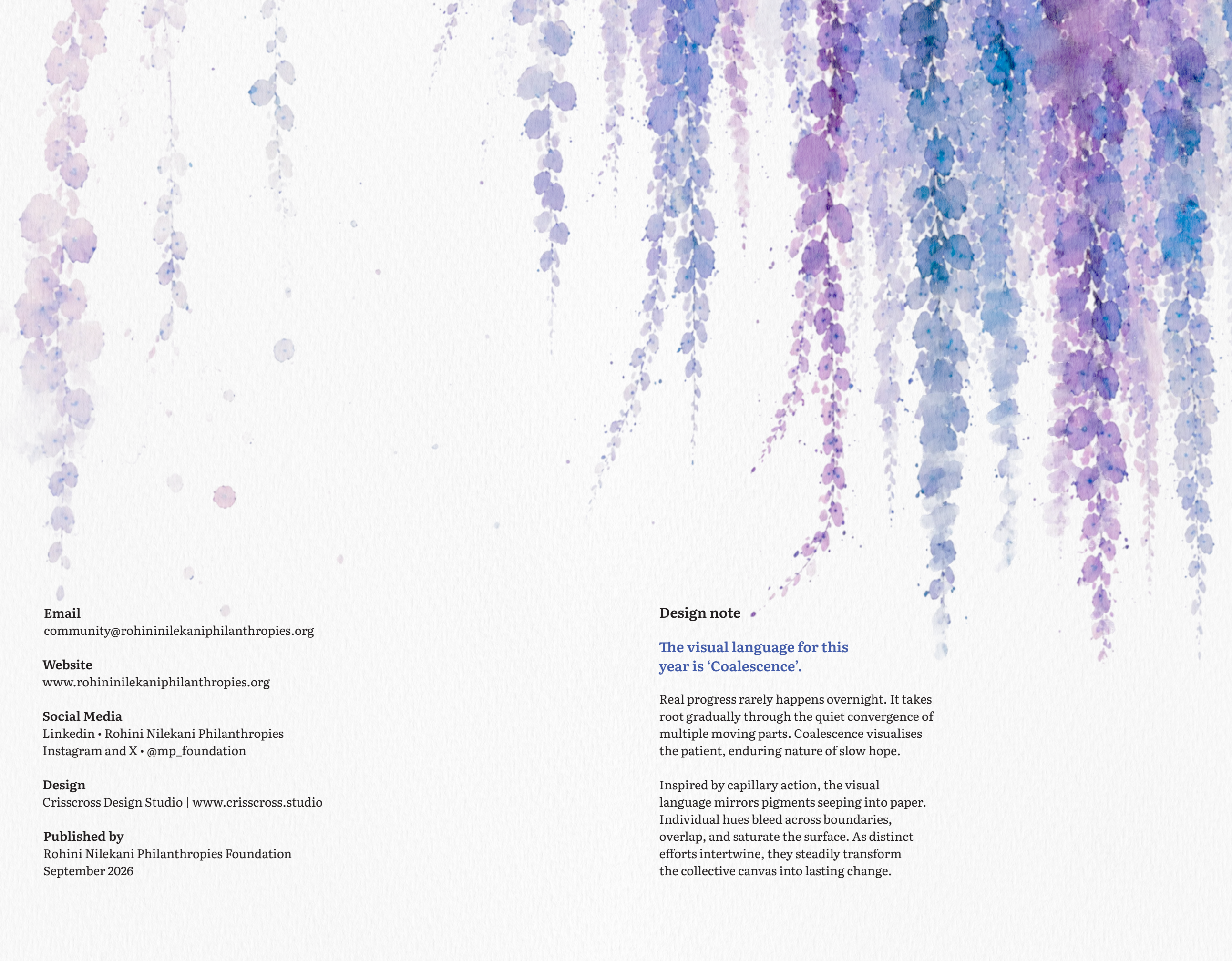


2025 - 2026

ANNUAL REPORT



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Design note

The visual language for this year is ‘Coalescence’.

Real progress rarely happens overnight. It takes root gradually through the quiet convergence of multiple moving parts. Coalescence visualises the patient, enduring nature of slow hope.

Inspired by capillary action, the visual language mirrors pigments seeping into paper. Individual hues bleed across boundaries, overlap, and saturate the surface. As distinct efforts intertwine, they steadily transform the collective canvas into lasting change.

LETTER FROM OUR
CHAIRPERSON

8-13

INSIGHTS FROM
THE YEAR

26-53

Letter from Rohini Nilekani	8	Reflections & Learnings	28
		Impact Stories	48

ABOUT RNPF

14-19

FINANCIALS

54-59

About Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies Foundation	16	Balance Sheet	56
Our Board and Team	20	Statement of Expenditure	57
		Cash flow Statement	58

PORTFOLIO AND
PARTNERS

20-25

Our Portfolio	22
Grants Given	23
Our Partners	24

TABLE OF CONTENTS



LETTER
FROM

OUR
CHAIRPERSON

LETTER FROM ROHINI NILEKANI

Dear friends,

There are moments when the world around us seems to move in opposite directions while we stand still.

On one side, we have bold headlines screeching from our screens. Urgent and relentless. Each morning, we hear news of conflict, inequality, ecological distress, shrinking civil spaces, technological disruptions, and deepening uncertainty. It feels like the societal challenges are multiplying faster than our ability to resolve them.

The other side is much quieter. It rarely makes it to our screens. It unfolds in classrooms and communities, in villages and courtrooms, in youth groups and forests, in research labs and prisons. It moves through dialogues and deliberations, through workshops and conversations. These movements are often invisible to the wider world. They are slower, deeper, and more powerful.

These are the movements where I find courage, optimism, and hope.

I don't need to search hard to find these pockets of hope.

Each one of the 176 partners that Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies (RNP) supported last financial year, alongside the wonderful work of other civil society organizations, is living proof that people are committed to positive change, determined to continue even when the outcomes are delayed and uncertain.

Last year, our team commissioned a report titled 'Resilience: Moving beyond surviving climate disasters to supporting communities to thrive', which uncovered that climate disasters are a 'new normal' in India. Today, 85% of India's districts are exposed to floods, droughts, or cyclones, and in 2023, the country experienced extreme weather on 86% of days, underscoring how frequent and widespread these disruptions have become. The study emphasized that local communities possess knowledge, networks, and adaptive practices that make them the most effective first responders and long-term resilience builders. The question ahead of organisations such as RNP is: How can we strengthen these communities and networks?

During FY 25-26, RNP invested INR 153 Crores across portfolios that include Access to Justice, Active Citizenship, Climate & Environment, Laayak (gender), Mental Health, Ecosystem Building, Arts & Culture and Research & Academia.

Across these portfolios, we witnessed that meaningful transformations could take multiple forms. That they are rarely linear, and don't take place overnight. Each represents years of patient work, of building trust before building programs, of strengthening relationships before expecting results, of learning through setbacks instead of being defeated by them.

