

H A I Y Y A

ANNUAL REPORT
2025-26

HOLDING
COMPLEXITY,
CHOOSING
LEADERSHIP

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Haiyya: Shaping Youth Leadership Through Community Organizing

We are a **youth-led campaign building and community organizing** focused organization that enables, supports and accelerates the individual and collective leadership of youth to make a difference through real-time community-led actions.

Over the years, we have engaged and trained thousands of young leaders, who have further created more local leaders across India, with whom we have **organized, campaigned, and collectivized** on some of the most crucial social justice issues impacting communities.

Our Mission

To inspire and nurture youth-led movements for courageous change by organizing, leadership development, community building, and learning – *that is rooted in feminist, anti-caste, anti-colonial, people-powered values and politics.*



Our Theory of Change

As a youth feminist organisation working on movement building through community organising, **Haiyya's theory of change is multi-dimensional**. In order to empower young people to become leaders, address local issues, and build stronger, more equitable communities, we at Haiyya use the following routes to drive change and impact.



Campaign Acceleration and Incubation

We seed bold ideas and nurture them into powerful campaigns through deep incubation. Then, we accelerate what works — scaling community-led strategies that drive systemic change.



Leadership Development

We grow and develop leaders grounded in community, courage, and strategy. Through organizing, they build collective power to challenge injustice and win lasting change.



Ecosystem Building

We strengthen the organizing ecosystem by shifting dominant narratives and creating tools that fuel grassroots power. Our strategy weaves stories, resources, and relationships to sustain movements for the long haul.



Collaborative Partnerships

We build transformative partnerships rooted in trust, co-creation, and shared purpose. By weaving alliances across movements, we amplify collective power to drive systemic change.

Note From The Founder

Honestly?

The world right now is a lot.

Political fractures deepening. Climate urgency that can't wait. Cultural shifts happening faster than most of us can process. And in the middle of all of it, we've been asking ourselves: what does Haiyya do next?

At Haiyya, we completed a decade last year. We found ourselves asking difficult questions too^o about leadership, culture, power, impact, and the kind of organisation we want to become. Instead of only celebrating growth, we chose to pause and look inward, **as we invested time in a 10 year culture audit and initiated our 5 year strategy planning process.** **After a decade of building,** that question doesn't feel small. It feels like standing at the edge of something vast and a little terrifying. It felt less like a victory lap and more like opening old storage boxes in the attic and realizing some things needed rework (maybe even repair) before they could be carried forward.

Personally, this year stretched me. Holding the present while imagining Haiyya's future often felt like trying to choreograph a dance while the music, the stage, and sometimes even the genre kept changing.

But somewhere in the chaos came clarity. That strategy is human before it is structural. That trust is built through relationships, not announcements. That commitment is far rarer, and more valuable, than expressed interest. And that movements, much like plants, cannot survive on workshops alone, they need consistent watering, care, and sunlight.



And yet, amidst all this complexity, there were moments that reminded me why this work matters. **Watching young organizers facilitate difficult political conversations in their own communities with courage and tenderness. Seeing grassroots leaders continue showing up despite hardships and uncertainty. Watching our own team hold difficult internal conversations, sometimes with honesty, care & accountability; and other times with despair, defensiveness, and deep discomfort, but still choosing to stay in the room with each other.** These moments may never make headlines, but they are the quiet infrastructure of democracy.

Over the past year, we invested more deeply in regional leadership, grassroots accompaniment, and building stronger ecosystems of organizers and communities who can sustain democratic participation beyond moments of visibility or crisis. We slowed down in some places so we could build with greater integrity in others.

I also want to acknowledge our board members, donors, partners, advisors, allies, my coaches and fellow travellers who stayed with us not just through moments of success, but also through questioning, transition, and rebuilding. In a sector that can often reward speed and certainty, your trust, patience, and willingness to engage beyond transactions has meant deeply to us.


As we imagine Haiyya's next chapter, one thing feels clear: we cannot predict the future. But we can prepare ourselves, and each other, to meet it with courage, integrity, love, humour, and collective leadership.

Aprajita Pandey
Founder & CEO, Haiyya




Looking back at the year's milestones and initiatives

Milestones



Haiyya Ho! Celebrated #10YearsOfHaiyya at a global birthday party co-organised by Leading Change Network and Haiyya



First ever coaches bootcamp - We piloted the Organizing Coaches Bootcamp, first ever training and workshop space meant for coaches. We created a structured space not just to train organizers, but to build the coaches who will guide the next generation of youth-led movements across India.



