

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SCHOOL GOES OUTSIDE



WHAT DO **YOUNG**
PEOPLE WANT,
FROM SCHOOL TO
SUSTAINABLE
ENTERPRISE OF
HER **CHOICE?**

Becoming a **Green Enterprise Entrepreneur**
Starting-up to solve for **Climate Change**





Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 08 |
| Learning How to Design Think Finding a solution | 10 |
| Climate Change What is it? | 20 |
| Sustainability Circularity | 42 |
| Focus on Girls, Young Women She's telling her own story | 56 |
| To Marry or Not to Marry Does it fit into her entrepreneurial plans? | 88 |
| New Life Plan | 94 |



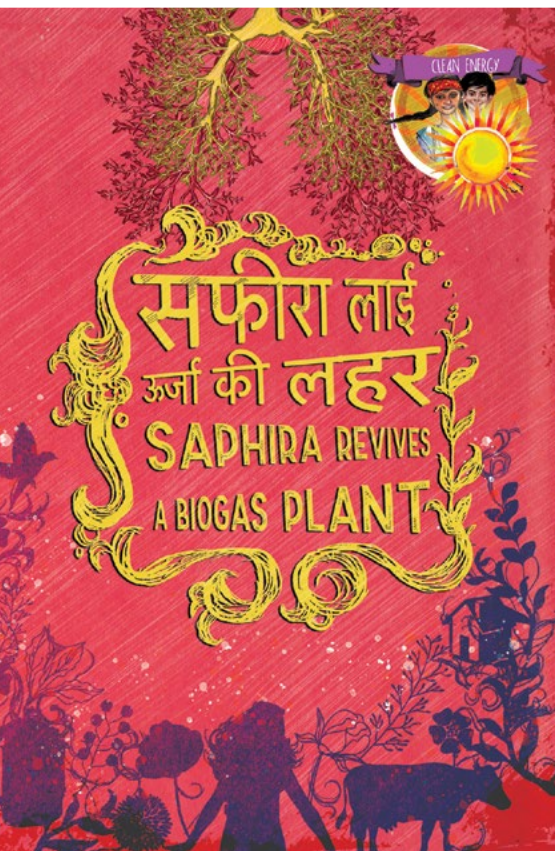
WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE WANT, HOPE
STARTING AN ENTERPRISE TO TAKE ON

We spoke to young people across 10 districts in Bihar

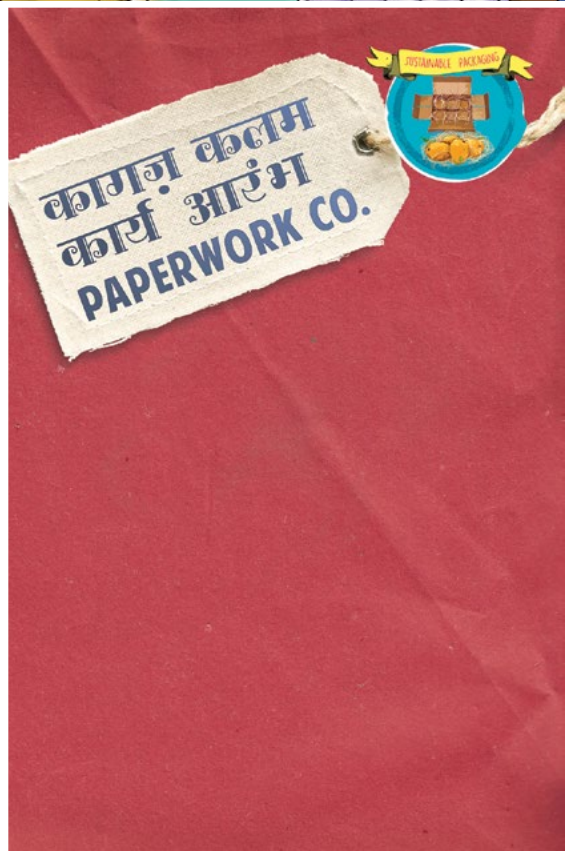
FOR, AND NEED, WHEN IT COMES TO
CLIMATE CHANGE IN RURAL BIHAR?

• We listened • We took notes • This is their story





“Graphic novels feature young women who start sustainable enterprises that solve Climate Change and Youth Unemployment.”



Get a Plan

is a large-scale, sustainable skills-at-school program, delivered in partnership with the Government of Bihar and IKEA Foundation to young people from grades 9 to 12 in 1,000 Government Secondary Schools. The original design was to create and deliver graphic novel adventures at school with linked research projects to be completed outside, in the field.

The pandemic closed schools which made our original plan impossible to deliver because while most of the world went online, most of the young people we were trying to reach were offline.

While we made a lot of T.V. that was watched by millions of young people, we still wanted to find a way to reach them directly. To this end, we had one more piece in our design that we hadn't tried yet: Green Enterprise Internships.

Working with sustainable entrepreneurs, we designed four internships for students in grade 9. What if, we reasoned, we opened up these internships across grades 9-12? What if we also made sure that all internships delivered by the entrepreneurs taking on climate change, solar engineers, garbage management leaders, and organic farmers, were delivered outside? Also, what if we made sure that outside, our teams were present daily with backpacks of graphic novel adventures for young people to choose from and an APP to track attendance and skills outcomes?

Our plan was simple: Go outside. Get outside of yourself. Change the plan. Deliver it to a school where young people are,

with sustainable entrepreneurs, graphic novels, and an APP. Outside, we reasoned, was pandemic safe. Outside is where climate change is happening right now, which means that you get first-hand experience of what the climate crisis means while learning about it. Outside is where sustainable entrepreneurs are trying to create change. Outside is where we have to teach and reach young people. Outside is where we, together, take on the biggest challenge of our lives: Climate Change. We traveled across Bihar to listen to their stories. We asked them questions before and after the program to reveal intriguing data and insights. If you are interested in what young people want to know about climate change, and the skills they'd like to learn to take it on, we suggest going outside to read it.

152,616 young people
93,913 girls, **58,703** boys
Learned outside this past year.



LEARNING HOW TO DESIGN THINK

Finding a solution

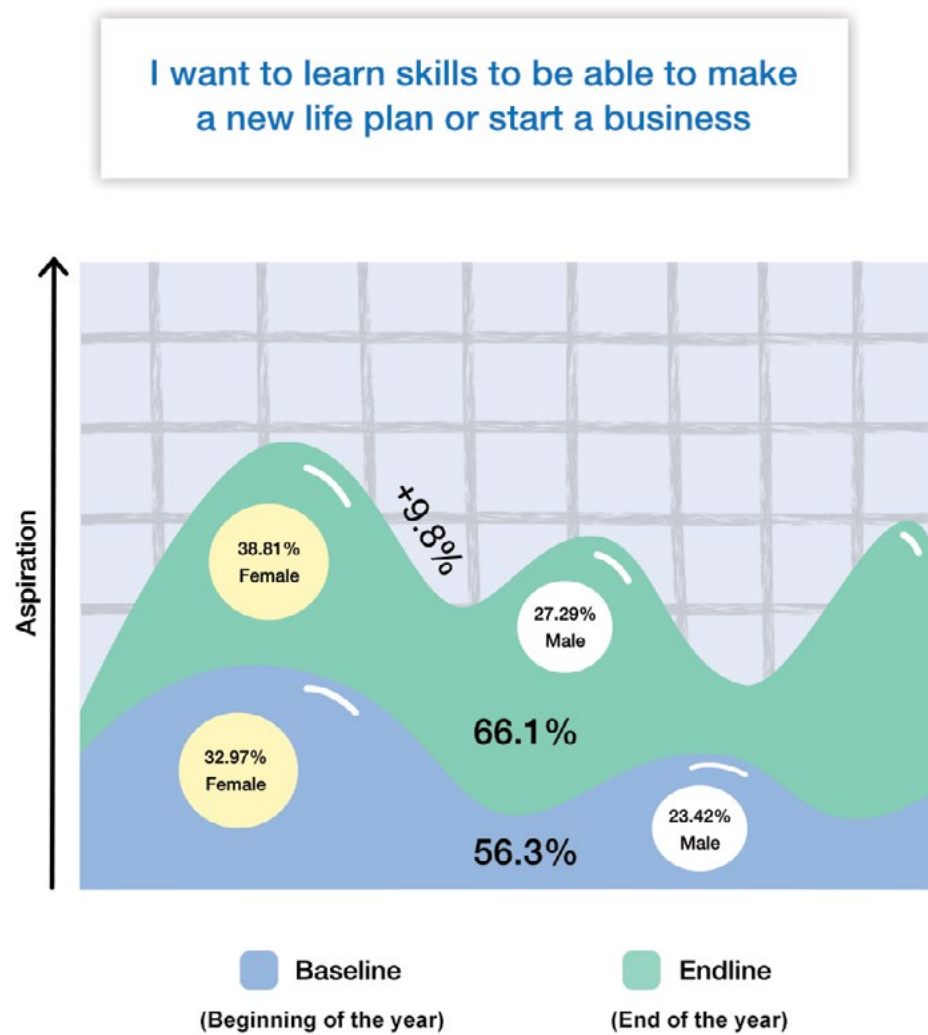


Much like the protagonists of Going to School's graphic novels, many young women and men in the green enterprise internships found themselves at a turning point. Schools were closed. Whatever plans they'd had for moving from school to equitable work or sustainable enterprise of their choice were on hold. The world had fundamentally changed. While they learned outside with sustainable entrepreneurs, while they learned hands-on, what it meant to start something new, mid-pandemic, they understood that perhaps at best you cannot only have a tolerance for ambiguity, but even design for it. Design to be surprised. Be dynamic enough to change your plans in a moment. Use your design-thinking skills and keep using them. In the graphic novel *Selfie, an Eco-Sanitary Pad Company*, when twins Ayesha and Alia realise they cannot skip school because they have their periods (a good reason they thought), they decide to start their own eco-sanitary pad company so no girl who had her period had to skip school ever again. They use a design-thinking process to set up their company. They conduct market research with the girls in their school, visit other eco-sanitary pad companies to learn more about the process and understand that it won't be enough to install a dispenser in the toilet, that the toilets also have to be clean, have running water. So, they design for the 'other' factor, the human element, the ambiguity that would have overturned their plan had they not completed their human-centered design.



'What would you like to learn or know more about in order to make a new life plan?' is the question we asked at baseline and endline. In the end, 66.1 percent of young people at the endline compared to 56.3 percent of young people at the baseline said 'I want to learn skills to be able to make a new life plan or start a business', showing a 9.8 percent increase in aspiration.

After getting a chance to get their hands dirty, outside, 47.6 percent of young people (27.5 percent girls, 20.1 percent boys) at the endline, said they have used design-thinking to solve problems at school, work, or at home, recording a 16.3 percent increase from the baseline.





Janvi Kumari, grade 10 student from Darbhanga, recounts the design-thinking steps she's learned.

“First, you must train in your chosen sector which you can do by getting work experience in an internship. Take lots of notes, as I did. Ask a lot of questions. Conduct a survey to understand your market. Find out where you can arrange adequate capital to start. Finally, with all your research, make a plan and show it to people. And yes, have good knowledge of that particular field. It also helps to know additional skills like I have learned, preparing in advance and how to be courageous in difficult situations.”



Janvi Kumari

Beekeeping entrepreneur Raj Kumar from Patna, who has been in the profession for nine years, ran five 10-day beekeeping internships, each with 25 to 35 students. He believes,

“Girls can easily start their own beekeeping business if they get support at home. There is a lot of profit in this sector, so it will help them become financially stable. The best part of this business is that it is eco-friendly and takes little time and effort to keep it functional. Although young people these days are desperate to find jobs, I think even people who have full-time jobs can start and maintain a beekeeping business. Apart from teaching students about the bees, how to identify, handle and manage them, and practical hard skills like the honey extraction process, I also taught students marketing and branding skills and soft skills like patience and observation, skills every entrepreneur must possess.”



Raj Kumar



“You have to give 100 percent to build your career in any sector. Do not get bogged down by time-wasting distractions. Focus on your end goal. Put on your design thinking cap. Research and know your market in-depth, make a note of the different government subsidies available. If you understand what you need to do, it is possible to change your life.”

Prachi Priya, Grade 12, Purnia



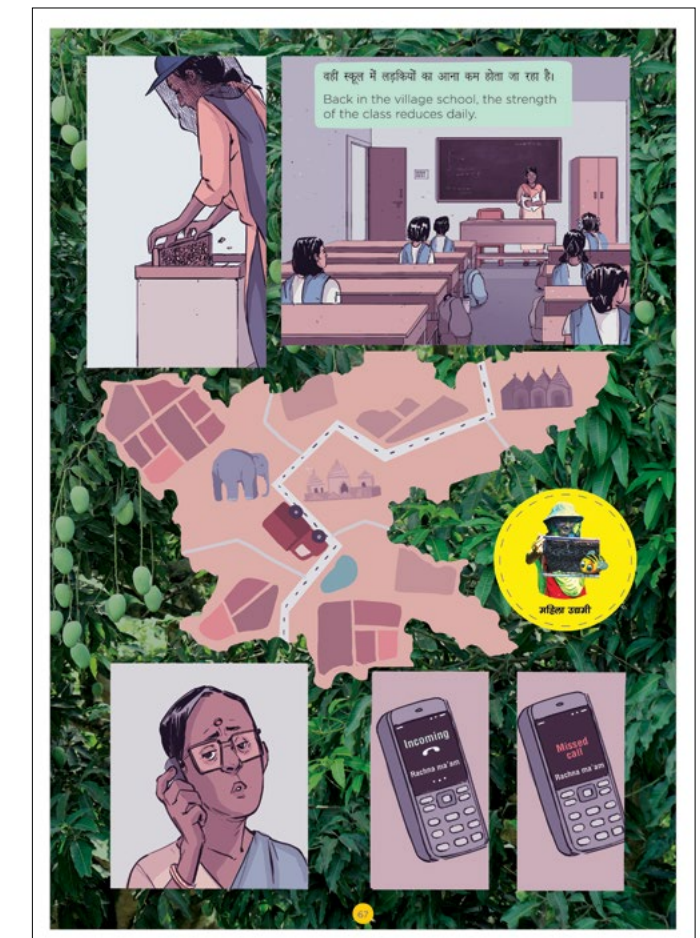
CLIMATE CHANGE

What is it?



