



UMEED

**EMPOWERING
HOPE,
DIGNITY, AND
SECURITY**

SINCE 2014



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24

www.umeedforwomen.org

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Our vision

Our goal is for every **woman** and **girl** in India to be treated as an **equal actor in society**.



What we do?

We give women from marginalised communities the tools & opportunities to become empowered, valued and equal members of society; to rise out of the oppression of societal norms and build better futures for themselves and the generations of women to come.

How we do it

We run skill building and empowerment programs both at a grassroots and system level that enable women with the knowledge to build their career and confidence to make and sustain their choices.

Our hope for the future

We envision a future where all women and girls in India are empowered, valued and equal actors in society; a society in which women have equal Agency, Choice and Voice.

The problem

Gender inequality in India are deeply rooted in norms and familial traditions, directly impacting womens' health, survival, education, safety, marriage, family planning, mobility, and financial independence.

These norms and traditions determine the rights of women and continue to keep them disadvantaged and trapped from one generation to another. Women have long been confined to household roles, lacking say in decisions, and forced to financially rely on men, leading to widespread abuse. Girls are often made to feel like a burden, facing pre-set life paths they can't change.

According to the **Global Gender Gap Report 2021**, out of **156** countries, India ranks **146** in gender equality and **151** in women's economic participation.



Defining Women's Empowerment

An Empowered woman is one who not only has the right to choose but also the right skill, mindset and exposure to make that choice and sustain it.

Our Programs

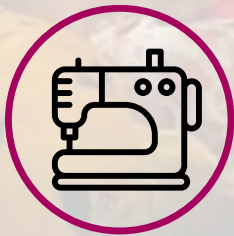
We serve our mission of empowering women holistically and sustainably through four programs across Telangana:



01. FIRSTLEAP

Career Readiness & Empowerment

Career readiness, self worth, industry exposure, counselling & placements to enable young women aged 18-22 yrs make career choices.



02. KARIGARI

Entrepreneurship & Empowerment

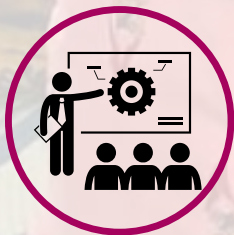
Livelihood, entrepreneurship & empowerment training to enable marginalised women aged 22 yrs and above make livelihood choices.



03. SHAKTI

Women's health awareness

Menstrual and reproductive health awareness and sustainable period management training for adolescents, pregnant and lactating mothers



04. SAHYOG

Employability train the trainer program

Train the trainer program to strengthen the existing Telangana govt. employability structures to include a gendered approach.

CEO's message

As we close yet another remarkable year, my heart is filled with gratitude for the incredible partners, funders, and mentors who have been an essential part of our progress. Thanks to your unwavering support, we've not only achieved our goals but also exceeded them in many ways.

Our team has grown three times larger, allowing us to increase our reach and impact, while our budget has doubled, enabling us to expand our operations and initiatives. We are especially thankful to continue our successful partnership with the Telangana government, which has been pivotal in helping us scale our efforts.

One of the most powerful lessons we've learned this year is the importance of scaling with purpose. As our team and resources expanded, it became clear that growth is not just about doing more—it's about doing more of the right things, in the right way.

We launched our operations in a new city, bringing our proven methodology to an even broader community, and were recognized by UNESCO for our work and approach. This recognition is a testament to the impact we're creating, and it reaffirms the importance of staying true to our values as we scale.

Looking ahead, we are excited for the possibilities that the future holds. Our focus will be on deepening our impact in the regions we serve, while also exploring new opportunities to extend our reach. We will continue to build on the successful partnerships that have propelled us thus far, particularly with the Telangana government, to amplify our efforts.

With the foundation we've built this year—empowered by our expanded team, increased resources, and strengthened collaborations—we are more committed than ever to creating lasting, positive change.

Thank you for your continued belief in our vision. It is because of you that we are able to dream bigger, act bolder, and create real, lasting impact.



