



# **I'M The Change...**

Parables from a Developing World

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*Compiled, Narrated and Edited by*

**Kasturi Das**

**IMT**   
**I'M THE CHANGE**

## **I'M The Change...Parables from a Developing World**

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Compiled, Narrated and Edited by Kasturi Das, Faculty-in-Charge,  
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### **About IMTG**

Established in 1980, Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad (IMTG) is India's premier AACSB accredited management school with a distinct focus on grooming Leadership through Innovation, Execution and Social Responsibility. An autonomous, not-for-profit institute, offering highly sought after postgraduate programmes over the past more than three-and-a-half decades, IMTG has been consistently ranked among the top management institutes of the country. Today, it is the proud alma mater of more than 300 C-suite executives and thousands of professionals serving in leadership positions in the best-known organisations in India and around the world, in key business functions of Sales, Operations, Human Resources, Consulting, Information Technology, Marketing, and Finance among others.



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*To all my students of the 2016-18 Batch of the Two-Year Full-Time PGDM Programme of IMT Ghaziabad...the torch bearers of the I'M The Change Initiative...*

## Deconstructing the Symbol of the I'M The Change Initiative



## Foreword

Tracing back to October 1, 2016, when the entire country was awaiting to observe the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi - the "father of the nation", Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad (IMTG), translated his eternal teaching of "Be the change you want to see in the world" into a three-credit course on Sustainability & Social Responsibility (SSR) for the first year students of IMTG's flagship two-year PGDM Programme from the 2016-18 batch onwards. The objectives of the course are to expose students to how people live, especially the underprivileged, and allow them to experience the 'joy of contribution'.

Having commenced as a part of "I'M the Change" Initiative of IMTG, the beauty of the book lies in the fact that the narratives here portray as to how the students came forward overwhelmingly and took their own initiatives to find innovative solutions to the problems confronting the underprivileged communities, while working with different non-profit bodies and organizations. Not only have the works presented here aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN but they essentially entail the objective of finding solutions to the problems that are embedded in the context of a developing country, which are distinctly different from the developed world.

It would certainly not be an exaggeration if I say that SSR has influenced the future business leaders to understand the nuances of a 'just' society and render the same in their regular day-to-day activities. The book is also a testimony as to how IMTG through its academic curriculum provides its students with opportunities to gain valuable exposure not only to the emerging trends of the industry but also to the lesser trodden areas of our existence. This publication is not just a compilation of projects undertaken as a part of a curriculum. Rather, it's the anchor to showcase the impact created amongst the community by the students of IMTG.

I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to the entire team who made the overwhelming experiences of the students getting transpired into this form.

Happy Reading!

**Dr. Atish Chattopadhyay**  
Director, IMTG

## Preface

The objective of this book is to present short narratives on impactful social projects undertaken by a select set of student groups as part of the Sustainability and Social Responsibility (SSR) course under the aegis of the 'I'M The Change – An Initiative on Sustainability and Social Responsibility' of IMT Ghaziabad (IMTG). Launched on October 1, 2016, on the eve of the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the I'M The Change Initiative is inspired by Gandhiji's vision: "Be the change you want to see in the world".

The 10 projects included in this volume have been selected out of a total of 74 projects that were carried out in this maiden year of the SSR course in different locations in Ghaziabad and elsewhere in Delhi-National Capital Region. The narratives in this volume have been prepared by drawing primarily on the final 'Project Implementation Reports' submitted by the groups. The selection of the projects for this volume has been based on a multi-pronged criteria that included, among other things, the final 'Project Implementation Report'; project deliverables; its execution; innovation, social impact and its sustainability; and stakeholders; feedback (collected in written form as well as through personal interaction in the field and over phone). Each story has been based primarily on the information scattered in the final 'Project Implementation Report', which had to be assimilated to bring out the ground truths and presented here in the form of a coherent story suitable for a wider audience. In addition, in order to help the audience appreciate the context of each story, which is embedded in Indian reality and challenges confronting the under-privileged communities in India, relevant supplementary information have been collected from other primary and secondary sources. Each project has been carefully scrutinised and its nexus with relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations has been depicted at the end of each story. Beyond that reflections by the students on the SSR journey have been included in the form of quotes to indicate the extent to which the experiential learning course has succeeded in achieving its desired learning outcomes! The annexures of the book contain select features on the I'M The Change Initiative by notable external accreditation and other agencies that have taken due cognisance of the novelty

and pedagogical innovation associated with the SSR course. The agencies include the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the United Nations' Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), GreenBiz, among others. Select reflective articles published on the web by the participant students themselves have also been included so as to allow the reader an opportunity to hear right from the horse's mouth.

