FIGHTING
Fake News

WhatsApp

DEF
DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT foundation

THE REACH

In the last couple of years, data packages have become significantly affordable for Indian consumers, courtesy spectrum competition.

For many, social media, and particularly WhatsApp, is the first exposure to the connected world.

There are over 200 million WhatsApp users in India.

WHATSAPP ALLOWS

Social Interactions

Business Engagement

Information Dissemination

Outreach and Awareness

Text | Audio | Video | Links | Documents | Emojis

However, the increased penetration of WhatsApp comes with its disadvantages as well. People could knowingly and unknowingly use it to spread fake news.

OUR EFFORT

WhatsApp

DEF
DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT foundation

In an effort to curb fake news, WhatsApp has partnered with Digital Empowerment Foundation to conduct community-based workshops to create awareness among users about the need to verify information before sharing it.

These workshops will be organised in partnership with the District Collector's Office or in partnership with the Superintendent of Police in states, which are due for elections this year or have seen unfortunate incidences of violence because of fake news.

TRAINING TOPICS

- Differentiating between fact, opinion, rumour and fake news

- Understanding the impact of sharing information

- Being empathetic towards other community's perspectives

- Identifying, questioning and verifying fake news or misinformation

- Leveraging technological tools introduced by WhatsApp

- Learning from case stories around us

PARTICIPANTS

Police Officials

Local Administration Officials

Teachers

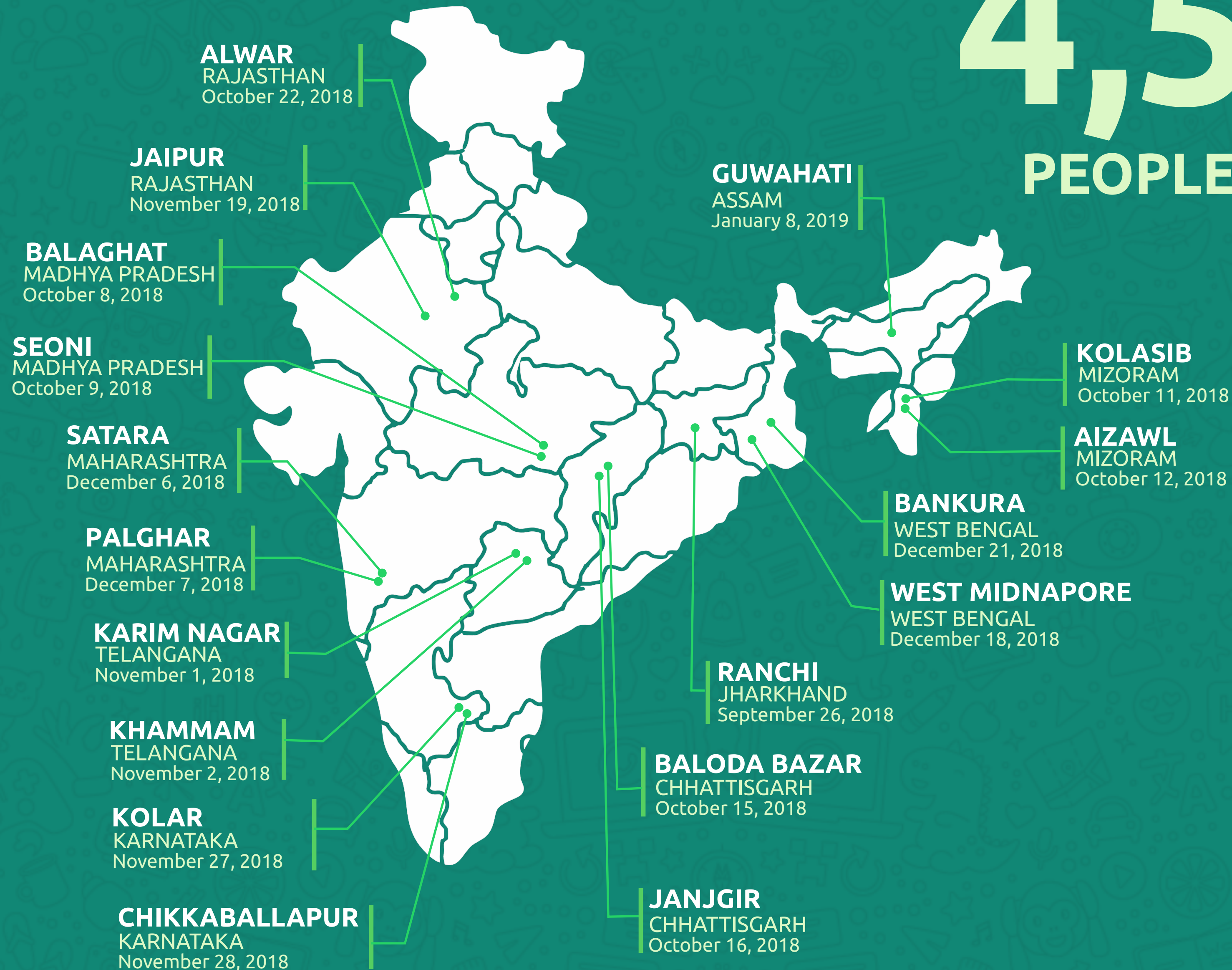NGO Representatives

Local Entrepreneurs
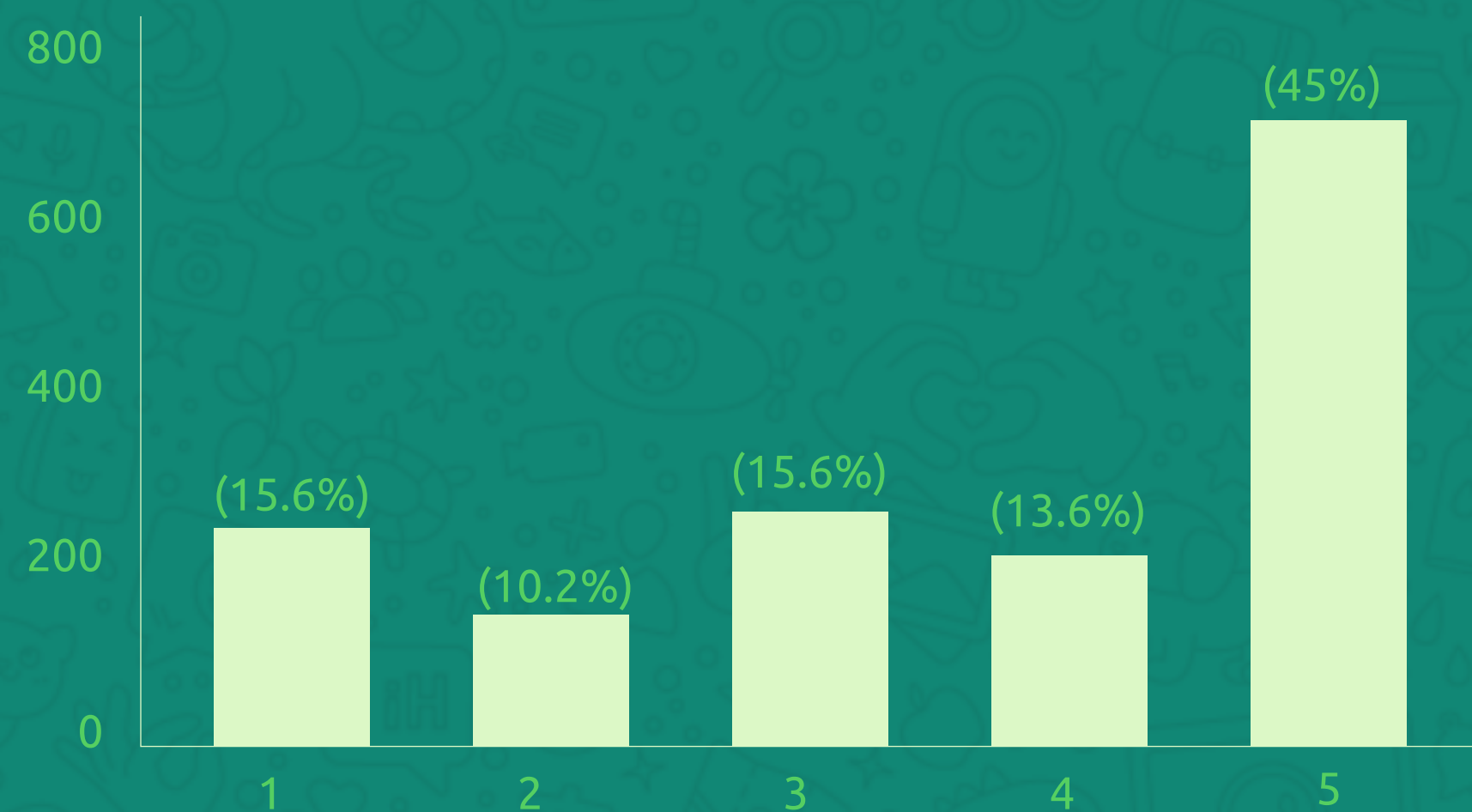
Students

Self-Help Groups
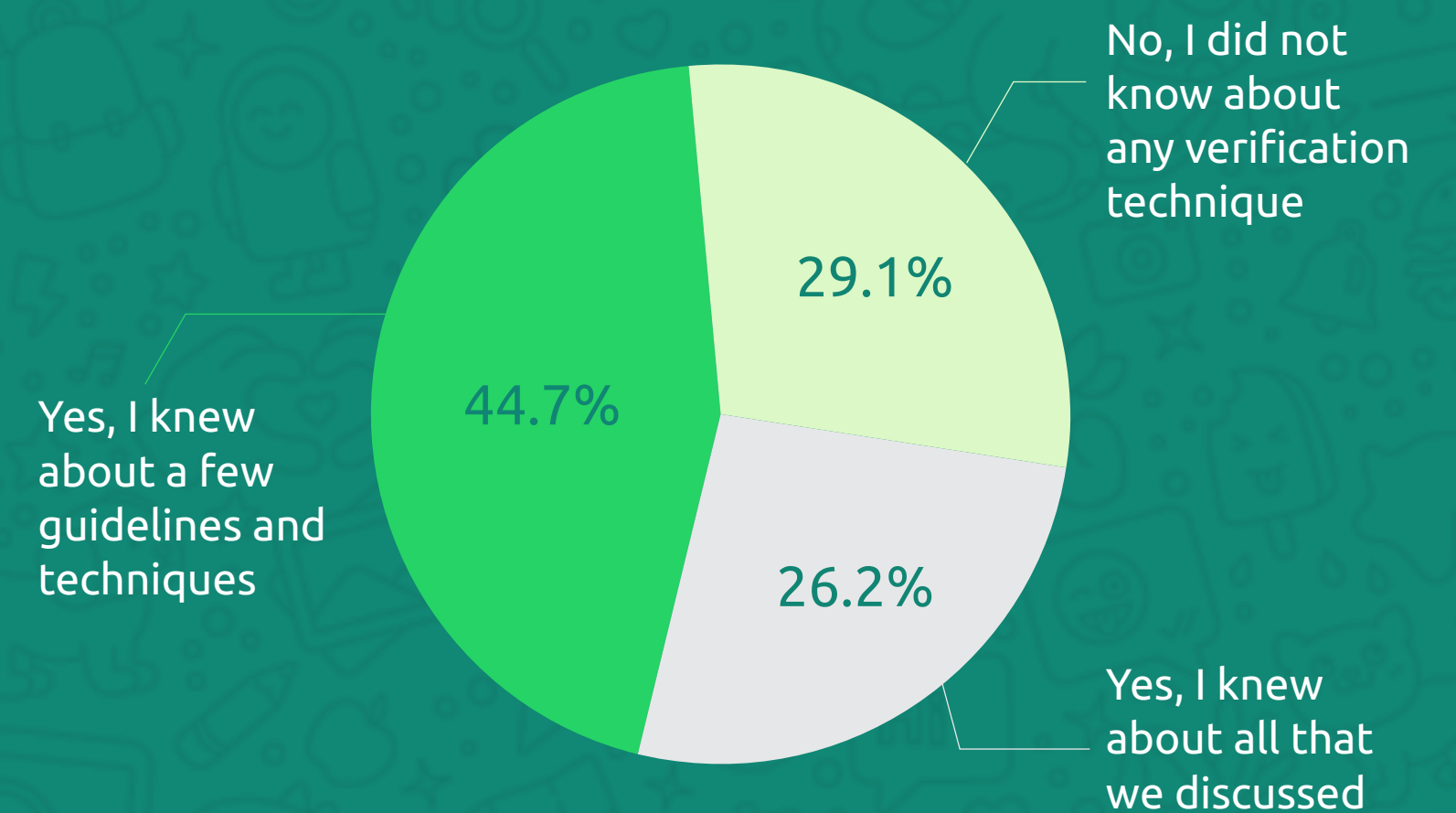
4,500 PEOPLE TRAINED SO FAR

