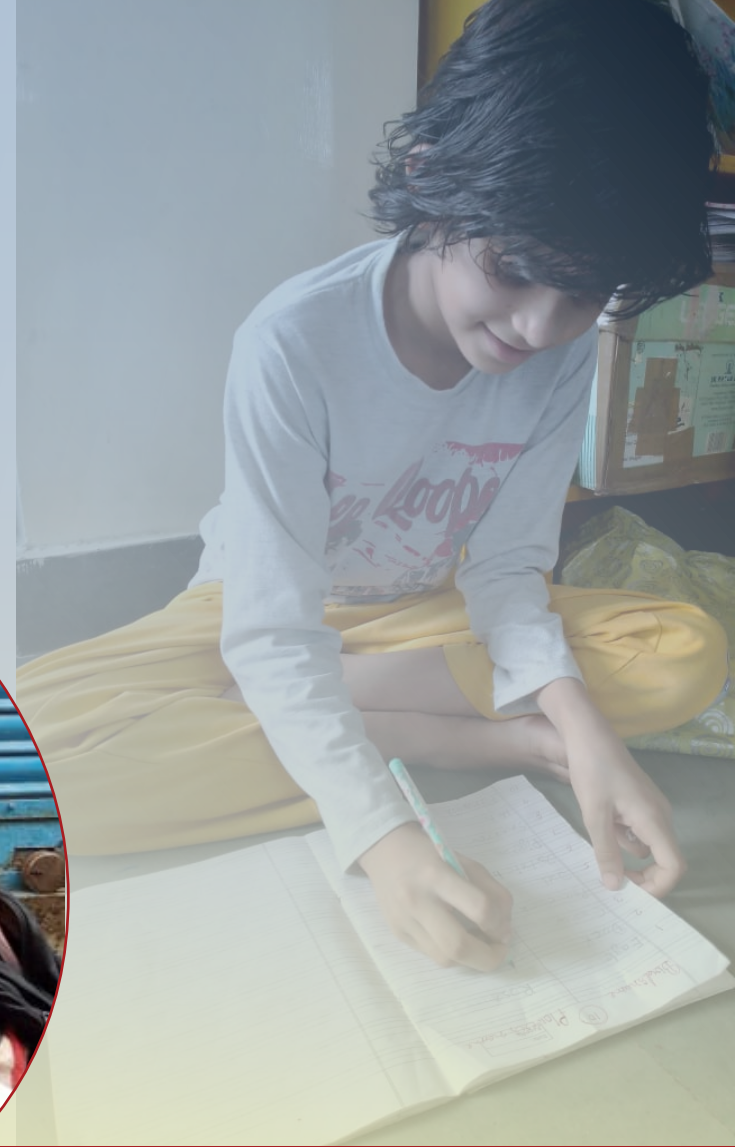




Agragami India



**ANNUAL REPORT
2022-2023**



About Us

Aragami India seeks to bring about sustainable change in the quality of life of the rural and urban poor by addressing the causes of multi-dimensional poverty - poor health & sanitation, lack of education, and absence of livelihoods opportunities. Its programs provide information, education and skills that empower and enable communities - particularly women and young adults - to adopt positive behaviors and utilize essential services for health, sanitation, education, skill development, and income generation. Programs reach out to the most vulnerable, emphasize gender equality, develop change agents within communities, use holistic and integrated approaches to bring about sustainable change, promote the utilization of services available for health, education, skill development and livelihoods, and collaborate with Government and other organizations to ensure program synergy.

Aragami's development interventions are focused on Bihar, and the low-income settlements of the National Capital Region.



Aragami also builds the capacity of community outreach workers, both government and non-government. Capacity building programs are conducted wherever needed in India.



Aragami India is accredited by The Credibility Alliance as an organization that fulfills all desirable norms of governance, accountability and system integrity.

Adolescent Health and Development

The long-term goal of EngenderHealth's Tarunya project is "***To empower adolescents in Bihar with information, services, and the enabling environment that they need for healthy growth and development***". The project helps the Government of Bihar to implement the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) through providing adolescents with preventive and promotive health education in community outreach mode, and counselling and curative clinical services from its primary and community health facilities.