The SSR course is a three-credit 'required' course that runs for six months for the First Year students of our flagship Two-Year Full Time Post-Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) Programme starting with the 2016-18 Batch. The predominant pedagogy of this course is experiential learning with limited conventional (classroom) learning sessions. Learning takes place through exposure to real-life social issues/challenges/problems, and hands-on execution of identified tasks in a rather unstructured environment with direct interaction with people who are unlike oneself. Students, working in groups, get exposed to situations that allow them to see how people live, especially the underprivileged. Each group then identifies a particular social challenge to be addressed by drawing insights from the field visits and goes on to implement it on ground. The endeavour is to sensitize our students to think about their responsibilities towards the wider society and the environment, looking beyond their narrowly-focused private interests alone, thereby helping them to become better corporate citizens going forward. At the end of the day, the course aspires to enable the students to experience the joy of contribution!

The pedagogy of the SSR course is premised on the "Know-Do-Be" philosophy as envisioned by Prof Srikant Datar in *'Rethinking the MBA: Business Education at a Crossroads'*. The vision underlying the course is on the 'being' component, i.e. to help inculcate values, attitudes, and beliefs that form a manager's world views and professional identities. The main focus of the pedagogy is on the 'doing' component - i.e. hands-on execution of a social project as a member of a team. The course contains only a few in-door sessions which, *inter alia*, include the I'M The Change Talks by leaders and stalwarts noted for their exemplary contribution to the cause of society thus providing the students an opportunity to listen to and interact directly with the real 'change-makers'. The pedagogy also

allows ample scope for students to think creatively and innovatively while identifying and framing problems and while executing the social projects on the ground. The learning strategy is observing and reflecting, doing and reflecting, and recording with a focus on self as well as 'others'. The course is based on the overarching premise that without "doing" skills, "knowing" is of little value, but "doing" skills will be ineffective and direction-less without the self-awareness and reflection on values and beliefs that come from developing "being".

Looking back, I recall it was last week of September, 2016 when I went to meet the municipal commissioner of Ghaziabad for the first time. The SSR course was about to be launched in just a week's time and we were running against time to put the bits and pieces of the implementation framework together. It was clear by that time that some of the projects would have to be implemented in slum areas and we reached out to the district administration to identify some such areas where the projects could possibly be located. The objective was to streamline the process and reduce the search time for the students' groups. The moment I shared with the municipal commissioner that IMTG was launching a course wherein our students would be working on ground with the under-privileged communities, the first thing he asked was whether we would like to collaborate with the municipality for the anti-open defecation campaign under the *Swachh Bharat* Mission (Clean India Mission) of the government. We had just about two days time to gather some 20 odd students, who would be willing to come forward for the 'cause', conceptualize a tailor-made *Nukkad Natak* (street play) and prepare themselves to perform it on ground— something they had never done before! Something I had never done before! The only thing I was sure of was "we have to do it"! In the wee hours of September 25, 18 students from IMT Ghaziabad hit the ground to perform their first ever *Nukkad Natak* in some of the notorious '*jhuggi jhopris*' (slums) situated in the nook and corner of Ghaziabad, where open defecation was part and parcel of everyday life! The entire exercise helped them strike a chord with the community residing in those slums, who came forward to share their concerns and plight with them. That was the 'moment of truth' for these budding leaders through their first encounter with 'how people live' in *Bharat* – the other side of 'emerging India'! The only concern that was haunting them on their way back to IMTG on

that September morning was how could they 'contribute' to make a difference to the lives of those less fortunate people! Before we could even realise, the ball had already started rolling and I had started getting to see glimpses of the path forward to fruition of the core objectives of the course - experiential appreciation of social context and challenges at the 'bottom of the pyramid'!

For execution of the social projects we developed partnerships with several local-level government agencies, and a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on diverse social and developmental challenges confronting India. The idea was that a group of (six) students, working in partnership with an NGO, would be exposed to a situation that would allow them to see how people live, especially the under-privileged. The group would identify a particular social challenge to be addressed and zero in on some specific areas of intervention with a potential for making a meaningful contribution to society by applying their knowledge, skills, aptitudes and innovation. With the identified objectives in view, each students' group would propose an 'Implementation Plan' with concrete deliverables, present it in class-room sessions for faculty and peer-review, implement it on ground, and submit a comprehensive 'Project Implementation Report' at the end, which would again be presented in class-room sessions. We have developed an evaluation framework, which is multi-dimensional and innovative, with a particular focus on partners' and stakeholders' feedback. A unique feature of the implementation model is active involvement of a students' committee, called the Community Outreach & Social Projects (COSP) Committee, in the coordination of the course.

The implementation framework that we developed for the SSR course is a kind of a 'glocal' model: the live social projects that our students have undertaken are in alignment with one or more 'sustainable development goals' (i.e. global); but the social projects are embedded in the Indian reality and are in tune with the development frameworks and policies adopted by the governments in India. The projects are aimed at addressing, at least to the extent possible, some of the challenges confronting the under-privileged communities in India, much of which are case and context-specific (i.e. local).

