

Umang



Learning from

'A Norm-shifting & Empowerment-integrated Model'

to address child/early marriage of adolescent girls in Jharkhand

Acknowledgment



PCI India brings this evaluation study to share its enriching experience of piloting Umang model at Nala (in Jamtara) and Godda Sadar (in Godda) blocks in Jharkhand during Oct'19 to March'23, and present measured assessment of its impact.

We express our humble gratitude to the members and leaders of women's collectives and community for allowing us into their lives and into their transformative journey for the last four years.

We are sincerely grateful to the Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society (JSLPS) for offering us the platform of institutional structure to work on, and for their valuable support and guidance. We appreciate the indomitable spirit and enthusiastic participation of JSLPS cadre, who have led Umang at ground level.

We thank the project and evaluation teams at PCI India for their tireless efforts in project design & implementation, data collection & assessment and presentation of measurement findings to you.

We truly cherish the significant contribution of Global Communities throughout the design thinking stage.

The Issue of Child/Early Marriage in India and Jharkhand



Status of Adolescent Girls in India and Jharkhand

23% of women aged 20-24 years **in India** are married before the age of 18. (NFHS-5, 2019-21); 27% in NFHS-4

Overall women and girls have a poor sense of self-efficacy, agency and decision-making power about their health, education and well-being. (Corstone, 2016)

School dropout among girls is most likely to occur between 5th to 8th standard in India. (CRY, 2013)



32% of women aged 20-24 years **in Jharkhand** are married before the age of 18. (NFHS-5, 2019-21); 38% in NFHS-4

10% of women in the age-group of 15-19 years in Jharkhand had **given birth** to a child or been pregnant during the time of survey. (NFHS-5, 2019-21); 12% in NFHS-4

Only **33%** of women aged 15-49 years in Jharkhand received **10 or more years of schooling**. (NFHS-5, 2019-21); 29% in NFHS-4

Learnings from Formative Study



Why child/early marriage persists?



- Lack of quality alternatives to delay marriage in the form of safe transition into adulthood makes child/early marriage a sticky social norm.
- Patriarchal community set-up and systemic arrangements (controlling sexuality and lack of safety) results in parents choosing to marry off their daughters as early as possible.
- Increasing economic burden in the form of dowry complicates the issue of child/early marriage.
- Harmful effects of early marriage on adolescent girls are often ignored as the benefits are perceived to outweigh them.

Normative challenges for mothers

to prevent child/early marriages of adolescent daughters (1/2)

Individual Woman (SHG member)

- Women are less expected (included) to be part of marriage related decision-making
- Women (mothers) are expected to agree to the marriage related suggestions of other family members/relatives
- Women are expected to agree for any match proposed to their daughters (pressure of dowry)
- Mothers are expected to teach daughters all sorts of household chores so that she is ready for marriage soon after adolescence (Do not know how to keep daughters engaged with any other constructive work to delay her marriage with lesser conflicts)

Normative challenges for mothers

to prevent child/early marriages of adolescent daughters (2/2)

Individual Woman (SHG member)

- Women are expected to get daughters educated so that she can read and write and support family in any work (not expected to study high to earn and to become independent)
- No one is expected to stop marriage, especially of girls. Marriage is a sacred ceremony and in the event of any unwanted event, the girl and her family face a lot of stigma and social exclusion/discrimination
- Women are expected to care, obey and bear all violence to maintain her marriage and her family
- Early marriage helps to safeguard family honour (fear of harassment and fear of elopement)

Normative & systemic challenges for SHGs *to prevent child/early marriages of adolescent girls*

Women Collectives (SHGs)

- Do not interfere into cultural process of different castes
- Fear (marriage is a sacred ceremony and severely stigmatizes girls and her family in the case of any negative events)
- Not aware of any law (partial awareness)
- Not aware of any child protection laws
- Not aware of any legal or systemic processes
- Do not raise issues which can cause conflict with men at community and household level
- Safety and elopement is an issue

