

OCTOBER 2024



INDIAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY NETWORK

Monthly Newsletter





CEO – SANTOSH GUPTA

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As I reflect on **ISRN's** recent achievements, I am filled with gratitude for our esteemed board members, dedicated team, and trusted partners. Together, we are advancing our vision of sustainable development and empowerment that continues to transform lives and communities. Our **October 25, 2024, Governing Board Meeting** was a pivotal moment to align on our progress and chart a dynamic roadmap. The meeting underscored our strides in education, health, and livelihoods, while the guidance from our board members reinforced our commitment to scaling impact.

Education remains a cornerstone of our mission. The inauguration of Smart Schools in Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh, and Bageshwar, Uttarakhand, through the Uttam School Project, is helping bridge the educational divide. These upgraded facilities — with digital libraries, science labs, and hygiene amenities — are empowering students to dream and achieve.

In agriculture, our FPO capacity-building training with CSIR-IIIM offered tools to enhance productivity and foster resilience among rural communities. Meanwhile, our role in the **COP29 Climate Conference** highlighted India's unique approach to climate action, showcasing the power of collaboration in addressing global challenges.

Finally, our NGO Clinic Podcast continues to inspire and educate, with its latest episode providing actionable insights on financial compliance and digital best practices for the nonprofit sector.

As we look ahead, ISRN remains steadfast in its mission to create meaningful, inclusive change. Thank you for your trust and support in this journey of transformation. Together, we are building a sustainable future.

Warm regards,

Santosh Gupta

CEO, ISRN

ISRN Governing Board Meeting: Shaping a Vision for the Next Six Months



On **October 25, 2024**, ISRN hosted its Governing Board Meeting at the ISRN head office in Delhi, bringing together its distinguished board members and team to strategize on current and upcoming initiatives. The meeting was marked by the presence of **Mr. Anil Khaitan, Chairperson, Dr. Ajeet Kumar Malhotra, Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Atul Tripathi, Treasurer, Dr. Nitin Agrawal, Mr. M.S. Reddy, Mr. Sanjay Aggarwal, Mr. Purnendu Mishra, Advisory Board Director with CEO Mr. Santosh Gupta** leading the ISRN team who attended both in person and virtually.

During the session, ISRN's dedicated team presented comprehensive updates on ongoing projects, highlighting key achievements, challenges, and the impactful outcomes achieved so far. Board members provided thoughtful feedback and strategic insights, laying the groundwork for future initiatives and ensuring alignment with ISRN's mission of sustainable, inclusive development.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MEETING

Project Updates and Impact: The team shared recent successes in current projects, emphasising ISRN's impact on community engagement, health, and education. Key challenges were discussed, and strategies were brainstormed to maximise effectiveness in the months ahead.

Review of Past Action Points: Action points from the previous board meeting were reviewed, offering an opportunity to assess progress, identify areas for improvement, and reinforce the strategic vision laid out in prior sessions.

Planning for the Next Six Months: With guidance from the board, a clear and ambitious plan was charted for the coming six months, focusing on scalability, efficiency, and expanding outreach. The roadmap includes new initiatives that leverage ISRN's strengths in sustainable development and community welfare.



The invaluable support of our board members, combined with ISRN's commitment to impactful, community-driven change, ensures we are well-positioned to advance our goals and serve communities across India effectively.

Stay Updated on ISRN's Journey

We look forward to implementing our shared vision over the next six months and beyond. To stay connected with ISRN's work, news, and future events, please visit our website at **[www.isrn.in](<http://www.isrn.in>)** or **follow us on our social media channels.**

Thank you for your continued support in fostering sustainable, positive change. Together, we can make a lasting impact.



UTTAM SCHOOL PROJECT: UTTAM SCHOOL: TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN SIRMAUR THROUGH SMART SCHOOL INAUGURATION

On October 26, 2024, the Government Senior Secondary School in Bhalar Bhalona, Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh, celebrated the grand inauguration of its newly upgraded Smart School as part of the "Uttam School" project. This significant transformation was driven by the support of the Care Today Fund, a CSR initiative of the India Today Group, and implemented by the Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN). The Uttam School project aims to bring state-of-the-art educational facilities to underserved rural areas, creating opportunities for a brighter future.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EVENT:

The school's upgrades include a digital library, a fully equipped science laboratory, safe drinking water stations, and separate toilets with menstrual hygiene resources. These additions foster a supportive environment for academic and personal development. The inauguration featured a traditional welcome, cultural performances, guest addresses, and a tour of the newly modernized facilities.

