

The Good Sight

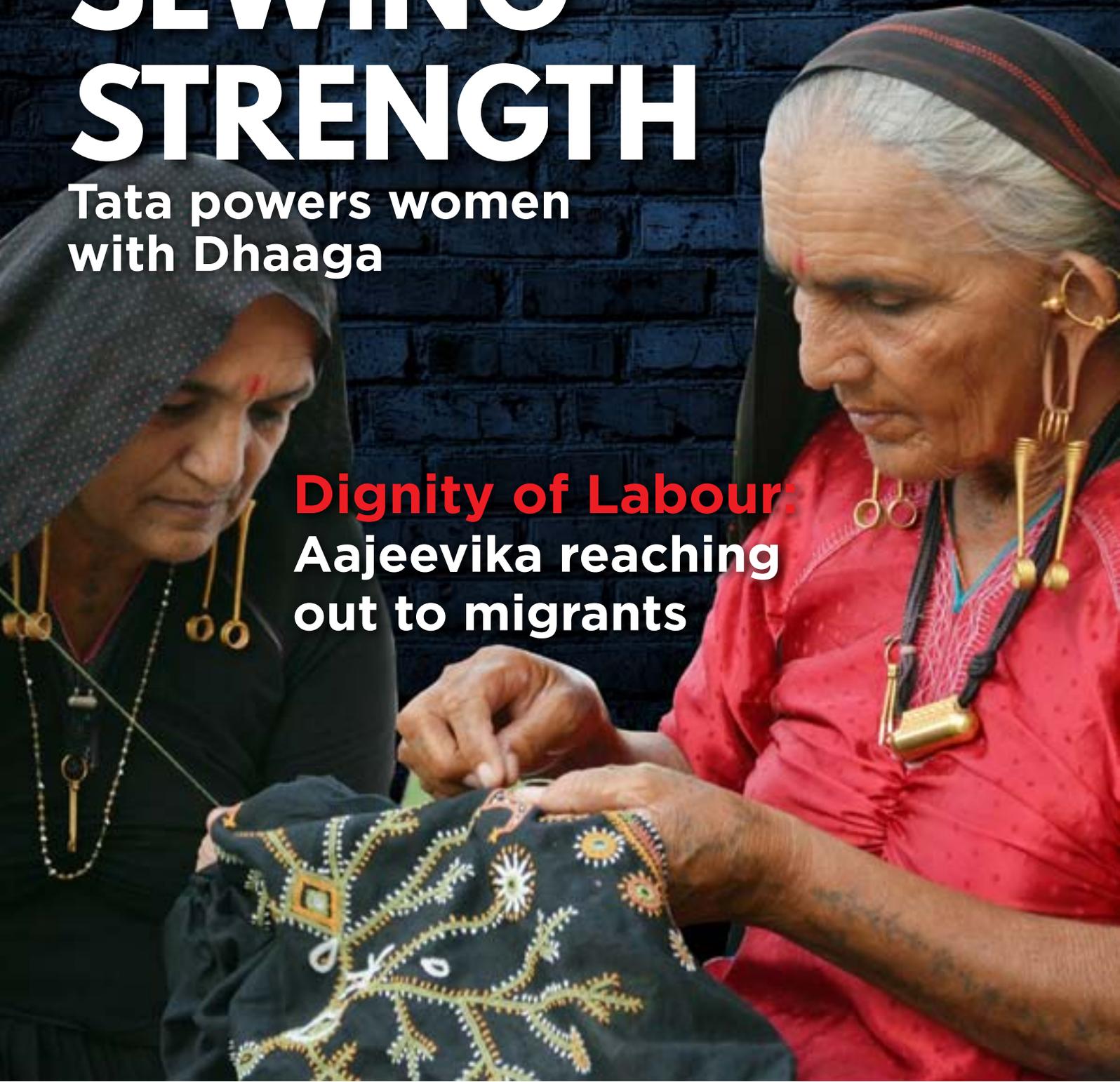
Issue 4/ October 2019

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SEWING STRENGTH

Tata powers women
with Dhaaga

Dignity of Labour:
Aajeevika reaching
out to migrants





Taking Care of Nature is all our responsibility.

#SayNoToPlastic #SwitchToGreenAlternatives

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TGS
The Good Sight
Be Inspired

Every edition, a new horizon

We present you the fourth edition of The Good Sight (TGS). Every edition has been a new horizon for us. We reach new people, new geography and new initiatives with each edition and it's a pleasure to share the stories of change with you.

Countries' sole objective is holistic development. But there are challenges. When one hurdle ceases to exist, new one emerges like the waves on a sea beach. With times things change. When plastic was invented, it solved many issues. It made life easy. And now its spread is a curse. It has become a global crisis. It is the topic of debate these days. From politicians to policymakers, experts to laymen and industrialists to commoners at remote hamlets, they all are talking about it.

Stopping plastic is the need of the hour. People from all walks of life have to come together to stop it. Development means coming together. The country-wise ban on single-use plastic has been implemented from 2nd October 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. It would be a tribute to the Father of the Nation if we can really end its use.

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Jaipur Rugs
wins Blue
Elephant
Award

Together with workers, employers and governments, Aajeevika builds a world where labour is valued and migration is safe, secure and dignified

LIVE AND WORK WITH DIGNITY- EVERYWHERE

Aajeevika undertakes systematic knowledge initiatives to address cross-cutting issues affecting labour migrants and their families

▲ Migrants lose access to basic entitlements in the form of state welfare benefits

Internal labour migration has emerged as a new-age development challenge for India. High economic disparity between regions, agrarian distress compounded by adverse climatic changes has pushed more and more rural poor to Indian cities. As per Economic Survey 2016-17, there are 139 million labour migrants in India. Scholars such as Jens Lerche argue that the number of migration affected people or people deriving their sustenance from migration could be in the range of 560 million - almost half of India's population. Among the various categories of migrants, short-term, seasonal migrants are argued to be the most vulnerable. Estimates suggest that about 42% of the short-term and seasonal migrants in the country come from SC and ST communities, with historically low levels of education, skills and lower asset ownership. Urban informal labour markets often use the historically low socio-economic positions of these communities forcing them into the lowest niches of precarious work, facing high risk to life and severe exclusion. There is a deep, complex and growing nexus between rural poverty, urban growth and rising labour migration which is throwing up serious challenges for governance and public policy.

Out of sight, out of mind

Despite the growing pervasiveness of the phenomenon and its centrality to the livelihoods of the poor, our public policy systems have failed to engage with labour migration effectively. Institutions of urban governance remain oblivious to the issues and concerns of labour migrants. On account of their mobility and absence of domicile documents, labour migrants fail to be viewed

as a legitimate constituency to be served by the urban governments, and fall outside the purview of a range of public services and entitlements in cities including lack of dignified housing, access to basic sanitation, healthcare and other public utilities. High mobility also leads to disenfranchisement within the country as migrants lose access to voting

rights, and to basic entitlements in the form of state welfare benefits.

Labour markets thrive on extracting cheap labour from migrants

Labour markets too, on the other hand, are ridden with informality and lack effective regulation and governance. Migration today is the

preferred mode of recruitment for Indian industry, however, most of the workers are engaged in informal, undocumented work which renders them vulnerable to high invisibility, precarity and exploitation. Large scale wage thefts, accidents and injuries are commonplace while workers struggle to access legal protection and basic social security. The recent

Estimates suggest that about 42% of the short-term and seasonal migrants in the country come from SC and ST communities, with historically low levels of education, skills and lower asset ownership

▼ A complex nexus exists between rural poverty, urban growth and rising labour migration



▲ We need to engage with labour migration effectively

wave of labour law changes and the introduction of new labour codes have also taken a more pro-industry stance diluting India's labour protection frameworks further.

