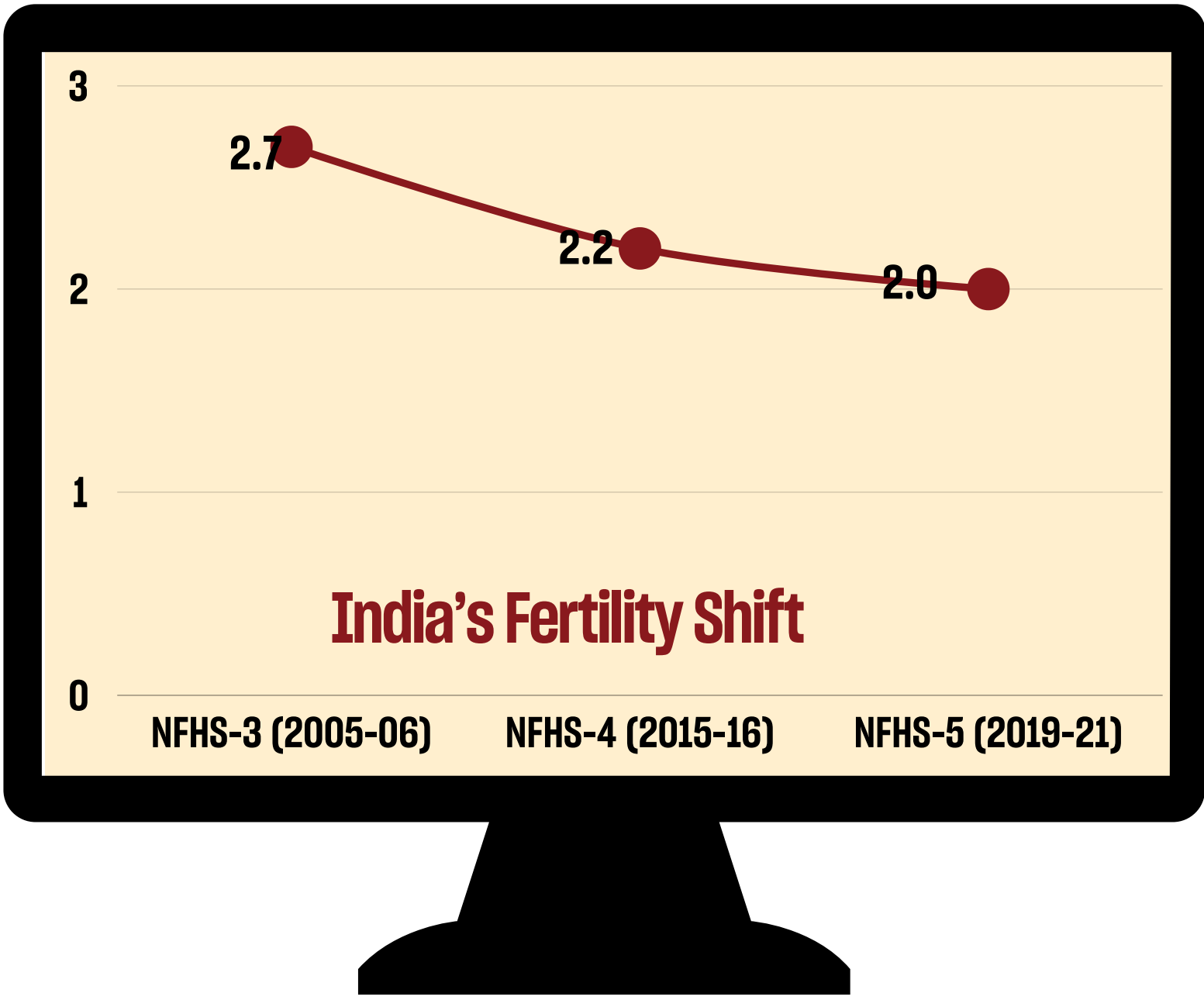


India sits at the center of a global paradox: hailed as the world’s most populous country while also seeing its Total Fertility Rate drop below the replacement level in all but five of its states. These twin realities are fuelling two competing but equally damaging narratives — fear of a “population explosion” leading to coercive control measures, and alarm over a “population collapse” prompting regressive pronatalism.

Both obscure the real story: India’s demographic transition is a window of opportunity for investing in health, education, and gender equality due to large young population, with women making up nearly half of it. Population Foundation of India partners with media to inject evidence and nuance into this polarized debate, reframing population from a crisis to a catalyst for inclusive development.



Approaches

Evidence Compilation

We compile and translate demographic evidence into simple, compelling content—infographics, myth-busting explainers, and data briefs—to help journalists and decision-makers understand population trends.