The social projects were aimed at making a contribution to the lives of the underprivileged in a range of areas including education; women empowerment; marketing/market linkages development for products produced by the communities; skill development (including soft skills); distribution of free medical equipment and winter garments among old and destitute; development of life skills among children through games and play; awareness generation on health and sanitation, child sexual abuse; financial literacy; recycling of waste papers; welfare of rag pickers community, special children and so on.

As part of this course, our students have also been involved in contributing towards some flagship initiatives of the Government of India namely the *Swachh Bharat* Mission (on anti-open-defecation campaign); *Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana* (on skilling rural youth); *Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana* (on financial inclusion); *Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana* (on promoting cleaner cooking fuel) and so on. In collaboration with the local-level government agencies our students also worked with government schools and Missing Children's Homes situated in Ghaziabad.

There were numerous challenges along the way, as we had ventured on something of this sort for the first time! Everything had to be developed right from scratch! But it has been thoroughly a learning experience for us and undoubtedly a truly rewarding journey! I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all my students of the 2016-18 Batch for making the maiden year of the I'M The Change Initiative a grand success!

Thanks are due to my colleague, Dr Anamitra Anurag Danda, Adjunct Associate Professor, IMTG for his wholehearted support in making this journey a rewarding one. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Ravikesh Srivastava, Dean-Academics, IMTG for all his guidance and the unstinted support he has extended at each and every stage in this journey. Thanks to Abhishek Verma, for providing artistic expression to my thoughts to create the beautiful symbol for the I'M The Change Initiative. I am grateful to all my colleagues at IMTG who have contributed in some

way or the other.

I would like to put on record that the many hurdles we confronted along the way could not have been traversed without the support I received from my students in the Community Outreach and Social Projects (COSP) Committee, particularly Ayush (Gupta), Udit (Mathur), Ritam (Bakshi), and Shikharjit (Mitra), who worked relentlessly with me to make it happen!

My sincere gratitude to all our esteemed partners for taking our students through this enriching experience and extending their unconditional support to our Initiative.

Thanks are due to all the 10 SSR groups whose projects have provided the basis of the narratives included in this volume, for their timely inputs despite a very tight timeline.

I am thankful to our Graphic Designer Titiksha (Verma) for depicting the stories in such a beautiful way, although she got very little time to work on the volume. I am grateful to Himanshu (Dandotiya), our Digital Marketing Manager for his unstinted support and encouragement throughout in this journey and for putting his best foot forward in bringing out this volume. Thanks are due to Sumana (Khan), our Corporate Communications Manager for her valued inputs.

Above all, my sincere gratitude to Prof. Atish Chattopadhyay, Director, IMTG for entrusting me with the crucial responsibility of translating his vision into a reality! This volume would not have seen the light of the day but for his constant encouragement and support all through this enriching journey!

**Dr Kasturi Das**  
Faculty in Charge, SSR, IMTG

## Our Partners



**TEACHFORINDIA**

**DMO  
Ghaziabad**



*"A sustainable world means working together to create prosperity for all."*  
- Jacqueline Novogratz

We take pride in our partners, because it is together with them that we could reach out to the ground...

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**Part 1**  
**Towards Sustainable**  
**Livelihoods**  
**of Rural Women**

**Dent in  
Patriarchy!  
A  
Sustainable  
Business  
Model for  
a Women's  
SHG in  
Village  
Galand**

*The Team-Archishman  
Latyan, Adya Jha,  
Nidhi Kumar, Sankalp  
Mohanty, Ankit Sharma,  
Kriti Sharma*



## At a Glance

Worked in partnership with the NGO SADRAG the objective of this project was to develop a sustainable business model for a rural SHG comprising 15 women in Galand Village, district Hapur in the Northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP). The IMT Team - Archishman, Adya, Nidhi, Sankalp, Ankit and Kriti - built capacities of the women regarding real market environment and basics of business; discovered new markets as well as new products with perennial demand for the SHG; got the prototypes of the new products produced through imparting skill training; improved the product quality to make it market-ready through an iterative process involving feedback from potential customers; developed sustainable market linkages for those products, and facilitated a source of finance for them through a nationalized bank and government schemes. The project helped the women in the SHG in getting a sustainable source of livelihood, which would go a long way in making them self-reliant and inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship within them. Going forward, the interventions of IMT students would perhaps also help these under-privileged women in garnering respect from their husbands, family members and local community, in a society that is blatantly dominated by patriarchy!