In *The Land of Love and Honey*, protagonist Jyoti wants to do anything instead of getting married. She discovers an old newspaper article about a collective of women that used to run a honey company and goes back in time. Later, she finds herself in the present, building a pure honey company once again, this time through sustainable branding and an online marketplace, ensuring the honey is pure and creating jobs for young women. This story motivated Sneha and Neha Suman, two sisters studying in grade 12 in Patna.

"We started our beekeeping business after reading the graphic novel *The Land of Love and Honey*. Jyoti inspired us to take up the beekeeping green enterprise internship and start our own bee farm. Jyoti learned skills to help her start her own business. The skills we learned during the internship that we use now are making a plan, taking a lot of notes, and risk management."



What causes Climate Change?

When we asked young people in Bihar this question at the start of the year, we were sure that many of them had experienced and/or seen climate change around them in some form, without knowing what it was called. What we learned was that many young people confused climate change with seasonal weather changes. For example, one of the answers we received was that 'it rains sometimes, then it is very hot.' Many had not even heard of the term climate change, not even the Hindi term, जलवायु परिवर्तन। **Get a Plan's** graphic novels feature young women protagonists who become entrepreneurs starting sustainable enterprises that solve two challenges: Climate Change and Youth Unemployment. In the series of adventures that young people read outside, provided to them by Going to School teams with giant backpacks, *The Land of Love and Honey*, *The Last Show*, and *The Butterfly Effect* directly took on climate change.



"I am very happy that both my daughters have learnt so much about beekeeping and have started their business, even though it is still on a small scale. They have both become quite confident, it feels good to see them come into their own like this. I want my girls to stand on their own two feet and be independent and teach other women too."

Seema Devi, Sneha and Neha Suman's Mother, Patna

Anamika Kumari



In *The Butterfly Effect*, Jayamitra, the protagonist, learns how to run an organic nursery in an internship. She then sets up a small nursery at home. Her nursery thrives and grows like a wild jungle. Her plants are so green that the butterflies begin to visit, one by one, and then a swarm. Following the trail of butterflies, everyone in the community comes to visit Jayamitra's nursery and begins to understand the power of organic farming. Though a small step in addressing the big challenge of climate change, the nursery shows young people and the community the impact of tangible and doable collective action on a local level and how small changes are big.

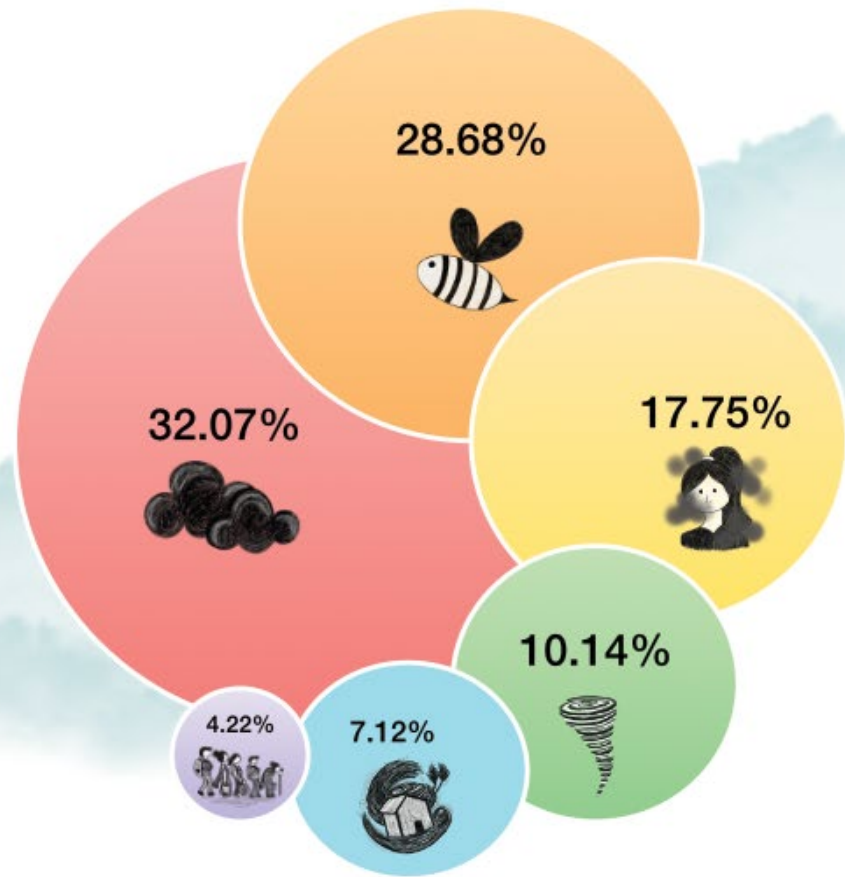
"I chose an organic nursery as my green

enterprise internship because I believe, to stop climate change, we have to move from chemical farming to organic farming. On this internship, we learned about making organic fertilisers. I am thinking of starting a business in organic farming after I finish school."

says Anamika Kumari, grade 10 student studying in Darbhanga.



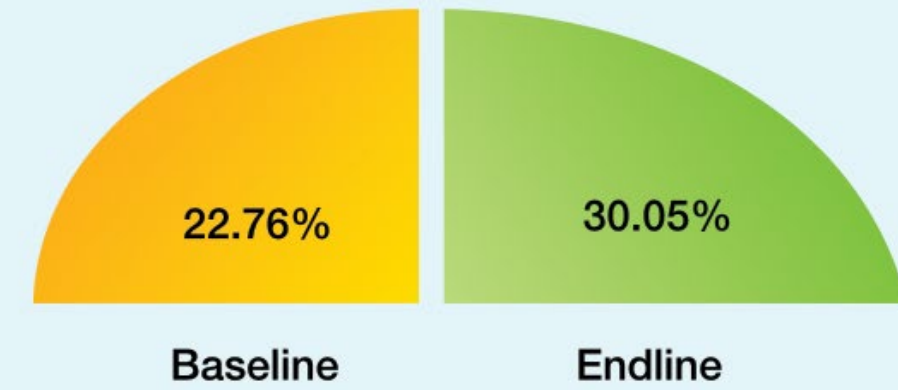
What effects of climate change do you see around you?



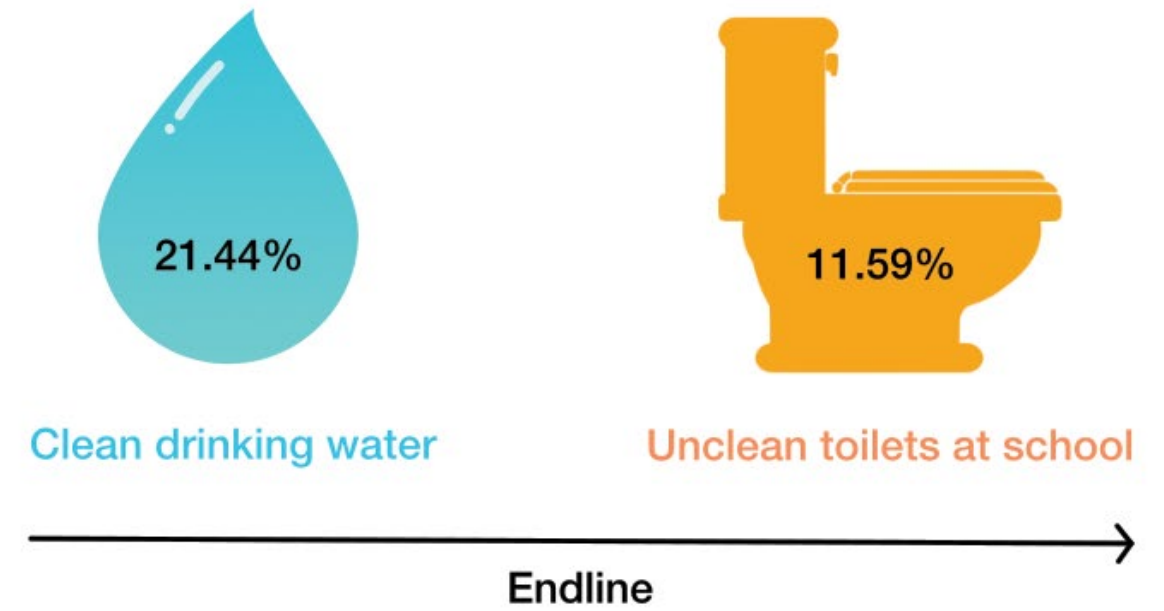
- Irregular weather
- Bees have disappeared
- Air pollution
- Cyclones
- Floods
- Migration (everyone is leaving for the city)

What things do you see around you that bother you?

Climate change is everywhere.



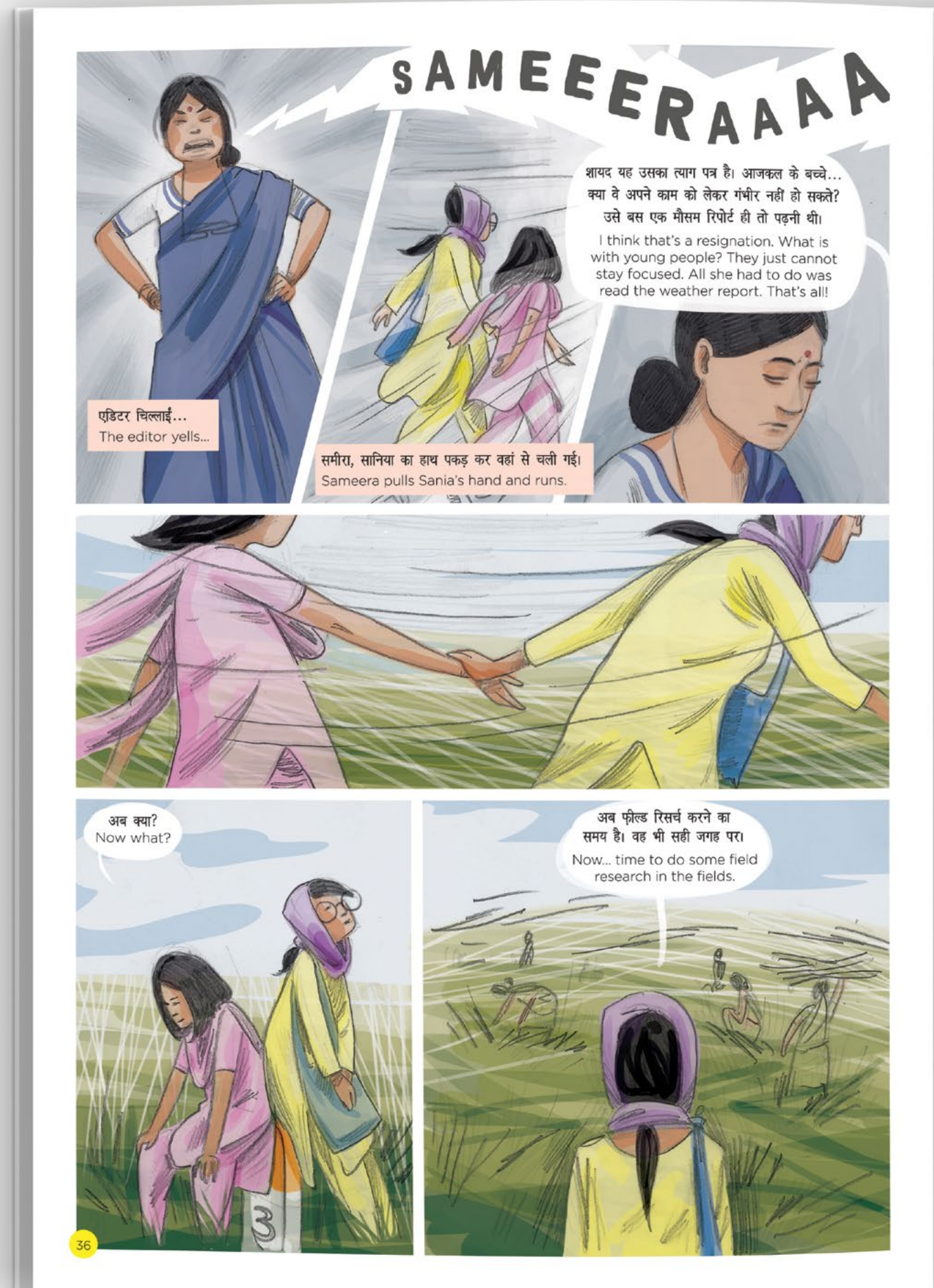
What things would you like to change?