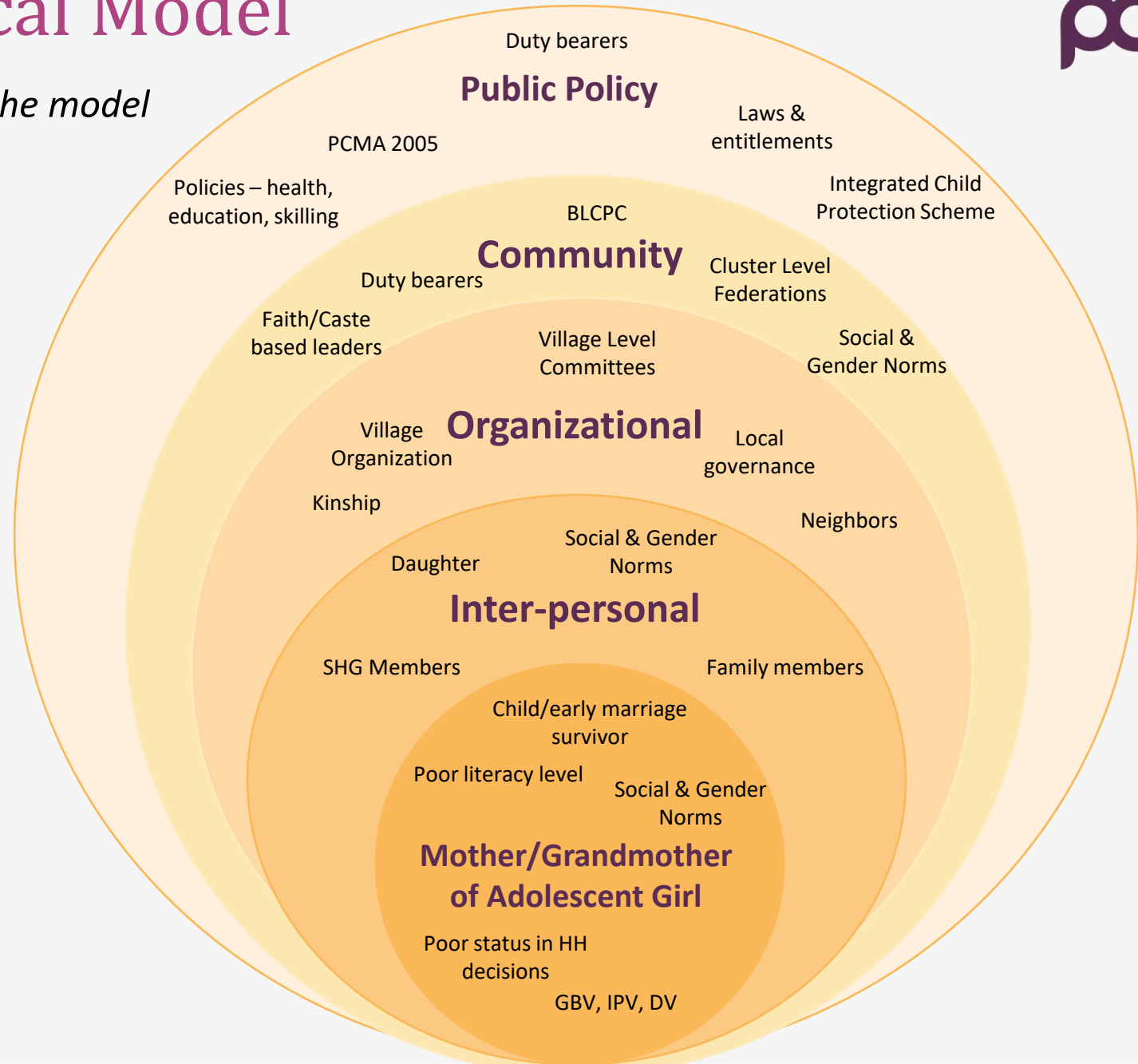
Theoretical Frameworks

for designing a norm-shifting & empowerment-integrated model

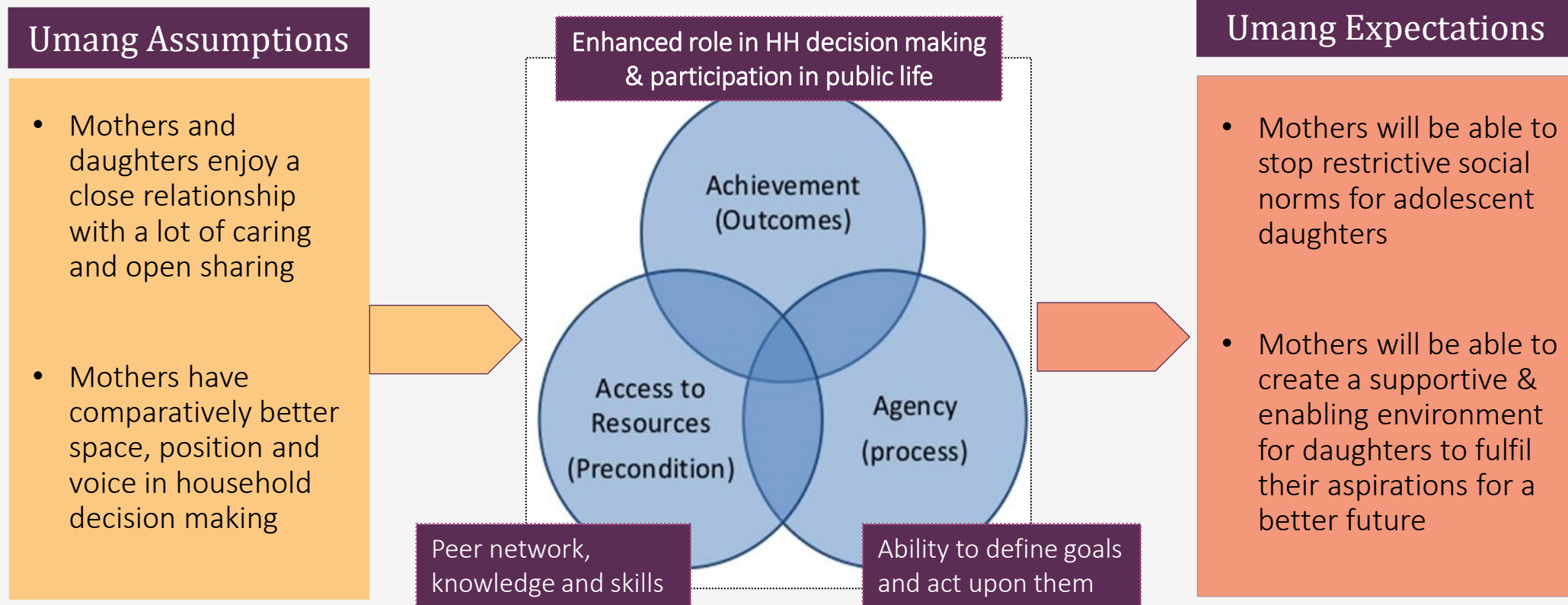


#1 Socio-Ecological Model

Umang works across all layers of the model



#2 Positioning Umang within the Empowerment Framework



Kabeer (1999) defines empowerment as the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability.

#3 Creation of Social Norms

5-Stage Process of Social Norms by Cristina Bicchieri



*Cristina Bicchieri is a philosopher and a Professor at the University of Pennsylvania.
Source: <https://bit.ly/45ml1Li> (A Handbook for Social Change: Bicchieri's Norms in the Wild)*

Layering & leveraging

SHG-federated structure of women collectives & its potential
and enriching mother-daughter relationship

Harnessing the Mother-Daughter Relationship

- Mothers are the **closest** to their adolescent daughters among all family members.
- Daughters consider mothers as their **first guide & friend** inside families.
- Most women (current mothers of adolescent girls) are **survivors of child/early marriage** themselves.
- **Joint decision-making** at household level needs to be leveraged to expand women's participation in the process with strengthened agency, voice and skills

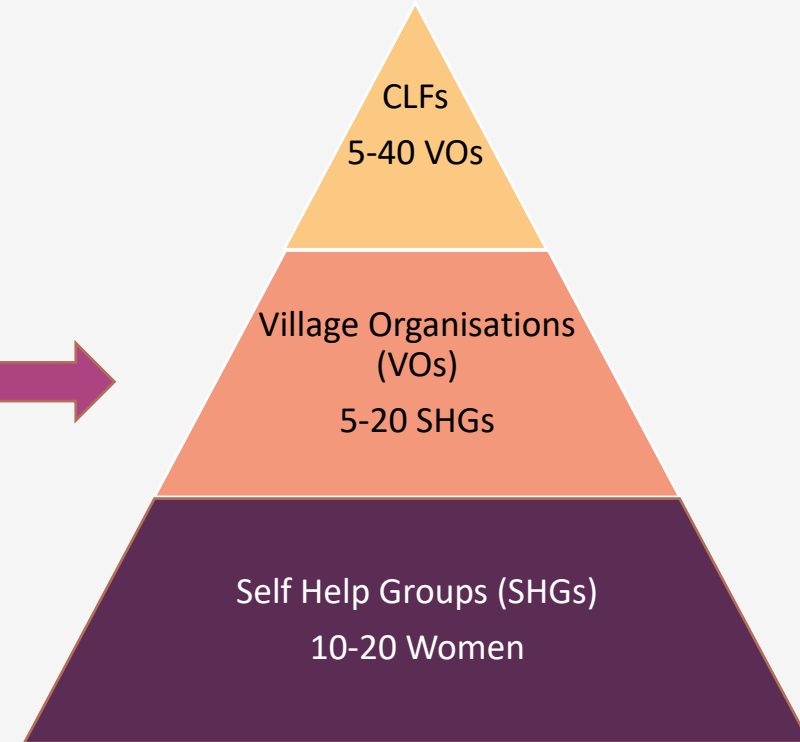


Umang and the SHG Structure

Inter-generational Transmission of Empowerment from Mothers to Daughters



Capacitating Women's Collectives (most members also happen to be mothers of adolescent girls)



3-tier Institutional Structure of SHGs

PART 1

Project Umang – Design

A norm-shifting & empowerment-integrated model



Project Umang

Goal

Reduce prevalence of child/early marriage by 15-20% in high-prevalence districts in Jharkhand and empower adolescent girls.

Objectives

- Capacitate women collectives to create an enabling environment & encourage adolescent girls to fulfil their aspirations
- Establish a scalable & sustainable model for addressing child/early marriage through SHG platform

Partnership

The project has been implemented in two phases – Pilot and District Saturation - in partnership with JSLPS.

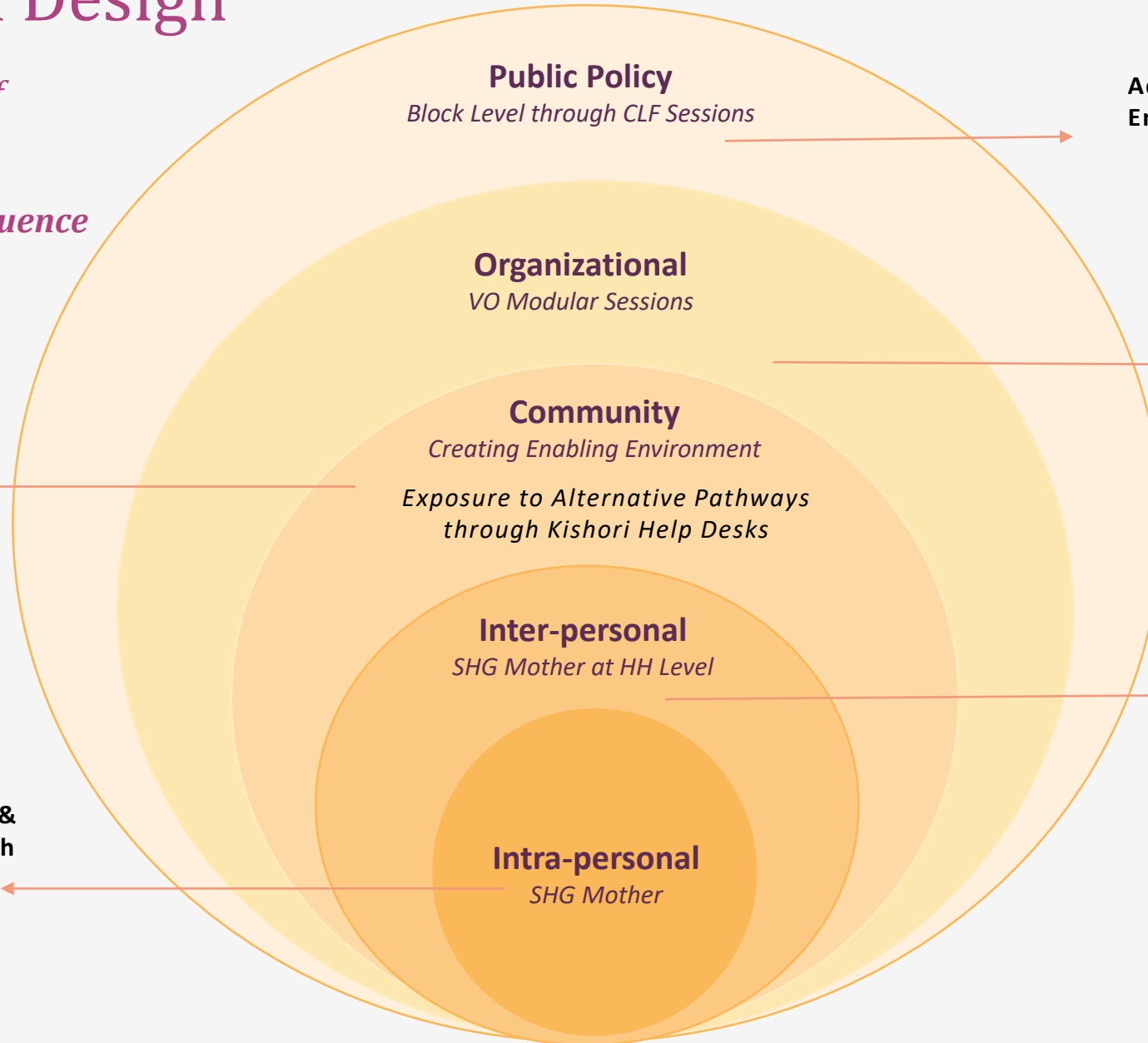


Duration

Pilot: Oct 2019 – Mar 2023 | District Saturation: Jan 2022 - June 2024

Intervention Design

Addressing the issue of child/early marriage through Levels of Influence



Advocacy & System-level Engagement with duty bearers

- Collective leadership among CLF leaders & SAC members
- Participation at BLCPC meetings
- Exposure visits

