA India made exemplary progress in ensuring rights-based Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services, overcoming socio-cultural and geographical barriers across 12 aspirational districts in four focus states—Rajasthan (Sawai Madhopur, Udaipur, Jaisalmer), Bihar (Sheikhpura, Katihar, Khagaria), Odisha (Gajapati, Rayagada, Nabarangpur), and Madhya Pradesh (Guna, Rajgarh, Chhatarpur). The expansion of contraceptive options and implementation of informed choice services have enhanced access to family planning, offering a wider range of reversible contraceptives, including DMPA-SC and single-rod implants. The health facilities have been strengthened to provide comprehensive reproductive health services, encompassing safe delivery, post-abortion care, and STI/HIV screening. Through strategic advocacy, UNFPA India secured greater investments in sexual and reproductive health, ensuring better services for underserved communities and reinforcing national and state commitments to reproductive health.

Midwifery education saw a paradigm shift with fully operational National and State Midwifery Training Institutes (NMTIs) in Udaipur, Jaipur, and Patiala. Cutting-edge virtual reality labs enhanced training, offering midwives hands-on experience in labour and complication management, better preparing them for real-world maternal health challenges. State-specific midwifery roadmaps guided the expansion of midwifery services, while upgraded labour room standards and advanced obstetric training contributed to safer deliveries and improved maternal health outcomes.

By expanding choices, investing in skilled care, and driving policy change, UNFPA India continues to empower individuals and communities with the right to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, ensuring that no one is left behind.



MEASURING PROGRESS



93% ↑
Target: 90%

of health facilities now offer at least five reversible contraceptive methods.



60% ↑
Target: 34.3%

of facilities provide comprehensive SRH services.



\$324M ↑
Target: 10%

SRH budget allocated in four focus states by the state governments increased by 20%.



50%

of targeted health facilities certified on national quality standards ensuring safer maternal care.



3 ↓
Target: 4

Midwifery Training Institutes fully operationalised (2 national, 1 state level).



44 ↑
Target: 40

trained midwifery educators deployed, enhancing the maternal health workforce.

Critical Study on Determinants of Maternal Mortality in Madhya Pradesh:

- ▶ Analysed secondary data on maternal deaths.
- ▶ Identified gaps in antenatal care, health system strengthening, and institutional care.
- ▶ Led to evidence-based strategies and technology-aided decision-making for improved maternal health.



VOICES IN ACTION

RAATRI CHAUPALS: EVENINGS ILLUMINATE THE WAY TO A HEALTHIER FUTURE IN BIHAR

“Raatri Chaupals have led to a noticeable shift in community attitudes, with a surge in couples adopting both permanent and temporary family planning methods.”

-Shivani, Yuva Mitra

On a sweltering afternoon in Sheikhpura, Bihar, Shivani moves with purpose. The 24-year-old aspiring doctor and dedicated Yuva Mitra (youth community mobiliser) navigates narrow lanes, calling out to neighbours, *“Kal shaam ko Chaupal hai, sabko aana hai!”* (The Chaupal is tomorrow, everyone must come!). It is a familiar routine—one that has seen her organise over 100 Raatri Chaupals, night-time community gatherings that bring essential health information straight to the heart of her community.

These fortnightly gatherings bring women, young people, and families together to discuss family planning, adolescent health, and child marriage. Through engaging films and open discussions, the Chaupals have fostered informed decision-making and a shift in social attitudes. Health workers report a notable rise in family planning adoption, with even mothers-in-law championing reproductive choices for younger women—a testament to the programme’s impact.

Government officials at the district and state levels have recognised Raatri Chaupals as a model for behaviour change, proving that when information is accessible, choices become empowered, and health outcomes improve.

The UPAMA project, a collaboration between the Department of Health, the Government of Bihar, and UNFPA India, is at the heart of this transformation—expanding access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services across Sheikhpura and beyond. This grassroots movement demonstrates that when communities take ownership of their health, lasting change follows—one conversation, one choice, and one Chaupal at a time.





YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS

STRENGTHENING HEALTH, LEADERSHIP, AND INCLUSION

With 253 million adolescents aged 10-19, India's youth represent its greatest potential. Ensuring they have the knowledge, skills, and access to health services they need is key to building a healthier, more empowered generation. UNFPA India is working to make this a reality by expanding access to comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), life-skills training, and youth-friendly health services, enabling young people to make informed choices and transition safely into adulthood.



A major focus in 2024 has been scaling up the National School Health and Wellness Programme (SHWP) across Bihar, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab, and Rajasthan. This initiative trains Health and Wellness Ambassadors to equip students with essential knowledge on health, nutrition, and well-being while promoting gender equality and life-skills education.

A comprehensive review across 10 states, combined with in-depth research in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan, led to critical programme improvements at the national level. In these three states, an innovative pilot programme introduced Health and Wellness Messenger (HWM)-led life-skills education (LSE) to ensure students, even in remote areas, receive consistent and high-quality health education. A real-time Management Information System (MIS) has also been introduced to improve monitoring, efficiency, and accountability.