Launch of our new digital home - Haiyya's website: We tinkered around and built a new space for our programs, ideas, community. Stay updated and find out about our existing and new (exciting) things we are planning for the year.

The Year's Initiatives & Impact Numbers



Leaders we
worked with

152

Trainings and
workshops to seed
organising:

59

Campaigns we
coached and
incubated:

14

What We Are Learning & Reflecting

on institution and culture building

1

Sustainable organising requires cultures of care, not just cultures of urgency. Over the past year, we learned that people-power organisations cannot rely solely on passion and political commitment to sustain movements. Intentional practices around rest, reflection, conflict navigation, mental health, and shared ownership became essential to preventing burnout and deepening trust within teams and communities. We also recognised that organisational culture is political work: the way decisions are made, risks are shared, and dissent is held internally shapes the kind of democracy we seek externally. We invested in looking within through an organisational culture audit, which led to revelations and reflections which are going to shape the future of Haiyya.

2

on political and public learning

In a polarised and rapidly shifting public sphere, narrative power is as critical as mobilisation power. Last year reinforced that organising is not only about gathering people, but also about shaping public imagination. Misinformation, fear-based politics, and shrinking civic spaces made it necessary to communicate with greater clarity, emotional resonance, and strategic depth. We learned that communities respond most strongly to grounded, values-led storytelling that connects systemic issues to everyday lived realities – and that public trust is built through consistency, credibility, and presence over time.

3

on communities of care

Communities do not sustain themselves through campaigns alone – they sustain themselves through relationships, belonging, and mutual support. Across our work, we saw that the strongest communities were not necessarily the largest or most visible, but the ones where people felt seen, heard, and accountable to one another. Moments of crisis highlighted the importance of decentralised leadership, peer networks, and local ownership. We were reminded that community organising is long-term work: it grows through listening, shared struggle, celebration, care, and the everyday practice of showing up for each other.

Stories from the Ground

"This year pushed me to rethink what progress really looks like. Choosing to pause programs like YCRN after years of continuous running was intentional, it created space to reflect, listen deeply, and reset direction based on what the ecosystem actually needs. At the same time, piloting OCB allowed us to experiment with new ways of strengthening organizing capacity. Holding both reflection and experimentation, became a defining shift in how we approached our programs."



– Akshay G.
Programs Director

When working with people, impact is not merely numbers, and stories are more than words. If the last year has taught me anything about meaningful storytelling, it is knowing when to zoom in to focus on minute, mundane details and simultaneously zoom out to take a bird's eye view of it all.



– Yashnashree,
Communications &
Engagement Lead

Haiyya's New Website

Organizing Coaches Bootcamp

Nilgiris Youth Adivasi Leadership Program

Climate Week India 2025

Youth Climate Resilience Network Community Listening

Indian Organising Podcast - Season 2

Nilgiris Youth Adivasi Leadership Program

2025 was an exciting year for youth leaders in the Nilgiris. They worked in tandem with the demands and needs of their region. They organised **community conversations, raised awareness on environmental destruction, and livelihood challenges, and collectively developed local governance election manifestos** and MLA election manifestos that reflected the real issues faced by their communities. These manifestos addressed concerns such as land rights, water scarcity, housing, education, healthcare, forest access, and climate resilience. The youth leaders also conducted **household surveys using community-designed survey tools and worked on Community Development Plans (CDPs)** that helped villages identify their priorities and demands collectively. Witnessing these youth leaders take collective ownership of their struggles and emerge as confident community leaders **rooted in indigenous knowledge, justice, and people-led change**, has been quite inspiring.



– Prathicksha M.
Program Manager

"Leading the Nilgiris programme in 2025–26 has been one of the most emotionally challenging and meaningful experiences for me. There were moments when grief, uncertainty, and exhaustion deeply shaped the work on the ground. But even within that reality, I witnessed youth leaders continue to show up for their people with immense courage and responsibility. What moved me most was how rooted their leadership remained in community care and collective action. They trained community members on constitutional rights, conducted PRA assessments to help villages articulate their own development priorities, and collectively built an election manifesto grounded in the lived aspirations of the people. Working in one of India's most ecologically sensitive regions also meant constantly navigating questions of environment, livelihoods, and justice together. More than a programme outcome, this year reminded me that leadership often emerges most powerfully in moments of collective difficulty."

