



# India's First 24/7 Crisis Line for gender-based violence.

We Listen, Educate and Empower -  
Because every survivor deserves to be heard,  
supported, and uplifted.





# OUR STORY

Aks Foundation is registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860 (Central) and under the Maharashtra Public Trusts Act 1950. Though primarily a Pune-centric NGO working in the area of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), domestic violence, sexual abuse, and harassment, Aks also provides support to victims across the country. It provides support to victims of abuse and violence in order to empower them to become survivors.

## INCEPTION

Idea formed in founder Barkha Bajaj's mind while studying in the United States. Inspired by her work with survivors of abuse, violence, and trauma.

**Goal: Replicate support systems for survivors and victims in India.**

## EXECUTION PLAN

- Organized a fundraiser to support the mission.
- Conducted training for first batch of volunteers.
- Launched Aks Crisis Line on 15th August 2013.

## CATALYST

The Nirbhaya incident in 2012, Aks organized and conducted a silent candlelight March and then transformed the initial idea into a certainty.

## OBJECTIVE OF 24X7 CRISIS LINE

- Ensure round the clock availability for individuals in crisis.
- Provide a listening ear to victims during times of emergency.





# MISSION

To empower survivors of gender-based violence through compassionate 24/7 intervention, legal guidance and community education.

# VISION

A society where communities stand united against gender based violence and every survivor is heard, supported and empowered to live with dignity, safety and autonomy.

## WHAT SETS US APART?

**Aks 24/7 helpline (Pan India) - support available round the clock.**

01

**Google India partnership (since 2022) for national outreach.**

02

**Only helpline to appear first on Google for gender-based violence support**

03

**Aks helpline displayed on Netflix support website [wannatalkaboutit.com](http://wannatalkaboutit.com)**

04

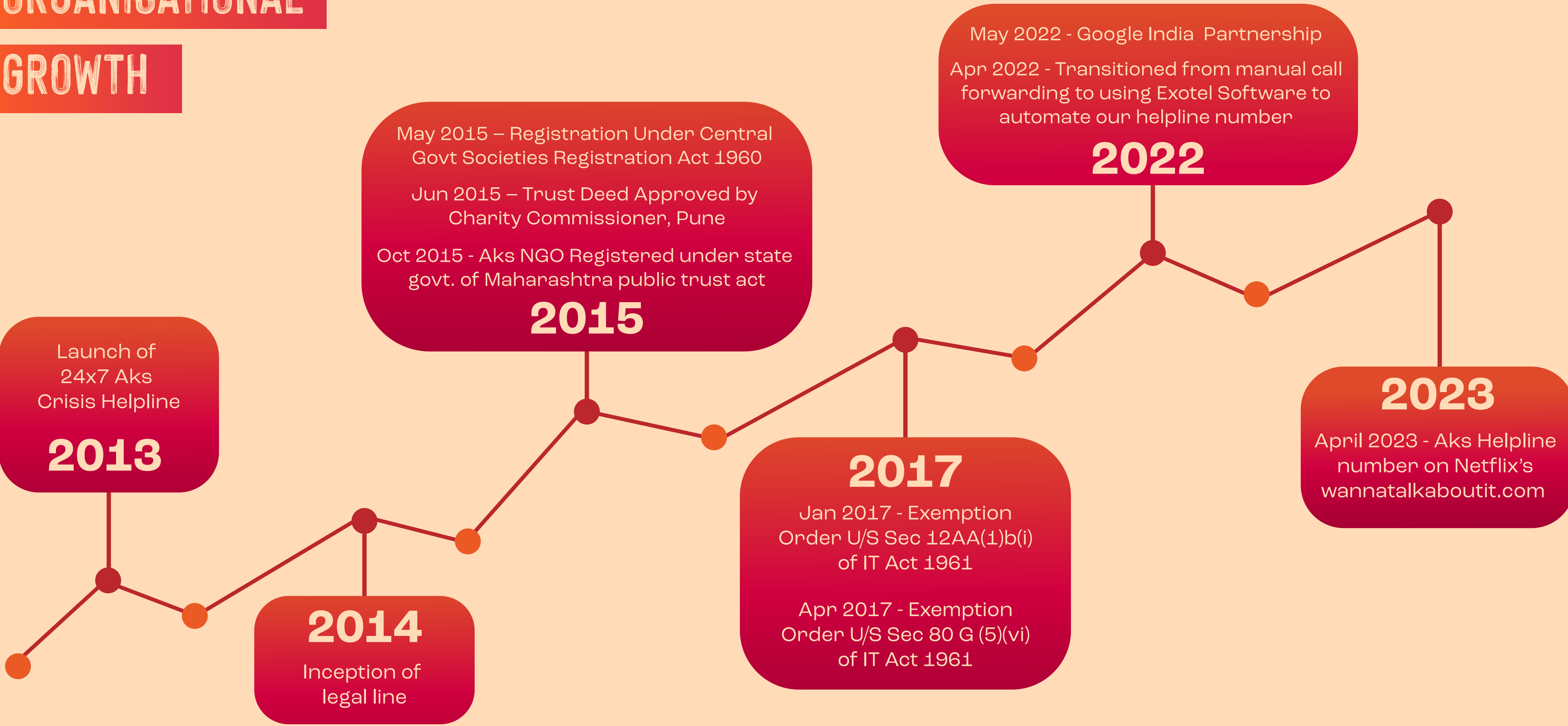
**Well qualified and trained counsellors who do follow-up calls for survivors who need ongoing support**

05



# ORGANISATIONAL

# GROWTH





# OUR THREE-PRONGED APPROACH

We don't just respond to crises we build pathways to empowerment. Whether it's a midnight call, legal clarity, or a workshop that shifts a mindset, Aks Foundation is where change begins.

## ⌄ 24/7 Crisis Helpline

- India's only 24/7 national helpline exclusively for survivors of Gender-Based Violence.
- Stringent volunteer selection process including interviews, in-depth training (designed by Aks) and practice sessions.
- Operated by 50+ trained multilingual, pan India volunteers.
- Empathetic and confidential emotional support available.
- Technology enabled by Exotel for call automation.
- Working with law enforcement to dispatch help when someone is in immediate danger including reporting child sexual abuse matters.
- Empower the callers with local resources available.

## ⌄ Legal Advisory

- Legal guidance for survivors of Gender-Based Violence through trained legal volunteers.
- Follow-up legal support on issues including: FIR/NC filing, Domestic Violence Act, POCSO Act, POSH Act, Divorce and custody laws.
- Legal volunteers undergo specialized training on modules designed by Aks before engaging with survivors.

### POSH Advisory Services:

- Support with Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) formation.
- Review and alignment of company policies with POSH compliance.
- Participation as external ICC members for organizations.