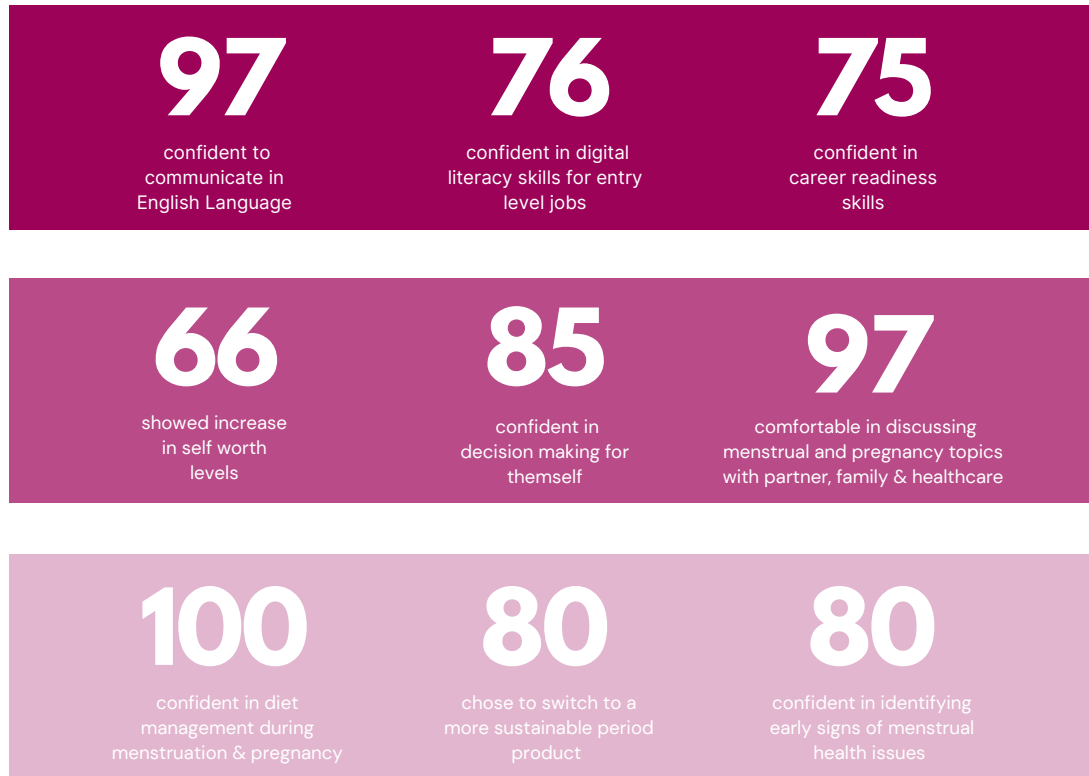
UDITA CHADHA
COFOUNDER & CEO, UMEED

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We've not just grown; we have ensured that every new step forward is purposeful and aligned with the needs of the communities we serve.

Our Impact

The impact of our programs is a clear reflection of our holistic definition of women's empowerment and our approach.



99% of women find Umeed useful for their empowerment



84% of women recommend Umeed programs to their peers



FIRSTLEAP

Career Readiness & Empowerment Program

FirstLeap aims to increase the economic participation of women by helping them become career ready and enabling them in selecting a career of their choice.

This holistic program places a strong emphasis on three pivotal facets:

- nurturing essential life skills
- instilling values and self worth that foster personal and professional growth
- broadening horizons by providing exposure to diverse world of professional opportunities

The program enables meaningful collaboration with corporate volunteers through mentorship, career counselling and skill based volunteering opportunities.



I LEARNED TO MAKE CV AND EFFECTIVE USAGE OF INTERNET

After joining UMEED I got knowledge about many things like- How to make CV and how the CV is useful and important to us, and another thing is how to make a PPT (power point presentation) and specially I learnt to speak proper English and now I can talk proper fluent English like this. I also learned MS Excel and 'Effective internet search.'

SANIYA KOUSAR

CKM College, Warangal
FirstLeaper 2023

Need we addressed

FirstLeap Career readiness & empowerment program addresses the diverse gaps around skill, mindset and exposure reported by our young women participants.



SKILL

- Low awareness of career readiness soft skills
- Low confidence in English communication
- Inadequate foundational digital literacy

MINDSET

- Low self confidence & self esteem
- Low awareness about personal potential
- No negotiation capabilities