Aajeevika Bureau – Striving to bring voice, visibility and dignity to workers

In the absence of a supportive institutional environment, there are some progressive experiments by the civil society to understand, articulate and respond to the concerns of migrant worker communities. Aajeevika Bureau is one such organisation working with migrant communities creating an institutional response and basket of migrant-friendly services (where none existed); bringing visibility to their issues and concerns and finally enhancing their agency to engage with government and employers for dignified work and living.

Creating a platform for workers to voice their concerns and seek redress

Aajeevika started work 14 years ago within rural Udaipur, with one block level resource centre for migrants in Gogunda (Udaipur district) namely Shramik Sahayataevam Sandarbha Kendras. The network of these Shramikkendras has now grown to 16, reaching out to more than 1, 50,000 workers across south Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra. These centres take an integrated approach to support vulnerable migrant communities by providing a range of services that help them improve their incomes, security and stability, both in the labour markets and their rural homes.

In a system where migrant workers tend to be highly invisible due to their mobility, access to critical entitlements and services has been a thrust area for Aajeevika. The

walk-in resource centres have served as platforms where workers reach out for vocational skill training for improved incomes, linkages with social security and government welfare benefits, accessing quality healthcare and financial resources. Each of the services focus on the most vulnerable segments of migrants and have alongside worked to strengthen existing public systems and sensitise them towards the needs of migrant communities. For instance, one of the first and most critical services of offering identity solutions was carried out in partnership with the local Sarpanches and the Labour Department and helped create a database of out-migrants from southern Rajasthan. It also became a building block for further advocacy with state level departments to institute other critical services such as legal aid and phone-based helpline for workers in distress, with the active support of the state government. At

present, the centres along with its large cadre of volunteers and paralegal workers have brought back wages worth Rs 21 crore benefitting more than 83,000 workers. The legal aid service offered by Aajeevika also plugs an important gap in the access to justice for informal, migrant workers and demonstrates how it is possible to address this through a strong, institutional response. Services of the labour helpline and its emergency response system is now well integrated in the functioning of several district level labour departments, helping them reach out to thousands of migrant workers in the informal sector.

Building agency among migrant communities to initiate action

As part of its mandate to enhance the agency of workers and communities to engage and make demands from the public systems, Aajeevika has promoted a large cadre of 12,000 women volunteers from high migration areas who come together to ensure effective delivery of NREGS and PDS. These women's groups along with other worker collectives promoted by Aajeevika ensure vigilance of rural public systems, filling an important gap in the rural governance of areas impacted by high poverty and high levels of migration.

Interventions by Aajeevika have also been geared to addressing the institutional vacuum in the informal labour markets in the cities. With the help of 10,000-member strong collective and trade unions, the organisation has strived to engage both employers and state agencies to ensure a safe, fair and dignified work environment for migrant workers in cities. Aajeevika's worker



▲ Internal labour migration is a new-age development challenge

collectives, active across growing urban destinations- Ahmedabad, Surat and Mumbai represent a range of occupations and work sectors such as the construction, power looms, recycling and small manufacturing, stone carving and transportation (head-loading). Convening to deliberate on issues pertaining to their work, they identify solutions and work towards activating responses from the state at various levels. Some of the important initiatives undertaken include facilitation of social security benefits from the destination state, and incubation of service solutions such as community kitchens and creches for migrant children in collaboration with employers.

Impacting the ecosystem through research and advocacy

Rooted in the belief that meaningful synergy between practice, research and advocacy can bring about change that is effective and sustainable, Aajeevika undertakes systematic knowledge initiatives to address cross-cutting issues affecting labour migrants and their families. Based on in-depth field studies, Aajeevika aims to fill current gaps in our understanding of seasonal, internal labour migration and contribute to growing literature, examining this important issue. In the last decade and a half, Aajeevika has produced about 40 research studies on key themes including the political economy of informal work and labour migration, chronic poverty and vulnerability of families living in high out-migration areas and the travails of migrant families engaged in distress migration and precarious work in urban destinations.

Leveraging on insights from its practice and field-based research enquiries,

Aajeevika also organises dialogues with a view to actively advocate to the governments at the national, state, district and block levels- on the critical concerns faced by this growing population and some of the ways in which sensitive responses can be designed and implemented. Partnering with multi-lateral organisations (such as the ILO) and academic institutions (such as IIM- Ahmedabad), Aajeevika has engaged in systematic dialogues with state governments as well as industry representatives with an objective to understand the views of different stakeholders in the labour policy ecosystem and identify suitable points of dialogue and strategies for effecting change.

What we have been able to achieve thus far

Migrant workers form a pivotal role in fueling economic growth in India. Still it is a community that it out of the purview of public policies and state welfare. Aajeevika through its systematic interventions involving migrant communities, governments and the industry has helped bring visibility to this population and its needs. It is now acknowledged that migration is a valid livelihood strategy that needs policy attention. More importantly, it is established that a systematic response to risks resulting from migration in India has potential for rapid replication and can positively transform the lives of millions. Lessons emerging from migration interventions on the ground have influenced priorities of donors, academics, national and multi-lateral organizations, contributing to a growing body of work on migration. ■

(Contribution by Aajeevika for The Good Sight)

Stitching HER better future

Tata Power's Dhaaga is a common thread for social and economic empowerment of women across 7 states in India

As a part of its social responsibility, Tata Power has been undertaking Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) interventions in the thrust areas of Education, Health & Sanitation, Water, Financial Inclusivity and Livelihood & Skill Building under an integrated approach model. Women being the critical stakeholder in community entailed Tata Power to focus on their social, economic and governance related empowerment. With this objective in mind, "Dhaaga" the flagship Initiative for Women Empowerment was launched to unleash the potential of women. It is a woman based micro-enterprise initiative which reached out to both rural and urban women for improving their social status and sustainable livelihood options. The journey began in 2015 with 16 women members being skilled in tailoring followed by garment manufacturing. This also supports in conserving traditional handicrafts and promote the local talent. Today, the Dhaaga initiative touches lives of 1050 women in 96 villages across 7 states of the country (Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Delhi and Gujarat).

Objectives

- Empower Dhaaga women by building and strengthening Self- help Groups for Income generation for women members of Dhaaga and improve their household income
- Develop and promote Dhaaga brand and products
- Organise business activities of the Dhaaga members for establishing and strengthening market linkage for their products
- Focusing on how women stand for other women as mothers, sisters and friends. Dhaaga is also an initiative run by women for women. We want to applaud the women who create a difference in our lives

The purpose of understanding and helping women unleash their potential is the real essence behind the story of Dhaaga

Strategy

A Centre of Excellence was established in Maval, Maharashtra equipped with state-of-art infrastructure and training competencies to nurture the aspiration of establishing the brand Dhaaga. The centre acted as a Hub for training women (who were part of the Self-help groups) for garment making. Gradually the scaling and replicating strategy adopted included Hub and Spoke Model in which multiple centres were established across 16 locations with diversified portfolio of products.

▼ Dhaaga is a women-focused intervention



From implementation strategy, Tata Power through its development arm of Tata Power Community Development Trust (TPCDT) partnered with likeminded agencies and NGO's for institutionalising and scaling Dhaaga pan India in terms of market linkage, product design, training and product pricing. Ongoing feedback from customers including employees provided scope for improvement in the product quality and delivery timelines.

