

REGISTERED AS
CHILD WELFARE AND
ACTION FOUNDATION

FY 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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FOUNDERS CORNER



MEERA MARTHI
CEO & CO-FOUNDER



PROTIMA SHARMA
DIRECTOR & CO-FOUNDER



SMRITI GUPTA
CO-FOUNDER

FY 2024–2025 was a remarkable year for WAIC. Together with the WCD departments of Maharashtra, Telangana, and Karnataka, we continued to leverage both technology and fieldwork to ensure that more children find their way into the legal adoption pool and, ultimately, into loving families.

Our 5 Child Protection Patrons, who committed ₹5 lakhs for 5 years, stood firmly by our side, as did our individual donors whose year-on-year commitment furthers our mission with trust and belief.

We are grateful to the Azim Premji Foundation, whose partnership strengthened our work in Karnataka, and to Dr. Reddy's Laboratories CSR, whose support enabled us to work in CCIs across Telangana. Our heartfelt thanks to other CSR partners—BCG, Linkwell Telesystems, ShipConsole and FutureThoughts. Finally, a special note of gratitude to the Tarachand Ramnath Seva Trust for investing in our organisation-building journey.

This year was about more than milestones—it was about people coming together, believing in a child's right to family, and making it possible.

Over **440** children have been made legally adoptable by the Child Welfare Committee and over **365** children have moved into the legal adoption pool.

160 have found their forever families.

In the coming year, we are filled with hope, enthusiasm, and confidence. We will work tirelessly to continue making a positive impact on the lives of children in shelters!

Champions on the Ground



Sanjay Shetty



Premalatha Gade



Kavya Nallacheruvu



Rohit Kamble



Purender Naidu



Ann Mary



Amit Deshmukh



Shahadev Kamble



Kamlesh Waghmare



Vishwas Waghmare



Pradnya Bhagat



Santhosh Keshetty



Prasanna Pedhapuram



Ramesh Botla



Amritha



Chalapathi V



Ravi



Shreyas Devadiga



Shivaraja



Altamash Khazi



Sanga Shivaji

WAIC team is passionate, dedicated and are an asset and pride of the organization. Fieldwork is particularly challenging, as it involves working with multiple stakeholders, changing mindsets, and adhering to a thorough legal process. Most importantly, we must ensure we respect everyone's roles and boundaries.

This includes a committed support team for admin and finance activities which are as important as our programs.

We hired 4 new team members, 3 for programs and one for finance.

OUR VISION & MISSION

Our Vision is that Every child in India is assured a right to family through long-term changes made to the adoption ecosystem. Every child in shelters is accounted for and no child languishes in shelters unnecessarily.

Our mission is to make every child in India's shelters visible to the authorities through digitisation. Evaluate children for adoption eligibility and enable policy changes for children living in shelters even when they have a family. Bring about a sustainable change through adoption-related training and public awareness.