Between June 2017 and November 2021, Agragami India had been entrusted by EngenderHealth to carry out all activities of RKSK for the district authorities. However, in Phase XI – December 2021 to March 2023 - the emphasis of Agragami's work changed from direct implementation of all RKSK activities to preparing for the transition to full planning, implementation and monitoring of all RKSK activities by block health officials themselves. Accordingly, the emphasis in phase XI was on:

- (a) gradually handing over implementation of RKSK activities to block health personnel, so that RKSK implementation in the district would continue even after EngenderHealth's technical and implementation support ends,

- (b) increasing coverage of RKSK from 344 to 652 of Sitamarhi's 845 villages,
- (c) testing out the parents' training module as a means of building a supportive home environment for adolescents,
- (d) making a special effort to extend adolescent health information, education and services to adolescents of marginalized communities as they had not so far been reached by RKSK activities,
- (e) helping school authorities to begin implementation of the school health program – newly launched in Sitamarhi district in January 2021.

All 18 Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics (AFHCs) are now being run completely by government health personnel. They continue to receive weekly on-the-job supportive supervision and feedback from Agragami staff. 25,715 adolescents visited the AFHCs for counseling or clinical services - an average of three to four each working day per AFHC compared to two in the previous phase of the project. While 30% of adolescents came at their own initiative, 22% came because their peers had told them about the facility. This is evidence of growing awareness of the existence of the facility and of its utility to adolescents.

Adolescent Health and Wellness Days are being conducted every six months in 11 blocks entirely by block health personnel, with planning support and monitoring by Agragami staff.

A group of 12 peer educators has been trained as trainers of peer educators - a resource for future training of peer educators for the RKSK program.

Under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme, the district health authorities plan to convert 70 health sub-centres of the district into “Health and Wellness Centres” (HWCs) staffed by Community Health Officers (CHOs). Nine HWCs have been made operational to date, and in six of them CHOs have been trained by Agragami and have begun adolescent counselling. The Parents' training module on adolescent issues was successfully tested out on a group of 13 parents in Banchauri village of Dumra block – participating parents said that the training had enabled them to understand and empathize better with their adolescent children.

In a significant achievement of phase XI, in 170 demonstration villages – ten in each of the 17 blocks of Sitamarhi - 2 peer educators from Dalit families from each village were selected and trained. A total of 340 peer educators reached out to 3,400 peers from their community with adolescent health information and referral to Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics.

Aragami staff also supported the roll-out of the newly launched School Health Program:

- In the training program for School Health and Wellness Ambassadors (selected teachers from each school) Agragami staff taught the sessions on adolescent sexual and reproduc-

tive health (ASRH).

- After the training, in 152 of the 978 government schools of Sitamarhi district, Agragami actually conducted the ASRH sessions to demonstrate to teachers how the sessions could be conducted, and to help them overcome their embarrassment and reluctance to conduct the ASRH sessions. From July 2023, teachers have begun conducting these sessions by themselves.
- Agragami staff are also providing help in ensuring that weekly iron and folic acid doses are being distributed to all school boys and girls aged ten years and older in all 978 government schools of the district.

Aragami's involvement in Tarunya is likely to end in June 2024 when EngenderHealth withdraws from Sitamarhi. The agenda for the next phase is to complete the transition to full implementation of RKSK by the district and block health authorities.



Health checkup during Adolescent Health Day

Conviction Leads to Wholehearted Involvement

Amrita Kumari is a general nurse midwife at the Sub Divisional Hospital, Belsand, in Sitamarhi district. In 2018, she was reassigned from running the hospital stores to running the Adolescent Friendly Health Clinic. For several reasons she avoided the transfer- she was unsure of what it was she would be expected to do, and doubtful about her own ability to talk to young people about the issues of adolescence.

In June 2019, when it became clear to her that the administration was serious about her reassignment, she decided to prepare herself for the new job. To learn about adolescent health issues, Amrita Kumari attended the training programs that were being held for adolescent peer educators. Attending these programs made her realise that adolescents were at a vulnerable stage of life in which they need information and counselling on several issues and that without such information and counselling they could make harmful choices. She decided that she would take up the new assignment and use the opportunity to help young people deal with the many issues that they were facing.