To ensure better healthcare access, UNFPA India has trained healthcare providers and strengthened Adolescent-Friendly Health Clinics (AFHCs) across 12 aspirational districts in four focus states—Rajasthan (Sawai Madhopur, Udaipur, Jaisalmer), Bihar (Sheikhpura, Katihar, Khagaria), Odisha (Gajapati, Rayagada, Nabarangpur), and Madhya Pradesh (Guna, Rajgarh, Chhatarpur). These clinics now offer more inclusive and accessible services, particularly for young people with disabilities.

In Rajasthan, UNFPA India worked closely with the state government to advocate for increased funding and sustainable public health resources. This collaboration enabled the piloting of IT-based health models and the expansion of programmes across departments, with support from the UNFPA's Strategic Investment Facility (SIF) Fund, translating to measurable improvements across systems, leading to:

1

A **54%** increase in Rajasthan's Adolescent Health Programme budget.

2

Approval of **USD 3.3 million for 2024–25 and USD 3.2 million for 2025–26** by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

3

Expansion of adolescent health education into Madrasas.

4

Upcoming initiatives in 2025 to support adolescents with disabilities.

Recognising the importance of youth voices in shaping policies that affect them, UNFPA India formed the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) in October 2023. The initiative brought together 50 young leaders from diverse backgrounds, empowering them to advocate for sexual and reproductive health (SRH), gender equality, and youth empowerment at major global forums—including the ICPD30 Global Youth Dialogue and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Youth Roundtable.

MEASURING PROGRESS



1 million ↑
Target: 800,000

adolescents



530,000



470,000

accessed essential health services, ensuring their well-being and rights.



1,086 ↑
Target: 800

AFHCs are now staffed with trained service providers, enhancing the quality of care in the four focus states.



64,341 ↑
Target: 55,000

schools across Rajasthan, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab, and Delhi implemented the SHWP.



3.17 million ↑
Target: 2.72 million

adolescents in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Punjab, and Delhi gained knowledge through school-based life-skills education, fostering informed decision-making.



VOICES IN ACTION

THE POWER OF YOUTH VOICES: ABHISHEK'S JOURNEY FROM ASPIRATION TO ADVOCACY

“Why can’t boys support girls? A question that confronted everything I had been taught. It made me uncomfortable and moved me to act.”

-Abhishek

When Abhishek joined the Youth Advisory Group (YAG), he was not sure what to expect, but he discovered a nurturing space where young voices were amplified.

As an RKSK (Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram) coordinator in Rajgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Abhishek spread awareness and ensured young people had access to counselling and essential health services. RKSK (National Adolescent Health Programme) is a comprehensive health programme specifically designed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) to address the health and development needs of adolescents. Equipped with the knowledge of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), he supported his community; however, he admitted that he lacked the confidence to advocate for these issues openly.

But change often begins in moments of discomfort. Through YAG and with the guidance of his mentor, he decided to address menstrual hygiene in his district and urged his RKSK project coordinator to distribute sanitary pads to girls.

His persistence led to district-wide action, ensuring more young girls had access to menstrual hygiene products. But the real transformation was within him! YAG did not just give him opportunities—it reshaped his understanding of leadership. Engaging with communities beyond his own widened his world and deepened his resolve.

Today, Abhishek is a force for change. His story is proof that courage is contagious, that a single voice can ripple through generations, and that the future belongs to those who dare to question, to challenge, to act.



GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

EQUALITY, EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT

Every woman deserves to live a life free from violence. Yet, for many, gender-based violence (GBV) remains a harsh reality. UNFPA India is working to change this by challenging harmful social norms, strengthening policies, and ensuring access to essential support services. Through a combination of research, policy innovation, multi-sectoral collaboration, and strategic advocacy, UNFPA India is driving meaningful progress in preventing GBV, supporting survivors, and empowering women and girls to exercise their rights and choices.



One of the key pillars of this effort has been improving One Stop Centres (OSCs)— specialised support hubs for women facing violence. A comprehensive assessment of 56 OSCs across 18 states and Union Territories, commissioned by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), provided critical insights to enhance national and state-level GBV response mechanisms. The findings highlighted the importance of needs-based capacity building for OSC staff, standardised protocols for case management, stronger multi-sectoral coordination to improve survivor support, and a disability-inclusive approach to GBV response.

In response, UNFPA India partnered with MoWCD to train OSC staff in effective case management, ensuring survivors receive compassionate and comprehensive support. The organisation also collaborated with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) to conduct a national workshop for locally elected representatives, equipping them with the tools to address GBV within their communities.

UNFPA India is also leveraging cutting-edge technology to enhance survivor support systems. In Odisha, the introduction of blockchain technology is streamlining information sharing between OSCs and shelter homes, improving efficiency and transparency.



Other state-led partnerships are reinforcing institutional responses. In Rajasthan, collaboration with the Police Academy is refining law enforcement protocols for GBV cases. In Madhya Pradesh, the *Nari Shakti* (Women Power) Mission is taking a holistic approach to women's empowerment, promoting their participation in social, economic, and political spheres. UNFPA India is also guiding the development of a state-level policy for women's empowerment, ensuring it aligns with global best practices.

Tackling harmful practices, including child marriage, remains a key priority. A major milestone in 2024 was the development of a 'Primer on Child Marriage Annulment,' providing a strategic roadmap for legal and policy action. To ensure widespread outreach, the primer was accompanied by a short comic style narrative in four languages, making critical information more accessible to communities.