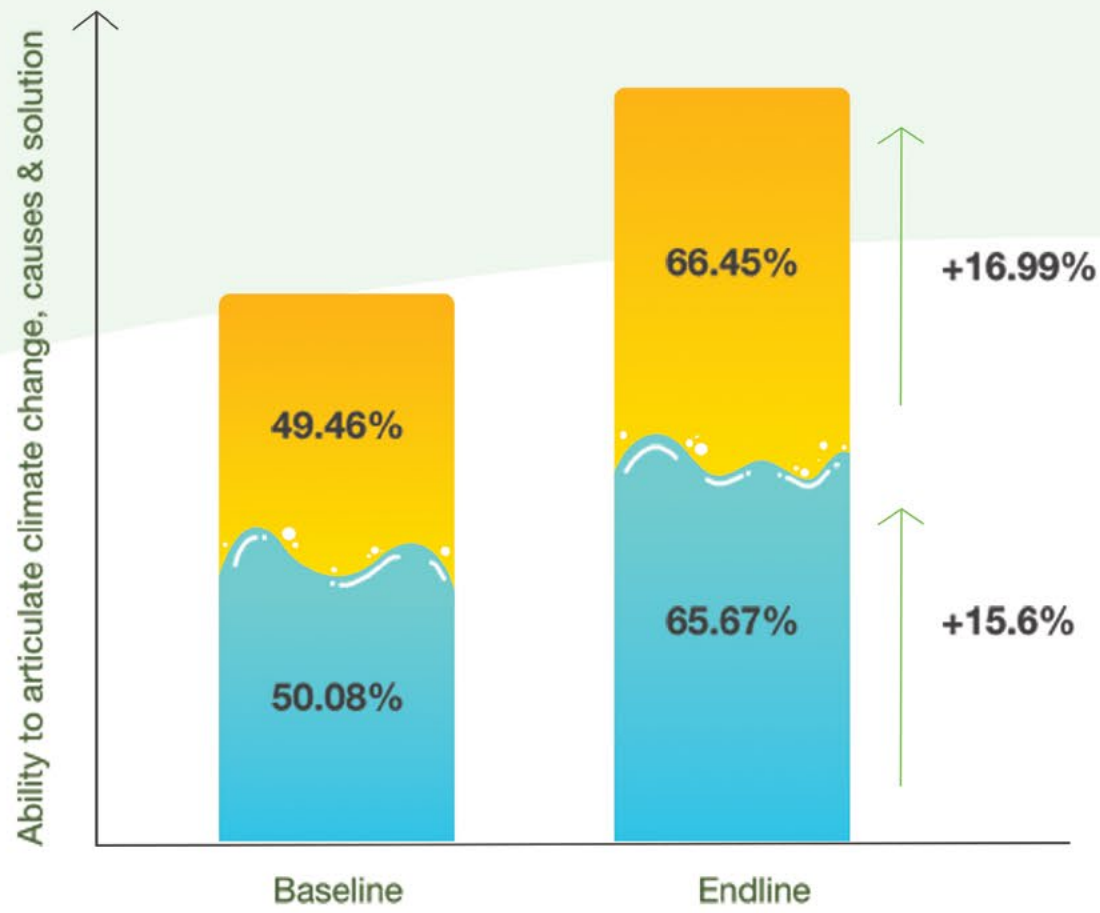
Saurabh Kirti

In *The Last Show*, Sameera and Sania's father is devastated that his small farm has failed. His depression has overtaken him. He stands in their barren field under the full moon. Sameera is interning at a local TV news station and is researching climate change. Meanwhile, Sania thinks the answer is just a field away, with their reclusive aunt, a retired Bollywood star who has countless dogs and cats and goats that she loves. They try to convince her to do one last show about how a community can farm organically together as they assume that their father will come to see his sister perform for the last time. Encouraged by the story to experience sustainability first-hand, grade 12 student from Gaya district, Saurabh Kirti completed a 10-day internship on an organic mushroom farm. "Along with learning how to grow mushrooms, I learned how to work in a team, respect everyone's opinion and share ideas. I realised that I regularly witness the effects of climate change, unseasonal rains, extreme temperatures, and floods. We all need to move to organic farming and also ensure that the vehicles we use do not pollute."

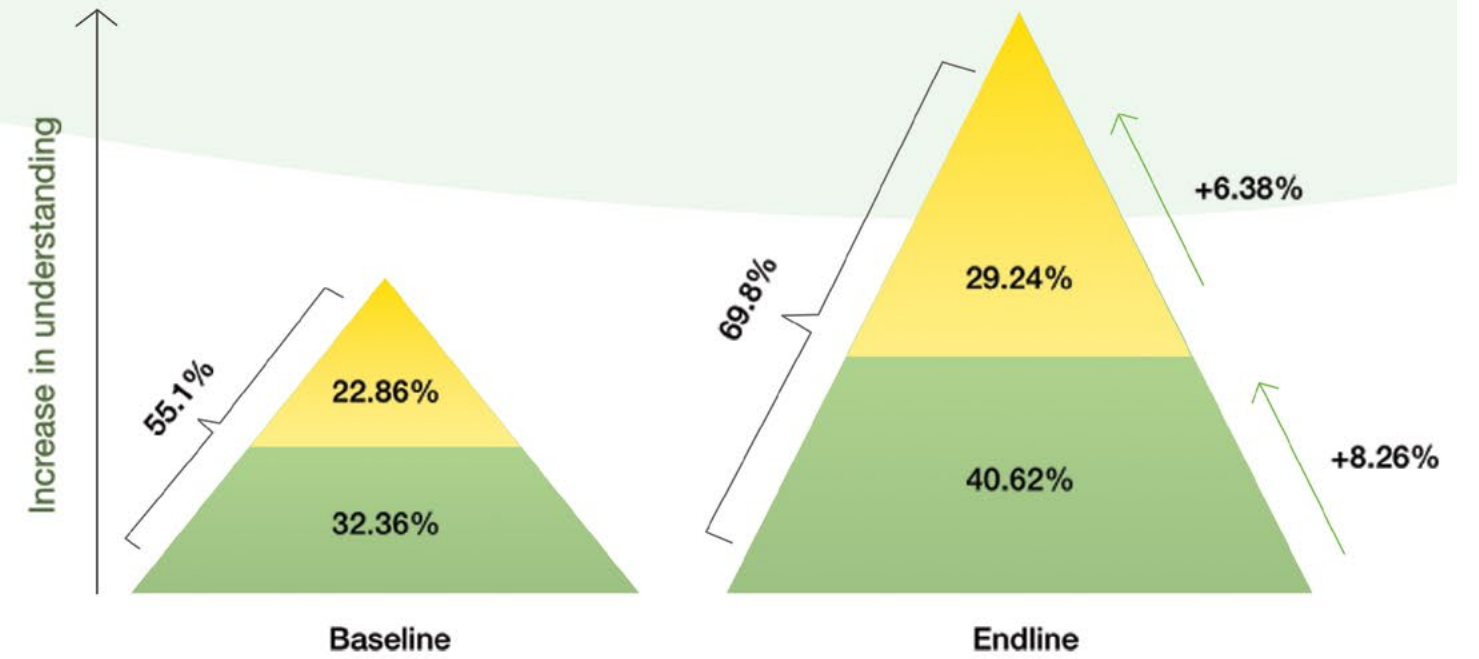


Girls
Boys

By the end of the year, we witnessed an increase from zero to climate change hero.



What causes climate change?
Human activity



Girls
Boys

“I did an internship in vermicomposting. I want to get more such opportunities again. I want to encourage more girls to take up internships because it is very beneficial for us. It builds confidence.”



Khushi Kumari, Grade 9, Patna



“I learnt that we should not use factory-made chemical fertilisers on our farms. We must not use any products that have a negative effect on our health. I learnt about the importance of making your own organic compost at home and using only this. This way, we will help the soil recover and also take care of our health.”

Ankit Kumar, Grade 11, Jehanabad

प्रयोगशाला कक्ष



'What do you think could **unpredictably** change your plans?'

'Floods', which saw a 5.5 percent increase in selection by young people at the end of the year and 'The effect of climate change', which saw a 4.71 percent increase. Young people also said the biggest threat to India's agricultural growth are erratic rainfall, heat waves, and dry spells.

"Climate change is real."

says grade 9 student from Kishanganj, Tulsi Kumari.

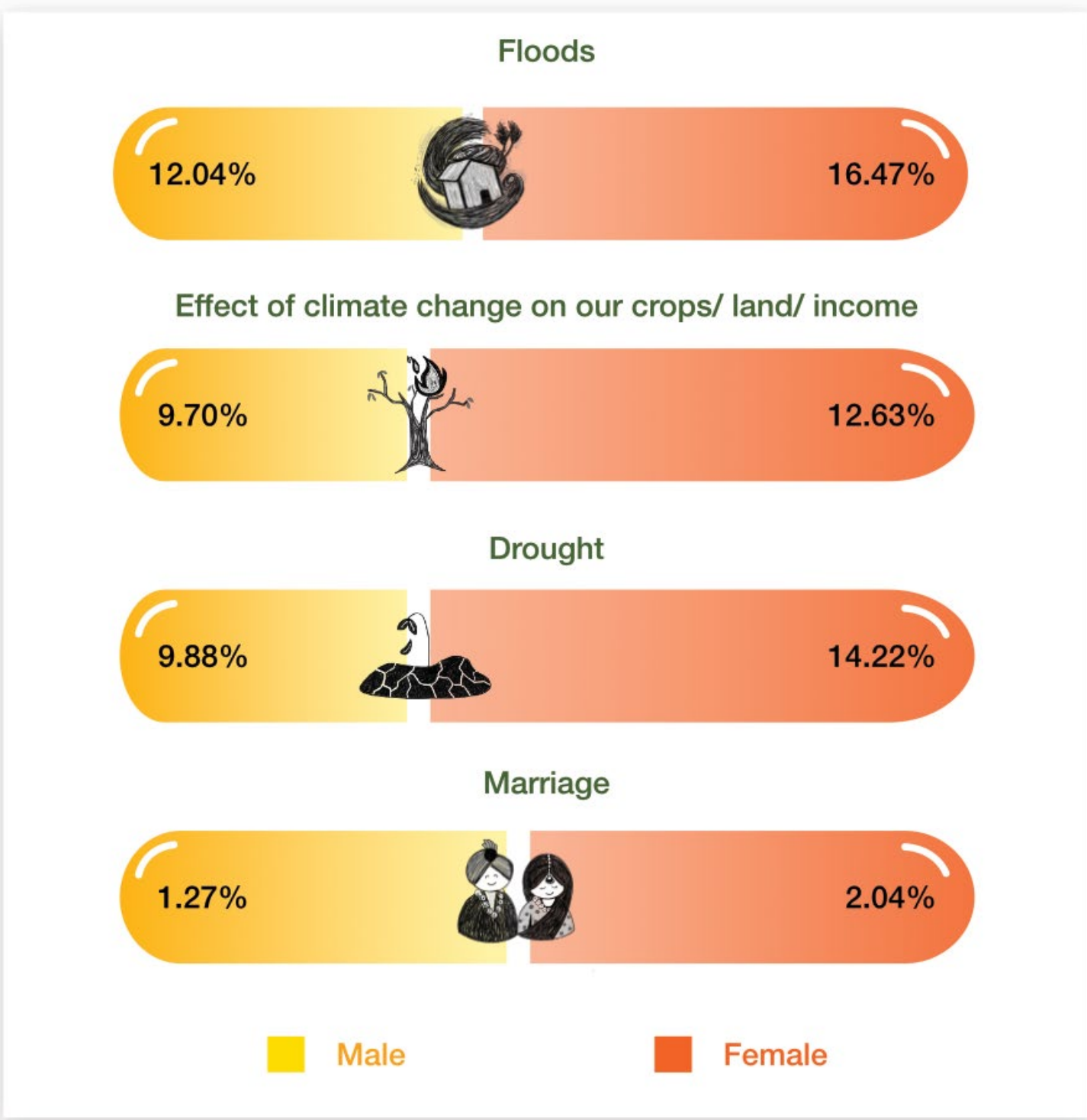
"If we end deforestation and stop using plastic, we can help protect the environment. I completed my green enterprise internship in sustainable products, where I learned how to make and sell sustainable products which do not harm the environment. Don't use plastic. Instead, pursue a business idea that not only solves a sustainability challenge for everyone where you live but also creates employment opportunities for local people,"

she adds.

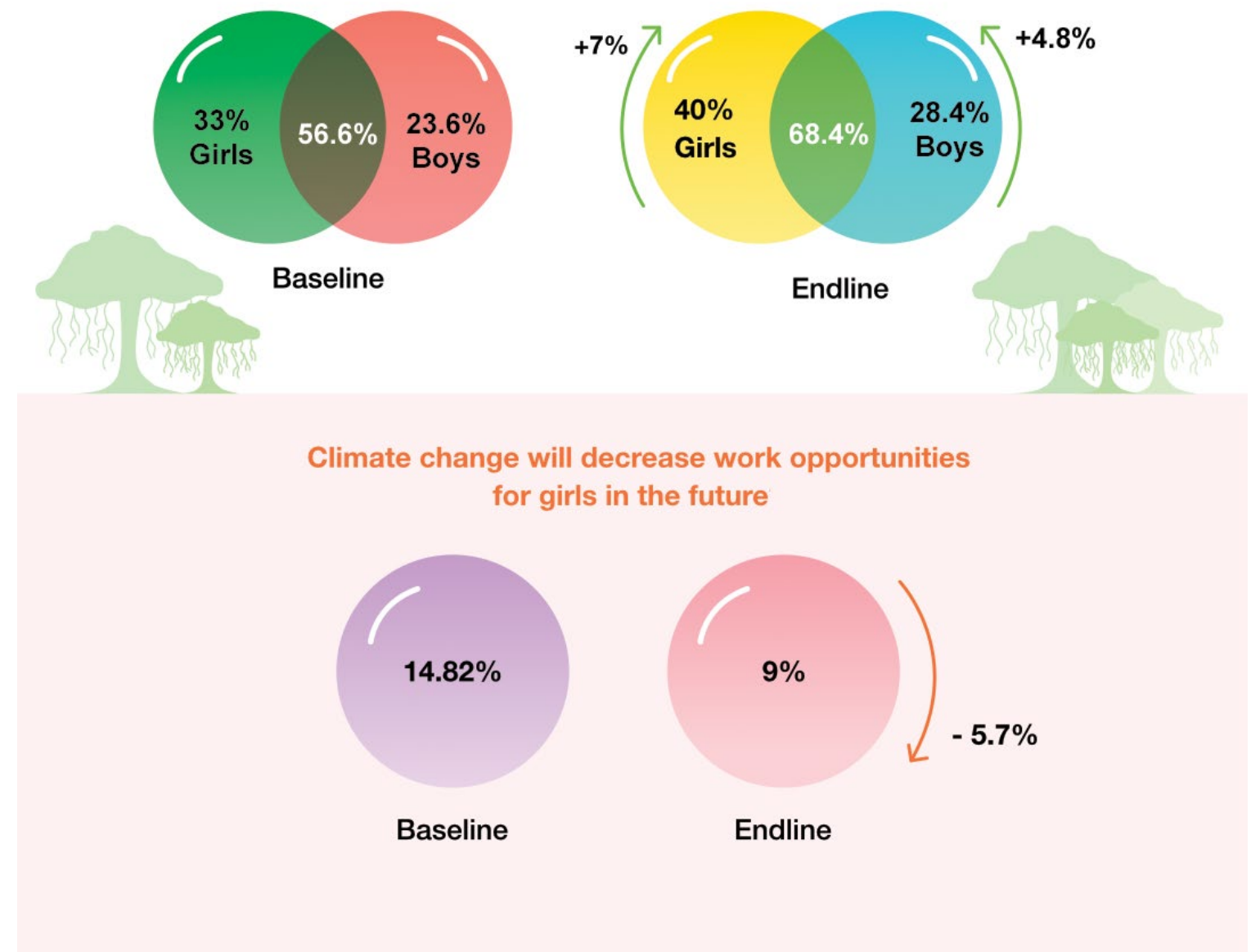


Tulsi Kumari

What do you think could unpredictably change your plans?