## ⌄ Community Education

- Workshops on gender sensitization, POSH, women's rights, and child safety.
- PROJECT PROTSAHAN: Individual and Group counselling at Observation Home for Juvenile Children, Yerwada, Pune.
- Outreach Program for Community Centres/Bastis/Corporates/Other NGOs (Gender Sensitization, Gender-Based Violence, Domestic Violence Awareness)
- College Outreach Program for young adults (Gender Sensitization, Gender-Based Violence)
- School Outreach Program for Staff, Parents, and Children (Child Safety And Prevention against Sexual Abuse, POCSO Awareness)
- POSH Program for Corporates
- Safe Space Program for communities





# IN THE WORDS OF OUR FOUNDER:

## The Origin and Growth of Aks Foundation

I returned to India in 2009 after completing my Master's in Counseling Psychology and working with Denton County Friends of the Family in Texas. For nearly five years, I had worked with survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual abuse. Despite my experience, upon returning to India, I got swept up in the pace of life here. While the idea of Aks had already taken root, at that time it was a one-woman initiative focused primarily on awareness programs.

Everything changed in December 2012. The horrific Nirbhaya case shook the nation and me. The very next day, I was traveling alone by train to the Northeast. My compartment had no other women, and I was gripped by fear. I remember vividly: I slept with my boots on and kept red chilli powder in my bag just in case. That night, I embodied the collective fear that countless women across the country were feeling.

The next morning, as I reached Dimapur, I began searching for a women's helpline I could have called that night. Shockingly, there were no 24/7 crisis helplines for women in India at the time. That moment sparked the idea that became the Aks Crisis Line.

I returned to Pune, trained our first group of six volunteers, and organized a fundraiser to get the helpline operational. We applied for NGO status, and on 15th August 2013—Independence Day—we officially launched the Aks 24/7 Crisis and Legal Helpline. The date was symbolic: I firmly believe that none of us are truly free until all of us are free.

From 2013 to 2025, Aks has grown from strength to strength. Today, we are the top Google search result for keywords like "domestic violence" and "sexual abuse"—a recognition we're proud of, especially as it stemmed from a collaboration initiated by Google. From just six volunteers, we now have a team of over 60 dedicated volunteers and a core team of 10, with each vertical of Aks being independently managed by committed team members.



**Barkha Bajaj**  
Founder & President

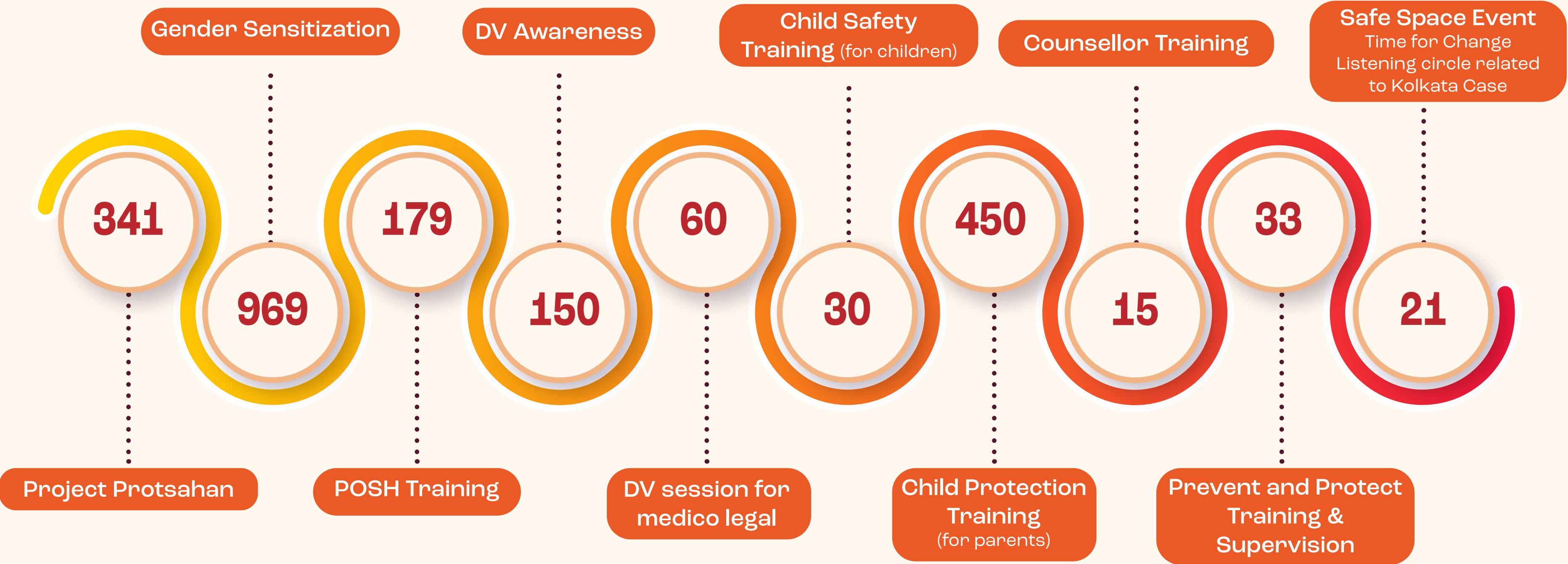
One of the initiatives closest to my heart is Project Protsahan, where we work directly with juvenile offenders and perpetrators of violence. We provide individual and group counseling to children in juvenile homes and conduct workshops on gender-based violence and consent. Having started my career as a therapist working with perpetrators, this project feels especially meaningful. It addresses the root of the issue—focusing not just on supporting survivors but also on transforming those who cause harm. I believe real change begins when we raise our boys differently.

Today, Aks continues to bring change by spreading awareness across schools, colleges, and bastis in Pune. The journey has taken years of hard work, resilience, and more sleepless nights than I can count. There were moments I wanted to give up, but I'm deeply grateful to my core team and volunteers who have stood by me through it all. They are the reason Aks exists—and thrives—today.



# COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM

Data from - 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025



While endeavouring to provide compassionate, comprehensive services to those impacted by Gender-Based Violence (domestic violence, sexual abuse, and harassment), Aks also looks at partnering with the community to promote safety, awareness, and prevention of Gender-Based Violence. Aks trainers and community ambassadors to venture into schools, colleges, and the local community to raise awareness and conduct workshops on gender related topics.





# BITTER REALITY:



The WHO estimates that between 25%–50% of Indian women suffer intimate partner violence in their lifetime.