Collaborative Leadership

- Imbibing Collaborative Leadership among VO members
- Capacitating to raise gender issues at village level
- Village level convergence with PRI, VLCPC, etc

SHG sessions facilitate

- Enriched Intergenerational interactions, esp mother-daughter
- Norm-shifting behaviour
- Valuable participation in HH decisions
- Improved negotiations with husband & in-laws

Building peer support & influence through

- Maa-beti Sammelan
- Enrolment drives for dropout girls
- Events on special days
- Home visits by Umang team
- Counselling on education, career, SRHR, life skills, link with govt schemes

SHG sessions enhance awareness & enable her to realise concerns with

- Child/early marriage
- Girls' education
- Social & Gender Norms
- Participation in HH decisions

Umang Modules – *Capacity Building*



For SHGs

Enhancing awareness & communication skills

Session 1-3: Orientation towards the project and gender sensitization

Session 4-6: Mother-daughter communication & relationship

Session 7-9: Reproductive health and decision-making

Session 10-12: Nutritional requirements of adolescent girls

Session 13-15: Educational requirements towards agency development

Session 16-18: Laws & schemes for protection of child rights and prevention of child marriage

Session 19-22: Career choices for girls & avenues for financial independence



For VOs

Capacitating to raise issues at village level

Session 1-1b: Our role and responsibilities

Session 2-2b: Gift of education

Session 3-3b: Child Marriage

Session 4-4b: Welfare schemes for education of adolescent girls

Session 5-5b: Participation of stakeholders for prevention of child marriage

Session 6-6b: Discussion on laws related to adolescent education (Right to Education), POCSO, Domestic Violence Act, etc

Session 7-7b: Identification of village level organization promoting adolescent education



For CLFs

Building collective leadership for system-level engagement

Session 1: Current status of adolescent girls in Jharkhand and the role of CLF

Session 2: Welfare scheme related to adolescent education

Session 3: Awareness on existing laws on child marriage and sexual abuse

Session 4: Child Protection Committee

Sessions 5, 6, 7, 8: Childline 1098, Domestic Violence, Dowry, Women helpline

Session 9: Engagement with stakeholders on education & security of adolescent girls

Session 10-11: Data Collection & Analysis

Session 12: Discussion with block level officers

Session 13: Preparation of Demand Note, Advocacy

Session 14: Kishori Help Desk

Kishori Help Desk - *Systemic Enabling Environment*

Kishori (Adolescent) Help Desk is a component under Project Umang that addresses the gap in aspirations for career & education among adolescent girls and guides them through a healthy passage to adulthood



Located at CLF offices, help desks provide guidance on



Pathways for Higher Education



Career Counselling



Linkages with Govt Schemes and Benefits



Life Skills Guidance



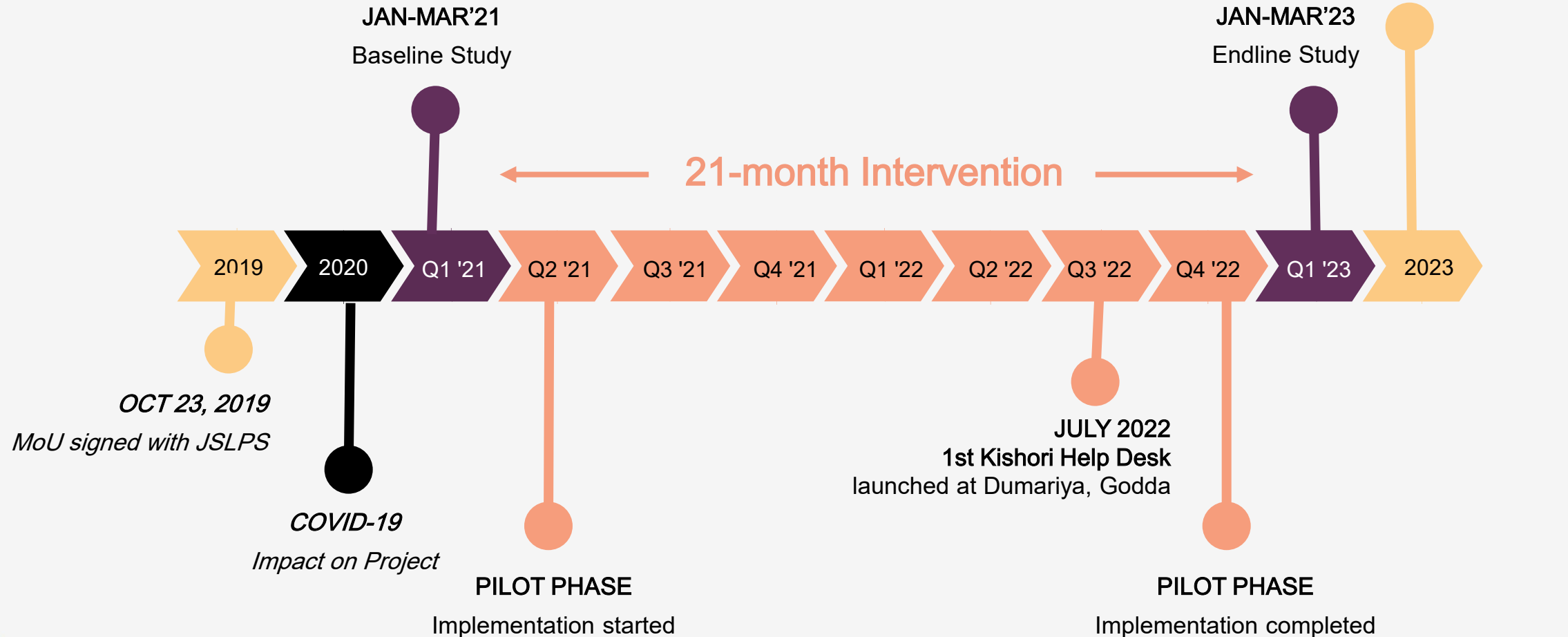
Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights

Besides, help desks also offer hand-holding to adolescent girls in applications for scholarships and govt schemes