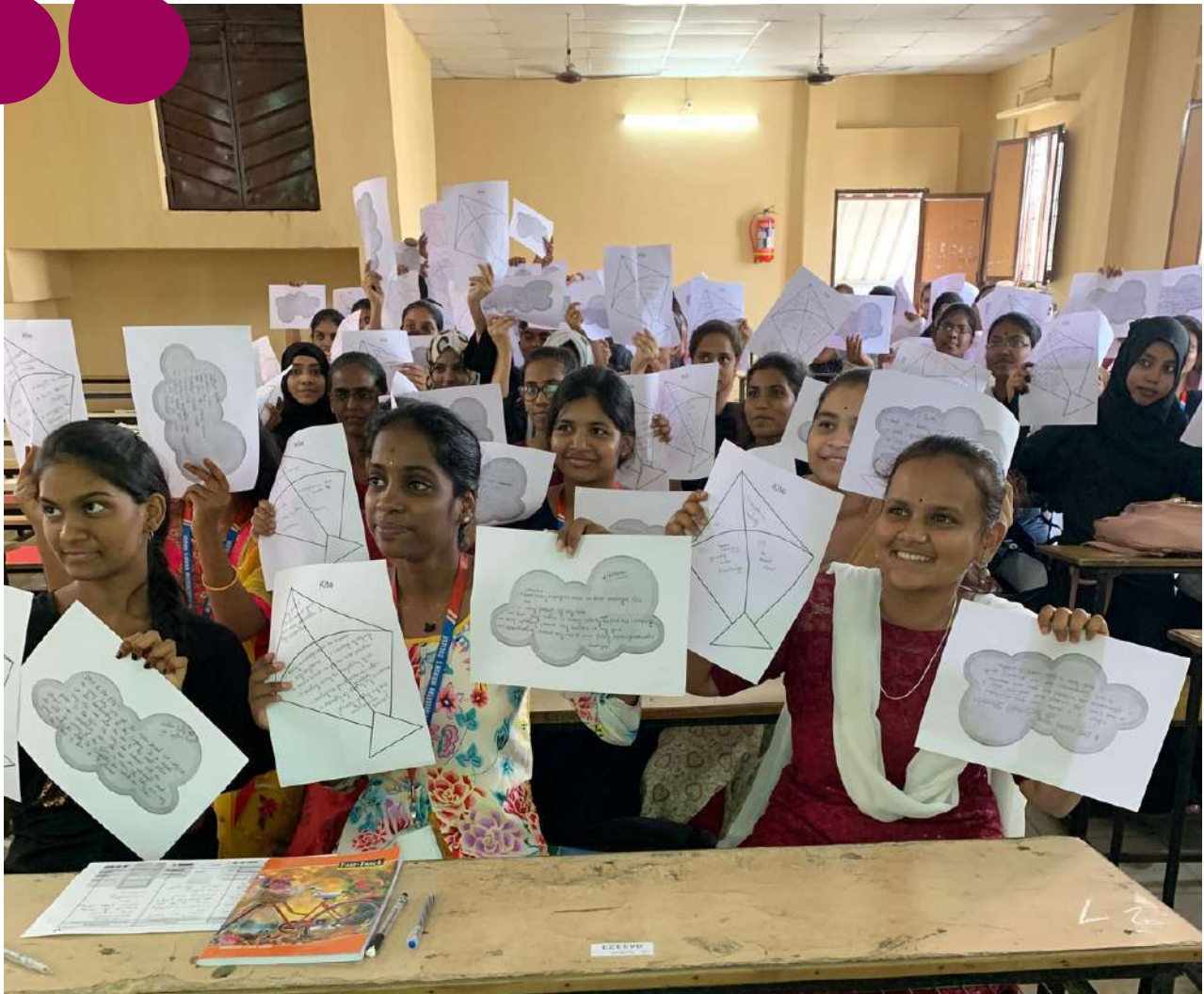


EXPOSURE

- Limited exposure to career opportunities
- Low awareness of self financial management
- No mentors, role models to follow



This program aims at ensuring our women are knowledgeable, skilled, and adequately aware about career prospects to take them on a transformational path of personal, social and financial empowerment.



IT'S LIKE AN ALL-IN-ONE PACKAGE FOR PERSONAL GROWTH

I've personally seen a big positive change in developing my skills, sessions like Financial literacy taught me to make a budget before spending and, Communication skills taught me a better way to communicate personally as well as professionally. I am now more in love with myself.



SHAMIRPET CHANDRIKA

Indira Priyadarshini Govt.
College, Hyderabad
FirstLeaper 2023

Where did we work

HYDERABAD



WARANGAL



Hyderabad, Telangana

- Government Degree College of Begumpet
- Government Degree College of Kukatpally
- Government Degree College of Patancheru
- Indira Priyadarshani Government Degree College

Warangal, Telangana

- Pingle Government College for Women
- CKM Arts and Science College



THERE'S A BOOST IN MY SELF CONFIDENCE

It is very useful and I'm building a very good confidence through this program. The many activities in the session helped me to come forward and speak in front of all people. I am very grateful to Umeed members for giving us this opportunity. I suggest that every girl and women should join this program as they will gain courage to speak in front of everyone.

DEEPSHIKA

Govt. Degree College Patancheru.
Hyderabad
FirstLeaper 2023

Our Program Participants



20 YRS

Average age



6

Govt Colleges



2 LAKH

Avg family income

We worked with final year women students from Government Degree colleges across the state of Telangana in courses like BA, BCom, BBA, Bsc, etc. These young women hail from BPL (Below poverty line) families from low-income urban communities with an average annual family income of 2 Lakh.

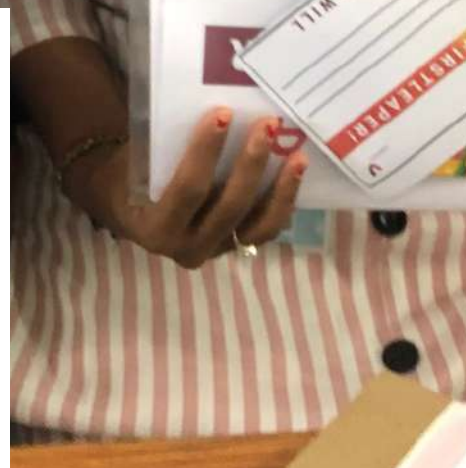
Parents of these women pursue professions like daily labour work, auto driving, security services in facilities, agriculture and farming etc.

The average age of these young women beneficiaries is 20 yrs. With respect to language comfort they are fluent in local native languages namely Telugu and Urdu with a very basic English understanding. Most of them are first generation learners and job seekers in the organised sector with aspirations to start their career in general administration, HR, accounting, banking, nursing etc. related jobs. They are interested in pursuing higher education courses like MSc, MA, MBA, MCom etc.



I'M ABLE TO PRESENT MY THOUGHTS BETTER

Before joining the training I used to feel so much hesitation to share my thoughts ideas, even feelings to someone. Mainly I used to have stage fear unconditionally but after the Umeed training classes. I got away from my hesitation and fear of stage. Sessions like Basic English, Negotiation, Self worth help me a lot to overcome my stage fear and to present my thoughts better way.



S. Bhargavi

Govt. College Begumpet,
Hyderabad
FirstLeaper 2023

Career Pathway

At Umeed, 'success' is ensuring all our women are knowledgeable, skilled, and adequately aware to exercise their choice and take informed decisions regarding their career choices that best suit their personal aspirations and circumstances.