WHY WAIC

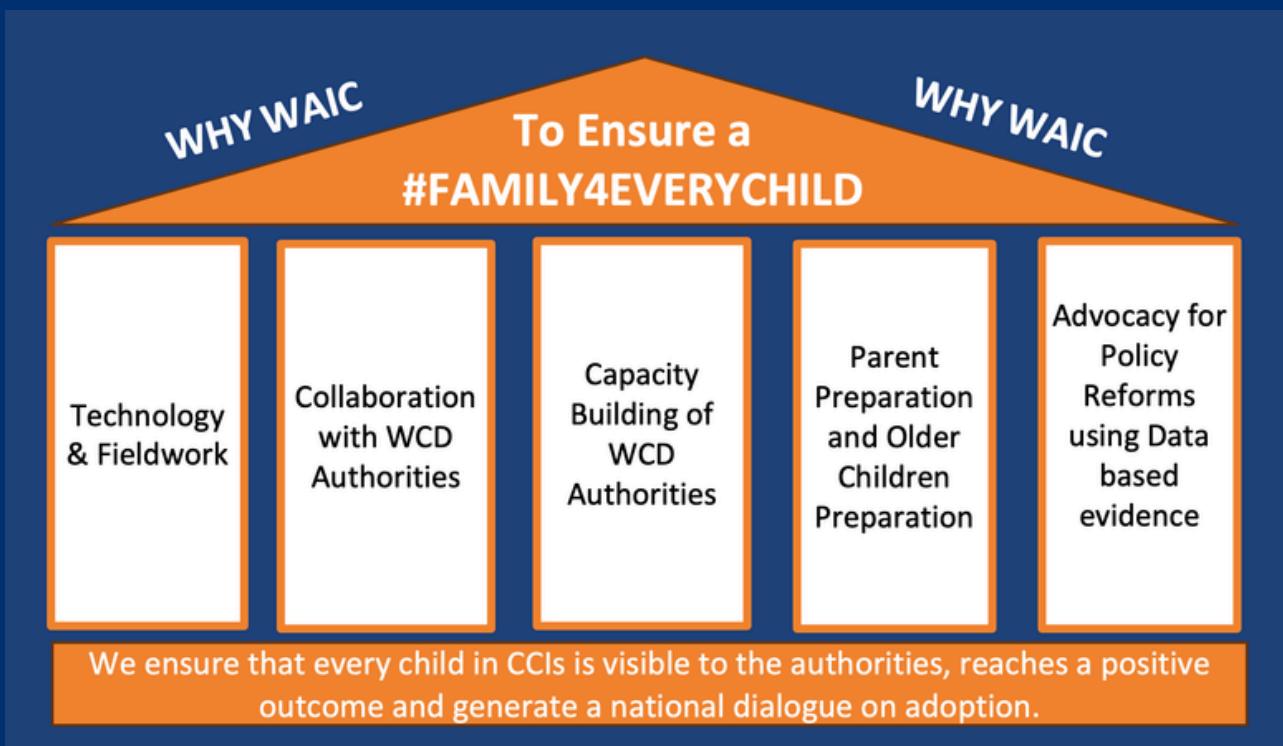
When we think of childhood, we think of love, laughter, and being held and cared for. But for lakhs of children in our country, childhood looks very different. These are children who live in Child Care Institutions(CCIs). Many of them have been abandoned, some orphaned, others left behind by circumstances beyond their control. And yet, India has thousands of parents waiting and longing to adopt. So why are these two worlds — waiting children and waiting parents — not meeting?

That is the question that WAIC was born to answer.

At WAIC, we work with district and state authorities across Telangana, Maharashtra, and Karnataka to ensure that children in shelters who are eligible for adoption are identified, evaluated, and placed into the legal adoption pool — the national database called CARINGS. Only then can a child be matched with a waiting family.

This process is not simple. It is time-consuming. It involves visiting every single Child Care Institution, digitising data, following up with government authorities, and ensuring that no child who is eligible slips through the cracks. It is quiet, invisible, painstaking work. But it is work that changes lives, and we have a passionate and dedicated team who do this every day, tirelessly.

OUR APPROACH



WAIC's Approach: Four Pillars of Intervention

- **Technology & Fieldwork** – We digitise and humanise the records of children in Child Care Institutions (CCIs), making them visible to decision-makers and ensuring no child is left behind in the system. Using this data, our dedicated team actively follows up on cases of children eligible for adoption, working on the ground to move them into the legal adoption pool.
- **Capacity Building & Training** – We collaborate with the WCD and equip CCIs, District Child Protection Units (DCPUs), and Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) with knowledge of the Juvenile Justice Act, pre-adoption processes, and adoption regulations—strengthening their capacity to protect children and uphold the adoption ecosystem.
- **Parent Preparation & Older children preparation** – We at WAIC realised it is not enough to ensure children reach the legal adoption pool. We need to prepare parents especially for older children adoption and at the same time prepare children for adoption.
- **Research, Advocacy & Campaigns** – We are the voices of vulnerable children through evidence-based advocacy, policy engagement, and community campaigns. This includes raising awareness on the Safe Surrender Law and creating acceptance for the adoption of older children, fostering a society that supports every child's right to family.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



A dedicated team of 19 field members, supported by 3 project managers and overseen by 1 Chief Program Officer, leads WAIC's on-the-ground efforts.

