

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



FOUNDATION FOR
MOTHER & CHILD HEALTH
INDIA





2023–24: The Year of Exploration

Exploration is the driving force of human progress. It is about venturing into the uncharted, facing the unknown with courage and returning with newfound understanding. It is this spirit of exploration that led explorers to discover new lands, scientists to unravel the mysteries of the universe and artists to create groundbreaking works. FMCH is on the same path. We are not just exploring new places to spread our work, we are also finding new ways of thinking, new solutions to old problems and new perspectives on the world around us. This year has been a journey of exploration for us, and thus, is the theme of our annual report.

The year 2023–24 has been a thrilling expedition/discovery. We embarked on a bold journey in the past year, charting new territories and pushing the boundaries of possibility. Here are the highlights of this adventure.

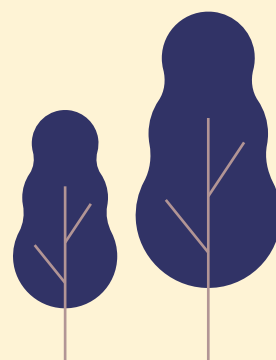


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CEO's Note for 2023-24



Dear Team, Partners, and Supporters,

As we close the chapter on 2023-24, I am filled with a sense of awe at what we've achieved together. This year, our theme was Exploration. We pushed boundaries, ventured into the unknown, and piloted new technologies. We expanded our footprint to new locations, reaching more communities. And in doing so, we discovered not only new ways to work but also new parts of ourselves.

“

Reflecting on the year gone by, I am reminded of treks across hills. It was a big one that we climbed – and the view is definitely worth the effort! And I see the many hills in front of us as well.

Exploration, by its nature, is exhilarating. It is also exhausting. As we reflect on our journey, we must also acknowledge the fatigue that comes with constant growth and change. Just as a traveller must pause to rest and refuel, we too must find moments to breathe, to recharge, and to prepare for the next leg of our journey.

But let's not forget the excitement that exploration brings. We ventured into Chattarpur, Madhya Pradesh, and Ullhasnagar, Mumbai. We experimented with new tools like NuTree Lite, ChatBots, AI powered ChatBots, Health Indicator Tapes – and so much more!

Each of these pilots could redefine our work. We expanded our team to 100 strong, welcoming new leaders who bring fresh perspectives and energy. We doubled our impact, reaching 40,000 families, all while reducing costs and maintaining our commitment to quality.



Yet, with all this exploration comes the need for reflection. How do we balance the thrill of discovery with the need for stability? How do we ensure that our rapid growth is sustainable? And how do we make time for rest in a world that never stops moving?

As we look ahead, let's embrace both the excitement of exploration and the necessity of rest. Let's continue to push boundaries, to ask questions, and to seek out new solutions. But let's also remember to pause, to reflect, and to care for ourselves and each other.

To our incredible team, thank you for your tireless dedication and unwavering spirit. To our partners and supporters, thank you for being with us every step of the way. Together, we've explored new worlds, and together, we'll continue to soar.

With gratitude and anticipation,

Shruthi Iyer



Our Programs & Impact



Poshan Initiatives – Direct Intervention

At the heart of our mission is the well-being of mothers and children. Our direct intervention focuses on the critical first 1000 days of a child's life, a period pivotal for their growth and development. To achieve maximum impact, we have cultivated a robust network of local women, trained as field officers, who serve as the frontline of maternal and child health care.



includes group education sessions, such as Pregnancy Clubs and Nutrition Courses, to spread knowledge in communities.

In the 2023–24 fiscal year, our program reached 16,932 families across Kurla, Bhiwandi and Ulhasnagar, Ambernath and the Wadia hospital in Maharashtra:

Location	No. of families reached
Kurla	6131
Bhiwandi	1240
Ulhasnagar	7359
Wadia	1100
Ambernath	1102

In the 2023–24 fiscal year, our program reached 3634 families across Konanakunte, Gottigere, Uttarahalli and Kengeri in Karnataka.

