“I have won many archery competitions. My life has been full of challenges. However, I continued my studies despite many hardships. Currently, in collaboration with Livelihood Mission, I am opening a sewing and archery training centre for girls in my village.”

Twenty-one-year-old Sadhana from Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh, is one of the 15 champions who received honour from the hands of Ms. Sumitra Mahajan, Lok Sabha Speaker. A series of advocacy and mass contact programmes under ‘Yes to education, no to child marriage’ were organized from 27-29 January 2019, in Kumbh, Prayagraj, jointly by Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA), UNICEF and WSSCC aligning with Department of Women & Child Development, Uttar Pradesh. Lok Sabha Speaker Ms. Sumitra Mahajan, Minister of State, Mr. Satya Pal Singh, Minister WCD, Uttar Pradesh, Ms. Rita Bahuguna Joshi were key political personalities who came out to support the cause. Swami Chidanand, Baba Ramdev, Maa Karunamayi, Maa Anandmayi, Mahant Devyagiri and representatives from Sikh, Jain, Islam and other faiths made a commitment to bring down early marriages to zero by the next Kumbh.

A video film featuring prominent faith leaders promoting positive narrative on the value of girls and continuing their education was also released on the occasion. The Kumbh campaign was designed to promote positive speeches made by faith leaders, youth (particularly men) on girl’s education, value of the girl child and the need to unplug age-old social and gender norms.
Key Results of the Kumbh Interventions (As of 27 March)

- The signature drive has directly reached **185,000 persons**
- Over **20 Ministers, Governors, senior leaders and film celebrities** endorsed (pro bono) the campaign
- Over **7,500 persons** reached through women’s street theatre and game activities
- At least one **radio programme** (pro bono) was broadcasted daily for 10 days by community radio Adan with reach up to **150,000 persons**
- Almost **35 social media posts** have been released through **UNICEF Twitter handle and Facebook page** during February–March

**Words of commitment from cross section of the society**

*many signing the ‘Yes to education, No to child marriage’ flag*

“**A girl who is not physically or mentally ready, is not mature and doesn’t understand the world must not be burdened with marriage.**”

*Sumitra Mahajan, Hon’ble Speaker, Lok Sabha*

“I fully support this campaign. It is much needed to wake up our society against social evil like child marriage.”

*Nitin Gadkari, Central Minister, Road Transport, Shipping and Water Resources*

“**Women and girls must take pride in themselves, only then will society change.**”

*Rita Bahuguna Joshi, Minister, WCD, UP*
Public education, engaging with key influencers especially faith leaders and developing appropriate messages and tools for advocacy and communication are necessary steps for community mobilisation, strengthening core life skills and positive parenting; and encouraging intergenerational dialogue. Boys and men have to be a part of the communicative action for the much needed change in social and cultural norms.

Using the above strategies comprehensively, the UP State Office–UNICEF, has designed a social and behaviour change communication campaign called Swabhimaan: Betiyon Ki Udaan (Girls getting wings makes me proud) which calls to end child marriage in the state. The campaign uses a multipronged and long term strategy to mobilize adolescents and youth, parents/elders, community influencers including faith leaders to bring about the desired results.

The Swabhimaan campaign has just been set rolling in Kumbh at Prayagraj. The second phase is set to be activated simultaneously in 8 high priority districts in the coming month. With a view to consolidate the engagement of faith leaders and youth networks to the cause, we may enter into long term partnership with faith based institution such as GIWA and youth networks such as NCC, NSS, Bharat Scout and Guide. Simultaneously, government accountability will be leveraged through the Department of Women and Child and Uttar Pradesh Rural Livelihood Mission. The commitment received from more than half a million people through the campaign will be amplified through dissemination and advocacy with government and partners.
It was a warm, sunny day in Odisha – much more pleasant than chilly Delhi. We had driven over five hours to reach Raikana village in Rayagada district, home of the Kandha tribe.

Rayagadha and Kohraput districts are home to one of the most marginalized populations in India. It can be difficult to provide services to these communities as they are located far from urban centres. A sub-health post was recently established, but basic health services are yet to be delivered. Mobile networks are weak and often unavailable. When there is a health emergency which requires an ambulance, the Kandha sometimes find themselves in a battle between life and death, waiting several painstaking hours for the ambulance to arrive. There are often only two water sources in surrounding villages, raising serious water scarcity and quality issues.

Although the Government has implemented several development programmes in Odisha and made commendable progress, traditional practices in tribal communities impedes the progress. Access to services is not the greatest challenge for the Kandha people; the community can be resistant to behaviour change due to strongly embedded cultural practices.
Focusing on social and behaviour change communication, UNICEF has conceptualized an innovative convergent intervention called “Sampurna Barta.” Launched in November 2018, Sampurna Barta means “complete comprehensive dialogue” and was initiated to support the state strategy for the reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality rate in Odisha. Sampurna Barta includes a menu of high-impact communication messages and actions which support child survival and development. These cover topics such as early marriage, teenage pregnancy, newborn care, infant and young child feeding practices and water and sanitation. These messages are communicated through intensive community dialogue and persistent interpersonal communication with families during home visits.

