good business lab

Catalyzing Change

GBL'S JOURNEY OF GROWTH AND IMPACT

ANNUAL REPORT **2022-23**









Contents

03 Our vision

05 From the founding team

07 Our impact

09 Delivering impact to workers and businesses

10 Building soft skills in the supply chains

12 Enabling worker voice

14 Undoing the knots of gender inequity

15 Adapting the supply chain to include rural women

17 Improving women's sexual and reproductive health through workplace intervention

19 Exploring new ground

20 Driving adoption of green technologies

22 Gender parity in automobile manufacturing

24 Absenteeism in platform work

26 The path ahead

28 Financial overview



Our vision

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BUILD A

‘good’ business?

In today’s competitive global economy, business leaders understand that their most valuable asset is their workforce. Yet, the wellbeing of those very workers is often treated as an afterthought, not a core driver of productivity, retention, or profitability that it is..

Through rigorous research we are proving that targeted investment in the wellbeing of workers can not only improve the lives of workers but are crucial for building a successful business in the long run.

A *good* business.

Our team of over 100 have worked across industries to identify, evaluate, and scale solutions that simultaneously improve the lives of workers and business bottom lines. We have deployed this unique model in garment manufacturing in India, retail in Colombia, automobile manufacturing in Argentina and extended our reach in the emerging gig economy. We are confident that our value proposition transcends industry and geographic boundaries, which our growing scope of impact confirms every day.

But besides just achieving more, we are learning to achieve better.

Six years into our journey, we proudly reflect on the measures of wellbeing we have helped our partners invest in; the tangible improvements our interventions have brought to businesses, and the significant differences we have made in the lives of thousands of workers. This annual report aims to illuminate many of these achievements and underscores the importance of a few key principles:

- Keeping our ear to the ground, so we can quickly adapt our approach in direct response to the needs of who we serve
- Fostering long-term, resilient relationships with workers and firms based on trust and a common vision of wellbeing
- Investing in a team that has the capacity to conduct research and the ability to apply the learnings in innovative ways.



From the founding team

To the GBL Community,

Thanks so much for supporting and partnering with us in a year that has brought tremendous growth and impact, as well as a new raft of challenges and possibilities. We are as motivated as ever about demonstrating that worker wellbeing and good business can go hand in hand. This year we have focused not only on continuing to expand our portfolio of rigorous evidence on this idea, but also on helping to take successful pilots to scale through a variety of pivotal partnerships with foundations, governments, and private sector organizations.

GBL has grown considerably, commensurate with the scale of the work we are doing. We now have 100 team members spread across four offices covering South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the United States. We've learned a few important lessons this year. First, there is a large and increasing appetite for evidence-backed solutions that improve worker wellbeing — and not just from funders and governments, but also from business leaders. Against the backdrop of challenges to collective bargaining and worker strife around the world, there is a growing recognition that promoting the wellbeing of workers and their communities enables business success.

We've also learned that despite this appetite, achieving impact at scale is hard. Co-creating solutions that deliver real impacts to workers and demonstrating their business returns is just the preamble. Convincing firms that it is in their best interest to take these solutions up, especially when they are entirely new, requires organizational flexibility and innovation, constant learning, persistent effort, time, and perhaps a healthy dose of grit. The S-shaped curve of adoption is, it turns out, quite relevant in our context. We remain passionate about wide-scale impact, and we welcome the challenges of achieving it as the next stage of GBL's journey.

Third, this year has reinforced something that we've always known to be true: worker wellbeing is both about investing in workers themselves as well as in the organization as a whole. Workers cannot thrive in dysfunctional businesses. Helping organizations to be better managed and structured unlocks growth that also benefits workers. We have shown this to be true in a variety of settings through the evaluation of key managerial interventions. Investments in organizational competence, especially those targeting middle managers, have mutual benefits for workers and firms.

Finally, we remain as always in awe of our amazing team, without whose passion, intellect, empathy, and effort nothing would be possible. We are so thankful to work with them every day. We look forward to another fantastic year. Thanks for your continued support of GBL and our mission.

Sincerely,



Anant Ahuja Anant Nyshadham Achyuta Adhvaryu

Our impact

Developing and scaling successful solutions that deliver worker wellbeing within firms requires not just understanding workers but also what drives businesses. It requires rigorous research, innovation, effective stakeholder management, and perseverance.

