

KHABARBAAT



April to June 2026



About Unnati

Vision

Everyone enjoys the right to education, expression, participation and to live with dignity while preserving their language and culture.

Mission

Creating learning opportunities through a mother tongue-based multilingual education approach across formal, non-formal, and informal learning spaces.

Values

Equality, Integrity,
Honesty, Ownership

Unnati Institute for Social and Educational Change (Unnati ISEC) is an 11-year-old, Maharashtra-based not-for-profit organization focusing on SDG 4 (quality education), NEP, and 21st-century skills.

Our work spans education, youth development, and gender-equitable approaches, while empowering marginalized and under-served communities.

Unnati runs four key programs:

- 1) literacy and education through MLE,
- 2) school library programs,
- 3) village library initiatives,
- 4) leadership development for tribal adolescent girls.

These initiatives operate in Akot block (Akola district) and Shahapur (Thane district), Maharashtra.

➤ **Youths from the Shenve and Babre ashram schools in the Shahapur project ran a library initiative in their respective villages during the Summer vacation.** For this, books were given to the students from Unnati's collection. An attractive book display was organized at the school by from which, the **students selected a total of 250 books, on various subjects, for exchange in the villages.**

➤ During book exchanges, some books get damaged or lost. Therefore, based on reader requests, the **Akola office purchased 12 new books to replace them and enrich the library collection.**



➤ **On April 10, 2026, a headmaster and teacher meeting was held at the Shahapur project.** The team reviewed annual activities in reading, writing, art, group work, and playful learnings, **School teaches also recognised that a rise in student confidence and participation.** Discussions focused on literacy test results, science book requirements, attendance strategies, 'Aanandi Ank' distribution, and 'Unnati Varga.' The meeting concluded with a clear roadmap and planning goals for the upcoming academic year.

On May 7, 2026, **Unnati organization facilitators Tikaram and Gokul participated in an interactive session** organized by the Melghat Parishad at Kusumkot. On this occasion, an exhibition of various educational materials from the Unnati organization was displayed

Unnati conducted its **annual review in two phases between March and April 2026**. The review evaluated yearly activities, achievements, and challenges across programs, featuring internal presentations from March 24 to April 9 and **Management Board presentations from April 13 to 16**.

During the organization's summer training, **team members stepped up as trainers for certain subjects**. Though it was a first-time experience for some, thorough preparation allowed them to conduct the training with great confidence. This opportunity boosted their morale and self-confidence. **Heartiest congratulations to Subhash Kedar, Sheetal Todkar, Bharti Padwal, Gayatri Lonkar, and Bharti Jadhav**



During this period, **Unnati revisited and updated its mission, vision, motto, and core values**. Facilitated by **Mr. Ibrahim Afghan**, this participatory process gave the **team ample time to address questions** and reach complete alignment, leaving everyone happy and motivated

Education for the Underprivileged – Challenges, Grit, and Stories of Transformation

On April 25, 2026, Unnati organized its annual conference in Thane, Mumbai, to promote dialogue on tribal communities in urban areas and connect with new well-wishers and potential partners.

The chief guest, Padmashri Mahendra Kumar Mishra, emphasized the importance of preserving tribal knowledge, culture, and linguistic diversity. Guest speaker Rajashree Tikhe highlighted the challenges tribal youth face in accessing higher education.

The conference also featured an interview with activists Bandu Sane (Khoj) and Premdaya Kasdekar (Sadaya), who shared their impactful work in children's education and tribal rehabilitation in Melghat, Amravati.

Anil Ghaskar from Navi Talai village, Telhara taluka, was honored for his inspiring efforts to preserve and promote the Korku language.

Event Highlights

- Informational stalls showcasing Unnati's programs and initiatives.
- Displays of community impact and success stories.
- Exhibition of event photographs, publications, and resource materials.
- Visits and encouragement from distinguished guests across various sectors.

Glimpses of the Conference



Mentors Training in Learning Community Program



From April to May 2026, Unnati mentors and **youth girls participants engaged in a series of training programs hosted by Vacha, Mumbai**, as part of the Youth Empowerment (Learning Community) project.