Malnutrition recovery rate of children in locations with our sustained intervention in the past year:

Location	Percentage moved from malnourished to healthy
Kurla	86.7%
Ulhasnagar	88%
Bangalore	78%

Equipped with the NuTree app, these field officers provide essential counselling and support to families. The App, designed to operate seamlessly in offline conditions as well, offers tailored guidance based on individual needs. By tracking key biomarkers and behavioural changes, we can measure progress and refine our approach.

Our field officers collaborate closely with 2,408 anganwadis across Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, ensuring comprehensive care for pregnant women and children up to two years of age. Through regular growth monitoring, facilitated by digital machines provided by FMCH, we identify potential issues early on. Beyond individual counselling, our program



Anganwadi Accelerator Programme (AAP) – System Strengthening Approach

India's Anganwadi workers are the backbone of maternal and child health, serving millions of mothers and children through the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). Despite their critical role, they often struggle with overwhelming workloads, limited resources and inconsistent training. This leads to suboptimal outcomes in the first 1000 days of a child's life.



Our Anganwadi Accelerator Program (AAP) aims to transform this landscape by empowering Anganwadi workers and strengthening the Anganwadi system. Through capacity building, mentorship and data-driven insights, we are working to improve the quality and reach of early childhood care and development services.



Our interventions in Chhatarpur and Kurla have yielded promising results. By providing targeted training and ongoing support, we have seen a significant increase in home visits and the use of essential screening tools. This improved performance has directly benefited 90,400 families in Chhatarpur, covering the entire district. We have begun work on a similar district-wide intervention in Tumkur, Karnataka, and in FY 2024-25, that will help take our programme to 30,000 more families.

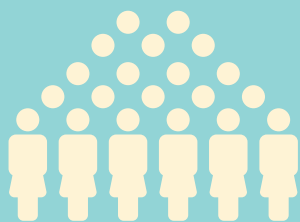
By investing in Anganwadi workers, we are not only improving the lives of countless children but also strengthening the foundation of a healthier India.



Our Impact in 2023-24



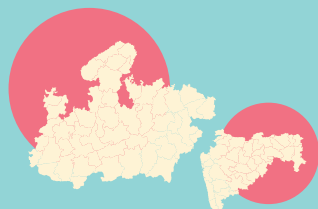
Through both the direct and indirect interventions, we brought down malnutrition by 86%, moving **1600+ children out of malnutrition**, and preventing it in about 1.5L families.



We trained over **200 frontline workers** (including FMCH field officers, Anganwadi workers, and Partner field workers) and reached **27,055 families with the help of NuTree and NuTree Lite apps.**



We conducted **142,000+ counselling and 140,000+ anthropometry sessions** this year, using the NuTree app. NuTree Lite helped us take nutrition counselling and guidance to more than 1.2L new families, with support from the Anganwadi workers.



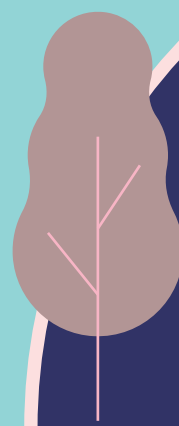
We reached **2,400+ new Anganwadis** across Chattarpur, Rajgarh and Navi Mumbai.

Again, we outperformed the NFHS-5 national and district-level data across all IYCF indicators.

	NFHS-5	2023-24
Institutional deliveries	88%	99.08%
Early initiation of breastfeeding	41%	84.87%
ANC Visits (>4)	58%	97.5%
IFA Tablets - 100 tablets	44%	94.56%
Complementary feeding on time	46%	73.84%



Innovations



1. FMCH WhatsApp Chatbot: A Digital Companion for Mothers

This year we launched a groundbreaking WhatsApp chatbot to provide essential information and support to mothers during the critical first 1000 days of a child's life. This innovative platform offers comprehensive guidance on pregnancy, nutrition, breastfeeding, complementary feeding, vaccination, and more, directly accessible through the WhatsApp app.



By delivering timely, tailored information, the chatbot aims to enhance maternal knowledge, attitudes and practices. Through interactive quizzes and engaging content, we empower mothers to make informed decisions for their families' health and well-being. Our initial pilot has demonstrated the chatbot's potential to create healthier communities. In the next year, we will expand its reach to Maharashtra and Karnataka, bringing this valuable resource to more families. By developing chatbots in local languages and ensuring 24/7 availability, we aim to make a lasting impact on malnutrition rates.