A small grant made years ago to study India's open prison system has today contributed to Supreme Court directions that could reshape prison reform across the country. Several themes that RNP backed early—such as heat, pastoralism, commons governance, and ecological restoration—are now gaining mainstream policy and institutional traction. Extreme heat has emerged as a systemic risk with significant implications for health, livelihoods, and resilience. RNP's early bets on ecosystem building, backing partners to shape systems, are now beginning to see evident wins. Pastoralism has been recognized in the Livestock Census for the first time in 105 years, and the Oran water bodies conservation has moved from local stewardship efforts to a landmark Supreme Court judgment, with legal recognition across Rajasthan. This is evidence that long-term investments can pay high social dividends.

This has always reinforced my belief that *Samaaj* is our greatest renewable resource.

Governments matter. Markets matter. But it is society that continually regenerates itself. It is society that experiments, adapts, cares, questions and creates. Even in difficult times, people continue to organize, collaborate and imagine better futures together.

Last year, we intentionally created spaces where people from across philanthropy, government, civil society, research, business, and media could come together not just to exchange ideas, but to build shared understanding around complex societal challenges.

At the Mumbai Climate Week, we convened more than 30 funders for the launch of our Disaster Resilience Report, sparking strong momentum. 26 organisations expressed their interest in further collaboration and 3 others explored support for a community-led resilience pilot in Cuddalore. We also co-convened three dialogues on the future of longevity across Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru with Ashoka New Longevity and Dalberg, bringing together over 120 leaders to examine what an ageing India will require—from stronger social infrastructure and equitable policy to new narratives around work, health, and dignity in later life. Our Access to Justice portfolio gathering reflected not only on the challenges of the field, but on what it would take to build justice as a system of care.

Convenings, for us, are a vital infrastructure for shaping fields, surfacing new partnerships, and strengthening collective action. They are a space for us to listen intently and hear from our partners their stories and lived experiences.

Many of our partners spoke about the tensions they now face. They are navigating shrinking civic spaces, uncertain funding environments, growing polarization, increasing compliance demands, and the pressure to demonstrate immediate results for problems that may take decades to solve. They worry about scaling without losing depth, about using technology without losing humanity, about growing organisations while preserving trust. There is a growing emotional burden on community workers and practitioners on the ground. Increased unemployment leading to economic insecurity is posing a major challenge that could reinforce harmful gender norms and reverse gains made in gender equity.

These are not signs of failure. These are indicators that systems change demands more creative support and more patient capital.

One of the creative ways in which I have translated philanthropic giving is through the National Mental Health Festival, Manotsava. The second edition of the festival, in partnership with NIMHANS and NCBS, held in November 2025, witnessed participation from over 6000 participants attending over 85 events facilitated by 140 speakers. The goal of Manotsava was to flip the existing model and associate mental health with wellness, not just disease, and bring science and society closer. Manotsava was free and open to the public, catering to people of all ages, from young children to senior citizens. The overwhelming response from the public surfaced a deep latent demand to understand issues of mental health and wellness.

Public engagements of such kinds are gaining traction. Across fields, be it climate, gender or justice, we are beginning to recognize that evidence alone does not create change; evidence must travel.

Last year, Nilgiris: A Shared Wilderness, a documentary I produced in partnership with Felis Creations, was released in theatres. Beyond the screen, the film has travelled to schools and communities, opening conversations about coexistence, conservation, and our deep interdependence with the natural world.

We ended the year with a partnership that reflects our belief that conservation begins with connection. Through a grant of INR 5 crore to Bannerghatta Biological Park, under the Zoo Authority of Karnataka, we are supporting the creation of a 25-metre Public Observation Tower that will help more people experience, appreciate, and understand the rich biodiversity around them.

Nature, in all its beauty, has always been a constant inspiration for me. The ocean tides never move in just one direction. Sea levels rise and recede. Trees shed their leaves in one season only to bloom again in the next. What appears to be decline is often preparing the ground for renewal. Change, in nature, is never linear; it is cyclical, patient and deeply interconnected.

Human societies are no different. There will be setbacks. We will make mistakes. Some efforts will fail. Others will take years before their impact becomes visible. Yet each act of courage, each new collaboration, each institution strengthened, each community that finds its own voice becomes part of a much larger cycle of renewal.

As we look ahead, I remain optimistic. Hopeful. After all, hope continues to be my religion — not because the path ahead will become easier, but because I continue to witness extraordinary people choosing to stay on it.

To all our partners, collaborators and communities: thank you for your incredible work, your courage, your imagination and your persistence. Thank you for reminding us that even when progress feels slow, it is still progress.

This, to me, is what makes a strong Samaaj.

Warm regards,

Rohini Nilekani

Rohini Nilekani



ABOUT

ROHINI
NILEKANI

PHILANTHROPIES
FOUNDATION

OUR GOAL

A Quest For a Strong Samaaj

FY 25-26 Snapshot

TOTAL GRANTS

153.23 Cr

NO. OF PARTNERS

176

Values

Trust, Curiosity, Empathy,
Embracing Failure,
Humble – Not Modest.

Commitments

Unrestricted Funds,
Multi-Year Grants,
A Learning Partner.

Beyond Grants

Collaborative Philanthropy, Research,
Convenings, Content, Capacity Building.

Key Portfolios

Climate & Environment, Mental Health, Active
Citizenship, Access to Justice, Laayak — Young
Men & Boys.

Other Portfolios

Ecosystem Building, Art & Culture,
Research & Academia.