Amrita Kumari took wholehearted charge of the AHFC. For over a year, she received on-the-job supportive supervision from Agragami's team and she honed her skills as an adolescent counsellor. Her empathy, sincere attitude and understanding manner appealed to young people and the number of adolescents that visited the AHFC in Belsand incre-

ased significantly. She proactively reached out to the ASHAs and ANMs in Belsand block and asked them to refer adolescents to her clinic. Her clinic has become one of best run AFHC in Sitamarhi district in terms of the availability of the GNM, display of relevant communication materials and maximum client load.



The Uday Project NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh

Funding: The HCL Foundation

UDAY is HCL Foundation's integrated development project in NOIDA, UP. It aims to improve the lives of NOIDA's migrants through convergent action by a network of partner NGOs who address health care, environmental sanitation, child development and education, and training of young people for livelihoods. Agragami's contribution to this program is in the area of family planning. Its focus is on creating awareness of the life-changing effects of planned families- delaying childbearing till a woman is out of her teens, ensuring a healthy interval between two births, and achieving small families. Agragami promotes the use of modern contraceptive products and services, builds strong linkages with providers, and refers those who need products or services to them.

Phase I of the project started in June 2018 in just three locations, and in four and a half years the program has spread to 17 locations, working in low-income settlements with mostly migrant residents. From December 2021 to March 2023, the project reached 52,379 households (with a total population of 1,95,179).

Aragami's efforts have been effective in increasing contraceptive use to delay, space and limit child bearing-

- Overall use of modern methods of contraception, including the standard day method, has increased from 16.95% at baseline to 54.96% in March 2023.

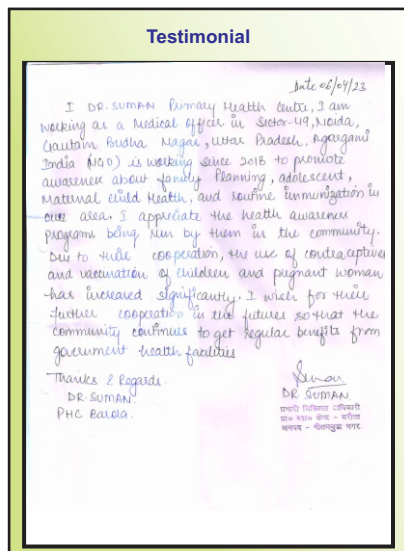
- The use of spacing contraception has increased from a mere 5.2% at baseline to 42.32% at endline. Clearly, couples have begun to use contraception earlier in their reproductive lives to delay and space childbearing, rather than later in life to just limit family size.
- Teenage pregnancies and births have reduced. The percentage of married adolescents who have experienced pregnancy or childbirth has reduced from 7% at baseline to 4% in March 2023.
- Birth intervals are increasing. The percentage of babies born less than 23 months after their elder sibling has reduced from 16.41% to 8.64%, while that of those born after an interval of 36 months or more has increased from 49.93% to 52.95%.
- Families have begun to have fewer children- the proportions of newborns of birth order 3 and over has reduced from 43.22% to 37.66%.



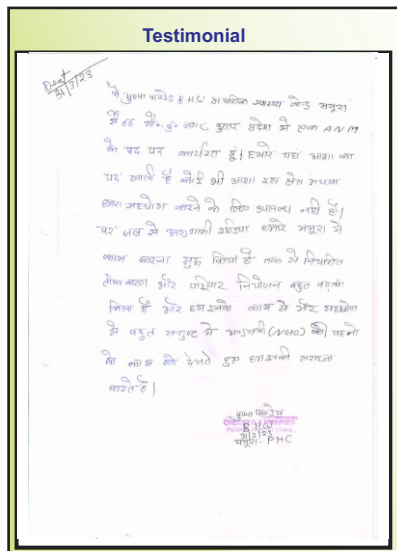
Excerpt from page 3 of Noida Darpan Times dated 25th Jan 2023

Aragami has worked extensively in the intervention areas, creating linkages between government facilities and the community, thereby facilitating greater utilization of contraceptive and immunization services provided by the government. The impact of the tireless work of our Family Planning Educators on the ground is visible in the increased number of footfalls in the PHCs and the UPHCs in our intervention areas.

The appreciation letters by the PHCs of Barola and Mamura, given below, attest to this fact.