2. AI Training

Our field officers play a crucial role in collecting firsthand accounts from beneficiaries during home visits. However, challenges in time management, storytelling skills, and a lack of standardised guidelines often result in inconsistent and superficial stories. These stories frequently lack the depth and context necessary for a comprehensive understanding of program impact.

To address these issues, we partnered with GritWorks on a 10-day pilot program from 21 August to 5 September, involving 10 FMCH field officers. We deployed two solutions:

By delivering timely, tailored information, the chatbot aims to enhance maternal knowledge, attitudes and practices. Through interactive quizzes and engaging content, we empower mothers to make informed decisions for their families' health and well-being. Our initial pilot has demonstrated the chatbot's potential to create healthier communities. In the next year, we will expand its reach to Maharashtra and Karnataka, bringing this valuable resource to more families. By developing chatbots in local languages and ensuring 24/7 availability, we aim to make a lasting impact on malnutrition rates.

1. GritPersona

GritPersona is a voice-based AI-driven story collection bot designed for field staff and beneficiaries. Equipped with a conversational interface, GritPersona skillfully probes for story details, ensuring the capture of comprehensive, well-structured narratives. The bot leverages AI algorithms to guarantee high-quality narrative generation, making each story not only compelling but also insightful.



Our field officers and GritWorks successfully collected 55 stories together. The pilot program was a remarkable success, as evidenced by the quality of stories collected. GritPersona and GritBot effectively addressed the challenges in story collection and analysis, enriching the narratives with depth, context and analytical insights. This groundbreaking approach has set a new standard in understanding community impact.

2. GritBot

The bot provides qualitative analysis of stories collected through GritPersona. It offers an interactive chatbot interface that serves as a platform for data-driven insights. It has the capability to create synthesised narratives from the field, thereby offering a qualitative view of the impact being made. This makes it a powerful tool for decision-makers, offering them a nuanced understanding of the work on the ground.



3. NuTree Lite

Launched in June 2020, FMCH's NuTree App is an advanced decision-support tool designed to improve maternal and child health outcomes. Developed in collaboration with medical experts and technology specialists, the app incorporates field-based insights to deliver a comprehensive solution.

NuTree's initial version focused on data collection and decision-tree guidance. Subsequent iterations, including the 2021 launch of NuTree App version II, expanded functionalities to include visit scheduling, SAM/MAM protocols and interactive IEC materials. This enhanced version empowered field officers with standardising counselling points, optimising visit planning and capturing



real-time data for effective program monitoring. Recognising the need for a more accessible and simplified tool, FMCH introduced NuTree Lite in 2023. Tailored for Anganwadi workers, this lightweight app offers multilingual support, decision-tree guidance and IEC materials while streamlining data collection. The NuTree Lite is designed for offline use and enables seamless WhatsApp integration, facilitating efficient counselling and improving service delivery. This version empowers Anganwadi workers to deliver high-quality services, even in remote areas. Through these innovative digital solutions, we aim to optimise resource allocation, improve service delivery and ultimately reduce malnutrition.



4. The Health Indicator Tape

Malnutrition is a complex issue with roots deeply embedded in the first 1000 days of life. Misconceptions about nutrition, such as the 'eating for two' myth during pregnancy, often lead to imbalanced diets and low birth weight babies. Postpartum, the burden of childcare and household chores frequently hinders exclusive breastfeeding. Additionally, a lack of knowledge about complementary feeding often results in children consuming nutrient-poor foods like tea, biscuits, or junk food. Compounding the problem is the inability of many families to recognize malnutrition in their children until severe symptoms appear.

To address this, we have developed innovative solutions. We have modified the MUAC tape designed by WHO for the African continent to identify SAM/MAM status of Indian children. Our modified MUAC tape, the Health Indicator Tape (HIT), empowers parents to assess their child's nutritional status with 80% accuracy. Additionally, our Nutribot WhatsApp chatbot provides essential guidance on growth monitoring, breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and nutritious recipes.

We have successfully piloted the HIT in Bhiwandi, and are excited to expand this initiative to other locations.