Below are some examples of career pathways selected by our women.

Upskilling

Post the FirstLeap program women have opted for upskilling courses to keep up with the latest industry knowledge thus opening diverse career prospects.



Rasagnya Kuna - Machine Learning | NI MSME

Curious about developing a career in AI, Rasagnya embarked upon an upskilling journey in Machine Learning at NI-MSME, Hyderabad.



Narsapuram Harshitha- Data Analysis | Learning links

Harshitha enrolled in a Data Analysis course to help her transform her dream of becoming an Analyst into reality.

Higher Studies

Post the FirstLeap program women have opted for higher education to deepen their subject expertise and expand their career prospects.



Sania Fatima - M.A. Business Analytics | Kent University

Sania broke all barriers and went to Kent State University, Ohio, USA to pursue her higher education goals.



Syed Shagufta Begum-M.Sc Statistics | Badruka college

Against all odds Shagufta courageously followed her passion, by pursuing master's degree in Statistics at Badruka College, Hyderabad.

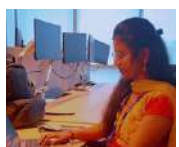
Job

Post the FirstLeap program women have opted for joining the formal labour force enabling them to immediately start their journey of financial empowerment.



Parvathy Manorenj - Communications Associate | NGO

Parvathy chose to work in a leading non profit in Hyderabad thus chasing her dream of empowering more young women like her.



P. Deekshitha - Claims Associate | Corporate

Deekshitha, a first generation learner in her family joined India's leading data analytics provider for the healthcare industry.

Our Program highlights

L&D Exposure visit

Exposure visits play a pivotal role in our program. We conducted exposure visits for FirstLeapers' at renowned healthcare multinational corporation **Omega Healthcare & Novartis**. The visit consisted of immersive workshops that covered a wide array of topics, including the skills in demand for the next decade, the unique values women bring to work, opportunities for empowerment and the power of networking. An engaging workshop on ChatGPT demonstration was also conducted.

Sessions on **'What's new in Automation, AI, & virtual reality'**, Workshop on impactful communication and a fireside chat with super inspiring women leaders. Through this visit, the participants learnt a lot about the opportunities available to them in the near future.



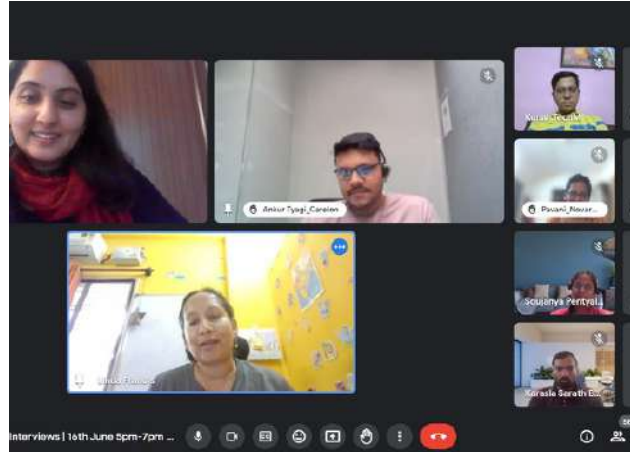
"The interaction with women leaders was truly inspiring. They emphasized the importance of being authentic, initiating change, and continuous learning throughout life."