THE BOARD

Rohini Nilekani
Chairperson,
Rohini Nilekani
Philanthropies



Dr Janhavi Nilekani
Board Member



Dr Nihar Nilekani
Board Member



Archana Rao
Executive Assistant
and Operations
Manager



Natasha Joshi
Chief Strategy
Officer



Sahana Jose
Chief
Community Officer



Srinidhi K
Finance Manager



Suresh Ponappa
Chief Financial
Officer



Tanya Kak
Associate Director,
Climate and
Environment



Yashasvi Murali
Portfolio Manager,
Mental Health
and Gender

THE TEAM



OUR
PORTFOLIOS

AND
PARTNERS

OUR PORTFOLIO

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

ARTS & CULTURE

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

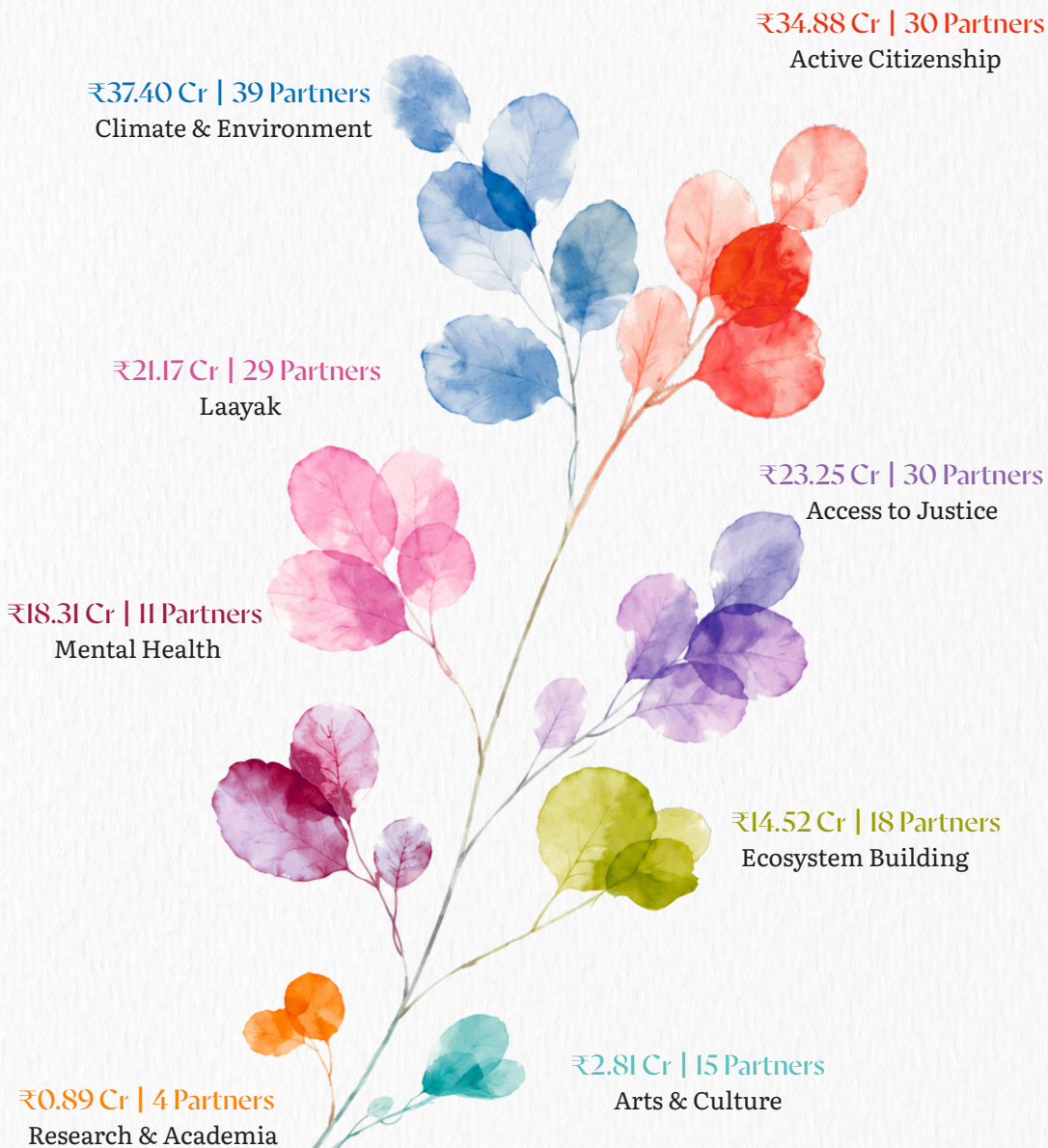
ECOSYSTEM BUILDING

LAAYAK

MENTAL HEALTH

RESEARCH & ACADEMIA

Total Grants	No. of partners
153.23 CR	176



GRANTS GIVEN

PARTNERS

Access to Justice

Agami (Vayam Forum for Citizenship) • Daksh • Dhvani Legal Trust • DISHA • Enfold Proactive Health Trust • IDIA Charitable Trust • India Justice Report • iProbono • Justice Initiative Foundation • Kolkata Sanjog Initiatives • LAW Foundation • Nyaaya • OutLawed India • Prayas (Tata Institute of Social Sciences) • Prison Aid + Action Research (PAAR) • Project Second Chance (TYCIA) • South Asia Women Foundation India • Sumanasa Foundation • The Yuva Ekta Foundation • VARHAD • Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy • Zenith Society • Ashiyana Communities Foundation • Committee for Legal Aid to Poor Counsel to Secure Justice • Law and Equity Foundation • NALSAR University of Law • PACTA • Studio Nilima • The Ara Trust

Arts and Culture

Bangalore Literature Festival • Kalkeri Sangeet Vidyalaya • Aditi Sharma • Bhoomija Trust • Kishima Arts Foundation • Sree Neelakanteswara Natya Seva Sangha • Anubhava Mantapa Servants of Knowledge • Asha Jyoti Lions International Trust • Centre for Media Studies • Watavaran • Chaka Vak Foundation • Coastal Heritage Collective Trust • Madras Crocodile Bank Trust • Mahashakti Seva Kendra • Serai Trust • Theatre Nisha

Active Citizenship

ACCORD • Anubhuti Charitable Trust • Citizen Digital Foundation • Civic Innovation • ComMutiny • Goonj • Haiyya Foundation • India Rising Trust • Indus Action • Initiatives • Jhatkaa • Make a Difference • Milaan Be The Change (NGO) • Nagrika Policy Research Foundation • Oorvani Foundation • PARI (CounterMedia Trust) • Praja Foundation • Pravah • Reap Benefit • SaveLife Foundation • Socratus Foundation for Collective Wisdom • Synergy Sansthan • The Magic Key • UNICEF • We The People Abhiyan • Yugantar • IIACD Foundation • Association for Rural & Urban Needy • National Foundation For India • Responsive Governance and Transformation Foundation • Solidarity Foundation

Ecosystem Building

Buzz India Trust • Medecins Sans Frontieres India (MSF) • The AF Trust • AIP (Foundation for Accelerating Philanthropy) • ATMA • Dasra (Impact Foundation India) • Kshetra Foundation for Dialogue • C4EC (No Paradigm) • Dor Education Foundation (ILSS) • Takshashila Institution • The Akanksha Foundation • Give.do • Giving Together Foundation • IDR • Stitva Seva Foundation • T4G Impact Tech Foundation • Sanghamithra Rural Financial Services

Climate and Environment

All Living Things Environmental Film Festival (ALT EFF) • CEEW (Center for Energy, Environment & Water) • Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy • Centre for Wildlife Studies • Clean Coonoor • Council of Philanthropies For Climate Action (ICC) • Dakshin Foundation • Dusty Foot Foundation • Environmental Defense India Foundation • Goonj • IFMR • Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Tirupati • International Foundation For Research And Education • Keystone Foundation • Krapavis Nature Conservation Foundation • People's Action for National Integration • Sahjeevan • SEEDS (Sustainable Environment & Ecological Development Society) • Sustainable Futures Collaborative • Tech4Good Community • Upstream Ecology Foundation • Veditum India Foundation • Waste Warriors • WCT (Wildlife Conservation Trust) • Wildlife Conservation Society-India • Wildlife SOS • WWF • CEPT Research and Development Foundation • Gujarat Mahila Housing Sewa Trust • Indian Institute of Science Education and Research • M S Swaminathan Research Foundation • Metastring Foundation • Reach Wild Foundation

Research and Academia

Ashoka Innovators for the Public • Pratham Education Foundation • The Community library • Hamsagatha Foundation

Young Men and Boys - Laayak

Azad Foundation • Breakthrough Trust • Centre for Budget and Policy Studies • CEQUIN • Centre for Health and Social Justice • CORO India • Equal Community Foundation • Equidiversity • I'm Every woman • International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) • Milaan Foundation • Nirantar Trust • Patang • Project Khel (Society for Development Activities) • PUKAR • Sesame Workshop India Trust • Swayam • Yuva Originals Private Limited • Aditi Bhowmick (researcher) • Blue Ribbon • Centre for Catalyzing Change • EMpower India Trust • Gender Lab Foundation • KEM Hospital Research Centre • Maraa • Milaan Be The Change (NGO) • Population Foundation of India • Sukhibhava Foundation • Bebaak Collective Sanstha

Mental Health

Dasra (Impact Foundation India) • FAHI • Indian Law Society • NCBS-TIFR • NIMHANS • Sangath India • Sarva Hitam Manav Seva Sansthan • Youth Ki Awaaz • Alternative Strategies for The Handicapped (ASTHA) • Herbertpur Christian Hospital • SNEHA

The background is a light cream color with abstract watercolor splatters in various shades of blue and green. The splatters are of different sizes and shapes, some forming large, soft-edged circles, while others are smaller droplets or elongated streaks. The colors range from a pale, dusty blue to a vibrant teal and a deep forest green. The overall effect is artistic and organic.

