

RETROSPECTIVE

April 2024- March 2025



Reflections, Learnings, Impact and the Future

EDITORIAL



This past year has been a year of transformation: of purpose, of direction, and of impact. And as we keep our promise of sharing with you the tangible results your belief in us has helped deliver, I write this with immense pride and gratitude.

As I take up the honour and the onerous task of leading the organisation, I've had a front-row seat to witness the strength of our work and the soul of who we are. What strikes me most is how grounded yet aspirational we remain—deeply connected to the communities we serve, while pushing the boundaries of what's possible.

This past year, we focused on deepening impact: building smarter, more responsive interventions rooted in ground realities. We've not just run programs, we've co-created them. Community insights and resilience are not just inputs; they are central to how we work. As we expanded beyond education into public health, geriatric and palliative care, and livelihoods, we saw our role evolve. To reflect this, we changed our name—from "Literates" to "Lives"—to better capture the breadth of our work. A simple change in name, but a significant shift in purpose. We are not just nurturing learners, we are nurturing *life* outcomes.

Our geriatric and palliative care work in Anekal was recognised by the Government of Karnataka, who invited us to run the Palliative Care Unit at C.V. Raman General Hospital and replicate our model in nearby urban slums. We've also been recognised as a technical partner for statewide scale. In education, over 80% of students we support delivered strong SSLC results this year, a powerful testament to our foundational work.

With these wins behind us, we enter the new year with renewed energy. I'm excited to begin this chapter with our team and with your continued belief in our mission, I'm confident we'll keep transforming lives, one at a time.

Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed
CEO

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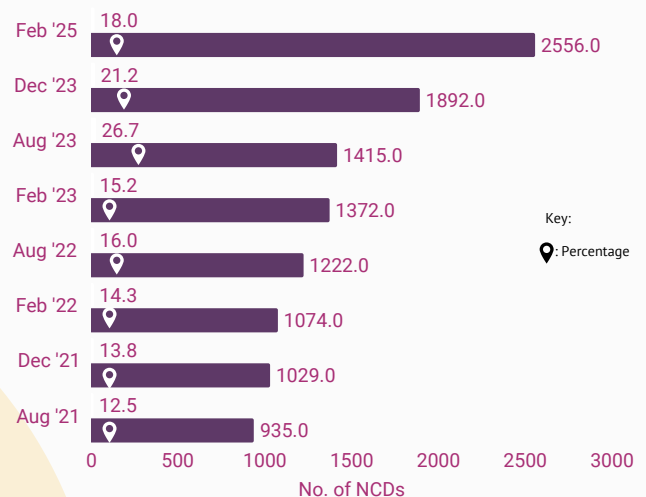
Community-Based Public Health Innovation: **Remedy**

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD)

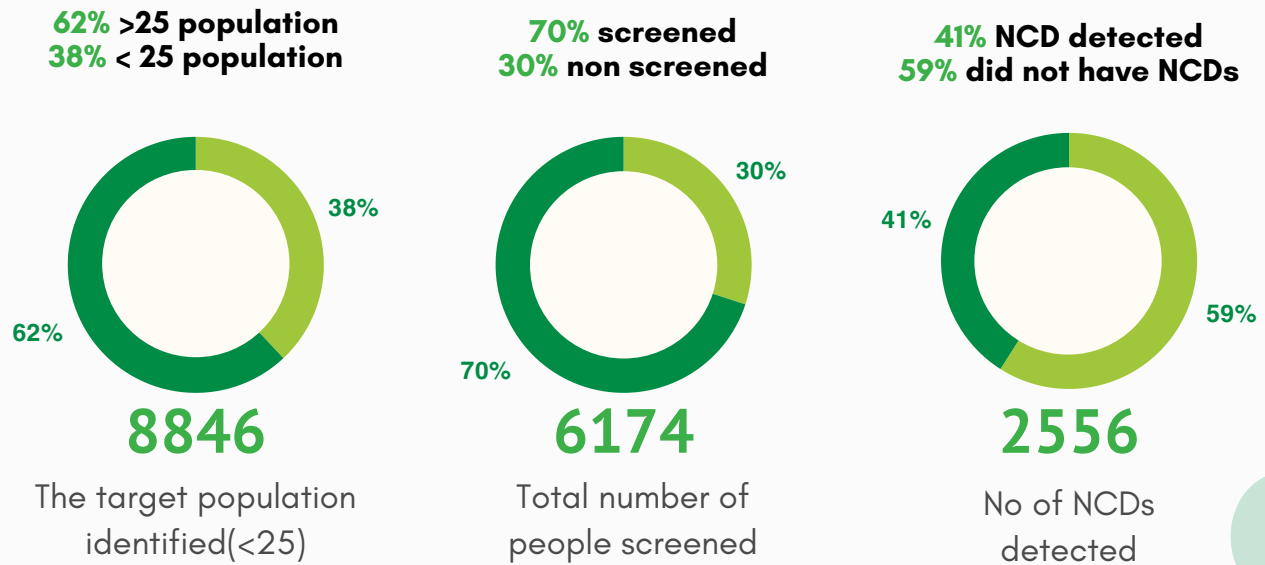
The Remedy program, launched to strengthen the healthcare continuum by improving access to primary healthcare for vulnerable communities in rural and peri-urban areas of Anekal Taluk, continues to ensure timely, affordable, and consistent care for those who need it most. In 2024-25, Remedy expanded significantly to integrate screening and treatment for NCDs, geriatric and palliative care, mental health, and cancer.