Our formula to drive positive impact at scale prioritizes both the direct impact on beneficiaries and the indirect impact brought by collaborations that facilitate cross-sectoral learnings. Looking back at the last year, with 15 active projects of which 11 are recent undertakings, we saw workers' lives and business capacities improve in different ways:

273,000+ workers

impacted through interventions that build holistic health, create pathways for upskilling and better employment, enabling access to secure channels for grievance resolution, and improve their environmental conditions.

Productivity gains generated by firms through our interventions measure at

$3,481,865

and are accrued by increases in worker productivity



118,500+
women workers

empowered through interventions that introduce financial inclusion to low-income contexts, provide opportunities for income-generation in rural areas, and boost their potential for breaking the glass ceiling.

13,959
workers

whose holistic health and wellbeing improved through interventions that focus on providing support for sight-related issues, access to menstrual hygiene management practices, and alleviate mental health problems experienced by young migrant women.

Area covered in terms of new geographies/ countries/ industries



To date we have worked with

70+
businesses

where we have made a demonstrative difference in both financial gains, and worker wellbeing.

30
funders

have trusted us to continue leveraging our research to build interventions that create measurable impact for workers and hard returns for businesses.

18
new organisations

between 2022 and 2023, spread across the private sector, the development sector, and academic institutions.



Delivering impact to workers and businesses

Our work is informed by the vision that real impact necessitates finding the middle ground between workers' needs and business interests. We design and evaluate to disseminate and scale.

DELIVERING IMPACT TO
WORKERS AND BUSINESSES

Building soft skills in the supply chains

IMPACT:

32,000
workers impacted

FUNDERS:

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Jobs and Opportunity Initiative at the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab

PARTNERS:

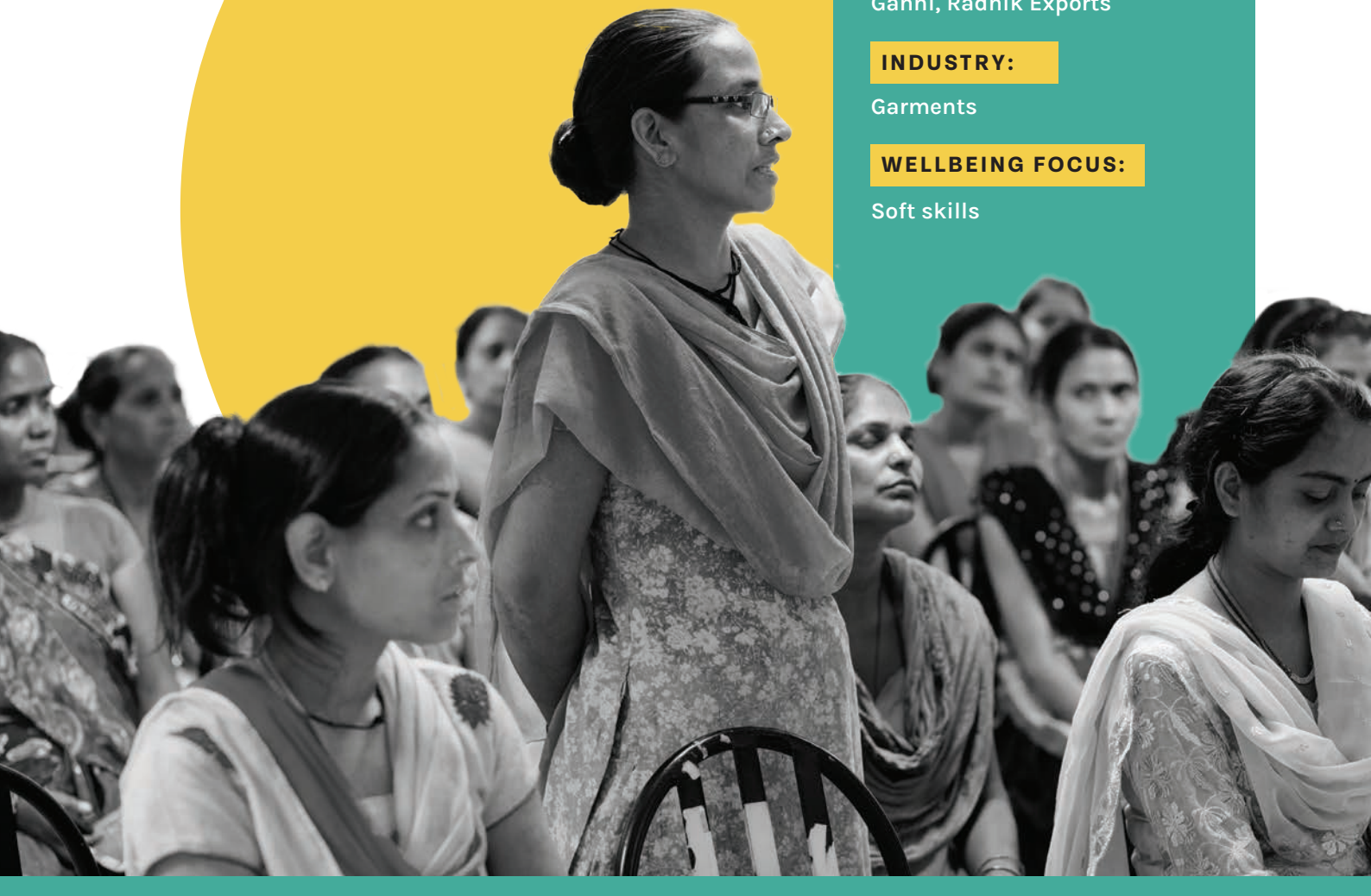
Shahi Exports Pvt Ltd
Ganni, Radnik Exports