INSIGHTS
FROM

THE
YEAR

01. The Missing Piece In Ecosystem Action Towards Gender Equity

Why We Seeded the Center for Men and Boys

Over the last two decades, the development sector in India has witnessed historic, hard-won milestones in gender equity. Driven by a deliberate mix of government mandates, grassroots movements, and strategic philanthropy, women and girls have made monumental gains in education, health, livelihoods, and institutional voice. We believe this focus remains absolutely critical to correcting centuries of systemic harm. However, while ground realities have evolved, our institutional lenses for viewing men and boys have remained rigidly static.

As a sector, we have largely continued to view half the population through a singular, flat dimension: either as default beneficiaries of historical privilege or as potential perpetrators of harm, completely missing the complex vulnerabilities shaping their lives today.



We are beginning to see how this collective blind spot yields a quiet, destabilizing crisis. Caught between traditional expectations of infallible providership and a modern reality of dwindling economic security, young men are experiencing profound structural strain. The data makes this friction impossible for us to ignore: boys account for over 33 lakh of India's 50-lakh-plus school dropouts (UDISE, 2023-24 and 2024-25, Ministry of Education), the jobless rate for educated male graduates stands at a staggering 29.1% (India Employment Report, ILO, 2024), and millions are being funneled into insecure gig work. Compounded by an inability to articulate vulnerability, this socio-economic friction has triggered a silent mental health epidemic; men now account for 73% of all suicides in India (National Crime Records Bureau, 2024).

When young men are left to navigate this storm without supportive socio-emotional infrastructure, we see them funneled into a destructive binary trap: invisible suffering (isolation and psychological distress) or visible grievance (unaddressed shame and economic anxiety transforming into public resentment). This upstream crisis directly compromises safety, contributing to a devastating 106% increase in reported crimes against women over a 13-year period (NCRB Crime in India Reports, 2010 and 2022-2023).

Despite this urgent reality, the philanthropic market remains stalled; funding for men and boys is microscopic, leaving a few to carry the weight of a national systemic crisis virtually alone.



We realised that continuing to ignore the immense strain on young men would ultimately undermine the decades of progress we have collectively built for women and girls. For us, working with men and boys was not an alternative to gender justice; it is a necessary prerequisite for it. Addressing the root causes of male vulnerability was essential.

At Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies, over the last 8 years, our Laayak portfolio has aimed to create a space within the Samaaj where men can voice their fears and vulnerabilities and reflect on both their roles and relationships in an attempt to restructure and transform harmful social gender norms. We partnered with over twenty organisations that have worked to implement a changed narrative in the daily lives of men and boys, in a society that expects boys and men to be a certain way and assume a predetermined role. They have initiated the inclusion of boys and men in gender equity work through work with schools, communities, health systems, and grassroots movements. These disparate efforts have generated deep, practice-based insights into how young men navigate work, aspiration, care, identity, and belonging.

What remains less developed, however, is the structural layer that connects these insights across systems. We see a critical gap when it comes to translating these local, lived realities into broader institutional direction across markets, media, and governance.

Last year, we decided to step forward and seed the Center for Men and Boys (CfMB) as a dedicated anchor institution. The Center aims to bring field coherence to an intensely fragmented landscape.

Currently, various media, market, and grassroots actors hold only isolated pieces of a young man's life. CfMB will look at the whole picture, shifting the collective conversation away from individual moral blaming toward structural, empathetic problem-solving. By collating the data/evidence already existing, and supporting new independent research, the Center will drive clarity around how non-profits, governments, and donors can invest in masculinities work.

The ultimate goal of this Center is to establish clear pathways to action, build the practical toolkits and robust guardrails that policymakers, corporate leaders, and mainstream storytellers need to engage men and boys constructively and at scale.

To bridge a structural gap, CfMB operates precisely at the connective layer of system reform.

The organisation is building the architecture that:

- **Consolidates** knowledge and data across diverse actors
- **Converts** field signals into a shared, ecosystem-wide understanding
- **Aligns** actors across sectors around specific, actionable reform agendas
- **Generates** institutional proof within high-priority themes
- **Strengthens** durable social norms through embedded, long-term change

Building Together

We believe that unlocking this level of systemic change requires more than just scaling existing programs; it demands coordinating this field of action. For us, this field-catalyzing effort requires three fundamental shifts:

- **New Alliances (Changing who works together):** We must break down traditional siloes to bring together market players, media agencies, development actors, employers, platforms, journalists, policymakers, and cultural producers to establish a shared language across sectors.
- **New Understanding (Changing how we see the problem):** We need an integrated, cross-system perspective that directly connects ground-level field insights with the broader structural and macroeconomic forces shaping the lives of boys and men.
- **New Proofs (Changing what feels possible):** We must generate rigorous evidence that demonstrates exactly how institutions can engage boys and men in responsible, effective, and accountable ways, and documents the positive shifts that occur when systems change.

By strengthening this vital connective layer, we can ensure that isolated efforts finally gain coherence, proof gains visibility, and large-scale institutional adoption becomes possible. Ultimately, we hope this initiative serves as a powerful catalyst for our entire peer ecosystem—equipping partners with the resources and clarity needed to support boys and men, heal fractures in the community, and build a safer, more equitable, and deeply empathetic society for everyone.

02. Nurturing Collective Capacity For A Changing Climate

Climate and biodiversity have moved from being environmental concerns to becoming defining development challenges for India. Climate shocks are disrupting livelihoods, public health, education, food systems and economic productivity at an unprecedented pace. Nearly 85% of India's districts are exposed to floods, droughts or cyclones, while extreme weather occurred on 86% of all days in 2023. Annual economic losses from climate disasters are estimated at over USD 12 billion, and for many vulnerable households, recovering from a major climate shock can take nearly 19 years- far longer than the interval between increasingly frequent disasters. At the same time, biodiversity loss is weakening the ecosystems that quietly buffer communities from these very risks.

The challenge before us is therefore no longer simply one of responding to environmental change; it is about safeguarding India's development gains and strengthening society's capacity to adapt to an increasingly uncertain future.

This changing reality is also reshaping the role of philanthropy. Across India, governments, researchers, civil society organisations and communities are generating new evidence, testing innovative approaches and responding with urgency. The greater challenge today is less a shortage of ideas than a shortage of connection—between disciplines, institutions and sectors. As climate risks become more interconnected, so too must our response. This understanding shaped the evolution of Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies' Climate & Environment portfolio over the past year. As our portfolio expanded to support over 50 partners across climate adaptation and resilience, conservation and biodiversity, we also chose to go deeper.

