

A photograph of children playing in a park. In the foreground, a boy in a blue and red patterned shirt is crouching and smiling. Behind him, a girl in a blue shirt and red pants is leaning forward, and a girl in a red shirt and blue pants is standing with her hands raised. Other children are visible in the background, some standing and some sitting on the grass. The scene is set in a lush green park with trees and a clear sky.

Annual Report
PROJECT KHEL

2021-22

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FOREWORD

After a year full of uncertainties we started the year 2021 full of hope, only to be marred by a second and the third wave of COVID. We continued to reach out to communities, providing vulnerable families with dry ration, and medical support and helping our players with their school fees. As schools remained shut and numerous children could not afford online classes, we decided to respond to the need of the hour - we actively included Functional Literacy components in our curriculum and began work directly in communities, engaging with as many children as were willing to show up.



We joined panels and facilitated online training of trainers on using an activity-based curriculum to talk about Menstrual Attitude Management and adolescent issues, and shared our learnings from the ground about the same.

For our Ultimate Frisbee programme, we went into a hybrid mode, giving online video analysis assignments to our players and running multiple league matches among our players to engage with them physically while also pumping their spirits, which remained majorly affected since the lockdown.

We end this year on a hopeful note that the upcoming one brings more stability and well-being to all of us.

COVID RELIEF EFFORTS

With people losing their livelihoods, COVID led to a huge financial crisis for low-income families. Children in these families dealt with the risk of dropping out of school, learning loss, and mental and emotional stress. We were constantly evaluating the situation of our children and youth leaders and responded in ways that we felt would have the most impact. Here are some of the steps we took to support our children during this -

1

STIPEND TO YOUTH LEADERS

We had paid a small stipend to our Youth Leaders till the end of the financial year 2020-21. While most of their families were able to get back to a fairly stable living, we continued to support the most vulnerable ones of the lot.

2

SCHOOL FEE

We spent Rs. 1,02,500 to support the school fees of children enrolled in our programmes, who were at risk of dropping out because of the financial troubles brought about by the pandemic and lockdown.

3

DRY RATION DISTRIBUTION

We resumed working with our youth leaders to identify vulnerable families and continued to support them with dry ration packs during the second and third waves.

4

ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

As a continuation of our efforts in 2020, we continued to engage with children from our Ultimate Frisbee programme both in-person and online to help them navigate through their online classes in school.



MADE IN MAIDAAN

RESUMED WORK AT 3 CENTERS

2 low income schools and 1 community center

STARTED WORK AT 7 NEW CENTERS

All 7 centers were opened in different communities

WE REACHED OUT TO 194 GIRLS AND 256 BOYS, SO A TOTAL OF 450 CHILDREN

Our programme, Made in Maidaan, harnesses the power of play to deliver 21st-century life skills to children from underserved and resource-poor families.

In 2020-2021, we had to close almost all our centers, except in 2 shelter homes, owing to COVID and the subsequent lockdowns. In 2021-22, we were hopeful for a more stable year, but the second and third waves affected our ability to work on the ground. However, we did start working directly in a few communities to give children more physical play time, keep them away from their screens and revise alphabets, numbers and other basic language application through games.

KHELSHAALA



Very few families of the children we work with were able to keep up with the online education system during COVID, which resulted in dropouts. So, a common request we began getting was to start a literacy programme, and thus our decision to resume KHELshaala, our initiative towards bringing functional literacy to out-of-school children.

We experimented with formats and have created a 150-hour curriculum to teach children functional Hindi, English and Math.

GIRLS - 35

BOYS - 52

**TOTAL CHILDREN
WE REACHED
OUT TO - 87**



FRISB (ARABAR)

**RESUMED WORK WITH 32
PLAYERS**

**STARTED WORK WITH 17
NEW PLAYERS**

**WE REACHED OUT TO 49
PLAYERS IN TOTAL**

The pandemic and lockdown had put a complete stop to our Ultimate Frisbee coaching program the previous year. During this period, we continued to work with our senior players online and once the lockdown was lifted, we discontinued work with the younger players and continued training only the senior team in a public park.

Our efforts at maintaining engagement despite the lockdown and pandemic paid dividends. This year the senior Ultimate Frisbee team made great progress as we qualified for the national championship, based on excellent performance throughout the season.