INDUSTRY:

Garments

WELLBEING FOCUS:

Soft skills



Even in industries that are major employers of women, like the Indian garments industry, women mostly occupy entry-level positions and rarely move up the ranks to supervisory roles. This issue is closely linked to biased hiring and discriminatory practices driven by inaccurate beliefs about the managerial skills needed to drive a productive workforce that give disproportionate importance to technical skills over soft skills.

Intervention:
We developed a tablet-based tool for Supervisor Screening and Training. Our talent-spotting tool screens candidates recommended for supervisory roles for soft skill gaps and recommends tailored training modules to empower workers to advance. Recognized by MIT Solve Future of Work challenge, it particularly supports low-income women in forging paths to leadership by eliminating bias in promotion practices.

The training component delivers on the recommendation and provides individualized learning paths for workers based on screening scores. The curriculum includes modules on efficient problem-solving, time management, preventing harassment at the workplace, and gender sensitization to ensure that trainees are equipped to develop ideal environments and succeed as managers. This was developed based on a training program, STITCH (Supervisors Transformation Into Change Holders) that yielded positive impacts on worker productivity and retention.

Possibilities:
Pilots of both interventions are currently being evaluated. Following successful evaluation, we plan to provide this tool at a low cost. With preliminary results in, our suite of STITCH implementation partners continues to grow globally. As this program continues to gain adoption, we believe it will be a powerful tool to advance key social outcomes of gender equality, access to decent work, and improved worker wellbeing.



Usha is one of the few women supervisors in an Indian garment factory. Back when she was a helper, she engaged in a breadth of chores from cleaning machines, bringing supplies to several other tasks. As she climbed the ranks, she learned the ropes from her own supervisor. Usha initially believed that managers shouting at their direct reports was an acceptable norm, but following training provided by GBL, she came to see how management techniques that emphasized soft skills over command and control yielded better results.

DELIVERING IMPACT TO
WORKERS AND BUSINESSES

Enabling worker voice

IMPACT:

1,00,000+
workers' voices unlocked

FUNDERS:
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

PARTNERS:
Shahi Exports Pvt Ltd

INDUSTRY:
Garments

WELLBEING FOCUS:
Agency to voice grievances



Workers need to believe that their voices are valued and accounted for in firm decision making in order to truly trust management and feel secure in their employment. While labor unions continue to lead worker rights movements, channels for amplifying individual voices remain nascent. Despite the presence of suggestion boxes and worker committees that provide an avenue to Human Resources teams, the effectiveness of these mechanisms are hindered by illiteracy, fear of reprisal and lack of timely resolution. Past GBL research has demonstrated the profound impact that having a well-utilized and accessible worker voice tool can play on worker retention and productivity. We designed a new tool to amplify this impact.