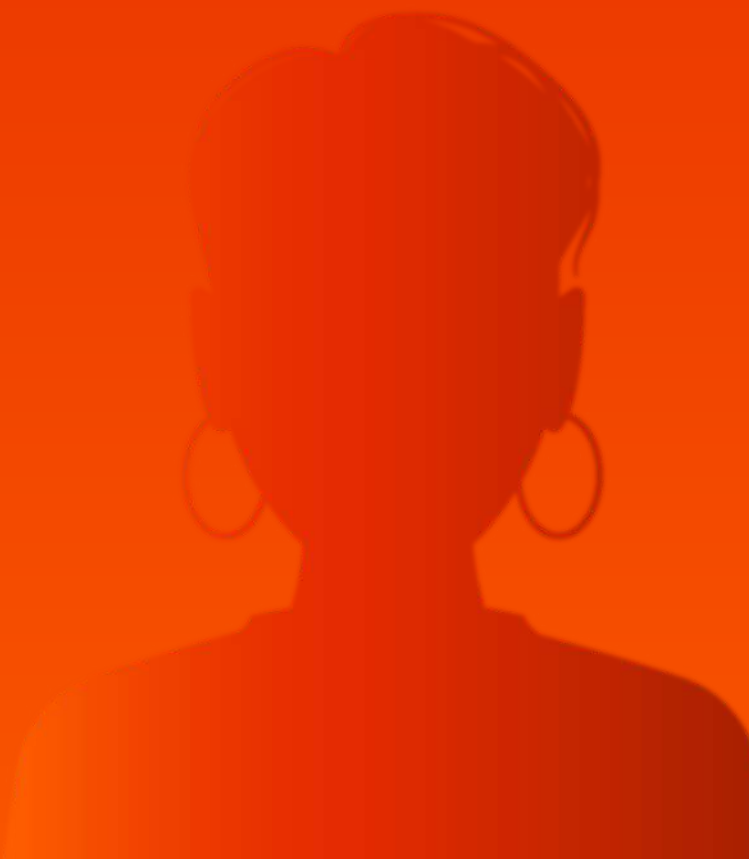
40% of female suicides globally occur in India; domestic violence is a major risk factor.



Research indicates male victims suffer from anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and suicidal tendencies.

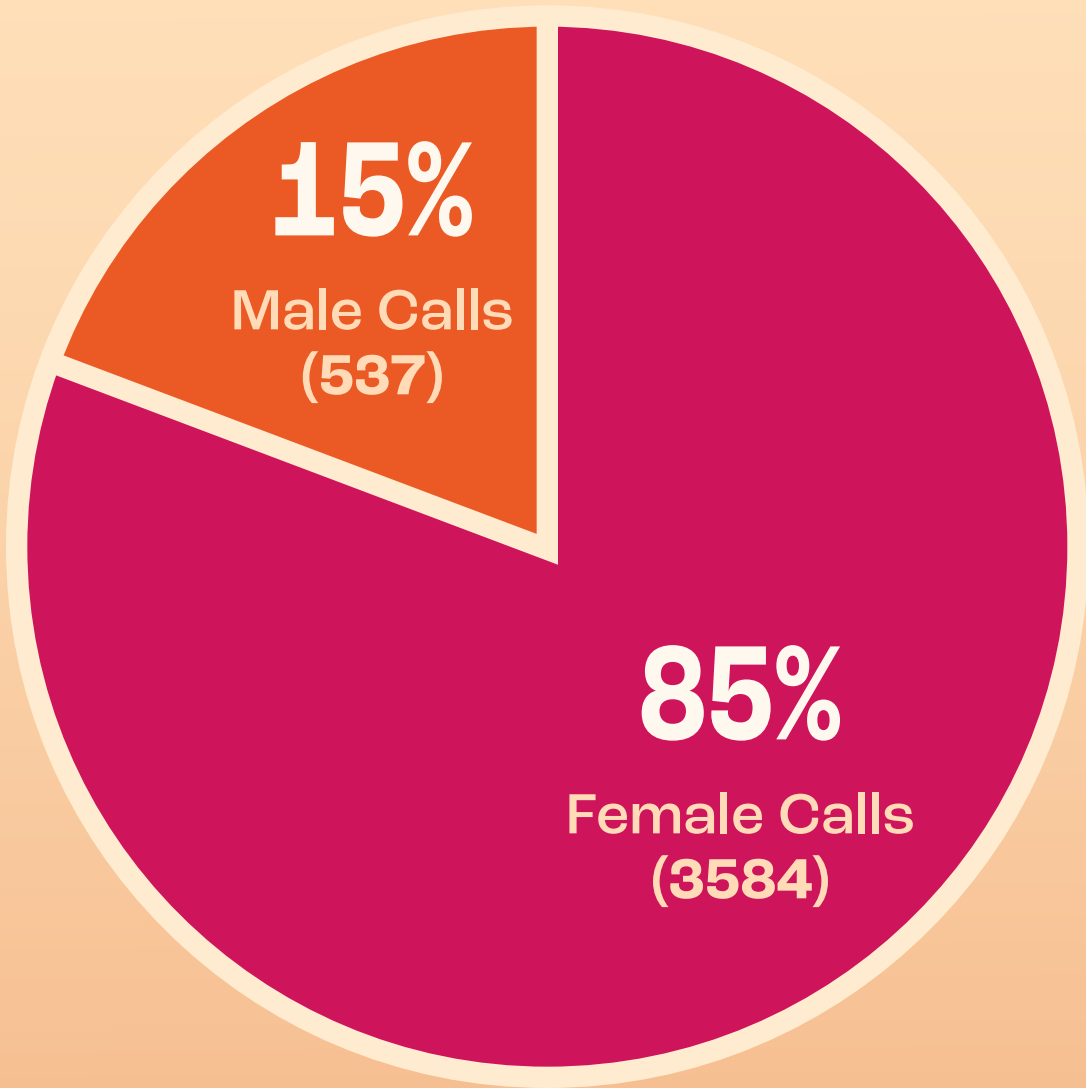
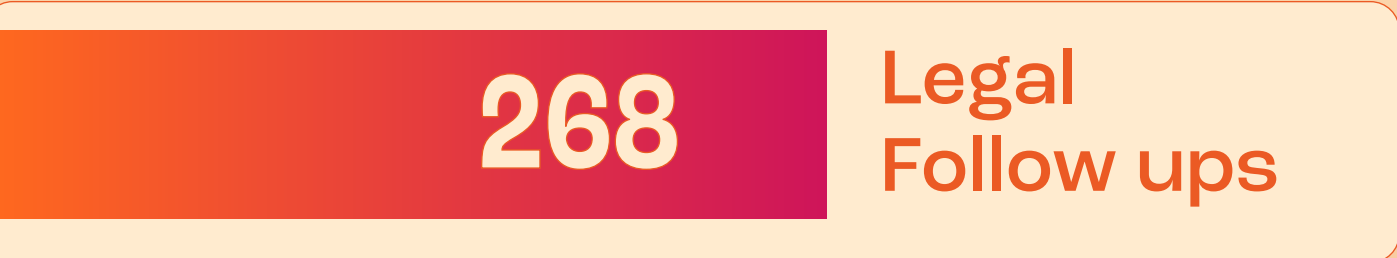
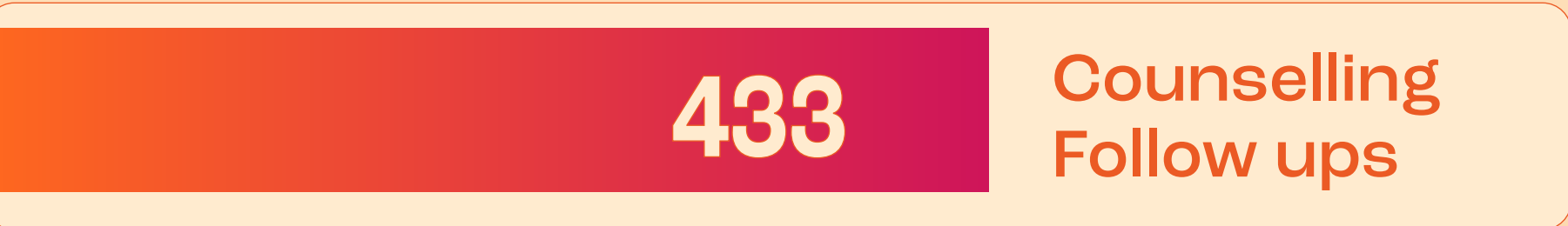