Voices of Impact: Ms. Shikha, a 12th-grade student, expressed her excitement for the new library, which provides valuable resources, books, and digital tools to expand her learning. **Ms. Shyama**, a teacher, highlighted the positive impact of the upgraded menstrual hygiene facilities in reducing absenteeism among girl students.

The collaboration between **Care Today Fund, ISRN**, and the Uttam School project underscores a shared dedication to providing quality education and fostering community growth. This initiative reflects the power of partnerships to transform rural education and empower future generations.



Revolutionizing Rural Learning: Smart School Unveiled at Atal Uttakrist Government Inter College, Bageshwar

On **October 28, 2024**, **Atal Uttakrist Government Inter College in Supi, Bageshwar, Uttarakhand**, celebrated the official inauguration of its newly transformed Smart School, a significant milestone driven by the Care Today Fund's CSR initiative, implemented by the Indian Social Responsibility Network (ISRN). This transformation aims to bridge the educational divide in rural areas by offering modern facilities and resources that inspire academic excellence and holistic development.

Key Facilities Introduced:

Digital Library featuring modern resources such as desktops, books, and an LED TV.

Fully Equipped Science Laboratory to enhance students' practical learning experiences.

Separate Toilets for boys and girls, including menstrual hygiene facilities (sanitary vending machines and incinerators).

Drinking Water Stations for safe and hygienic water access.



Event Highlights:

The ceremony began with a traditional welcome, followed by a ribbon-cutting, school tour, and vibrant cultural performances. Guests, including Mr. Santosh Gupta, CEO of ISRN, highlighted the vision of providing rural students with educational resources comparable to urban schools, fostering both academic and personal growth. Esteemed guests applauded the transformation's impact on learning outcomes and emphasized continued stakeholder support for such initiatives.



Voices of Change:

Mr. Vishal Thakur, a teacher, emphasized the importance of new facilities, especially the science lab, in enhancing practical learning. Student Ms. Shivani expressed her gratitude for the upgraded library, which broadens students' learning horizons beyond textbooks, a crucial resource in this remote, hilly region.

This initiative marks a step forward in transforming rural education, powered by the collaborative efforts of the Care Today Fund, ISRN, and community stakeholders, reinforcing a commitment to creating nurturing, resource-rich learning environments.



USAID funded PROJECT PRERANA (Promoting Equity and Reproductive Health Access for Northeast India)

The Indian Social Responsibility Network is gearing up to implement the USAID-funded **PRERANA project** as a Lead CSO in Arunachal Pradesh. This initiative focuses on building vibrant, engaged, supportive, and resilient communities by empowering youth, women, and vulnerable and marginalized groups. It also seeks to actively involve men and local religious and cultural leaders to transform community norms and attitudes, fostering greater demand and voluntary adoption of Family Planning and Reproductive and Sexual Health services, while reducing early marriage and pregnancy rates in the state.



PRERANA Background

Goal & Expected Outcome

Creating a **RESPONSIVE HEALTH ECOSYSTEM** by ensuring Availability of Quality SRH services for addressing Adolescents and Young Population Reproductive Health "choices" in NE India

- Duration: 5 years (till Dec 2028)
- Geography: 8 states in the NE Region
- 8 focused districts for demonstrating innovations
- Arunachal Pradesh & Sikkim will have State level interventions