AS TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS WERE EASED DURING THE YEAR, WE PLANNED AN OUTSTATION TRIP WITH OUR YOUTH LEADERS. APART FROM ORGANIZING OUR TRIP WITH INTENTIONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES, WE WANTED IT TO HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR YOUTH LEADERS AND BE A SOURCE OF VALUABLE EXPOSURE FOR THEM.



DUDHWA TIGER RESERVE

We planned a 3 nights and 4 days camping trip to Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, with 22 of our Youth Leaders. Through our trip, our youth leaders got a chance to learn how to make a raft, a mini tent, a stove from scratch and a host of other camping skills. They got to interact with the locals living in the reserve and closely observe their ways of life. The accommodation was planned in a way to push our youth leaders to step out of their comfort zones and interact with peers outside their close circle of friends. All in all, it turned out to be a trip that helped our youth leaders to feel connected with nature and with each other, something that they had been deprived of for the past year.

STORIES FROM THE GROUND

Arjun



CALLING IN AN INDIVIDUAL TO UNDERSTAND HOW THEY MIGHT BE WRONG IN SAYING OR PERCEIVING SOMETHING IS OFTEN MORE IMPACTFUL THAN CALLING THEM OUT FOR THE SAME. THIS PICTURE OF ARJUN WITH TWO OTHER CHILDREN IS A REMINDER OF JUST THAT.

Arjun is one child who often preferred his own friend circle. Initially, we thought this was because he was a little older, so probably found it difficult to gel with the others. One day we overheard Arjun asking his friends not to hold hands with the 'Malichh' children (*Malichh is a racial slur used for people considered to belong to a lower caste*). We had an immediate conversation with the entire group on what the word meant and where they had heard it from. Of course, no one knew what that meant except that Malichh are dirty people and distance should be maintained with them. We discussed at length what dirty meant, what place a slur has in our space, and how if the exclusion was the way of life then our entire engagement with them would not exist because of class or education or more such discriminatory parameters. After that, we went back to the game and at one point found Arjun holding hands with the same children that he had initially wanted not to even stand next to!

Sophie's Mother



THE BEAUTY OF THE SAFE SPACES THAT WE CREATE IS THAT IT DOES NOT STAY LIMITED TO OUR CHILDREN ALONE, BUT TRANSCENDS TO REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE COMMUNITY OR A PARTNER INSTITUTION'S FEELINGS ABOUT PARTICIPATING, SHARING, OR EVEN WATCHING OUR SESSIONS.

As we mobilized children in a new community where we had just started work, a number of young women came outside their huts to see what was happening. We invited them to join too but they said, "if we were the sons of this community, there would have been no problem at all, but we are the daughters-in-law, playing in the open will not be well taken."

Exactly two months since then, Sophie's mother became the first "daughter-in-law" of the community to join us for a game of Frisbee!

The relationship of trust that we have built with this community and many more like them takes weeks and months of effort, to show up on time every single time, to take interest in what is happening with them, and not just try to run our curriculum, to respond to invitations of having tea at their place, to help out in ways beyond the scope of our intervention...

Hafiz ji joins our session



PLAY HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE MINDSETS OF AN INDIVIDUAL AND ALSO THEIR PERSPECTIVE ABOUT THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM. THIS STANDS TRUE NOT JUST FOR CHILDREN, BUT ALSO ADULTS.

Not many people see our work with children as an educational one. For most parents and teachers, the standard response is "but our children are playing all the time, so why should we partner with you to give them more play time?" Our relationship with Hafiz Ji, an Urdu and Quran teacher from a local community was a similar one. We had never met, but he actively dissuaded our children from joining our sessions. In fact, children were sometimes punished for forgetting their Urdu lessons and yet attending our sessions. We reached out to him but he assured us everything was fine, yet we had children who often did not attend our sessions due to their fear of Hafiz ji's response.

One day, Hafiz ji stopped by to watch us play Pitthu. Maybe it was a nostalgic moment for him or a triggered memory from his past, but he readily joined us when we invited him to play! Within minutes he was seen cheering and celebrating each point with the children (much to their surprise too). His approach to us changed drastically after having experienced our session as a participant and seeing how we embed learning through fun. He comes by sometimes to take updates about our children and also share inputs on what we should focus on too.