ALWAR
RAJASTHAN
October 22, 2018

JAIPUR
RAJASTHAN
November 19, 2018

BALAGHAT
MADHYA PRADESH
October 8, 2018

SEONI
MADHYA PRADESH
October 9, 2018

SATARA
MAHARASHTRA
December 6, 2018

PALGHAR
MAHARASHTRA
December 7, 2018

KARIM NAGAR
TELANGANA
November 1, 2018

KHAMMAM
TELANGANA
November 2, 2018

KOLAR
KARNATAKA
November 27, 2018

CHIKKABALLAPUR
KARNATAKA
November 28, 2018

GUWAHATI
ASSAM
January 8, 2019

KOLASIB
MIZORAM
October 11, 2018

AIZAWL
MIZORAM
October 12, 2018

BANKURA
WEST BENGAL
December 21, 2018

WEST MIDNAPORE
WEST BENGAL
December 18, 2018

RANCHI
JHARKHAND
September 26, 2018

BALODA BAZAR
CHHATTISGARH
October 15, 2018

JANJGIR
CHHATTISGARH
October 16, 2018

FEEDBACK

How useful were the workshops?

Bar chart with y-axis labeled 800, 600, 400, 200, 0 and x-axis labeled 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- 1: (15.6%)
- 2: (10.2%)
- 3: (15.6%)
- 4: (13.6%)
- 5: (45%)

Were you aware of verification techniques before coming for the workshop?

Pie chart:
- No, I did not know about any verification technique: 29.1%
- Yes, I knew about all that we discussed: 26.2%
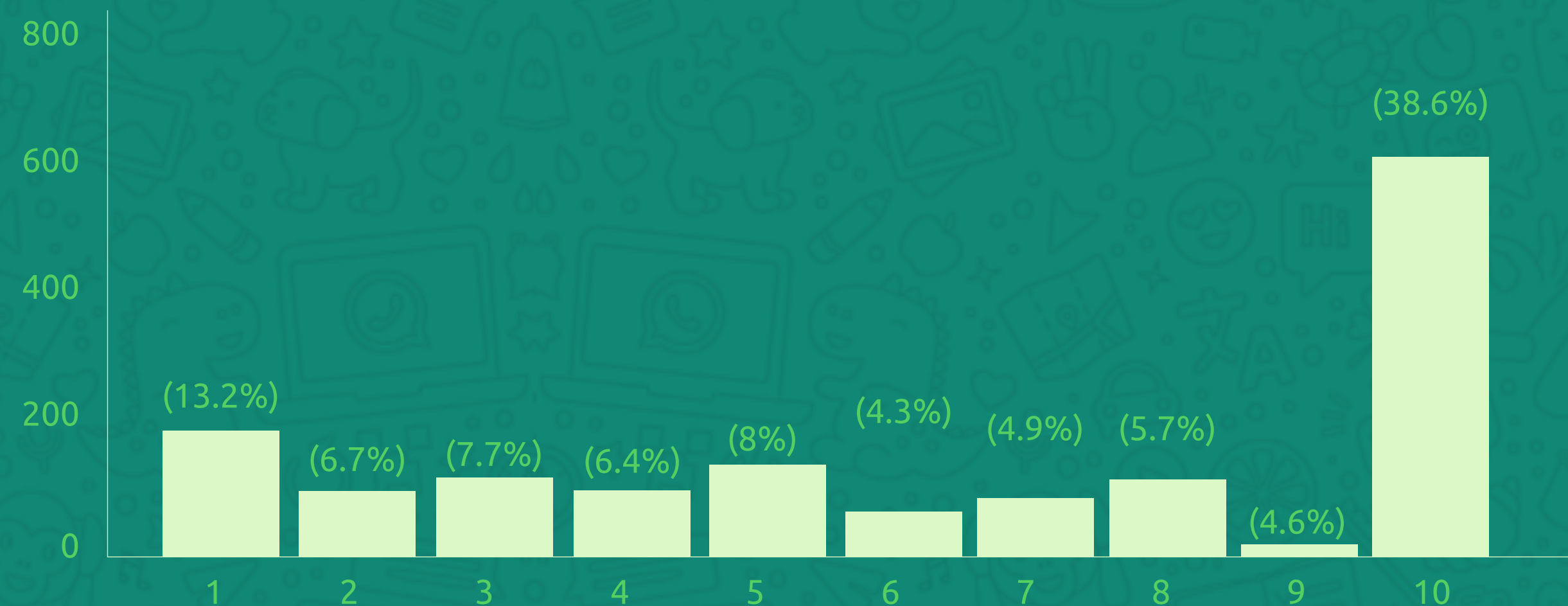- Yes, I knew about a few guidelines and techniques: 44.7%