Project Duration



Timeline of Pilot Phase



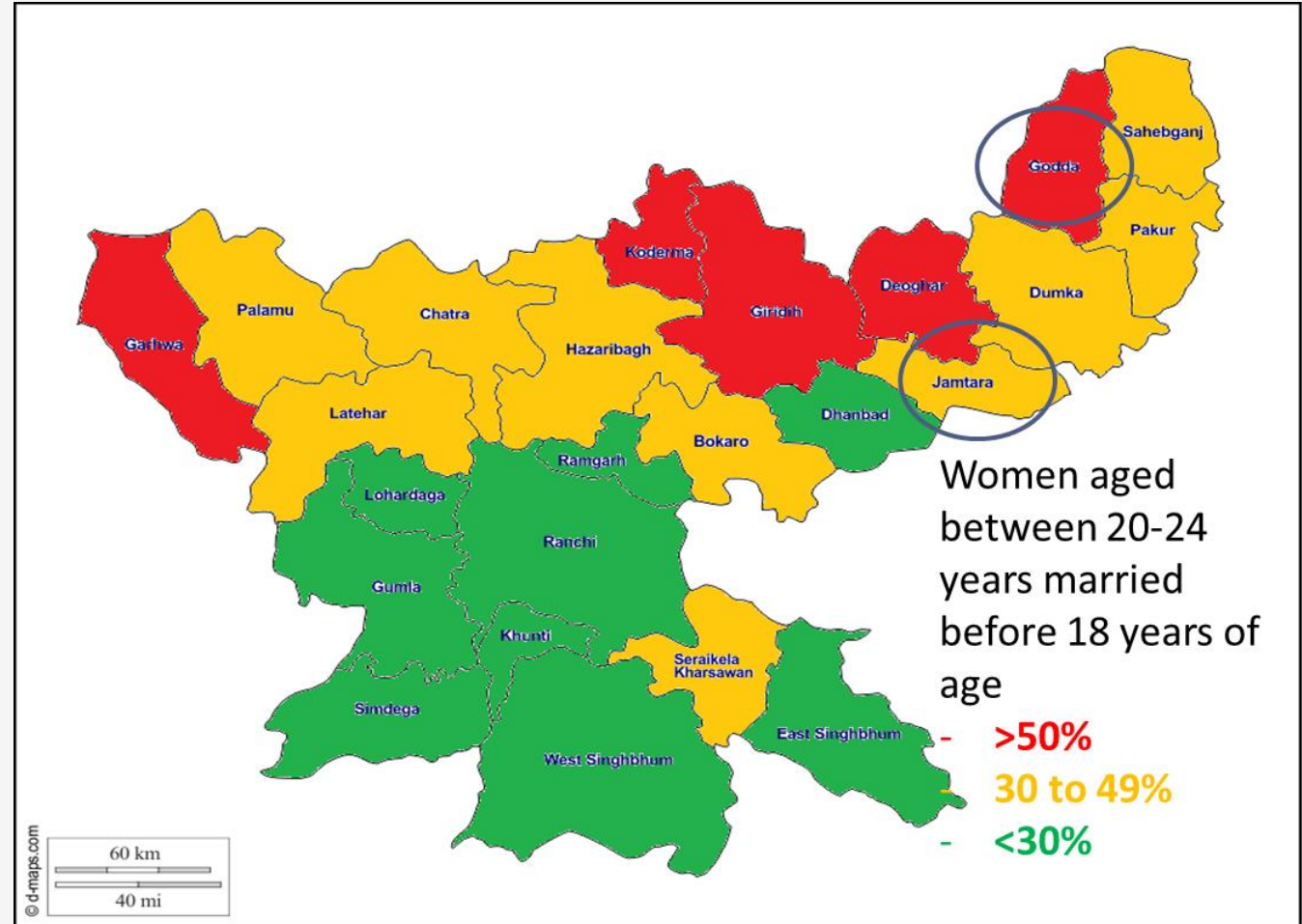
Why Godda & Jamtara Districts?

Proportion of women aged 20-24 years married before the age of 18

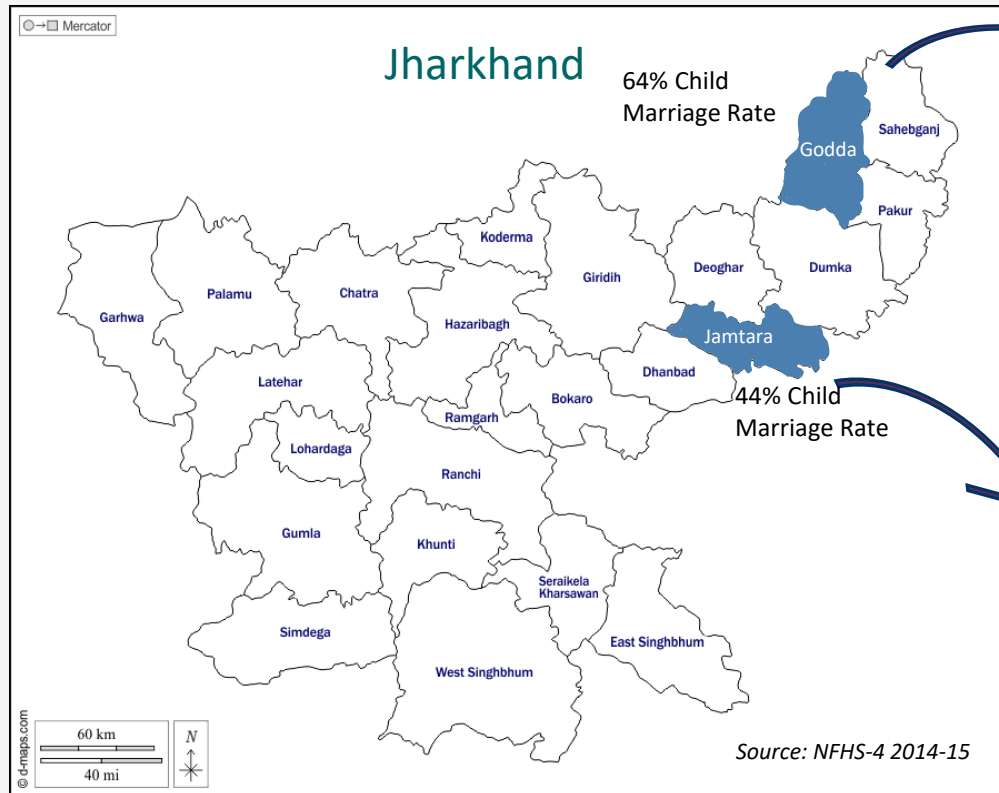
- India – 27%
- Jharkhand – 38%
- Godda – 64%
- Jamtara – 44%

Completion of 12th std. among women aged 19-24 years:

- Jharkhand – 15%
- Godda – 10%
- Jamtara - 6%

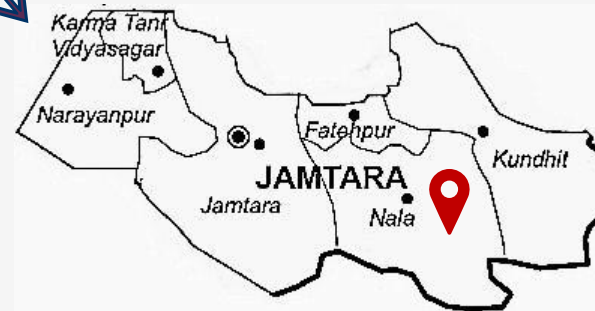


Intervention Area – Pilot Phase



Godda

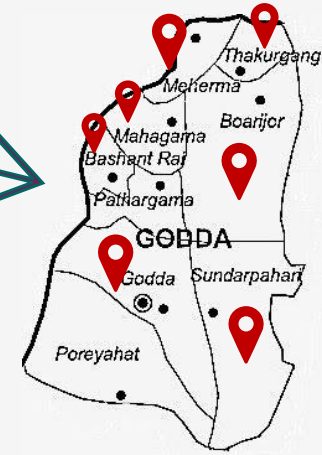
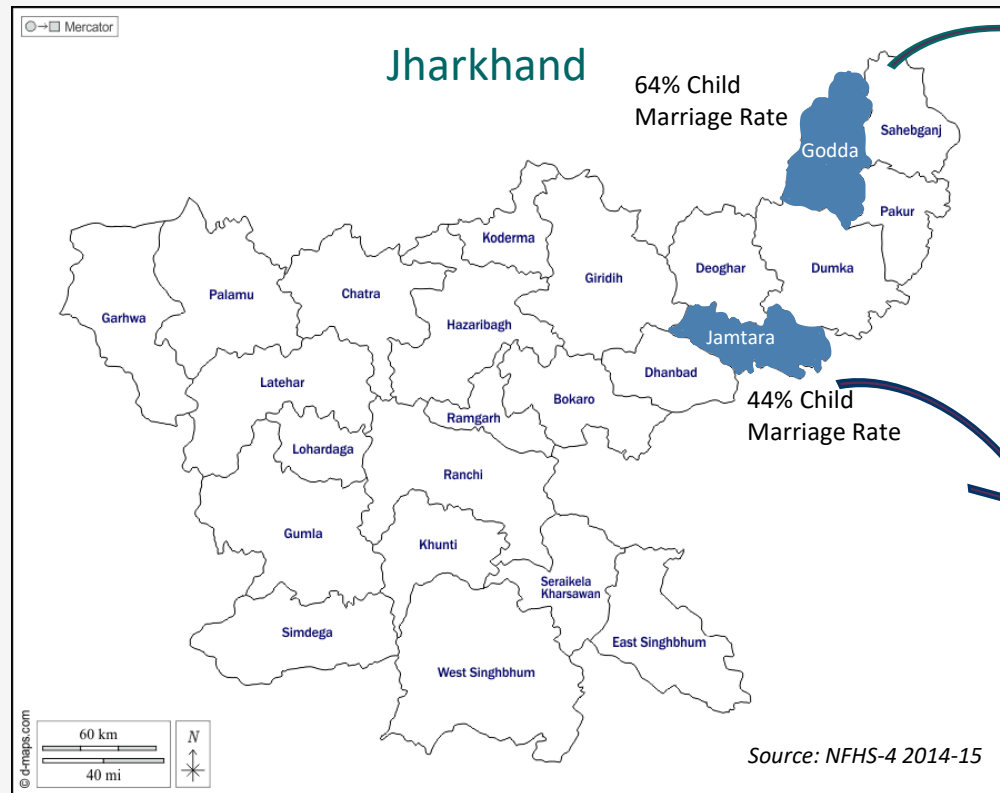
Pilot: 1 Block (Godda Sadar)



Jamtara

Pilot: 1 Block (Nala)

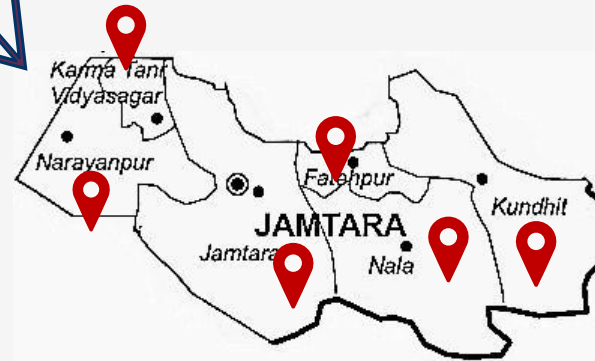
Intervention Area – District Saturation



Godda

Pilot: 1 Block (Godda Sadar)

Dist Saturation: 6 new blocks



Jamtara

Pilot: 1 Block (Nala)

Dist Saturation: 5 new blocks

Reach of Project Umang



Since its inception in 2019, Umang has touched the lives of **1.78 lakh women** from **15,000+ SHGs**.