The publication of 'Annulment of Child Marriage under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006: A Primer' marks a critical landmark in the quest for the removal of the social scourge of child marriage. By equipping those working with children in vulnerable situations with the primer to empower child parties who wish to exit their marriages, this initiative marks a step towards realising the noble vision of the framers of the Constitution.

-Justice B.V. Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India

To address gender-biased sex selection (GBSS), government-appointed nodal officers, medical personnel, district authorities and CSO representatives from the four focus states were trained on the implementation of the Pre-Conception Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC & PNDT) Act, leading to stronger enforcement, and increased awareness about the legal and ethical implications of sex-selective practices.

UNFPA India mobilised community leaders from the four focus states to advocate against child marriage and sex selection while fostering meaningful community engagement to combat GBV. Additionally, community-level events were held to raise awareness about the consequences of child marriage, promote alternatives, and emphasise the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality.



Opening doors to potential careers in sports and fostering self-sufficiency, I brought girls onto the field. This has built their confidence and equipped them with valuable leadership skills.

-Neeru Yadav, Woman Sarpanch, Rajasthan



To strengthen gender-inclusive governance, UNFPA India continued to drive national advocacy for women's leadership in local governance. This was evident at the 57th session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development (CPD57), where UNFPA India partnered with MoPR (Ministry of Panchayati Raj) and India's Permanent Mission to the UN to organise a side event on promoting women's leadership in local governance. Three elected women representatives from Rajasthan, Tripura, and Andhra Pradesh—representing the village, block, and district levels of the Panchayati Raj system—participated in the event, sharing their insights and experiences in advancing women's empowerment and inclusive development as leaders.



With support from the Omidyar Network, UNFPA India launched a pilot intervention in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh to promote Women and Girl-Friendly Panchayats (WGFP). Drawing from the insights gained during implementation, UNFPA India's advocacy with MoPR led to the establishment of 770 WGFPs across India. To support the scale-up, UNFPA India partnered with the Ministry to train over 300 master trainers from state institutes of rural development and State Departments of Panchayati Raj and developed key training resources and knowledge products for elected representatives.

Recognising the importance of engaging men and boys in shifting gender and social norms, UNFPA India supported interventions in Sawai Madhopur that facilitated dialogues with over 7,520 men and boys to address harmful masculinities and promote gender equality.

Media Partnerships for Shifting Social Norms

UNFPA India initiated targeted efforts to promote gender-sensitive reporting by engaging journalism students from Makhn Lal Chaturvedi University and institutions in Patna, Mumbai, and Manipal through digital and interactive group workshops, leading to a growing cadre of young media professionals equipped to challenge stereotypes and amplify gender-equitable narratives.

In 2024, UNFPA India facilitated two national-level workshops and trained over 100 state-level master trainers for building capacities of elected representatives on addressing GBV and creating WGFPs as part of efforts to strengthen local governance systems and promote safer, more inclusive communities.

MEASURING PROGRESS



4,331 ↑

Target: 1,640

key stakeholders (police, government officials, and judicial officers) trained to enhance GBV response.



2,745 ↑

Target: 1,040

community leaders mobilised to combat child marriage and sex selection, driving tangible change.



13,287 ↑

Target: 11,000

individuals engaged in awareness campaigns, championing the rights of adolescent girls.



486 ↑

Target: 415

media professionals sensitised on gender-sensitive reporting, supporting gender justice.



504 ↑

Target: 500

officers and personnels trained on implementation of PCPNDT



VOICES IN ACTION

FROM FAMILY TO FRONTLINE: EMPOWERING SURVIVORS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

“We work to ensure no one is left unattended, day or night. Emergencies can arise anytime, and I must be available.”

-Vidya Joshi

Vidya Joshi's day begins before the sun rises, balancing the demands of motherhood and her pivotal role as Centre Administrator at the One Stop Centre (OSC) in Sikar, Rajasthan. These centres serve as lifelines, offering comprehensive support to women affected by gender-based violence (GBV) and those in distress. By day, Vidya stands as a tireless advocate for survivors, providing them with shelter, legal aid, and counselling. By night, she returns to the role of a dedicated mother, managing family life with the same care and commitment she shows at work.

Her days are a constant whirlwind. From supporting young women grappling with dowry harassment to guiding survivors of cybercrime through the legal system, Vidya navigates complex and urgent cases. Through UNFPA India's training in GBV case management and legal aid, Vidya is empowered to offer survivor-centred care, providing a safe, compassionate environment at each step of the process.

Vidya's OSC stands out as one of the highest-performing centres in the 2021 WHO Violence Against Women (VAW) survey, out of over 800 OSCs across India, a testament to her dedication and leadership. Vidya's story is one of unwavering resilience, where family, duty, and compassion drive her to be on the frontlines of change. Her commitment represents the relentless work of women who shape the very fabric of gender equality and support those who need it the most.





POPULATION DYNAMICS AND RESEARCH

MEGATRENDS, FORECASTING DATA, AND DRIVING EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY

“Some 30 years after the Cairo Conference (1994), a renewed commitment to the core aspirations of the Programme of Action – including universal access to reproductive health care, education and decent work, gender equality, the freedom to decide on the number of children and the timing of their births, and the right to live free of discrimination and violence.”