Our team visits all Child Care Institutions (CCIs) within their assigned districts, entering each child's data into CLMS. They then present children identified for adoption evaluation to local Women and Child Development (WCD) authorities, collaborating closely to move eligible children into the legal adoption pool.

Beyond helping children enter the adoption pool, WAIC's work has facilitated family tracing, sibling reunions, and, when necessary, safe surrenders for children whose parents or guardians are unfit or unwilling to provide care. Through these efforts, WAIC is actively ensuring that each child they work with has a greater chance of finding a safe, loving family.

DIGITISATION OF CHILDREN'S DATA



Maharashtra

- 35 Districts (303 CCIs)
- 187 declared free for adoption
- 131 on the CARINGS portal
- 55 children reached families



Telangana

- 31 districts (275 CCIs)
- 179 declared free for adoption
- 175 on the CARINGS portal
- 75 children reached families



Karnataka

- 32 districts (340 CCIs)
- 75 declared free for adoption
- 60 on the CARINGS portal
- 35 reached families



Capacity Building

- Debrief Sessions with CCIs, DCPUs, CWCs
- Parent Preparation Sessions – Online
- CARA Refresher Training Resource



Advocacy

- Meeting with the Central WCD Secretary to influence policy reforms

Institution Building

- Regular Monthly training on JJ Act and related procedures.
- Focus on Mental/Emotional Well-being

Impact Metric

METRIC	NUMBER
Children's records digitized	21,100+ (918 CCIs)
Currently active cases with WAIC	500+
Children Declared Legally Adoptable by CWC	441
Children on the CARINGS Portal	366
Children adopted and reached families	165

Headcount – 23; Volunteers. - 5

ANNUAL ORGANISATION MEET



Reflecting on a year of growth, collaboration, and shared vision at our 2024 Annual Organization Meeting in May 2025.

It was a meeting sharing our achievements, learnings, and challenges. We had a 2-day meeting with team building activities, fun activities, introspection, and way forward.

SESSIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS



This year we started conducting debriefing sessions with the CCIs, DCPUs, and the CWCs when the digitisation and update of the data was completed in a district.

The debriefing session serves multiple purposes.

1. **The team discusses the data with all the stakeholders in one meeting, which helps them know the current status in their district.**
2. **The classification of the child identified for adoption are discussed in detail.**
3. **The pre-adoption process of each classification is discussed and recommendations are given to the DCPU about the orders that should be given by the CWC.**

GOVERNMENT INTERACTIONS



Our team meets all the states WCD SARA team every month to update on the progress or lack thereof in the state. This consistency has helped bring visibility to the challenges we face on the ground. The SARA team then intervenes and instructs the on-ground WCD team to expedite the process for the children waiting to be reviewed and evaluated.

We were invited to the Adoption Awareness month by the Telangana WCD to speak about older children adoption. We met the CARA CEO, Bhavna Saxena and explained about WAIC's work.

We met the WCD Secretary, Mr Anil Malik in Delhi to discuss policy reforms in adoption. We are a resource for the refresher training conducted by CARA every quarter.

On invitation WAIC attended the Family Summit organised by Miracle Foundation in New Delhi.

SITE VISIT BY CSR PARTNERS



Our CSR partners Amazon India conducted a site visit in Siddipet district, Telangana after the grant period was complete. They interacted with the DCPO, and the CWC members regarding WAIC's work.

AZIM Premji Foundation representative conducted a site visit in Kodagu and Hassan district, Karnataka as part of one-year completion of the grant period. The team along with the APF representative met with the CWC, DCPO, and a CCI WAIC worked with in the two districts.

PARENT PREPARATION SESSIONS

JOIN OUR PARENT PREPARATION SESSIONS TO RECEIVE GUIDANCE ON BONDING, BELONGING, AND BUILDING TRUST IN YOUR CHILD'S ADOPTION JOURNEY, ESPECIALLY WHEN ADOPTING AN OLDER CHILD!