The project will demonstrate innovative models in 8 selected districts

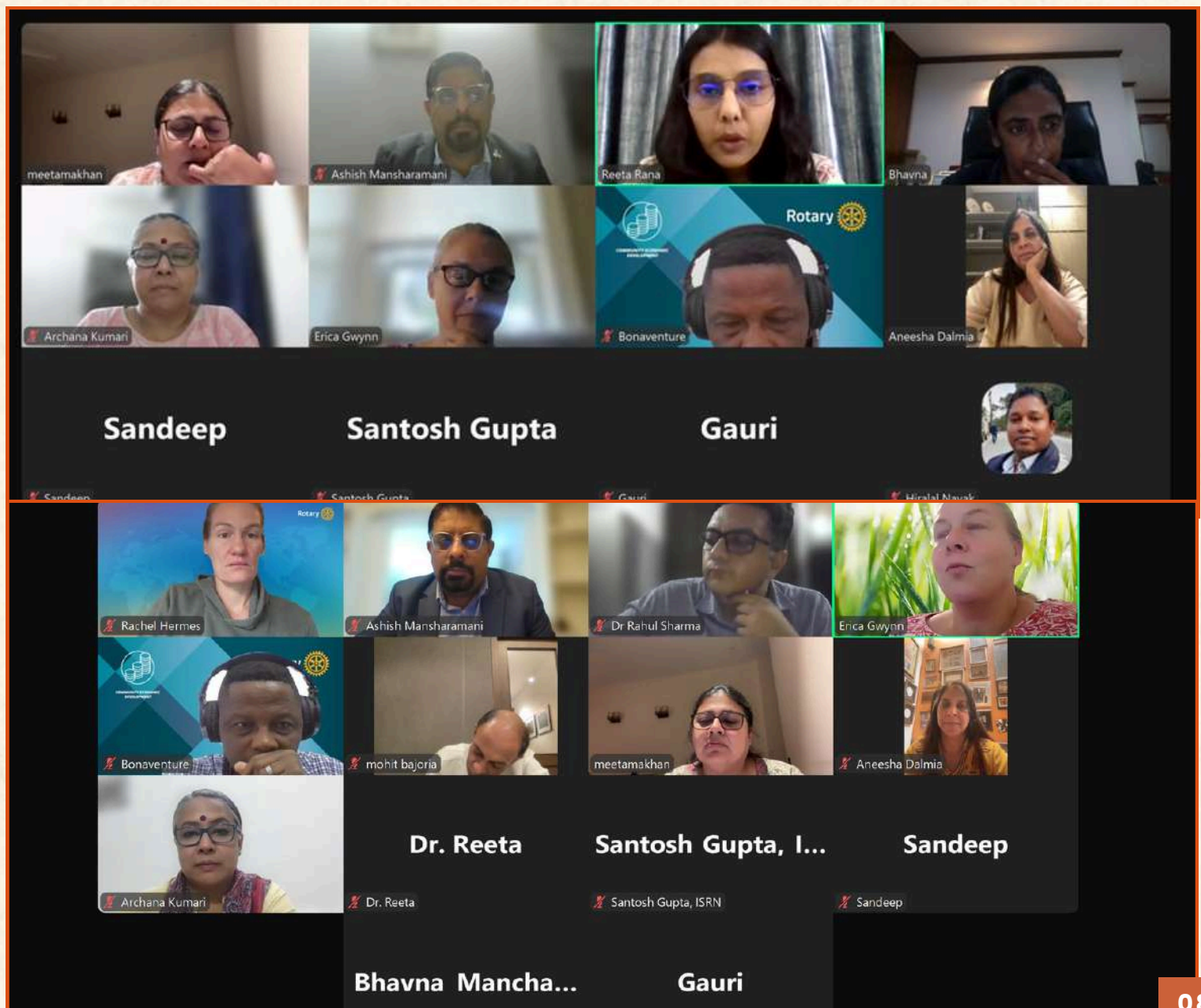
1. Kohima	5. Ri Bhoi*
2. Mamit	6. West Garo Hills*
3. Sepahijala	7. Bongaigaon*
4. West Imphal	8. Udalguri*

* tbd

PM | PRERANA LEAD CSO ONBOA...

Baseline and Feasibility Study for enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability in collaboration with Delhi Premier Rotary Service Foundation

In October 2024, the ISRN team engaged in extensive deliberations with Rotary's national and international teams to finalize the baseline questionnaire toolkit for primary data collection as part of the Baseline and Feasibility Study aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability. The toolkit comprised a household survey for quantitative data collection and questionnaires for qualitative data collection through Focus Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews at both village and district levels. The finalized questionnaire was highly appreciated by Rotary International for its comprehensive nature and alignment with the study's objectives. The ISRN team is now prepared to roll out the survey, utilizing the toolkit to gather comprehensive primary data on critical agricultural parameters such as crop yields, farmers' income levels, irrigation practices, groundwater levels, and existing cultivation patterns.



CAPACITY BUILDING

INDIA'S ROADMAP TO COP29 CLIMATE CONFERENCE BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS TO CLIMATE ACTION

ISRN was honoured to co-host Preparatory Session towards COP29 Baku, in collaboration with Paryavaran Sanrakshan Gatividhi with the support of Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change at the ISRN HQ, New Delhi before the departure of delegates representing Bharat at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. Impactful informative session was addressed by Mr. J.R Bhatt, Former India IPCC Chief, who has represented India at the various COP summits, he delved into the practical aspects and strategies for effective climate action, negotiation and the philosophy of Science and Evidence. Other well-known dedicated specialists from various fields came together both online and offline to share their insights on innovative actions to be taken at the COP 29 Summit. The delegates will make a significant impact from Bharat and share their strength of India's Climate Action at the UN Conference of Parties 29 Annual Climate Summit.