*Responses of only 1592 of total respondents have been digitised so far

FEEDBACK

How often did you verify forwards on WhatsApp earlier?

Bar chart with y-axis from 0 to 400:
- 1: (23.6%)
- 2: (9.9%)
- 3: (7.9%)
- 4: (9.9%)
- 5: (13.9%)
- 6: (5.8%)
- 7: (4.9%)
- 8: (4.4%)
- 9: (1.9%)
- 10: (17.7%)
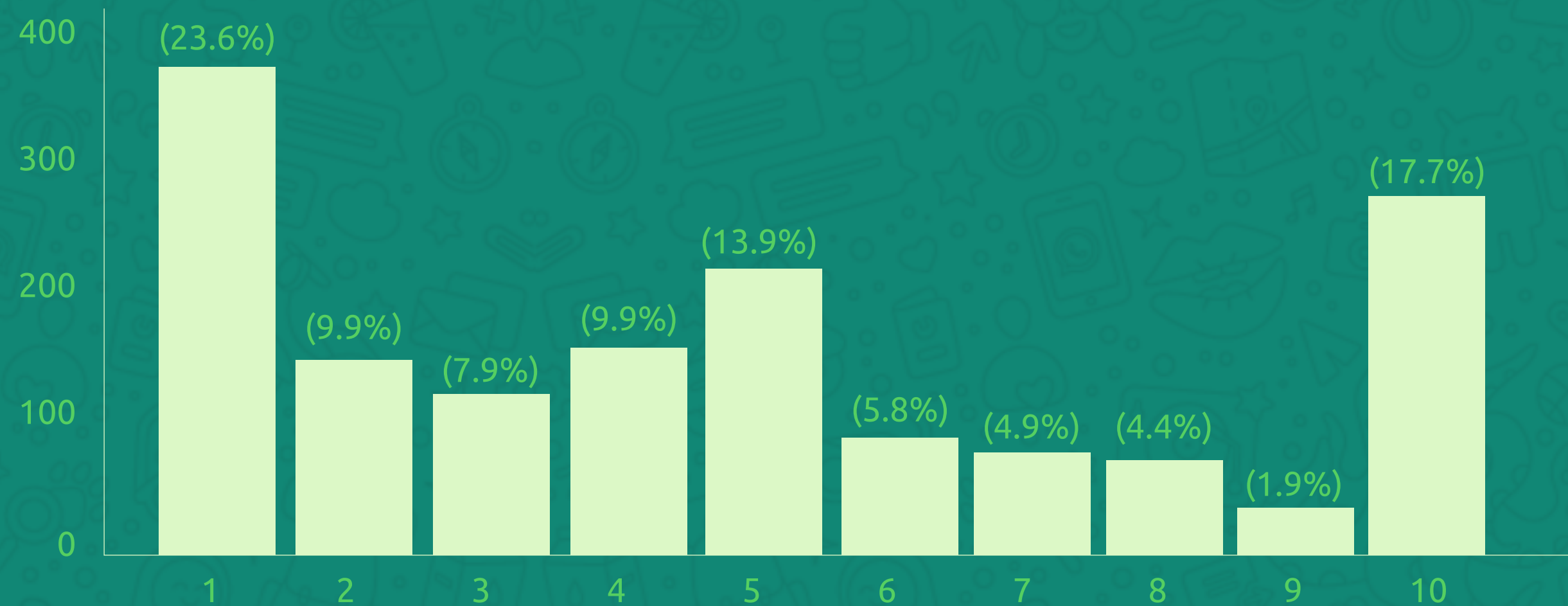
How often will you verify forwards on WhatsApp now?