These empowered mothers have been capacitated to stand against child/early marriage and nurture

the aspirations of their daughters, thus enhancing prospects for a better future for **46,000+**

adolescent girls in Godda & Jamtara districts of Jharkhand.

Reach	Pilot Phase (2 blocks)	District Saturation
SHG	3,183	11,852
VO	199	1,019
CLF	12	50

PART 2

Project Umang – Evaluation Study

A norm-shifting & empowerment-integrated model



Objectives of the Evaluation Study



To test the efficacy of norm-shifting intervention 'Umang' that empowers SHG members and enriches mother-daughter relationship to delay age at marriage & fulfill the aspirations of their adolescent daughters



Study Design and Methodology

Study Area *(for baseline and endline)*



- 📍 **Godda district**
Godra Sadar block
- 📍 **Jamtara district**
Nala block

Study Geography *(for baseline and endline)*

Quantitative Survey carried out in 100 randomly selected villages in each round



- 64 villages in Godra Sadar block
- 36 villages in Nala block

4 eligible pairs of mothers and daughters were selected from each sampled village

Methodology

- Representative cross-sectional survey
- Pre-Post design
- Dyad approach

Quantitative Survey:

- Baseline: 395 pairs of mothers & daughters
- Endline: 400 pairs

Data Collection Duration



Baseline - Feb to Mar 2021

Endline - Feb to Mar 2023

Respondents' Profile

Mothers

- Members of SHGs
- Mothers of adolescent girls (10-17 years)
- Median age – 35 (Baseline) & 36 (Endline)
- Age range: 22-55 (baseline) * 26-61 (Endline)



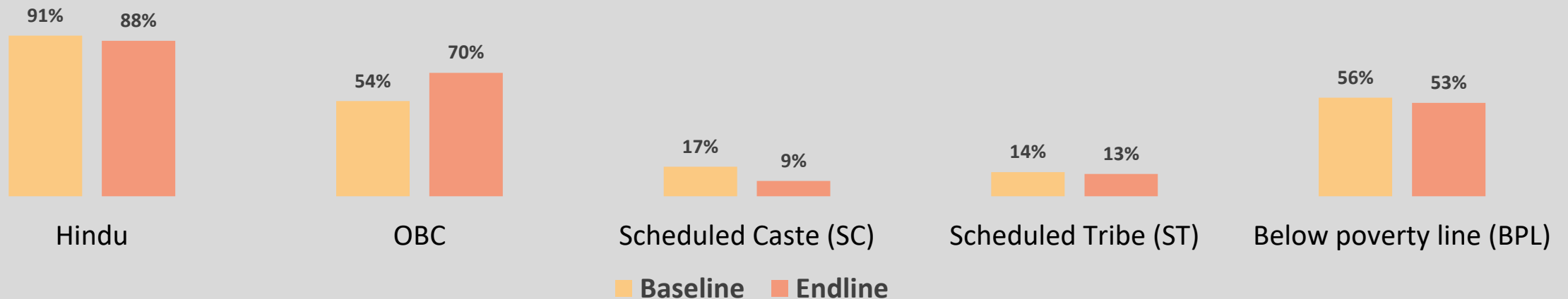
Dyad: Interviewed in pair

Daughters

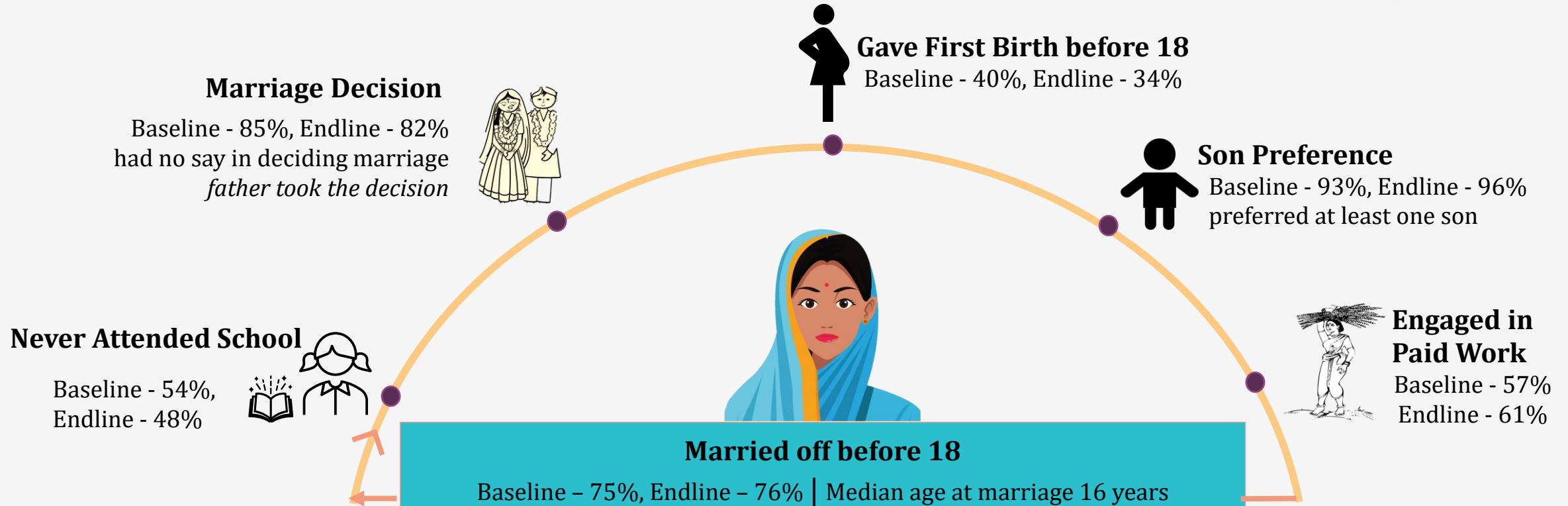
- Daughters of SHG members
- Age: 10-17 years
- Never married
- 94% attend schools in both – baseline and endline
- 10% in baseline and 8% in endline attend private schools



Socio-economic Status



Mothers' Life at a Glance



Social Engagement
Majority (66% in Baseline and 72% in Endline) were socially engaged and met with their friends frequently.

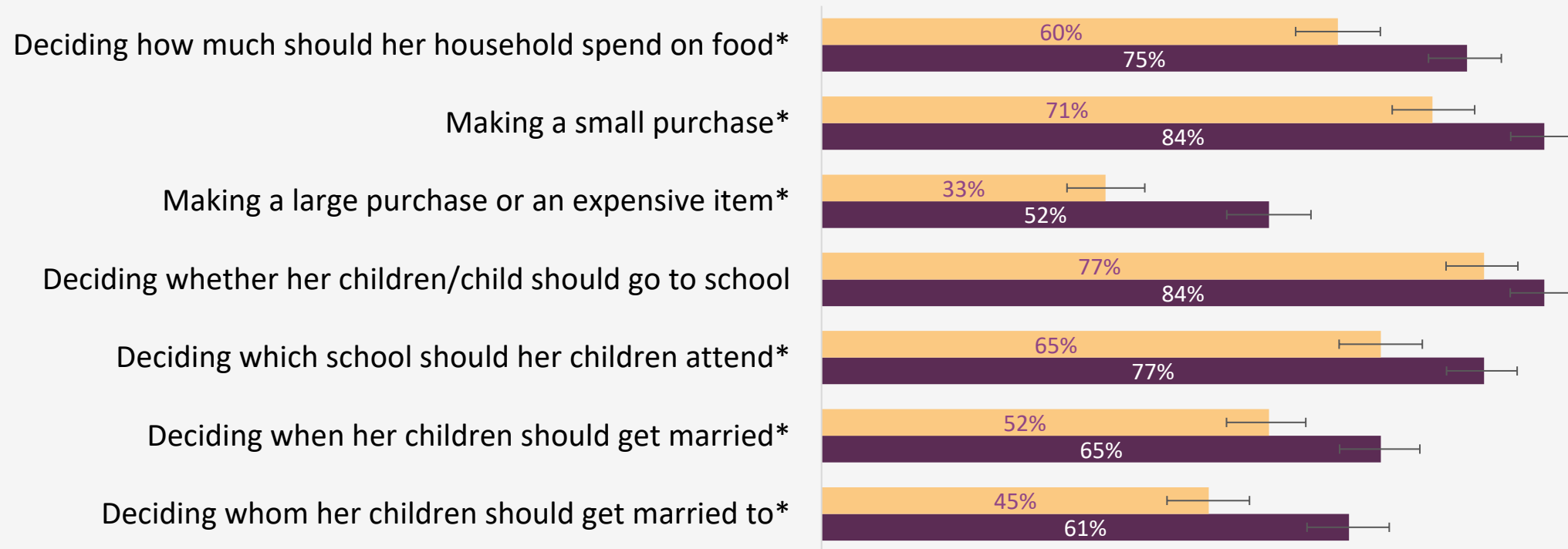
Spousal Communication
88% of mothers in endline (as against 72% in baseline) said that they could comfortably air their differences in opinion to their husbands. 84% mothers in endline & 73% in baseline reported that they could discuss with their husbands about children's marriage.