Tech Tools

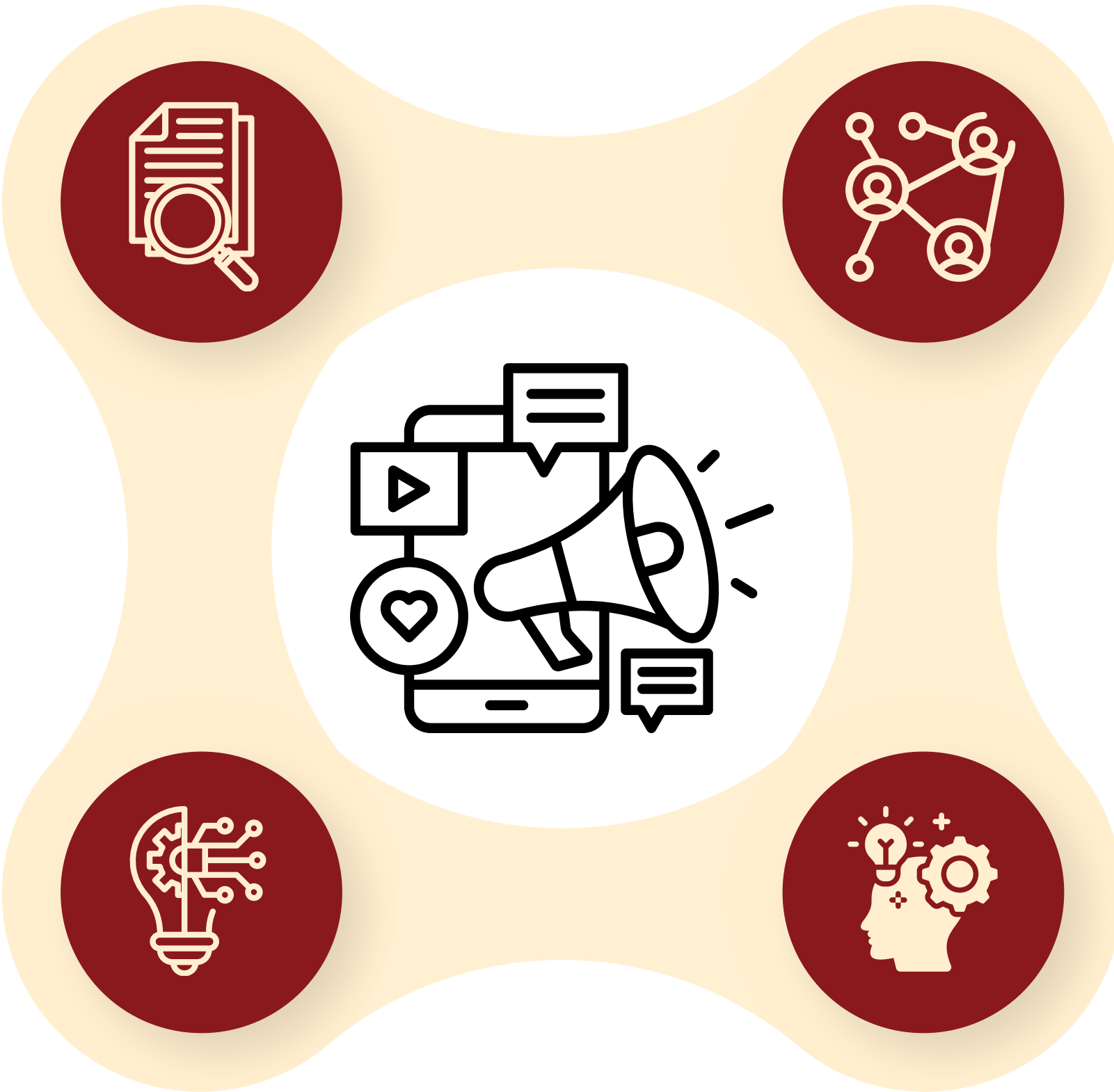
We have developed a digital knowledge portal that provides reporters, academics, and civil society members with quick access to reliable information on population, gender, health, and gender-based violence — available in both English and Hindi.

Media Collaboration

We build relationships with leading national and international outlets, and even social media voices, supplying data, expert quotes, authoring op-eds, and joining TV and online panels to inject facts and gender-sensitive perspectives into breaking news cycles

Narrative Framing

We reframe population from a crisis to a catalyst for inclusive development—emphasising investments in women, young people, and the elderly as key to reaping India’s demographic, gender and silver dividends.