Bar chart with y-axis from 0 to 800:
- 1: (13.2%)
- 2: (6.7%)
- 3: (7.7%)
- 4: (6.4%)
- 5: (8%)
- 6: (4.3%)
- 7: (4.9%)
- 8: (5.7%)
- 9: (4.6%)
- 10: (38.6%)

*Responses of only 1592 of total respondents have been digitised so far

FEEDBACK

Where have you come across WhatsApp campaigns ads?

Newspaper

35%

3.8%
Radio

60.2%

N/A

1%
Social Media
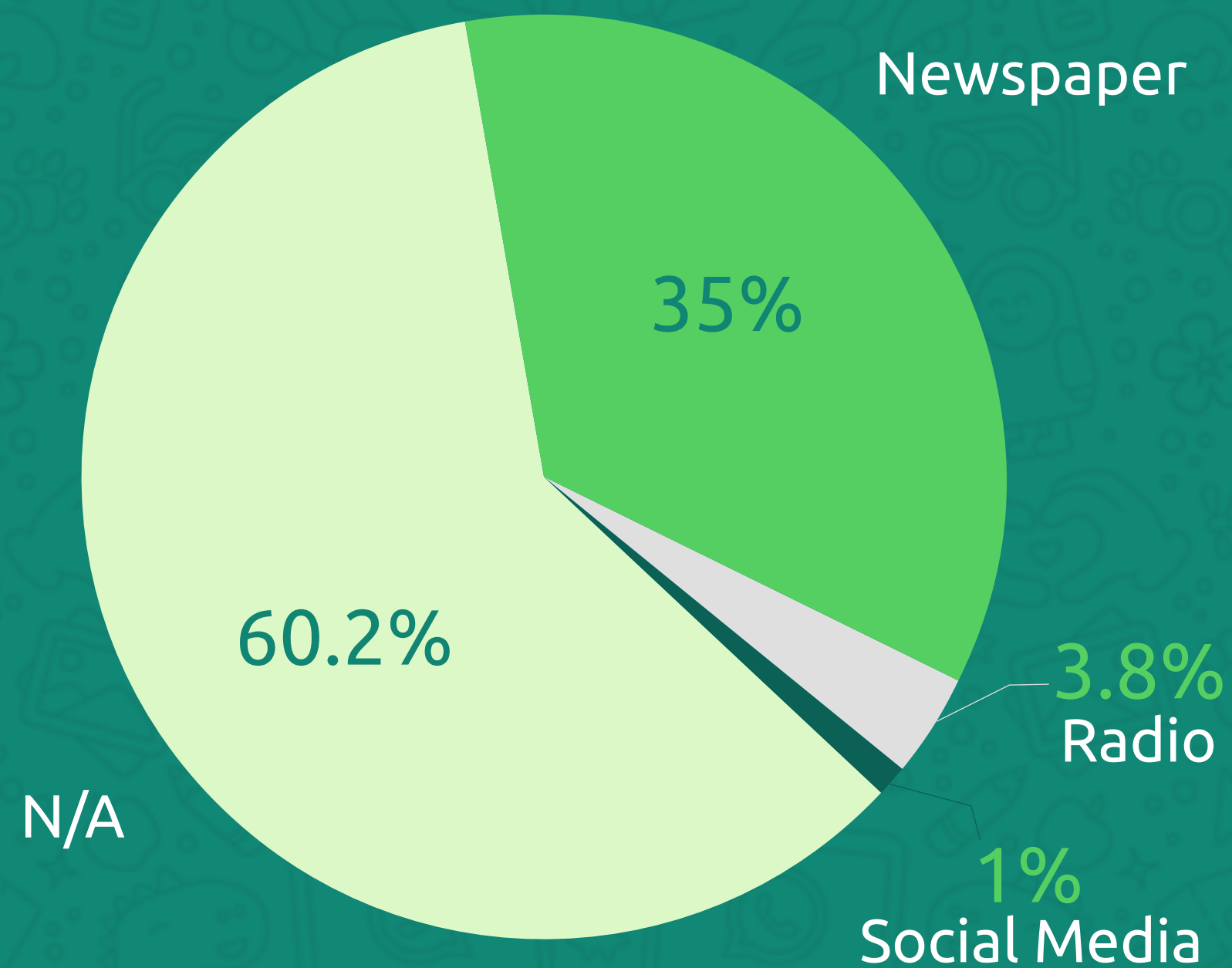
*Responses of only 1592 of total respondents have been digitised so far