*Established in 2004, Social and Development Research and Action Group (SADRAG) ([www.sadrag.org](http://www.sadrag.org)) is a non-profit organization working in Delhi and Western Uttar Pradesh in Northern India and in Bangalore in Southern India. It is an action driven organization which aims at delivering programmes for women empowerment, child protection and better community health, among other areas. It is focused on ensuring that women and children meet their basic education, skill development, and health care needs.*

## The Situation

Galand is a remote village located in Hapur district of the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP). According to the Census 2011 data of the Government of India, the village with a geographical area of 703.53 hectares was home to around 10,000 people, with women comprising 47% of the total population. It is here that Archishman, Adya, Nidhi, Sankalp, Ankit and Kriti (SSR Group S34) worked in partnership with the NGO SADRAG towards improving the lives of 15 women members of a Self Help Group (SHG) associated with SADRAG. When the IMT Team met them for the first time, the women were involved in producing various products, such as *diyas* (small oil lamps), candles, petticoats, etc. as commissioned by the NGO. The modus operandi was like this: SADRAG would provide the women with the raw materials and also skill training, as and when needed. Once produced, the NGO would take the products for sale to different parts of Delhi and UP. The profit generated from the sales would be shared between SADRAG and the SHG. There were a lot of socio-cultural issues in the



### Multipronged interventions by the IMT Team in this project

village. Through the interaction with the *Pradhan* (head) of the village it was realized that the society in the village was highly patriarchal, which made upliftment of the women quite difficult. The women in the village were dependent on their spouses for everything. The spouses of most of the SHG members were not aware of the work these women were doing. The women could not inform their family members about the same as they knew that their family members would not like them working outside and would prevent them from doing so. Even the leader of the SHG had not told her husband about her work. In her family only her mother-in-law knew about it

and fortunately was supportive of her work. According to the *Pradhan*, it was a cultural issue, which he could not help! In their venture the women did not have any support from the *gram panchayat* (local self-government organization) either. The *Pradhan* claimed not to be aware of any of the SHGs working in the village! In spite of being the part of the system himself, he blamed the system for the condition of the village as well as the women. Notwithstanding such social pressure, the women in the SHG were quite proud of the work they were doing in association with SADRAG. It gave them immense happiness in taking these steps in the direction of

being financially independent. However, there were several gaps and problem areas which, if addressed well, could go a long way in improving the situation of the women. It was felt by the IMT Team that through their interventions under the SSR project if they could bridge

## of Intervention

**Dependence on products lacking perennial demand:** The SHG women were involved in producing products, such as candles and *diyas*, the demands for which were predominantly seasonal. This

*Self-Help Group (SHG) is a small voluntary association formed by economically homogeneous people in rural India with the objective of improving their livelihoods through collective savings and investments in income-generating activities. SHGs today play a major role in poverty alleviation in rural India. A growing number of poor people (mostly women) in various parts of India are members of SHGs and actively engage in savings and credit (S/C), as well as in other activities (income generation, natural resources management, literacy, child care and nutrition, etc.). The SHG system has proven to be very relevant and effective in offering women the possibility to break poverty. Many NGOs in India are promoting the SHG mechanism and linking it to various other development interventions.*

Source: [www.borjournals.com/a/index.php/jbmsr/article/download/258/pdf](http://www.borjournals.com/a/index.php/jbmsr/article/download/258/pdf)

some of the major gaps and help the women earn more by selling their products, this could help them in gaining respect and support for their work from their family members. This could even encourage other women to join SHGs in future.

made it difficult for the SHG to have a sustained source of livelihood. Hence, an important area requiring intervention, felt the IMT Team, would be to identify some products with year-round demand, which the SHG members would be able to produce without much difficulty.

## Identified Problems/Areas

**Poor quality of products:**



The IMT Team with the women of the SHG in Village Galand



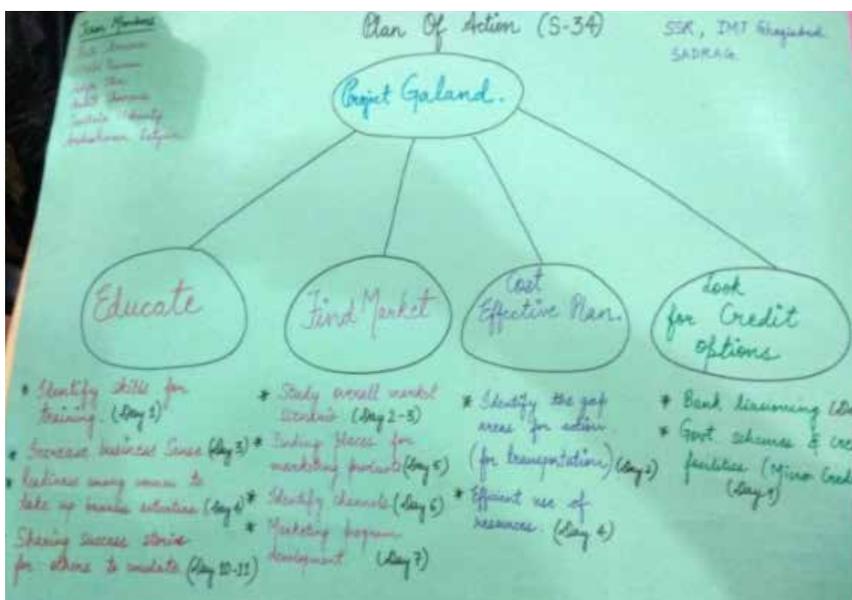
**Diyas- hand-made oil lamps produced by the SHG**

The women did not follow any standard protocols while making their products. As such the products made by them, namely candles and *diyas* were of sub-standard quality and would often have operational defects. Such products are difficult to market because even the small retailers would have access to other suppliers who could offer them better quality products. So, the sub-standard quality of the products was identified by the IMT Team as another major pain point requiring intervention.