Mobility
Most could travel outside home unaccompanied. It went up from 62.3% in baseline to 82.5% in endline.

Mothers in Household Decision-making

Proportion of mothers participating on household decision-making has gone up significantly between the baseline and endline surveys. The steepest rise was observed in decisions on large purchases and selecting life partners for children.

Mothers Taking Decisions



*P<0.05

■ Baseline ■ Endline

n=Baseline 395 mothers, Endline 400

Bond between Mothers and Daughters

Endline results show higher cordial relationship between mothers and daughters, where daughters share their concerns with their mothers more often & frankly

Mothers can make out if daughters are facing problems regarding health, education and safety



Mothers claimed that their daughters shared their problems with them

84% - Baseline, 94% - Endline

94% - Baseline
100% - Endline

Health

86% - Baseline
97% - Endline

Education*

70% - Baseline
82% - Endline

Safety



Daughters feel their mothers listen to them carefully and ask for more information when they share any problems



Usually, mothers listen carefully and ask for more information from them about their problems regarding:

Safety: Baseline - 44.8%, Endline - 74.8%

Health: Baseline - 99.7%, Endline - 98.3%

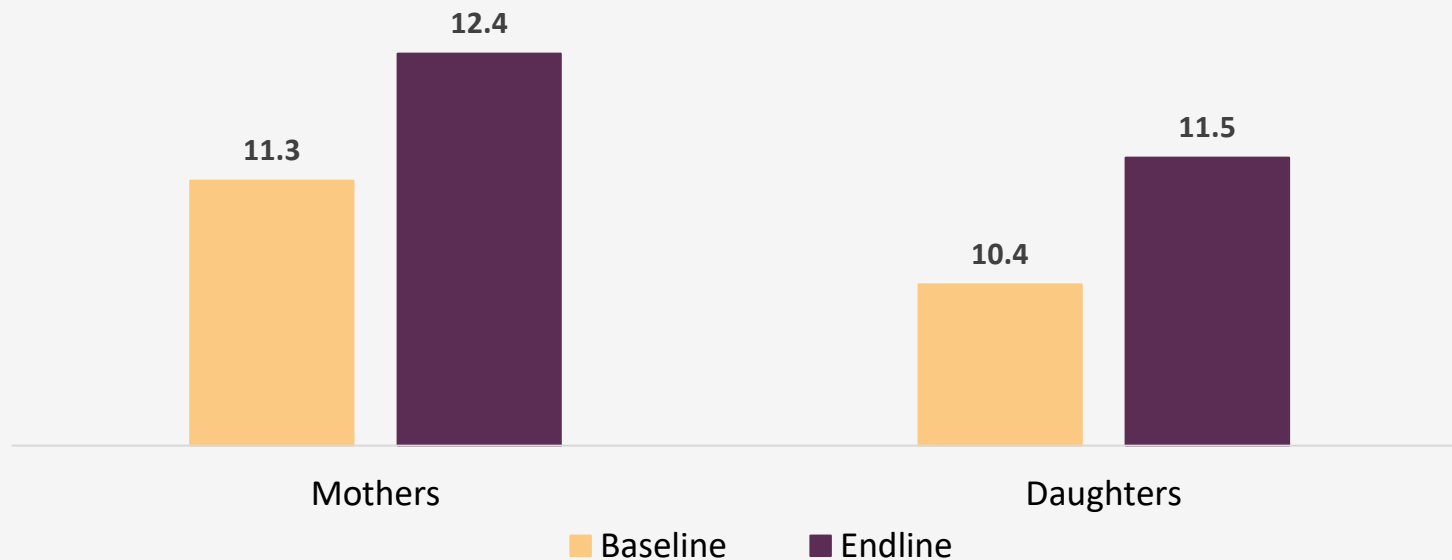
* Daughters were not asked about education

n= Baseline 395, Endline 400 (mothers & daughters)

Attitudes towards Gender Norms

Between baseline and endline, both mothers and daughters have shown improvement in attitudes toward positive gender norms. The average score based on multiple items have gone up after the intervention

Attitude towards Gender Norms: Average Score



Endline results are significantly different than the baseline scores for both mothers ($p=0.04$) and daughters ($p=0.00$) after controlling for age, education, caste, religion, type of house, type of family, mothers' age at marriage, mothers' engagement with gainful employment.

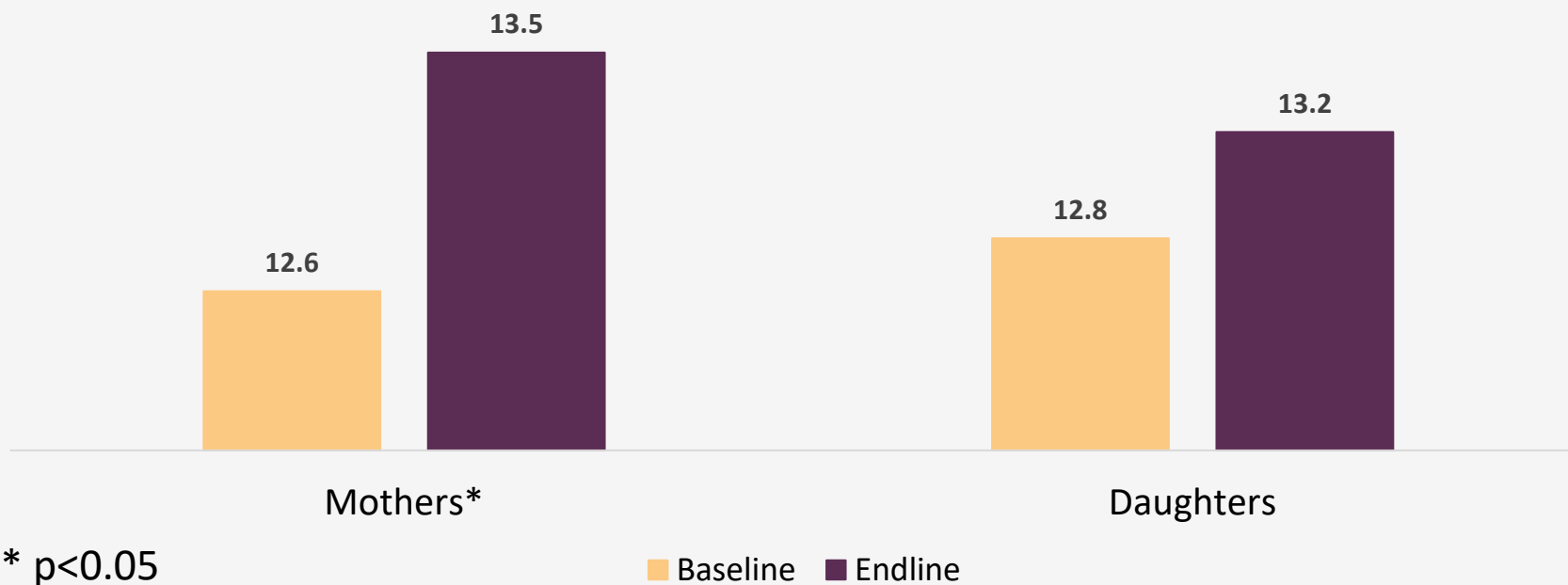
- 23 items were included for mothers and 22 for daughters
- Score ranges from 0-23 for mothers & 0-22 for daughters
- Higher score indicates more egalitarian view

N= Baseline 395, Endline 400 (mothers & daughters)

Knowledge and Attitudes to Marriage

A set of questions were asked about child marriage to all mothers and daughters (aged 13 years & above). The composite score (based on the indicators) show a rise from baseline to endline for both mothers and daughters. However, changes among mothers were more pronounced than their daughters between both the rounds of survey.