LOCAL EFFORTS

The District Collector's Office in Ranchi, Jharkhand, has built a team of City Peace Committee comprising members of the society that are known for their extremist views, violent nature, political biases or local stronghold. The City Peace Committee has been entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining peace in their localities.

RANCHI, JHARKHAND

LOCAL EFFORTS

The Police Department of Seoni, Madhya Pradesh, regularly organises workshops for their personnel to understand cyber crimes better. Such workshops are organised in other parts of the country too.
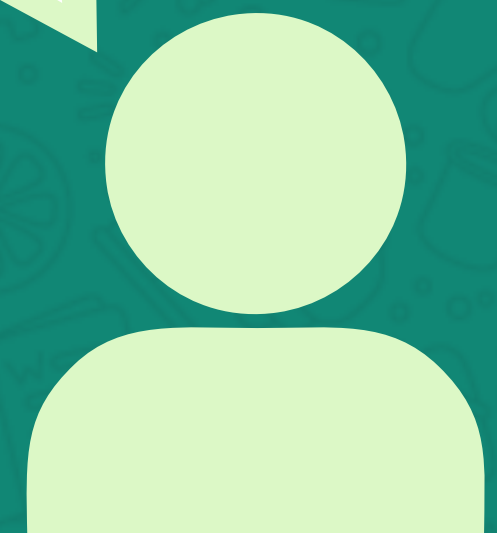

SEONI, MADHYA PRADESH

LOCAL EFFORTS

During the workshop, teachers in Palghar, Maharashtra who confessed to sharing fake news, are educating other teachers, students and local community members.

PALGHAR, MAHARASHTRA

LOCAL EFFORTS

Law students in Jaipur pledged to become 'Agents of Change' and reach out to people voluntarily, spreading awareness about fake news.

JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN

OBSERVATIONS

WhatsApp is extensively used by law enforcement departments to communicate with the citizens

Law enforcement departments do not see much value in encryption due to local law & order challenges

Police departments & District Collectors' Office see great value in organising such workshops

There is little understanding in Tier III cities of how people can make money off misinformation or fake news

Police officers in smaller districts do not understand encryption

People are mostly unaware about the new technical features of WhatsApp

People are largely unaware of the "**report**" and "**contact us**" features on WhatsApp

There is little understanding about the difference between misinformation and disinformation

Students in all the states seem much more responsible than their teachers

Participants were amazed to learn how videos and audios can be altered software

Learning about the new Grievance Officer of WhatsApp has been beneficial

Learning Reverse Photo Search is the most engaging part of the workshops

Everyone thinks it is just one forward and they are not directly responsible but barely anyone understands they are a part of the bigger fake news menace

The participants are looked at as the agents of change and are willing to take collective responsibility

The idea of technology is very limited and people find it easy to forward than creating new content

COMPLETION PLAN

WORKSHOPS

Remaining 9 workshops in Assam, Tripura and Jharkhand will be completed by mid-February. Village-level users of WhatsApp will be reached with training through DEF's physical presence in 11 states.

RESEARCH

The research report will be completed by the end of March 2019.

ABOUT DEF

Established in 2002, Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) aims to connect unreached and underserved communities of India in an effort to bring them out of digital darkness and equip them with access to information.

With the belief 'Inform, Communicate and Empower,' DEF finds sustainable digital interventions to overcome information poverty in rural and remote locations of India, and empower communities with digital literacy, digital tools and last mile connectivity.

www.defindia.org/

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DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT *foundation*