**Lack of access to perennial and close-by markets:** Due to the cultural barriers, the SHG women would not venture out in the market on their own

to sell their products. In such a scenario, a major challenge was to find demand for their products in the nearby markets where these women could easily supply their products. Moreover, for sustaining their business, the women would need to establish lasting relations with the buyers. Besides, there were gap areas like transportation where costs could be saved. Establishing sustainable market linkages in the nearby locations was therefore identified as a key area of potential intervention. The main aim of the IMT Team was to make these women self-reliant and possibly enable them to become women entrepreneurs, going forward.

**Lack of business acumen:**



Areas of intervention

Most of the women were uneducated and lacked basic business acumen. They were not even aware of the costs and selling prices of their products. They were completely dependent on SADRAG for all business and financial matters. It was felt by the IMT Team that if these women could gather some basic business sense, it would be a step in the direction of making them self-reliant in the future.

**Lack of awareness about bank loans:** The women did not have any awareness about the government schemes and the loan facilities available in the banks. This was also identified as another area of potential intervention.

## Execution and Delivery

**Identified gaps requiring intervention:** Interviewed the SADRAG Point of Contact (POC), SHG members, village Pradhan and potential buyers (retailers). Analyzed the business process to identify gaps.

**Helped in developing business acumen of the women:** Enhanced business sense and readiness among

the SHG women to take up business activities. Found places for marketing products and educated the women about operational excellence.

**Undertook market survey and analysis:** Visited, along with the SHG leader and the SADRAG POC, local and nearby markets; surveyed the prevailing conditions and found new opportunities.

**Identified potential products with perennial demand:** Paper plates, paper bags and cotton wicks were identified as key products that could be sold in the market throughout the year and could also be made by the SHG women.

**Identified skills requiring training:** Interviewed SHG members, SADRAG POC and local community members to identify the skills that needed to be honed with respect to the identified business opportunities.

**Helped in skill building:** Built the capacity of the women in acquiring the skillsets identified. Showed the women DIY (Do It Yourself) videos and discussed with them and the SADRAG POC the feasibility of making the products shown in the videos.



The SHG leader's first direct exposure to market, with support of the IMT Team

**Created prototypes, improved quality through iteration, and developed market linkages:** The IMT Team surveyed five different markets across Ghaziabad and were able to get shopkeepers to purchase from the SHG, pending approval of product quality. These products were cotton wicks, and paper bags used for gifts.

With collaborative efforts the

IMT Team got prototypes of the new products created by the SHG; revisited the market with samples of the products; identified potential customers for the products; obtained market feedback about the quality of the products and shared it with the SHG members. The women from the SHG were not aware of the professionalism required in the form of efficiency and quality required to be delivered. Hence, the quality of the products



The IMT Team busy doing market survey



The IMT Team showing DIY videos at a *Chaupal* in Galand

that were provided to the IMT Team for selling in the markets did not find any takers. As per market feedback, each and every product made by the SHG required a great deal of quality improvement in order for it to be sold. For solving this fundamental problem the IMT Team undertook a series of discussions with the women at different stages. They even held a *Chaupal* (village meeting) where they explained the quality expected in the market. The Team collected samples from various dealers in the market for demonstrating to the SHG women the quality that was warranted and thus helped them improve the quality. This

triggered a chain of iterative processes wherein the IMT Team would take improved products to the markets and the shopkeepers would ask for further improvements. Although this process generated slight tension among the SHG women initially, eventually it improved their skills and understanding and finally their products started meeting market standards. This helped the Team in getting some concrete orders for the SHG and developing market linkages for the products. Finally, the shopkeepers were quite impressed with the improvements in product quality and appreciated the efforts



Mission accomplished! Transformed quality of the petticoats

made by the women. The IMT Team also helped the women understand the terms and conditions of the orders being placed by the shopkeepers. By the time the SSR project got over, the women at the SHG had already started executing the orders brought to them by the Team according to the requisite quality and specification.

**Increased operational efficiency and sensitized the women about cost-effective production:** The work done by the IMT Team helped in improving the operational efficiency of the business model of the SHG. Earlier a large chunk of the cost was incurred on transportation of the products to the markets located in

different parts of Delhi and UP. The IMT Team helped addressing this problem by suggesting cheaper modes of transportation and by getting deals from the nearby markets rather than from distant markets. The Team also sensitized the SHG women about importance of cost-effective production. This realization came when the highest negotiated price with the shopkeepers would be lower than what was profitable for the SHG. Initially the women's notion was that it was the negotiation that had to be improved. However, soon they realized that in order to be able to compete in the market, they had to control their production cost.