-António Guterres, Secretary-General, United Nations

To shape India's future, UNFPA India in collaboration with partners, has been focusing on the key emerging demographic trends that will drive the country's development. In 2024, important discussions were facilitated around India's evolving demographics, including the potential of the growing youth population (the demographic dividend) and the challenges of an ageing population (the silver dividend). These trends are not just issues to understand but opportunities to harness for India's long-term growth.



Dr. Sang-Hyop Lee, Professor and Chair in the Department of Economics at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

By facilitating dialogues among policymakers and building national capacity around National Transfer Accounts (NTA) for generational equity—led by international and national experts—UNFPA India provided essential insights into how different age groups, including youth and older persons, contribute to and benefit from the economy. The NTA approach analyses how income and spending are shared among different age groups in a population, especially the young and the elderly, to develop fair and efficient policies.



In partnership with the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) and the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (EAC-PM), UNFPA India organised a high-level policy roundtable, 'Universal Health Coverage and the Silver Dividend: Opportunities and Challenges' and 'Digital Health and the Population Dividend: Bridging Gaps for Universal Health Coverage'. With a focus on empowering the elderly as active contributors to society and the economy, UNFPA India developed a strategic approach on Happy and Healthy Ageing and engaged with NITI Aayog, the premier policy think tank of the Government of India (GoI) and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on programmatic options for the well-being of senior citizens.



UNFPA facilitated the participation of senior officials from the Registrar General's Office and the Ministry of Statistics in a UNESCAP regional workshop, held in China.

UNFPA India compiled key findings from various health and population policies in India over the past several decades for the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW). Partnerships were established with international institutions, including the Burnet Institute and Victoria University, for a child marriage investment case study, and with the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) for measuring social norms. Additionally, UNFPA facilitated the participation of senior government officials from the Office of the Registrar General and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation in a regional workshop on the 'Use of Administrative Data for the Population and Housing Census,' organised by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in China.

Online Course on Population Dynamics Launched for 7.5 Million Civil Servants:



UNFPA India, in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) and the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD), Odisha, launched a pioneering online course on 'Population Dynamics and its Implications on Public Policy' on the Government of India's Mission Karmayogi platform.

With India's demographic shifts shaping the future of education, skilling, health, employment and social security, this unique course aims to strengthen the capacity of civil servants and policymakers by equipping them with analytical tools and insights to enable data-driven decision-making.

UNFPA India's research and publications in 2024 have played a significant role in deepening the national conversation on population trends:



An analytical paper on 'Sexual and Reproductive Health Inequalities in India' highlights marginalised groups through the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) lens.

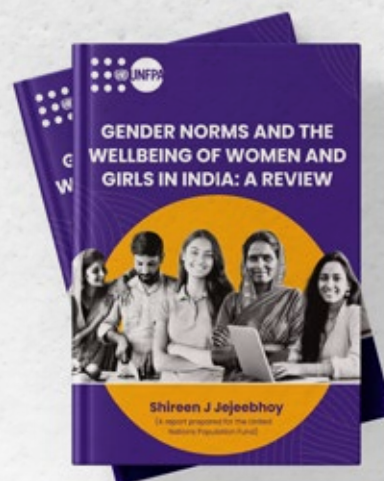
An investment case study on child marriage in Bihar and a fact sheet focused on the LNOB approach in Rajasthan.

Contributions to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6), addressing data gaps and estimation of healthy life expectancy to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Gender Norms and the Wellbeing of Women and Girls in India: A Review

India, with 257 million youth (15-24 ages) and a rising generation of empowered women, holds immense potential for social transformation. Yet, true gender equality demands more than economic progress—it requires dismantling deep-rooted sociocultural norms.

UNFPA India, in collaboration with well-known demographer and social scientist Shireen, conducted 'Gender Norms and the Wellbeing of Women and Girls in India: A Review' to analyse how deeply ingrained gender norms impact access to rights, health, education, and opportunities. Drawing on over two decades of research—including published and unpublished literature, systematic reviews, and global frameworks—the review provides critical insights to challenge harmful norms and drive meaningful change.



Odisha At 100: Mapping the Demographic Future



As Odisha nears its centenary in 2036, the Odisha Vikash Conclave 2024 set the stage for critical discussions on the state's evolving demographic landscape. A key highlight was the launch of *Emergent Odisha: Demography and Development*, a report by UNFPA India and the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD), unveiled by the Development Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha.

The report outlines transformative trends—declining fertility rates, increasing life expectancy, and a rapidly ageing population—that will shape Odisha's future in healthcare, education, employment, migration, and urbanisation. Grounded in data, the report serves as both a policy roadmap and a call to action, urging policymakers and civil society to build an inclusive, future-ready Odisha.



UNFPA India facilitated a high-level exchange between the Government of Rajasthan and Bihar, enabling key officials to observe the *Taalim-i-Naubalighan* life-skills education project in madrasas. This initiative, designed to empower young people with essential comprehensive life-skills, will now be replicated in Rajasthan, further extending its impact. Through these efforts, UNFPA India is ensuring that India's demographic trends are not just challenges to manage but opportunities to create a more sustainable, inclusive future.