NCRB data shows married men commit suicide at 3–5× higher rates than married women in age 30–60, with “family problems” as a leading factor.



## OUR IMPACT

in 1st April 2024- 31st March 2025



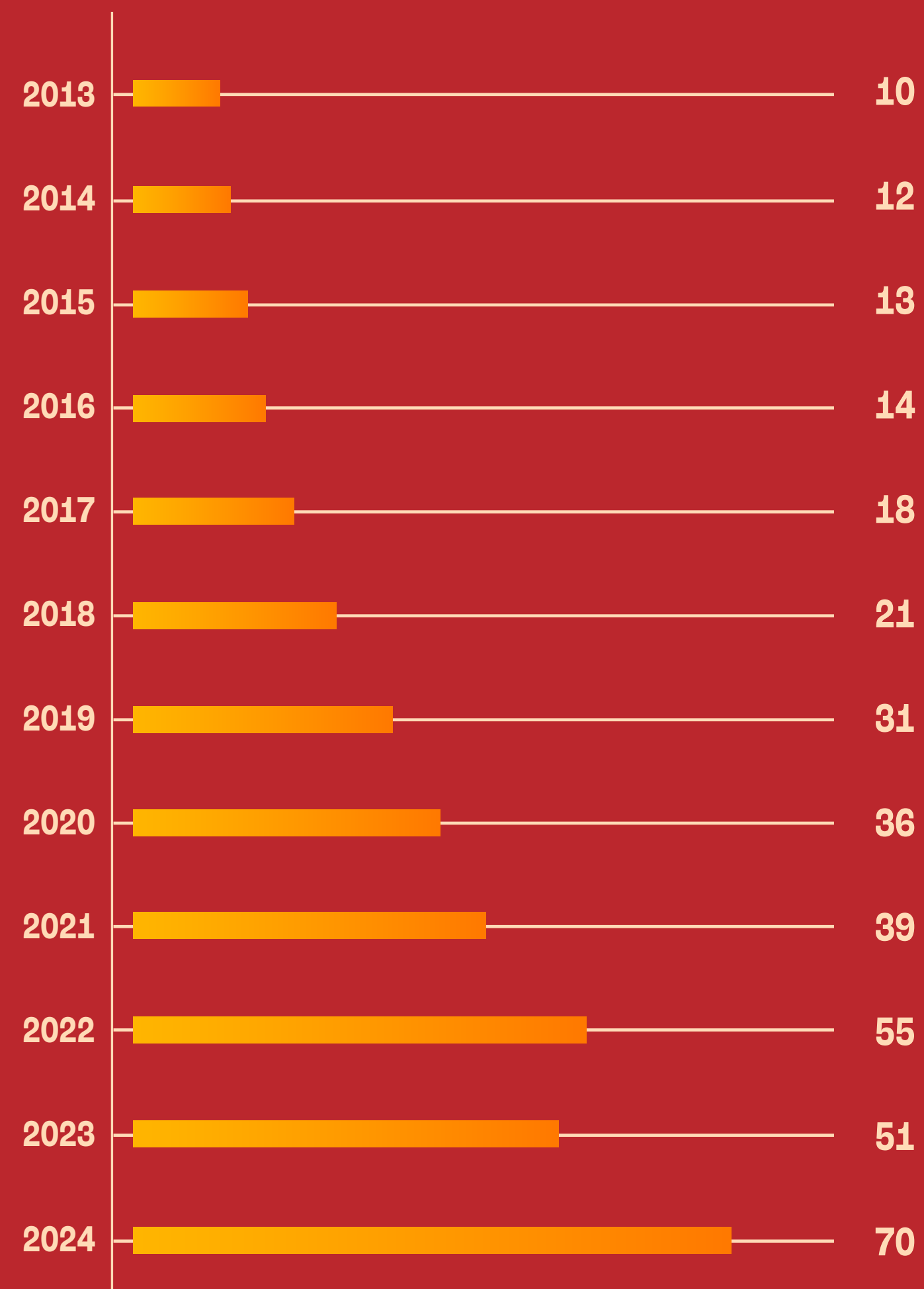
Calls Handled between 8 pm to 8 am/  
Calls outside other NGO Hours -