Beyond supporting individual organisations, we invested in strengthening the ecosystem itself: generating evidence, convening diverse actors, nurturing leadership and creating the conditions for collaboration.

Increasingly, we see philanthropy's role not only as funding solutions, but as building the capabilities, relationships and institutions that allow those solutions to endure and scale.

This approach was reflected most clearly in our work on disaster resilience. India has made remarkable progress in disaster response through stronger forecasting, institutional coordination and evacuation systems. Yet repeated climate shocks continue to erode livelihoods, assets and dignity, trapping communities in recurring cycles of loss and recovery. Through a year-long learning journey with Dalberg—including field immersions, expert consultations and practitioner learning circles—we sought to understand what it would take to move beyond response towards resilience. The resulting report, 'Resilience: Moving Beyond Surviving Climate Disasters to Supporting Communities to Thrive', argues that communities should be recognised not merely as beneficiaries of aid, but as first responders, holders of local knowledge and architects of long-term resilience. It calls for greater investment in preparedness, early warning systems, local institutions and innovative financing, while recognising resilience as the combined strength of physical, financial, human, social and natural capital working together.



The report was launched during Mumbai Climate Week through a closed-door convening of over 35 domestic and international philanthropies, CSR leaders and development finance organisations. The discussions reinforced a growing consensus that disaster risk reduction can no longer remain response-driven and infrastructure-centric while climate risks become increasingly continuous, compounding and development-eroding. Participants highlighted the need for anticipatory, place-based approaches that integrate livelihoods, health, biodiversity and local institutions, while recognising philanthropy's unique role in providing patient capital, convening diverse actors and enabling experimentation. There was a strong appetite for pooled learning, collaborative financing and shared innovation- reflecting a broader shift from funding response to financing resilience.



These insights informed one of our most promising innovations this year: the concept of a District Resilience Fund (DRF) called Jan Saksham Kosh, co-created with SEEDS. While disaster financing remains largely reactive, the DRF establishes a standing, district-level, pooled and revolving fund that supports communities across the disaster lifecycle—from anticipatory action and rapid response to long-term recovery.

By combining predictable financing with strong local governance, the model enables faster, more transparent and community-led support while strengthening local institutions over time. Following its successful implementation in Cuddalore, the model is now expanding across six districts in four states. More importantly, it demonstrates how philanthropy can move beyond funding individual projects to designing financing mechanisms that strengthen resilience over the long term.

Heat has similarly emerged as one of India's defining climate risks, yet policy and practice continue to treat it largely as a seasonal emergency rather than a structural development challenge. Recognising that no single organisation or intervention can address a challenge as complex as extreme heat, RNP supported a diverse portfolio of learning grants spanning research, policy and community practice. Partners such as CEEW and IIHS worked to strengthen the evidence base and improve the design of more contextualised Heat Action Plans, while organisations including Prayas, SEEDS, Mahila Housing Trust and Jan Sahas highlighted the lived realities of workers, women and vulnerable communities—revealing the persistent gap between policy intent and everyday experience. Together, these complementary efforts reinforced that heat is not simply a meteorological phenomenon, but one that intersects with health, labour, housing, urban planning and social equity.

To synthesise these learnings and identify opportunities for collective action, RNP convened the Heat Huddle, bringing together 21 organisations across research, policy, philanthropy and practice. While partners approached heat from different entry points, the discussions revealed striking convergence. There was broad agreement that Heat Action Plans must become more locally grounded and accountable; that communities should be recognised as co-creators of solutions rather than passive beneficiaries; that more granular and usable data is essential; and that a 'heat lens' must be embedded across development planning rather than confined to seasonal response. The convening also catalysed several new collaborations, including the Heat Donor Collaborative with India Climate Collaborative, the exploration of a Heat Experience Centre with Spectrum Impact and CEPT University, deeper work at the intersection of climate, health and labour, and RMI India's Urban Heat Mitigation Lab exploring scalable policy and market solutions. It reinforced an important lesson for us: philanthropy's greatest contribution often lies not only in supporting individual innovations, but in creating the conditions for collective innovation.

Looking back, the thread connecting these efforts becomes clear. Whether strengthening community resilience or advancing more systemic responses to extreme heat, our work this year was guided by a belief that lasting change is rarely achieved through isolated projects. It emerges when evidence is paired with relationships, when practitioners learn across disciplines, when communities are recognised as experts in their own futures, and when solutions are strengthened through collaboration.

Climate change and environmental loss are often described as crises of infrastructure or technology. Increasingly, we see them as a crisis—and an opportunity—of collective capability. Building resilience means investing not only in stronger roads, cooler buildings or healthier ecosystems, but also in the trust, leadership, institutions and shared imagination that enable societies to adapt together.

As climate risks continue to accelerate, philanthropy has a unique role to play: providing patient capital, convening unlikely allies, supporting experimentation, and strengthening the civic infrastructure that allows communities not merely to survive uncertainty, but to shape a more resilient and hopeful future together.

03. PATTIC : Building a Learning Ecosystem For Better Nonprofit Governance

Strong social impact organisations need more than passion and purpose—they also need the ability to navigate an increasingly complex regulatory environment. Yet for many nonprofits, particularly smaller organisations, accessing reliable and timely information on compliance and governance remains a persistent challenge. Rules evolve frequently, information is fragmented, and expert guidance is often difficult to access.

The idea for PATTIC emerged from this gap. What began as efforts to build compliance capacity through structured learning soon revealed a larger need: practitioners were looking not just for training, but for an ongoing space where they could ask questions, learn from peers, access trusted expertise, and stay updated as regulations changed.

This insight led to the creation of PATTIC—a collaborative learning ecosystem designed to make compliance and governance more accessible, practical and community-driven.

Supported by Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies (RNPF), PATTIC has been developed in collaboration with T4G Impact Tech Foundation as the lead implementation partner and Saathi Development Services as the lead knowledge partner. It is further strengthened by an ecosystem of knowledge partners including Samagata Foundation, PACTA, ISDM, Azim Premji University and others, reflecting a shared commitment to strengthening governance across the social sector.

Today, PATTIC has evolved into a trusted destination for nonprofit professionals seeking practical guidance on statutory compliance, governance, and organisational management. Whether organisations need clarity on FCRA requirements, 12A and 80G renewals, board governance, or broader regulatory questions, the platform provides reliable, practitioner-oriented information backed by expert knowledge.

Since its launch in 2024, the platform has seen encouraging growth in both reach and engagement. More than 60,000 unique visitors have discovered PATTIC through search engines, WhatsApp channels, partner referrals, email campaigns, and outreach efforts, demonstrating a significant demand for credible and accessible compliance resources.

Recent platform analytics further reflect sustained interest:

- 4,600 unique visitors during the reporting period
- Approximately 4,000 total visits
- More than 8,100 page views
- An average of 1.67 pages viewed per visit
- An average visit duration of 1 minute and 15 seconds



Beyond discoverability, the platform has successfully built a vibrant learning community. As of June 2026, PATTIC has over 22,000 active members who receive regular updates, learning resources and opportunities to engage with experts and peers.