Market linkages were established with entities such as Okhai brand of Tata Chemicals, Indian Hotels, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai and others. Today Dhaaga portfolio includes Kurtis, Palazzos, wrap arounds, aprons, clutches, office folders, embroidery work of Kutch, Tie & Dye, Tiger Grass, handicrafts, and pen stands, to name a few. The monthly household income of these 1050 women has been augmented in the range of Rs. 2500 - Rs. 5400 pm.

Implementation

1. Scoping of skills and association through SHGs:

SHGs are instruments for a variety of goals, including empowering women and developing leadership abilities amongst poor women. SHGs create opportunities for women to enhance their participation in social and economic development at individual, family, and community level. TPCDT is committed to women empowerment in its operational area covering 348 villages and 220 urban clusters of India in 15 states to improve the socio-economic conditions of 1.5 lakh women in social, economic and governance domain through an integrated approach in Maternal Health, SHGs, Microenterprise and Skill

Building and women participation in decision making forums at various levels.

2. Partnership and market linkages:

Dhaaga sale and exhibitions happen through strategic partnership within the group and at various corporates. Since last year these rural women associated with Dhaaga have conducted more than 15 exhibitions across India, having a turnover over of more than Rs. 37 lakhs. Within a very short span of time Dhaaga has become a well-known brand and is ready to hit the E-Commerce market. The women SHG's of Dhaaga are graded by Government of India to participate in all India E-Haats and registered with Rashtriya Mahila Kosh programme. Now more than 100 women are today certified by National Skill Development Council in the initial phase which has attracted many top brands of India like Indian Hotels, Okhai, Kala Raksha, Folk India, Amazon Saheli etc.

Coordination (with execution team)

- Exploring potential buyers and markets for product.
- Engaging with potential buyers through sample product delivery.
- Connecting with corporate and organization for Exhibition-Cum-Sale at office/public fairs and premises.
- Coordination with the Production Units for supply indent and delivery.
- Quality control and pricing models based on overall costing and margins.
- Customer Feedback and integration to the Product line



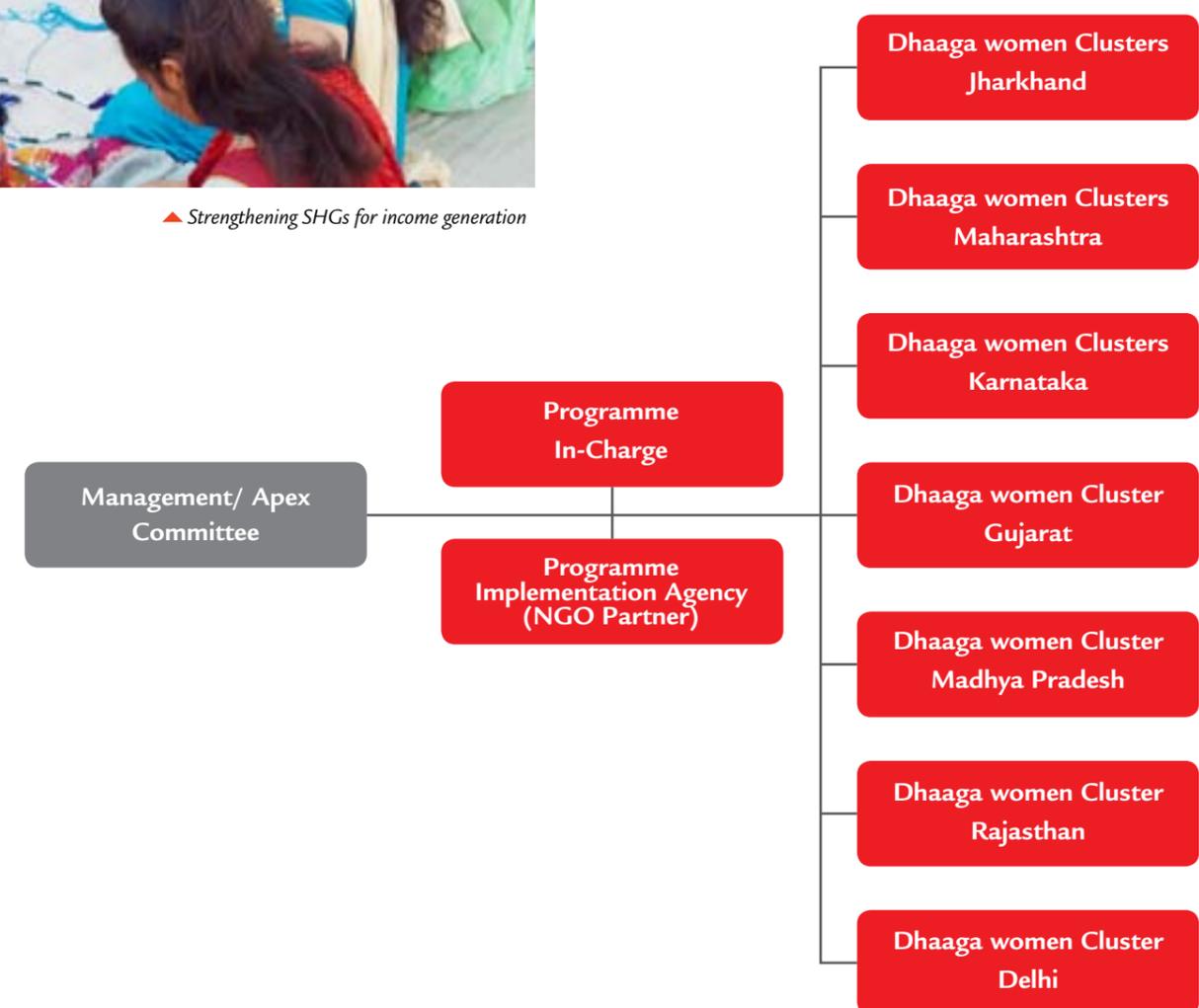
▲ Strengthening SHGs for income generation

Dhaaga central team located at Mumbai provides facilitation and other handholding support all the locations SPOC's and at each location the divisional CSR team along with the partner agency executes the agreed plan and programme. Mobilisation of women is one of the critical aspects managed by the team to ensure continuous community engagement as a major pillar of the Dhaaga programme.

The intervention has been designed based on enterprise development model to support Dhaaga and the rural women member on their journey, on elements of Customer acquisition, Business and finance planning, People Management and Partnership building etc.



▲ Crafted as part of Dhaaga initiative



Threads of Empowerment

Dhaaga is a women-focused intervention, to bring economic and social empowerment. It offers opportunities to women to get organised and institutionalised. The initiative entails handholding for skill upgradation, market linkages, training on standard operating procedures and vendor management support, all required to make a microenterprise self sustainable in the long run. It gives a sense of security and financial stability to the members associated with "Dhaaga". The initiative not only provides financial stability but also builds confidence and safeguards social identity of women. With collective efforts, Dhaaga enterprise justifies the purpose of its branding by forming a chain of women who are not only transforming their own lives but also reaching out to other women, and this rippling effect is planned to touch 10000 lives in the next five years.

Community Testimonials

"We are mostly engaged with daily household chores. However, we want to do something which can help augment our family income," remarks Leela Ben of Mota Kandagara village of Kutch district in Gujarat. Similarly, Lalita Koli of Umberwadi village in Pune district of Maharashtra shares, "In our society, bread earning member of family is generally respected while we also slog without being paid. We want to earn our respect and collectively contribute for the betterment of our children future."

