

# 2025 Annual Report



Photo Credit: Pokhrama Foundation

## U.S.-India Friendship Alliance

*People. Partnership. Shared Progress.*

<https://usifa.org/>

## Notes from Leadership

*At a time of rapid global change, the strength of the U.S.–India partnership depends not only on shared strategic interests, but on the relationships, understanding, and goodwill built between our people. This is where the U.S.-India Friendship Alliance (USIFA) plays a vital role. By investing in programs that bring communities closer, strengthen resilience, and create opportunities for exchange and understanding, USIFA helps cultivate the human connections that are the foundation for progress across shared bilateral priorities. This includes initiatives such as the USIFA-supported crafts center in Maharashtra, which revitalizes a traditional weaving practice, expands women’s economic opportunities, and builds U.S. market linkages through a partnership with a U.S. academic institution.*

*With the United States and India expanding collaboration in critical and emerging sectors, the work of fostering mutual understanding becomes even more essential. As the philanthropic arm of the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF), USIFA is uniquely positioned to help build these bridges. By supporting initiatives that deepen connections and promote shared prosperity, we are investing in the long-term fabric of one of the world’s most consequential partnerships. - **Mukesh Aghi, President of USISPF and USIFA Board Member***



*Over the past year, the U.S.-India Friendship Alliance (USIFA) has continued to advance its mission by putting its resources to work where they matter most. Building on generous donor support, in 2025 the Alliance sustained two active programs in India that strengthen cross-border connections between the U.S. and India and help build community resilience.*

*This year also marked an important moment of growth for USIFA. With the addition of a new Executive Director and a Manager, we are laying the groundwork to broaden our reach, deepen our partnerships, and expand initiatives that support greater connectivity and shared prosperity between the United States and India. I am grateful for the trust and support of our donors and Board Members, which makes this work possible, and I look forward to the impact we will create together. - **Kate Bollinger, Executive Director***

## About USIFA

**As the philanthropic and engagement arm of USISPF**, USIFA mobilizes corporations, philanthropists, and civic partners to foster collaboration, expand opportunities, and strengthen the social and economic bridges between the United States and India.

**The U.S.-India Friendship Alliance (USIFA)** drives impact through initiatives that strengthen people-to-people ties, create economic opportunities, and expand access to essential services—advancing shared growth and stronger U.S.-India ties. USIFA was created during the COVID-19 pandemic to mobilize corporate and government partners in response to India’s urgent medical needs. Through its affiliate USISPF, USIFA raised \$22 million to deliver lifesaving supplies across India, saving tens of thousands of lives. Building on this model of partnership, USIFA continues to deepen bilateral ties and build resilience.