Our Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) program focused on early detection and continuous care in Indlawadi and Vanakahalli Panchayats, reaching over 15,300 individuals across 32 villages. We conducted over 600 clinics across 19 cycles, recording more than 17,000 individual consultations.



Prevalence as of March 2025, after 18 NCD clinic cycles: (Aug 2021- March 2025)



Of the 8,846 individuals screened, 41% were diagnosed with conditions like hypertension and diabetes. A significant 82% of those diagnosed are now under treatment, with 70% receiving care at OBLF clinics.

Geriatric & Palliative Care (GPC)

To meet the growing need for end-of-life care and elderly support, we also expanded our Geriatric & Palliative Care services across four panchayats. The integration of home visits, caregiver support, and physiotherapy, including specialized care protocols, including comprehensive geriatric assessments, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, and palliative care for individuals with life-limiting illnesses, continues to anchor this program.

559
Total # screened

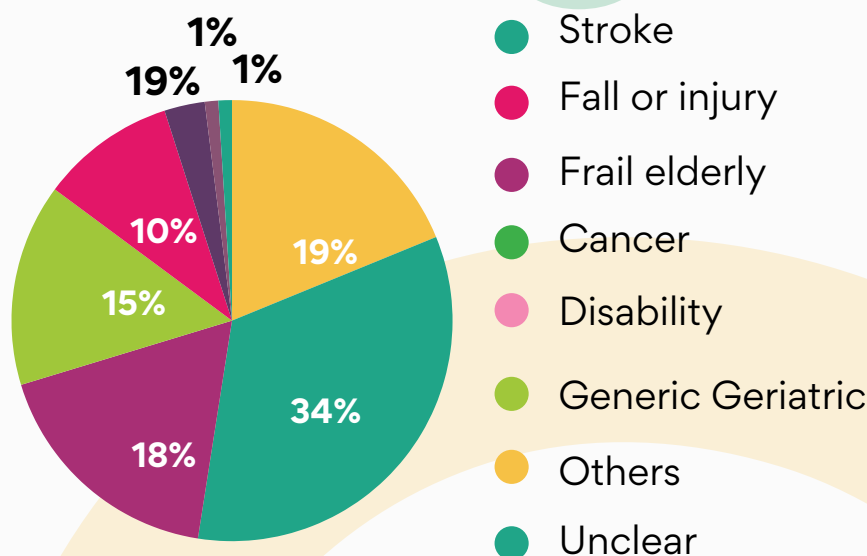
771
Total# of consultations

347
Total # triaged

In September 2024, the Geriatric Palliative Care (GPC) clinic was set up in Anekal to provide dedicated care for the elderly. Since, its inception the team screened 559 individuals, and managed 771 consultations, addressing life limiting illnesses, and managing pain.

- Population Covered: 40,000 (Marsur, Karpur, Chandapura, Hennegere Panchayats)
- Screened: 559 individuals
- Consultations: 771
- Caregiver Support: 60+ caregivers counseled

Major conditions managed:



Mental Health

The program provides comprehensive care to address common and severe mental health disorders. It also provides support for intellectual disabilities, substance use disorders, and more. It focuses on enhancing community well-being through early detection, treatment, and ongoing support, ensuring individuals receive the care they need to improve their mental health and quality of life.