Testimonial from Dr. Suman of the Public Health Center in Barola, NOIDA



Testimonial from Dr. Pushpa Pandey of the Public Health Center in Mamura, NOIDA

From December 2021, the scope of the Agragami Uday intervention has been expanded to include essential maternal and child health (MCH) inputs. Since the intervention was reaching every woman in the reproductive age group of 15-49 years with family planning education “at the doorstep”, it was relatively simple to add education on essential aspects of MCH such as early registration of pregnancy, antenatal and post-partum care for the mother, immediate and exclusive breast-feeding, new-born care and infant immunization. The project now also mobilises eligible beneficiaries for the immunization drives held by the government. The outcomes of the MCH inputs will be reported next year.



Changing Mindsets

Vijayveer lives in Mamura, Noida. He works as a driver for a building material supplier and has three children. He and his wife did not want more children. They sought the advice of an Agragami Family Planning Educator (FPE) who told the couple about the contraceptive options available to them. When they showed an interest in adopting a permanent method, both tubectomy and vasectomy were explained. The FPE also introduced Vijayveer to a beneficiary who had already undergone vasectomy. When Vijayveer realized that vasectomy was a simpler procedure than tubectomy, he made his choice. He underwent the procedure on 19 January 2023 at the PHC in Bistrakh, Noida. He is very happy and grateful to the Agragami FPEs for their counseling, guidance and support, and says he will try to convince other men to adopt vasectomy as a permanent method of contraception.

Vijayveer is an example for the community where the responsibility for contraception is largely perceived to be the woman's. Not only did he understand that both husband and wife are equally responsible for the family and for taking decisions related to it, he could look beyond the myths and misconceptions regarding vasectomy – that it reduces the sexual prowess of men and makes them physically weak. He realized the value of vasectomy as a simple, trouble free and permanent way of avoiding unwanted pregnancies and of ensuring a better future for his wife and children



Agragami India Family Planning Educator explaining the process of vasectomy to beneficiaries

Livelihoods

The Khushali Project, Bodhgaya, Bihar

Funding: Atragami unrestricted funds

The livelihoods project serves 200 poor families including those from marginalized communities- Dalit, Manjhi and other scheduled castes and tribes- in ten villages of Bodhgaya block, helping them to undertake home based activities that will supplement their incomes. While about 90% have land holdings of 1.5 bighas or less, 13% of the families are landless. The project commenced in 2017. Mushroom cultivation, kitchen gardening and goat and pig rearing have been the income supplementation activities undertaken by the beneficiaries. For these, training and technical support has been provided by Atragami.

Mushroom cultivation was introduced in 2017. After promoting both oyster and button mushrooms, the project found that unless beneficiaries are willing to invest in growing at least 25 bags of mushroom a season, the activity does not generate income proportionate to the time that Atragami staff have to invest in supporting each beneficiary. Unfortunately, none of our beneficiaries is able to invest the Rs.1625 required -at current prices- to buy 25 starter bags of mushroom. From 2022-2023 the project has had to discontinue support for mushroom cultivation.

Pig rearing is very profitable but because of the social stigma associated with it, only Dalit families rear pigs. Veterinary care and

routine immunization of pigs is not available through the government system and incidents of swine fever cause severe mortality, wiping out the investment made by pig rearers. Understandably, even Dalits are very reluctant to get into pig rearing. Of the 24 Dalit families amongst our 200 beneficiaries, only 8 reared pigs. An outbreak of African swine fever, a highly contagious viral disease of pigs, in April and May 2022, killed many pigs. Three of the eight families now refuse to get back into piggery. For the 5 families that continue to keep pigs, income in 2022-2023 has been much less than in the previous year. In 2021-2022, 7 out of 8 families earned more than Rs.10,000 in the year. This year only 2 out of 5 families earned more than Rs.12,000.

The project is working to encourage more Dalit families to take up pig rearing, explaining that immunization and clean rearing practices will prevent mortality, but as of now they are reluctant to take up this activity.



Goat rearing remains a steady generator of income and the landless benefit from it greatly. It receives significant government support in terms of schemes as well as veterinary services. During this year, 24% of the 97 families engaged in goat rearing earned more than Rs.12,000 from this activity.



The size of the patches surrounding beneficiaries' houses, suitable for kitchen gardening, is tiny and varied, ranging from 0.5 to 2 katthas. Therefore, earnings from kitchen gardening are small. Out of the 195 beneficiaries who cultivate kitchen gardens, only 8% earned more than Rs. 12,000 during the year from this activity.