#LeadersSpeak

I am Anitha A.C. from the Adiya (Ravula) tribal community.

Over the past year, I gained valuable knowledge about community rights, governance, leadership, and social issues. Through trainings on the Constitution, SC/ST Act, Forest Rights Act, local governance, and climate change, I developed a deeper understanding of the systems that affect our communities. I improved my communication, public speaking, and facilitation skills and learned how to engage effectively with government officials and community members. I also learned the importance of collective action, teamwork, and advocacy. This journey increased my confidence, strengthened my leadership abilities, and inspired me to work for positive change in my community.



I am Binu M. from the Paniya tribal community. As part of the Youth Leadership Program, I have been working for the past year with the communities of Akkalpura Unnathi, Narangachal Unnathi, and Nelliye Unnathi in Thondernad Panchayat, Wayanad. Through trainings on the Constitution, SC/ST Act, Forest Rights Act, local governance, Gram Sabha processes, manifesto building, and community data collection, I gained valuable knowledge about rights, governance, and community development. I was able to share this knowledge with my people and support them in addressing issues related to housing, roads, bridges, drinking water, and other essential needs. This year strengthened my leadership skills, confidence, public speaking, communication, and relationship-building abilities. I learned how data and collective action can bring meaningful change. Most importantly, I discovered my own strength, resilience, and ability to lead, which has given me confidence to continue working for the development and rights of my community.



I am Sumithra M.R. from the Adiya (Ravula) tribal community. Over the past year, I have been working with youth, children, elders, and community members in Thirunelli Grama Panchayat, Wayanad, to support the growth and development of our community. Through these trainings, I gained valuable knowledge and shared it with my people. I developed confidence in public speaking, organizing meetings, engaging with government officials, and advocating for community rights. This journey strengthened my leadership skills, broadened my understanding of social issues, and helped improve access to education, housing, welfare schemes, and essential services for my community.





I am Anusree, from the Kattunayakan tribal community. For the past year, I have been working with tribal communities in Narangakunnu, Ramanpadi, Thoppetty, Vellara, and Ana Camp hamlets of Thirunelli Grama Panchayat, Wayanad. My work focused on supporting community development through trainings, Gram Sabhas, campaigns, and awareness programs on the SC/ST Act, Forest Rights Act, and local governance.

Through these efforts, I witnessed increased community participation, improved access to government schemes, better communication, and stronger leadership among community members. Advocacy with local authorities helped address issues such as drinking water access and housing. This experience deepened my understanding of community issues, strengthened my confidence, and built lasting trust and relationships with people.

Leading the Nilgiris programme in 2025-26 has been a deeply grounding and transformative experience for me. Working closely with tribal youth leaders across the Nilgiris and Wayanad, I witnessed how leadership can emerge even in the face of uncertainty, discrimination, economic hardship, and the growing impacts of climate change. One of the most powerful parts of this journey was seeing young people build political awareness within their communities and connect local issues with larger questions of climate justice, governance, and rights."



– Thirumurthi T.
Program Manager

Youth Climate Resilience Network

Reflection, Renewal, and Reimagining the Next Phase

Our **biggest learning this year** has been that strong programs are not just built by doing more, but by knowing when to **pause, listen, collaborate, and redesign** so that the work remains rooted in people, power, and purpose. After five years of building and running YCRN as a national youth climate network, YCRN created a Strategy and Planning Committee in 2025 to guide this transition. The committee brought together the Haiyya core team along with long-term community members - Sabique, Aleena, and Arnav ensuring that the process was grounded in lived experience, community insight, and evolving ecosystem realities.

A key part of this process was a structured listening exercise, engaging 25–30 individuals and organisations across the climate ecosystem. These dialogues helped surface critical insights on leadership gaps, regional realities, and emerging needs of young organisers, allowing the strategy to be shaped through collective reflection rather than assumption.

Because **the future of climate justice** will not be built from the top, it will be led by those already **living its realities**.





– Arnav,
YCRN Strategy and
Planning Committee

Being part of the YCRN planning process has shown me the power of creating spaces where voices from marginalised communities are not only included, but truly heard. Through our conversations and reflections, I have realised that YCRN is not just building a network, but nurturing a platform where young people can come together to learn, reflect, and collectively imagine more just and resilient futures.