28K

people across 12 villages in Nerlur Panchayat

150+

Individuals screened

10%

with Common Mental Disorders (CMDs), 1% with Severe Mental Disorders (SMDs)

118

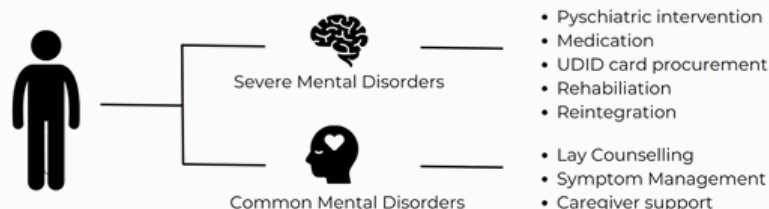
Cases managed- 22 CMDs, 27 SMDs, 49 mental disabilities, 20 other conditions

PATIENT IDENTIFICATION

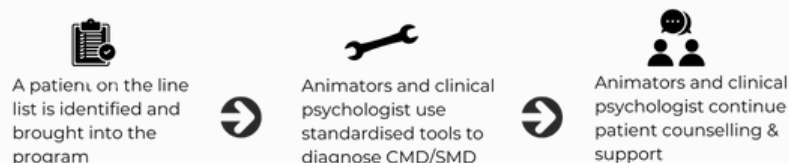
The line list is created by triangulation through:



PATIENT TREATMENT



TREATMENT PROTOCOLS



Overcoming Learning Gaps: Elevate

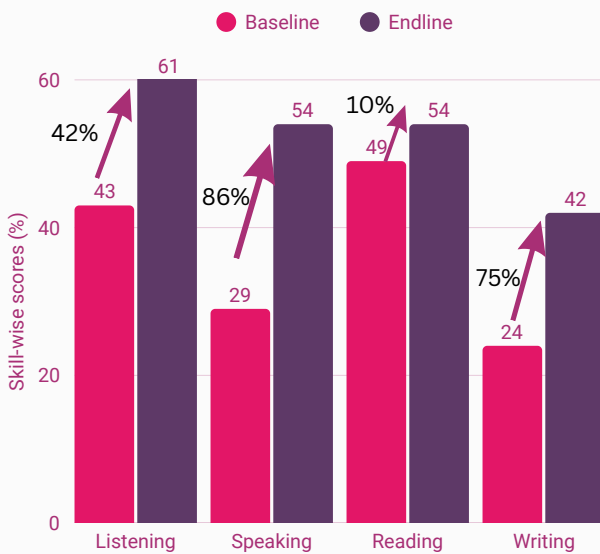
Launched in 2010 to address the systemic lack of English language instruction in rural schools, Elevate continues to empower children through foundational literacy, while developing local women educators. In 2024-25, Elevate advanced its work in aspirational districts like Yadgir and Raichur. The year witnessed inclusive pedagogical strategies such as mood charts, "word a day" vocabulary exercises, and custom modules for children with learning needs. Teachers implemented new approaches rooted in empathy, curiosity, and emotional safety. These practices translated to stronger classroom engagement, improved learner confidence, and a visible reading culture. Elevate's dual impact—on students and women educators—makes it a powerful model for systemic change in rural education.

Key Highlights

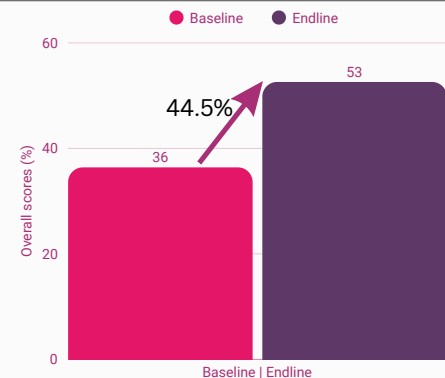
- OBLF designed their own curriculum and implemented the Nalikali curriculum for grades 1-3 wherein student outcomes and pedagogy were designed and mapped as per the state curriculum.
- Across the year, teachers received training in English language proficiency, pedagogy (including reflective practices and classroom management), child safety protocols, and professional development. This year also marked the initiation of our SRHR program.
- All OBLF-trained teachers participated in gender awareness sessions focused on bodily autonomy and consent. A menstrual leave policy was also implemented, a step forward in making workplaces more gender-responsive.
- Trainers and supervisors regularly visit classrooms to observe teaching practices and offer real-time coaching and feedback, ensuring continuous learning and classroom-level impact.
- To address teacher shortages and learning gaps in Anekal's government schools, OBLF launched the Vidya Pragathi initiative in partnership with the BEO, Sansera, CIE Automotive, and Jai Shivshakti Foundation. We would like to thank Mr. Singhvi, Sansera and JSS for their dedication and support to providing quality teachers in rural government schools of Karnataka through the Vidyapragathi program of OBLF.