ACCELERATING CHANGE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIONS

At UNFPA India, innovation is at the heart of our mission to fulfil the ICPD Programme of Action and achieve the three transformative results by 2030. This work is guided by the UN 2.0 'Quintet of Change', which leverages innovation, data, digital technology, strategic foresight, and behavioural science. We are pioneering new approaches to tackle complex development challenges. This strategic alignment reinforces our commitment to transformative change and empowers us to deliver sustainable solutions that meet the evolving needs of the future.

By integrating and mainstreaming innovation in programming with measurement frameworks to map outcomes, UNFPA India fosters sustainable solutions and works closely with governments, civil society, and the private sector to implement and scale impactful solutions for all.

Improving access to SRHR and mental health information and services:

120,000 adolescents and youth accessed JustAsk! AI Chatbot, a safe, personalised and non-judgmental digital engagement. The chatbot facilitated over 2 million conversations, with 52% of users being girls and women from 19 States in India.

Building a Skilled Health Workforce:

Trained 60 Nurse Practitioner Midwives (Male and Female) across National and State Midwifery Training Institutes in Rajasthan and Punjab using a Virtual Reality (VR) simulation training programme on labour and complication management, thereby improving hands-on skills to manage complex deliveries.

Enhancing Data-Driven Decision-Making:

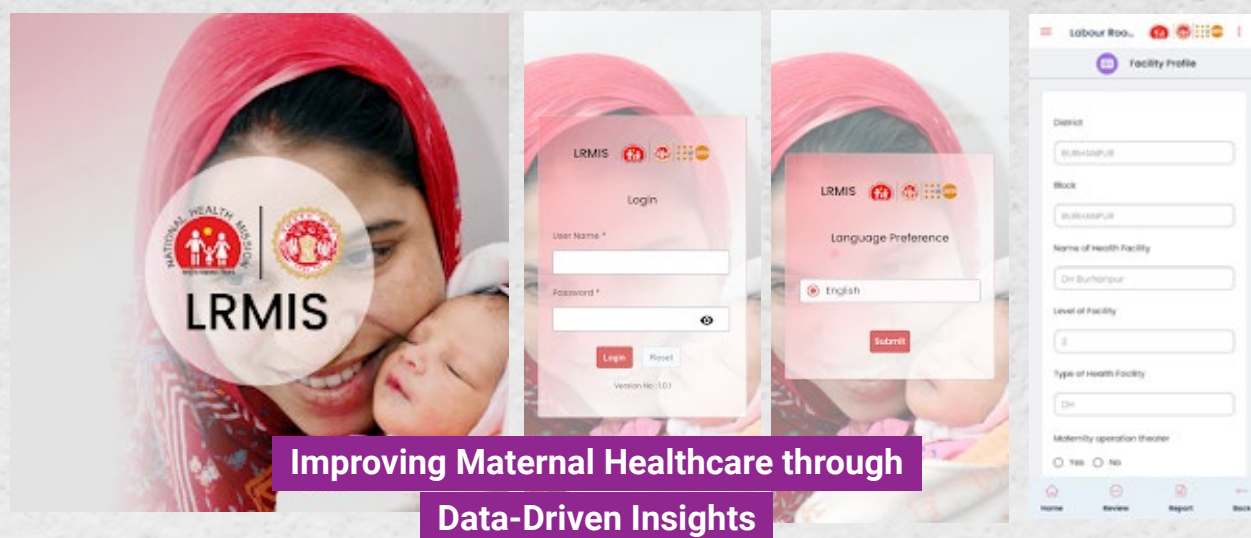
In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), the Ayushman Bharat School Health and Wellness Programme (SHWP) has been scaled through the adoption of a comprehensive Management Information System (MIS). This initiative enables real-time reporting from 13,813 schools across 302 districts in 32 states, thereby improving programme monitoring, accountability, and impact assessment.



INNOVATIONS IN 2024



In partnership with the Women and Child Development (WCD) Department, Government of Odisha, and Amazon Web Services (AWS), UNFPA India designed and launched 'Shakti'- a platform harnessing blockchain technology to bolster support for survivors of gender-based violence. By creating a secure, centralised system, Shakti empowers One Stop Centres, shelter homes, and frontline institutions to collaborate seamlessly to provide trauma-informed rehabilitation services to GBV survivors. Piloted in five districts of Odisha, this initiative laid the foundation for onboarding and integrating critical stakeholders like Child Care Institutions, police, and the judiciary to strengthen survivor support systems.



In collaboration with the National Health Mission (NHM), UNFPA India introduced the Labour Room Management Information System (LRMIS) in Madhya Pradesh. This system monitors labour rooms, maternal operating theatres, and high-dependency units concerning the availability of essential medicines, medical equipment, health workforce, and monthly referral cases. By providing intelligence to identify service gaps, LRMIS enables evidence-based decisions to improve the quality and efficiency of maternal care across health facilities in the state. In 2024, the intervention was piloted across 150 labour rooms in three districts and is currently being scaled up to over 1,700 labour rooms across primary and secondary healthcare facilities.



Improving Access to Modern Contraceptives through Behavior-led Interventions

UNFPA India conducted comprehensive research across districts in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan to identify the physical and psychological barriers and enablers affecting the uptake of modern contraceptives. This study gathered insights from married and unmarried men and women, frontline workers, family members, and service providers in the public health system. The findings informed the design and development of behaviour change interventions and a strategic framework to increase the adoption of modern reversible contraceptives, which are now being piloted across various districts in both states to map their effectiveness.