Organizing Coaches Bootcamp

Organizing Coaches Bootcamp (OCB) 2026 is Haiyya's investment in the infrastructure of youth-led movements — building the coaches, the relationships, and the shared language that allows organizing knowledge to travel from **one person to the next, from one community to the next, and from one generation to the next.** Participants came from **15+ states and regions across India** — making this a **genuinely national cohort.** Many participants came from areas with limited access to organized training — including conflict zones (J&K), tribal belts, coastal fishing communities, and semi-nomadic pastoral communities.

Participants explored what it means to coach from a values lens, how to hold space for organizers in struggle, how to balance direction with autonomy, and how to support someone without taking over their leadership.

This included honest, sometimes difficult **conversations about power, positionality, and what it means to coach across caste, gender, and community lines.** Many participants arrived with informal coaching experience but left with a much clearer framework for the practice of coaching: **the questions to ask, the spaces to hold, and the moments to step back.**

The residential format, where participants lived, ate, and reflected together, created conditions for the kind of trust and depth that online spaces simply cannot replicate.

This is how movements grow:

not through a single moment of training, but through the steady, relational work of people who believe in each other's power — and have the tools to help others find it.





– Pritam Das,
Sr. Programs Associate



The communities facing the sharpest edge of the climate crisis, caste violence, gender injustice, and state repression are also those with the least room to lose organizers to burnout. That's why building people-power now slowly, relationally, across geographies and movements isn't idealism. It's preparation. OCB is what preparation looks like when you take the next decade of climate and social justice work seriously.



Climate Week India 2025

Climate Week India was one of the highlights of 2025. **Co-hosting** it with multiple organisations and **enabling decentralised events** across regions showed **how collaboration can build collective power and create impact at scale**. It also brought more intersectional participation into climate spaces, especially through **the youth leaders of Nilgiris**, whose presence shifted conversations by bringing in lived experiences, diverse identities, and grounded realities, and strong participation from regions often underrepresented in national climate spaces, including Northeast India, Kashmir, and Central India.

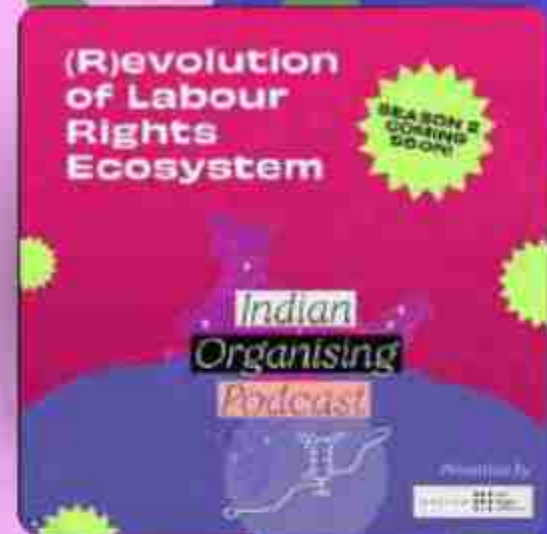
This way, YCRN continued to build public momentum through the network - 26 organisations/collectives organized **35 events** across **26 locations pan-India**. This demonstrated the continued strength, decentralised leadership, and organising energy of the YCRN community.



Indian Organising Podcast - Season 2

Our digital storytelling and narrative work launched **Season 2 of Indian Organising Podcast** in collaboration with One Future Collective. The Indian Organising Podcast was launched in 2023 with the aim to document organising narratives and harvest best practices of organising in India. Season 2 focused on **unpacking the labour rights ecosystem in India** that has seen a significant (r)evolution in the past few years with guests like Meena Patel, Sudhir Kumar Katiyal, Meena Seshu, Puja Mandal, Clifton D'Rozario, and many more.

The need to continue advocating for just labour practices is especially emergent now in the context of the rise of artificial intelligence, climate change, the rise of the gig-economy, and increasing risks to employee safety amongst many other challenges which are influencing the labour rights ecosystem in India.



Haiyya's New Website

As Haiyya entered a new decade, we worked on refreshing our visual language to reflect our identity better. We now have a **new online address** where you can learn about us, the work we do, our theory of change, and more. We chose bold, bright colours to signify our youthful, vibrant, and action-oriented outlook and leadership. It is a work in progress but we invite you to take a look at the website [\[haiyya.in\]](https://haiyya.in) and tell us what you think.