1) During a three-day mentorship training held from April 27 to 29, 2026, Unnati mentors Aditi and Sheetal received comprehensive **training on leadership development, mental well-being, safety, patriarchy, and key mentoring responsibilities.**



2) **Eleven girls** from LC group and their 2 mentors participated in the 'Rubaru' workshop in Bhayandar on May 5–6, 2026. **The training focused on gender awareness, leadership, safety, teamwork, and communication.**

3) On May 29–30, 2026, **Unnati representatives joined a second mentor session covering child protection, the POCSO Act, patriarchal structures, and community mapping.**

Language: a carrier of Children's living, Culture, and Identity



Over the last three years, the Sadaya Organization has consistently worked to promote education across the hilly region of Melghat. Marking its 3rd anniversary in May 2026, a celebration was hosted in Patkahu village, Chikhaldara, bringing together local residents, organizational partners, and education sector professionals. **Unnati Director Hemangi Joshi served as the chief guest for the occasion.**

In her address, she explained the importance of children's language in simple terms. She stated, 'A child's mother tongue carries their experiences, culture, and identity. When children's native languages are given their rightful place in education, learning becomes far more meaningful and enjoyable. **Therefore, it is the key responsibility of teachers and society to use children's languages in schools, provide opportunities for expression, and respect it within the learning process.**' Her thoughts inspired the audience to look at children's mother tongue with a fresh perspective.

Song Training for Khoj Organization



The Khoj Organization in Dharni taluka, Amravati district, organized a song training workshop for children. **Subhash Kedar and Tikaram Belsare from Unnati served as resource persons, teaching songs in Korku, Marathi, and Hindi through engaging and activity-based methods.** A total of 18 members from Khoj actively and enthusiastically participated.

"Because the Korku and Marathi songs share the same tune, they were very easy to hum and remember," shared the participants. **In total, 12 songs (6 in Korku and 6 in Marathi) were practiced hands-on.**

The session offered a fresh perspective on early childhood education, and **attendees thoroughly enjoyed the songs.** Members expressed their resolve, stating, "We will definitely sing and practice these songs in both languages with all the children in the village."

Unnati completed its annual staff evaluation from May to June 2026. This process reviewed team performance, highlighting individual progress, strengths, and future growth opportunities

Nurturing Reading Culture via Book Exchange

Nanda Dhigar from Khirkund Khurd village, where Unnati runs its Village Library Project in Akola, is a regular reader under the book exchange program. Having completed her education up to the 10th grade, Nandatai and her husband both share a deep passion for reading. **They borrow books every week to read regularly. Remarkably, even their one-and-a-half-year-old daughter enthusiastically participates in selecting books.**

Nandatai discusses the ideas and insights from the books she reads with her family. Whenever the Gaav-Mitra (village coordinator) visits her home with books, she eagerly makes her selections, carefully observing the topic, content, and usefulness, while also requesting specific titles she wants to read. **The book exchange initiative has cultivated a strong habit of reading within her family, passing a love for books on to the next generation.**



From Library to Literacy

In the academic year 2025–26, Unnati implemented the "**Literacy Through Libraries**" initiative for 5th-grade students across four tribal Ashramshalas—Kothare, Taki Pathar, Babare, and Shenve—in Shahapur block.

Out of 160 students given a pre-literacy assessment, **112 were selected for year-long learning activities** including stories, word games, reading, and writing. A post-assessment of 108 students showed clear reading improvements—students moved from basic alphabets to compound words and fluent reading groups. **Overall, 76 students improved their reading levels, with notable progress at Taki Pathar and Shenve schools.**

This initiative clearly demonstrated a growing interest in reading, increased confidence, and improved literacy skills among students. **Our effort next year will be to guide as many students as possible toward achieving full reading proficiency.**



Expanding the Reading Movement Through Youth Groups



For the past 2–3 years, a **Youth Group initiative** has been conducted for 7th-grade students at Babare and Shenve (Kulhe) Ashramshalas in Shahapur block. This initiative trains students on how to manage a village book exchange program. During Diwali and summer vacations, students visit various villages to advance the reading movement.

In May 2026, the book exchange initiative was launched in 10 villages (5 from each school), with 25 books provided per village. On May 5 and 7, 2026, field facilitators visited 9 of these villages to observe the students managing the exchange process, keeping records, and interacting with villagers. Guidance was provided where needed, along with recommendations on creating effective book displays.

Trainings for Staff

From April to June 2026, a total of **24 training sessions** were held, with **20 team members** from the Akola and Shahapur teams participating.

Eleven team members attended **7 external workshops on leadership, education, multilingualism, and library management** across Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh.

All 20 team members attended 17 internal training sessions in Karjat and Amravati to strengthen organizational practices. Topics covered included core values, policies, report writing, personal growth, and practical skills like AI, Canva, and photography.





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