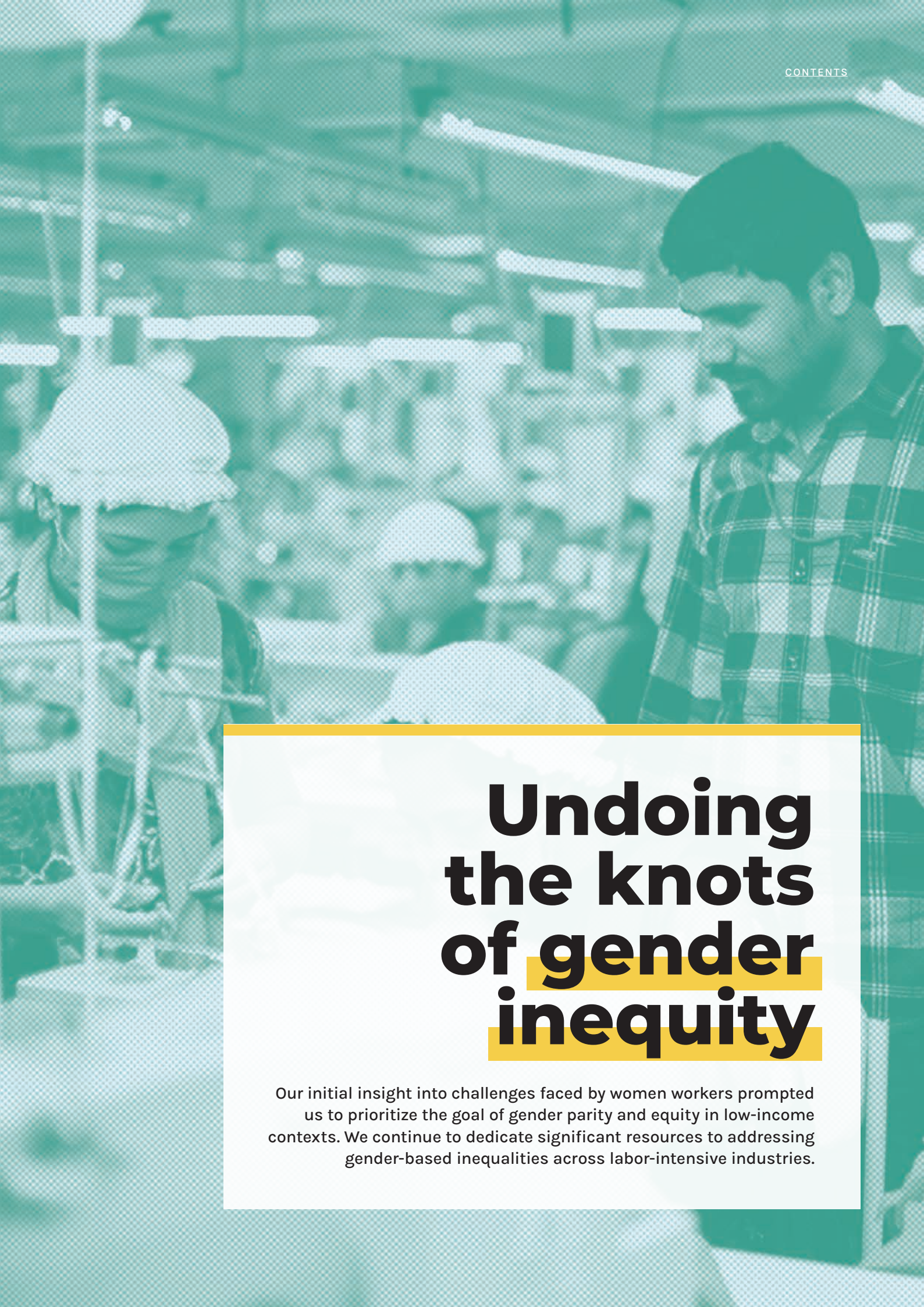
Intervention:
Inache is a tech-enabled platform that allows workers to easily and anonymously submit grievances and feedback to management and then enables HR teams to ensure swift resolution and reporting. The two-way communication and workflow tool relies on a combination of SMS and voice calls, all feeding into a dashboard where HR teams can view cases, document and categorize details, track progress to resolution, and support reporting.. An additional key feature driving utilization is the integration of financial incentives for HR teams to hit resolution targets. Underreporting or quietly resolving grievances is often part of managerial instincts to mitigate risk, so creating new financial incentives for responding to, resolving, and documenting issues has been shown to greatly improve tool utilization and increase transparency surrounding worker voice.