5. The NuTree App's Composite Indicator Score

We recently added a new feature in our NuTree App: the Composite Indicator Score. This score provides a holistic view of each mother or child's health journey during the first 1000 days. It analyses vital parameters like meal frequency, diet diversity, hospital registration, antenatal checkups, and WASH practices. The Composite Indicator Score identifies areas where each mother or child needs the most improvement, allowing us to personalise our interventions for optimal health outcomes.

To ensure effective utilisation of this new tool, we have been organising internal training sessions at different locations. The sessions equip our field officers with a thorough understanding of the score and its application. Moving forward, we are:

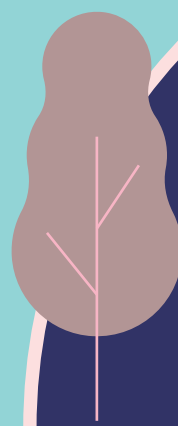
- Encouraging and monitoring field officers' utilisation of the Composite Indicator Scores.
- Providing personalised support to those who scored lower on the knowledge assessments to ensure successful integration of the new feature.
- Integrating daily practice of using the Composite Indicator Score into field officers' routines.

By empowering our team with this innovative tool and comprehensive training, we aim to significantly improve the health and well-being of our mothers and children during their most critical developmental window.





Expansion





Trainings in Karnataka



Mother Leader Pilot



Ambernath - direct location expansions



Navi Mumbai and Ambernath





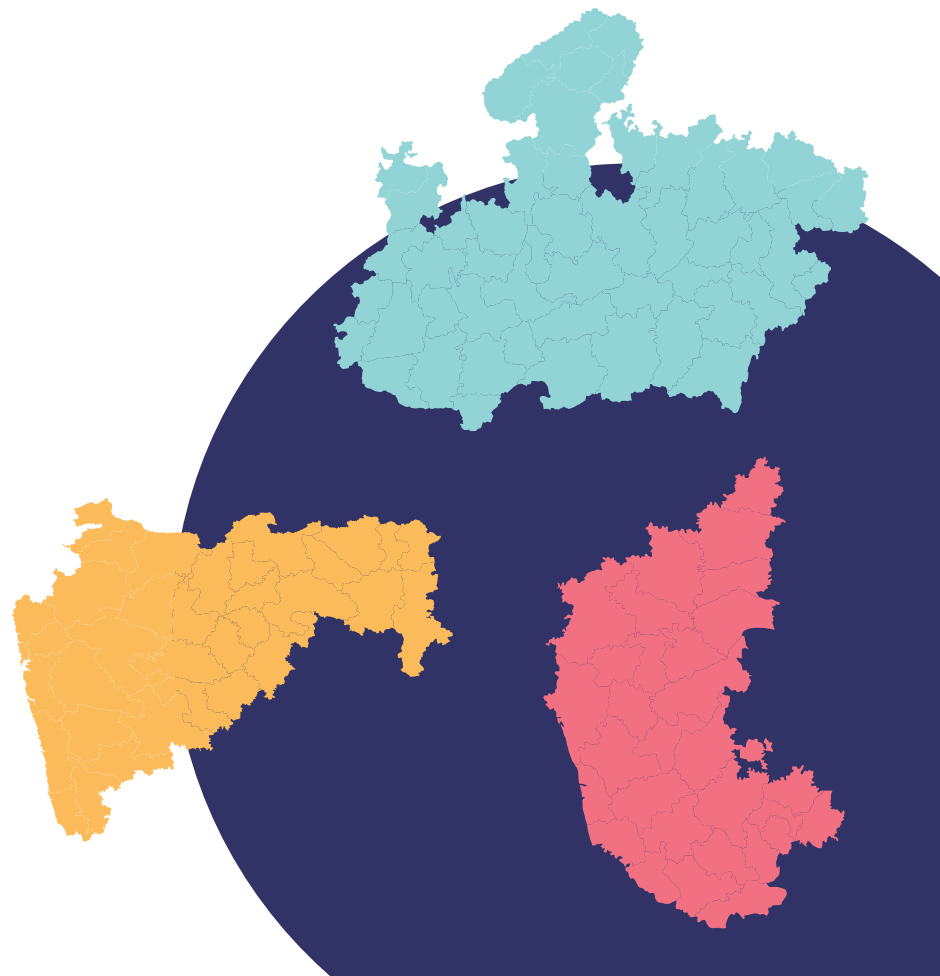
Strategy discussions in MP with CDPO and Supervisors (June)