Children decorate their school!



USING PLAY FOR CREATING CHANGE IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE GAMES WE USE TO SEND A MESSAGE BUT A MINDSET THAT ALLOWS US TO BE PLAYFUL IN HOW WE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT OUR ACTIVITIES. ENGAGING CHILDREN THROUGH PLAYFUL MEANS, INCREASES THEIR INTEREST IN AND OWNERSHIP OF THE PROGRAMME.

When we started work at a new informal settlement after the third wave, the community requested us to convert an abandoned hut into a school for their children. And we happily obliged. However, we were not sure how sincere the children would be, so instead of investing in the physical space, we began investing in our curriculum and facilitation to encourage their curiosity.

Within almost a month of our intervention here, we were up for a beautiful surprise when we reached the community! Our children filled up the holes in the floor and applied mud paste overall to smoothen the surface. They had borrowed colourful sarees from their homes and neighbours and tied them up to beautify the walls! They had also gathered thick plastic sheets and covered up the roof, just so that their school looks as warm a place as it feels to them.

TRAININGS

One advantage that we took of the COVID situation was to strengthen the Training wing of our work. With fewer sessions on ground, we were able to take up opportunities to visit other organizations to see their work and also strengthen their intervention by either training their team of facilitators or directly engaging with their beneficiaries.

JOSH, DELHI

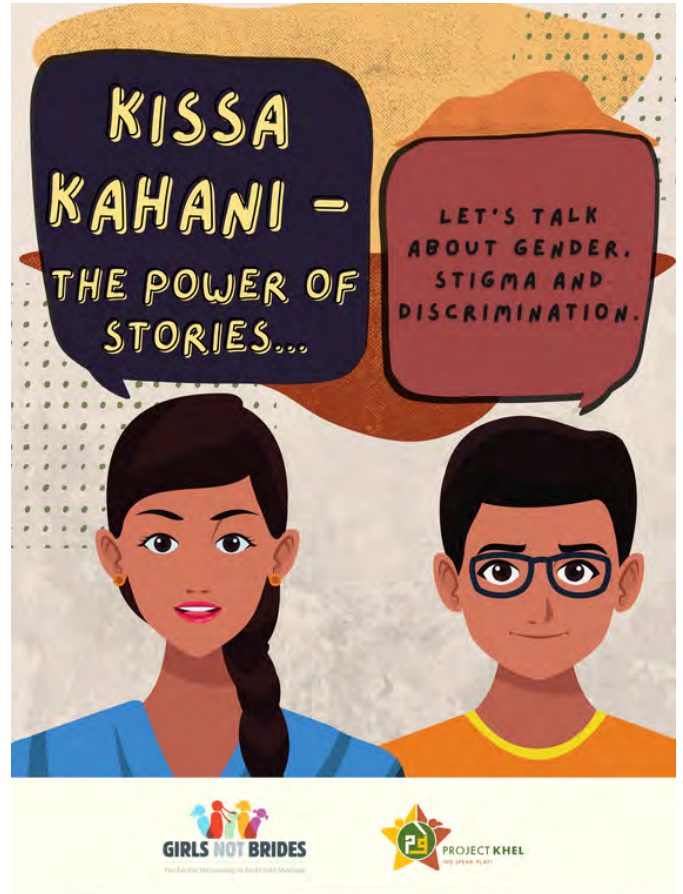
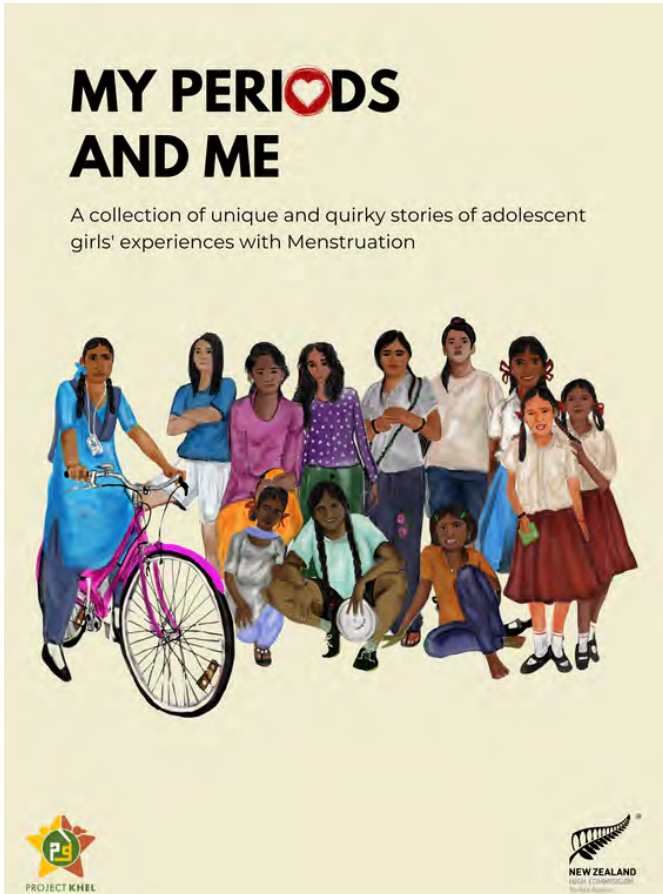
We facilitated a two-day activity-based workshop on Gender and Employability Skills, for the 35 girls who were graduating from JOSH's livelihood opportunity creation programme.