Inache has also bridged the trust gap between workers and management through three key features:

- The assurance of anonymity emboldens low-income workers to raise grievances without fear of reprisal
- The multilingual capability ensures inclusivity, making the tool accessible to all
- The platform's potential to offer upskilling opportunities and serve as a support mechanism has generated significant buy-in from the administrative staff.

Possibilities:
As the digital divide shrinks and worker adoption of SMS and VoIP solutions like WhatsApp grows, Inache will increasingly support additional channels for communication. Additionally, work to leverage AI to transcribe and categorize submissions is underway, with the potential to decrease administrative effort and improve data quality. Finally, Inache's data analytics and reporting infrastructure has the potential to serve a variety of use cases in social compliance beyond voice and enable greater transparency throughout the supply chain.

With grievances addressed in as little as 24-72 hours, Inache has expedited conflict resolution and notably enhanced workers' trust in the administration. Recently honored with a Zendesk Tech for Good award, Inache is live in 60+ factories in India.



Undoing the knots of gender inequity

Our initial insight into challenges faced by women workers prompted us to prioritize the goal of gender parity and equity in low-income contexts. We continue to dedicate significant resources to addressing gender-based inequalities across labor-intensive industries.

UNDOING THE KNOTS OF GENDER INEQUITY

Adapting the supply chain to include rural women

IMPACT:

Income generation of INR
559,080
(USD 6,735)

FUNDERS:

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

PARTNERS:

Bangla Natak

INDUSTRY:

Artisanal

WELLBEING FOCUS:

Women's income generation



Women make up a larger share of the workforce in rural settings compared to cities, but in rural communities, women tend to be confined to low-paid, informal agricultural roles. This informality results in a significant financial and personal insecurity for rural women workers compared to their urban counterparts. Mobility barriers further deter women from seeking work beyond their immediate surroundings. Our project asks - if rural women can't access good work, can we bring good work to them instead?

Intervention:
Our work explores how we might empower rural women by providing formal and flexible employment opportunities with guaranteed wages. Our ongoing evaluation in Jharkhand, a state in Eastern India, focuses on 50 women undergoing specialized training to craft pen stands from locally sourced sabai grass. By comparing productivity and satisfaction levels between women working from home versus in external workshops within their communities, we found that workshop-based women were more productive despite working fewer hours. This discrepancy can be attributed to the inherent challenges faced by home-based workers, such as juggling caregiving duties and agricultural responsibilities. Despite such challenges, a resounding desire for meaningful employment and stability echoes among these women.

Possibilities:
We are currently planning to expand this intervention to Rajasthan, a state where women self-employment is prevalent but often yields meager returns. The idea is to build and test a decentralized production model, which not only fosters diversification within the supply chain but also elevates the quality of work and income for women workers. By leveraging partnerships with grassroots organizations, we aim to seamlessly connect local suppliers and manufacturers with a talented pool of skilled women workers.

Women make up a larger share of the workforce in rural settings compared to cities, but in rural communities, women tend to be confined to low-paid, informal agricultural roles.

UNDOING THE KNOTS OF GENDER INEQUITY

Improving women's sexual and reproductive health through workplace intervention

IMPACT:

Building a business case for investments in SRH

PARTNERS:

IcarusNova, United Nations Population Fund- Asia Pacific (UNFPA)

WELLBEING FOCUS:

Health and health-related outcomes

INDUSTRY:

Industry agnostic



The value of investment in women's health is well established, yet many in the impact space struggle to identify and support the most impactful interventions. Even in the case of globally vetted solutions, local context is highly linked to success or failure. Few organizations in the private and public sector alike are able to quantify the impact of interventions in support of women's health, leaving a large knowledge gap that can serve as a barrier to sustained investments in SRH. Our work provides an actionable tool to fill this gap.

Intervention:
We collaborated with the UNFPA to create an evidence-based calculator which assesses the business impact of sexual and reproductive health-related programs tailored to local contexts. The calculator assists decision-makers with informed choices on interventions based on their goals, budget and potential impact. A leading textile manufacturer utilized the tool to measure the impact of providing subsidized menstrual health products and found an estimated return of INR 2.90 for every Indian rupee invested, and a 21% drop in worker absenteeism. In the Philippines, an automobile parts manufacturer used the calculator's insights to implement family planning information sessions that dispelled major pregnancy misconceptions among workers.