KMC kit distribution in collaboration with KHPT

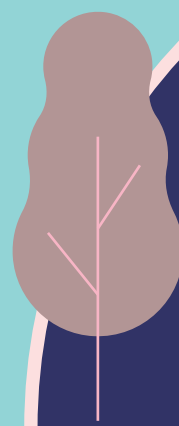


AAP implementation in more locations – our reach





The Team



Breastfeeding Week



Workshop for nurses at private hospitals – KPI – at Fauziya Hospital, City Hospital and Habib Hospital – successfully conducted breastfeeding workshops in three private hospitals



Nutrition month - exhibitions, role plays, workshops, movie screenings



Wadia hospital events

- quiz, interviews, make my plate healthier



Movie shows by Red Chillies

Oral Health Camp



On the occasion of Women's Day, we organised a small introduction and get together session for our Mother leaders in the community.



Wipro partner event
"Know your Partner" and conducted role play for the staff along with some fun activities. Through this event we were able to meet the other non-profit organisations working in the community for mother and child health and were able to understand their interventions in the community."

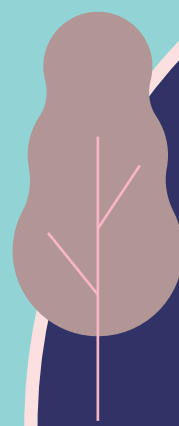
Annual meeting: "Ulhasnagar Poshan Initiative" Program won an award for exceptional performance on declining the SAM/MAM cases in Ulhasnagar



POSH training – In December, we organised POSH Training for all the field and non-field officers for identifying and differentiating between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour at the workplace or communities we work in. We invited Onil Kulkarni, a certified POSH trainer and educator.



Recognition



Meet our Acumen Angels 2023 awardees!

Shruthi Iyer

Co-Founder and CEO of Foundation for Mother and Child Health India (FMCH)



Acumen Angels Program award

ngobox.org

NGOBOX

Top 10 NGOs in India Working in The Healthcare Sector

By NGOBOX

October 31, 2022

Share

NGO box featured us among top 10 NGOs

यशोभूमि

आंगनवाड़ी सेविकाओं को उपकरण वितरित

भिवंडी । प्रतिनिधि

फाउंडेशन फॉर मदर एंड चिल्ड्रन हेल्थ द्वारा भिवंडी में

रंगना दिनकर कंकाल द्वारा किया गया। फोटोवर्स एंडरसेस प्राइवेट लिमिटेड कंपनी के संचयन समर्थन



आईसीडीएस कार्यालय, कल्याण नका स्थित कार्यक्रम का आयोजन कर आंगनवाड़ी सेविकाओं को खजन और ऊंचाई मापने के उपकरण दिया गया, जिससे

रोगे सहित एकीकृत बाल विकास परियोजना भिवंडी कार्यालय की मुख्य कार्यकर्ता मनीषा रावल, प्रतिभा वीर, मधुमिता केजले एवं एकएम्सीएन टीम के प्रतिनिधि शुभांगी भोईटे, अमर यादव, शाहजहां अस्मरी एवं टीम उपस्थित थी। इस कार्यक्रम में आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्ताओं को एक एप्लिकेशन के बारे में जानकारी दी गई। इस एप्लिकेशन का उद्देश्य गर्भवती महिलाओं, स्तनपान कराने वाली माताओं और 2 वर्ष से कम उम्र के बच्चों की माताओं को पोषण का महत्व सिखाना है।

कुपोषण की व्यापकता को मापने में मिलेगी मदद

जनसंख्या स्तर पर बच्चों और माताओं के बीच कुपोषण की व्यापकता को मापने में मदद मिलेगी। कार्यक्रम का मार्गदर्शन सहायक आयुक्त एकीकृत बाल विकास परियोजना भिवंडी-सुश्री

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Mumbai NGO to track malnutrition cases in Bengaluru

The plan is to work with 65 anganwadi centres to assess the dietary habits and gaps in the local communities.