BAL KALYAN MANCH, RANCHI

We facilitated a two-day life-skills training session for young people from Santhal communities near Jamshedpur. Building communication skills in the light of the jobs they were being trained for was the focus of this workshop.

HUMARI MUSKAN, SOUTH KOLKATA

We facilitated a half-day workshop exploring how we discriminate on the basis of parameters that individuals had no control over, the need to love ourselves that also opens us towards acknowledging and accepting people who seem different from us.



PUBLICATIONS

MY PERIODS AND ME

A collection of unique and quirky, stories of adolescent girls' lived experiences with Menstruation.

For this, we facilitated story circles with adolescent girls from low incomes families, rural areas, urban slums, and shelter homes in and around Lucknow.

SUPPORTED BY: THE NEW ZEALAND HIGH COMMISSION

KISSA KAHANI

This was a 2-part production -

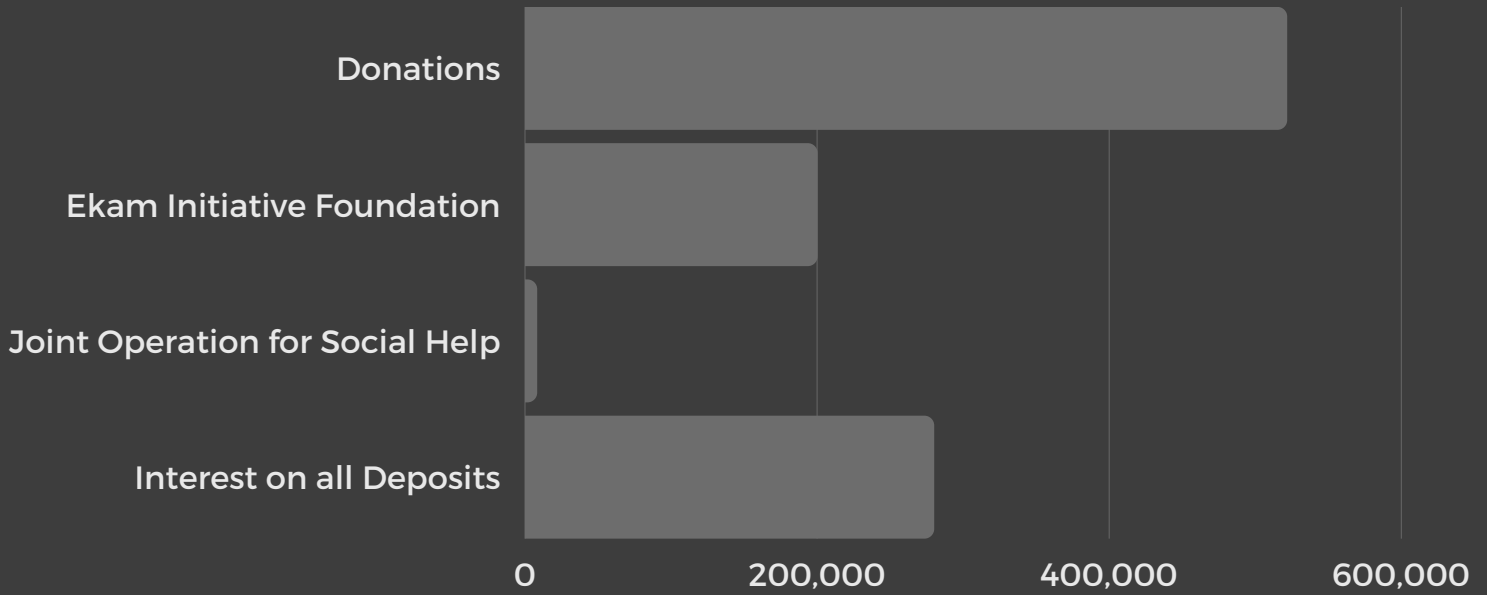
1. A curriculum that uses stories as a tool to talk about Gender discrimination and stigma.
2. A toolkit of stories to talk about Gender, created by the participants from the Kissa Kahani workshop series in Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