The purpose of understanding and helping women unleash their potential



▲ A Dhaaga creation



▲ Bringing economic and social empowerment

▼ Dhaaga touches lives of 1050 women in 96 villages across 7 states

is the real essence behind the story of Dhaaga. Today Rashida Ben, master trainer of Dhaaga members who has shared her skills to upgrade the socio-economic status of these women takes pride in being a part of this movement. Recalling her earlier days with the initiative, she narrates, "Shalini didi from Tata Power had asked us to think big which we were hesitant about initially. Now with the results, we are not going to look back, rather keep moving forward." "Being part of this movement of women empowerment is encouraging and satisfying... I can only say that we have just begun and would surely cover 10000 women in the next five years." ■

(Contribution by Tata Power for The Good Sight)



▼ Women at work



HELPING INDIA TAKE STEM STRIDES

India STEM Alliance educates students, enables teachers, empowers girls, enriches the earth, one STEM Step at a time

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education is at the centre of India STEM Alliance's (ISA) efforts to provide our students with 21st century skills. Critical thinking, discovery, innovation and problem solving are the keys to success in tomorrow's economy and STEM related job opportunities are growing at a rapid rate.

STEM education is an approach to learning that removes the traditional barriers separating science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and integrates them into real-world problem solving and relevant learning experiences for students.

STEM in itself is not a curriculum, but rather a way of organising and delivering instruction by weaving the four disciplines together in intentional ways. Rather than adding two new subjects to the curriculum, the engineering and technology practices are intentionally

woven into existing math and science lessons in ways that engage students and help them master 21st century skills.

Individually, Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths open so many doors; and when their collective powers join forces as STEM, they open entire new worlds, ignite infinite imagination, rewrite destinies across continents, empower communities and nourish minds...

ISA has STEM education at its core to empower students with 21st century skills which include critical thinking and creative innovative applications aligning with the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals 2030. ISA endeavours to take meaningful steps towards the most empowered, most self-reliant and a more inspiring India.

STEM education is more than simply teaching; it is about **engaging**.

“Nothing is more essential to India’s future than education. And STEM education is the only way to ensure innovation”

- Raj Kapoor, Co-Founder, ISA

STEM Step 1: STEM Sakhi

Challenging the prevailing perception that sub subjects are beyond the grasp of girls, ISA invests in the resilience and creative abilities of Indian Girl power by encouraging, engaging and empowering girls to pursue STEM studies and claim their rightful place in the ever growing STEM workforce. Since STEM becomes a partner, a confidante, an enabler and a friend, ISA rightly named this initiative STEM Sakhi. ISA enables girls to embrace technology through workshops and projects in robotics, coding, app building, programming and maths through a series of interactive and hands on projects.

ISA envisions a world where women feel confident to pursue STEM careers and are equally represented in the STEM workforce. And to get India girls to embrace technology wholeheartedly ISA initiated STEM Sakhi – a holistic programme focusing on STEM Skills for girls.

The major benefits for girls especially in rural India are:

- Girls gain confidence in their STEM skills and abilities
- Girls feel more comfortable working with computers and technology
- Girls can develop better problem-solving skills
- More girls can enroll in STEM Degrees in colleges
- Girls can have better career options



▲ STEM Sakhi focuses on STEM Skills for girls



▲ *Lakh Shikshak Ek Dashak aspires for 100,000 excellent STEM teachers into classrooms nationwide*

STEM Step 2: Lakh Shikshak. Ek Dashak

ISA's initiative Lakh Shikshak Ek Dashak (a million STEM teachers in a decade) aims to unite the nation's top academic institutions, nonprofits, foundations, companies, and government agencies to address the nation's STEM teacher shortage. Together, ISA is trying to tackle systemic challenges and getting 100,000 excellent STEM teachers into classrooms nationwide.

By giving STEM teachers the support they need, ISA is attempting to help educate the next generation of innovators and problem solvers.

ISA is acutely aware that for young minds to soar, question, innovate and become solution providers, an entire new generation of STEM teachers are required to be trained and deployed.

Today's students are tomorrow's leaders. ISA look to them to produce the next big ideas and solve our greatest challenges. But to thrive in the workforce and the world, students will need support, inspiration, and excellent skills in science, technology, engineering,

and math. That's why ISA is preparing and supporting 100,000 excellent, STEM teachers in India's classrooms.

Lakh Shikshak Ek Dashak is an initiative of the ISA to create a national network committed to solving one of our country's most pressing challenges – giving kids a great STEM education – by adding 100,000 more, excellent STEM teachers to India's classrooms by 2030.

Lakh Shikshak Ek Dashak will work with a network of best-in-class organisations to develop a unique networked impact model to solving social problems.

ISA is now charting a course to train and retain 100,000 excellent STEM teachers. But ISA is not doing it alone. It aims to cultivate a network of best-in-class organisations to make ambitious commitments to the shared goal, foster trust between those organisations, and facilitate networked problem-solving to tackle the biggest challenges facing STEM education.

ISA has developed this unique approach over the past few years, and it is committed to continually interrogating and refining how it can best do its work, so it is always improving its model.

STEM Step 3: STEM Suraj

Partnering with the world's best, ISA created STEM Suraj. India's first inflatable solar light, to empower billions of Indians who still live without reliable access to electricity. In many places, as soon as the sun goes down, children can't study, entrepreneurs have to stop working, women are less safe walking outside, health clinics have to close... the list goes on. Kerosene lamps are the most common solution in these areas – but they are dangerous, toxic and expensive. Lightweight, easy to carry, and shining for hours on a single charge, STEM Suraj is a clean, safe and affordable way to bring light to our world.

ISA understands the significance of renewable energy and has created STEM Suraj - an inflatable solar light that can fit into a handbag and can light up an entire room shining brightly by harnessing solar energy! Clumsy kerosene lamps and dangerous clay lamps should now be a thing of the past. STEM Suraj stays lit up for hours on a single charge.

With millions of Indian's living without access to clean, reliable, or affordable energy, everyday tasks are made more difficult (and dangerous) than they should be. Access to clean energy can improve health, create education equality, economic empowerment, all the while combating climate change.

Working with NGOs and non-profits, ISA provides clean energy to those who need it most. Through its partners, ISA distributes clean energy options that provide a more economical and environmentally friendly approach to everyday tasks.

Renewable energy is the future, and ISA aims to create responsibly crafted, sustainable products, that while addressing a particular need, have a positive impact on the environment. ISA is on a mission to empower the millions of Indians around the world living without access to clean, reliable, and affordable energy.



▲ *STEM Suraj-India's first inflatable solar light*

STEM Step 4: Prithvi Se Pyaar

ISA believes that our children must inherit a clean, green and a sustainable earth. Partnering with Global Green STEM, ISA brings the Project Hero initiative to India that strives to connect the kids to species and ecosystems that need their protection and support. It wants to empower the next generation to create a community of solutions for the planet. And ISA uses STEM to search these solutions.

For years, ISA's programmes have been helping youth embrace and strengthen their power to create positive change in their schools, communities, and the natural world in which they live. These Heroes resolve to revive rivers, remove plastic from oceans, and help create/reclaim habitats where sparrows chirp and butterflies thrive.