Program Impact: Internal Assessment

Our hypothesis of driving a combination of learner-centric models of curriculum and investing deeply in teacher proficiency has been validated, with a significant upward shift in student proficiency by 44.5%. Statistical analysis of assessment scores shows a clear increase in learner proficiency across language skills (Listening- 42%, Speaking- 86%, Reading- 10%, Writing- 75%) as they move up the Cambridge proficiency levels.



		Average % improvement between Baseline and Endline		
#	English Language Skills	Pre A1	A1	A2
1	Listening	38%	55%	55%
2	Speaking	89%	75%	47%
3	Reading	9%	10%	0%
4	Writing	84%	49%	78%
5	Overall	45%	45%	38%



Grades	Avg Score	Avg Score	% Change
1	1.14	18.36	1516.65
2	10.91	24.74	126.78
3	16.84	32.15	90.92
4	23.94	33.95	41.82
5	25.76	36.08	40.04
6	29.75	37.45	25.87
7	32.56	38.96	19.65
Total	20.13	31.6	56.97

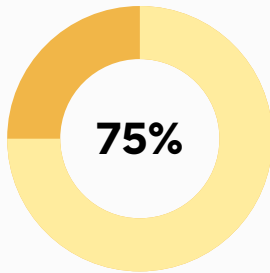


In lower grades, the percentage improvements are **2x-3x** that of those in higher grades where the percentage improvements become more moderate.

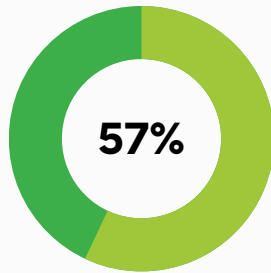
Program Impact: External Assessment*

Method: The study adopts a mixed-method design using a combination of secondary data analysis and primary data to answer the research questions on proficiency, professionalism & participation. N=1100 students, 30 teachers

Overall and skill wise games



Of students demonstrated some level of positive change in CEFR scores, Greatest progress seen in lower grades.



Was the average CEFR improvement across all grades

Listening 67%

66.56% of students showed improvement, with the highest gains in Grades 1 and 2

Reading 60%

59.78% of students showed an improvement in reading. Older students in Grades 5 to 7 experienced a plateau.

Writing 63%

63% of students showed improvement, with ed-tech tab program learners showing higher gains.

ELEVATE has proven to be a transformative initiative, not only addressing the critical literacy gaps in rural and peri-urban schools but also empowering local women to become catalysts for change. By providing ongoing training, fostering inclusive classrooms, and creating livelihood opportunities, the program is reshaping education in marginalized communities. With its continued expansion and proven impact, ELEVATE is paving the way for a more inclusive, educated, and empowered future for both students and educators alike.



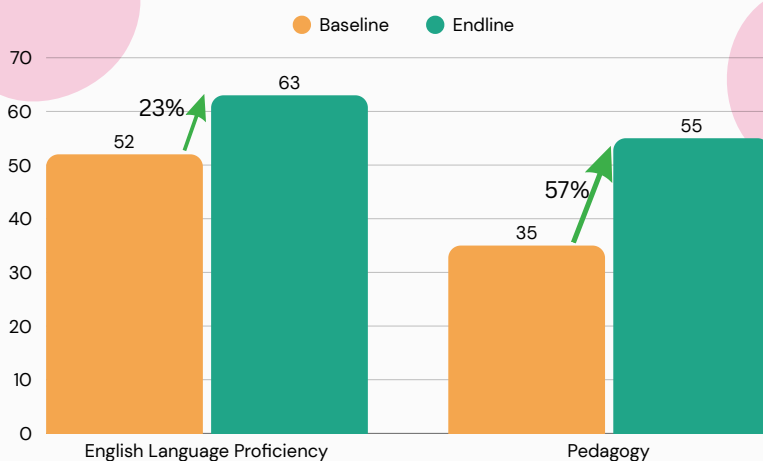
*This External Assessment was conducted by Socioven, a monitoring and impact consulting organisation.