FORMATION & PROMOTION OF FARMER PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS (FPOS) UNDER THE CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEME FOR FORMATION & PROMOTION OF 10,000 FPOS

ISRN-promoted, SFAC-supported Jammu & Kashmir FPO participated in a two-day training session organized by CSIR-IIIM on November 5th and 6th, 2024. FPOs from Chennai, Bhaderkashi, Inderwal, and Assar were part of the training.

Dr. Prabodh Kumar Trivedi (Director, CSIR-CIMAP Lucknow) emphasized the transformative role of innovation in uplifting rural communities, pointing out the economic potential of value-added crops. He stressed the impact of ANB projects in driving agricultural advancements. Meanwhile, Dr. Sudesh Kumar Yadav (Director, CSIR-IHBT, Palampur) highlighted the benefits of the Purple and Golden Revolutions for the bio-economy of the Himalayan region, underscoring the event's importance as a hub for knowledge exchange and collaboration



The inauguration included a startup exhibition featuring entrepreneurs from across India, showcasing innovative agri-tech and biotech solutions. Over 40 farmers from the Chennai FPO, Bhaderkashi FPO, Inderwal FPO, and Assar FPO from Jammu and Kashmir engaged with live demonstrations, participated in hands-on sessions, and viewed a multimedia presentation detailing CSIR-IIIM's technological contributions. The collaboration exemplified the institute's commitment to translating research into tangible solutions for both industry and society.

Three technical sessions throughout the day featured expert panels and brainstorming discussions, with a special focus on value addition and training programs for women's self-help groups and FPOs. The sessions spotlighted success stories from the Aroma, Floriculture, and Nutraceutical Missions, with lively discussions on aromatic and other crop cultivation drawing strong interest from local entrepreneurs.

A focused panel discussion addressed the challenges facing farmers, featuring experts like Ms. Ruchita Rane from the Policy Advocacy Research Centre, Mumbai, and Ms. Rakhee Bakshee, Founder and Editor of Her World India. Additionally, an afternoon training session on product-making by farmers was launched for FPOs, women, and self-help groups.

The event, organized under the guidance of Dr. Zabeer Ahmed and coordinated by Dr. Suphla Gupta, involved contributions from several department heads and committee members, reinforcing CSIR-IIIM's dedication to agricultural and environmental advancement.



PERSONAL BULLETIN

INDIA'S CLIMATE PATH – LEADING BY PRINCIPLES, GROUNDED IN ACTION

Ashish Manshaamani, Associate Director

INDIA'S APPROACH TO CLIMATE POLICY RESTS ON FIVE PIVOTAL PILLARS: GEOGRAPHY, POPULATION, IMPACTS, WORLDVIEW, AND ACTIONS. EACH FACTOR SHAPES THE NATION'S UNIQUE RESPONSE TO THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CRISIS.

Geography plays a critical role in defining India's environmental strategy. As the 7th largest country, spanning 3.28 million km², India accounts for just 2.4% of the world's land but hosts 4% of its freshwater resources. The nation's incredible biodiversity includes four global biodiversity hotspots and ten bio-geographic zones, exemplifying a natural richness that has underpinned its civilization for millennia. This profound connection is evident in its six traditional seasons — celebrated in the works of poets like Kalidasa — that have historically guided agriculture and culture. However, the climate crisis is disrupting these age-old cycles, creating an urgent challenge for the nation.



Population, at 1.4 billion, is viewed as an asset in India. The country's demographic scale and density present unique challenges and opportunities. India is home to 7-8% of the world's documented species, a testament to its ecological wealth. Yet, its land-to-person ratio of 0.0021 km² necessitates highly strategic and sustainable land and water management. The country's forests, which house 70% of the global tiger population and significant numbers of other iconic wildlife, underscore India's conservation legacy. Notably, in 2019, forest and tree cover offset 20% of its CO₂ emissions.

Climate impacts pose an ongoing threat. India ranked as the fifth most climate-affected nation in the Global Climate Risk Index 2020 and faces increasing extreme weather events. A World Bank report from 2018 projected that climate change could shrink India's GDP by 2.8% due to rising temperatures and shifting monsoon patterns. Research from Kotz et al. (2024) underscores that the global economy could lose 19% of its income within 25 years due to climate change, with the least culpable regions, including India, set to suffer disproportionately.

India's Worldview is rooted in ancient traditions of harmony with nature. Texts like the Vedas extol the sacred bond between humanity and the earth, a perspective summarized by the Atharva Veda's declaration: "Earth is our mother, we are her children." Unlike Western paradigms that often treat forests as carbon sinks, India reveres them as holistic ecosystems providing a full spectrum of services: provisioning, regulating, supporting, and cultural. Gandhi's concept of trusteeship, emphasizing that the Earth has enough for everyone's needs but not for everyone's greed, inspires policies favoring moderation over excess.