JustAsk! Khulke Poochho AI chatbot, designed to provide accurate information on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and mental health, was featured at the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD) Global Dialogue on Technology and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 'Summit of the Future' 2024.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ACCELERATING THE ICPD MANDATE

In 2024, UNFPA India strengthened key partnerships—spanning government, private sector, civil society, and academia— driving transformative initiatives that reinforced the organisation’s commitment to sustainable development, gender equality, and reproductive rights.

A significant milestone was mobilising both core and non-core resources to scale impact. Core funds were instrumental in strengthening National Transfer Accounts (NTA) analysis, equipping policymakers with data-driven insights for informed decision-making. Meanwhile, non-core resources expanded the reach of critical programmes, accelerating progress on reproductive health, youth empowerment, and gender equity.

Guided by the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD) mandate, which upholds SRHR as key to sustainable development, UNFPA India works to ensure universal healthcare access and empower women and youth to shape their futures.

UNFPA organised a high-level roundtable on ‘Harnessing a Gender Dividend: National Transfer Accounts (NTA) for Gender and Generational Equity in India’s Development,’ convening representatives from bilateral agencies, development partners, and international financial institutions. The discussion highlighted the potential of NTA in advancing women’s participation in sustainable economic growth. The roundtable, included leveraging the NTA framework for targeted policy interventions, formalising the informal sector to account for women’s labour, and adopting a life-cycle approach to social protection. Learning from global experiences, strengthening inter-ministerial collaboration, and aligning skill development with market needs emerged as critical next steps.



Building Future-Ready Girls with Rajasthan Council of School Education



In partnership with Samagra Shiksha, Department of Education, UNFPA India is equipping adolescent girls in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) with the skills they need to thrive—enhancing their social, health, financial, and digital literacy. This transformative programme strengthens peer educators, teachers, and counselors to drive the School Health and Wellness Curriculum forward with impact.

Expanding Language Access with Digital India Bhashini Division



UNFPA India partnered with Digital India Bhashini Division (DIBD) to enhance accessibility and address language barriers faced by the JustAsk! AI Chatbot. DIBD is an independent business division, established by MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology), which acts as a nodal agency for promoting language translation technologies and to manage and execute the activities of the Bhashini mission. Leveraging Bhashini's expertise, the chatbot will incorporate regional languages, like Marathi, Hindi, Punjabi, English, and Telugu, to reach and engage with diverse Indian communities and promote digital inclusion.

Scaling Innovation with Amazon Web Services (AWS)

A renewed 15-month partnership with AWS will support developing and testing early-stage tech solutions, or Minimum Viable Products (MVPs)—initial product versions with essential features that allow for early user feedback and validation. These pilots will be implemented in the four focus states to assess effectiveness and further refine the solutions, ultimately paving the way for national scaling.

Empowering Young People with the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Rajasthan



This partnership focuses on empowering adolescents and young people from marginalised groups by fostering an inclusive environment within academic institutions. It includes integrating life-skills education into the curriculum and equipping youth with the information they need to make informed decisions. The collaboration also aims to create an enabling ecosystem in Rajasthan by promoting inclusive policies and programmes that prioritise diversity, equity, and access to opportunities, ensuring that no young person is left behind in the pursuit of social and economic advancement.

Expanding Access to SRHR with Bayer AG

Empowering young people with the knowledge and services they need to make informed choices, UNFPA India and Bayer AG joined forces on the My Rights – My Choice project to expand access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services for adolescents, youth, and couples. This initiative combined digital solutions with health system strengthening to promote modern contraceptive uptake. A key milestone was the launch of Just Ask! Khulke Poochho, an AI-powered chatbot that provides a secure, personalised, and non-judgmental space for adolescents and young adults (15-29 years) to explore information, understand their rights, debunk myths, and access SRH services. The platform has engaged 120,000 users, facilitating over 2 million interactions across 19 Indian states. Expansion efforts are underway to scale the platform's reach to 500,000 users by 2025.



Advancing Maternal and Newborn Health with Laerdal Medical India

Through a strategic partnership with Laerdal Medical, UNFPA India will continue to focus on reducing maternal and neonatal mortality by enhancing healthcare providers' capacity in UNFPA intervention states. Through competency-based training and simulation, healthcare providers are being equipped to deliver high-quality, evidence-based maternal care services, including emergency obstetric and newborn care, ensuring improved maternal health outcomes.



Scaling Contraceptive Access in Rajasthan with CIFF

UNFPA India partnered with the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) to support the Government of India in advancing the National Family Planning Programme, marking a significant milestone in addressing unmet need for family planning and improving reproductive health outcomes. As part of the efforts to advance the FP2030 commitments, the Government of India approved the introduction of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs)—DMPA-SC and single-rod subdermal contraceptive implants—into the contraceptive basket of choices under the National Family Planning Programme. These new contraceptives mark a pivotal advancement in empowering individuals, especially women, with safer, more effective, and reversible family planning methods.



Under a two-year co-financing agreement, UNFPA and CIFF are collaborating to strengthen the rollout and scale-up of DMPA-SC (Antara-SC) and single-rod subdermal contraceptive implants in Rajasthan, addressing key systemic barriers identified during the pilot phase. This initiative builds on lessons learned to enhance programme delivery, empower healthcare providers, and ensure equitable, rights-based family planning services for underserved populations.