Possibilities:
Our calculator underscores the business case for enhancing women workers' wellbeing. Quantifying healthcare impact is transformative, particularly in low-income settings where workplaces can bridge healthcare gaps, notably in sexual and reproductive health. Currently, efforts to increase our tool's healthcare program portfolio is underway, and we are exploring partnerships in various Asian regions. This initiative promises tangible improvements in women's health and workplace productivity, catalyzing positive change in underserved communities.

Quantifying healthcare impact is transformative, particularly in low-income settings where workplaces can bridge healthcare gaps, notably in sexual and reproductive health.



Exploring new ground

Six years into our journey, we are expanding our learnings to new contexts. We are committed to growing our presence and building resilient relationships and deliver actionable research to promote worker wellbeing across industries and geographies.

EXPLORING NEW GROUND

Driving adoption of green technologies

WELLBEING FOCUS:

Environment and working conditions

PARTNERS:

Beyond Sustainability, Tiruppur dyeing cluster

FUNDER:

Private Enterprise Development in Low-Income Countries (PEDL)

INDUSTRY:

Textile



The process of textile dyeing requires heating water to high temperatures for dye fixation, which increases the industry's reliance on fossil fuels. According to the World Bank, the textile industry is responsible for 20% of global water pollution and 10% of global carbon emissions. Tiruppur, a city in southern India, has over 400 operational dyeing units which export to Egypt, Bangladesh, Brazil, among other international markets. Workers endure high-heat stress while the urban environment too suffers. While awareness of more sustainable equipment is growing, actual adoption has been slow, despite the well-studied benefits on worker wellbeing, efficiency, and environmental impact. We set out to identify the drivers of adoption so that we can help shift Tirupur's dyeing industry towards sustainable practices.

Intervention:
In 2013, our work revealed a 3% productivity decrease for every one-degree rise in temperature. Transitioning to LED lights not only reduced shop floor temperature but also improved productivity, saved energy costs, and enhanced worker well-being. Our latest initiative aims to understand what tactics might induce firm leaders to invest in replacing heat-intensive technologies with energy efficient solutions. Specifically we are evaluating the roles that factors like competitive forces, technical support, and information play in driving adoption.

Possibilities:
If we can identify the approaches that overcome inertia and resistance to investment in sustainable technologies, we can use the evidence to support sustainable practices across the entire supply chain. These findings can also serve as a starting point for addressing other intractable issues where barriers to local buy-in prevents systemic change.

According to the World Bank, the textile industry is responsible for 20% of global water pollution and 10% of global carbon emissions.

EXPLORING NEW GROUND

Gender parity in automobile manufacturing

WELLBEING FOCUS:

Working conditions and employment opportunities

FUNDER:

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

PARTNERS:

The Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA), Curated consortium of ACMA member companies

INDUSTRY:

Auto component manufacturing



Women account for only 5.6% of the automotive workforce as of 2023. This gender disparity is perpetuated by a complex web of supply-side and demand-side constraints. Realizing the vision of a gender-diverse and gender-inclusive automotive industry demands concerted action on multiple fronts, interventions designed must address both demand and supply side barriers, improve the implementation of existing regulations on the ground and work closely with automotive firms to foster inclusive work cultures in a way that drives innovation, boosts productivity and bolsters their bottom line.

Intervention:
In order to drive change across an industry, it's critical to conduct a thorough discovery to truly understand the status quo, identify existing solutions, and frame the incentive structures that will enable successful scale up. The current phase of this program is an example of using qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the current state of the Indian automotive sector with respect to gender representation and develop context-specific solutions. Working together with ACMA, India's largest body of auto component manufacturers and SIAM, the industry body for Automotive original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), we will develop a Gender Inclusivity Playbook complete with rigorously tested and proven solutions. Participating firms will commit organizational bandwidth and GBL will provide advisory support throughout the gender mainstreaming process, along with conducting long-term studies to consistently update the initiative's impact on women's employment.

Possibilities:
Our partnership with automotive firms and industry associations will allow us to design, implement and test solutions. We will develop a robust framework to monitor the progress of successful solutions, and strategically assess the holistic impact of the intervention. Our goals include:

- Conducting large-scale diagnostic research focused on understanding the demand and supply side challenges for women workers.
- Developing and evaluating pilot interventions in participating firms that can address such challenges.
- Codifying best practices in the form of a Playbook that will provide the sector a practical pathway to advance gender parity goals.