Meghalok Giri

Last Updated 13 October 2023, 05:09 IST

Follow Us



Representative image. Credit: iStock Photo

A Mumbai-based NGO has undertaken a year-long intervention to raise awareness about malnutrition among new and expectant mothers in Bengaluru.

Exit events featured in local marathi dailies/YouTube channels

Featured in Deccan Herald

भिवंडी में आंगनवाड़ी सेविकाओं को वजन और ऊंचाई मापने के उपकरण का वितरण

रंगना दिनकर कंकाल

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MULAGO

2023 RAINER ARNHOLD FELLOWS



SHRUTHI IYER

FOUNDATION FOR MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH 2023

Collaboration with KHPT for KMC covered by local news

FMCH selected for Rainer Arnhold Fellowship



Shruthi speaks at a podcast – Ep 2 of The Nutrition Story by Vitamin Angels India



Bhagyada got certified as lactation consultant



FMCH is one of the “Most Trusted” nonprofits in India, receiving the “Gold Certified Seal” of trust from Give India



Bhagyada was invited to speak at a panel discussion on ‘Strengthening Public Systems for Foundational Education in Maharashtra’, organised in Pune by Leadership for Equity and Centre for Learning Resources.



Jesmina got into ILSS program

Shruti Kashyap Choudhari

Director – Projects & Strategy,
BL Kashyap

"It has been inspiring to witness FMCH's journey of exploration and innovation in the past year. The organisation's commitment to community-driven approaches, combined with its strategic partnerships, has led to some remarkable achievements. The development of the new Bot shows FMCH's commitment to leveraging technology to reach more people. This innovative tool will definitely provide important information and support to our mothers in the community. I am proud to be associated with FMCH and look forward to contributing to its continued growth and success."

Board Member



Savita Prajapati

Anganwadi worker,
Chhatarpur, MP

"FMCH's NuTree app has been an invaluable tool for our work. Before every home visit, we consult the app for guidance. Showing women the app's videos has been a game-changer. They find the information on breastfeeding, feeding young children and nutrition incredibly helpful. We have seen a significant improvement in mothers' knowledge about child care.

The NuTree app is essential for our home visits. We appreciate how it provides clear, step-by-step instructions. It's like having a knowledgeable expert with us during every visit, guiding our conversations and ensuring consistent messaging "

Anganwadi Worker



Ritu

Mother,
Rajgarh

"Since we got associated with the FMCH program and started using the NuTree app, the women in our village have completely changed, especially with regard to how they feed their children. They have stopped buying unhealthy snacks from the market, like chips and chocolates. Now, everything their children eat is homemade and nutritious. It has made a big difference in their health and well-being. Thank you FMCH! "

Mother



Rajiv Singh

District Program Officer,
Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh

"t was a wonderful partnership with FMCH to combat malnutrition in the District Chhatarpur. Together, we not only fermented a robust strategy, but also executed with utmost sincerity & dedication.

The biggest testimony is the way we expanded, so quickly, from a pilot of 100 AWCs to all 2058 AWCs in less than a year.

The team FMCH is a silent crusader against child malnutrition. Their Nutri-lite app has emerged as a potent tool of BCC in Health & Nutrition education.

We sincerely express gratitude towards their dedicated & valuable support in the district. Best Wishes!"

Chhatarpur



Devishree Radhakrishnan

Advisory Team Member
Vanavil Trust

"Over the past year, Vanavil's collaboration with FMCH has been crucial in raising awareness and protecting the health of young mothers and infants from the Nomadic tribes in Tamil Nadu's delta districts. Our partnership began with us translating the FMCH's Nutree App into Tamil, to effectively use the app within our nomadic tribal community.

FMCH's trainers have been very knowledgeable, giving our team thorough training that took extra time and effort due to language barrier. As the champion for Vanavil's Malnutrition Project, I often translated these sessions for our trainers. Translation meant extended hours, but the FMCH trainers remained enthusiastic and supportive, always willing to go the extra mile.

This partnership has significantly enriched our understanding of nutrition and malnutrition prevention. We continue to learn with the help of FMCH, especially Shreya, the super cheerful trainer, and hope to reduce malnutrition in the community we work.

A special thanks to Shruthi Iyer who was instrumental in building this collaboration."