With



Smriti Gupta
Parent through Adoption & Co-founder, WAIC

Meera Marthi
Parent through Adoption & CEO & Co-founder, WAIC

Pratima Sharma
Parent through Adoption & Director & Co-founder, WAIC

EVERY SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH STARTING FROM

9th NOVEMBER 10:00 AM IST
PLATFORM ZOOM LINK: bit.ly/waicpps

REGISTER NOW <https://bit.ly/waicpps>

#Family4EveryChild

ADOPTING A CHILD ABOVE 5 YEARS?

STRESSED ABOUT ACADEMICS?

- What to Expect About Schooling?
- How Much WILL the Child Know?
- How Much SHOULD the Child Know?
- What Is Your Role in Helping the Child?
- What if My Child Struggles?

JOIN OUR PARENT PREPARATION SESSION
TO GET ANSWERS ON
JANUARY 11TH 2025
10 AM IST

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Navigating Children's Trauma : Insights and Strategies for Adoptive Parents



Join us for an insightful dialogue in the upcoming
PARENT PREPARATION SESSION



MEERA MARTHI
CEO & Co-founder WAIC



in conversation with
RENU SRINIVASAN
Educationist, Psychologist, Special Educator,
Empanelled Adoption Counsellor
Master Trainer for Trauma-Informed Caregiving

8th February 2025 | 10AM IST | Hosted by WAIC

REGISTER NOW <https://bit.ly/ppsbywaic>

Parent Preparation Sessions are central to our mission of ensuring that every adoption is built on a foundation of understanding and care.

These sessions equip prospective parents with the knowledge, sensitivity, and tools needed to welcome an older child into their lives. They provide a space to explore the realities of adoption, address concerns, and learn trauma-informed practices that strengthen bonds.

By preparing families emotionally and practically, we help ensure that children are embraced by parents who are resilient, compassionate, and ready for the journey. In doing so, we bring children closer to their right to a safe and loving family.

IMPACT STORIES

From Uncertainty to a Forever Family

Vijay and Manasa (names changed), siblings aged 8 and 9, tragically lost both their parents and were placed in a Child Care Institution in Telangana. With little care from their aunt and no clear path ahead, their future seemed uncertain.

In November 2023, WAIC intervened—assessing their situation, engaging with the District Child Protection Officer and Child Welfare Committee, and advocating for the children's right to a family. Despite initial resistance from their aunt and later the CCI founder, our team persisted, ensuring that the children's best interests were never forgotten.

By June 2024, the siblings were declared legally free for adoption, and in November they found a loving family in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

What began as two years of uncertainty ended in hope, belonging, and the warmth of a forever home—made possible through WAIC's consistent advocacy and commitment to every child's right to family

The Boy who waited Seven Years for a Family

Girish lost both his parents when he was just four years old. His grandmother, a differently-abled woman who survived by begging on the streets, tried her best to care for him. Eventually, the police spotted them and Girish was placed in a Child Care Institution (CCI) for protection. Though his grandmother visited him for some time, she refused to surrender him for adoption—and later, when Girish was six, he was moved to another CCI where she could no longer visit. A few years later, she passed away, leaving Girish completely alone.

For years, his case lay unattended—until WAIC intervened in October 2023. Our team brought Girish's case before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) in Kolhapur, worked with the District Child Protection Unit to issue newspaper notices and TV broadcasts, and obtained a non-traceability report from the police. Finally, after all due process, Girish was declared Legally Free for Adoption.

At 13 years old, after seven long years of waiting, Girish was welcomed into an adoptive family in May 2024. Our team was present to witness the joy on his face at that moment —proof that every child needs a family.

IMPACT STORIES

Rebuilding Bonds: The Gradual Reunion

Sandhya, Shilpa, and Kushal, siblings from Andhra Pradesh, grew up in extreme vulnerability. Their parents, migrant labourers in Karnataka, struggled with alcohol dependence and neglect, leaving the children without food, shelter, or care. In 2020, they were rescued and placed in Child Care Institutions (CCIs), where they lived without parental contact for nearly four years.