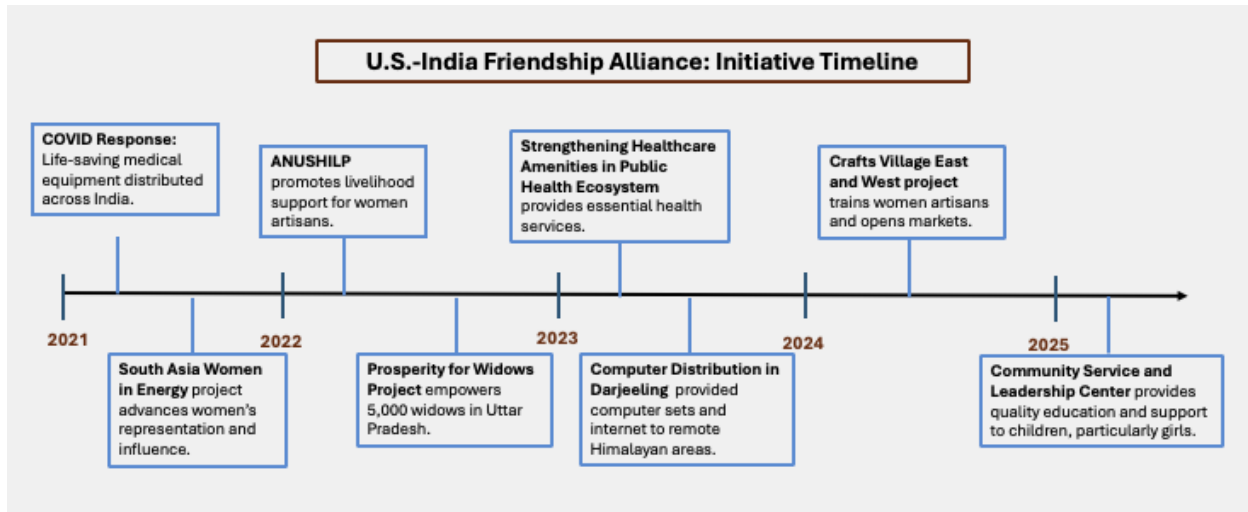
## Vision

A deep and enduring U.S.–India bond that expands opportunity, fosters understanding, and elevates lives across both countries through meaningful human, civic, and economic connection.

## Mission

The U.S.-India Friendship Alliance advances shared prosperity between the United States and India by investing in people, talent pathways, cultural and civic linkages, and community resilience.

# 2025 Initiative Highlights



The U.S.-India Friendship Alliance has two active awards in 2025, summarized below.

## Preserving Cultural Heritage: A Crafts Village Uniting East and West

**Partner:** Women Forward International

**Funding:** \$115,000 (to date)

**Location:** Aurangabad, India

**Timeline:** 2025 – 2026

**Project Description:**

### Overview

USIFA is funding Women Forward International to support the training of women artisans and development of a Crafts Village in Aurangabad, India. The Crafts Village aims to be a cultural and economic hub dedicated to the preservation, production, and promotion of traditional Indian crafts—specifically Himroo shawls, Paithani sarees, and Bidri work. The project places specific emphasis on building opportunities for an expanding group of rural women weavers in the area. The textile sector, including handloom products, in India is an important source of economic empowerment for women but suffers from supply issues due to the absence of systematized production. The craft center, the first of its kind in Maharashtra state, will empower expertly trained rural women to attain sustainable livelihoods and support economic growth in the area.





**Outreach** The project has placed specific emphasis on building support from government, academics, and the media in India. Officials from the Weavers’ Service Centre (Ministry of Textiles) visited the site and met with the women weavers. They were impressed and have committed to providing a two-month Himroo weaving training for 45 women. The pilot will be conducted at the current factory space and eventually at the Crafts Village once it’s ready. In addition, the center’s Himroo work and women's empowerment efforts were recently featured in a government produced documentary airing on national TV and OTT platforms.

### **Market Connectivity**

Women Forward International has partnered ZariZar Luxury Shawls & Minerals in India with the Parsons School of Design in New York to build market opportunities for Crafts Center products. In Fall 2025, students from New York’s Parsons School of Design collaborated with ZariZar in a Design Sprint—an immersive experience that connects them with external partners to address real-world design challenges rooted in sustainability and cultural preservation. As part of the project, students will help implement a strategic plan to expand market access—particularly in the United States—to uplift ZariZar’s community of women artisans, along with their families and communities.



### **Project Goals**

- Support the local Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar economy by boosting tourism opportunities for the villagers and earning opportunities for women weavers.
- Preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Himroo weaving, while providing a beautiful, inspiring atmosphere for the women weavers to live and work.

### **2025 Accomplishments**

- 15 women weavers have participated in the training program in India.
- 5 women have mastered their skills and are now working as professional weavers.
- Women have reported a notable increase in their income through new job opportunities.
- A growing number of students and interns from design institutes are gaining hands-on experience and contributing to craft documentation.
- Community engagement and skill development is growing steadily.
- Continued construction of the crafts center complex.

## Project Title: Establishment of Community Service and Leadership Center

**Implementing Partner:** [Pokhrama Foundation](#)

**Funding:** \$ 100,663 (to date)

**Location:** Lakhisarai, Bihar, India

**Timeline:** 2025-2028

### **Project Description:**

USIFA has partnered with the Pokhrama Foundation to build and establish a Community Service and Leadership Center. The [Pokhrama Foundation](#) is a nonprofit organization working across remote villages in Bihar, India, focused on providing high quality education and community services to children, and particularly girls, in remote and underdeveloped areas of Bihar, India.