Partner



Ullas Kumar

Founder, GritWorks.ai

#Unveiling Real Stories: FMCH's Journey with GritWorks' AI-Powered Storytelling

In 2023, FMCH embarked on an exciting collaboration with GritWorks, venturing into uncharted territory by piloting their innovative AI-powered story collection tool in the bustling neighbourhoods of Kurla, Mumbai. This exploration wasn't just about embracing new technology – it was about uncovering the real, lived experiences of the mothers and children we serve.

Over 12 intense days in August and September, our dedicated team of 10 field officers embraced GritWorks' cutting-edge approach. The result? An astounding 55 authentic, heartfelt stories that breathe life into our impact data.

Through this partnership, we met Kesar Jahan, whose hemoglobin levels rose from 9.0 to 11.0 under our care. We witnessed Puja Rajbhar's transformation as her weight increased from 36.5 kg to 48 kg during her pregnancy. And we celebrated with the family of young Kaif Ashraf Shaikh, who grew from a frail 2.7 kg to a healthy 7.2 kg with our intervention.

Partner



A Mother's Journey to Nourishment

Location: Ulhasnagar

Nitu Kohli, a resident of Kheimane, was expecting a baby boy when she unexpectedly welcomed twin babies. Despite the joy, both infants were diagnosed with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), a surprising challenge for a well-educated and financially stable family. Concerned about her twins' health, Nitu sought guidance from our field officer. It became evident that formula feeding, prescribed by doctors due to insufficient breast milk, was hindering their progress. Through comprehensive counselling, our officer emphasised the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, providing support on latching, positioning and milk production.

Recognising that Nitu's diet was also impacting her milk supply, the officer introduced a meal plan to increase her nutritional intake. With consistent support and guidance, Nitu successfully overcame breastfeeding challenges. The twins thrived under this care, gaining weight steadily and overcoming SAM. Their journey shows the power of early intervention and the importance of maternal nutrition in infant health.



A Mother's Battle, a Grandmother's Transformation

Location: Kurla

Shehnaz, a field officer with FMCH, was on a routine visit to the Kaju Pada area of Kurla when she met Araham, a frail four-month-old. Living with his parents and grandparents, Araham's world was a stark contrast to the vibrant energy of a healthy infant. His father, the sole breadwinner, struggled to balance work and family, while his grandmother seemed resistant to outside intervention.

Shehnaz, undeterred, made Araham's home a regular stop. Slowly, she overcame the grandmother's reservations, gaining her trust one visit at a time. A closer look revealed the seriousness of Araham's condition. Born weighing a mere 1.9 kg, he had only managed to gain just 0.6 kg in four months, a clear sign of severe malnutrition.

Shehnaz realised that Araham's mother was battling both physical and emotional challenges. Lack of support from her husband compounded her distress. With the grandmother's growing trust, Shehnaz, aided by an FMCH anganwadi teacher, initiated a nutrition education program. The grandmother, once a barrier, became an ally. She began to understand the critical role she played in Araham's life.

The transformation was remarkable. In just two months, Araham started thriving. His weight gain was substantial, thanks to the combined efforts of the family and Shehnaz. The once-resistant grandmother now welcomed Shehnaz with warmth, a symbol of their newfound bond. Araham's journey from a malnourished infant to a healthy baby is a story of perseverance, care and the power of human connection.



Dorothy Wagle

Message from the Chairperson



Exploration is crucial for driving innovation and achieving long-term sustainability in our rapidly changing environment. This year, our team has embarked on extensive research and experimentation to identify valuable ideas, technologies, and strategies that will serve our beneficiaries, resulting in lasting impacts and growth in the communities that need it most.