### **Liaised with banks and local administration to help process loans:**

Disposable plates were identified as a product that the SHG women could produce, if the requisite machine was available. The IMT Team found that the cost of such a machine ranges between INR 40,000 and INR 70,000 (\$616 and \$1077, respectively @ \$1=INR65) depending on the size of the disposable plates. The only way the SHG could get hold of such a machine was through bank loans. The Team visited the Galand branch of the Punjab National Bank – a nationalized bank in India and explored with the bank officials the ways and means of getting a loan sanctioned for the SHG. It was learnt that there was a government scheme through which these women could get a loan of up to INR 1,00,000 (\$1539). The application of this loan had to be processed through the Block Development Officer (BDO). Next, the Team visited the BDO office at Dhaulana to get the loan processing initiated. However, the process could not be started immediately owing to the code of conduct for the impending election in UP. Though the Team could not complete the processing of the loan till their SSR project got over, they did

introduce the SHG women and the SADRAG POC to the BDO office and explained them how to take the process forward.

### **Captured success stories:**

The IMT Team captured success stories of the women members of the SHG, which could be shared with other women in the village for encouragement and inspiration.

**“All our deliverables were aimed at making the SHG self-sufficient and sustainable, thereby making the women self-reliant and financially empowered.”**  
– IMT Team

### **Impact**

Through their interventions under the SSR project the IMT Team did succeed in creating

IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
<b>BEFORE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SHG group dependent only on <i>diyas</i>.</li><li>• No idea of the loan facilities available</li><li>• Exploration of skill set limited</li><li>• Operational inefficiencies</li><li>• Product inefficiency</li><li>• No proper market</li><li>• Financial dependence on the NGO</li></ul>	<b>AFTER</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SHG group learned new skill sets through tutorial videos</li><li>• Operational inefficiencies removed</li><li>• New markets and new orders</li><li>• Loan facility for a new machine (for disposable plates) in progress</li><li>• Capacity building in the direction of financial independence</li><li>• More confidence and the motivation is clearly visible</li><li>• Significant improvement in product</li></ul>

multi-pronged impact on the lives of the 15 women members of the SHG in Village Galand, with potential for sustainability and carry-forward effects.

They succeeded in increasing the awareness among the women about the external market environment and the basics of creating sustainable businesses. Earlier they did not have any meaningful contact with the market and were completely dependent on the NGO SDARAG for all sales and marketing activities. However, this model was not sustainable. For one, SADRAG could only generate some seasonal demand for their products, that too in far-off places which in the process increased transportation costs. It was imperative to sensitize

the SHG women about these issues. The first market visit that Manju - the leader of the SHG- undertook with the IMT Team succeeded in triggering this much-needed change in approach. That was the first time Manju visited the market on behalf of her SHG, without supervision of the NGO, and undertook a survey. This exposure helped the women develop an understanding about the market and motivated them to experiment with production of various new products.

One thing that was an obstacle to progress of the SHG was the members' lack of knowledge about the products they made, their features, uses and quality. They mostly sold their products (e.g. petticoats) in either the



The IMT Team with the SADRAG POC at the bank



The IMT Team with Manju, the SHG leader, at the BDO office

local village market where there was little or no emphasis on quality or in the corporate

environment through SADRAG where their products (e.g. candles) were sold as 'exotic'

ones rather than for their functional benefits. However, to enter the regular market with perennial demand, their products had to meet strict feature, quality and dimensional standards. This is something the IMT Team succeeded in getting done by the women through a painstaking iterative process.

Another significant impact of the IMT Team was in introducing new products to the SHG. By the time the SSR project got over, the women were already making products such as, cotton wicks, paper bags and gifting bags, which they had not made before, that too of market-ready quality. Through the DIY videos shown by the IMT Team disposable paper plates were identified as another category of products, which the SHG could produce in the near future, if the requisite machine could be made available to them.

To facilitate acquiring of the machine, the IMT Team initiated the process of loan application for the SHG with a nationalized bank and relevant government departments. This was a major step, as purchasing the costly machine would not have been possible for the SHG otherwise.

The impacts that the IMT

Team succeeded in creating through their SSR project have the potential for sustainability and carry-forward effects beyond the duration of the project. The market linkages that were converted, for paper bags and cotton wicks, would be sustainable, provided the quality of the products was maintained. The bank loan, if sanctioned, would open up another new product line for the SHG – disposable plates, which would increase their earnings significantly.

