

Ahvaan Trust



Ahvaan envisions a future where every child has access to high-quality early childhood education that sets a strong foundation for lifelong learning and success



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between 2022 and 2025, Ahvaan Trust advanced its mission of improving early childhood education and foundational learning for children from underserved communities in India. Working closely with governments in Delhi, Chhattisgarh, and Tripura, Ahvaan contributed to making quality early education accessible to millions of young learners through teacher professional development, curriculum design, and parent engagement activities. In this period, Ahvaan's initiatives reached over 300,000 children and supported the professional growth of more than 14,000 teachers and Anganwadi workers ensuring last mile coverage of key national priorities such as NEP 2020, ECCE Policy 2013 and NIPUN Bharat.

In India, the policy landscape has steadily deepened its focus on ECCE over the last decade. The National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy (2013) first laid out a vision for holistic early childhood services covering care, health, nutrition, and pre-school education. Building on this, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 called for universalizing quality ECCE by 2030 and recommended integrating pre-primary years into the school system. It emphasized the importance of play-based, activity-driven pedagogy, the professional development of early years educators and greater engagement of parents. As part of this transition, there has been a strong push for closer alignment between Anganwadi centres (community-based centres under the Integrated Child Development Services, traditionally focused on health, nutrition, and early education) and Balvatikas (preparatory classes for 3–6-year-olds within schools). Many states are now setting up Balvatikas, while also strengthening Anganwadis, to ensure smoother transitions and greater school readiness of children in the age group 3 to 6 years. Complementing this structural reform is the rollout of a national ECCE curriculum framework, which several states are contextualizing and adopting. These efforts directly support the goals of the NIPUN Bharat Mission (2021), which seeks to achieve foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN, also referred as Foundational Learning) for all children by Grade 3, recognizing that strong ECCE is the bedrock for success in FLN and later schooling.

Translating these ambitious policies into classroom reality requires steady, practical support at the last mile. Charitable organizations such as Ahvaan have an important role here, not by replacing the state but by strengthening its hand where capacity and reach are uneven. Over the last three years, Ahvaan has collaborated with state governments and partner organizations in Delhi, Chhattisgarh, and Tripura, impacting over 300,000 students aged 3 to 8 years. We have mentored over 14,000 teachers representing over 10,000 Balvatikas, primary schools and Anganwadis across these states. Ahvaan has been a trusted partner to state agencies for policy formation and implementation in the areas of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Foundational Learning (FLN). Our approach to ECCE and FLN aligns with key policies such as National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy (ECCE Policy) 2013, and initiatives such as NIPUN Bharat, focusing on skill-based, developmentally appropriate, and contextually relevant learning for young learners.

ABOUT AHVAAN

Established in 2010, Ahvaan is a public charitable trust registered under the Indian Trusts Act, 1882. Since its establishment Ahvaan has been a pioneer in early childhood education, and foundational learning in India committed to the vision of creating a strong academic and values-based foundation for millions of young learners from underprivileged communities in India.

Ahvaan's work spans curriculum development, professional development for educators, parent engagement and building state capacities- driving access to high quality early education for children from underserved communities. Over the years, Ahvaan has collaborated with state governments and partner organizations in Chhattisgarh, Delhi, and Tripura, impacting over 300,000 students aged 3 to 8 years. We have mentored over 14,000 teachers representing 15,700 government pre-primary schools, Balvatikas and Anganwadi centers across these states.

Ahvaan has been a trusted partner to state agencies for policy formation and implementation in the areas of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). Our approach to ECCE and FLN aligns with key policies such as National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy 2013, and initiatives such as NIPUN Bharat, focusing on skill-based, developmentally appropriate, and contextually relevant learning.

Led by a committed board of trustees, experienced leadership and a dynamic team of educators, Ahvaan is driven by the mission of empowering teachers, parents, and children towards developing effective knowledge, skills and values that create a foundation for lifelong success for millions of young learners.

The ECCE Challenge

The transformative power of quality ECCE and FLN

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is widely recognized as one of the most impactful investments in human development, with returns on investment (RoI) as high as 7% to 10%. Nobel laureate James Heckman and other researchers have demonstrated that quality ECCE contributes directly to improved cognitive and socio-emotional development, better educational outcomes, higher earning potential, and reduced social inequalities.