Places that Inspired & Pushed Us

▶ **CLIMATE GLOBAL SOUTH
CONVENING**
(UMI, Brazil)

▶ **LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZING,
ACTION COURSE**
Harvard Kennedy School

▶ **PEOPLE POWER CHANGE
CONFERENCE**
(Copenhagen by ActionAid
Denmark)



▶ **REIMAGINING FUNDRAISING
PROGRAM**

(by Dasra, Indian School of
Business and The Fund Raising
School at the Indiana
University Lilly Family School
of Philanthropy)



Inside Haiyya: How we held the work and ourselves

Community organizing in India will not yield results without centering caste and gender at its core—and Haiyya has boldly realized this imperative over the past years. Through intentional hiring and retention strategies, a Prevention of Caste Discrimination at Work Policy, and the seamless embedding of these values into our programs, we have built an ecosystem that aspires to equity and resilience. Looking ahead, we envision a society where every leader and initiative dismantles hierarchies to achieve a truly democratic future.”



– *Riya Singh,*
People, Finance and
Operations Director

DREAMING

As we celebrated 10 years of Haiyya, we dared to dream beyond what exists today. Together, we started imagining the future we want to build for the next decade of our shared mission.

LEARNING

We made space to learn, unlearn, and grow together. Every reflection, training, and new practice strengthened how we show up for work and for each other.

JOY

Even in a demanding year, joy found its way in. Through the birthday celebration campaign, retreats, rituals, and small moments of connection, we kept each other going.

CARE

Care was not an afterthought, it was an attempted foundation of how we worked. We continued building a culture where equity, dignity, relationships and collective action could take root.

POLITICS

We sat with hard questions about power, justice, collective action and the world we seek to change. The tension was not always comfortable, but it is moving us closer to clarity.

COMMITMENT

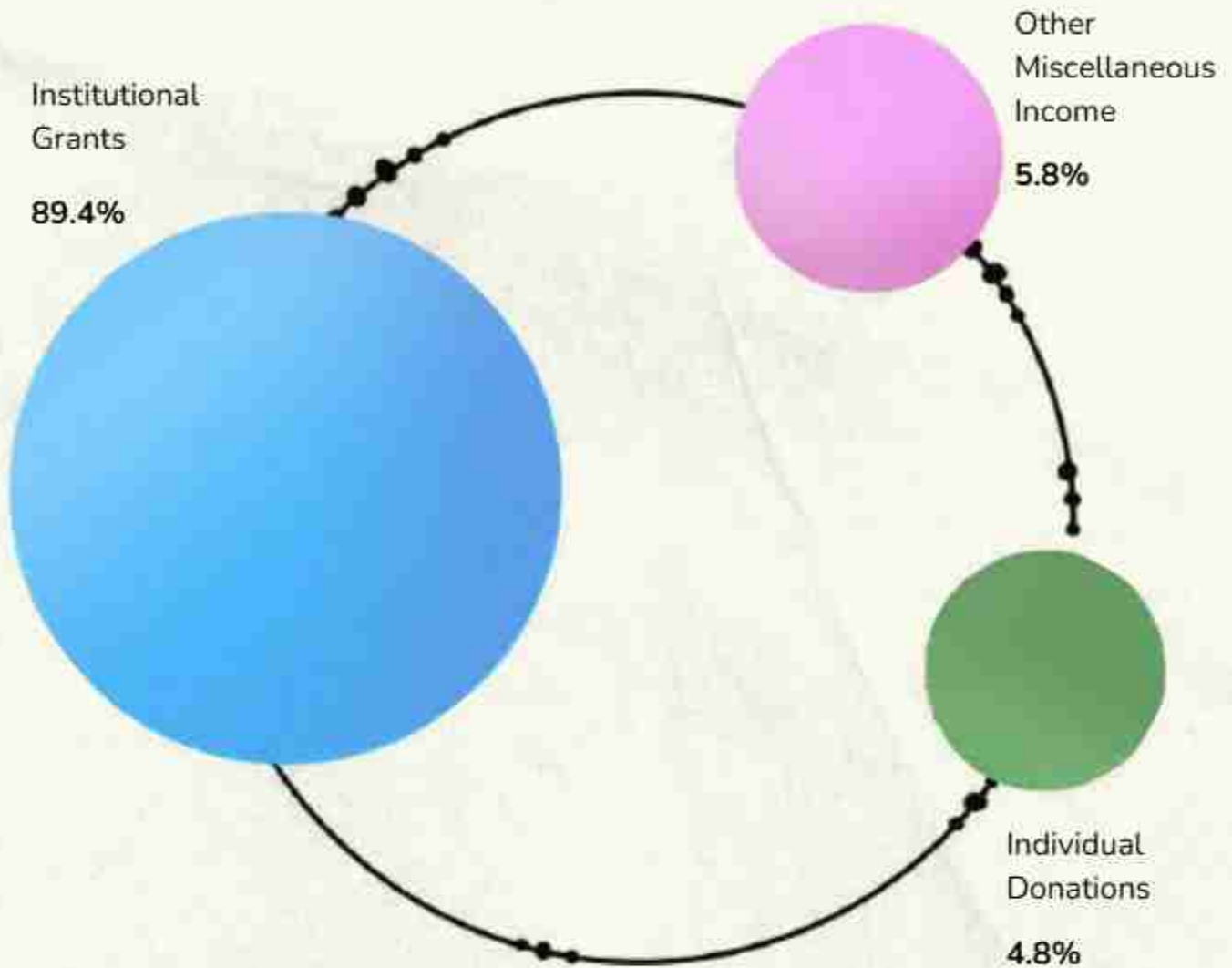
Through uncertainty and change, the challenge was to move beyond surface level interest to deep commitments for the change we wish to create. We are continuing to make room for people to step in with courage, conviction, and a willingness to stay the course.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Growth demands honesty. Our 10-year Culture Audit created space to reflect on where we had upheld our values, where we had fallen short, and what repair still called for.