Will climate change increase or decrease work opportunities for girls in the future?





SUSTAINABILITY

Circularity

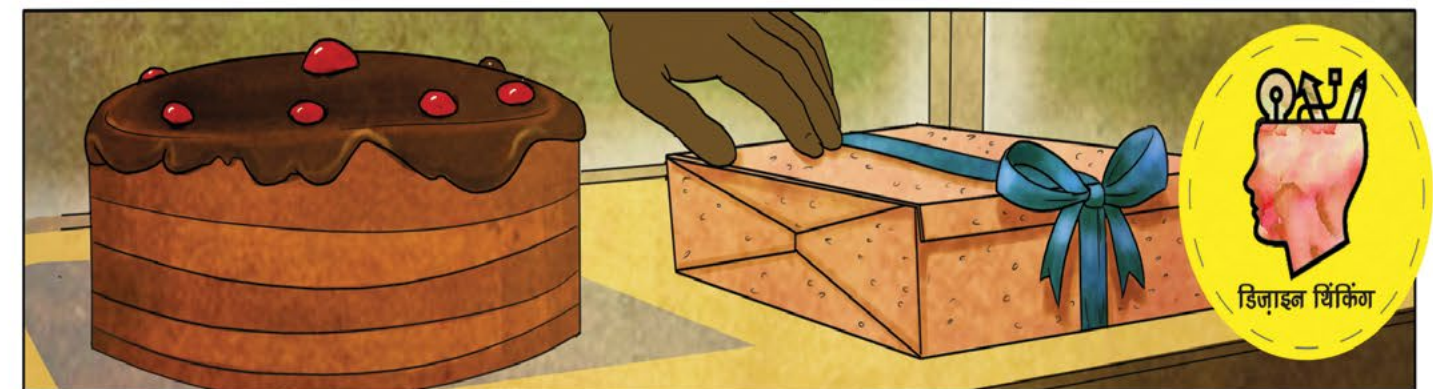
The challenge of talking about a concept with young people for which there are no exact words in Hindi

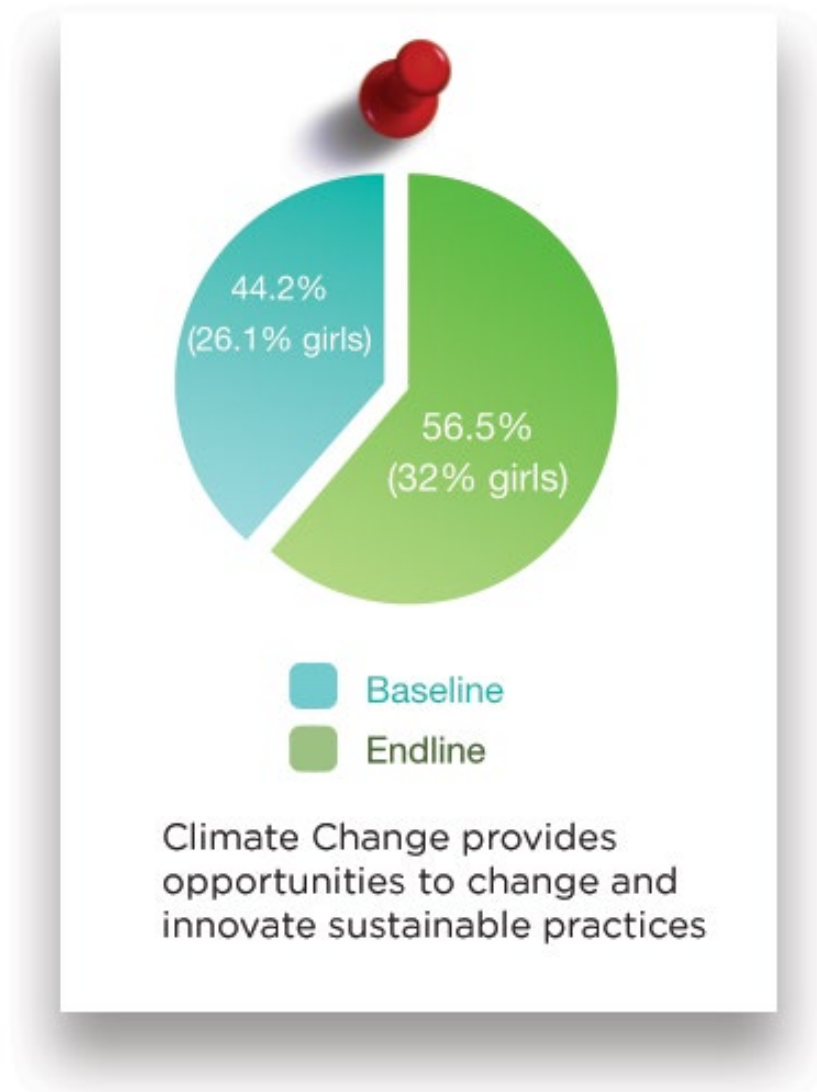
It's not easy to talk about climate change in Hindi with young people. In English, it has a firm shape, a definition, even if that definition expands and contracts, debatably amorphous - we are now in the Climate Crisis. What exactly do we want to talk about, what do we mean, when we ask young people about climate change in rural

Bihar? Global warming (that dated phrase), pollution, plastic, 'say no to plastic', no plastic bags. Stock phrases whose exact meaning of what I, as a young person should do about, escapes us all. Phrases used in English while speaking Hindi. Try 'sustainability.' Next to impossible to achieve, almost as difficult to explain. Sustainable + enterprise. Hard. Try explaining an organic vegetable delivery service where leafy greens come wrapped in plastic. We took the 'sustainable' approach on communicating about the climate crisis with young people. We decided it was everything. Everything was interconnected. We are

all part of the cycle of 'everything'. It's up to us, no rather, you. You go first, make different choices, design different solutions. And while it is just you to begin with, in the larger aspirational cycle of starting a sustainable enterprise, if you include enough people, and make your cyclical enterprise just wide enough, you'll start to change things sustainably. You'll no longer be alone because you'll be impacting a lot of people. You'll make a grab at the big one: Climate Change. We argue, positively, you can begin anywhere. Take a look at traditional art for instance. Madhubani painting, from Madhubani, Bihar, using organic colours; paintings made by women were originally about women in new leadership roles, entrepreneurs protecting the

environment. Sounds like the heroes we need for the time we're in, an ancient, now modern story of sustainability and Climate Action with women in new roles. In the graphic novel, *The Golden Rule*, Zeenat, Kavita and their friends paint trees with Madhubani art to stop the municipality from cutting them down. With a small taste of success, they decide to try some more actions - they clean up the ponds where they live. They notice the garbage they collect is plastic and packaging materials. Which gives them an idea: start a sustainable packaging company, designed with Madhubani art, is organic, biodegradable, replaces plastic and creates a lot of jobs for women.

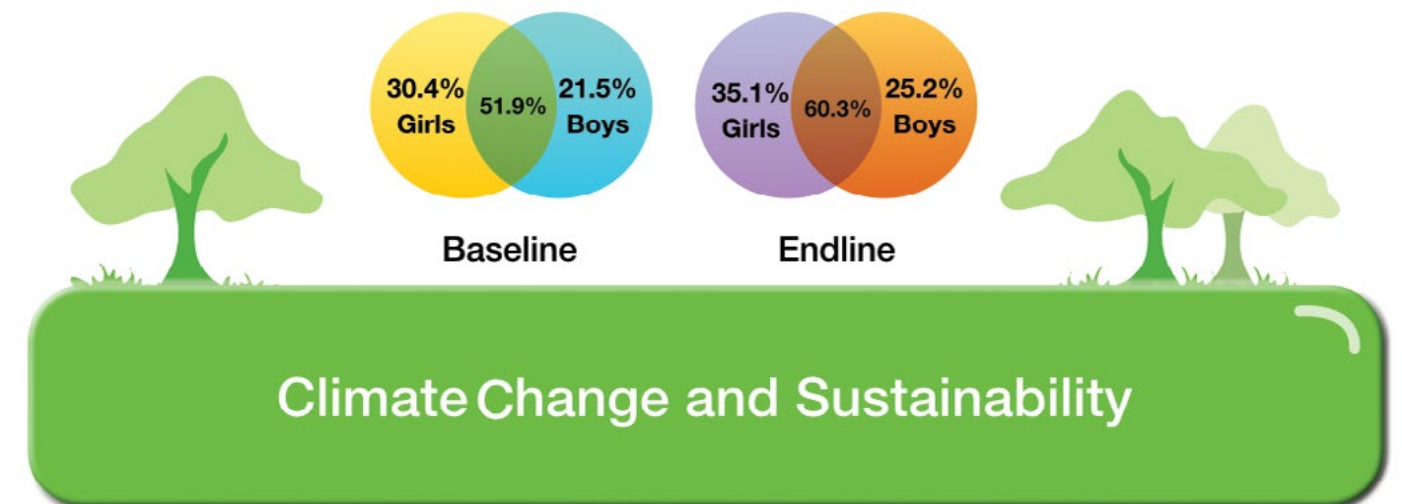




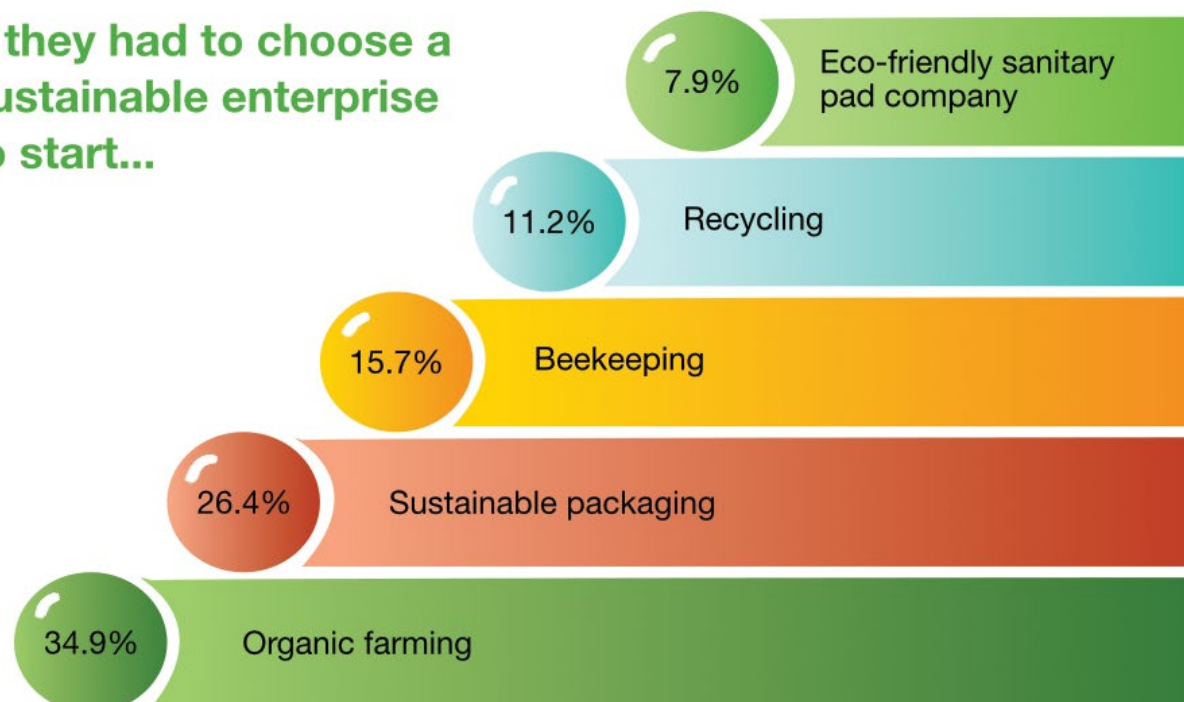
Sustainability, Technology, and Climate Change are becoming buzzwords for young women in Bihar. And, like the young heroes of the graphic novels, they're exchanging ideas on how they can keep their ponds clean. 57.91 percent girls said they want to get work experience or learn skills doing an internship with a green enterprise.