Prithvi se Pyaar is a holistic way of life that supports and strengthens all initiatives of loving cherishing enriching and protecting mother earth. Hence the project name Prithvi se Pyaar. These young champions and heroes,



▲ Prithvi Se Pyaar-for a clean, green mother earth



ISA Co-founders: Raj Kapoor, Aman Bandvi, Harmeet Singh

rescue endangered species and realign them with their ecosystem experimenting with alternate modes of manufacturing, packaging, transporting and waste management, CP, and PSP Heroes are the real knights in STEM armours helping our plant, one classroom and one community at a time

ISA's Ecosystem programmes support solution-oriented, youth-led projects that result in real environmental outcomes. Its Ecosystem Kits are a set of kits to facilitate ecoSTEM learning and using the environment as a context for applying knowledge. And ISA's EcoTech solutions engage children in inquiry-based, STEM-related projects that leverage technology and/or use nature-based design to address environmental problems in local communities.

ISA is a dedicated think tank and advocacy, Co Founded by Raj Kapoor, Aman Bandvi and Harmeet Singh whose passion is taking constructive STEM Steps to make India the thriving ideation and innovation hub and bring back its glory days - one initiative at a time.

Raj Kapoor, puts it, "India is on the verge of tremendous growth and innovation. Now more than ever, a pressing need exists to develop a skilled talent pipeline in STEM fields, leveraging the tremendous human capital of India to fuel economic growth. Nothing is more essential to India's future than education. And STEM education is the only way to ensure innovation."

Turning today's big ideas to tomorrow's bountiful and beautiful reality, each small STEM step is a giant leap for the nation and for mother earth. ■

Featured in arrangement with India STEM Alliance



ADDRESSING INDIA'S BIGGEST CHALLENGES

EMPOWERING INDIA WITH STEM



Empowering girls to embrace STEM



Training 100,000 STEM teachers in the next 10 years



Lighting up lives with clean energy



Environment solutions for a green and a sustainable earth

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Entering into Entrepreneurship

Two social entrepreneurs are on a mission to reach every corner of the globe through innovative entrepreneurship education

Entrepreneurship education empowers young people to see the world as opportunity-rich and to craft the lives they dream to live” – Tina Seelig, Stanford professor, speaker and bestselling author on innovation entrepreneurship and creativity.

Two social entrepreneurs based in Gurugram (Haryana) – Kunwar Vijay Parmar and Rituu Srivastav – are changing the entire entrepreneurship education ecosystem of India and around the world through their innovative and world’s first game-based entrepreneurship development

programme named Heuristic. Heuristic is a powerful brainstorming tool to nurture the entrepreneurial mindset. Powered with game-based learning, it aims to familiarise players with all stages of start-up journey, enhance entrepreneurial skills and empower them to become one.

The two strongly believe in nurturing entrepreneurship at the grassroots level, especially in schools and colleges. They believe that entrepreneurship education should not be limited to premium institutes and schools of major cities of India. And that is why they have set out on

a mission to take entrepreneurship education to the remote corners of rural India and the world.

They are the founders of an education start-up called Wiwitan Solutions India Pvt. Ltd which has been recognised by the Government of India as a start-up and due to their innovative product the start-up has also been granted 100 crore tax exemption under the Start-up India Scheme.

The duo has been working day and night and spreading its wings across

the global ecosystem and running programmes not just in India but also in Singapore and Kenya in collaboration with a non-profit organisation called Slumcode. They support Goal 4.4 of Entrepreneurship education out of 17 sustainable development goals of the United Nations.

They have conducted workshops and are working with esteemed organisations like Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad, National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business

Development (NIESBUD), Noida, All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE), Delhi, Ashoka University etc. They have also been instrumental in developing the entrepreneurship mindset curriculum for Delhi government schools.

The duo also founded Wiwitan Entrepreneurship Foundation, a Section 8 not-for-profit organisation, which is the social arm of their start-up through which they are running “Start-up Saksharta to Saksham Abhiyan” (start-up awareness to empower mission) to nurture



▲ Heuristic and Slumcode team during the launch

entrepreneurship in government schools of Gurugram in collaboration with the District Administration and the Department of Education. Their vision is to implement the programme in schools across the country.

It is a one-of-its-kind project in entire India and more interestingly is a non-classroom and non-examination format and based on their innovative and “World’s 1st Startup Game – Heuristic Star” (protected under Copyright Act by Wiwitan Solutions India Pvt. Ltd.). The gamification of entire learning offers a fresh approach and high level of engagement among students. Keeping in mind the Hindi medium background of the students, the entire game and programme is

translated and taught in Hindi only. The entire programme consists of the game and multiple creative activities which enhance the learning experience and keep the students motivated. The uniqueness of the programme is that it creates an entrepreneurial mind shift within students from being problem seekers to problem solvers. The programme extends handhold support to the students and takes them through the entire entrepreneurial journey stage by stage starting from the opportunity identification to coming up with innovating solutions, validating the solution and building an MVP, from market launch to preparing a pitch for fundraising. The concept of micro start-up lunch is unique as it enables students to not just know

all the stages of a start-up but also execute them stage by stage and have real-time experience and learning.

The start-up is also working on the pilot project with All India Council of Technical Education to train faculties of 50 colleges on “Heuristic – World’s 1st Game-Based Entrepreneurship Development Programme”.

The two have the vision to make the programme reach to the remotest areas of India and the globe and also bringing in technological support to scale the project and offer a better learning experience. ■

(Contribution by Wiwitan Entrepreneurship Foundation for The Good Sight)



◀ Kunwar Vijay Parmar and Rituu Srivastav

◀ Participants at a Heuristic workshop in Singapore

◀ School-level entrepreneurship development programme



Startup Saksharta to Saksham Abhiyan
(Awareness to Empower mission)

An Initiative by
Wiwitan Entrepreneurship Foundation
(A social arm of Wiwitan Solutions India Pvt. Ltd.,
Recognized by Govt. of India DIPP-24301)

Through
World's 1st Game Based Entrepreneurship Development Program
HEURISTIC

Sakshar
Play Like an Entrepreneur

This is an awareness stage to understand the concept of entrepreneurship, startup and its various stages.

Sashakt

Think Like an Entrepreneur

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FINDING LOVE AGAIN DESPITE HIV

'I met many who were living with HIV. They gave me hope. I thought, if they can, then I too can live a healthy and normal life'

Even before Kamalini could properly adjust to her newly married life, she lost her husband, a truck driver, to HIV. She had no other choice but to accept her fate. She continued to live with her in-laws, then a few years later she started to frequently fall ill. When tested for HIV, her reports were positive. She was shattered to know that she will be on medication for lifelong.

Feeling helpless, she registered herself with the ART Centre at Rourkela Government Hospital for the treatment. The ART counsellor then connected Kamalini with Urmila, a female outreach worker with a Care and Support Centre (CSC) developed under Vihaan. The Vihaan consortium is led by Alliance India and 17 state-level people living with HIV (PLHIV) networks and NGOs that in turn partner with district-level PLHIV networks and other organisations to deliver care and support services in communities.

▼ Image for representation only.
Image credit: Pranab Aich, Alliance India

During a course of time, Kamalini and Urmila formed a close friendship based on many commonalities they shared together including their HIV status. Urmila, trained in giving care and support services to people living with HIV, was able to impart HIV literacy and encourage Kamalini to adhere to her treatment regimen. "At the support group meetings held in the CSC centre, I met many who were living with HIV. They gave me hope. I thought, if they can, then I too can live a healthy and normal life," said Kamalini.

Kamalini regularly attended the support group meetings and interacted with Urmila and other Outreach Workers at the CSC centre who always extended support to her. They even introduced Kamalini to her future husband Santosh who is also living with HIV and is registered with a CSC in Cuttack. Urmila along with another Outreach Worker from the Cuttack CSC facilitated the first meeting between the families and in no time the wedding was fixed and Kamalini got re-married to Santosh.

