

About MMF

Myna Mahila Foundation (MMF) empowers women in urban poor communities in India by providing knowledge, tools, and sexual/reproductive health services they need to take control of their well-being. MMF addresses common yet stigmatized conditions such as vaginal infections, infertility, polycystic ovary syndrome, and menopause through physical clinics and digital platforms, including a WhatsApp-based AI chatbot for telehealth, lab tests, and medications. Around two million women have already benefited from these programs, which emphasize trust and cultural sensitivity: 75% of staff come from the same neighborhoods, ensuring solutions that fit local traditions.

To address women's limited mobility and complex cultural contexts, we bring health education directly into homes through digital tools and safe Women's Empowerment Hubs. These hubs provide relevant medical guidance, confidential consultations with female providers/AI-assisted workers, training for local women to be AI-assisted health workers and health sessions in colleges and communities. Partnerships with institutions like Stanford University enable ongoing rigorous research, including randomized-control trials, resulting in cost-effective and impactful interventions.

The long-term vision is to empower 35 million women by 2035 (10% of 350 million lacking access to sexual/reproductive healthcare). By 2030, MMF aims to reach six million women by establishing 50 additional physical hubs and training three million college students while expanding digital services to 2.5 million chatbot users yearly. Through strategic collaboration with education and health departments and a skilled team of technologists, health workers, researchers, and doctors, MMF is creating ecosystem-wide improvements for women to speak up about their health, like the chatty 'Myna' bird.

MMF's Approach

MMF's approach is built on three pillars: a community-centered model, innovative technology, and rigorous research, recognizing that holistic solutions are essential for achieving women's health equity. With 70% of unemployed women rarely leaving their homes, MMF delivers sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services directly through physical centers and community-based programs. MMF has reached over 2 million women, including 1 million through doorstep delivery of menstrual health products and SRH education. Through the agency program, we have educated 500,000 women colleges and urban poor communities. Assessments revealed an 84% reduction in cultural misconceptions and a 65% increase in health-seeking behaviors. Our clinics have been extremely successful in reversing infertility cases and improving adherence to medications, and early diagnosis of vaginal infections. Given this success, local government departments approach us directly to operate their health centers.

To scale impact, MMF leverages localized technology tailored to semi-literate women. With support from BMGF, MMF developed Myna Bolo, an AI-chatbot trained on 75,000 SRH-related queries. The AI-assisted health worker model increases women’s engagement with the chatbot by 20% and increases workers’ economic independence. Ultimately, we aim to increase women’s agency index, combining communication, health-seeking, decision-making, mobility, and employment metrics. A 2022 randomized control trial with 3,200 women showed a 27% rise in mobility and 93% gaining income control, raising household earnings by 60%. MMF is currently collaborating with Stanford University to evaluate the impact of healthcare delivery modes on women’s autonomy, with early data showing the chatbot’s effectiveness in providing confidential SRH information.

MMF is driven by expertise in four key areas: medical care, grassroots experience, academic research, and technology innovation, supported by an experienced and skilled team committed to delivering meaningful impact.

Our *medical expertise* is led by skilled gynecologists, nurses, and social workers who address diverse healthcare needs, including menstrual health, infertility, and infection management. This team ensures comprehensive care delivery through workshops, counseling sessions, and clinical support.

Our *grassroots experience* is anchored in a team where 75% are women from the communities we serve, ensuring our programs address real needs. This lived knowledge is complemented by founder Dr. Suhani Jalota’s 15 years of grassroots work with urban poor women, fostering deep trust and cultural relevance.

Our *academic research expertise*, led by Dr. Jalota—a development economist with a PhD and MBA from Stanford—ensures evidence-based interventions. MMF’s academic research and M&E teams conduct rigorous field experiments to refine strategies linking women’s health, agency, and economic empowerment.

Our *technology knowledge* drives innovation, with technologists developing AI-driven tools like chatbots to increase program accessibility and scalability with a consistent lens of responsible use. These tools are iteratively improved using real-time feedback from ground staff.

MMF is guided by a global Board of Directors and trusted advisors with expertise across public health, governance, and compliance. With MOUs from Maharashtra’s education and health departments, partnerships with global organizations like Microsoft, and a commitment to

professional development, MMF's highly adaptive team continues to innovate and scale sustainably, staying rooted in community needs.

About Suhani

Dr. Suhani Jalota is an Economist with a PhD from Stanford and an MBA from the Stanford Graduate School of Business, where she was a Knight Hennessy Scholar. She founded Myna Mahila Foundation, a women's agency-building organization in slum communities in India with a reach of 1.5+ million women. She is a Hoover Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. She also founded Myna Research, a data collection arm that manages field experiments on women's issues in urban slums in India. She and her team are also currently developing Rani Work, an employment platform for women in India to work on digital jobs on their smartphones. She leads work around the future of work for women in the digital economy in India. For the last fourteen years, she has been working in urban slum areas and rural communities on projects ranging from adolescent girl health, water and sanitation to social protection policies in South Africa, Thailand, and several cities in India. She is a Forbes Asia under 30 recipient 2018, Hindustan Times 30U30 2021, Asia 21 Leader 2019, Young Achiever's Mother Teresa Memorial Awardee 2018, and Queen's Young Leader 2017. She has a BS in Economics and Global Health with the highest distinction from Duke University. Read more here: www.suhanijalota.me