Rachuri Swathi | FirstLeaper



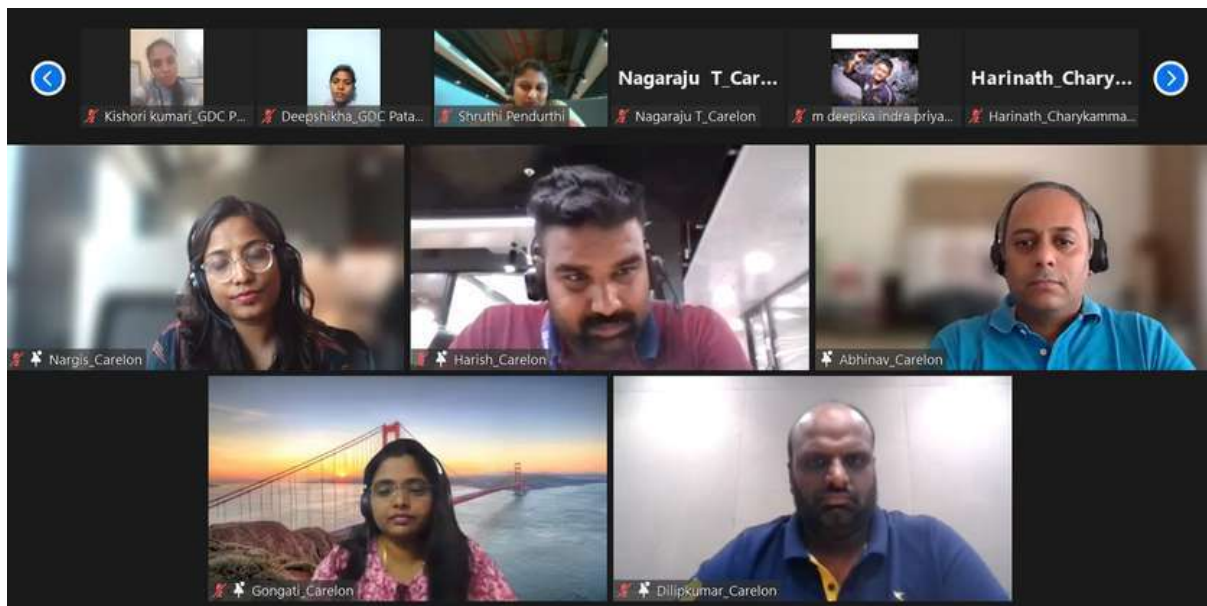
Corporate Volunteering Programs

Multiple skill-based volunteering programs were implemented with corporates like **Omega Health Care, Carelon Global Solutions, Novartis, Tech Mahindra, Arcesium and SVP. Volunteers joined** from all across the globe! Together we've blurred all boundaries of geography, culture, and time zones and established the fact that true giving just needs a strong intent!



"The mock interviewer gave me a lot of useful advice regarding working more on communication skills, especially body language, and managing nervousness."

Shahensha Dilawar | FirstLeaper



Career drives

Several **Career counselling, higher education, and job drives** were conducted through the year for our FirstLeap program participants. These drives gave the participants exposure to career avenues available for them.

We empower women with the choice to select their personal and professional journeys and equip them with the tools to sustain these decisions.

"Umeed is such a great platform for women to develop themselves as strong and empowered women. It's the FirstLeap of my life to go on the way to success."

Sania Fatima | FirstLeaper



SHAKTI

Women's holistic health awareness program

Encumbered with age old superstitions, misinformation and just lack of awareness, women from marginalized communities have been a victim of prejudice and declining health all over India.

The aim of this program is to make women aware and knowledgeable, break myths, and empower them with the right tools, information and support platforms.

This holistic women's health program places a strong emphasis on three pivotal facets:

- Reproductive anatomy
- Menstrual & Reproductive health awareness
- Sustainable Measures, tools, networks to manage health

The program enables meaningful collaboration with grassroot community organisations to reach the most marginalised women.



THESE SESSIONS HELP US TO UNDERSTAND OUR BODY BETTER

The sessions are very useful for us. We got to know about what is menstrual cycle, pregnancy cycle, how pregnancy is confirmed. The growth of the baby inside the mother's wombs. These sessions helps us to understand our body better as a women. The sessions related with myths and facts related to menstruation and reproduction were very useful and knowledgeable for us. A special thank you to team Umeed and all the Facilitators.

PARVEEN BEGUM

Shakti Program Participant
2023

Need we addressed

Shakti, a holistic health awareness program for women, raises awareness, enhances knowledge, dispels myths, and empowers women with essential tools, reliable information, and supportive platforms to take charge of their well-being.



Awareness

- Lack of awareness of M&RH issues
- Lack of understanding about affordable diet essentials during menstruation and pregnancy

MINDSET

- Shame and reluctance in voicing their concerns
- Low confidence and guilt in discussing M&RH issues



Management

- Lack of exposure and access to sustainable period management tools
- Limited exposure to healthcare specialists/facilities

This program aims at ensuring our women are knowledgeable, skilled, and adequately aware of Menstrual and Reproductive Health, free from the shame and hesitation that can hinder them from addressing their issues confidently.



MYTHS & FACTS SESSION HELPED ME A LOT

We are very thankful for the team for clearing our doubts and giving us clear understanding related to the pregnancy. The knowledge which we are receiving here is very useful and great for our health and for our kids. The myths and facts sessions were new for us and now we know what exactly is a myth and a fact.



FARZANA BEGUM

Shakti Program Participant
2023

Our Program Participants



27 YRS
Average age



2
Marginalized
communities



1.17 LAKH
Avg family income

We worked with women who hailed from the low-income urban community of Ameerpet, and Bahadur Pura, Hyderabad, Telangana. The majority of these women are school dropouts with very minimal literacy levels. The women participants were in age bracket of 14-35 years. The training cohort included pregnant women, lactating mothers, married women planning a child, and unmarried women planning to get married. Adolescent daughters aged 14-18 years, of women in training were also welcome to our workshops.

Earning members of these families pursue professions like daily labour work, auto driving, street vending, running small-scale retail stores etc. With respect to language comfort, they were fluent in local native languages namely Telugu and Urdu. The women participants lacked knowledge about menstrual health and reproduction. Their primary role is that of a caretaker of the family. Due to very limited levels of exposure they rarely participate in any decision-making at home.



I WAS INSPIRED AND ALSO BROUGHT MY DAUGHTER TO LISTEN TO SESSIONS

I learned in detail about menstrual health and periods, and they explained reproductive health in a way that was easy to understand. I was inspired and even brought my 8th-month pregnant daughter, Anjum, who was equally excited to learn about self and baby's health during pregnancy. We learned important facts about breast milk, which is the best milk for a child's healthy growth & also on diet.

HABIBA BEGUM

Shakti Program Participant
2023

Where did we work



WOMEN SELECTED FOR THE PROGRAM

hailed from low income communities of Hyderabad



HYDERABAD

Menstruation and reproductive health related stigmas, taboos and myths are prevalent in these communities.

Such myths have often lead to exclusion, discrimination, and human rights concerns for resident women and girls.



I AM NOW MORE CONFIDENT THAN BEFORE

I express heartfelt gratitude to everyone at Umeed for orchestrating such a meaningful program, which not only educated me but also empowered me to embrace my own well-being. I am now more confident than before.