Attitudes towards Child Marriage: Average Score



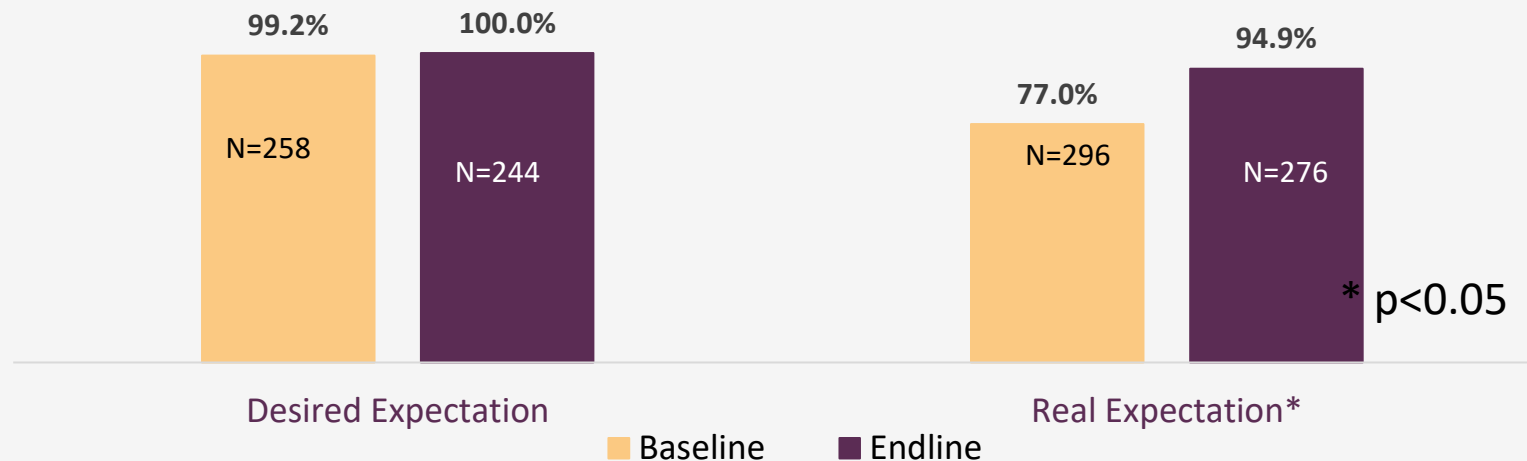
- 17 indicators were included for both mothers and daughters
- Score ranges from 0-17. Higher score indicates more egalitarian view

N - Baseline 395, Endline 400 Mothers
 N - Baseline 264, Endline 313 Daughters

Daughters' Agency to Resist Child/Early Marriage

- While desired expectation to get married after turning 18 years old is almost universal, girls displayed higher confidence level to achieve the desired goal (real expectation) in endline as against baseline.
- Nearly 95% of girls during endline responded with conviction that they will be able to resist marriage pressure and dissuade their families against child/early marriage as against 77% in baseline.

Aspirations for getting married after 18 years of age: Desired vs. Real Expectation

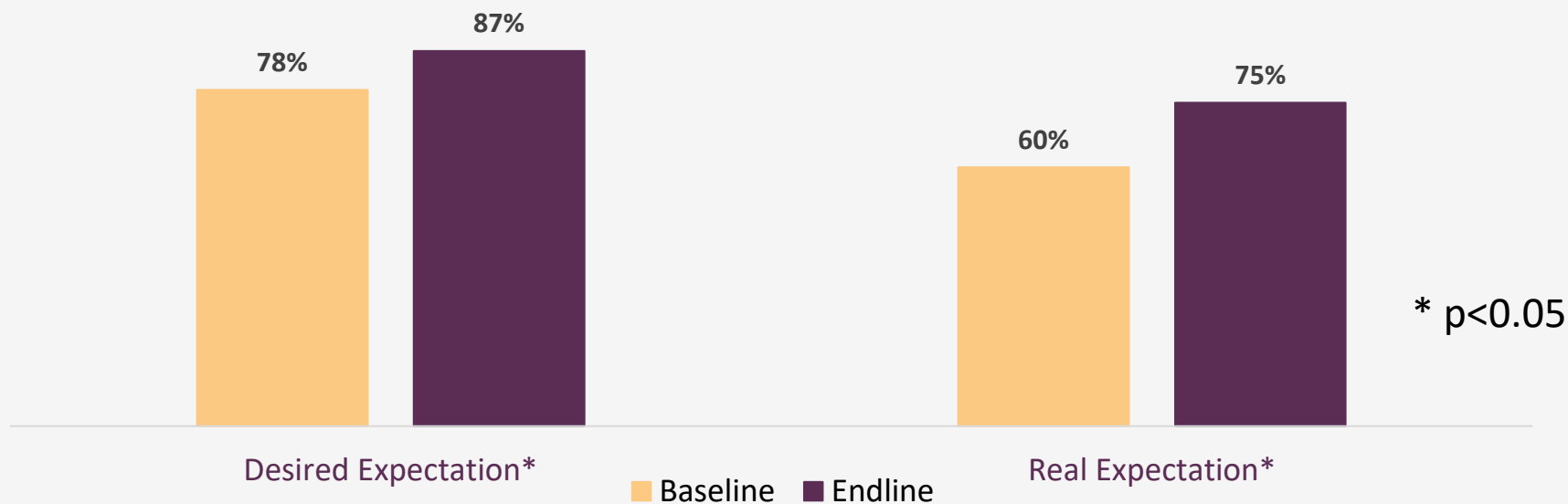


The rising aspirations and conviction seem to stem either from increased awareness, agency and self-efficacy among girls or increased support from their mothers, who are the direct beneficiaries of PCI Umang project.

Educational Aspirations among Daughters Desired vs Real Expectations

87% of daughters in endline (as against 78% in baseline) said that they aspire to study at least up to 12th standard. However, only 75% of them (60% in baseline) expressed confidence that they will be able to fulfil this aspiration.

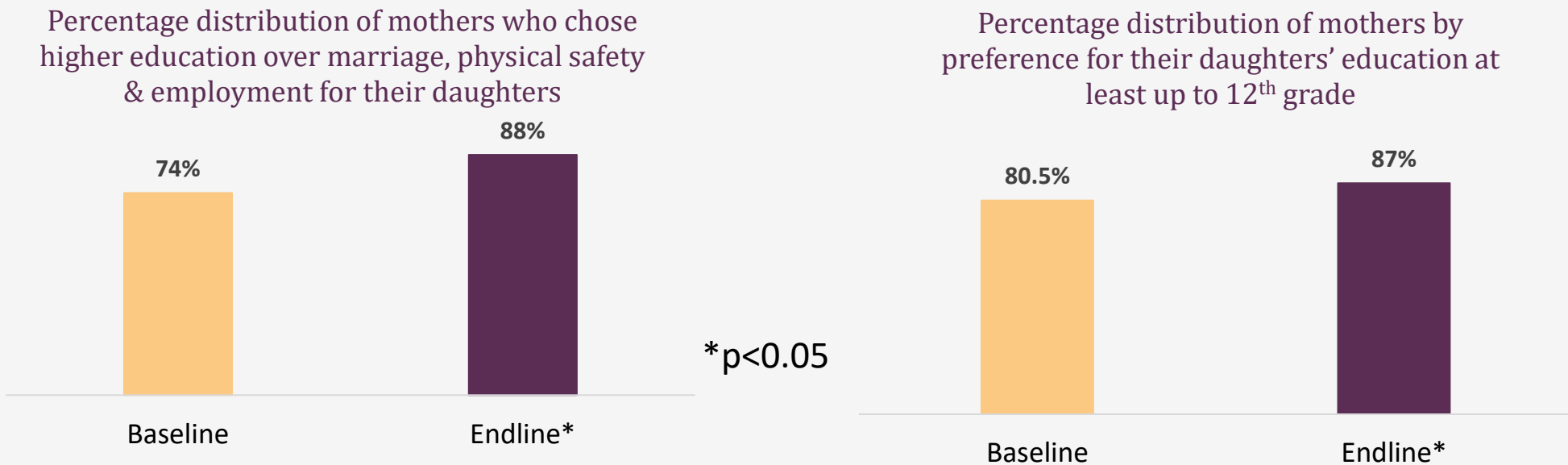
Educational aspirations among girls to study at least up to 12th grade and/or above



Barriers to educational aspirations: Expenses - 34% in endline (41% in baseline); Marriage pressure - 15% in endline (22% in baseline). Other barriers include long distance of schools, no permission from parents

Mothers' Support to Daughters in Education

- **In terms of priorities** among marriage, higher education, physical safety & employment, 80% of mothers in endline (as against 74% in baseline) ranked higher education as the number one priority for their daughters.
- **Education till 12th grade** – When asked till what standard their daughters should study, 87% of mothers in endline (as against 81% in baseline) said that their daughters should study at least up to 12th standard.