To support continuous learning, the platform offers:

- More than 250 expert responses addressing real-world compliance and governance questions.
- A yearly Compliance Calendar with timely reminders to help organisations stay on track with statutory requirements.
- More than 150 newsletters covering regulatory updates, governance practices, and sector insights.
- A peer-learning forum where practitioners can ask questions, exchange experiences, and learn from one another.
- Resources that are instantly translatable into more than 14 Indian languages, improving accessibility for organisations across the country.

Importantly, PATTIC has moved beyond being a repository of information to becoming an active learning community. More than 1,500 members have engaged directly with the platform by posting questions, participating in discussions, attending learning sessions, accessing specialised resources and joining partner-led programmes. The newsletter has over a 50% open rate. This level of participation demonstrates that practitioners value opportunities not only to receive information but also to learn collectively from one another’s experiences.

The platform’s emphasis on peer learning is particularly significant. Compliance challenges are rarely unique to a single organisation. By creating a trusted space where practitioners can discuss common issues, share practical solutions and learn from experts, PATTIC is helping build confidence and capability across the sector. It is also contributing to a broader culture of accountability, where good governance becomes a shared responsibility rather than an individual organisational burden.

A defining feature of PATTIC is its collaborative design. Rather than building another standalone resource, the initiative brings together diverse organisations with complementary strengths. Knowledge partners contribute subject matter expertise, implementation partners support technology and platform development, while outreach partners help ensure the platform reaches organisations that might otherwise have limited access to such resources.

This collaborative approach extends to community building as well. Outreach efforts are supported by a team of young professionals, including individuals working through challenging life circumstances with organisations such as WeLive Foundation and Samraksha. Their contribution reflects PATTIC’s broader philosophy: strengthening the sector requires investing in people, creating opportunities for participation and building ecosystems rather than isolated institutions.

This shift—from individual organisational efforts to a shared ecosystem—is central to PATTIC’s vision. Complex challenges such as nonprofit compliance cannot be solved by any one organisation alone. They require trusted partnerships, shared knowledge and sustained collaboration across the sector.

Looking ahead, PATTIC aims to deepen engagement while expanding its reach. By 2028, the platform seeks to build a community of 35,000–40,000 professionals working across the social sector and establish itself as the go-to destination for compliance and governance learning in India. Future efforts will focus on enriching the knowledge repository, strengthening peer-to-peer learning, expanding multilingual resources and creating more opportunities for practitioners to learn together.

At its heart, PATTIC represents RNPF’s belief that strong institutions are built through trust, collaboration and continuous learning. By making reliable knowledge accessible and fostering a community of practice around governance, the platform is helping nonprofits spend less time navigating complexity and more time advancing the missions they exist to serve.

04. Building A Justice System That Cares - One Convening At A Time

The entryway to the annual justice convening hosted by Margins to Access Project (MAP), a legal aid centre committed to expanding access to justice, featured an art exhibition titled Nyaay Kala. The exhibition showcased ten artistic interpretations of landmark judgments that shaped India, turning legal decisions into visual stories.

One artwork stood out. A mixed-media installation reflected on the invisibility of custodial violence through discarded tea bags bearing blurred faces—symbols of lives handled, strained and forgotten. Tea or chai, after all, is routine in Indian police stations. Inspired by Nilabati Behera v. State of Orissa (1993), the work asked what accountability and human dignity mean when the ordinary routines of power conceal extraordinary injustice.

In a country with over 5 crore pending cases, prison occupancy at 131%, and more than 55,000 pending cases before Juvenile Justice Boards (India Justice Report), justice is often seen as distant, intimidating, and something to be avoided unless absolutely necessary. As one senior panellist remarked during a convening, “We don’t want to touch justice until justice touches us.” Changing this relationship with justice requires more than legal reform. It requires spaces where people can listen, question, connect and imagine a different system together.

Over the last financial year, we saw more of these spaces emerge across RNP’s Access to Justice portfolio. More importantly, we saw a shift in their nature. They became more consultative, centring people with lived experience and using art, storytelling and dialogue to deepen conversations around justice.

Last December, RNP brought together more than 30 partners from across the portfolio for a collective sensemaking exercise using a methodology called 4D Mapping. Participants explored the justice system not as observers, but through the perspectives of citizens, judges, lawyers, police, funders, media, families and community organisations.

One insight stood out. For many people, justice feels fatalistic from the outside. Even those working within the system were struck by how consistently community voices reflected the belief that seeking justice could make life worse rather than better. Justice was described as dangerous, exhausting, and ultimately futile. This is not just a service delivery challenge. It is a narrative challenge.

It echoes findings from UNDP India’s People-Centred Justice Needs Assessment, which surveyed 2,500 people from marginalised communities across six states. The study found that 80% of respondents who had never accessed legal aid had simply never heard of it. The biggest barrier was not distrust but invisibility. This is further corroborated by the findings in the India Justice Report, which notes that nearly 112 crore people in India are eligible for free legal aid, yet only 1.5 crore have accessed it since 1995.

The 4D mapping exercise also surfaced another uncomfortable truth. When participants reflected on the role of storytellers—journalists, filmmakers, researchers and the media—they found that communities often viewed them as outsiders. Families felt they needed protection from them. Funders felt they stood between communities and philanthropy. Storytellers themselves admitted they often followed what made for compelling stories rather than what the system most needed to hear.

This led us to ask difficult but necessary questions. How might communities tell their own stories? How do we ensure that lived experience is not simply documented, but shapes policy, institutions and public imagination?

Over the past year, several of our partners explored these questions through convenings. Each looked different, but all were built on the belief that meaningful reform begins when people who usually work in silos come together around a shared purpose.

They take the shape of a civic infrastructure. They bring together judges, lawyers, policymakers, practitioners, researchers, artists and people with lived experience to build trust, challenge assumptions and imagine a justice system that is more humane, responsive and accountable.

A justice system that truly cares.

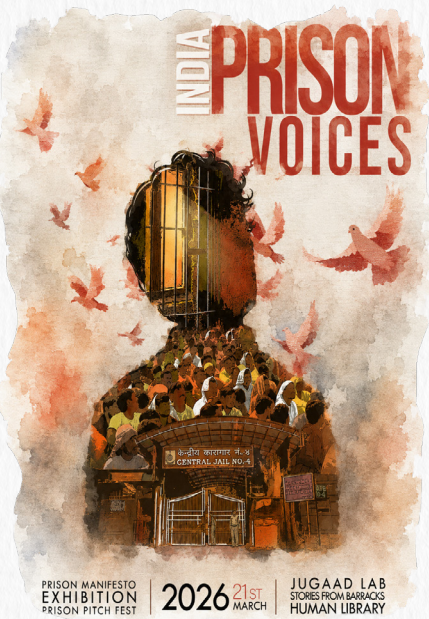


Formerly incarcerated individuals were not invited to share testimonials; they became the primary educators. Their stories shaped the agenda and challenged assumptions about prison reform. Jail ki Pehli Raat, a theatre performance by former prisoners, and Stories from the Barracks, where eight people with lived experience shared TED-style talks, moved the room in ways no traditional panel discussion could. Human libraries enabled judges, prison officials, and civil society leaders to sit in small circles and listen. Artwork by incarcerated people became conversation starters. Letters written from prison invited commitments from those outside prison walls.