The table below categorizes the 200 beneficiaries of the project by total income earned from all project activities during the three years from 2020 to 2023.

Absolute earnings (Rs.)	% of Beneficiaries		
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
≤5999	68.0	50.0	25.5
6000-11999	26.0	18.5	25.5
>12000	6.0	31.5	49.0

The percentage of beneficiaries who have earned more than Rs.12,000 a year from all activities combined has climbed from only 6% in 2020-2021, to 31.5% in 2021-2022 and to 49% in 2022-2023.

Plans are underway to increase income from kitchen gardening by encouraging kitchen gardeners to grow hybrid, high yielding papaya and drumstick trees. High quality seeds have been procured, and saplings will be sold at cost to willing beneficiaries. Training on soil preparation, planting, the use of organic fertilizers, and care of plants will also be provided. If all goes to plan, each papaya tree should yield a net income of Rs.4000 during its two-year life, and each drumstick plant Rs.1500 in the first 3 years. In a seven to ten-year life-time, hybrid drumstick trees could generate about Rs.10,000 in income from flower and fruit, besides providing miraculous nutrition for the family.

Over the 6 years of its life, Agragami's livelihoods project in Bodhgaya has kept close track of all Government schemes designed to help poor and marginalized communities. Its staff have informed beneficiaries of schemes announced, and helped them to apply for the same:

- 15 farmers were helped to register under the *Pradhan Mantri Kissan Samman Nidhi Scheme*¹
- 8 Dalit farmers were selected to participate in an experiment to promote the cultivation of sesame. All of them grew the crop successfully, motivating other farmers to take up sesame cultivation
- 4 out of the above 8 farmers have now been selected to participate in a government cultivation trial for growing ragi, a millet

District agricultural extension and veterinary services authorities now welcome the participation of Agragami's beneficiaries in their schemes for poor and marginalized families because they know that the close training, support and monitoring that Agragami staff will provide to beneficiaries will ensure positive outcomes.



¹All farmers who do not have government employment are eligible for assistance under the *Pradhan Mantri Kissan Samman Nidhi Scheme*.

Gaining Skills & Confidence

Thirty-five-year-old Pinki Devi lives in Shivrajpur village of Mocharim panchayat in Bodhgaya block. Her husband Raju Prasad is a farmer. Pinki Devi helps her husband to work on their small holding of one and a half bighas of land, but the income from farming is not sufficient for them and their five children. Eight years ago, Pinki Devi decided to supplement the family income by raising a couple of goats. She started with two kids and as they grew and multiplied, she would sell the new kids and keep the older goat, never going beyond four or five animals because she feared that she might lose them to disease and death. She would sell the kids while they were still too young, and her returns were sub-optimal. Last year, she attended Agragami's free training program for village women who rear goats. She learned the basics of rearing goats-feeding, shelter, common diseases, their prevention and treatment, essential deworming and immunization, mating and breeding to grow the herd, care and feeding of new-born kids, and how to optimize revenue from sale of goats- at what age to sell, and the need to weigh the animal to determine its selling price. She began to practice what she learned, the feeding of her goats improved and she introduced creep feed and salt lick. As her herd grew visibly healthier, her confidence grew. She began to grow her herd, and delayed selling till the time she could get a good price for her animals. At last count, Pinki Devi had ten goats and has learned to drive a hard bargain when she sells an animal!



Vocational Education

The Bodhgaya Hotel School

Bodhgaya is an extremely important spiritual destination for followers of the Buddhist religion. Gaya, too, has been a place of pilgrimage for Hindus since time immemorial.

Bihar is one of India's poorest states with a high rate of unemployment, due largely to the facts that job creation in the state is limited, and that the youth of the state lack skills which could make them employable. The hospitality industry is highly labour intensive – with the number of tourists increasing every year, there is always a huge demand for trained personnel. Agragami India identified this opportunity; it also realized that if the unskilled youth resource in Bihar was equipped with hospitality related skills, they would be able to find employment and move up the professional ladder in the industry.

Thus, The Bodhgaya Hotel School was born as a collaboration between Agragami India and two Swiss agencies - EHLsmile and IFPD. The aim of the project is for the hotel to generate revenues in the long term to enable the school to become economically sustainable. The school works to train local young people for the hospitality industry. The high quality of vocational training imparted by the school has resulted in our students performing very well in the hotels where they have been absorbed after graduation.