Active interest and policy push towards universal quality ECCE

In India, the policy landscape has steadily deepened its focus on ECCE over the last decade. The National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy (2013) first laid out a vision for holistic early childhood services covering care, health, nutrition, and pre-school education. Building on this, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 called for universalizing quality ECCE by 2030 and recommended integrating pre-primary years in foundational learning for the age group 3 to 8 years. For early years, it emphasized the importance of play-based, activity-driven pedagogy, the professional development of early years educators and greater engagement of parents.

Emerging ECCE priorities in India

There has been a strong push for closer alignment between Anganwadi and Balvatikas centres. Many states are now setting up Balvatikas attached to government pre-schools, alongside strengthening Anganwadis, to ensure universal and quality ECCE. Complementing this structural reform is the rollout of ECCE curriculum frameworks, which several states are contextualizing and adopting. There is some distance to cover in terms of professional development of educators- teachers and Anganwadi workers-towards delivery of quality ECCE, increasing parental involvement in early education, and robust and responsive evaluation of ECCE programs across states.

The opportunity for civil society organizations and investors

The current ECCE landscape in India offers an opportunity for civil society organizations like Ahvaan to contribute with their technical and implementation expertise towards addressing persistent gaps in access and quality of foundational learning in India. Focusing on four key areas i.e. contextualized and developmentally appropriate curriculum, continuous professional development, greater parental engagement and strengthening state capacity, organizations can drive high-impact and scalable interventions aligned with national priorities. The potential benefits are substantial: enhanced school readiness, reduced educational disparities, and a strong step forward towards India's long-term socio-economic growth

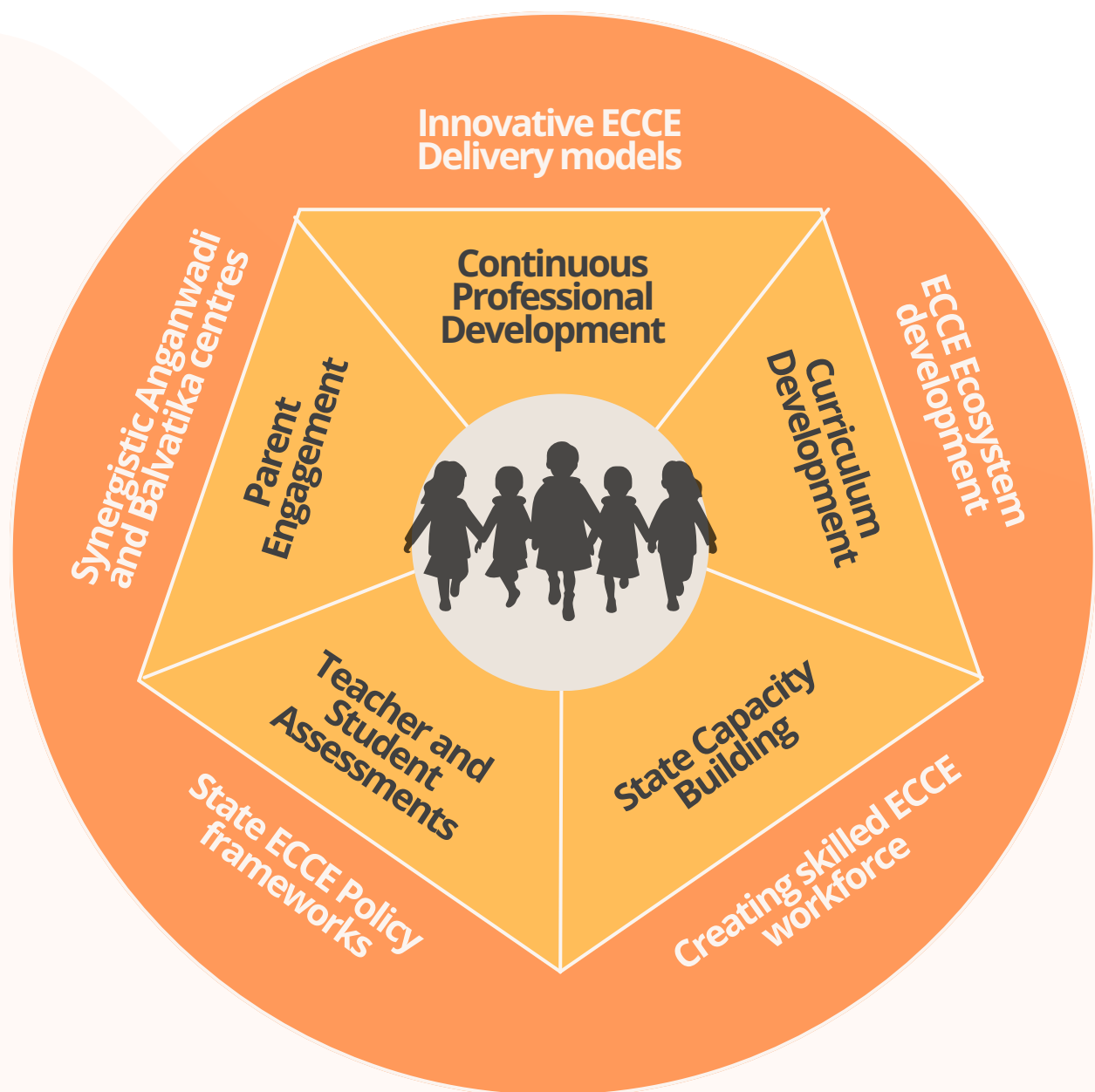
*ECCE- Early Childhood Care and Education *FLN - Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) plays a pivotal role in shaping a child's mental, physical, and socio-emotional development, forming the foundation for all future learning. Universal access to quality early childhood education must be achieved as soon as possible, ensuring that all students entering Grade 1 are school-ready.