Advancing Gender-Inclusive Governance with Omidyar Network

UNFPA India partnered with Omidyar Network Development Initiatives LLC to challenge deep-rooted social norms and promote women's participation in decision-making, economic opportunities, and education. The initiative aims to eliminate child marriage and create an enabling environment for better life outcomes for women and girls, ultimately benefiting society as a whole.



The programme will introduce an innovative approach to create a measurement framework for tackling social norms and harmful practices. By showcasing good practices and providing evidence of effective strategies, the initiative aims to create Women and Girl-Friendly Gram Panchayats (WGFPs) and challenge discriminatory norms at the community level. This collaboration builds on UNFPA India's existing partnership with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), ensuring effective engagement with local governance structures and fostering community ownership.

AMPLIFYING IMPACT: COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA SNAPSHOT

UNFPA India's communication and campaign efforts in 2024 were not just about raising awareness—they ignited action, shaped powerful narratives, and redefined how sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender equality, and population dynamics are perceived. Through bold storytelling, celebrity and influencer engagement, strategic partnerships, and cutting-edge digital tools, UNFPA India created conversations that mattered. The impact was undeniable, positioning UNFPA India as a thought leader and change-maker in the nation's development landscape.

Driving the Agenda: Engaging the Government and the Private Sector



With **2 billion media impressions**, UNFPA India ensured that **SRH, gender equality, and population dynamics** dominated the national discourse. From policymakers to private sector leaders, the engagement was **strategic—driving critical conversations and influencing policy priorities.**



Four powerful op-eds—on grassroots women's leadership, midwifery, healthy ageing, and violence against women with disabilities—did more than spark debates; they pushed decision-makers to rethink policies and take action at the highest levels.



16.1 million users were reached through the **#GramToGlobal** in just **seven days**, highlighting India's **Panchayati Raj system** as a **shining example of women-led development** to the world.

Unpacking SRH Messaging, Inspiring Youth-Led Action



With **39 million** social media impressions, UNFPA India transformed digital spaces into hubs of dialogue, breaking down complex SRH issues into compelling, relatable, and actionable content.

75 influencers helped UNFPA India reach a staggering **29 million** young people, making conversations on SRH, gender, and empowerment informative and inspiring—mobilising a new generation to lead change, challenge norms, and champion rights.

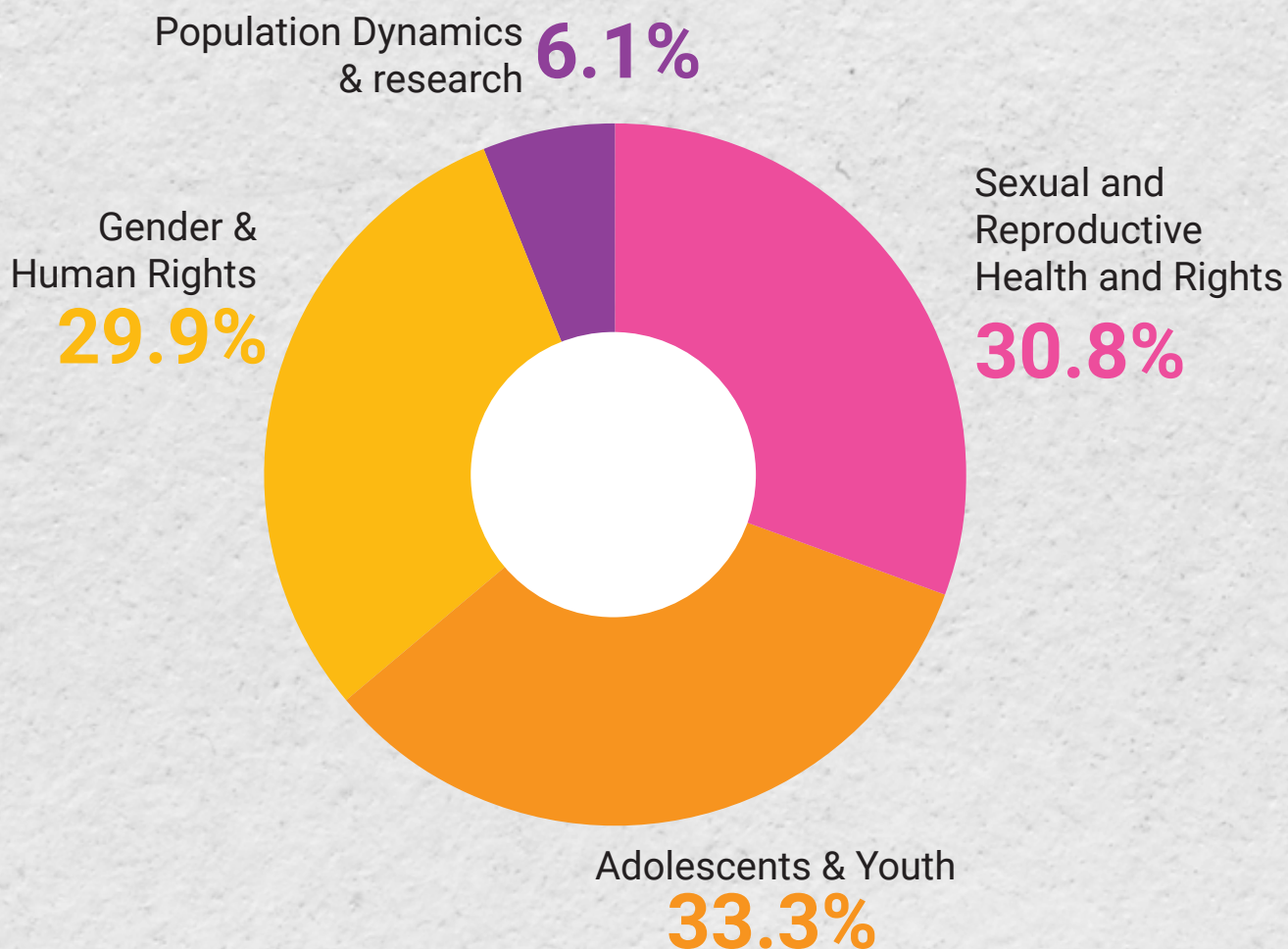
The #UinUNFPA campaign was more than just a digital launch celebrating 50 years of the organisation in India—it was a statement of intent. It reinforced that UNFPA India will always put the “U” at the center, ensuring that young people, communities, and changemakers remain at the heart of its mission. Through this campaign, UNFPA India showcased its unwavering commitment to amplifying voices, driving conversations, and making SRHR and gender equality a shared priority for all.