HUMERA BEGUM

Shakti Program Participant
2023

Our Program highlights

Open house with a Gynaecologist

An open house event featuring a **Gynaecologist** was scheduled as the final segment of our program. The female attendees engaged enthusiastically during the session, posing a number of inquiries on menstrual and reproductive health.

We facilitated the presence of Gynaecologist from a prominent hospital in Hyderabad who adeptly addressed all the questions raised by the attendees. The level of participation in this session exceeded expectations, indicating strong interest in this subject.



Cloth Pad Tutorial Sessions

The tutorial to make **cloth pads** for personal/family use stood as one more highlight of the Menstrual and Reproductive Health program, with the integration of external expert-led sessions focusing on sustainable menstrual hygiene practices. Ms. Aruna, leveraging over 15 years of industry experience, designed an exclusive cloth pad tailored for daily use, emphasizing comfort, durability, and sustainability. These sessions shed light on the myriad benefits of cloth pads, including their eco-friendliness and cost-effectiveness. Moreover, participants actively engaged in a hands-on pad-making session, facilitated by an expert, which empowered them with practical skills and knowledge.

The combination of informative sessions on cloth pad utilization and the interactive pad-making workshop not only enriched participants' understanding but also equipped them with tangible tools to embrace sustainable menstrual practices confidently.





I LEARNED PREGNANCY DO'S AND DON'TS.

I had very little knowledge about menstruation and reproduction, even though it's a common part of every woman's life. In these sessions, I learned new things that make me aware of what to do and what not to do during pregnancy. In our time we were unaware but we will share these learnings with our daughters.

FARHEEN BEGUM

Shakti Program Participant
2023

2023-24



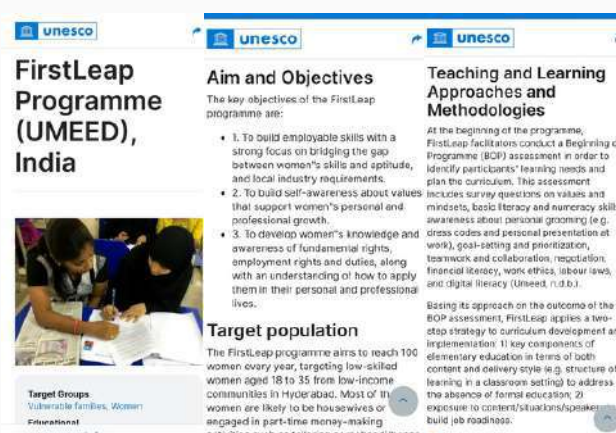
ORGANISATION HIGHLIGHTS

Here is a glimpse of some of our highlights for the year 2023-24.

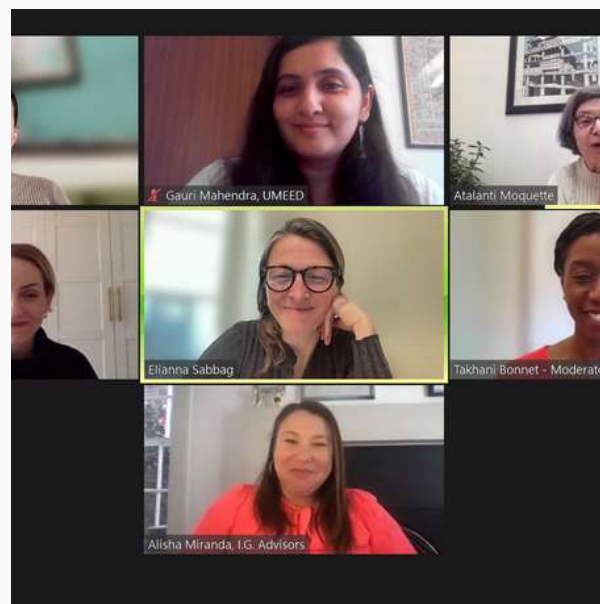
UMEED gets featured by UNESCO



UNESCO Institute of Life Long Learning has published a case study on Umeed's FirstLeap Job Readiness and empowerment program. UIL acknowledges exemplar work of organizations focusing on adult learning with a particular emphasis on furthering educational equity for disadvantaged groups and in the countries most afflicted by poverty and conflict.



Talk on Decolonising Philanthropy



Gauri Mahendra, CoFounder, Umeed participated in an international panel on 'Decolonising Philanthropy: Adjusting the balance of power for good.' This panel hosted by Giving women brought together global funders, local implementing partners and advisors, to unpack tangible examples and best practices around how we can all work together, to make progress in truly decolonising philanthropy.



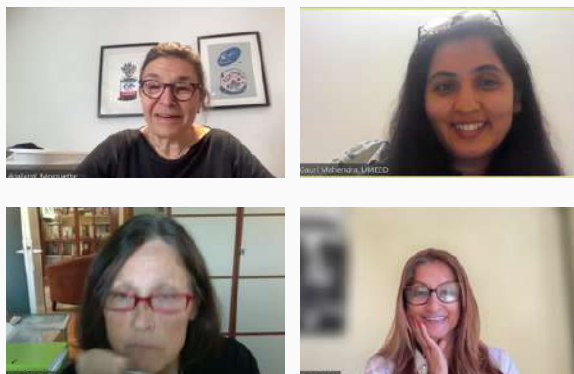
New City Launch

Umeed is thrilled to announce its expansion to Warangal, Telangana! Through the FirstLeap Career Readiness & empowerment Program we launched our work to take more and more women on a transformational journey of empowerment!