Key Moments in Media Engagement

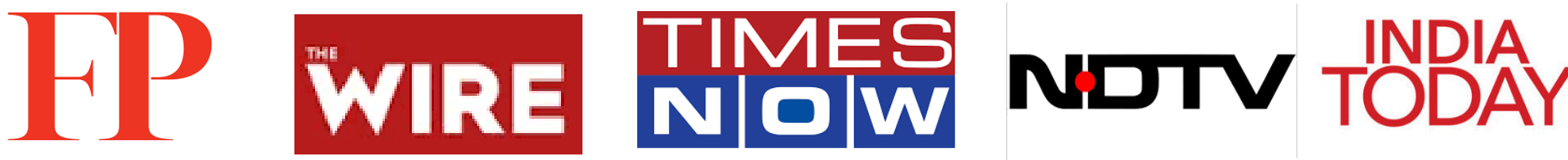
2014	2019-22	2021-2022	2023	2024- Present
Sterilisation Tragedy	Thwarting Attempts at “Population Control” Legislation	Uttar Pradesh Population Policy	India Becomes Most Populous Country	Delimitation Debate & Minority Myths
Event: Deaths at a sterilisation camp in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.	Event: A stringent Population Control Bill introduced in parliament.	Event: UP Population (Control, Stabilization and Welfare) Bill proposed strict measures.	Event: UN State of the World Population Report states India’s numbers have surpassed China.	Event: Public debates sparked by political and community leaders’ comments over delimitation and myths about minority population growth.
PFI Action: Led a fact-finding mission; findings were widely reported in the media and informed the Supreme Court’s landmark Devika Biswas vs Union of India judgment, ending sterilisation camps and mandating quality-of-care guidelines	PFI Action: Produced data-backed briefs and extensive media outreach highlighting harms; contributed to withdrawal of the bill in 2022	PFI Action: Quoted widely in national and international articles opposing the coercive draft; provided evidence and technical inputs and facilitated the drafting of a more progressive state population policy.	PFI Action: 200+ media engagements domestically and globally reframed the “population crisis” into an opportunity for demographic and gender dividends	PFI Action: Debunked misinformation, authored opeds and provided journalists with fact-based information and expert commentary to prevent divisive narratives from taking hold

Impact Highlights (2023–2025)



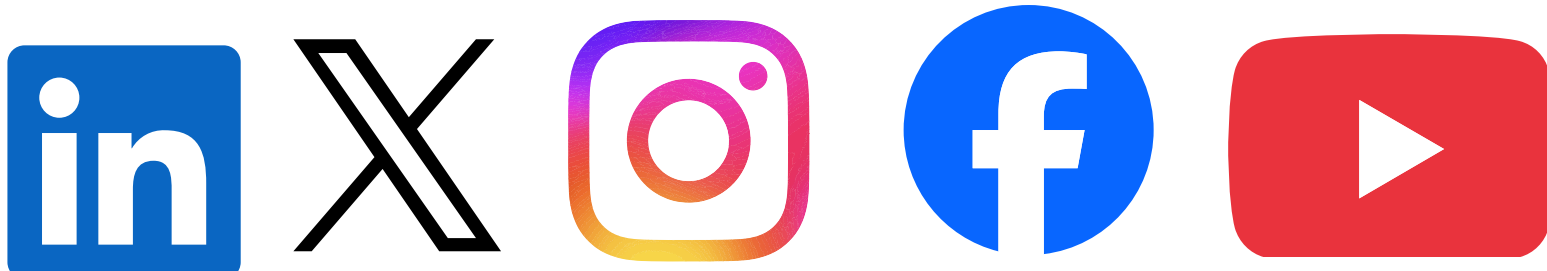
400+
Media Features

PFI’s experts have featured in op-eds, interviews, and news stories across leading national and international outlets, shaping narratives on population, SRH, and gender.



50+
TV / Online Panels & Podcasts

PFI leadership brought in evidence and gender-sensitive perspectives into high-visibility debates across television and digital media across the world.

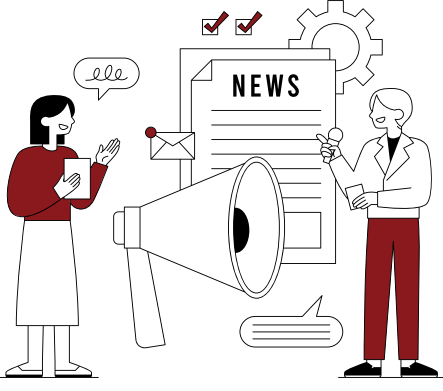


170 Million+
People Reached Digitally

PFI’s social media presence and collaborations amplified evidence-based messaging on family planning and demographic change to diverse audiences across India and abroad

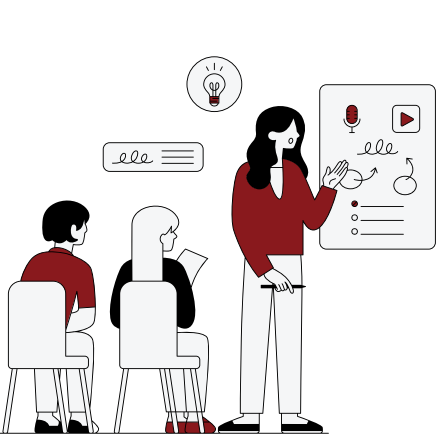
Lessons/ Implications

Media as Multiplier



When evidence and rights-based messaging are seeded into mainstream and digital media, they ripple outward—amplifying accurate information on population, SRH, and gender to millions and shifting public discourse faster than traditional strategic engagement alone.

Invest in Journalist Capacity



Training, toolkits, and timely support for reporters create a network of informed storytellers who can cover complex demographic issues responsibly and counter myths before they spread.

Reframe the Narrative



By moving beyond the “population explosion vs. population collapse” framing, PFI positions India’s demographic change as an opportunity to invest in women, adolescents, and the elderly—turning a perceived crisis into a catalyst for inclusive development.

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