The Community Service and Leadership Center will be situated next to the Pokhrama Foundation Academy and will provide a community pediatric health clinic; computer lab; learning center; and continuing education and community outreach center. As the Center is being developed, the activity

### **2025 Accomplishments:**

#### **Learning Centres (Bridge Program for Out-of-School Children)**

- Outreach to 200 households across three villages to identify out-of-school children, especially girls and those from marginalized communities, to participate in the program.
- Delivery of daily classes in foundational literacy and numeracy to participants.
- Teacher and student training on lesson planning and implementation.
- Operation of toto (e-rickshaw) services to enable out-of-school girls to safely attend the Continuing Education Program.
- Continuous monitoring of attendance, progress, and school-readiness.



## 2. Pediatric Health Program

- Health check-ups conducted in July 2025 and October 2025 by pediatric specialists.
- School-wide eye testing conducted in July 2025 through Titan+ Eye Company, with prescriptions provided as needed.
- Establishment of strong coordination with the Pokhrama Public Health Centre to ensure HPV vaccination for girls ages 8–14.
- Menstrual health workshop conducted and sanitary napkins regularly distributed.
- Nutrition workshops conducted for lower, middle, and high school students.
- Continued follow-up on referrals and medical needs identified during screenings.



Photo Credit: Pokhrama Foundation

## 3. Continuing Education Program (Adolescent Girls)

- Outreach to 56 households to identify adolescent girls who discontinued schooling to discuss continuing education opportunities.
- Offered continuing education opportunities to program participants (adolescent girls) including exam preparation, mock tests, and targeted support for written entrance exams.
- Strong working relationships established with Azim Premji University professors and students for program participation.
- Two Toto (e-rickshaw) routes (4 Totos total) currently operating for safe evening transportation.
- New Project Lead (hiring underway) will strengthen counseling, outreach, attendance, and parent engagement.



Photo Credit: Pokhrama Foundation

## 4. Digital Learning & Computer Literacy Program

- Students regularly guided on computer usage, including typing, research, and presentations.
- Online test preparation for adolescent girl to prepare for entrance exams.
- Conducted online sessions for out-of-school girls.

# Financial Summary

The U.S.-India Friendship Alliance (USIFA) is committed to being careful stewards of all funding received, as we work to strengthen people-to-people ties, expand educational opportunities, promote skills development, and support community-driven development across both nations. The following financial summary provides a clear and comprehensive view of how generous contributions fueled our mission.



As USIFA is currently in a growth phase, we will be building our funding base in the coming year to more fully support our mission of advancing shared prosperity between the United States and India by investing in people, talent pathways, cultural and civic linkages, and community resilience.

## Funding Overview

The below reflects USIFA’s expenditures and equity through Q3 of 2025. Visit our website to read our Form 990, which provides additional details on our funding, expenditures, and organizational oversight.

Type	Expenditure Amount
Pokhrama Foundation to implement their project, <i>Establishment of Community Service and Leadership Center</i>	\$100,663
Consulting fees	\$49,850.00
Website services	\$204
<b>Total Expenditures 2025</b>	<b>\$150,717</b>
<b>Current Equity</b>	<b>\$2,486,000</b>

# Looking Ahead

As we move into the coming year, the U.S.-India Friendship Alliance aims to build a strong and diversified funding base while deepening collaboration with partners who share our vision of stronger and more connected U.S.-India partnership. We will continue to broaden engagement with corporate and philanthropic partners to better align funding with community priorities and emerging opportunities in both the U.S. and India with a focus on our two pillars: people-to-people ties and crisis response.



Photo Credit: SEWA

We will translate committed resources into high-impact programs, ensuring that every dollar entrusted to us delivers meaningful, measurable benefit and goodwill, and advances our long-term strategic goals. Programs will be guided by two core principles:



Photo Credit: Anant National University

**1) Bilateral Value Creation:** Every initiative will strengthen people, opportunity, and resilience, reinforcing the U.S.-India partnership as a shared engine of prosperity.

**2) Corporate Purpose as Catalyst:** We will mobilize the expertise, platforms, and networks of mission-aligned corporations to unlock talent pathways, innovation, and community investment across the U.S.-India corridor.

We look forward to expanding our partnerships and collaborations in the coming year. Please reach out to us at [friendshipalliance@usispf.org](mailto:friendshipalliance@usispf.org) to connect with us and learn more.

**Contact:** [friendshipalliance@usispf.org](mailto:friendshipalliance@usispf.org)

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