— NEP 2020

Our approach to quality ECCE and FLN

Ahvaan's approach to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) focuses on building a **robust early education ecosystem** that **bridges the gap** between **research, policy** and **practice**. Keeping the child in the centre, we work towards effective last mile coverage of policy priorities in ECCE, achievement of national goals for early education such as universal ECCE and Foundational learning and in the longer run developing a robust ecosystem for quality early childhood care and education in India.



Key Activities 2022-25

Curriculum Development for Early Years

Between 2022 and 2025, Ahvaan collaborated with SCERTs to design, revise, and roll out curriculum and teaching-learning materials in Delhi, Chhattisgarh, and Tripura.

- In Delhi, Ahvaan co-authored the numeracy chapter of the State Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage, revised Preschool 2 and 3 curricula, and created school readiness modules, ECCE kits, and assessment tools.
- In Chhattisgarh, curriculum-aligned lesson plans and assessments were co-developed with SCERT and were adopted across 10,000 Balwadis, benefiting over 54,000 children.
- In Tripura, Ahvaan designed a play-based curriculum aligned to NCERT standards, which was formally endorsed by SCERT.

This work ensured that teachers and Anganwadi workers had access to structured, developmentally appropriate resources, directly improving classroom practice and children's learning experiences.

Continuous Professional Development of Teachers

From 2022 to 2025, Ahvaan implemented structured professional development for teachers, Anganwadi workers, and academic resource persons to strengthen classroom practice and leadership in the early years.

- In Delhi, 120 Master Trainers from MCD and Directorate of Education schools were trained, cascading to more than 2,000 teachers and Anganwadi workers.
- In Chhattisgarh, 939 master trainers and district resource group members were capacitated, while 1,028 Balwadi teachers and Anganwadi workers received sustained in-classroom mentoring.
- In Tripura, blended pre-service and in-service training programs reached 4,500 educators, 64 specialists, and 900 principals.

These efforts equipped educators with practical skills, developmentally appropriate pedagogy, and ongoing academic support, ensuring that training translated into improved learning experiences for children.

Key Activities 2022-25

Parent Engagement

Between 2022 and 2025, Ahvaan expanded structured engagement with parents to strengthen the home-school continuum of learning.

- In Chhattisgarh, over 5,500 parents were reached through regular school meetings, home visits, and summer learning camps.
- Over 100 summer camps were conducted in rural Chhattisgarh in collaboration with Samagra Shiksha to create awareness about early education
- Over 120 admission rallies were conducted to create awareness about Balvatikas amongst rural and semi literate parents
- Periodical surveys and interviews were conducted with parents to understand their aspirations and barriers towards early education.

These efforts built awareness of early learning, reinforced school readiness at home, and improved enrolment and participation of children in Balwadis, particularly in underserved communities.

State Capacity Building for Quality Early Education

Between 2022 and 2025, Ahvaan worked as a technical partner to state governments, building institutional capacity for sustained delivery of ECCE and foundational learning.

- In Chhattisgarh, Ahvaan collaborated with SCERT and Samagra Shiksha to embed ECCE priorities across 33 districts. This included joint monitoring visits with state officials, leading training sessions for DIET and SCERT faculty, and establishing 62 Mor Balwadis as demonstration centres for quality practice.
- In Tripura, Ahvaan co-led training of educators alongside SCERT, established a Foundational Learning Cell, created digital FLN content for the Vande Tripura Edusat channel, and designed a management information system (MIS) to track teaching-learning progress.