Girls also showed an increased understanding of sustainability processes. For example, 37 percent girls at the endline compared to 27 percent at the baseline, showing a 10 percent increase, said that they understood that organic waste is the appropriate ingredient for biomass fuel.

The top component students say they will include when writing a business plan for a garbage recycling business



If they had to choose a sustainable enterprise to start...



The other two components they will include are market research and a one year business cashflow



SUSTAINABILITY

“I believe that the only way to overcome the plastic problem is to ban all new plastic production. We need to re-use the plastic we have at home and explore plastic alternatives like recycled, tree-free paper or bamboo.”
says Muskaan Kumari, grade 9 student from Patna.



Muskaan Kumari



“We’re cutting down too many trees, especially for firewood. We have to stop it and instead use other means of cooking. We need to plant more trees and each of us living near the trees must be responsible for its maintenance,” emphasises Aryan Kumar.

Savita Kumari, grade 9 student from Darbhanga, says,

“The recycling internship I did helped me realise that to save our environment, we must stop using plastic. I learnt to make pen stands, paper bags, and other sustainable products using recycled material.”



Savita Kumari



Chitranjan Kumar, a beekeeping entrepreneur from Gaya, has eight years of experience in the business. He ran a 10-day beekeeping internship with 40 students and taught them public speaking and entrepreneurial skills, along with beekeeping skills.

“Beekeeping is a practice that young people can easily take up as a lucrative career in sustainability. I know of many others in this field who own small bee farms and have managed to make an annual profit of four to five lakh rupees. This shows how fruitful sustainable skills can be. You can achieve plenty of success in this field and I urge more youth to take up beekeeping.”

Chitranjan Kumar

"If you really want girls to achieve, study, start their own businesses, then you have to actually support us. I want to let every girl know, whether she is a teenager, a child or a widow, that if she really wants to do something, there is nothing to be afraid of. All it takes is courage. If I can do it, you can do it. Don't people always say, 'God helps those who help themselves?'"

Nysha, Grade 10, Darbhanga



FOCUS ON GIRLS, YOUNG WOMEN

She's telling her own story



If I was attending school and studying in the classroom, I would have fared better.”

says Diya Kumari, grade 9 student from Kishanganj.

Get a Plan is designed for girls. We’ve always worked to put girls at the centre of their own stories. In our stories, they are start-up problem-solving entrepreneurs.

Graphic novels feature many a young woman hero-protagonist, identifying problems that affect many people where she lives. Designing a solution and leading a team, she starts a sustainable enterprise to solve for Climate Change, creates jobs and solves the problem for a lot of people.

Our stories show girls and young women in pioneering, enterprising, leadership positions. Green enterprise internships led by young women gave girls and boys a chance to see women entrepreneurs in action in new sectors: solar, biogas, sustainable packaging, organic farming, beekeeping, and recycling.

It’s been reported that 10 million adolescent girls in India dropped out of school because of the pandemic.

As schools re-open and as we complete this report, most of them are not coming back. Girls were left out even before the pandemic. Now, as we try to get them back to school, it’s harder than ever.

“The lockdown severely affected my studies. As it is, girls face a lot of challenges if they want to study – we get little to no support from our families and people in the village misunderstand girls. I was unable to cope with online education.

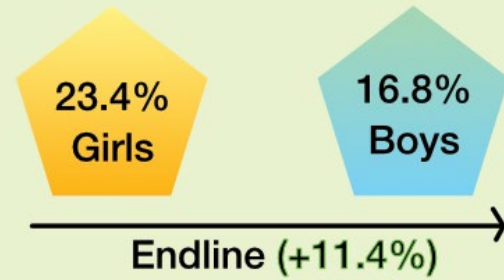
Diya Kumari



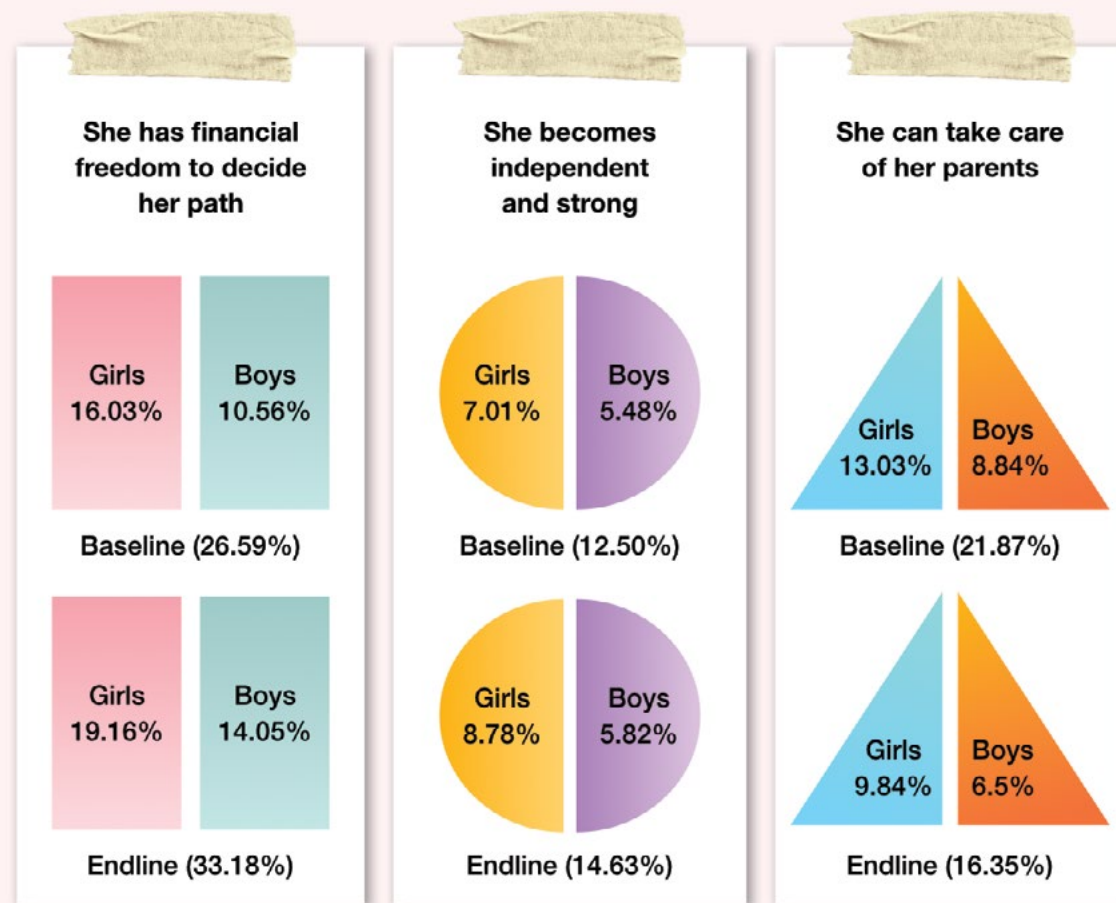
“Diya did a solar installation internship. I have seen a lot of changes in her personality and behaviour which is good. She also seems to have gained knowledge about solar installation which I know nothing about. I am happy that she is trying to do something with her life. Girls should also think of doing some work.”

Upendra Prasad Singh, Diya Kumari's Grandfather, Kishanganj

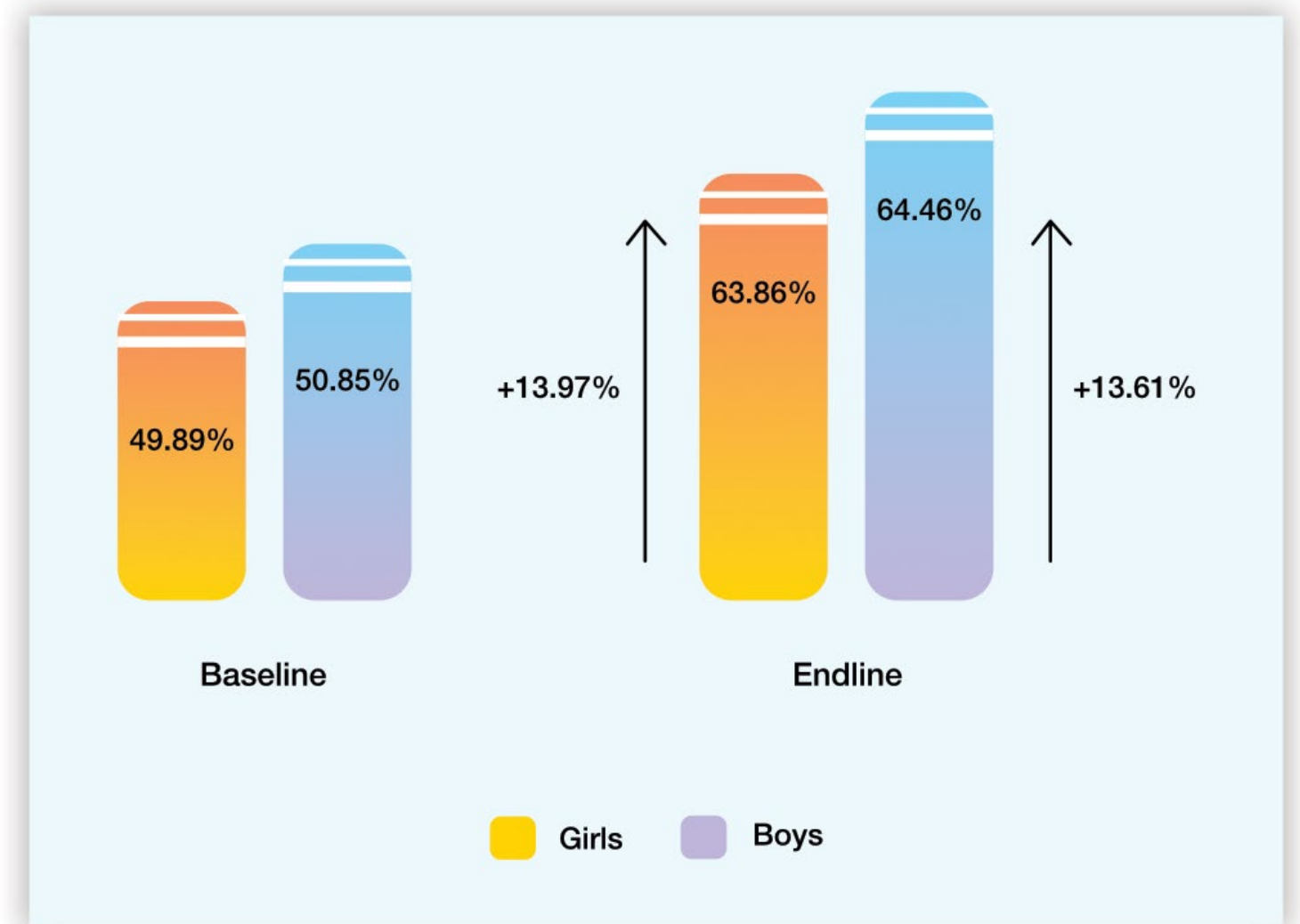
The most important thing that needs to change to enable more young women to work outside of their home is **safety for women**.



Why should a young woman choose to work after she completes school?



Skills to negotiate barriers to women's labour force participation

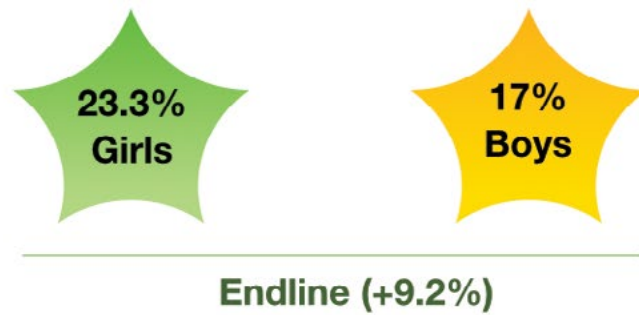


Get a Plan has a lot of **Goals**

One of them is to ensure girls' retention in school to help her make the transition from school to equitable work or sustainable enterprise of her choice. 33.9 percent of girls at the endline compared to 26.7 percent of girls at the baseline said they plan to get work or do an internship in the next 12 months.

School to Work or **Enterprise Transition**

At the end of the year, the percentage of girls who recorded an improvement in skills to negotiate barriers to women's labour force participation increased by 13.97 percent, rising from 49.89 percent at the baseline to 63.86 percent at the endline. Boys refused to be left behind, showing an improvement of 13.61 percent, going from 50.85 percent at the baseline to 64.46 percent at the endline.

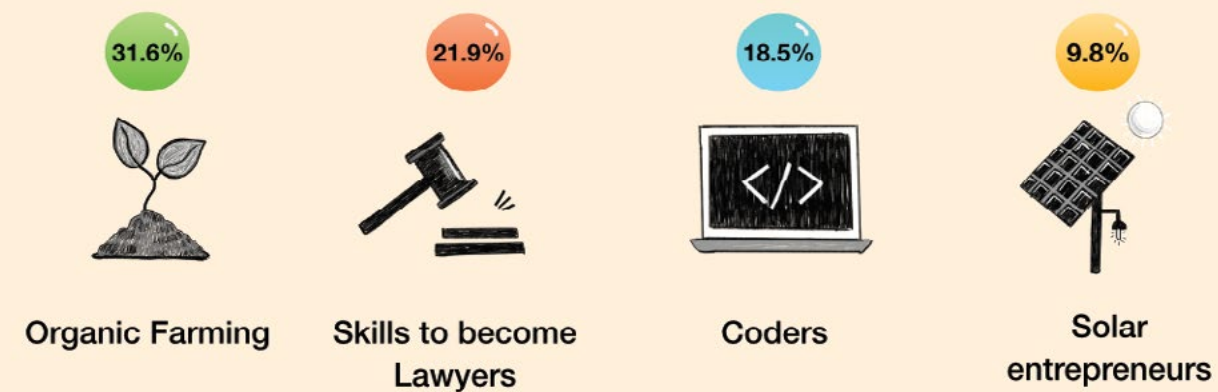


They would like to become problem-solving entrepreneurs who take on climate change and create jobs for a lot of people when asked what risk they would take on to solve a problem.