Financial Summary

(Income)

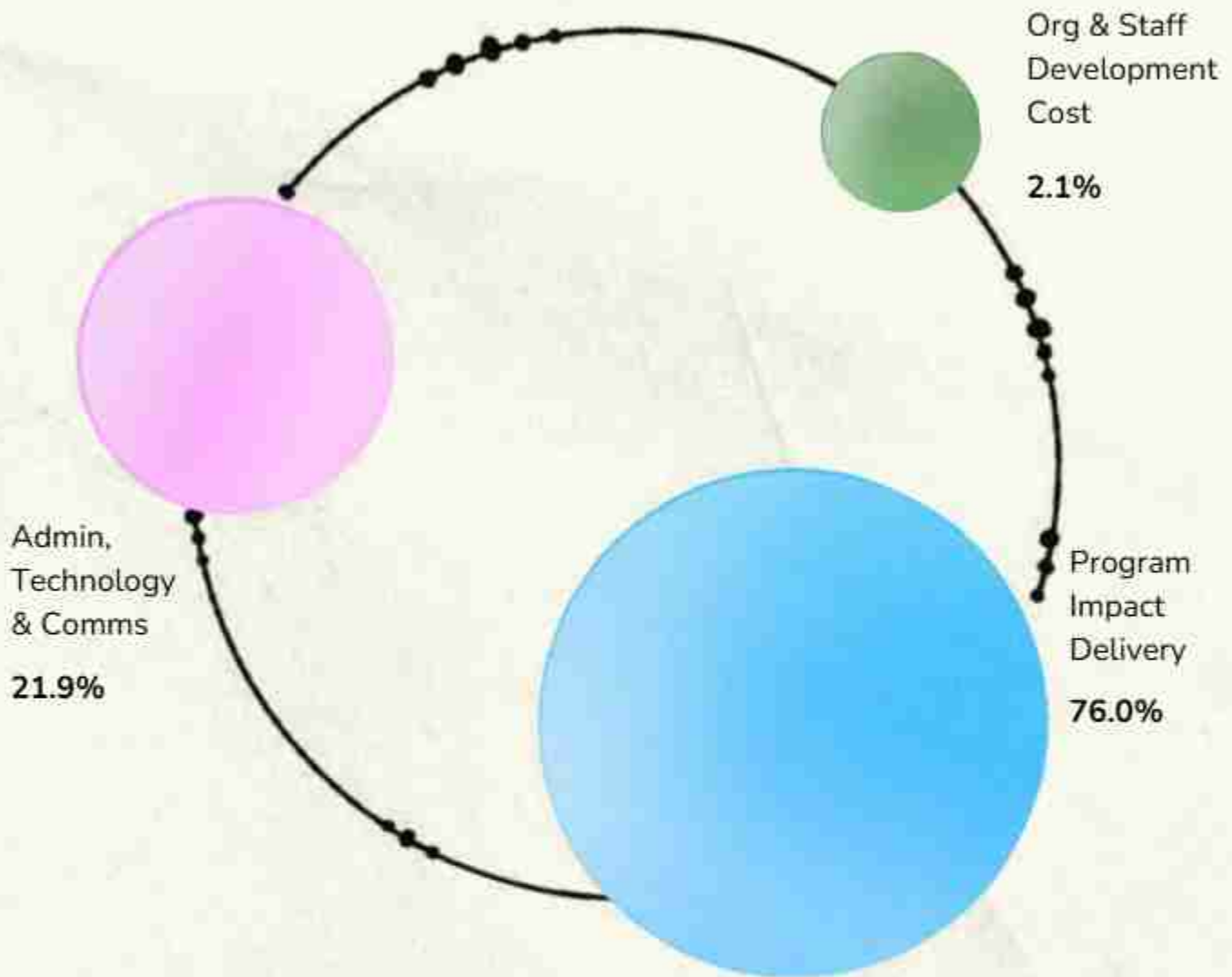


Total Income

FY 2025 - 2026




	Institutional Grants	₹2,00,00,000
	Miscellaneous Income	₹12,93,503
	Individual Donations	₹10,78,003

Financial Summary (Expense)



Total Income

FY 2025 - 2026

	Program Impact Delivery	₹1,42,68,649
	Admin, Technology & Comms	₹41,13,199
	Org & Staff Development Cost	₹3,85,231

An illustration of two hands, one larger and one smaller, holding a glowing yellow sun. The sun has a bright center and radiating rays. Several yellow stars are scattered around the sun. The background is a solid blue color. The hands are rendered in a stylized, flat style with visible lines for fingers and palms.

Hopes and anticipations for this year

As we work on solidifying Haiyya's identity and go deeper in community organizing, we are more certain about what this work demands, time, honesty, courage, integrity and care. We are clearer about what we will protect, depth over scale, repair over avoidance, and leadership ecosystems over individual heroics.

To everyone who walked with us this year, learners, organizers, facilitators, partners, funders, and friends, **thank you for trusting us with the slow, necessary work of change that is organizing.**

We continue to believe that hope is not a feeling, it is a practice.

The Team That Led & Held It All

Executive Management Team



Aprajita Pandey,
CEO & Founder



Akshay G.,
Programs Director



Riya Singh,
People, Finance and
Operations Director

People & Culture, Operations, and Finance Team



Jaykant Saini,