These initiatives built capacity within government systems, ensuring that ECCE and FLN reforms were institutionalized and scalable beyond the project period.

Examples of our state partnerships

Delhi: Neev and Pathshala Initiatives

- Co-created ECCE curriculum with SCERT Delhi, implemented across 450 Sarvodaya and Municipal Corporation schools.
- Trained over 3,500 pre-primary teachers in delivering quality FLN content.
- Established 5 Exemplar Pre-Schools under the "Pathshala" program; supported 51 schools with in-class coaching.
- Launched the "Neev" program for continuous professional development of educators.
- Developed assessment guidelines and tools for effective evaluation of student progress.

Chhattisgarh: Strengthening 'Mor Balwadis'

- Co-created FLN curriculum with SCERT Chhattisgarh, introduced in ~10,000 Balvatikas and 15,000 Anganwadi centres across 33 districts.
- Trained over 1,500 teachers, Anganwadi workers, resource persons, and state-level master trainers in play-based pedagogy and FLN in 4 districts in collaboration with the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), DIETs and SCERT
- Established 62 Model Balvatikas building functional synergies between Anganwadi and Balwadi centres
- Established in-class coaching and feedback mechanisms for sustained teacher development and student progress in over 687 Balwadi centres in 4 districts
- Initiated school and block level parent engagement programs to drive awareness and home-based learning support for children

Tripura: Capacity Building of Pre-primary Educators

- Set up a Foundational Learning Cell in SCERT, Tripura
- Launched dynamic, continuous pre-service and in-service blended training programs for 4,500 educators, 64 specialists and 900 principals
- Created an experiential, activity-based, and play-based curriculum aligned with NCERT standards and endorsed by SCERT Tripura
- Partnered with the GoT's Edusat Channel to launch "Vande Tripura- digital content for FLN
- Established MIS to track progress of teaching, learning, infrastructure, stakeholder competencies

Stakeholders Speak

“I have been amazed at the dedication, creativity, and persistence with which you have designed and transacted the Integrated In-service Training Daily Lesson Plan Module for Assistant Teachers of nursery. The components of Activity-Based Learning infused by you into the academic inputs will make learning a joyful experience for our young children in the primary classes. I would like to place on record my profound appreciation for all this hard work put in by you.”

—Saumya Gupta, IAS

“Ahvaan Team is helping us in our professional development. They are giving us many ideas that we can use in our teaching to improve the teaching standards”

—Shikha Saini, Teacher, Delhi

“Ahvaan has enriched the pre-primary curriculum. The activities are age appropriate for children. Teachers and children don't even come to know how children learn everything while playing games”

—Anjali, Primary School In-charge, Delhi



Future Plans

Scaling our ECCE and FLN initiatives in states

- To scale our ECCE and FLN programs to 5-6 states in India over the next 3 years ensuring last mile coverage of ECCE Policy 2013, NEP 2020, and Nipun Bharat.
- To scale our existing program in Chhattisgarh from 4 to 6-8 aspirational districts
- Greater integration of technology and AI into our programs spanning content development, trainings, parent engagement, M&E, and assessments
- Develop robust tracking mechanisms with states to observe student development over the years

Proof of concept pilots in quality and access to ECCE

- To launch Early Childhood Education Fellowship for women- a unique program geared towards creating a high quality early childhood workforce while empowering women from local communities
- To launch tech-enabled parent engagement programs in 2-3 states in the next 2 years
- Develop a prototype for synergistic Anganwadi and Balvatika centres

Scaling our policy formation and implementation support

- To enhance our support to state governments towards FLN content development and continuous professional development of Balvatika teachers, Anganwadi workers, resource persons, supervisors and CDPOs
- To scale our support in drafting state level ECCE and FLN policies and strategies to 2-3 states

Partners and Supporters

STATE PARTNERS 2022-25

CHHATTISGARH



DELHI



सत्यमेव जयते
Government of the National
Capital Territory of Delhi

TRIPURA



SUPPORTERS 2024-25

ECHIDNA
GIVING



TSF GROUP



SHOWA ARCH
METALS



ABI-
SHOWATECH



BRAKES INDIA



REAL TALENT
ENGINEERING PVT. LTD



NUDGED

AFFILIATIONS AND COLLABORATIONS





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