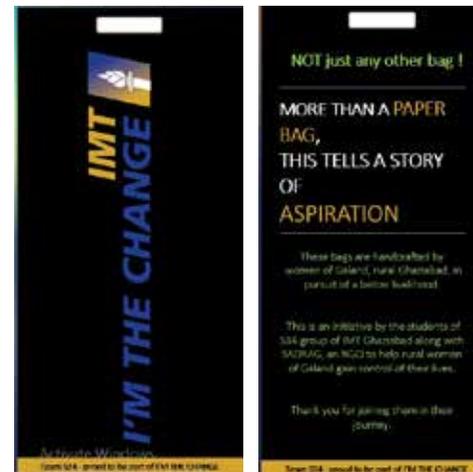
The SSR project has also created spill-over effects beyond the 15 women members of the SHG and their families. Before the project there was no awareness in the village about the working of the SHGs. Even the *Pradhan* of the village claimed ignorance of the existence of the SHGs. On their first visit to Galand the IMT Team held a meeting with the *Pradhan* and tried to convince him to support the Team in their endeavours. The *Pradhan* promised the Team to do whatever he could for successful running of the SHGs in the village. This assurance, alongside the impact created by the SSR group on the women may be expected to help the SHGs in getting greater social acceptance in the village, going forward!

**“We can say with full conviction that the project is sustainable and the people who will make it happen will be the women of the SHG and the NGO SADRAG. Because we have given them a market to operate in, and have shown them the direction for the path ahead. Going forward the SHG can also become independent and work on its own without the help of the NGO.”**  
 – IMT Team

**“Thank you IMTG for giving us the opportunity to work with these under-privileged women! All these moments and memories are special! It was a great experience - something that we will cherish throughout our lives. In the process, we learnt a lot! We became aware of the ground realities and also learnt how to apply our theoretical knowledge practically in real time. It was an experience worth a lifetime!”**  
 – IMT Team



‘The Green Bag’ – a gifting paper bag made to order by the SHG women of Village Galand for the I’M The Change Day, March 22, 2017. It was used by IMTG for creating a kitty of goodies for felicitating the dignitaries and winners in the competition on SSR projects



Two sides of the label created by the IMT Team for the ‘Green Bag’

1 NO POVERTY



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



# Contribution of the Project to SDGs

# **Nandpur Diaries: In Search of an Alternative Livelihood Option for Women**

**The Team-Sravan  
Nekkanti, Anindya  
Sadhu, Sakshi  
Srivastava, Banupriya  
P, Harsh Golyan, Shobhit  
Suman**



## At a Glance

Through their SSR project located in village Nandpur in Hapur district of Uttar Pradesh, the IMT Team – Sravan, Anindya, Sakshi, Banupriya, Harsh and Shobhit - succeeded in finding an alternative source of livelihood of their liking for the village women who hitherto did not have any other option than working as agricultural labourers. Working in partnership with SADRAG, the Team identified a product – petticoat, which had high demand throughout the year, facilitated skilling of the women to enable them to produce the product, developed market linkages for selling the product, managed to bring the product to market standards, and converted one initial order from a wholesaler. In a village where people were averse to forming Self Help Groups (SHGs) through NGOs due to certain unpleasant experience in the past, the IMT Team, through their work, succeeded in bringing back the much-needed trust and three groups of women became willing to form SHGs.

*SADRAG is engaged in a community development programme, 'Life Plus – Vikas Ki Pehal', in partnership with Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages Private Ltd. (HCCBPL), as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives of the company. The main aim of the programme is to create self-sustaining communities with improved quality of life in the neighboring villages of Kakrana, Galand, Poothi and Nandpur in the Hapur district of the state of Uttar Pradesh (UP). The programme has various components. The 'livelihood' component focuses on skilling the local people, particularly the women to help them generate their livelihood; and also on building and strengthening Self Help Groups (SHGs) that promote entrepreneurship among the women on a sustainable basis.*

*Source: <http://sadrags.org/test/corporate-social-responsibility/>*

## The Situation

Nandpur is a village located in Hapur district of the state of Uttar Pradesh. Agriculture is the mainstay of the village economy with the male members of the families predominantly working in the field to run the households. Some women also worked in the field as agricultural labourers. While this kind of work would fetch the women a decent daily wage of around INR 220 (\$3.38 @ \$1=INR65) per day, the work was laborious. Moreover, the women did not like leaving their homes for working on the field and were therefore not content with their work. They were keen to explore options, which would allow them to earn money by working from the comfort of their homes, and were even ready to accept a little less earning for such options. The rest of the women, who were homemakers, were relatively free. They also were keen to earn at least some amount of money so that they did not have to depend on their husbands for fulfilling their day-to-day small needs.

Sravan, Anindya, Sakshi, Banupriya, Harsh and Shobhit (SSR Group S38) worked in



**The IMT Team in consultation with the women in Nandpur** village Nandpur in partnership with SADRAG for their 'Life Plus – *Vikas ki Peahal*' Programme. The initial project idea, developed in consultation with SADRAG, was to take steps for setting up Self Help Groups (SHGs) in village Nandpur; and facilitate the creation of sustainable markets for the products made by the SHGs.

