

# Designing Impact, Building from the Ground Up:

## The RBPM – Dr. Priti Story



In the growing urgency of India's environmental crisis, the question is no longer whether change is needed but how to design, sustain, and ensure communities own and apply it effectively. For Dr. Priti Singh, a development professional with over two decades of experience, this question became deeply personal.

She had spent years designing, implementing, and evaluating programs across national and international organisations, working closely with communities, donors, and systems. Although her organisation had been registered long ago, when the time came to actively build it as an organisation rooted in environmental protection and women-led action, she found herself at a familiar crossroads many sector leaders face:

- How do you translate experience into a well-structured organisation?
- How do you move from intention to impact?
- How do you design change that is measurable, credible, and scalable—without losing the human core?

The answer emerged through ISDM's **Results-Based Program Management (RBPM) certificate program**.



## A practitioner's pause. A sector-wide challenge

For much of the social sector's history, programs have been measured by activities, training sessions conducted, meetings held, and beneficiaries reached. Dr Priti described this as the field's dominant conditioning.

"We were running programs well," she reflected, "but we weren't always clear about how activities were leading to outcomes, and outcomes to long-term impact."

Even seasoned professionals often inherit systems where documentation, monitoring, and learning are compliance-driven rather than decision-shaping. As organisations grow, this gap becomes more pronounced, especially when founders attempt to build new initiatives from scratch. By the time Dr Priti joined the RBPM program, she was at a crossroads. She did not need motivation; she needed **structure, clarity, and alignment**.



## Enter RBPM: When experience aligns with program excellence

The Results-Based Program Management program is designed to equip development professionals to design, manage, and lead programs grounded in results, evidence, and systems thinking. Over three months of live, case-based learning, participants engage with tools such as systems analysis, Theory of Change, logical frameworks, stakeholder management, and monitoring and evaluation.

**For Dr Priti, RBPM was immediately applicable.**

**“**I realised that everything I wanted to do next—strengthening the organisation, engaging with donors, and building a more effective team—started with one thing: clarity on the problem and the change pathway. **”**

– Dr Priti



RBPM helped her slow down before acting. She began with **problem identification, root cause analysis**, and **needs assessment**—skills reinforced repeatedly through the program.



## Designing before doing: The RBPM shift

One of the most significant shifts Dr Priti experienced through RBPM was moving from *activity-led enthusiasm* to *outcome-oriented design*. The program's emphasis on **Theory of Change** and **results chains** helped her visualise impact as a journey, broken into short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes. Logical frameworks gave her a language to articulate this journey clearly to teams, partners, and donors.

"M&E stopped being a checklist," she explained. "It became the backbone of decision-making."



## From classroom to community: Building Repair World & Life



Soon after completing RBPM, Dr Priti strengthened and expanded the work of Repair World & Life, an environmental organisation built on a women-led, community-first model. Beginning in August, the organisation entered a more structured phase of operations across Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, engaging women, adolescents, schools, youth, and senior citizens to drive sustainable behaviour change.

RBPM frameworks shaped every foundational decision:

- **Program sequencing:** Community engagement before school interventions
- **Stakeholder mapping:** Women as primary change agents, families and youth as multipliers
- **Program design:** Small, measurable behaviour changes rather than unrealistic demands
- **Monitoring systems:** Monthly data collection to track shifts in habits over time

Instead of asking communities to eliminate plastic use completely, the organisation focused on reduction—tracking numbers week by week. Instead of relying solely on awareness campaigns, they measured adoption, resistance, and progress.

The result was not just participation, but ownership.



## Evidence over anecdotes: Making impact visible

One of the earliest cultural norms Dr Priti embedded in her organisation—directly inspired by RBPM—was the idea that “**activity is not impact**”.

Her largely volunteer-driven team was trained to collect baseline data, track behaviour before and after interventions, and document learnings—both successes and failures. Monthly modules helped the organisation analyse what was working and where course correction was needed.



## More than tools: A leadership transformation

The program reaffirmed that leadership in the social sector is not about doing more—it is about **designing better**. It taught her how to lead teams through the shift from activity-based work to outcome-driven thinking, even when that shift caused discomfort.

“Change creates turbulence,” she said. “RBPM taught me how to navigate that turbulence—strategically, not emotionally.”

Today, the organisation she founded is not dependent on her presence alone. Systems guide decisions. Data informs direction. Learning is institutionalised.



# The larger RBPM promise

Across India's development ecosystem, countless professionals carry ideas they want to build but lack the scaffolding to do so well. RBPM provides that scaffolding. It equips professionals not just to manage programs, but to



Design  
Organisations



Lead Teams



Engage  
Stakeholders



build credibility  
through evidence.

Dr Priti is one of many RBPM alumni applying these learnings across roles and contexts—but her journey stands out as a powerful illustration of RBPM's entrepreneurial and organisational value.

Because impact does not happen by accident. It is designed.