Sr Finance & Legal
Manager



Nikhat Parveen,
Finance Associate



Monjir,
Sr Admin Associate



Karthika Rayavarapu,
People & Culture
Manager



Sahil, Office
Supervisor

Programs, Fundraising & Communications Team



Bhumika Sahani,
Sr Manager - Programs
& Fundraising



Prathicksa M,
Program Manager



Thirumurthi T,
Program Manager



Saloni S,
Sr Program
Associate



Stanzin,
Junior Program
Associate



Pritam Das,
Sr Program
Associate



Parth Pawar,
Sr Associate -
Content & Comms



Thilakasri Krepanand,
Design Consultant



Yashnashree,
Sr Manager - Comms &
Engagement Lead

Our Trainers and Coaches

**Abhishek
Desai**

**Sreejani
Malakar**

**Madhura
Dasgupta**

**Chiku
Agrawal**

Our Advisors



Prof. Marshall Ganz



Rishabh Lalani



Tanvi Girotra

Our Strategic Planning Committee

Abhishek
Desai

Sumit A

Maya
Bhardwaj

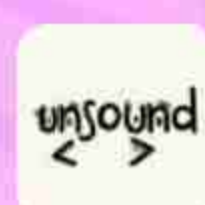
Jafrin
Akhtar

Pankaj
Kumar

Mahesh
Negi

Gratitude to Partners We Worked With

Thank you to all our collaborators who have made this journey possible and worthwhile, who have stood by us for a shared purpose.



Acknowledgments

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Content & Curation : **Yashna and Aprajita**

The communications team would like to sincerely thank all Haiyya staff members for their invaluable inputs.

Thank you to each one of you for being part of the Haiyya Network in 2025, for showing up and helping this community grow and stay strong. Your commitment for change is what sustains us.



H A I Y Y A

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