From August 2022, COVID affected tourist traffic in Bodhgaya began to show a slow recovery. By March 2023, COVID had waned and the hospitality industry has revived. People are traveling. Footfalls, even in Bodhgaya, have begun to return to pre-pandemic levels. The Bodhgaya Hotel School (TBHS) is being promoted through online travel agents – chiefly Booking.com and Makemytrip. At Booking.com, TBHS maintained a rating of more than 9 which shows the high satisfaction level of the guests of the hotel. Good on-line guest reviews have also resulted in direct bookings from people who search the net and then book directly with a hotel instead of going through an online travel agent.

In 2022-2023, TBHS made a special effort to attract small, low budget groups of Indian pilgrims, and largely because of these, achieved 24.56% occupancy during the year. In the financial year 2023-2024, our plans are to promote the hotel to budget travelers in the low season, and cater to higher paying guests in the high season - November to March.

After the fourth batch of students of the diploma course in hospitality services graduated in July 2022, no students were enrolled because we were unsure of whether TBHS would have sufficient guest occupancy to provide adequate practical training to students. Now that tourist footfalls are back to normal, we have made plans to admit the next batch of students in August 2023- for the academic year 2023-2024.

Education

Early Childhood Development Program

Madanpur Khader, Delhi

Funding: Agragami unrestricted funds

In its Early Childhood Development program in the low-income settlement of Madanpur Khader, Delhi, Agragami runs both pre-school and remedial education classes. Pre-school classes initiate 3 to 6 year olds, who have not yet started formal schooling, in the three Rs - reading, writing and arithmetic - using play-way methods. Remedial education classes help children in primary school to keep up with the syllabus being taught in school.

We started the year in April 2022 with 14 students in the two sections of remedial classes and 18 students in the two sections of pre-school classes. New students joined both the sections during the year, but many also dropped out. We ended the year in March 2023 with 21 students in the remedial education class and 20 students in the pre-school section. We anticipate more admissions in July 2023 when regular schools reopen and mothers and their children return to Madanpur Khader from their villages. These classes are currently running at only 50% of capacity.

Many factors lead to the turnover of children during the year - children from the pre-school class are admitted into regular school, families move out of Madanpur Khader either temporarily or permanently, and financial issues. Though our fee is highly subsidi-

zed, parents often take their children out of our school because they have found a “less expensive” alternative. Several of them bring their child back to our school a few months later because they see the difference between the child's learning in the new school and in our school. This is a validation of our methods of teaching and provides encouragement and motivation to the staff.



Validation

Three and half year old Anamika lives with her parents and three siblings in Madanpur Khadar, a low-income settlement in Delhi. Anamika's family is originally from Uttar Pradesh. She is the youngest of four children. She was admitted into our pre-school class in July 2022. Less than a year later, in April 2023, her mother, Suman, withdrew her from our pre-school and admitted her into the pre-nursery class of a regular school. However, within two months, Suman brought Anamika back to our school because she felt that the new school into which she had admitted Anamika did not give proper attention to its students. She said that after joining that school, Anamika was forgetting whatever she had learnt in Agragami's pre-school class. When Anamika had taken admission at the Agragami India pre-school class the first time, she did not know anything. But in the short span of 9 months at the center, she learnt enough to easily get admission into a regular school. She could answer questions confidently during the admission test. A lot of changes were evident in her – she learnt to eat on her own, became more active, learnt to answer properly, became interested in studies etc. But in just three months in the regular school not only was she forgetting the good habits she had learnt here, she was also forgetting the alphabets and numbers she had learnt so well here. Hence, her mother wanted her to rejoin the class at the center to ensure that her child got a good foundation in academics and also learnt social skills that would stand her in good stead in the future.