In December 2024, WAIC identified their case during field visits and pushed for the “abandoned child” procedure. With persistent follow-ups, newspaper notices, and police tracing, the children’s father was finally located in Andhra Pradesh in May 2025. He appeared before the CWC, expressing willingness to care for them.

That summer, the siblings reunited with their father for a trial stay—returning to the CCI afterward to continue schooling while their father began regular visits. For the first time in years, family ties were rekindled, marking the beginning of a hopeful reintegration.

From Neglect to Belonging

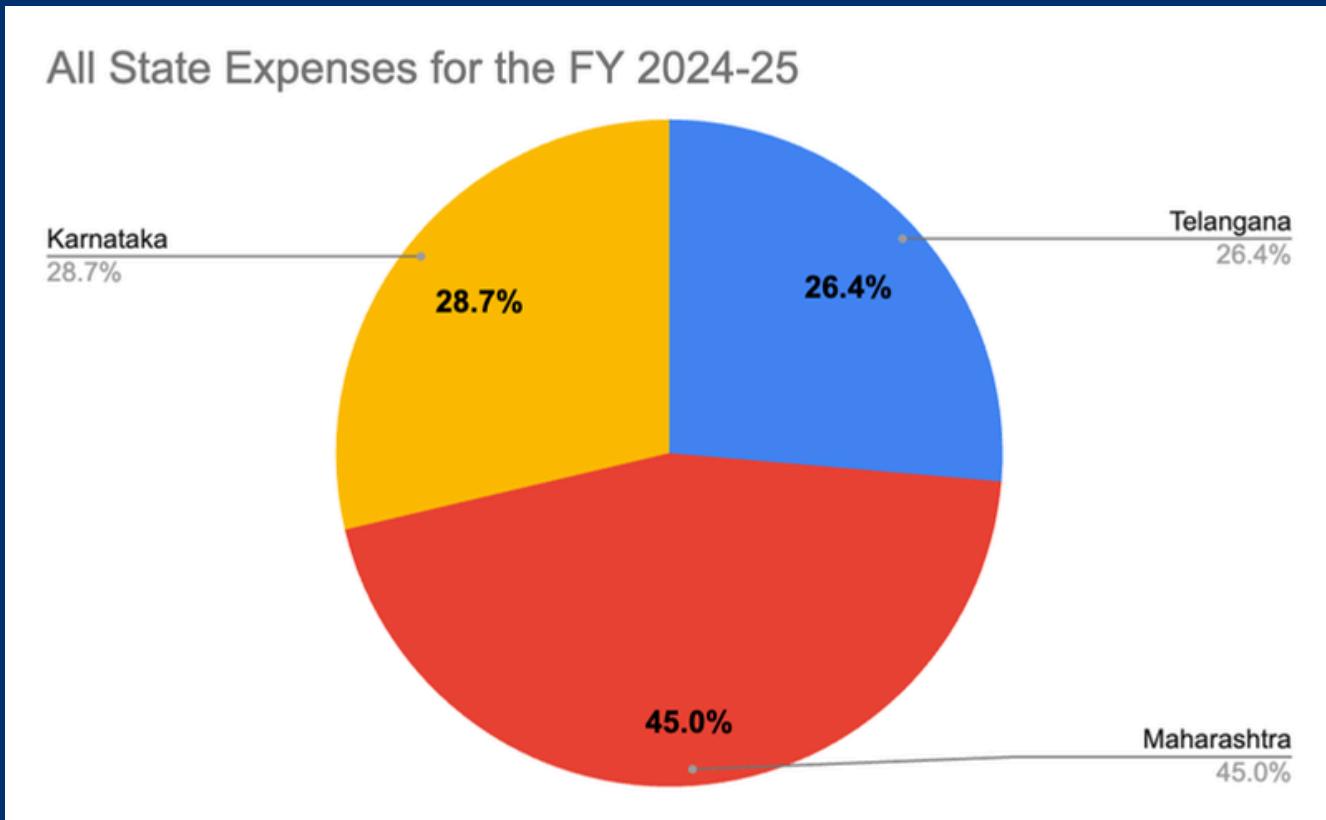
Roma lost both parents at a young age and was placed in a shelter home in Nagarkurnool, Telangana, in 2013. For over a decade, she lived without family visits, longing for love and stability.