They would like to explore the sustainable enterprises they can join to learn new skills and decide if they want to pursue this.

They would research or train themselves in a particular sector or field to either intern to learn more and apply for a job or become a problem-solving entrepreneur. "Whatever it is, I will do it myself. I won't rely on a course or other people for my career and future. I'll make it," they said.

What would they self-teach or train for?



Shweta Kumari

But risk, they say, is nothing but another way to learn how to change the world.

For hands-on work experience and to learn how a renewable energy business is run, the green enterprise internships became the go-to place for many months for young women (and men!).

"Only if girls move outside can we learn something new. That is why girls like me are lucky to be able to come to these green enterprise internships. We get the opportunity to fulfill our dreams."

points out Shweta Kumari, grade 9 student from Gaya.

'Which jobs are women unable to do that can be done by men?'

"Women can do any job that a man can," say young people in rural India. While 32.5 percent of young people (19.1 percent girls, 13.4 percent boys) at the baseline had this opinion, it increased to 37.6 percent (22 percent girls, 15.5 percent boys) at the endline.

Sapna Kumari Jha, grade 11 student from Kishanganj who completed a green enterprise internship in an organic nursery, says that for her, stability and security in life are synonymous with her career ambitions.

"Security and stability are odd things. When I complete grade 12, I will start my own business and when it's going well, it's profitable, only then will I feel that I am stable in life. After I complete grade 12, I want to start my own business, perhaps I'll even open an organic nursery where I'll create jobs for other people to work with me."

“Ever since Aryan started attending the Get a Plan program, his understanding of climate change and clean energy has increased. He is also more curious and is constantly researching or enquiring about things. There are many children like Aryan Kumar, especially girls, who are from the Seemanchal region who do not have access to this kind of knowledge about global warming or climate change, which is a very important topic today. Children are not aware of it and how they can make their career in it. I feel your organisation should reach all students, not just in Purnia or Bihar but around the country because such a training program that is free of cost is needed.”

Deepak Kumar, Shweta Kumari's Teacher, Gaya





Sapna Kumari Jha



सर्किट फिक्स हो गए हैं!
The circuits are fixed!

ऊर्जा दक्षता के लिए कॉपर बॉटम फिक्स!
Copper bottom for **energy efficiency**, fixed!

बच्चे अपने उद्यमशीलता के विचारों पर कार्य करना और उसके प्रोटोटाइप बनाने की खुशी भी महसूस करते हैं!
The girls and boys also learn the joys of actioning and prototyping their entrepreneurial ideas!

"हमारा इलेक्ट्रिक कुकर तैयार है!"
"Our electric cooker is ready!"

अब समय है प्रोटोटाइप को टेस्ट करने का!
Time to test our prototype!

नए एंटरप्राइज आइडिया के लिए नए लोगों की खोज

लेकिन बिजली फिर से चली जाती है!
But the lights go out again!

कुछ नया करने के उत्साह में हम समस्याओं को भूल गए!
In our excitement to do something new, we forgot about the problems!

इस बेईमान बिजली की समस्या का कुछ तो समाधान होगा...
There has to be a way to solve this unreliable electricity problem...

28

Clean Energy Enterprises, a Solution

In the graphic novel *Powered by the Sun*, a group of young women work together with other women engineers to set up a solar power grid that will light up their village despite the annual flood that always knocks out the electricity. Aditi and her team are mentored by a professor and woman solar engineer to help transform their village and restore the local economy.

“I completed my green enterprise internship in another renewable energy source, solar. Now, I want to learn more about solar energy and find a job in this field,”

adds Diya Kumari from Kishanganj. For Harsha, grade 10 student from Kishanganj, securing a chance to complete a solar installation internship was exciting and eye-opening.

“I learned how and from where light originates, how to ‘capture’ it, and many other aspects of the solar sector. It is so important to start a business or do a job that thinks about how it is impacting the environment,” she says.



Harsha

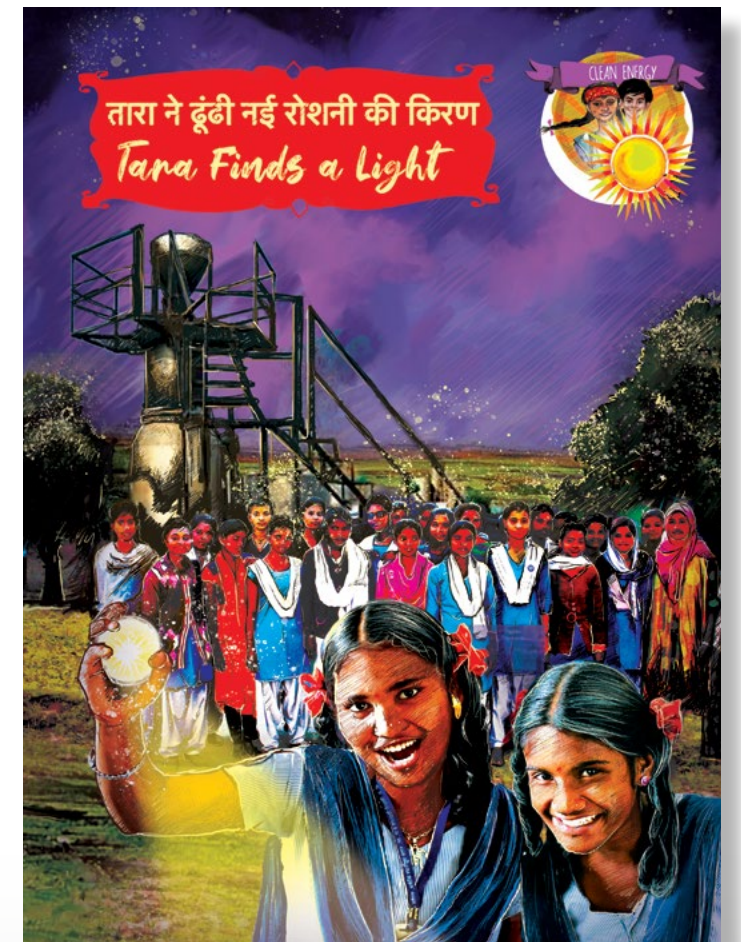
Aman Kumar



Darkness, as someone once told protagonist Tara in the graphic novel *Tara Finds a Light*, is the absence of light. In the story, Tara, an 18-year-old student from Patna, decides to research solutions and learn skills to solve the problem of erratic, unreliable electricity in her village. Along with her team, she researches how to make a biomass gasifier from rice and farm waste without using too much diesel. She creates a prototype and convinces a local businessman to invest in the business and farmers to provide farm waste for the venture. “Tara inspired me to be strong and pursue what I want to do in life,” says Diya Kumari.

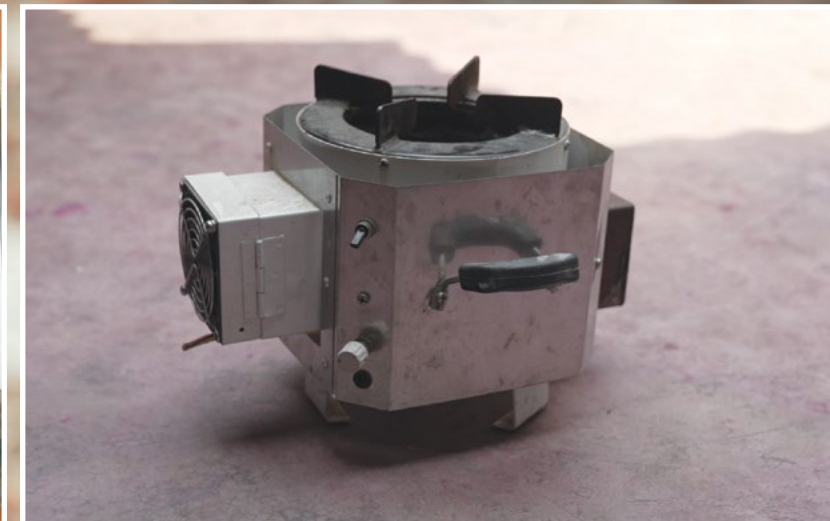
Tara also inspires Aman Kumar, grade 9 student from Darbhanga.

“She works hard to bring regular electricity to her village against all odds. This taught me that you should do exactly what you have decided to do, no matter the challenges or outcomes,” he says.





Aarti Kumari



Aarti Kumari is an entrepreneur who has been running her solar installation business in Bhagwati village in Gaya since 2018. She ran four solar installation green enterprise internships, each with 30 students lasting 10 days, for a total of 120 students over 40 days. "Students learned about solar installation, its uses, and how it is important to balance our ecology. I feel everyone got a good understanding of what solar panels are and how they

work. Many students told me they want to start their own solar panel business. Solar panels can work in any climate, irrespective of climate change. They do not pollute and are a reliable source of electricity compared to current, unclean sources."



"I believe women can do anything. They can even start their own businesses. Doing business is good. We should step out of our homes and do something. Only then can we be inspired by people who are doing something different and go forward and inspire others."

Aprajita, Grade 10, Muzaffarpur

Atul Kumar, a biogas, waste management and drip irrigation entrepreneur based in Patna, set up his enterprise two years ago. He ran four waste management internships of 10 days each with a total of 130 students.

“In my opinion, waste management is going to be a huge sector in the coming years,” he says, adding,

“It can generate lakhs of jobs. We have been able to reach thousands of people through

these green enterprise internships because if you teach one student and make them understand, they automatically motivate ten more people where they live. During our internships, students learnt about climate change, biogas, the waste management process, the drip irrigation process, marketing, branding, and market needs.”



Women at Work

When it comes to gender attitudes, both young women and men said that it is important for young women to be paid on par with men for the same piece of work to ensure their equal participation in the workforce.

We asked 'Do you think girls' equal participation in work with equal pay is required to make a fair society?'

A healthy 60.1 percent (35.14 percent girls, 24.94 percent boys) answered 'Yes' at the endline compared to only 44.1 percent (25.75 percent girls, 18.37 percent boys) at the baseline, showing an almost 16 percent positive change in attitude.



Girls' equal participation in work with equal pay is required to make a fair society.



Raunak Raj

Grade 10 student Raunak Raj from Patna is happy to let us know that he is inspired by a young woman.

"Jyoti, the hero-sustainable adventurer from the graphic novel *The Land of Love and Honey*, taught me the need to keep my spirits high and never give up on my dreams. She taught me about climate

change and the need for more entrepreneurs to start sustainable enterprises. After I complete my studies, I want to become an entrepreneur like Jyoti and contribute towards saving the environment," he says.



Payal Priya, grade 11 student from Purnia district believes communication is key to a girl's success.

“Girls can create opportunities for themselves if they have the potential to reach out to people. Social media is a good platform to advertise and financially support yourself by working part-time to set up a business of your own,”

she says.

Payal Priya

“Payal informed me about the youth skills program and organic farming internship she was doing, what she was learning from it, the benefits of using organic fertiliser. She also gave me a book to read, *The Last Show*. I was very inspired after reading this book. This is a good program for girls. I hope my children spend time with Payal and are inspired by her.”

Ranu Kumari, Payal Priya's Neighbour, Purnia

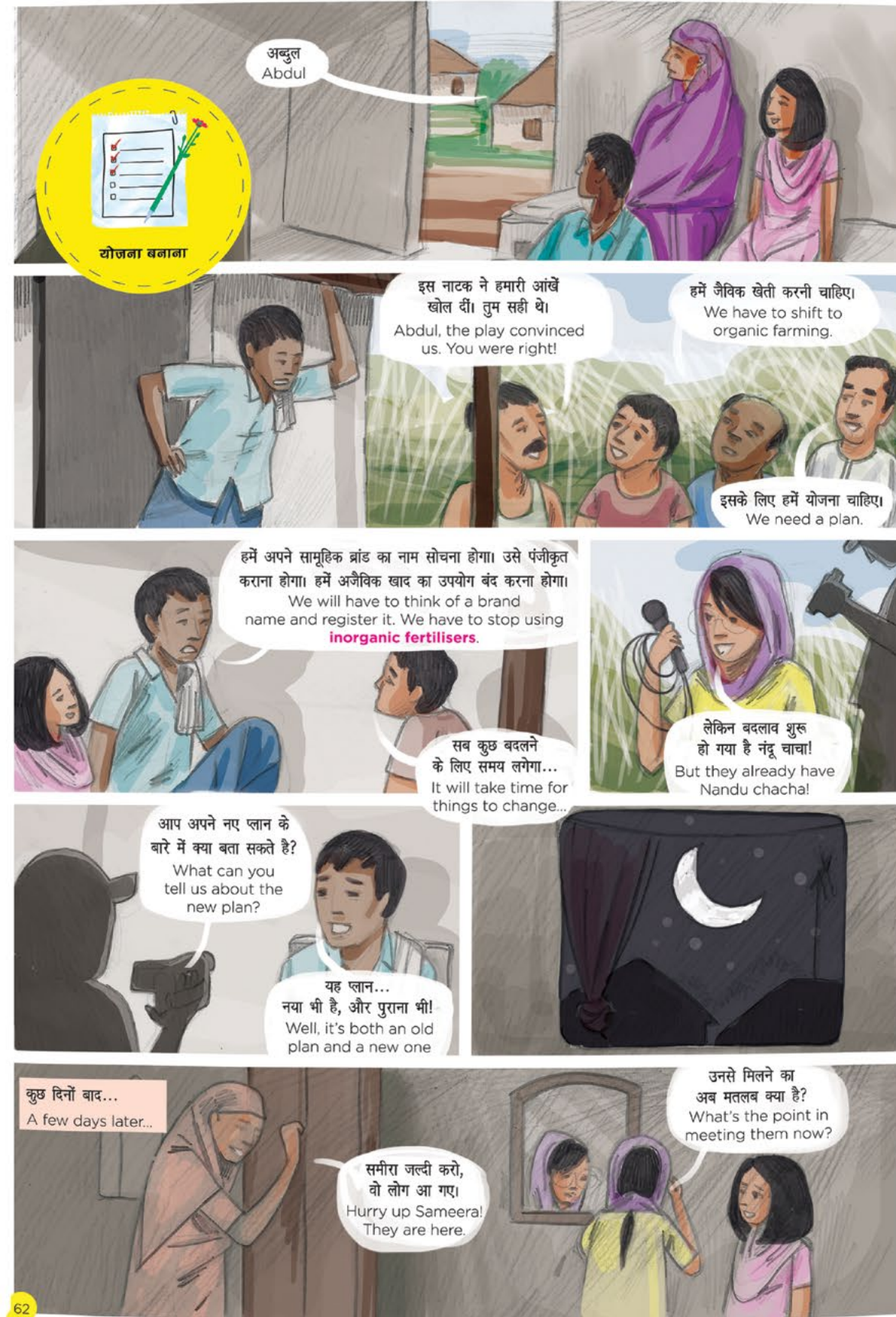


TO MARRY MARRY OR NOT TO

Does it fit into her
entrepreneurial plans?