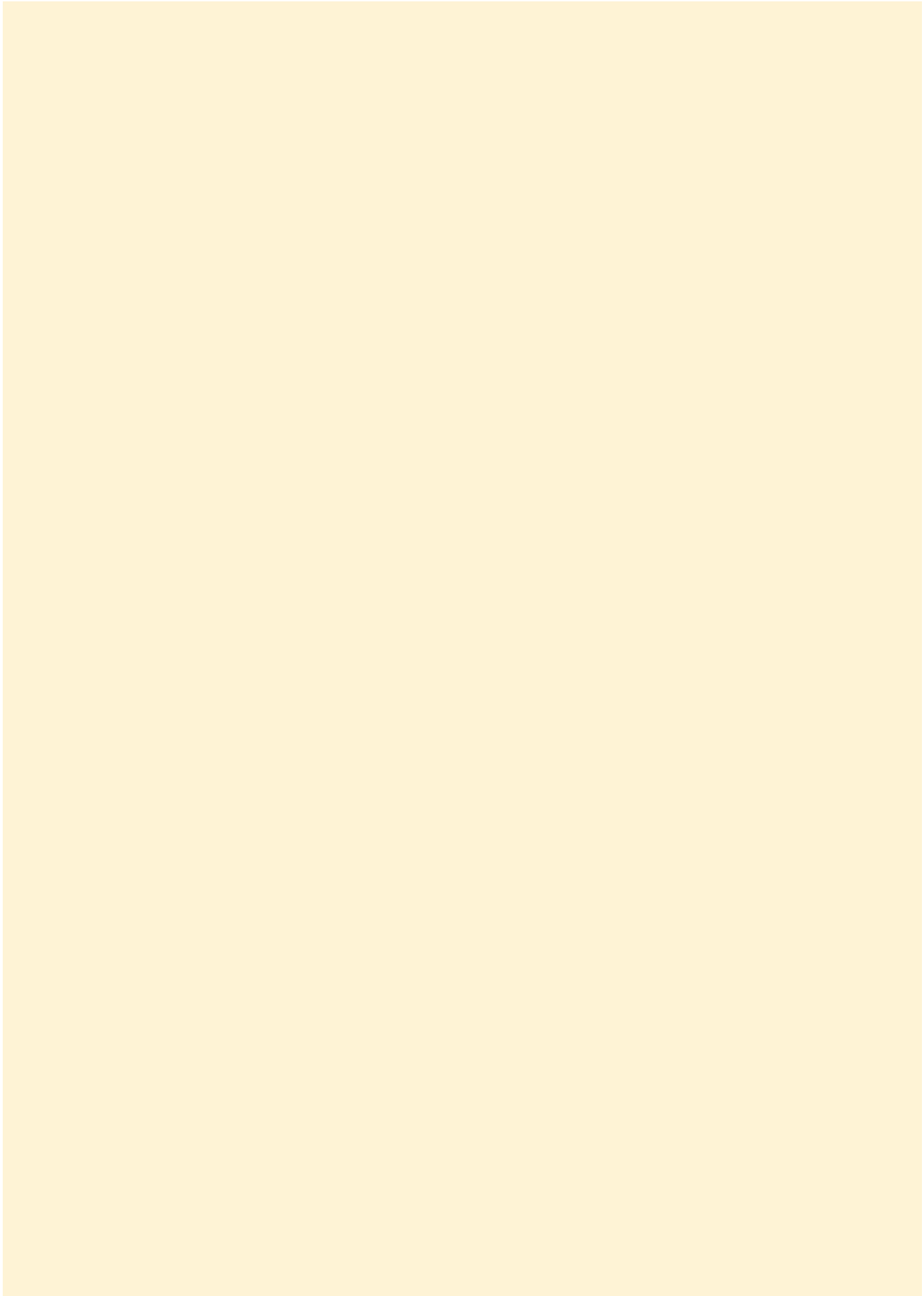
We believe that our commitment to continuous exploration of successful practices, areas for improvement, and innovative ideas and technologies is what sets FMCH apart and has brought us to our current achievements. The challenges faced by mothers and children are complex and ever-evolving; there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Our flexibility and creativity, combined with our dedication to listening and responding to the needs of the communities we serve, empower us to address these challenges effectively. By identifying and solving problems at the front lines, we are positioned to create generational change within our communities.



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At FMCH, exploration is not confined to the end of the fiscal year; it is deeply ingrained in our organisational culture. We celebrate our team's relentless pursuit of innovative solutions that enable us to serve more effectively and reach a broader audience. We are also deeply grateful to our supporters and donors who stand with us as we look to the future, informed by the lessons of the past. Exploration at FMCH is a collective effort, and together, we are dedicated to making a positive impact on India.

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