Perhaps the most powerful image was not on stage but in the audience: a senior judge sitting beside a former prisoner, a prison superintendent listening quietly as someone described fear, hope and survival. For a moment, hierarchy gave way to listening.

This year marked a decade since the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 allowed for children aged 16-18 accused of heinous offences to be tried as adults. It was in this context that a two-day National Consultation on the ‘Treatment of Children in Conflict with the Law as Adults’ was hosted at NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad. It brought together 100 stakeholders in the juvenile justice system from 15 states across the country - child rights practitioners, legal experts, policymakers and academic institutions - to examine one of the most difficult questions facing the juvenile justice system.

Rather than forcing consensus, the consultation created space for disagreement, reflection and evidence-informed dialogue. Convened collaboratively by iProbono India, Enfold, India Justice Report, Counsel to Secure Justice, the Juvenile Justice Clinic at NLSIU, Aashiyana Foundation, and NALSAR University, it demonstrated how diverse institutions can come together not just to find answers, but to ask better questions and build a stronger foundation for collective action.



At Nyaay Sabha, organised by MAP, conversations moved beyond legal procedure to ask what justice actually feels like for people navigating the system. Instead of discussing policy, practitioners shared stories. A child rights advocate described how offering a chair to a child inside a legal services office transformed that child’s sense of dignity. A prison reform practitioner spoke about justice unfolding through years of trust rather than a single legal intervention. Another reflected that winning a case does not always mean experiencing justice, just as losing one does not always extinguish hope.

These stories reminded us that justice is experienced not only through verdicts, but through interactions, relationships and the humanity with which institutions respond.

India Prison Voices, hosted by Project Second Chance, similarly reimaged what a justice convening could be by placing people with lived experience at the centre. 50 of the 100 participants at the event were people with lived experiences of incarceration. The festival centered their voices as they shared the stage with those who had the power to change things: superintendents from prison departments, sitting and former judges, and Director Generals of prisons.



The Agami Justicemakers Mela 2025 reinforced another lesson, ecosystems need festivals as much as conferences. Last year, the Mela hosted more than 1000 justicemakers from 200 districts, making it a truly national and community celebration. An Innovation Showcase, a two-hour interactive pop-up, brought together practitioners to present new ideas in dispute resolution, data and the environment, while more than 20 art installations, performances, book readings and immersive experiences invited participants to engage with justice in unexpected ways. Through music, storytelling and embodied experiences such as sound baths, the Mela sought to communicate the idea of justice through felt experience rather than explanation. As many participants reflected, it was a space that "connected hearts before ideas"—reminding us that systems change often begins with empathy before it becomes policy.



These convenings reaffirmed something we have long believed, systemic change is built as much through relationships, trust and shared understanding as it is through policy and litigation. They make invisible issues visible, strengthen partnerships and shift public narratives about justice.

Across these convenings, three ideas became clear.

First, we must care for the people who hold the field. Justice work is emotionally demanding, and sustaining those who do it is as important as strengthening the institutions they work within.

Second, if we want to build a stronger justice ecosystem, we must invest in the narratives, relationships and shared spaces that shape public imagination—not just legal outcomes. And finally, stewardship matters. Convenings reminded us that people need opportunities to learn together, disagree with respect, build partnerships and know they are not working alone.

At Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies, we remain committed to supporting this work—not only by funding legal interventions, but by investing in the infrastructure that enables systems to change. We will continue to support narrative building, collaboration and spaces for collective learning, moving them from the margins to the centre of how we think about justice. We will fund what matters, not only what is easiest to measure, and stand alongside the people and organisations doing the quiet, necessary work of building a more just and caring samaaj.

Maraa, Laayak

It has been very helpful for us to have flexible donors like RNP who have trusted us to break fresh ground in exploring the diverse landscapes of masculinities. It has been useful to receive core support for our work because, as a collective, we do not work in project silos. Each area of work intersects and nourishes the other. With RNP's support, we have been able to realise two fellowships that have brought together artistic practice and community-centric research to yield fresh insights around masculinities.

These collaborations have led to exciting innovations and questions. For example, the imagination of masculinities embedded in folk cultures that challenge dominant masculinity, the relationship between communalism and masculinity, particularly its impact on men from minority religious contexts, and the experiences and expressions of queer communities in rural and peri-urban contexts, which are very different from urban-centric discourse.

In March 2025, the Rohini Nilekani Centre for Brain and Mind (RNCBM) launched the CBM-ADBS Longitudinal Multimodal Brain Resource (CALM-Brain), a dedicated data resource and web portal designed to facilitate data sharing with national and international collaborators. The programme has also supported substantial capacity building, with 14 students currently at various stages of their PhD training using CBM data, and three career development fellowships awarded following rigorous review. These efforts have fostered 29 national and international collaborations to date. CBM has also undertaken several public engagement initiatives, including Manotsava, public talks, and panel discussions. In the last year, the programme has produced 33 publications, with 6 currently under review and 19 manuscripts in preparation.

NIMHANS, Mental Health

IMPACT
STORIES

NCBS, Mental Health

The Rohini Nilekani Center for Brain and Mind is a collaborative, multi-institutional venture that uniquely combines expertise across neuroscience and psychiatry. A multi-dimensional approach to map the evolution of mental disorders in patients and healthy individuals is used, and includes behavioural, genetic assays, and finally the generation of stem cells for detailed molecular and cellular analyses. This is also a first-of-its-kind attempt to set up resources for the scientific community at large.

RNP’s funding has enabled us to establish a rounded setup to tackle important questions relating to mental disorders across multiple scales, employing multidisciplinary expertise to generate invaluable scientific resources.

PAAR, Access to Justice

In February 2026, the Supreme Court issued a detailed order to expand the open prison system. PAAR’s report was acknowledged, and our recommendations on open prisons were reiterated by the Supreme Court of India. The Apex Court has asked all High Courts to set up monitoring committees to oversee the establishment of open prisons across the country. Twenty-nine High Courts have swung into action, focusing on the expansion of open prisons. Two Supreme Court orders on Open Prisons were issued as a result of our efforts.

RNP supported us through a small grant of 10 lakhs in 2017 to study the open prison system and take our report to the Supreme Court of India. Ten years later, there are dozens of High Court orders, multiple Supreme Court orders, and over 100 open prisons in the country. We have come a long way!

We are deeply grateful for RNP’s continued support of Project Second Chance—it has been foundational in enabling spaces like India Prison Voices to come alive.

The core idea behind India Prison Voices was to place lived experience at the forefront—moving away from traditional panels to create a space where those closest to the system could lead the dialogue. The day became a space to celebrate lived experience through TEDx-style talks by individuals, a human library format enabling direct conversations, pitches by prison departments, and powerful expressions through theatre and music by those with lived experience. Alongside this, prison departments and civil society brought forward innovative ideas and solutions, creating a dynamic exchange of best practices, reflection, and collaboration—building momentum to carry these learnings forward into action.

Project Second Chance,
Access to Justice

One of our most significant achievements this year has been influencing policy support for pastoralist communities across multiple levels of government. Karnataka enacted legislation to safeguard pastoralists’ access to grazing lands, while Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh committed major investments to strengthen pastoral livelihoods through improved veterinary services, wool value chains, grassland restoration, and a ₹300 crore livelihoods programme. At the national level, the Government of India agreed to separately enumerate pastoral livestock in the 21st Livestock Census—a long-standing demand that will improve the visibility of pastoralism and enable better-targeted public investments. These milestones reflect the cumulative impact of our research, advocacy, livelihood initiatives, and public outreach.