SUPPORTED BY: GIRLS NOT BRIDES

FINANCES

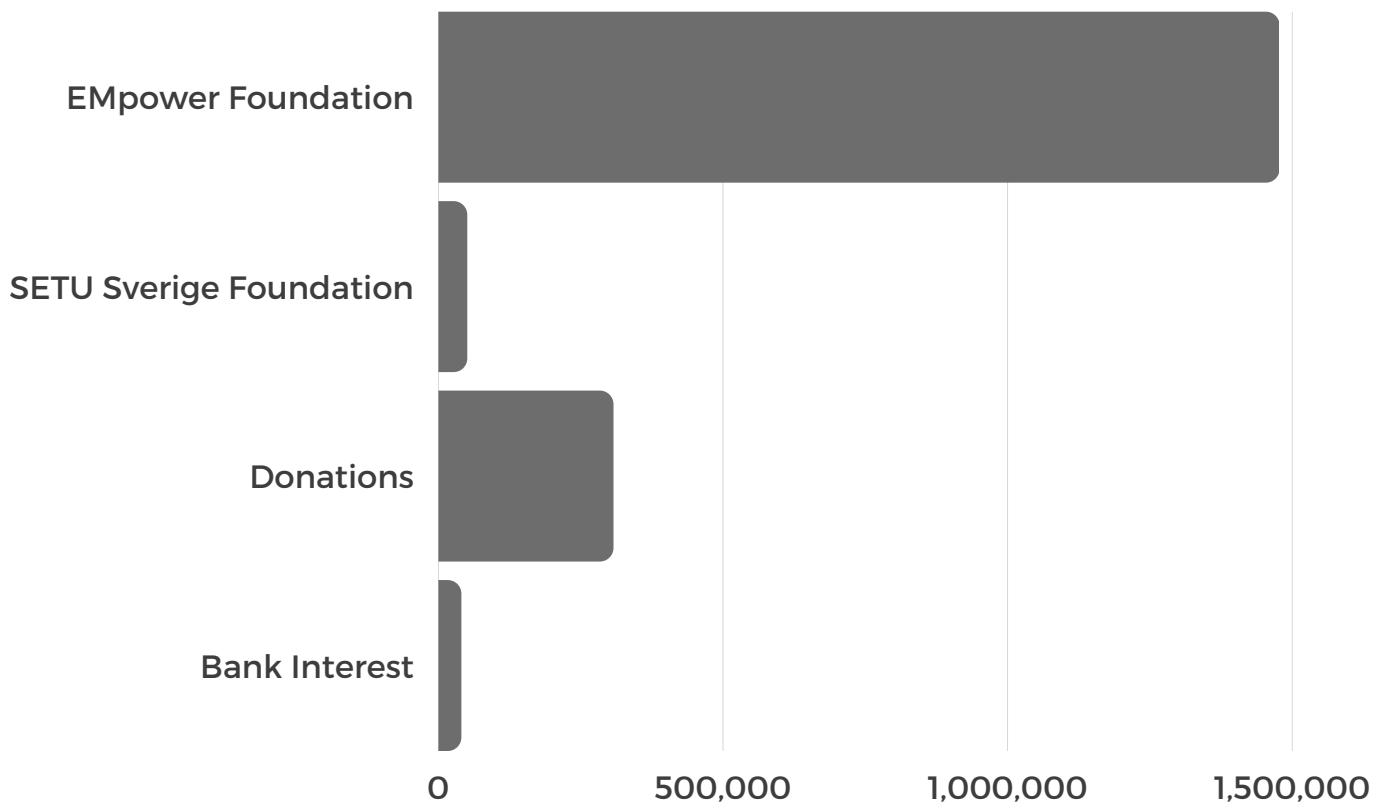
Income sources (DOMESTIC)