From Learners to Leaders: Kickstart

Kickstart was envisioned to develop a pipeline of skilled rural women as both teachers and frontline health workers. The 2024-25 cycle focused on equipping them with classroom proficiency, technology skills, and gender-sensitive training.

Teacher Assessment

Through targeted training and professional development, this initiative empowers women by providing them with the skills and confidence to become effective educators and leaders in their communities. The women received professional development in child safety, digital literacy, and inclusive education through structured workshops and on-field coaching. Training formats included skip-level meetings, peer-led sessions, and teacher counselling.



There has been a 23% overall increase among the teacher cohort. All teachers have moved up a CEFR learning level. 38 teachers are currently at B1 and 3 teachers are at B2. Thereby a significant no of teachers are now proficient in English as adult learners.

Teachers received pedagogy training on two core concepts: Classroom Culture and Instructional Planning. They were scored on a rubric across the year. They have shown a tremendous improvement of 57% in their pedagogical understanding.

For the past 3 years, OBLF has been addressing the gender struggles and social challenges faced by rural women, such as limited access to health information, domestic violence, and unequal household care. Our program focuses on empowering women with vital knowledge about their bodies, health, and rights, particularly through menstrual and sexual health training. By providing a safe space for open discussions, we tackle menstrual hygiene, debunk myths, and promote sustainable practices, while also covering sexual health, contraception, and reproductive rights. Through interactive workshops, women gain essential knowledge and the autonomy to make informed health choices, challenging societal taboos and fostering a healthier, more informed community. A sample of 76 participants undertook the survey answering questions around knowledge attitudes and practices around menstrual health.

63%

Believe that menstrual cups and tampons are safe products to use.

71%

Believe that experiencing menstruation affects a person's ability to work.

70%

Believe that its okay to go to temple or touch pickle when menstruating.

67%

Believe that women need a day or two off from work for menstruation.

60%

Believe that period blood is not impure nor unhygienic.

52%

Believe that talking with males about periods is disrespectful.

First Gender Conference

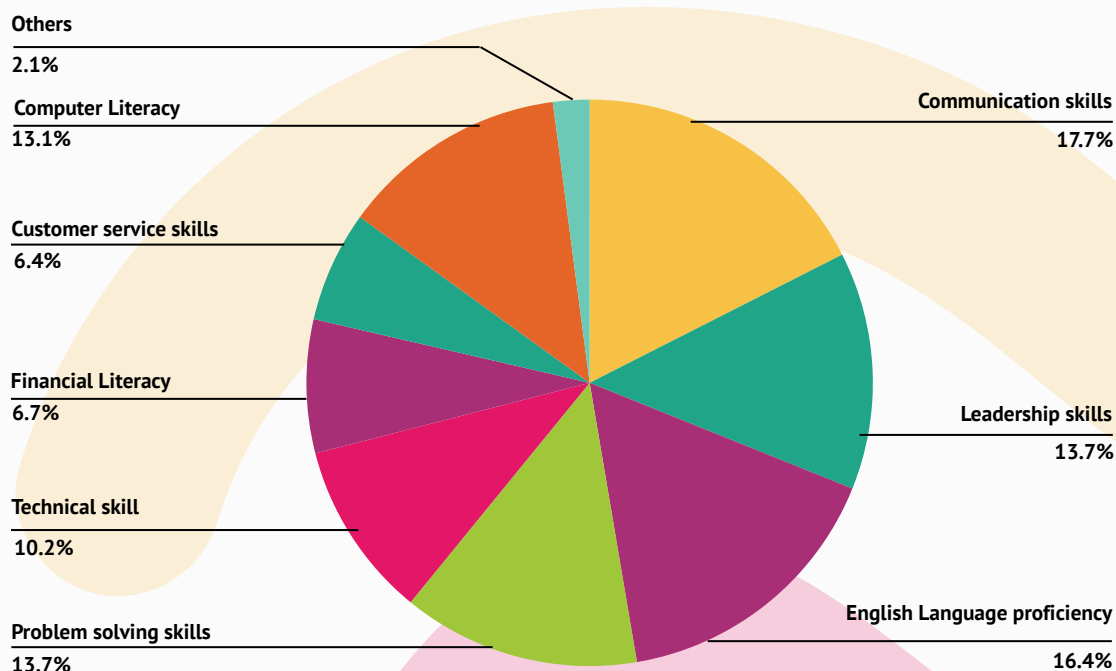
Over the past 2 years, OBLF has worked to break the silence around menstrual health and spark honest conversations on gender, power, and autonomy. Our first Gender Conference on 8th March 2025 brought together women and men in a safe, interactive space, from period pain simulations to consent workshops, encouraging reflection and challenging stigma. It marked a step forward in co-creating new perspectives on agency and equity, and reinforced our belief that awareness and dialogue are key to lasting change.