Neglected  
Market **1099** out of 4009

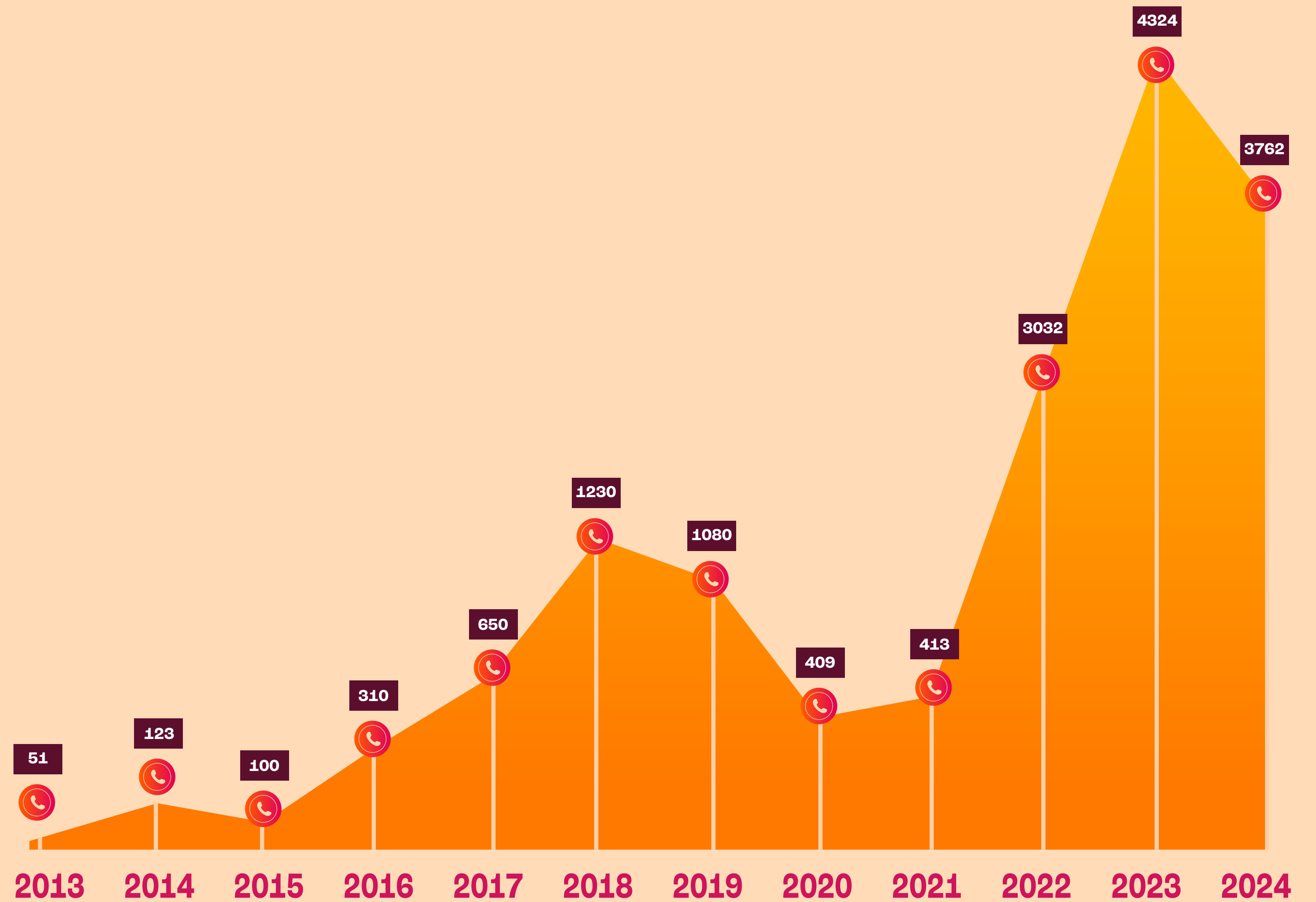
“Over **50%** of surveyed married men in rural India report emotional or physical violence highlighting a silenced crisis. Yet, there is no legal framework to protect them. Aks Foundation’s gender-inclusive helpline breaks this silence with 24/7 crisis intervention, counseling, and follow-ups services which Aks already offers.”



