

HLPF 2 mins Lightning Talk Script

Namaste, my name is Vikrant Pandey from Nepal; I am the founder of the Fightback program. Violence and harassment against women and girls were something that always touched my heart when I was growing up. When my daughter was born this feeling turned into a sense of urgency. I quit my job in a leading bank working as a software engineer to pursue my dream to be a social entrepreneur.

The idea was to combine the education with physical self-defense skills to create a program, which would help women, and girls build their Mental, Vocal, and Physical skills to deal with the risk of violence and harassment. We also started to offer stakeholder programs to men, boys, parents, and teachers to shift harmful social norms and victim blaming to create a safety eco-system.

Since 2017, we started to conduct in-person training at scale; our outreach has been to 28,000+ girls and 15,000+ stakeholders. COVID pandemic severely affected our in-person training, we started to pivot to an online means of service delivery and started developing an e-learning platform, due to this shift, now there is a potential to reach a larger audience and diversify our services. For example, we are working with two UN agencies in Nepal to develop the content of online courses. We are also in the process to expand regionally in India. This was possible because of three factors of which two are internal, which is our innovation and resilience. The third factor is the external funding support we got through Grand Challenges Canada's innovation award.