Centre for Pastoralism,
Climate and Environment

SEEDS, Climate
and Environment

SEEDS expanded its urban heat programme from municipal schools to vulnerable neighbourhoods, piloting 18 affordable cool-roof solutions and installing cool roofs in over 600 homes, alongside ventilation systems in 430 households to improve thermal comfort and sleep. The initiative engaged over 1,000 community members, trained 55 frontline health workers (33 Anganwadi and 22 ASHA workers), and built a grassroots network of 60 community leaders and 80+ heat ambassadors to strengthen local resilience. The programme has influenced the Government of Delhi’s commitment to scale cool roofing across all 11 districts and has since expanded to more than seven cities nationwide, integrating schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces, and public health.

Through a three-year collaboration with Equinoct, Panchayats, and coastal communities, Asar helped catalyse a landmark policy shift that led the Government of Kerala to officially recognise tidal flooding as a State-specific disaster—the first such recognition in India. The effort combined rigorous community-led evidence, storytelling, and local advocacy, including 13 Panchayats passing resolutions calling for state action and the community theatre production Chevittorma, which amplified lived experiences of chronic flooding. This decision enables affected households to access financial assistance through the State Disaster Response Fund and establishes a pioneering framework for addressing chronic climate risks through policy, relief, and resilience planning.

Asar, Climate
and Environment

Pravah, Active
Citizenship

Thank you for believing in young people and making their leadership journeys possible. Because of your support, young people have embraced diversity, planted the seeds of new thought, challenged stereotypes, stepped beyond their comfort zones, and begun negotiating important decisions within their families. For many, it was their first opportunity to travel beyond their own geographies, encounter different realities, and connect across cultures. Whether through moments of deep relatability or cultural surprise, every experience has expanded perspectives in beautiful and lasting ways. Thank you, RNP, for making these ripples of change possible.

In 2026, Civis grew its impact from 33,000 citizens engaged to over 9,00,000 citizens engaged across India. Reaching the milestone of 1 million citizens was something we had planned to get to incrementally - bit by bit, all the way until 2030.

Looking back at this year of tremendous growth, one thing stands out: we were able to push harder, be bolder, and be more audacious because we had RNP’s unrestricted and patient capital backing us.

Taking a leap of faith and scaling work that reflects the immediate needs of our community required investment that matched that ability to be responsive. With RNP’s support, we were able to scale through innovations, invest in the people and processes that mattered, and build a strong proof point for active civic engagement in India.

Civis, Active
Citizenship

OUR FINANCIALS

The background of the slide is an abstract watercolor painting. It features broad, sweeping brushstrokes in various shades of green, from light lime to deep forest green, and bright yellow. These colors are layered and blended, creating a sense of movement and depth. Scattered throughout the composition are numerous small, dark green and yellow splatters, giving it a textured, organic feel. The overall aesthetic is clean yet artistic, suggesting a focus on nature or growth.

BALANCE SHEET

(All amounts in 'Lakhs' unless otherwise stated)

PARTICULARS	NOTE	AS AT MARCH 31, 2026	AS AT MARCH 31, 2025
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Shareholders' funds			
Share capital	3	1.00	1.00
Reserves and surplus	4	1,472.06	82.84
		1,473.06	83.84
Current liabilities			
Trade payables	5		
Total outstanding dues of micro enterprises and small enterprises		8.15	-
Total outstanding dues of creditors other than micro and small enterprises		10.85	0.90
Other current liabilities	6	28.51	39.77
		47.51	40.67
Total		1,520.57	124.51
ASSETS			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant, equipment and intangible assets			
Property, plant, equipment	7	1.27	3.73
Other non-current assets	8	6.35	18.99
		7.62	22.72
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	9	296.56	95.70
Other current assets	10	1,216.39	6.09
		1,512.95	101.79
Total		1,520.57	124.51

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

(All amounts in 'Lakhs' unless otherwise stated)

PARTICULARS	NOTE	AS AT MARCH 31, 2026	AS AT MARCH 31, 2025
Income			
Donation	11	18,200.00	13,400.00
Other income	12	58.27	40.42
Total Income		18,258.27	13,440.42
Expenses			
Programme expenses	13	16,221.57	12,862.45
Employee benefits expense	14	451.98	444.04
Depreciation and amortisation expense	15	2.91	5.88
Other expenses	16	192.59	253.41
Total expenses		16,869.05	13,565.78
Surplus/(Deficit)		1,389.22	-125.36
Tax expense			
- Current tax		-	-
- Deferred tax		-	-
		-	-
Surplus/(Deficit)		1,389.22	-125.36
Earnings per equity share:			
[Nominal value per share: Rs. 10]]			
Basic/Diluted (in Rs.)	25	13,892.20	-1,253.60

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

(All amounts in ‘Lakhs’ unless otherwise stated)

PARTICULARS	AS AT MARCH 31, 2026	AS AT MARCH 31, 2025
A. Cash flow from operating activities		
Surplus over expenses	1,389.22	(125.36)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation and amortization	2.91	5.88
Interest received	(57.77)	(40.39)
Operating surplus before working capital changes	1,334.36	(159.87)
Adjustments for changes in working capital		
Adjustments for (increase) / decrease in operating assets:		
Other current assets	(1,196.34)	(12.77)
Adjustments for increase / (decrease) in operating liabilities:		
Trade payables	18.10	(11.63)
Other current liabilities	(11.25)	17.77
Operating surplus after working capital changes	144.87	(166.50)
Direct taxes paid	(1.32)	(0.33)
Net cash generated from operating activities	143.55	(166.83)
B. Cash flow from investing activities		
Purchase of fixed assets	(2.43)	(2.54)
Sale of fixed assets (Buyback by employees)	1.97	-
Interest received	57.77	40.39
Net cash generated used in investing activities	57.31	37.85
C. Cash flow from financing activities:		
Proceeds from issuance of share capital	-	-
Net cash generated from financing activities	-	-

(All amounts in ‘Lakhs’ unless otherwise stated)

D. Net (decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents (A+B+C)	200.86	(128.98)
E. Cash and cash equivalents - Opening balance	95.70	224.68
F. Cash and cash equivalents - Closing balance (D+E)	296.56	95.70
Notes :		
1 The above cash flow statement has been prepared under the “Indirect Method” as set out in Accounting Standard - 3 Cash flow statements prescribed in the Companies (Accounts) Rules, 2014.		
2 The above cash flow statement has been compiled from and is based on the Balance Sheet as at March 31, 2026 and the related Statement of Income & Expenditure for the year ended on that date.		
3 Components of Cash and cash equivalents:		
	AS AT MARCH 31, 2026	AS AT MARCH 31, 2025
Cash on hand	-	-
Balances with banks:		
- in Current accounts	262.87	2.36
- In deposits accounts	33.69	93.29
Other receivables	-	0.05
Total	296.56	95.70

The accompanying notes, as disclosed in detail on our website, are an integral part of the above Financial Statements.



ROHINI
NILEKANI
philanthropies