Interestingly, reservation among mothers against sending their daughters for higher studies (fearing that this will delay their age of marriage) has come down from 17% in baseline to 12% in endline

Daughters' Career Aspirations

Mothers and daughters aspire for careers which are stereotypically meant for females. They are unwilling to aspire against prevailing social norms.



100% daughters in both baseline and endline said **teaching is the right job for girls.**



74% daughters in baseline & 69% in endline said that it is **not appropriate for girls to be bus drivers.**



63% daughters in baseline & 54% in endline believed that women should **work only if their in-laws and husbands allow them.**

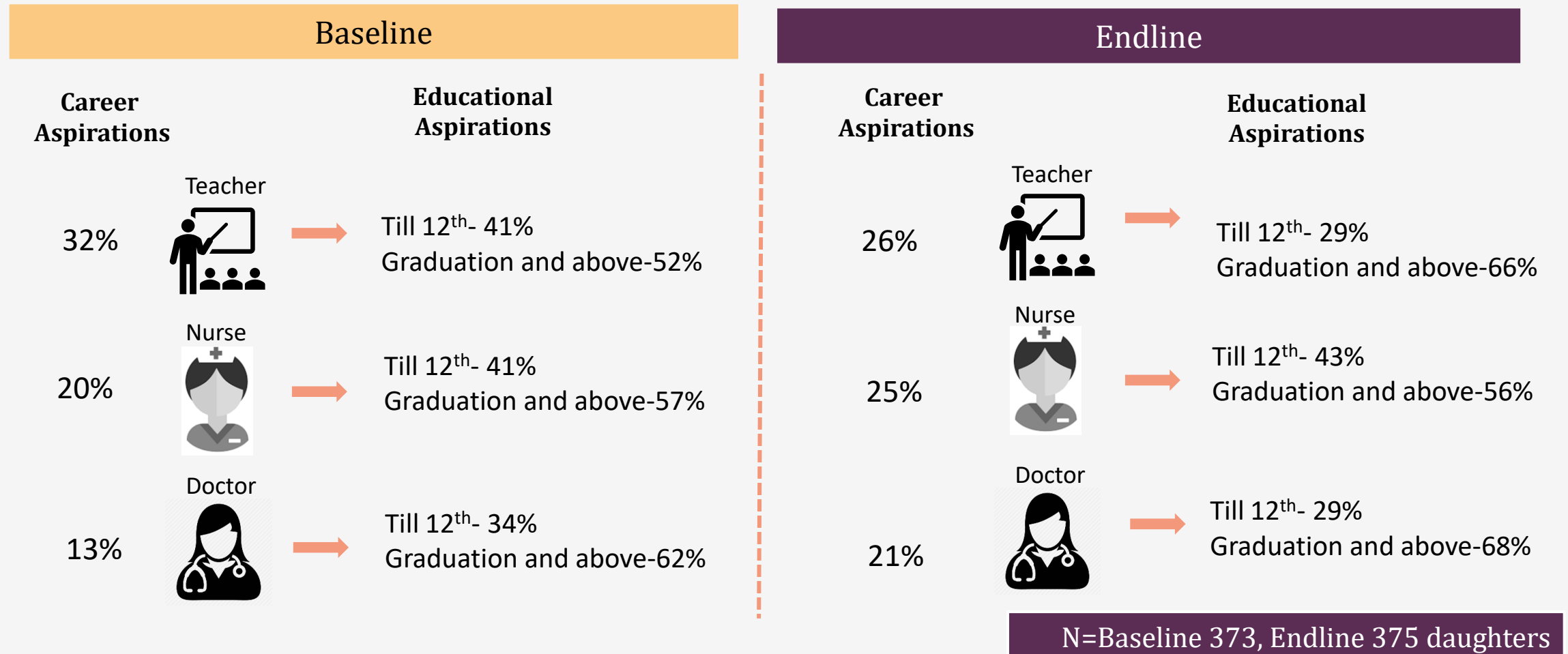


4% mothers in baseline & 3% in endline said they **don't want their daughters to be economically independent.**

Kishori help desk intervention started very late into the programming. Daughters' exposure to various career options was limited.

Gaps between Aspirations for Career & Education

Aspirations for engaging in economic activities is high among girls. Adequate proportion of girls who aspire to be teachers, doctors or nurses do not have the matching educational aspirations. Late start of Kishori Helpdesk failed to provide adequate awareness and knowledge on various career options and preparations needed to achieve them



Shifts in Norms (perspective of mothers) 1/2

Norms	Descriptive Norm	Injunctive Norm	Critical Reference Group	Personal Preference
Girls to do household chores and learn the same	Mothers believe that community expects girls to learn and do household chores	Mothers believe that they should teach household chores to their daughters and girls should preferably do the same (rather than boys)	Elders (in-laws/grand parents) and neighbours	Both boys and girls should do household chores
Attending school regularly	Mothers feel that community is supportive for girls' education till 10 th or 12 th grade	Mothers feel that people expect them also to get daughter complete studies till class 10 th or 12 th . (they're not really bothered about higher education)	Neighbors, relatives	Study beyond 12 th , which are linked to some income generating opportunities (not regular graduation)
Girls talking to male friends on the road	Mothers feel that community will not accept it at all. It brings bad name to the girl and her family	Mothers do not expect their daughters to talk to any male friend on the road	Neighbors, community	Girls should not talk to boys, as it may result in some bad actions (fear of elopement is very high)
Families need to attend to marriage proposals for daughters	Mothers feel that community prefers the response should be YES, not bothered about girls' future.	Mothers feel that they are supposed to deal with the pressure and find ways to save the life of daughter	Relatives, neighbours	Till the girl has not completed her education/skilling or gets job, its good to wait/delay her marriage. (increasing dowry adds to the complexity)

Shifts in Norms (perspective of mothers) 2/2

Norms	Descriptive Norm	Injunctive Norm	Critical Reference Group	Personal Preference
Girls travelling by public transport daily for higher education	Mothers feel that community is fine with girls travelling in bus or public transport for education	Mothers feel that community expects their daughter to be regular in studies but not indulge in other activities or talk to boys	Relatives, neighbors	Mothers feel that girls need to rebuild the attitude by increasing the trust (not get into wrong deeds)
Girls getting into jobs	Mothers felt that community is fine with girls doing traditional jobs like cadre, teacher, etc.	Mothers felt that they appreciate their daughters to take such job which others will appreciate and allow them to take care of household	Relatives, neighbors, (in-laws of daughter)	Girls do traditional roles, However, jobs in army, police is highly welcomed.
Girls' rights in family property after marriage	Mothers felt that community do not prefer girls to demand their share in family property when dowry has already been paid during marriage	Mothers felt that community expects them to only give their property to sons only.	Relatives, village leaders, neighbors	Girls should also get their due share in the property; but there's a long way to go.

Conclusion

Positive Effects

Enhanced mobility of mothers

Improved inter-spousal communications between mothers and their husbands

Stronger participation of mothers in household decision-making

Enriched bond between mothers and daughters

Positive shifts in gender norms among both mothers and daughters

Daughters feel more supported to aspire for higher education, health related issues and safety concerns

Increased confidence among daughters to study at least up to 12th standard & delay marriage till 18 years

Areas of Concern

Both mothers and daughters opted for traditional career choices

Lack of exposure to diverse career options

Lack of access to services as required for adolescents (SRHR, Life Skills, Career Counselling and quality education)

In the absence of a counterfactual measure, the simple pre and post measures suggest a lot of positive shifts and thus, the proposed pilot intervention holds a promise in reducing child/early marriages and raising aspirations of adolescent girls for higher education and positive gender norms through empowering their mothers using community institutions in India.

Learnings & Recommendations

- **Counselling** - Stronger focus needs to be on prioritising girls' education as a valid, long-term alternative to child/early marriage. Realising the glaring gaps in aspirations for education & career among girls, there needs to be a strategic emphasis on educational & career counselling (especially on start early counselling from 6th grade onwards).
- **Gender Norms** - Project Umang has proven a gradual shift among mothers towards positive gender norms. As the focus in pilot phase has primarily been on child/early marriage, hence there is a proven shift on this issue. Similarly, more areas of concern on gender norms can be targeted during scale-up.
- **Mother-daughter Bond** – Enriching the conversations & relationship between mothers and daughters has proven to be significant strategy in enhancing voice & space for daughters' concerns at household level. This can be extended towards engagement of sons as well and improved influence of mothers in shaping more egalitarian gender norms among sons.

PCI India would like to acknowledge the huge contribution & guidance of its partner, JSLPS (Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society, a body of the Govt of Jharkhand), towards piloting & scaling up Umang in the state.

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Thank You

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