2024 was a milestone, but UNFPA India will continue to accelerate further. By strengthening policy influence, expanding social media outreach, mobilising advocates, and deepening partnerships with media and global champions, UNFPA India will keep sexual and reproductive health and gender equality at the forefront—driving lasting impact and sustained change.

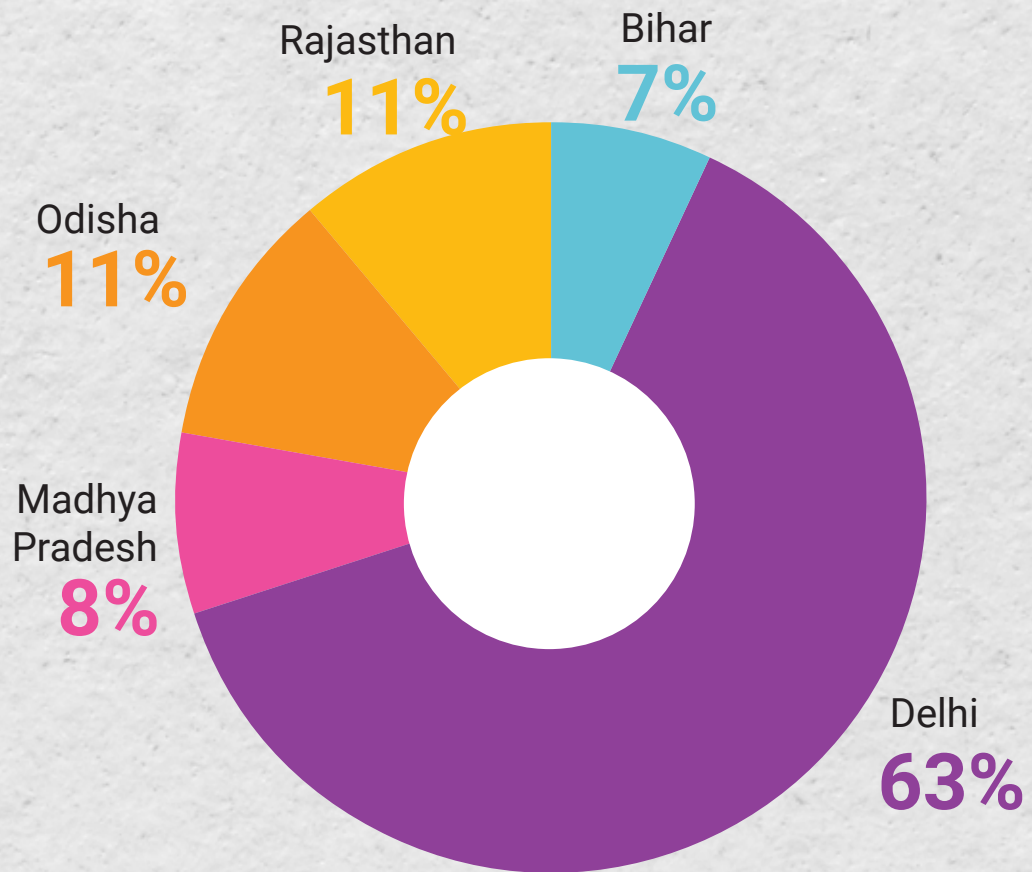
FINANCIAL UTILISATION - 2024

2024 Expenditure by Thematic Areas



Thematic Area	Amount (US\$)
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	2,886,322
Adolescents & Youth	3,120,908
Gender & Human Rights	2,802,834
Population Dynamics	572,722
Total	9,382,786

2024 Expenditure by Geography



Geographic Area	Amount (US\$)
Bihar	666,301
Delhi	5,952,732
Madhya Pradesh	717,579
Odisha	1,029,476
Rajasthan	1,016,698
Total	9,382,786

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