In January 2019, the couple gave birth to a healthy baby boy. Kamalini couldn't be happier to finally have a family of her own. Urmila had helped her through every step of the way, especially

The Vihaan consortium is led by Alliance India and 17 state-level people living with HIV (PLHIV) networks and NGOs that in turn partner with district-level PLHIV networks and other organisations to deliver care and support services in communities

linking Kamalini to Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission programme to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. "To see Kamalini transform into this confident and happy woman that she is today gives me great joy and satisfaction," said Urmila, the Outreach Worker who shared Kamalini's journey to health and happiness. ■

India HIV/AIDS Alliance (Alliance India) is a non-government organisation at the forefront of HIV response and human rights protection of the people most affected by HIV/AIDS. It has partnered with over 500 community-based organisations and has its presence across 32 states and territories in India, touching over 2 million lives annually. Its programmes are in alignment with India's commitment to ending the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030.

CONVENIENCE VS CONSCIENCE- THE MOST OFTEN FOUGHT BATTLE



Leave your convenience and listen more to your conscience if you really care for the Earth

[Akshata Bhadranna](#)



Humans are said to be social animals, who thrive amongst community. They are also the most intelligent beings on Earth (one amongst some more). We are more content being with our families and loved ones than alone like most animals and birds in the ecosystem. Yet we aren't the same, we are different, because we have the ability to think, there are rules we set, ideals we follow and many more things that only we, as humans do that makes us different. We all have a conscience that helps us differentiate between right and wrong, helping us choose the paths we want to go in.

Science and technology has helped us reach places, we never thought we could. From landing on Moon to being able to predict behaviours online, influencing people to buy. With

the boom in AI and Machine learning, there are inventions that are changing the way we live our lives. We humans are a talented lot indeed. But in all this, we are ignoring the very thing that has given us everything and is very crucial to our lives, nature.

When did we become this selfish?

From non-renewable energy to other raw materials for many products, Nature has been a source of it all. And we have plundered it to a point of no return now. The new inventions and discoveries pushed countries to leverage the environmental resources to produce more and, people continued to increase their consumption - from meat/food to clothing. The discoveries and inventions were a boon that made life for people easier, but it was also a bane due to overconsumption and the greed to make more money.

Trees were cut to become raw materials or to make space for agriculture for the growing population. The waste generated by these population grew while countries struggled to find solutions to treat these waste. The number of vehicles on the road increased adding on to more carbon emissions. Factories, vehicles, waste and people added to the greenhouse gases making the Earth warm, which resulted in climate change, ice caps melting and affecting many flora and fauna, even bringing many species to extinction.

We were so consumed with development to make our lives easier and to make it to the top of the world that we forget our very basic responsibility to protect our environment.

We were so consumed with development to make our lives easier and to make it to the top of the world that we forget our very basic responsibility to protect our environment

Take the Amazon forest fire in Brazil or the stomping of the Aarey forest, it's all done in the name of development not giving a hoot to the environment. 'What's the point of development, when you end up destructing the very source of life?'

A silenced Conscience

Are humans that cruel? Not really. We all have a conscience, but we have slowly mastered to silence it for our convenience. What stops people, from choosing to waste less, say no to plastic, use less paper, use public transport more, choose renewable energy? Many would say it's not convenient to do so or it's the corporate who needs to change all this to help people become more eco-friendly. Human beings are great at coming up with reasons, right?

United in Science report (compiled by UN World Meteorological Society-WMO) says 'Accelerating climate impacts from melting ice caps to sea-level rise and extreme weather were to blame for the record as the global average temperature increased by 1.1°C above pre-industrial (1850-1900) times and 0.2°C warmer than 2011-2015.' It also highlights the urgency to implement carbon-curbing actions and socio-economic transformations to fight this climate change.

The scientists have been warning the world about the timeline we have to make amends before we reach a point of no return. People understand this and yet they do not want to do anything about it. The Governments are refusing to consider the climate crisis we are all in it. Why do you think this is? Because it is convenient to go on the way we are and focus on more money for everyone.

The conscience that tells them this is selfish and think about environment is so suppressed that in many so-called leaders it is completely dead too. But why do people, the commoners who worry about the lesser privileged and help many in the ways they can, aren't worrying about preserving nature. Even if it is for their future generations?

Wake up. Take Note. Let Your Conscience take over

We are nothing without nature, without trees, water bodies, animals and birds et., al. We are nothing without the ecosystem. It's time for us to wake up and be better. As Greta Thunberg says, 'Why are you taking away the future of your children? How dare you?'



▲ Spreading the green message

Listen to that small voice that tells you to think about nature before taking a decision. Take small steps in your everyday life to live more eco-friendly, may it be walking more, switching to solar energy or composting at home. Ditch single use plastics, carry your own water bottles and segregate your waste. You will definitely be making a world of difference.

We as individuals have a lot of power. Mahatma Gandhi started as one person fighting with non-violence and then soon became an ocean of people. Nelson Mandela was one person fighting against Apartheid until he became an army of people fighting for rights. To bring you examples of today. Malala was a single voice, but now she has given voice to many more. Greta Thunberg was one person 1 year 2 months ago, today she is a million people.

We are the commoners, the consumers, the makers, the clients and we hold a lot of power to influence change in MNC and big Corporates to be kind to the environment more. They will change their products, their packaging and even their ethos to match your demands of going green.

Take that step. Leave your convenience and listen more to your conscience. Care for the Earth. For your future generations and for yourself. ■

(Akshata is the Co-founder of Dopology, a company into sustainable products like newspaper pencils and seed paper products. Aspiring to be zero waste in the next 4 years, she is a bibliophile, a feminist, and a traveller. Views are personal. Connect with her on dopology@gmail.com.)

MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

22 YEARS OF EMPOWERING PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

Since 1997, Samarthanam has been empowering persons with disability through education, livelihood and other interventions, thus building productive and meaningful lives

▼ Class in progress at Samarthanam-run special school for children

growth has hustled him to great height already at the age of 16. Physical training should have been a barrier for him yet it wasn't. It is one of his hobbies and the PT teacher is one of his favourite people. His various hobbies include drawing. Artistic skills in him are growing and he aspires to be a software engineer. For a student of the class eighth, having done so much is very much laudable. His story has appeared in multiple regional newspapers due to his acting skills in the Kannada Movie Chalagara. Manu is an inspiration and he couldn't have done it alone without the support of Samarthanam. Every opportunity given to him was turned by him into achievement.

Numerous such stories have taken shape with the interventions of Samarthanam in its journey of 22 years. According to the 2011 estimation by World Health Organisation (WHO) and World Bank, over a billion people (or 15% of the global population) have some kind of disability. People who have low income, are out of work or have low educational qualifications are at an increased risk of disability. Most people who are blind or visually impaired live in Asian countries.

Samarthanam, founded in 1997, is one of the pioneering NGOs in the field of disability empowerment, providing education and services to people who are visually/speech/hearing impaired and with other disabilities, to build productive and meaningful lives. It pursues this mission both locally and globally. The organisation advances its mission through its various divisions i.e. education, sports, livelihood, rehabilitation, culture and environment. As per the programme

Mala is a visually impaired student pursuing her junior college via Samarthanam's Higher Education Programme. Samarthanam, an NGO, works for the empowerment of persons with disability. She is a natural athlete and excels in wall climbing. In fact, she won a national-level climbing championship held in Jammu and Kashmir and was selected for representing India in France at an international climbing championship. She is an epitome of hard work who is good at sports and academics. She sought support from Samarthanam to pursue her dreams and aspirations leaving behind a life of poverty and lack of opportunities for education. She is truly an inspiration for the girls with disabilities from rural areas lacking education and career opportunities.