Women account for only 5.6% of the automotive workforce as of 2023.

EXPLORING NEW GROUND

Absenteeism in platform work

WELLBEING FOCUS:

Working conditions and employment opportunities

PARTNERS:

Broomees India Pvt. Ltd., HEC Montréal

INDUSTRY:

Platform service



According to the ILO 7.7 million Indians are platform workers, of whom around 20% are women who independently contract with digital platforms. Service platforms, such as Uber and Zomato, part of this gig economy have grown by five times. However, one recurring issue that limits both the earning potential of workers and growth of platforms is 'no-shows,' wherein workers fail to show for matched jobs. Similar to the absenteeism challenge in formal workforces, the drivers of no-shows remain understudied, presenting an opportunity to develop targeted interventions that can improve attendance and help workers and platforms thrive.

Intervention:
In 2023, GBL entered the gig economy space by partnering with Broomees, a platform that provides domestic and care work services in India. Approximately 35% of workers on Broomees are unable to appear for their allotted appointments. Why do workers not appear for work they have already accepted? What kinds of barriers do workers, especially women, experience while performing care and domestic work through the platform? Our goal is to discern whether there are specific factors that make certain workers less or more inclined to accept jobs. This approach will shed light on the dynamics of worker behavior and job acceptance. If certain factors are known to affect absenteeism, can workers be matched to job orders more efficiently by mitigating those factors before it even appears on their platform? To better understand this, the intervention will pair workers with jobs they are more likely to accept.

Possibilities:
This project will inform targeted interventions that enhance job-matching processes and align worker expectations with organizational realities. It hopes to develop implementable solutions that address absenteeism in platform work and foster a more inclusive and sustainable gig economy for both workers and firms. Study results will inform interventions to address no-show, enhancing job match quality and durability, and thereby benefiting workers, employers, and third-party platforms. The intervention also seeks to expand on the barriers women face when entering platform work. Findings could lead to sector-wide solutions for improving women's participation in the platform workforce.

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The path ahead





As GBL looks to the coming year, we aim to widen the scale and scope of our impact, strengthening worker wellbeing, increasing gender equity, and cultivating more productive and healthy work environments on a million worker scale. As we have learned, rigorously collected evidence itself isn't always enough to convince firms to invest in high impact workforce solutions. While our results to-date have validated the efficacy of our model, our next task will be to invest in three key areas to accelerate our path to large-scale impact.



1.

New models of data collection, including qualitative research and post-evaluation tracking that help more precisely measure various dimensions of worker wellbeing

2.

New research to identify go-to-market strategies that can overcome private sector inertia and improve adoption of high-impact solutions

3.

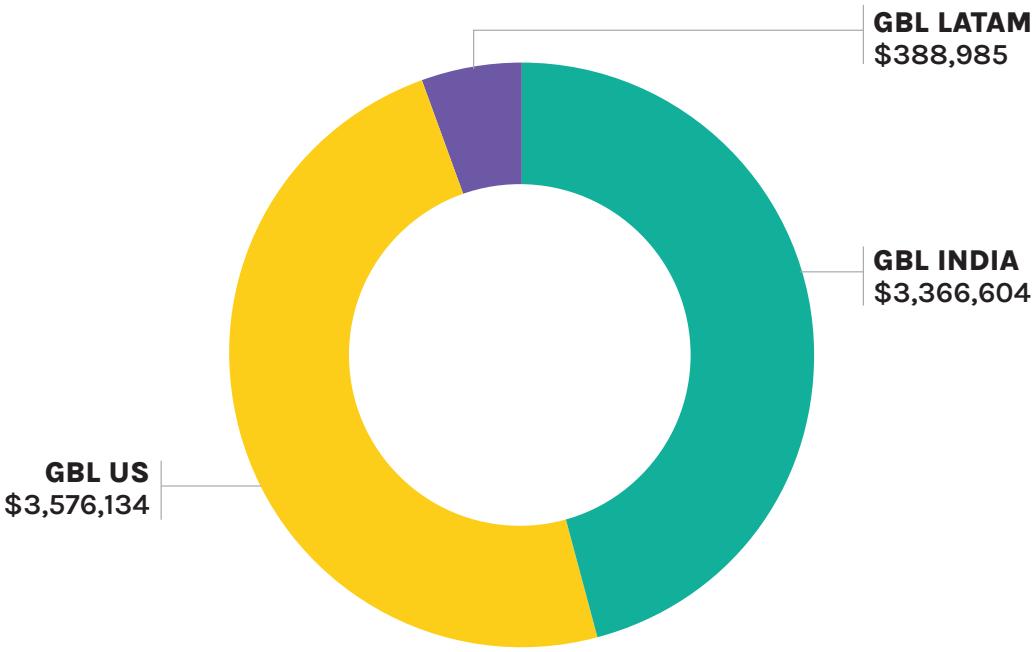
New applications for vetted interventions in new industries and geographies