Total - Rs. 10,09,366



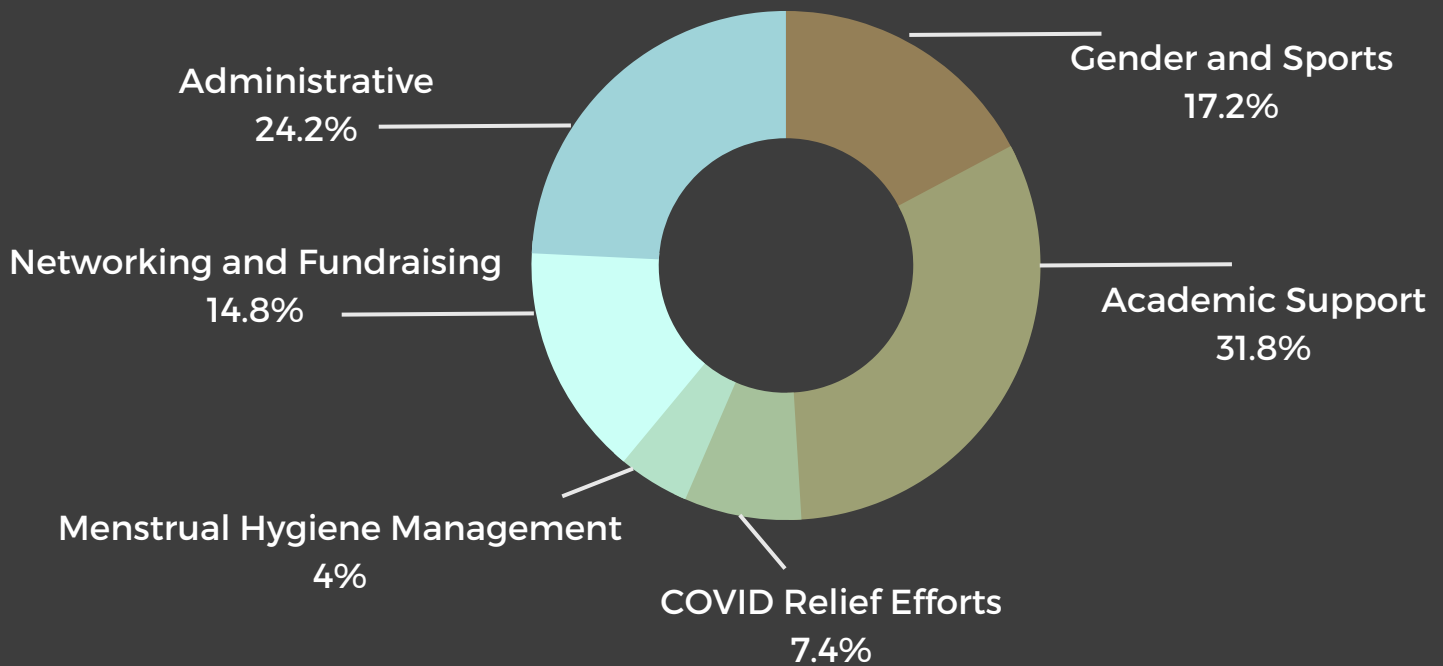
Income sources (FCRA)

Total - Rs. 18,73,548



Functional Expenses (Non-FCRA)

Total - Rs. 21,81,285



Functional Expenses (FCRA)

Total - Rs. 19,80,956