Human Resources

Details of Agragami Employees

Gross Monthly Salary And Benefits (in Rs.)	Men	Women	Total
<7,000	3	1	4
7,000-14,999	7	44	51
15,000 - 29,999	13	13	26
30,000 - 49,999	2	1	3
≥ 50,000	3		3
Total	28	59	87



The Education Project Team & students, Madanpur Khadar



Uday Project Team NOIDA



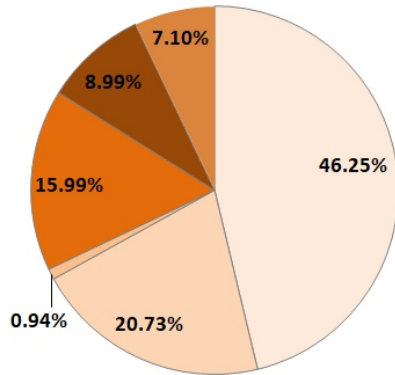
The Agragami team in Sitamarhi, Bihar



The Agragami team in Bodhgaya, Bihar

Financials

Sources of Funds: 2022-2023



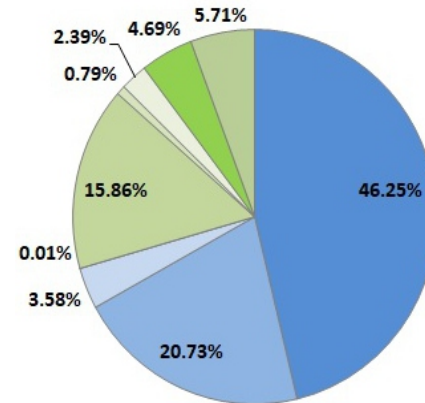
- Uday Family Planning Project, Noida - ₹122.10 lakhs
- Rashtriya Kishore - ₹53.18 lakhs
- Capacity Building for adolescent Health Program, Uttrakhand - ₹2.49 lakhs
- Vocational Education & Skill Development (TBHS) Revenue from Hotel Operations - ₹42.30 lakhs
- Other Income - ₹23.79 lakhs
- Unutilized Project Funds from Previous Year - ₹18.78 lakhs

Total ₹264.60 lakhs

Uses of Funds: 2022-2023

- Uday Family Planning Project, Noida - ₹122.37 lakhs
- Rashtriya Kishore - ₹54.85 lakhs
- COVID Immunization Project, NCR - ₹9.46 lakhs
- Capacity Building for adolescent Health Program, Uttrakhand - ₹0.02 lakhs
- Vocational Education & Skill Development (TBHS) - ₹41.96 lakhs
- Early Childhood Education Program - ₹2.10 lakhs
- Livelihoods & Sanitation - ₹6.31 lakhs
- Program Support & Building Maintenance - ₹12.40 lakhs
- Transferred to General Fund - ₹15.11 lakhs

Total ₹264.60 lakhs



Members of the Society

Mr. Shrikant Bhonsle
Dr. Bimal Charles, President
Dr. E.E. Daniel
Ms. Sreevally Dharmavaram, Treasurer
Dr. Nisha Gupta
Ms. Rekha Masilamani, Secretary
Mr. Sunil Nanda
Ms. Pooja Pal
Ms. Shubhangi Sawant, Vice President
Ms. Sita Shankar
Dr. Vijaya Srinivasan
Ms. Madhur Verma

Members of the Society elect an Executive Committee which serves as the Board of the organization. This is a volunteer Board and none of its members have received any remuneration from Agragami India, nor have they traveled abroad at the Society's expense.

Auditors

S.Sahoo & Co., 14 Palam Marg, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi – 110057.

Bankers

State Bank of India
4th Floor, New Delhi Main Branch, 11, Sansad Marg, New Delhi – 110001

Axis Bank
Mayur Vihar, Delhi; Boring Road, Patna; and Bodhgaya.

Donors

Our work this year has been made possible by the generous support of -

American India Foundation



HCL Foundation



EngenderHealth



International Foundation
for Population and Development



Azim Premji Foundation



Legal Status

Aragami India was registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860. It has FCRA registration and is tax exempt under both sections 12A and 80G of the Indian Income Tax Act. It is registered on Niti Ayog's NGO Darpan portal, and with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs for undertaking CSR activities. It is listed on the Ministry's CSR portal.





Aragami India

Aragami India's Offices:

Registered Office:

4, Community Shopping Centre (1st floor), Anupam Apartments, Saidullajab, New Delhi 110 068

Operating Office, Bihar:

Aragami India, The Bodhgaya Hotel School, Behind 80ft Lord Buddha Statue, Katorwa Road, Bodhgaya, Bihar-824231

Operating Office, NCR:

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