Should Girls Delay Marriage to Start Their Sustainable Enterprise or Get a Job?

A total of 43.3 percent young people at the baseline (25.7 percent girls, 17.6 percent boys) compared to 57.5 percent at the endline (33.1 percent girls, 24.4 percent boys) answered 'Yes' to this question, recording a total increase of 14.2 percent. Comparatively, 29.7 percent young people at the baseline (17.2 percent girls, 12.5 percent boys) and 26 percent at the endline (15.6 percent girls, 10.4 percent boys) said 'Not at all'. In our graphic novels, young hero-protagonists do everything they can to start a business to avoid getting married. They get up to a lot of mischief, proving their worth to avoid child marriage. Our heroes focus on finding a problem to solve, start a sustainable enterprise to solve the problem, impact a lot of people and then, as they are going great guns, when the question of marriage inevitably comes up, the young hero asks for more time to make an impact and by this time, she has the community's support too, to focus on her problem-solving enterprise. Whoa. All of that just to avoid getting married. In the graphic novel *The Last Show*, hero-protagonist Sameera is introduced by her parents to prospective groom Adil. He is impressed by her weather reports on TV but she storms away from the meeting, refusing to be married right away. Later, after Sameera shows the village farmers how they can switch to organic farming and that it is the solution to climate change, Adil tells her he too doesn't want to get married now nor does he want her to. In fact, he wants to work with her on her climate change project.



Palak Singh

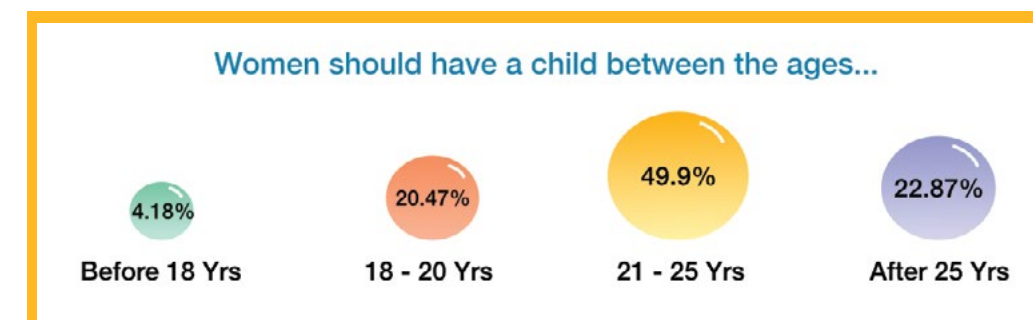
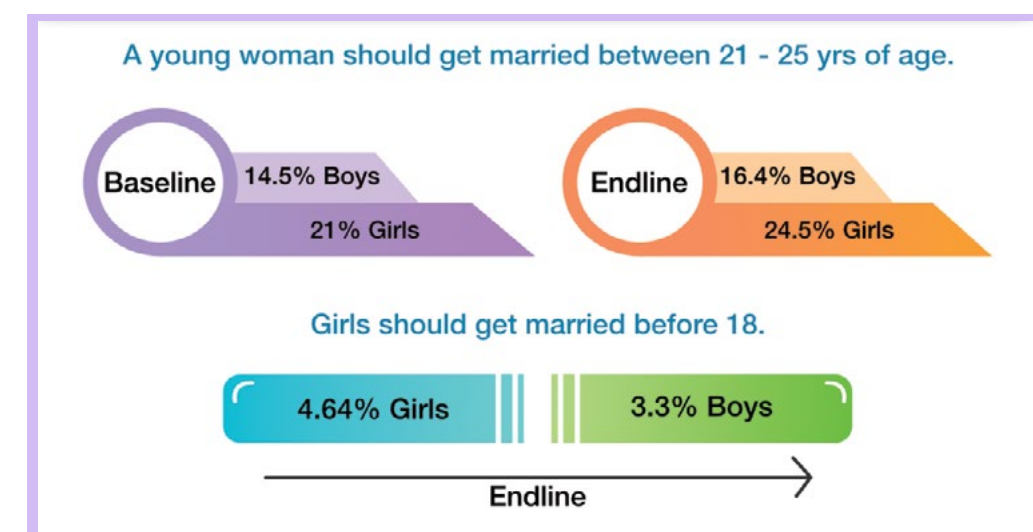
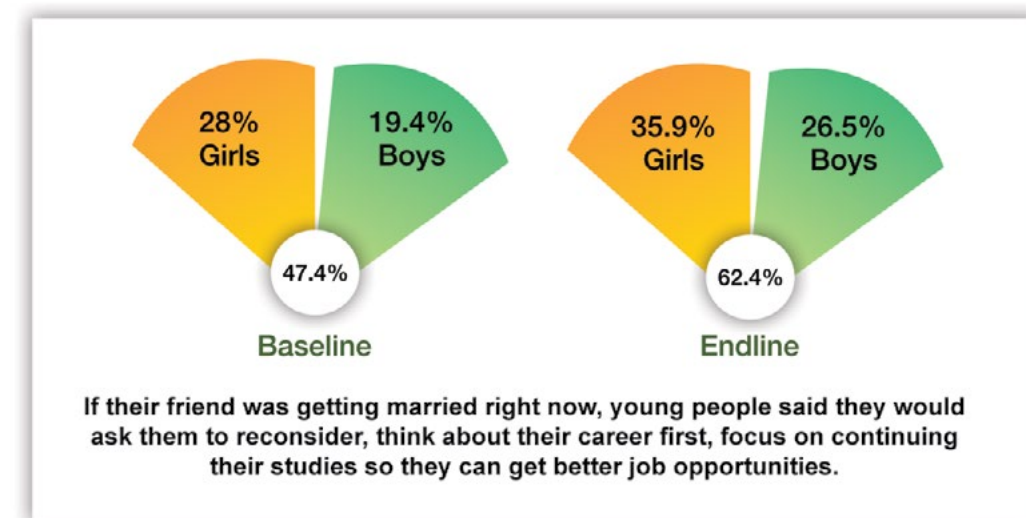
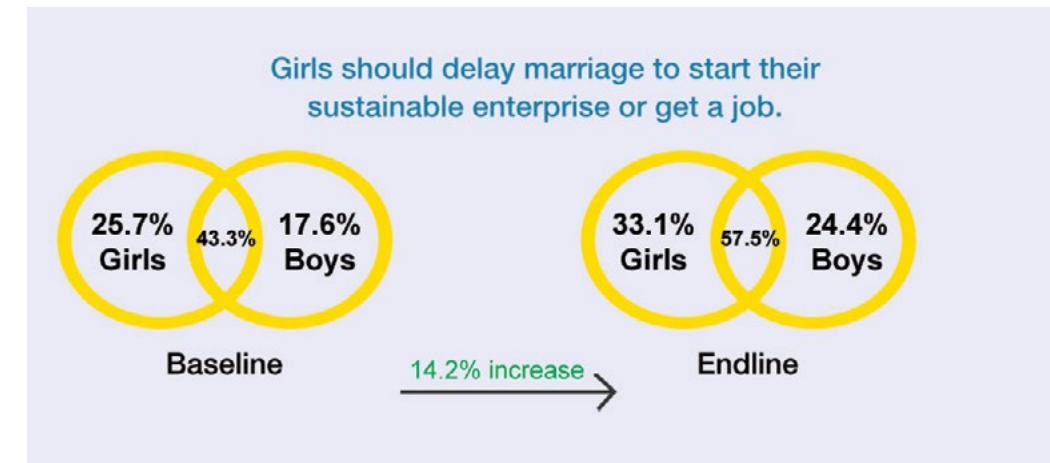


Palak Singh, grade 10 student from Muzaffarpur, says,

“Girls face a lot of problems. Families insist that if a girl has passed grade 12 and has gained enough knowledge, then it is time she gets married. Everyone in society faces the consequences of this way of thinking. If I start a business and progress, people should not create obstacles in my path. Progress may be slow but we should not stop or be asked to stop.”



Women at work in new roles / Skills to negotiate barriers to women's labour force participation.





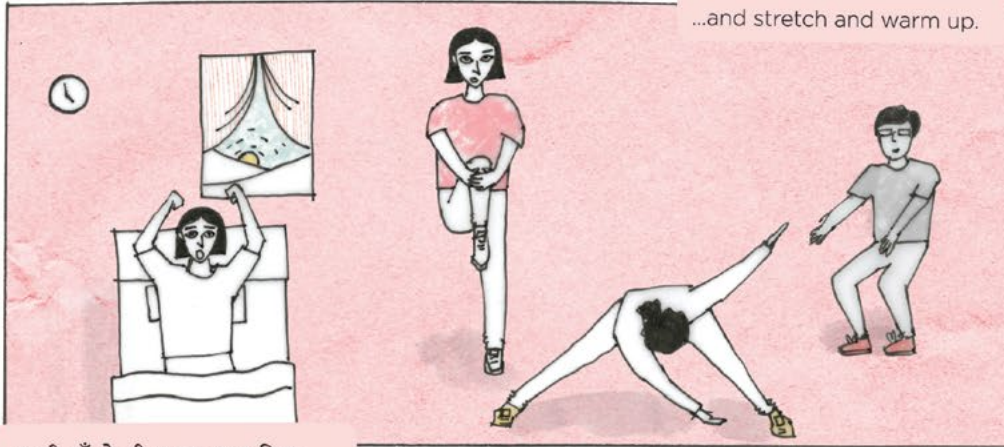
NEW LIFE PLAN

लड़कियों ने रोज़ सुबह पांच बजे उठना शुरू किया।

The girls diligently wake up at five am every day.

फिर वे शरीर को लचीला करने का अभ्यास करने लगीं।

...and stretch and warm up.



उनकी माँ ने भी उनका साथ दिया।

Their mothers help them at each turn.

वे चारों, हर सुबह पांच किलोमीटर तक दौड़ लगाने लगीं।

Every morning, they run five kilometres.



पेड़ों पर चढ़ने का अभ्यास शुरू किया।
They **climb** trees.



लड़कियाँ? ट्यूशन पढ़ने गई हैं।
Oh! The girls? They've gone for tuitions.



Komal Kumari



From School to Equitable Work or Enterprise of Choice

The power of young people is in their potential to change the world. We designed our program to help young people figure out the career path they would like to choose, whether that was getting a job or starting their enterprise.

Graphic novels, telling the stories of young women and men hero-protagonists and their team of young entrepreneurs, design-thinkers and problem-solvers, helped teach young people in grades 9-12 entrepreneurial and life skills they need to make the transition from school to work or enterprise of their choice.

If Fierce Was a Number it Would be Four is the story of three girls, three friends who convince their parents to allow them to learn self-defence and train to join the police force instead of getting married. This inspired Komal Kumari, grade 11 student from Kishanganj, who says,

"I dream to become an IPS officer in the future."

In *Riva's Barefoot Adventures*, Riva and her friends love to play football and must overcome many barriers to convince their folks to allow them to play the great game and become sports coaches. Laxmi Kumari Jha, grade 9 student from Kishanganj, says,

"Riva loves to play football but is discouraged by her parents because, in her village, girls are not permitted to play football. Riva doesn't give up. She inspires me. I too can do what I want, play football if I want, because you cannot differentiate between girls and boys."



Laxmi Kumari Jha



In *First, Do No Harm*, Saba finds her life's calling in the healthcare sector as a ward team member in a hospital even as she navigates school and her unclear plans.

Aryan Kumar, grade 11 student from Purnia, is inspired by her story.

"I really like *First, Do No Harm* because it teaches me that I'm capable of doing a lot more, along with my studies,"

he says.

Aryan Kumar

जिला स्वास्थ्य कार्यालय
District Health Office

उसी दिन जिला स्वास्थ्य कार्यालय में
The same day at the office of the District Health Officer

To,
The District Health Officer,
The people in the village require a working Primary Health Centre with the equipment list enclosed. This will greatly benefit our community. Please consider our application for the same.
Thank you,
Sarpanch
Huma
Saba
Shakista
Janardhan
Rizwan

मेवा भें,
जिला स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी,
प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्र को कुछ उपकरणों की ज़रूरत है। इनसे सम्पूर्ण गाँव का भला होगा। कृपया सहयोग करें।
धन्यवाद
सनपंच
हुमा
साबा
शाकिस्ता
जानार्दान
रिजवान

कुछ दिनों बाद...
Few days later...