In Warangal we worked in Government Degree College of Pingle and CKM Arts and Science College.



Mentorship with Giving Women



Giving women circles provide strategic advice on capacity building to grassroots women's focused organisations like ours. Through mentoring on communications and branding and impact assessment our mentors from this prestigious organisation have supported us immensely.

We have made tremendous strides in the way we look at our monitoring and evaluation structures and the way we represent our work and ask before prospective partners, supporters and funders.

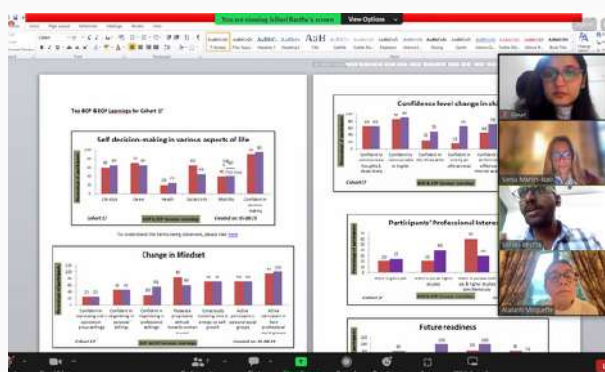
Mentorship with SVP Hyderabad



Social Venture Partner (SVP) mentored Umeed on our skilling program models.

This collaborative solutioning approach has supported us in testing our program models, analysing pitfalls and planning for scaling up in the most sustainable manner.

The very experienced and diverse group of mentors from SVP Hyderabad have supported us with knowledge and networks to make our programs more robust, replicable and scalable.



Graduation & IWD Celebrations 2024

Umeed's Graduation and IWD celebration, March 2024 had us celebrate the achievement of our program participants, hear their stories of grit and courage, and brainstorm on creating inclusive opportunities for the advancement of women.

The event featured a panel discussion on 'Invest In Women', One-on-one career mentorship, certificate distribution and inspiring speeches from our funders, supporters and program participants.



Our Team



Udit Chadha
CoFounder & CEO



Gauri Mahendra
CoFounder & President



Sumana Kothapalli
Lead Facilitator



Tarique Iqbal
Operations Lead



Naveen Thandhari
Finance & Accounting



Radha Gayatri
HR Manager



Bala Krishna
Outreach Lead



Rahmath Unnisa
Program Impact Lead



Samatha Gowrishetty
Lead Facilitator



Srihari Bestha
Lead Facilitator



Srujan Das
Lead Facilitator



Tusarika Kumbhar
Lead Facilitator



Shaziya Sultana
Program Facilitator



Deepika Jesta
Program Facilitator



Supritha Reddy
Program Facilitator



Tanuja Tiwari
Lead Facilitator



Fathima CH
Lead Facilitator



Tirupathi
Outreach Associate



Bahastuti Bhat
Operations Associate



Srinu M
Outreach Lead

Media Coverage



Umeed boosts women's morale to grab jobs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Udita Chadha and Gauri Mahendra worked tirelessly to empower socially low-income community women with a programme called Umeed India.

As part of their FirstLeap Job readiness to women, they have completed 16 cohorts of the programme. The team of teachers approaches the institutions and encourages them to pursue working career after completing studies.

One of the woman participants, Anjali said, "Self-worth sessions have had a lot of impact on me. I have started realising my own worth and I have also started loving and respecting myself. I have stopped comparing myself with others and started strengthening myself." She is currently working as a Sales Executive with a starting salary



of Rs 22,000.

One of the programmes case study has also been published in United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Another beneficiary Chandrika said, "I learnt how to respond to difficult questions. That it's okay to be honest and say I don't know the answer to this, I have to read more about this. The interviewers also said that it is the potential to learn that mat-

ters the most, not knowing everything in advance."

Through the FirstLeap job readiness programme we have trained 510 women. Around 43 per cent of women placed in jobs they have received are at the entry level such as sales executive, junior IT recruiter, junior accountant and tele executive. In all, 14 per cent have been given upskilling on core technical skills such as Java, C++, Advanced MS Office Suite etc and 30 per cent

are pursuing higher studies such as MBA or MCA, MSc or MA, Statistics, Computer science, English, Biotech etc.

Among the future projects, Udita Chadha said that FirstLeap Job Readiness and Empowerment programme in Commissionerate of Collegiate Education and Government Colleges in Telangana are working on entrepreneurship and empowerment programme for women.

A Pravalika, working as a sales executive with a starting salary of Rs 26,000 said, "Umeed has helped us recognise our talent. In the two-hour sessions, one hour is an explanation and another hour is for activities. All these classes will help us when we get jobs and will help us improve, like how to communicate with managers, co-workers, and how to face an interview, and how to answer their questions."