## ACTIVE CRSIS LINE VOLUNTEERS

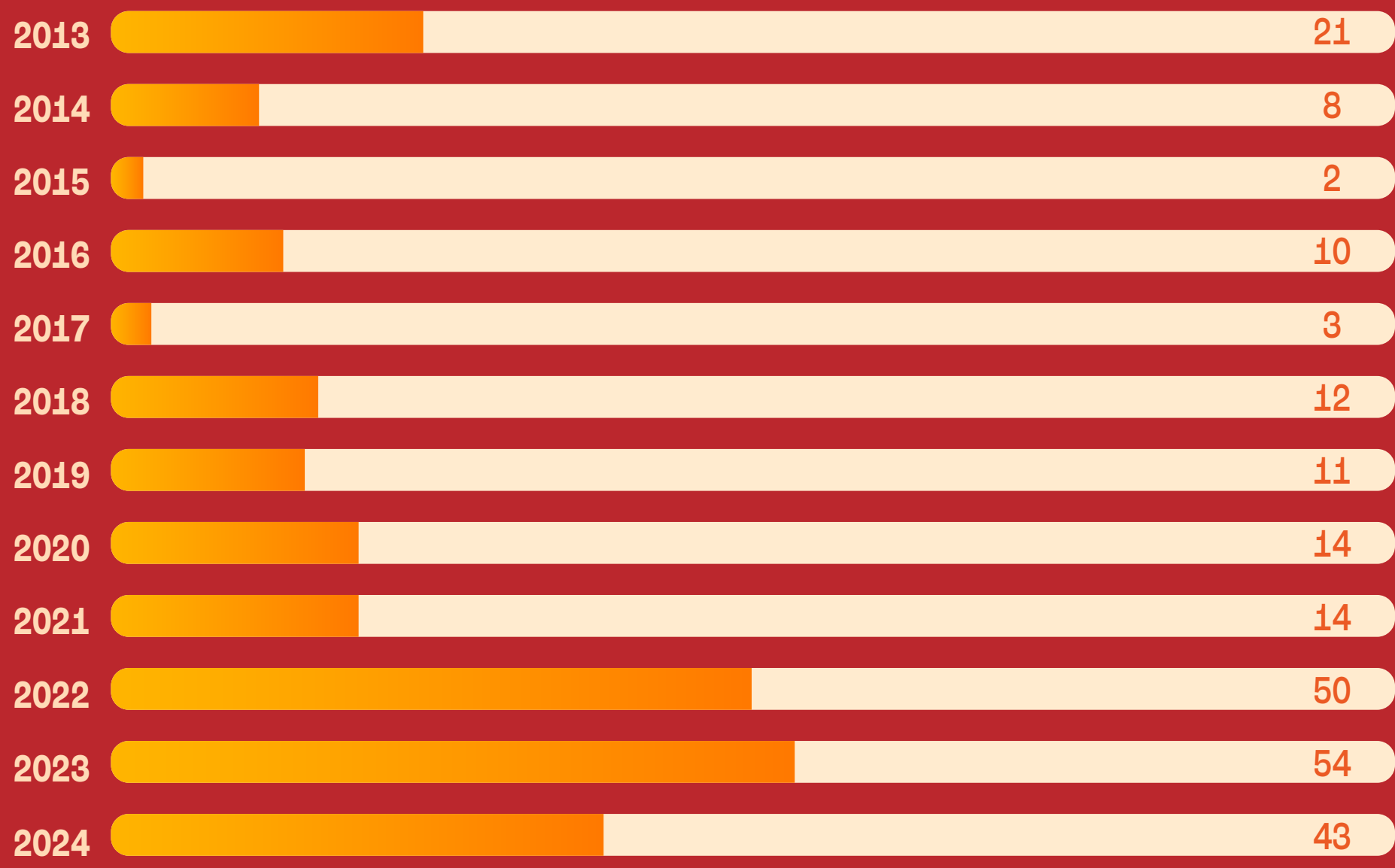


## CALLS RECEIVED

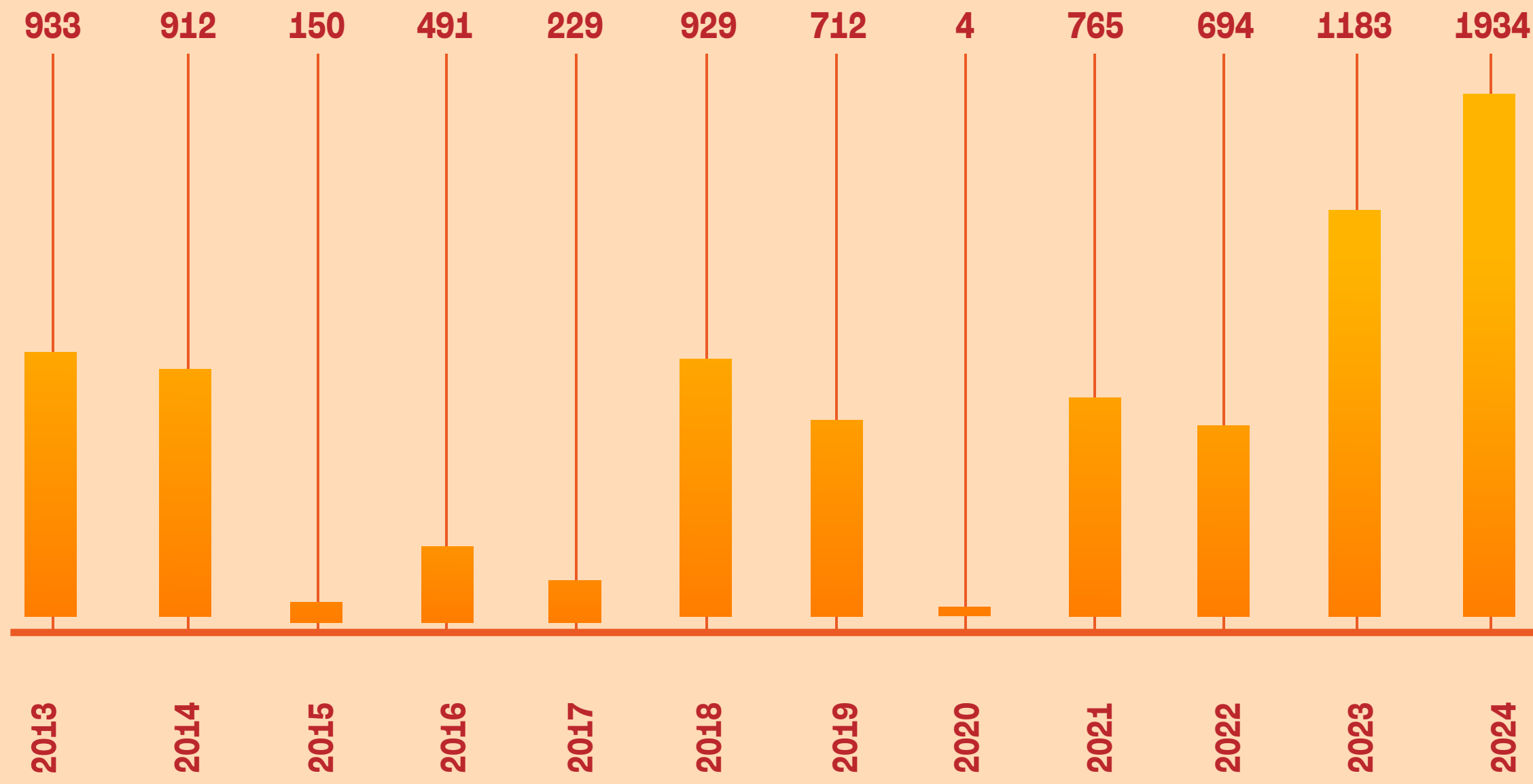




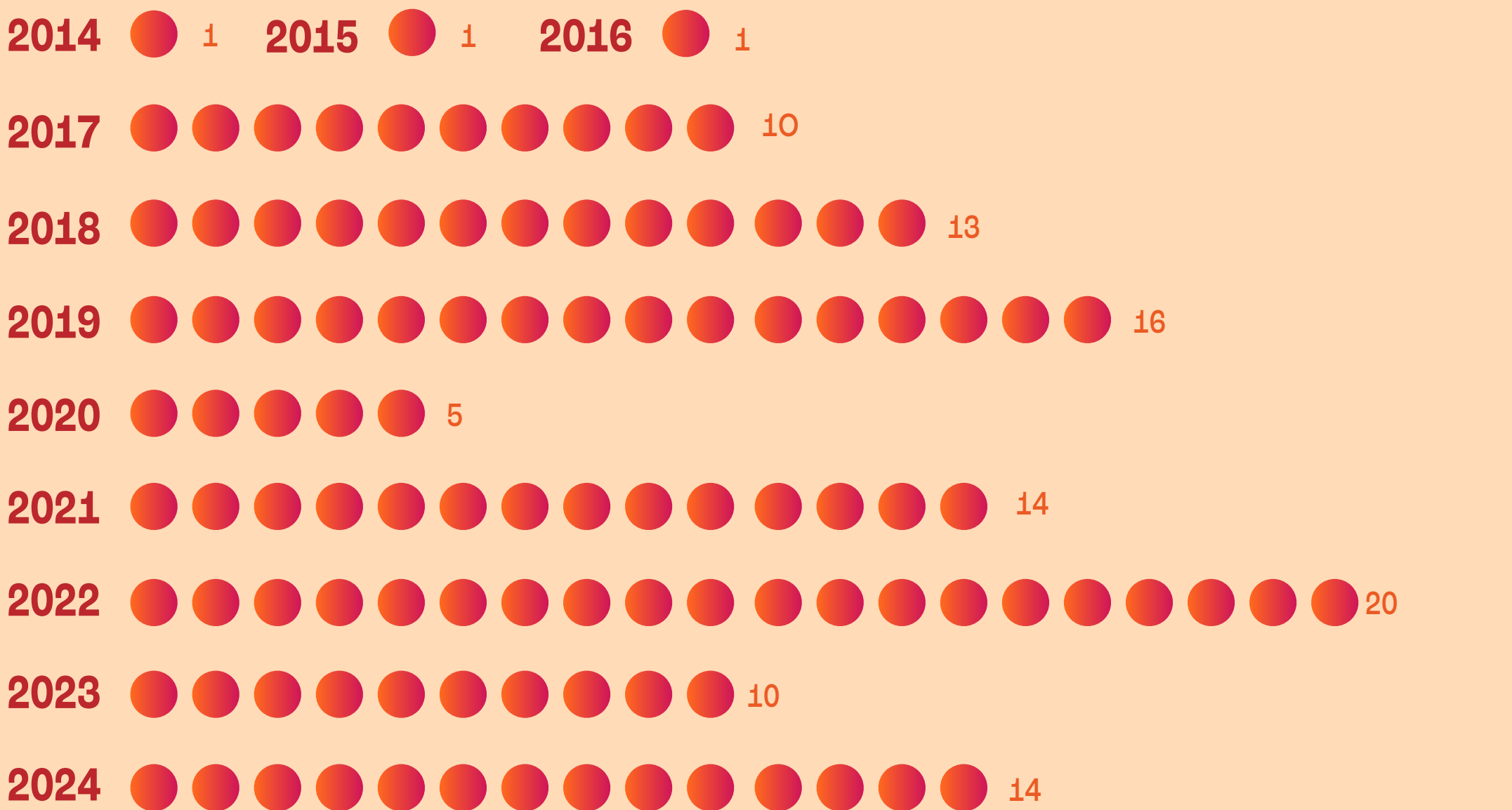
VOLUNTEERS TRAINED



COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS



LEGAL LINE VOLUNTEERS





# AKS HIGHLIGHTS

Over the years we have met our goals and achieved our targets, overcoming adversities. We've highlighted some of the moments that have been instrumental to our success.



Aks Representative, Charu Mudholkar speaks at the seminar 'Transforming Women from Equality to Empowerment', sponsored by Maharashtra State Commission for Women



Aks in discussion with RTO on child safety.



Citadel featured Aks Founder to highlight Aks' fight for gender equality.



Spreading awareness through radio mirchi.



Aks representatives meet Maharashtra State Commission of Women to collaborate on community based programs for law enforcement and medical communities.