मैडम यह जिला स्वास्थ्य केंद्र से आपके लिए पार्सल आया है।
Ma'am, you have a parcel from the District Health Office.

अरे वाह!
इतनी जल्दी।
Wow, that's quite fast.

लगता है हमारी मेहनत रंग लाई...
Looks like our **hard work** paid off...

प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्र

मदद मांगो

परिवर्तन

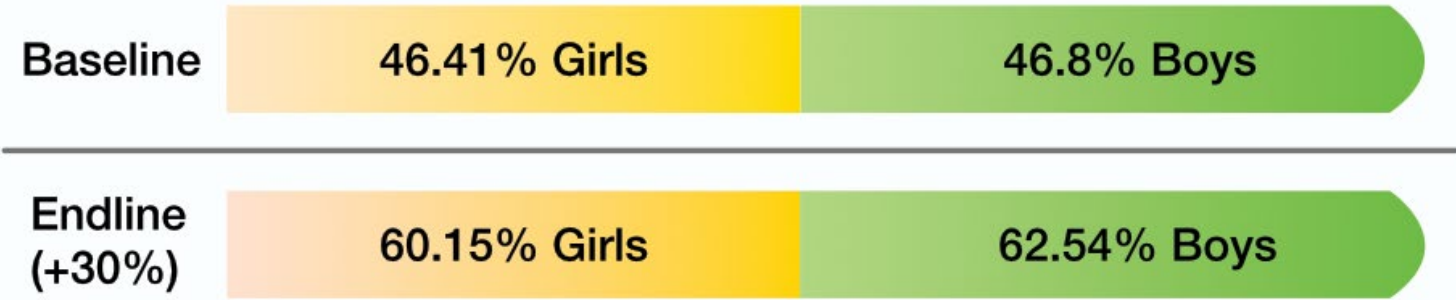
46

Talking about the impact of completing an internship, Adhiraj Kumar, grade 9 student from Patna, says,

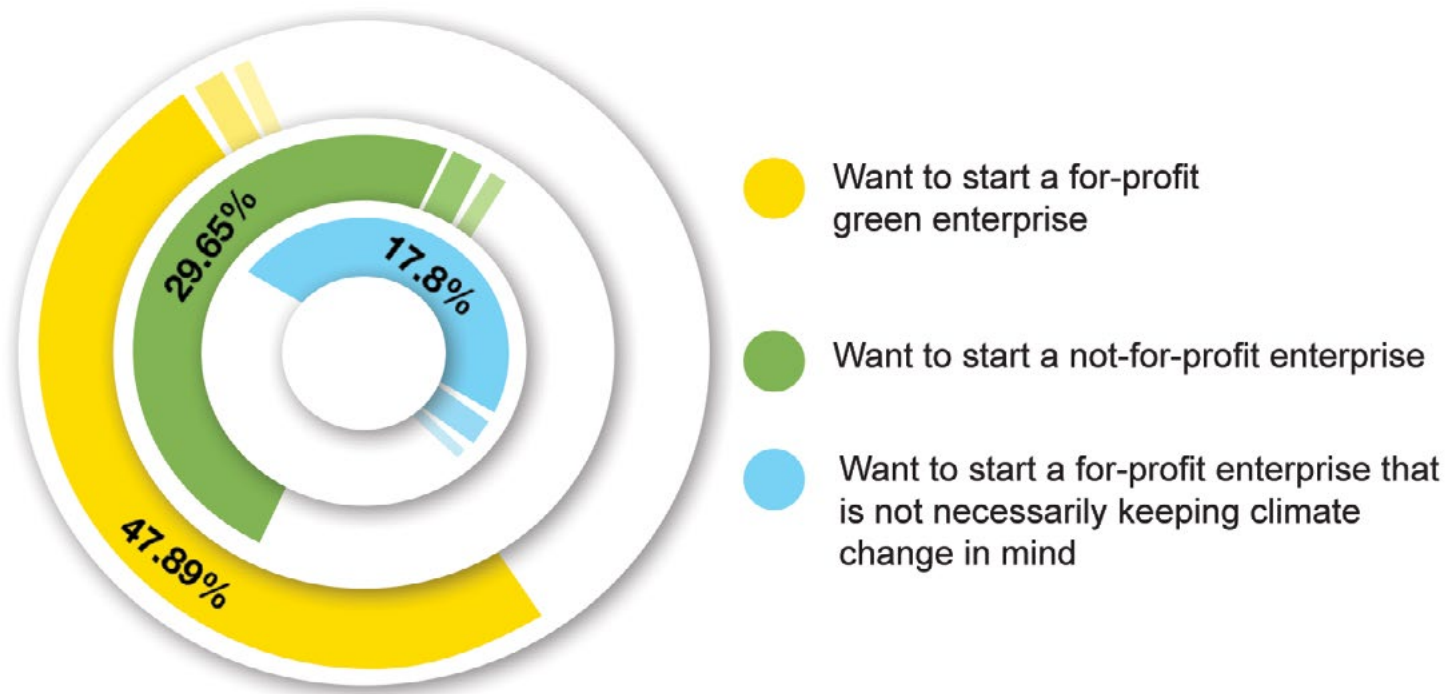
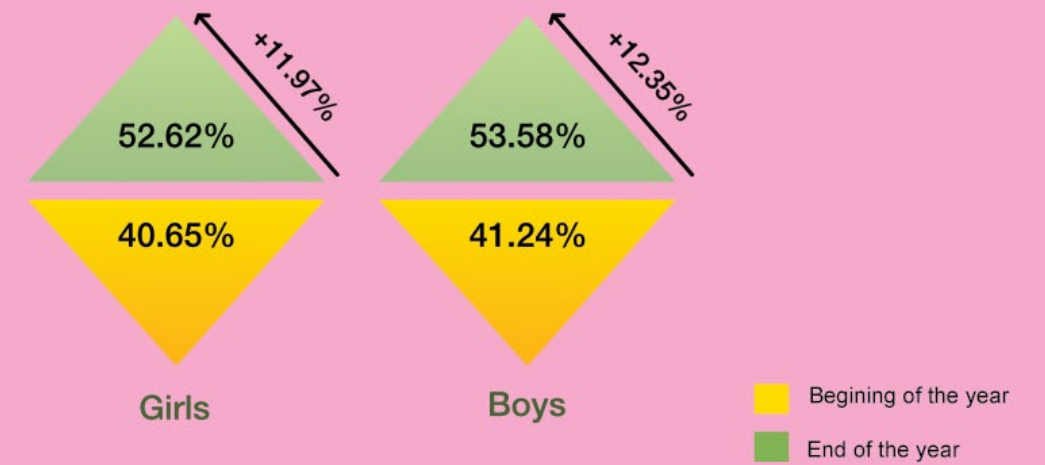
“After completing my green enterprise internship, I was inspired to start my own mushroom cultivation business. During the internship, I learnt a lot about mushroom farming and how to market and sell the product. By simply learning the basics, you can start mushroom cultivation and earn a living, while continuing your studies without disturbance. This business requires very little time and can be done in your own home for starters, so the initial investment is also minimum.”

Adhiraj Kumar

Developed career plans

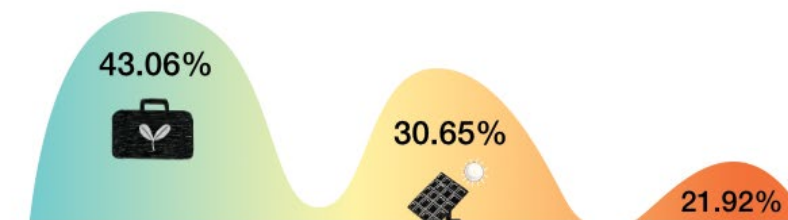


Attitude change towards jobs and/or enterprise



If it was upto you and you could do anything after grade 12, what would you do?

- I would sign up for a green enterprise internship with a local sustainable entrepreneur to learn the business and see if I can do it too - organic farming, solar, biomass, biogas, garbage.
- Start a green enterprise that solves climate change and creates jobs for young people.
- I'd go to college to study further.

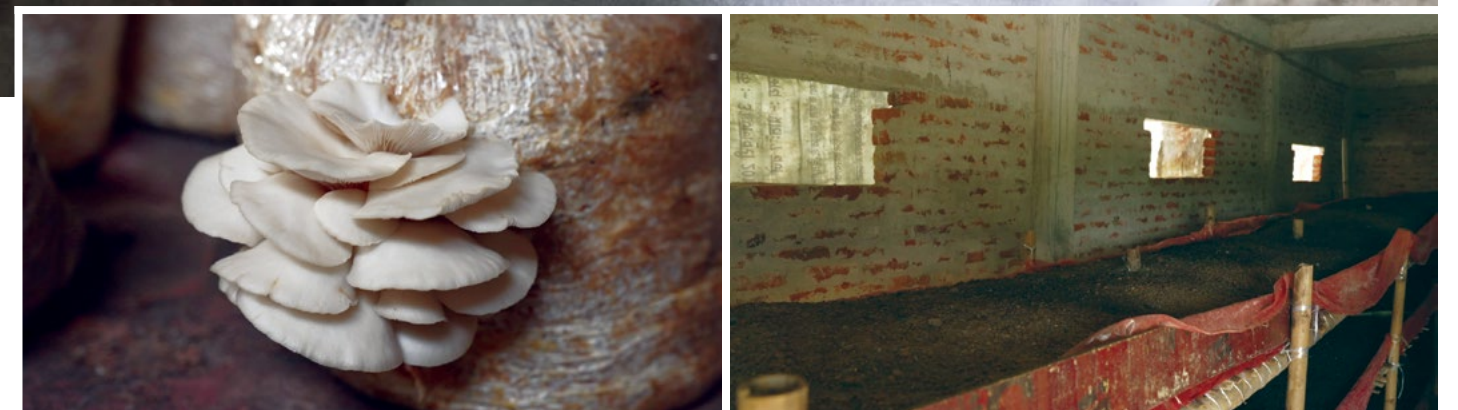


Premchand Kumar



Premchand Kumar, a mushroom farming entrepreneur from Gaya, has been in the business for the last four years. He conducted two green internships over 20 days with 60 students in total. Apart from teaching students the basics of mushroom farming, he also taught them public speaking and other entrepreneurial skills.

“Green enterprise internships are a good path for young people, especially those who are not finding success in other avenues. I started cultivating organic mushrooms in 2018 and have not looked back since. I first thought of starting something on my own after I completed my university studies because people had slowly started moving towards organic farming by then. Like me, young people can also start their own businesses and be successful,” he says.



Overall, 52.62 percent of girls at the endline compared to 40.65 percent at the baseline, and 53.58 percent of boys at the endline compared to 41.24 percent boys at the baseline showed a positive change in attitude and aspiration towards getting a job or starting their enterprise and careers after school, recording a 12.16 percent combined overall increase. A lot of young people also reported that they want to consider

studying further to help realise their career goals. “I met some really good people on the green enterprise internships who have inspired and helped me improve my communication skills. I want to learn more about how to improve my communication. I have a business plan that includes creating jobs for people,” says Aryan Kumar.



Pooja Kumari

Graphic novel adventures travel all over the map when it comes to problem-solving, to get women to work in new careers and sectors, from learning how to drive to managing large-scale waste companies and tricky logistics, where everything goes wrong, power cuts, missed trains, and colleagues that literally miss the bus. When our stories are not complicating matters (it's never straightforward to be an entrepreneur), the graphic novels take us step-by-step through bullet journals showing how young women can help fight climate change by starting new sustainable enterprises in the sectors of organic farming, beekeeping, recycling, waste management, sustainable packaging and renewable energy (solar, biomass and biogas). Young people told us it wasn't just one source, graphic novels, that taught them what they needed to know to start a business. It was also from the hands-on green enterprise internships. Pooja Kumari, grade 12 student from Darbhanga, says,

"After meeting other girls on the internships, I realised that it is not difficult for us to do because we can pursue it easily even if we study from home. I completed my internship in an organic nursery. We were taught about mushroom cultivation. From learning to take care of mushrooms to the method of preparing the seeds and making compost, we were taught every aspect of the business."





Nisha, Grade 12, Muzaffarpur

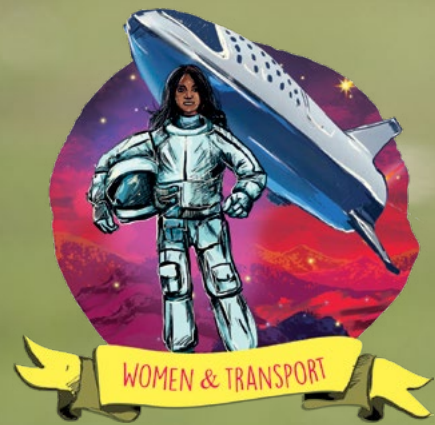
"If you want to start your business, please start it in the village. The advantage of doing this is you will help the unemployed get a job and become financially independent. And then you can help everyone switch to solar energy. I want to pitch to my village and other villages too that making a one-time investment in solar will last for a very long time and your electricity bills will reduce. Save the environment and create employment!"



“What must young people do to be independent? I completed an organic nursery green enterprise internship and learnt a lot of skills. I’ve decided that after completing grade 12, I want to start my own solar energy shop and provide solar energy to as many people as possible. Using regular electricity causes pollution. Solar will fix that problem.”

Aryan Raj, Grade 9, Muzaffarpur

“Girls can learn skills better than boys. For me, success means to not stop. When I complete my education, I will become a sustainable entrepreneur so I can bring glory to my country, my parents, my community and my school.”



Sakshi Kumari, Grade 12, Kishanganj



YOUTH VOICES, BIHAR, 2022

IKEA Foundation