By injecting these messages consistently into communities, the Sampurna Barta initiative also increases demand for health, nutrition, protection and water services provided by the Government. These messages come from formal channels like panchayat elected village leaders and health workers, and also from informal channels like religious and community leaders. Embedding the initiative into the community is essential to ensure its sustainability – that it keeps going even after UNICEF’s initiation and government support.

M. Bhanu, a health worker among the Kandha, told us that he can already see the benefit of the Sampurna Barta initiative. “There has definitely been an uptake of services for health-seeking behaviours, routine immunization and more referrals to health centres,” he said.

Sampurna Barta is now run across 15 high priority districts with a combined reach of 1.5 million tribal population. UNICEF and the Odisha Government supports the initiative with the implementation by two NGOs – SOVA and My Heart.

Since this programme started, there has been a **50% increase** in **latrine construction** in the village. Soon the days of using the forest as our toilet will be history.

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Sumati, a school peon

The initiative is also creating champions for child protection. A smiling Mona Divya Rampuri told us, “I am committed to supporting our anganwadi didi (community worker) to end child marriage in my community.”

The Sampurna Barta social and behaviour change communication initiative will be gradually expanded to other districts of the state, such as among the remote upper Bonda tribe of Malkangiri, who are nearing global extinction. There are only around 6,500 Bondas left, with only frontline workers as the primary point of contact between them and the outside world for basic services.

Reaching the most marginalized and vulnerable is one of UNICEF’s core mandates. Extending the resources and support to remote and often forgotten populations is what UNICEF does— we go the extra mile for children and families who may be otherwise forgotten. What better way to make a difference than through lasting social and behavioural change?
The Government of Bihar has appointed ace shooter, Shreyasi Singh as the Goodwill Ambassador for POSHAN Abhiyaan in the state. Ms. Singh addressed officials, media persons and representatives from development partners including representatives from World Bank, TATA Trust, UNICEF, CARE India on the key themes of POSHAN Abhiyaan, on 6th March at Suchna Bhawan, IPRD, Patna. Bihar is the first state in India to formally engage with and appoint a celebrity as Goodwill Ambassador for POSHAN Abhiyaan.

In her first field visit as a goodwill ambassador, Ms. Singh attended a Godh Bharai ceremony (a community based event under POSHAN Abhiyaan) in her hometown of Jamui. The event was attended by community members, frontline workers, PRI members, government officials, representatives of development partners and local media. In her address, Ms. Singh emphasized on the importance of the first thousand days of life and the necessary care and services intended for pregnant women such as antenatal check-ups, TT, IFA and calcium, and diet diversity. She also took part in a press conference where she spoke at length about the various challenges at the field level, lack of adequate infrastructure at the AWCs, implementation of the ICDS programme and issues related to malnutrition. She also urged the media to report more on POSHAN Abhiyaan.

She mentioned that every second child in Bihar is malnourished. Optimum care during the first thousand days and practicing recommended behaviour such as timely initiation of breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding till the age of six months, complementary feeding after six months of age along with diet diversity, and age appropriate feeding practices would bring the desired change in community. She encouraged families to take care of infants by adopting recommended practices on Health, Nutrition and Sanitation.

Ms. Shreyasi Singh was accompanied by Mr. Manoj Kumar (SPMU), Mr. Anoop Jha (UNICEF) and Mr. Ravi Kant Upadhyay (CARE India) throughout her visit to Jamui and Banka districts during 7–8 March 2019, as part of her maiden visit as Goodwill Ambassador-POSHAN Abhiyaan Bihar. There was extensive media coverage of her visit.
On the occasion of Women’s Day, Doordarshan Network released guidelines for gender sensitive programming. In line with these guidelines, it will produce gender transformative content, training its production teams on gender sensitivity. The guidelines are an outcome of a series of workshops conducted by UNICEF and Centre for Media Studies (CMS) in partnership with Doordarshan on Gender Sensitive Programming.

As per the public broadcaster, it is the largest in the world to develop and implement such guidelines in its programming. These guidelines seek to challenge gender stereotypes and inequality in society.

“DD has a long history of producing social/gender transformative/empowering content. These guidelines are a pioneering initiative of Doordarshan network to create a gender transformative content across all channels and genres. This is our continuous effort and these guidelines will enable our producers to ensure gender sensitiveness of each program on our channels. The guidelines will also be applicable to all our future content acquisition and commercials.”