Manu is an astounding boy from a village near Hassan, Karnataka. Deprived of a family, he was brought to Samarthanam in the year 2011. Being physically disabled by birth was another challenge. The need for



▼ Learning at digital library



▼ Class in progress at special school for children with intellectual disabilities



objectives and vision, the target population are people with a range of different disabilities (cognitive, intellectual and other developmental disabilities, mobility, visual, hearing, and mental health disabilities).

Its programme inputs focussed on programme development, implementation and evaluation include input from people with a range of different disabilities and their representatives. All of our development programmes have been designed keeping in view the disabilities and other users, socially, behaviourally, programmatically, in communication, and the physical environment. Samarthanam envisioned the need for innovation that could be applied in many ways to provide mobility for people with physical disabilities, digital education services and communication access in the disabled space.

The present challenge, however, is the lack of awareness and national assistive technology policy within the disability startup ecosystem and a fragmented vision and collaboration among stakeholders. There is growing evidence that the estimated one billion people with disabilities face attitudinal, physical and institutional barriers that result in multi-dimensional poverty, exclusion and marginalisation. Disability inclusion could increase earnings, tax revenues, and individual and societal wellbeing. It need not be costly or complicated. Inclusive approaches are more cost-effective than piecemeal disability interventions.

Going beyond barriers and taking a leap in the field of technology, Samarthanam, with its existing expertise, domain knowledge and market reach, complemented by a team of tech mentors, is setting up India's First Disability Focused Accelerator (Assistive Technology Accelerator) that will facilitate a disability-focused ecosystem around startups focussing on providing access to the disabled community and also thereby nurturing startups to develop and scale technology solutions that will enable persons with disability to access assistive devices. This assistive technology accelerator will hugely benefit people with disabilities and can have a positive impact with increased access to assistive services, higher chances of education and employment while reducing healthcare costs and offer opportunities for improved decision making and socioeconomic benefits. Assistive technologies and inclusion can enable people to live healthy, productive, independent and dignified lives. ■

▼ Persons with disability learning skills at Livelihood Resource Centre being run by Samarthanam



▼ Persons with disability performing cultural programme



MESSAGE FROM THE BORDERS: EQUITY OF ALTERNATIVES

It is about the families and their children living in extreme poverty denied of basic livelihood, health facilities, education facilities and infrastructures. As we struggle to have the facilities to get basic learning competencies in the region whereas in the other parts of the country, the discussion is going on about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), artificial intelligence and alternative education, what can be the way forward?

As an educator working in the region affected with armed conflict, ethnic violence and drug overflow due to the porous border along the golden

triangle, the challenges get harder day by day with privatisation of education gaining steam every other day.

The region is facing a learning crisis with thousands of children reaching the phase of adulthood without even the most basic competencies with very low learning levels. For our students to learn we need good teachers as well but the system we are in pays very little attention to what teachers know. What they are teaching in the

classrooms or are they even showing up regularly.

However, there are many dedicated and passionate teachers with all the challenges who are enriching and transforming the lives of the students. They defy the odds and make learning happen with passion, creativity and determination but how many such underdog stories are we fortunate to have?

RREA is providing space to women and children to dream through education intervention in more than 40 villages in North East

Mathanmi Hungyo





▲ Focus on education

Do we have equity in the alternatives that we as students, parents and educators in comparison with other regions of the country?

As we strive and propose to build quality education in our region with no alternatives except the depleted government schools in the borders, it requires building alternative systems that can deliver learning day after day. There has to be a strong commitment through the policies as well as through the political will and the ability to effectively implement the policies.

There is a rapid technological shift with a crucial role in the learning process and methodology to better manage classrooms and other challenges. The schools of the future are being built in many parts of the country and the world with innovation labs and alternative education model being tested out to deliver quality learning, including socio-emotional and digital skills.

The world is moving forward and waits for no one yet our students

are struggling for basic classrooms, teachers, toilets, electricity and books with very low learning levels. We are having dedicated focus on children identified at-risk and monitoring the learning level assessments (LLA) of the diverse students in the class to assess their basic academic competencies in reading, writing and analytical skills.

Three years back, we started Recognise, Rise and Empower Association (RREA) to provide a small space for our women and children to dream and now we have intervention in more than 40 villages and around 2,000 students in the region in the smallest way possible.

However, as we struggle to have the facilities to get basic learning competencies in the region, as we face the learning crisis with thousands of children reaching the phase of adulthood without even the most basic competencies and very low learning levels, we are working with the most immediate need currently such as:

- To bridge classes for identified children in school hours to solely focus on their learning gaps. This would enable them to achieve age-appropriate learning milestones. This would help them cope up with classroom curriculum in school.
- To enable each school to have a school customised plan to support their group of children who are low in learning levels. The school customised plan can be made in consultation with the school teachers and parents to make it more effective.
- Conducting teachers training on the creative teaching methods/ alternative pedagogy to teach children who are poor at their learning levels. The traditional

mode of teaching might not prove effective with these children, so teaching aspects need to be modified to make it more fun and playful. Games, storytelling, storybooks, music or arts could be used as alternative mediums for such children.

- One of the provisions in the RTE Act provides for the arrangement of bridge classes for children who are identified weak in their learning levels. Thus, supporting government schools in the realm of RTE is one of the major intervention areas of RREA.
- Peer-Group learning – Each group of weak children can be made to sit with a few children who are well-equipped in their academic

competencies. This would help in reducing the learning gaps as they sit and work together.

This investment requires patience and persistence and it will take a generation to understand the importance and benefits of high quality teachers, engaged and prepared learners, effective use of technology and improved management of school systems. The border remembers the challenges they have ahead of us, yet the determination and strength is the source of us moving forward. We don't have any alternatives other than to have an education system of under-resourced facilities.

Our message from the borders is that we are watching, we are listening, and

we understand and if it continues like this with lack of intent for our development in every aspect then our future generations might never be able to forgive us for this injustice.

The society we aspire to live in should not be a world filled with violence, hatred, inequality, education inequity, broken system and under development but it should be a world where there is peace, love, progress, justice, equality and development in all spheres of life. Education will play a crucial role to achieve this dream and we need our students to have quality education to also enable them to tackle the climate crisis that is threatening our existence.■

(Mathanmi Hungyo is the Director of Recognise, Rise and Empower Association, a non-profit organisation based in Manipur)

▼ Women discussing their issues





CASA is a humanitarian and development organisation established in 1947 to serve the needs of the victims of violence and displacement during Indo-Pak partition

Development is about improving the well-being of every individual in society so they can reach their full potential. The success of society is linked to the well-being of each and every citizen.

Social development means investing in people. It requires the removal of barriers so that all citizens can journey towards their dreams with confidence and dignity. It is about refusing to accept that people who live in poverty will always be poor. It is about helping

people so they can move forward on their path to self-sufficiency.

People normally live in poverty because they live in social, political and economic systems that deny them access to the resources they need to improve their well-being. This has significant implications for how we work with poor communities.

Development process is complex than a simple lack of material things, CASA work focuses on community development. That is, we do not simply provide people living in poverty with material goods they lack but work to help people living in poverty transform the systems in which they live so that they are able to access and utilise the resources they need to lift themselves out of poverty.