Aks representatives at National Consultation on Safety of Women & Children organised by Pune City Police and Indian Police foundation.



Domestic Violence Panel Discussion "Untold Stories".





2010



2009



2013



2009



2023



2013



2012



2019



2013



2014



2023



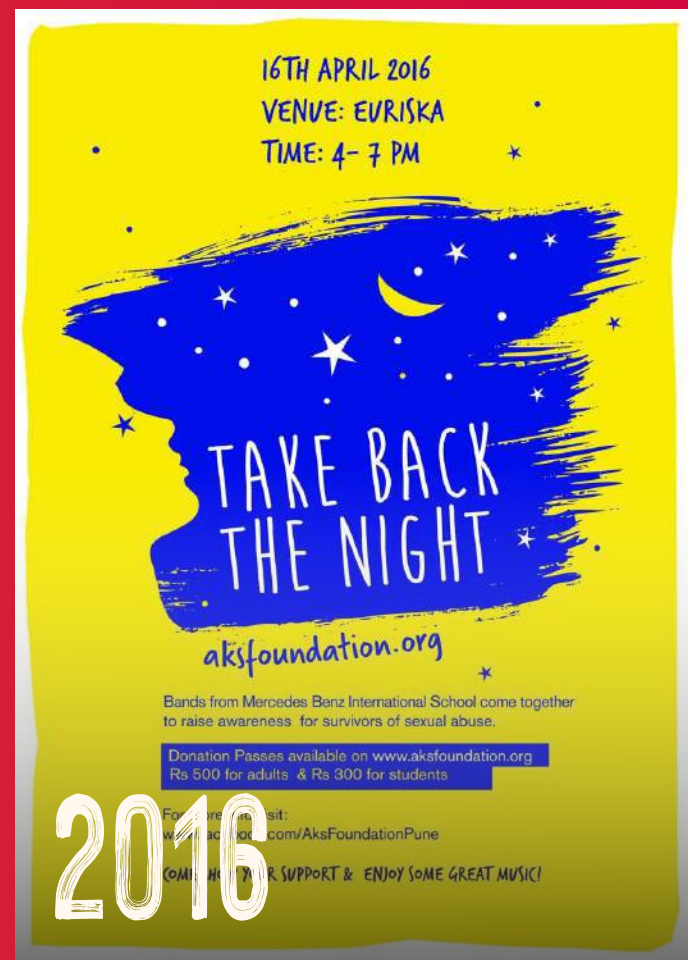
2015



2011



2018



2016

## TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

April is universally recognized as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Take Back the Night' (TBTN) first appeared in Europe in 1976 and is today a sign of empowerment for men, women, and children across the world. TBTN Pune is an annual event organized by Aks Foundation to spread awareness about Sexual Assault and to take a stand to 'reclaim the night'. Over the years, we have celebrated TBTN with art exhibitions, concerts, poetry, and humor, raising awareness and funds towards our cause. We will continue to discuss and raise women's issues unabashedly for years to come because the 'Night' belongs to all of us.