Supriya Sahu, Director-General, Doordarshan
The guidelines list out a set of seven principles that are applicable to all the programmes produced by Doordarshan. The production, portrayal and language of all programmes need to follow these principles:

I. All programmes on Doordarshan should ensure equal representation of women and men.

II. Programmes should promote equality and equal opportunities for men and women.

III. Programmes should ensure dignity of women and men in portrayal, reporting and representation.

IV. Ensure that programmes do not reinforce masculine and feminine ideals and expectations.

V. Programmes should not reinforce the patriarchal power relation of society where men are seen to be more powerful.

VI. Programmes should be sensitive to religion, region, status, position of women and men.

VII. Programmes should not objectify women or men with inappropriate and exploitative sexual imagery.

VIII. Programmes should use gender neutral/sensitive language.

Doordarshan has ensured that the guidelines include a comprehensive checklist—the Do’s and Don’ts for producing gender programmes. Moreover, the public broadcaster plans to review its progress on this front through regular review meetings to assess programs based on the given checklist, followed by monthly review reports. It also plans to conduct orientation workshops with all the producers at the state and zonal levels with an annual goal of gender budgeting and auditing for understanding the effectiveness and implications of its gender sensitive programing.

In West Bengal, over 41% women in the age group of 20-24 years are married before 18 years age, whereas the national average for under 18 year marriage for women is 26.8. More than 18% women under the age group of 15-19 years are mothers or pregnant. Certain districts like Murshidabad, Malda, South 24 Parganas and Purulia have high incidence of teenage pregnancy.

C4D supported SBCC Cell in the above mentioned districts to plan and implement social mobilisation activities for the prevention of teenage pregnancy in coordination with the line departments.

Purulia District SBCC Cell in coordination with Health Department, ICDS, Education Department and Sidho-Kanho-Birsha university conducted various activities in the districts. The SBCC cells are involved with Health Department, Education Department, DSWO and local NGOs in Malda, Murshidabad and South 24 Parganas.

More than 18% women under the age group of 15-19 years are mothers or pregnant.
Some of highlights of the District SBCC Cells in March 2019:

I. In Purulia district, over 675 AWWs, ASHAs, and 700 SHGs completed SBCC orientation on the issues related to teenage pregnancy. More than 125 National Service Schemes (NSS) volunteers completed sensitization on the issue. About 2,850 school going adolescents received messages about the consequences of teenage pregnancy.

II. Malda District SBCC Cell, jointly with NGO TALASH, organized a rally and special events namely “Aage Sikhar Soapan, Tarpur Kannadan” at Malda Railway Girls’ High School. Over 500 adolescents mobilized in English Bazar block on International Women’s Day (IWD). A poem on prevention of early marriage written by one of the student volunteers (Sugra Banu, Class X, Ramnagar High Madrasha) was displayed and recited by other students at different IWD events.

III. About 1,200 school going adolescent girls in 10 schools in six blocks of Murshidabad were mobilized by SBCC Cell for the prevention of teenage pregnancy.

IV. District SBCC Cells and line departments jointly prepared localized IEC materials such as wall paintings, poems, handbills, and appealed for them to be displayed and distributed at select locations like panchayat offices, schools and local market places.
An avid listener of songs from 1990's, most of the time I listen Hindi and English songs from “My Favourite” playlist. Robin Sharma is my favourite singer and I listen his podcast on SoundCloud.

I like utility apps and believe in ad free service. I like Digilocker, Buffer (to manage social media), LinkedIn, SoundCloud and Spark (to manage email).

Formal clothes in cotton fabric are my favourites. I like lighter shades of colour and also like Khadi waistcoat popularly known as “bandi” in Bihar.

As I am a 1990s kid, I like Sylvester Stallone's Rambo series and am eagerly waiting for his movie, Last Blood which is set to release in September 2019. I like several Hindi films, Andaz Apna Apna is one of them. Nowadays, I mostly watch web series. My recent favorites are Mirzapur, The Test Case and Smoke.

Kurukshetra magazine as it helps me in understanding the government’s point of view on issues and also provides data and analysis on them. I seldom read books but few of my all-time favorites are Idea of Justice by Amartya Sen and The Art of Start 2.0 by Guy Kawasaki.

Favorite Twitter handles: There are many handles I follow. A few of my favorite handles are: @railminindia, @tweesurfing, @SpeakUP_IN, @RobinSharma and handles of UNICEF and its key people.

When not C4Ding, I can be found: driving on the roads. I love long drives and visiting places. It frees me from my limitations.
Voices from the field

I joined this Masters in C4D course because SBCC can help to empower the communities and equip them to love a healthy life.

Felix, 1st International student from Ghana taking up the Masters in C4D course at Tezpur University, Assam.

I graduated in Economics & decided to take up Masters in C4D SBCC as this course helps me to understand development process better and the communities.

Pari, 1st Year student taking up the Masters in C4D course at Tezpur University, Assam.