As we chart our course, GBL is actively exploring new frontiers spanning holistic health, pathways to dignified employment for underserved communities, and the unique dynamics of the gig economy. Our expansion into emerging markets across Latin America and the United States underscores our commitment to scaling impact globally.

Leveraging our formidable evidence base on gender empowerment, financial inclusion, and best practices advisory, we are pioneering innovative impact models. Together, we can redefine the very essence of a "good" business - one that uplifts and unleashes the potential of its most vital asset: its people.

Financial overview

Secured funding



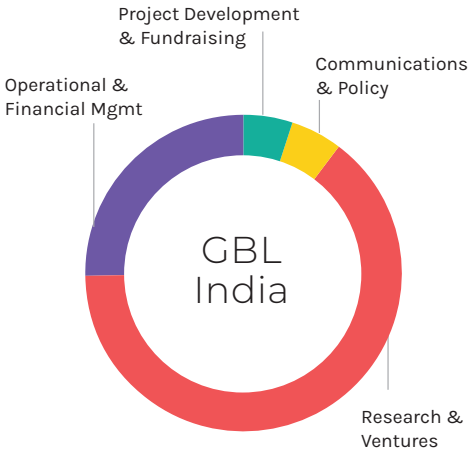
Type of Funding Organisation	GBL India	GBL US	GBL LatAm
Academic Institution	$120,000	-	$43,746
Corporate Funding	$989,064	-	-
Foundation	$10,447	$3,576,134	-
Government Funding	-	-	-
International Organization	$123,481	-	$345,239
Non Profit Organization	$2,123,612	-	-
Total	**$3,366,604**	**$3,576,134**	**$388,985**

Funds secured between April 2022 and March 2023; part of these funds are for multi-year projects.

Financial statements

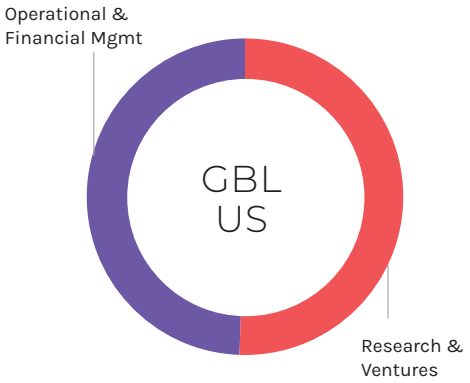
GBL India 2022-2023

Cost Category	Expenses in INR
Project Development & Fundraising	₹6,687,254.45
Communications & Policy	₹7,035,335.15
Research & Ventures	₹84,846,302.85
Operational & Financial Mgmt	₹33,126,344.95
	₹131,695,237.40



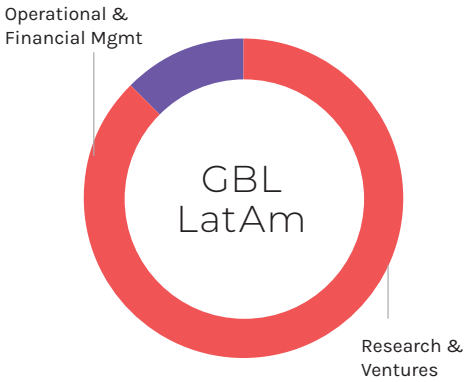
GBL US 2022

Cost Category	Expenses in USD
Project Development & Fundraising	-
Communications & Policy	-
Research & Ventures	$105,898.51
Operational & Financial Mgmt	$102,555.37
	$208,453.88



GBL LatAm 2022

Cost Category	Expenses in COP
Project Development & Fundraising	-
Communications & Policy	-
Research & Ventures	COP 388,173,045
Operational & Financial Mgmt	COP 55,316,650
	COP 443,489,695





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