In terms of Actions, India has consistently demonstrated leadership based on science and responsibility. Despite its sizable population, the nation's contribution to cumulative global GHG emissions is minor, with per capita emissions about one-third of the global average. Yet, India has pioneered efforts such as establishing the International Solar Alliance, focusing on renewable energy, and cutting its GDP emission intensity by 33% from 2005 to 2019. This contrasts with developed nations, which often waver on their climate commitments, as seen with the U.S. periodically exiting international agreements.



A Coordinated Climate Vision

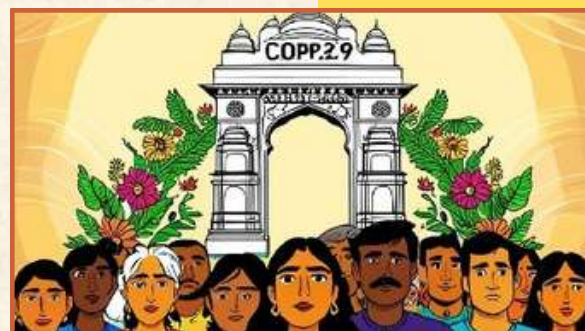
India's climate strategy has evolved through inclusive growth, poverty alleviation, and adherence to UNFCCC principles. The National Action Plan on Climate Change (2008) laid the groundwork for comprehensive action, integrating 23 ministries to shape a holistic response. India's climate approach is clear, consistent, and coordinated, further reinforced by the principles of confidence and practical, sustainable action epitomized in Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi's vision: "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas."

Yet, India cannot progress alone. The burden of climate mitigation should weigh heavily on developed nations, which have historically appropriated an outsized share of the global carbon budget. Their commitment to financial and technological support for the developing world must be honored. India, and other nations in the global South, face urgent adaptation needs and require adequate resources to respond effectively.

A Call for Collective Action

Development and environmental stewardship are two sides of the same coin, essential for holistic growth. The world must embrace the Indian ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — "One Earth, One Family, One Future" — to effectively tackle climate change. India's model, emphasizing evidence-based sustainable development, should inspire other developing nations to advocate for equitable climate policies and hold the global North accountable.

This COP 29 at Baku, Azerbaijan, stands on a crossroads where we need to decide how to meet our developmental needs in a situation of increasingly depleting carbon budget and increasing impacts of climate change. We are being asked to increase mitigation ambition by those who have shown no ambition, either in their own mitigation ambition or in providing the means of implementation. INDIA'S PATH, GROUNDED IN TRADITION, equity, and science, can guide a more just and effective global response to the climate crisis. The world must recognize this approach not just as an option, but as a necessity for a sustainable future.



ISRN'S NGO CLINIC PODCAST- EPISODE 9



Santosh Gupta
CEO, ISRN

Dr. Sanjay Patra (Chairperson) is
the Managing Director, M/s CPA
Services.

Episode 10 of ISRN NGO Clinic Podcast: "Child-Centric Sustainable Development"

ISRN is thrilled to share Episode 10 of the ISRN NGO Clinic Podcast on the critical topic of Child-Centric Sustainable Development in India. This enlightening episode features an engaging conversation between Mr. Santosh Gupta, CEO of ISRN, and Mr. Mohammed Asif, Executive Director of Plan India and a leading expert in child-centric sustainable development.

Through this discussion, the episode sheds light on impactful strategies to advance child rights, foster inclusive community development, and strengthen child welfare policies in India. Key takeaways include actionable insights into creating a sustainable future that prioritizes the well-being of children and empowers communities.

🔗 Watch the full episode here:

This episode is a must-watch for professionals in the social development sector, NGOs, policymakers, and anyone passionate about building a better future for children.

Together, let's make child-centric sustainable development a priority in India's growth story.

🔗 Watch now: <https://youtu.be/0PMnADAwJxI?si=FaTLPdW3hItLYHSH>

Like, share, and subscribe to stay informed with ISRN's latest updates

[Watch the full episode here!](#)

ISRN believes that having a right to live in equality is something each human deserves and with support from people like you, we are transforming the lives of thousands of fellow citizens. We have held workshops and training sessions for more than 800 member organisations, fostering a symbolic growth system

We genuinely appreciate all of your help, love, and support for ISRN.

We humbly ask that you continue to provide us with support, advice, and invaluable assistance that will enable us to ensure that each and everyone is empowered to grow and flourish in their own unique way.

Please scan the QR code to donate towards these causes, as your small contribution will help maintain smiles on million faces.



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Thank you for reading!



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