CASA's Social action basically has to do with life – life in its fullness or wholeness. It deal with ALL of life and Whole of life for everybody particularly the least, the last and the lost in socio-economic-political terms. We work for most marginalised rural communities basically Dalits, Adivasis, women and children, who do not enjoy life – life in its fullness or wholeness.

CASA is operational through its programme in 26 states across India, covering 10,505+ villages and focus of our work is on education, skill training, health, livelihood, women empowerment, climate change and humanitarian aid.

For thousands of underprivileged children in India, access to quality education, healthcare and nutrition is a far-fetched reality. But these special

People Helping People

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children deserve the right to enjoy a playful childhood and not work in harmful conditions. All they need is just a support. CASA runs Bridge Schools and Skill training Centres, especially for school dropout children and youth. Through our intervention, we liberate school dropout students involved in child labour and help them to complete their education and provide them soft skills.

Domestic violence, lesser involvement in decision-making, dowry, female foeticide, illiteracy, lack of health awareness, pay disparity and trafficking into forced labor and sex slavery are some of the major challenges that are being faced by women in India, especially the ones living in rural parts. Poverty is deeply rooted in our social constructs that adversely impacts a woman's economic status. Development within any society cannot be achieved without taking the role of women into account. Women empowerment is cross cutting issue across all programme areas of CASA. We help communities to understand the role of women in development process and empower them to come forward in every aspects of life especially in decision making.

CASA's works toward eliminating Lymphatic Filariasis, LF is an infectious

parasitic disease transmitted by mosquitoes causing permanent or temporary disabilities – mostly on the lower portion of the body. Flies infect human with roundworms in blood stream which further breeds and attack the lymphatic system of the body. The crippling disease is very prevalent in Odisha, West Bengal and other tropical states of India. CASA extensively provides medical care and teaches disease management techniques to its patients.

Agrarian crisis is affecting farmers across India particularly Maharashtra that has been one of the earliest states witnessing the crisis resulting in stress. We came across various reasons which were affecting and leading the farmers to take this extreme step – high debt and lack of institutional credit was among them.

CASA developed a model wherein the farmers – specifically women farmers – could make the most benefit. We took up a pilot project with three villages in Yavatmal district which was reeling under serious drought conditions. We are particularly looking for sustainable livelihood for the communities. We started to develop land-based and water-borne initiatives and support them in various livelihood options through farming and off- farming activities. We gave them the seed

funding and support to help them start various small-scale activities so that they don't have to reel under stress.

Apart from education, health, livelihood and women empowerment, Climate change and Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives are being integrated into CASA's Programme activities to build resilient communities and reduce the impact of climate change on vulnerable sections of societies such as small and marginal farmers, women, and manual labourers.

Since its inception CASA is one of the early responders to major disasters in the country. We reach the most remote parts of the disaster-hit regions where relief might not reach on time due to connectivity barriers. CASA's immediate relief operation makes sure that basic necessities for survival like food, dry ration, clean drinking water, temporary shelters and other utilities reach people at the time of disaster. CASA also believes in rehabilitating and building capacities (subject to fund availability) of the communities, helping them to start life afresh. ■

(Contribution by CASA for The Good Sight)

WORKING TOGETHER TO BRING DIGNITY IN LIVES

Wider outreach of CASA in the form of community - partner organisations and their networks and forums - enable the organisation to fulfill its mission of serving the people in distress and remain relevant in the changing context. All the projects of CASA have been diverted towards Humanitarian Aid and Sustainable Development serving the poor and underprivileged irrespective of their religion, caste, colour and race consideration.



www.casa-india.org



OUR MOTTO

TO CARE
TO BRING AWARENESS
TO SERVE
TO PROMOTE ACTION

OUR REACH

CASA's registered headquarters is located in New Delhi. We have three zonal offices in Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai from where our country-wide programmes are implemented and monitored by more than 220 employees. We work in more than 10,505 villages. Around 500+ organisations work as our partners in 26 states in India. We are a member of ACT Alliance.



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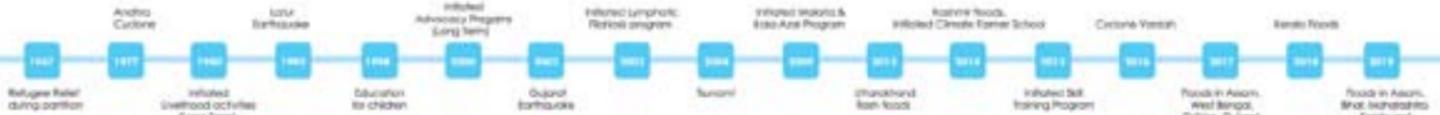
26 STATES

10,505 VILLAGES

500+ PARTNERS

62,48,019 POPULATION

To support our project please reach us at gaurav@casa-india.org



Jaipur Rugs wins Blue Elephant Award

The Koorius Design Awards recognise and honour the most outstanding design work in the Indian visual communications sphere

Jaipur Rugs, a social business that connects rural craftsmanship with global markets through its luxurious handmade carpets, recently won a Blue Elephant at Koorius Awards for the rug Aas Pass designed by weaver Manju. The Koorius Design Awards recognise and honour the most outstanding design work in the Indian visual communications sphere.

This rug is part of the sustainable development initiative called Artisan Originals where weavers get to design their own rug.

▼ Manju, the weaver designer

Manju, the weaver designer uses her surroundings and village life as an inspiration for this rug. She places varied colors of her countryside home in abstract patterns and uses the textures created by covering floors and walls with cow dung as the central design idea. The rug is handmade with leftover hand spun yarn and has 222,184 individual knots.

The Artisan Originals initiative has been introduced by Jaipur Rugs, which taps into the untamed fashion from the villages of India. It experiments with the originality of rural craftsmen to nurture their creative potential, which is unexplored at a global stage. For the first time ever, weavers get to be the designers of their own rugs. Each rug in the collection is a masterpiece for the design inspiration it weaves. It is imbued with the individuality of its artisan evident in unique artistry.

This collection has won numerous awards including the German Design Award, Elle Décor Award, Carpet Design Award (runners up) and the European Product Design Award among others.

Through the Artisan Originals initiative rural men and women who have either had no education or just primary education, have stunned the world with original designs competing with professional designers and mega design houses on the global stage. This one of its kind social innovation has resulted in important transformations in the life of the weavers.

It has renewed their passion for weaving, given them self-confidence and recognition from their own communities. They have discovered

themselves in a way they had never imagined. The project has facilitated the economic transformation of weavers who used to work as mere wage earners.

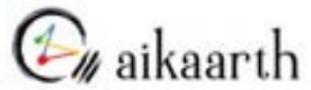
The social business model of Jaipur Rugs connects rural craftsmanship with global markets through its luxurious handmade carpets. It is a family business based out of Jaipur that offers an exclusive range of hand-knotted and hand-woven rugs made using a traditional art form.

The founder, Mr Nand Kishore Chaudhary created a unique business model that provides livelihood to the artisans at their doorstep. This changed the standard practice of involving middlemen to work with artisanal communities.

The company currently has a network of over 40,000 artisans spread across 600 rural Indian villages in five states of India. It has an end-to-end business model, right from sourcing of wool to exporting a finished handmade rug. Reviving the dying art of carpet weaving and creating a sense of bonding and community is at the core of the company's business philosophy. Jaipur Rugs has been working towards bridging the gap between the weaver at the grassroots and the urban consumers.

The modern and eclectic collection of rugs, made using the finest wool and silk, has won numerous global awards and is currently exported to more than 60 countries. ■

All text by Jaipur Rugs Foundation



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