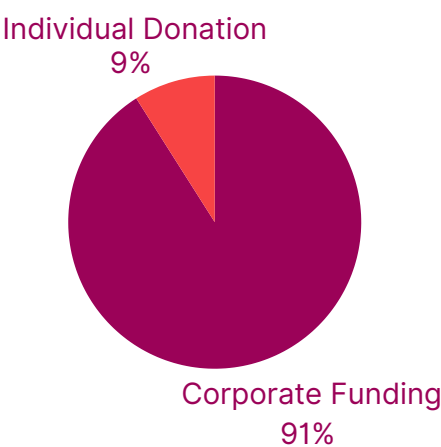
The Pioneer highlights about the job drive we conducted in various colleges for our FirstLeap Career Readiness & Empowerment program participants in Hyderabad, Telangana.

EENADU highlights UMEED's FirstLeaper's graduation ceremony, celebrated in conjunction with International Women's Day. The feature captures the essence of the event and our commitment to empowering women.

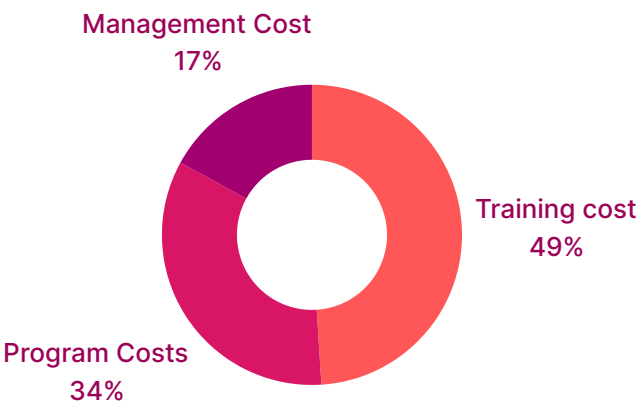


Financial Snapshots

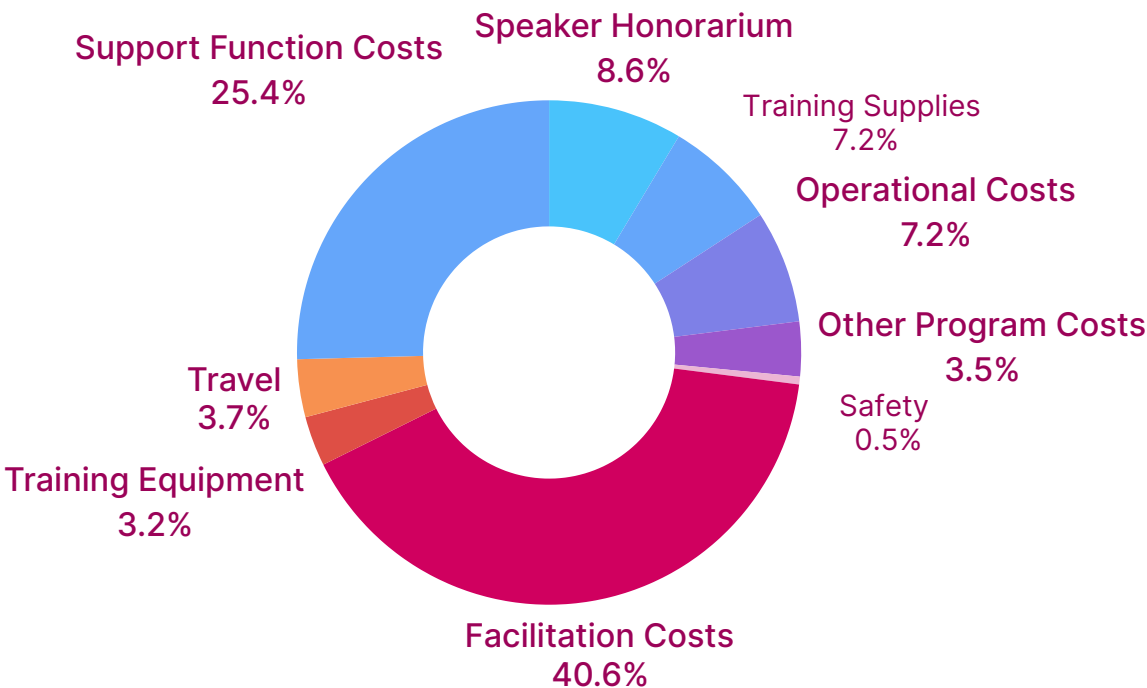
Where the money came from



How the money was spent



Training & Program Cost Breakdown



Our partners



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

This year our partners have spanned across areas of funding, program, training, community outreach, volunteering and mentorship.



At Umeed, we strive to leverage the skills, experience and support of people & organisations from varied walks of life. Following are avenues where we co-create impact in the continuous journey of Love, Hope and Courage .



VOLUNTEER & INTERN

on an ongoing project and learn a skill hands-on!



CONSULT OR COACH

Your unique talent and experience can help us make our processes more effective.



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Create meaningful programs that motivate your workforce



JOIN OUR TEAM

Work with us in a full time role and co-create impact



HIRE A FIRSTLEAPER

Employ our women trainee in to your workforce



FUND US

Partner with us to implement livelihood & empowerment projects

GET INVOLVED HERE!



WEBSITE

WWW.UMEEDFORWOMEN.ORG

EMAIL ADDRESS

CONNECT@UMEEDFORWOMEN.ORG

INSTAGRAM

[@UMEEDFORWOMEN](https://www.instagram.com/UMEEDFORWOMEN)

**CONNECT
WITH US**