In 2023, WAIC identified her case and began advocating with the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and District Child Protection Unit (DCPU). Despite initial resistance, WAIC persisted—counseling her grandmother, who eventually surrendered her. In March 2024, Roma was declared legally free for adoption and entered the CARINGS portal.

By August 2024, at 17 years old, she was matched with adoptive parents and began her journey into a forever family. After 11 long years, Roma finally found the care and belonging she deserved.

FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE

PROGRAM EXPENSES

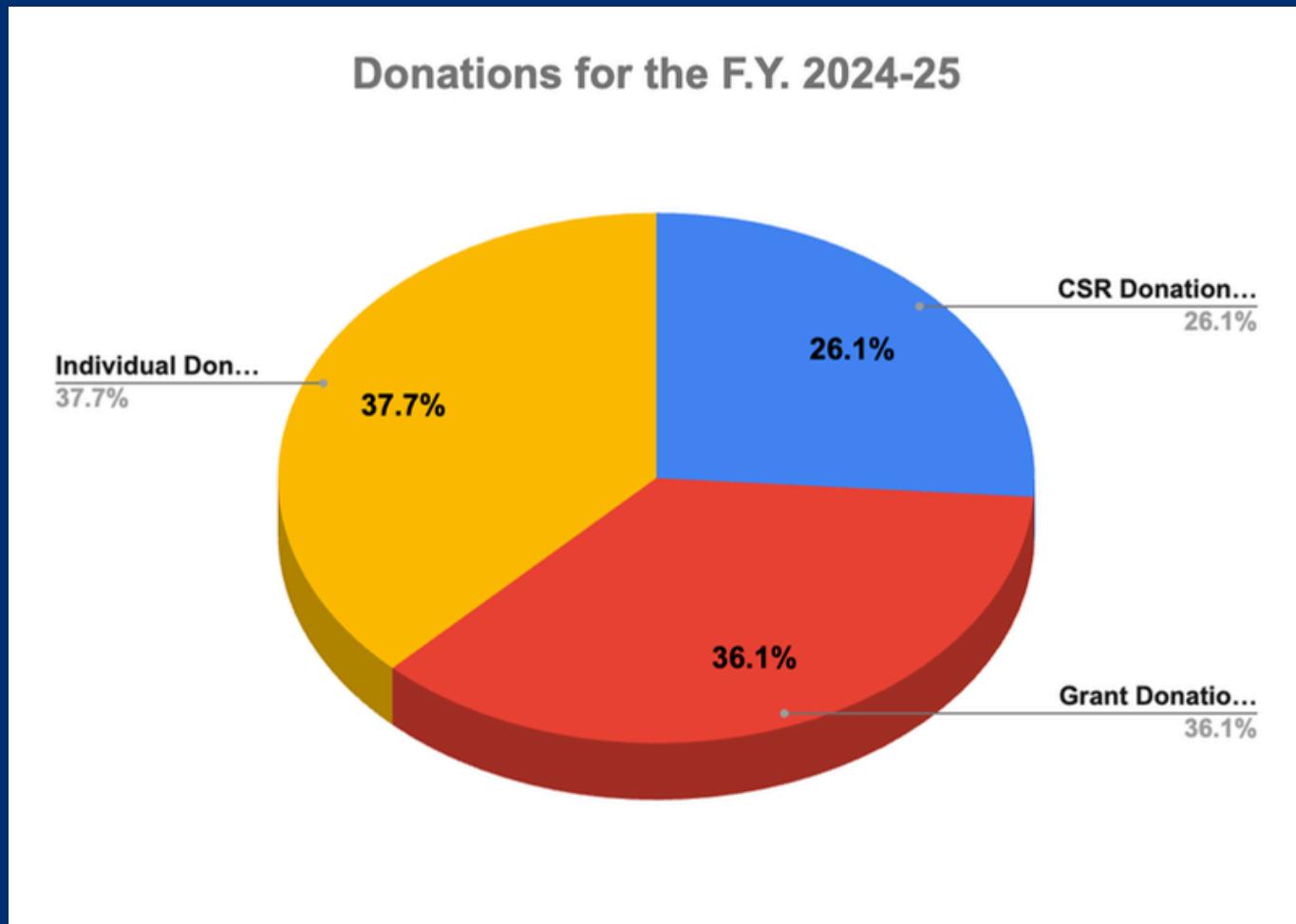


Our total expenses for FY 2024–2025 amounted to INR 1.49 crores.

Program expenditure was budgeted at INR 1.2 crores, with an actual spend of INR 1.1 crores.

Administrative expenses totaled INR 31 lakhs, covering accounting software subscriptions, auditor fees, DEMAT applications, outsourced accounting services to ensure compliance, and in-house HR and finance support.

DONATIONS AT A GLANCE



We received donations from multiple sources this year, with individuals and HNIs continuing to be our strongest and most consistent supporters.

Our audited financials is available on our website at
<https://waic.in/financial-reports/>

PARTNERSHIPS & SUPPORTERS

We are grateful to our partners and supporters for standing with us. The state WCDs of Maharashtra, Telangana, and Karnataka continue to believe in our work and constantly support us.

CARA for the belief in us that we are the experts on the ground and liasing with us when needed.



VOLUNTEERS

Anushree Murari for always being ready for data analysis, fundraising, and raising awareness about Safe Surrender.

Natasha Gowans on continuing to advise us in communications.

Saron Harford who is always ready to support us in any changes to our website and does it with admirable grace.

Sanjay Mucharla who reviewed our entire training material, gave a structure to it, we could not have done that without him.