# OUR TEAM



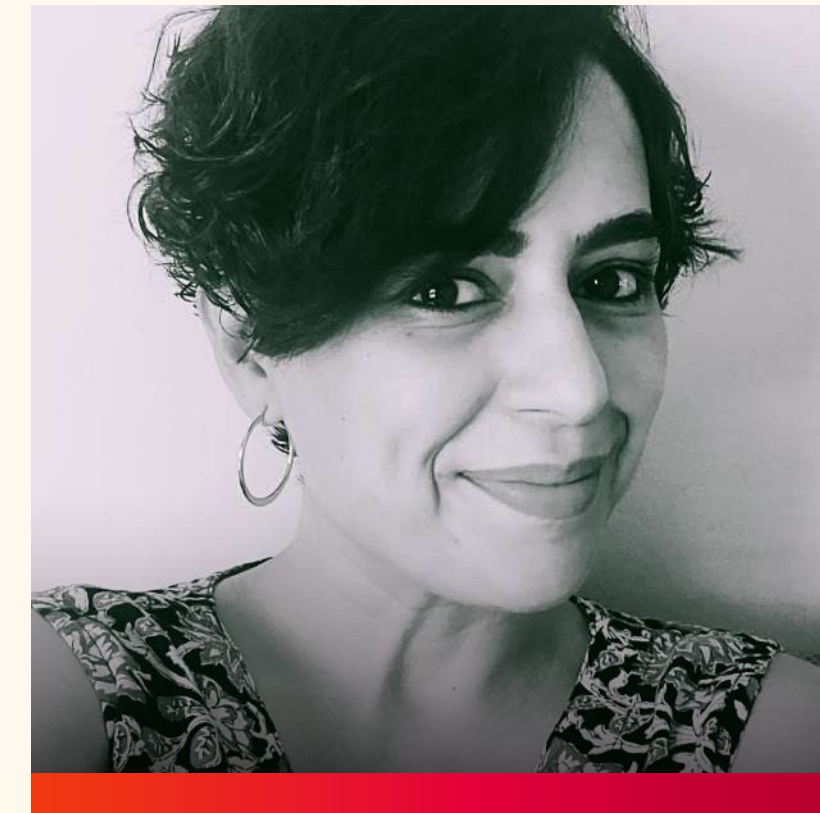
**Barkha Bajaj**  
Founder & President



**Brig Deepak Bajaj,**  
**VSM, (Retd)**  
Director, Finance & Admin



**Neerja Bajaj**  
Director, Operations



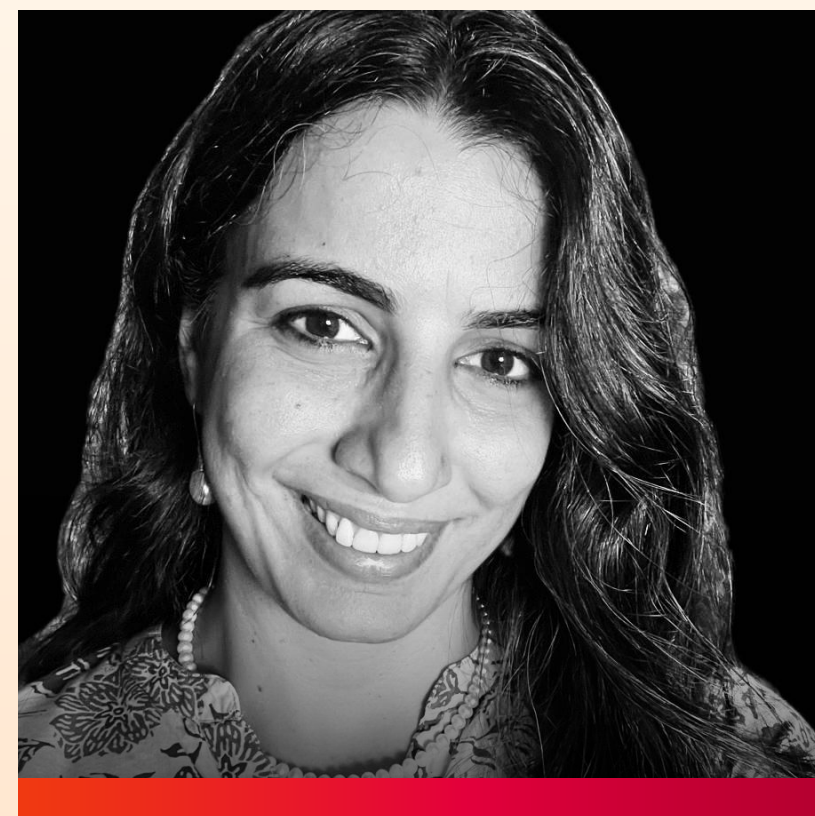
**Priya Parkhi**  
Manager, Operations



**Harpreet Kalra**  
Manager, Crisis Line



**Adv. Heena Panjabi**  
Legal Advisor



**Dr. Jenifer Billimoria**  
Manager & Counsellor,  
Community Education



**Aneet Matwankar**  
Team Lead & Counsellor,  
Crisis Line



**Payal Kannurkar**  
Team Lead & Counsellor,  
Community Education



# MEDIA OUTREACH

Anything that's human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary. The people we trust with that important talk can help us know that we are not alone.

Fred Rogers



25K  
1098

# TESTIMONIALS

I was once a survivor who reached out to Aks for help. The support I received changed my life—and inspired me to become a volunteer myself. I wanted to give back to the very platform that stood by me when I needed it the most.

- P

“You are our guiding angel.”

Mother of a 14 year old survivor of sexual abuse The mother brought evidence to show that a 25 year old foreign national was grooming her daughter. Aks counselors met the girl & collected evidence of their chats. He was pressurizing her to send nude pictures & also molested the 14 year old. Aks worked with the Kondhwa police & the mother. Aks counselors filed a FIR to get the men arrested & deported from India within a week.

I have been trying to call the helpline numbers mentioned on wannatalkaboutit.com which I was directed to at the end of a Netflix show depicting Domestic Violence. No one answered except you. Thank you for being there for people who need you late at night.

-Call received at 01:30 am

Thank you for helping us with the emergency numbers. We were able to call the police through 1091 and they have filed a complaint. Thank you for being there for the family at the time of emergency”

-Abhi, Bhopal

Aks provided emergency police numbers to the caller.



# CRISIS LINE IMPACT STORIES

## D's Story: Finding Hope and Strength

D's life was filled with challenges. She had endured abuse by male cousins, rape, bullying, and body shaming, which left her feeling broken and worthless. In her present situation, D was unemployed, financially dependent, and stuck in an abusive relationship with her live-in partner. Feeling hopeless and alone, she turned to counselling as a last resort, seeking someone who would simply listen.

In a safe and compassionate space, D began to open up about her pain. Over six sessions, she started to see her inner strength and resilience, which had been buried under years of hardship. With newfound courage, D made the brave decision to leave her abusive partner. She also confronted him about his behavior, setting boundaries for her well-being.

D's story shows the power of being heard and supported. Her journey of starting to taking control of her life is a powerful reminder of the strength within us all.

# HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

## Your CSR contribution can enable us to:

- Scale our 24/7 helpline
- Onboard and train more volunteers
- Create a counseling line bot for text services
- Create legal line bot
- Expand workshops to reach marginalized populations in India
- Outreach to rural communities and awareness campaigns
- Expanding Project Protsahan to provide support to juvenile delinquents in Observation Home Yerwada, Pune and their families through home visits
- Become a key CSR ally and co-create impactful initiatives.

# OUR PARTNERS





GET INVOLVED:  
LET'S BUILD A SAFER, MORE EMPATHETIC  
SOCIETY - TOGETHER.

To know more about us, log on to:



[www.aksfoundation.org](http://www.aksfoundation.org)



[operations@aksfoundation.org](mailto:operations@aksfoundation.org)



[aksfoundation\\_official](https://www.instagram.com/aksfoundation_official)



**+91 8793088814 (24/7 Crisis Helpline Number)**