Spark Program

With Anekal's growing industrial presence, there remains a significant gap between emerging livelihood opportunities and a largely unemployed population, particularly, among youth and women. This program addresses that gap through a twofold approach: building English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to strengthen language skills, and enhancing job readiness through experiential learning, with a focus on understanding the retail sector and other employment avenues. To address this, we offer training in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), along with life, work, and digital skills. These targeted interventions are designed to enhance employability, build self-assurance, and empower learners to make intentional, confident career choices. Our program was built on in-depth research into the aspirations and career goals of adult learners, particularly focusing on their challenges and opportunities.

What specific skills would you like to learn or improve to increase your chances of getting a job of your choice?



Most of our respondents said that they would like to learn English and communication skills. These two skills are at the core of the design of our program.

The adults in our program often face intersectional vulnerabilities, including class, financial insecurity, and gender. Many struggle with unstable employment, taking on gig work that provides temporary income but lacks long-term financial security. This precarious situation leaves learners anxious and less hopeful about their future, but through our interventions, they gain the skills and confidence to navigate these challenges and build more stable career paths.

Migrant Community Development: Nurture

Integrated students from the Hakki Pikki Tribal Group and Waste Picker Community (WPC) and supported them through Education, Healthcare, and Skill Development. Nurture supports communities that face deep structural barriers, including the Hakki Pikki and Iruliga tribal groups and the migrant waste picker community. Our integrated approach includes education, healthcare, sports for development, and gender equity.

Education interventions with the WPC led to **72%** improvement in attendance in schools, and learning centers bridged students into formal systems. Emotional literacy, gender awareness, and social cohesion were fostered through regular activities and sports-led engagement. Families adopted sustained sanitation practices, and primary healthcare clinics offered predictable care.

The strength of Nurture lies in the trust it has built with these communities. That trust now translates into improved school retention, reduced stigma, and visible shifts in mindset and confidence.





Nurture program has made significant strides in addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by the Hakki Pikki Tribal Group and the Waste Picker Community. Through focused interventions in education, healthcare, and skill development, OBLF has fostered trust, resilience, and empowerment. The program has not only bridged educational and health gaps but also promoted gender equity and social cohesion, creating a more inclusive environment.



LOOKING AHEAD: 2025-2026



We are powered by empathy, evidence, and the belief that lasting change comes from being rooted. Our strength lies in intention and the courage to evolve while staying true to our mission.

As I look ahead to the coming year, I feel both excitement and a deep, steady conviction. We've spent years quietly and consistently building something powerful at Anekal. Today, with our work grounded in evidence and trust, we know we're ready to take this model further. This isn't ambition for its own sake — it's the result of hard-earned insight, community partnership, and proof that our approach works. Now, it's time to scale — not just programs, but purpose.

Our initial steps into Yadgir and Raichur, invited by the Government of Karnataka to replicate our education model, have been both eye-opening and affirming. These new geographies are already teaching us that scale isn't just about numbers — it's about complexity, agility, and responsiveness. This isn't a copy-paste model. It's about deeply understanding what each community needs and building with them, not for them.

That is, and always will be, the OBLF way.

We don't aim to be just another NGO. We strive to be that organisation — one that scales without losing its soul. One that asks hard questions, reflects honestly, and adapts when needed. One that measures success not just in reach, but in relevance and depth. And one that never loses sight of why we began: to ensure no one is left behind.

Thank you for walking with us. The next chapter begins now, and I couldn't be more excited to have you with us.

Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed
CEO