Trushali Kotecha our newest volunteer from UK who supports us for fundraising in the UK.

LOOKING AHEAD

We will continue our existing programs with the same focus, zeal, and enthusiasm to ensure a child's right to family is fulfilled.

We plan to add the following programs in the coming year

Safe Surrender Awareness Program - A household survey program in villages and to ensure information dissemination about the Safe Surrender law at the grassroot level. We will present the Safe Surrender information in the Panchayat Gram Sabhas, SHGs, to the Anganwadi Workers, and to the Asha Workers for better distribution.

Child Preparation program - Older children often face difficulties adjusting to family environments due to their experiences in Child Care Institutions (CCIs). This increases the risk of adoption disruptions, underscoring the need for targeted support for this demographic.

WAIC is planning interventions at multiple stages for children:

- When the CWC asks a child above 6 years if they are ready to be adopted, most of the time, the child is unable to understand what it entails.
- When a child is found eligible for adoption after due process, before the CWC signs the LFA certificate, the child should be prepared by a child counsellor about what it means to be adopted, only then the CWC can sign the LFA after the consent of the child.
- Develop structured sessions for children in CCIs to prepare them and address emotional readiness, trauma recovery, and the transition to family life.

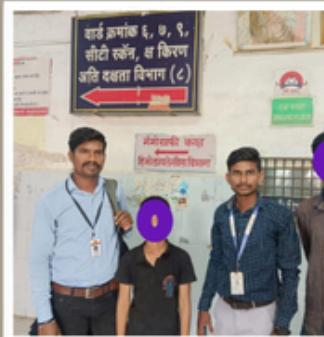
SUMMARY

The annual report highlights our organisation's achievements & progress over the past year. We have seen steady growth in impact.

Our financial position remains vulnerable and we are looking for sustainable funding to cover our costs.

We are grateful to all the supporters who have stood by us and continue to donate and support us!

WAIC is registered as Child Welfare and Action Foundation. Donations to WAIC are eligible for tax exemption under section 80G of the Income Tax Act.



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