## Identified Problems/Areas of Intervention

### *Aversion to SHG formation:*

The idea of the IMT Team initially was to generate awareness about SHGs among the women in Nandpur and then subsequently facilitate the formation of the same in the village. The formation of an SHG posed a challenge in Nandpur, however, since there was an instance long back when another NGO had collected money from the villagers on the pretext of setting up an SHG and then disappeared. This had left a negative perception about NGO-run SHGs in the village. Hence, when the IMT Team approached the women in Nandpur, their proposal of SHG formation under the supervision of SADRAG did



**Visit to Turab Nagar Market by the IMT Team**

not receive the requisite support from the villagers and hence an alternative action plan had to be chalked out by the Team for the women of the village.

### *Finding an alternative source of livelihood for the village women:*

The women in Village Nandpur were quite interested in having an alternative source of livelihood than farming and were keen on working towards that objective. They were also eager to learn new skills, which would help them in becoming self-reliant over time. So, the IMT Team had to identify an alternative source

of livelihood for them, which would allow them to work from their homes as per their own time and convenience, instead of the stipulated fixed time they had to spend on the field as agricultural labourers. This required three things:

- Identification of products, which could be produced by the women
- Providing skill training to them for this purpose
- Developing market linkages for the products.

The Team decided to act as an intermediary initially, connecting the women to the

wholesalers who would be willing to procure the products made by them.

## Execution and Delivery

**Market survey to identify potential products:** The IMT Team undertook a market survey to identify products, which could provide an alternative source of sustainable income to the women in Nandpur. Various products that could be manufactured were identified, such as petticoats, pillow covers, paper bags, and candles. Petticoat was finally identified as the most viable product after an extensive analysis and discussion among the members. This was mainly because petticoat was found to have a year-round high demand in this part of the world where lots of women wear a sari, which requires a petticoat as a necessary accessory. Furthermore, making petticoats requires skills, which could be easily acquired by the women with little training. In fact, the women were quite enthusiastic to learn stitching and readily agreed to make petticoats.

**Skill training:** IMT Team noticed that although the

women had agreed to make petticoats for sale in the market, a majority of women felt under-confident about their own skillset for the purpose of its mass-production. However, a few names were taken by the women themselves who were considered to be a notch above the rest for the job. To tackle this problem the IMT Team arranged for training the women on cutting and stitching of petticoats through the help of SADRAG. This was done in the form of a one day workshop by a team of experts. The workshop was attended by three groups of women from Nandpur.

### **Addressing the problem of the lack of requisite resources:**

The women informed the Team about the availability of only one sewing machine in the village, which could be used for making petticoats and even that machine was not in the best of conditions! The IMT Team could arrange for three sewing machines with the help of SADRAG.

### **Market segmentation and identifying the target segment:**

In order to develop market linkages for the petticoats, the IMT Team undertook a thorough survey of



The IMT Team gaining insights from a wholesaler

certain relevant markets in Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR). Through their market research the Team could decipher that the market for petticoats was divided into three segments: (a) petticoat as a single product but of low/medium quality; (b) petticoat as a complementary product along with a sari; and (c) petticoat as a single product but of high quality. The Team tried to understand the types of customers each of these three market segments catered to. It was important

to focus on a market segment with low competition and medium quality. Hence, they decided to target the second segment, where they thought it would be easier to establish a customer base quickly for the kind of petticoats the women in Nandpur could deliver.

**Persuading the target customers:** A major challenge the IMT Team confronted while trying to tap the wholesalers in the target market for petticoats was that most of them already



The Nandpur SHG women on a mission



Finally! An order for 100 petticoats – being placed by a wholesaler

had tie-ups with organized factories and other village folks for procuring their petticoats. Some of these tie-ups were as old as 20-25 years. Hence, it was difficult to convince the wholesalers to develop fresh tie-ups with the Nandpur women. The Team tried hard to convince those wholesalers, who appeared to be slightly more open to trying new sources of procuring petticoats and finally could manage to convince some such wholesalers, subject to the quality of the products.

**quality to bring it up to market standards:** Initially a few sample petticoats were stitched by the women in Nandpur, which were taken to the target market in Delhi-NCR by the IMT Team. The first few samples, however, were not as per the market standards. The wholesalers pointed out several issues with the petticoats, such as: (a) the stitch was not done properly; (b) the length of the petticoat was too short; (c) the designs were not as per what market demands (the petticoats that were made by the women had four 'kallis' whereas most customers were demanding

**Improving the product**

only three 'kallis' in petticoats); and (d) the finishing of the product was not good enough and lot more improvement was needed. To address these issues, the IMT Team bought samples from the market and showed them to the women in Nandpur to help them understand what kind of improvements had to be made in the product to make it market-ready. This approach finally succeeded in bringing the petticoats up to the market standards.

### **Securing an order... finally!**

After having brought the petticoats to the standards of what market demands, the IMT Team again went back to the target wholesalers. After checking the product quality the wholesaler did agree to place an initial order for 100 petticoats @ INR 78 (\$1.2) each, which marked the successful kick-off of the business model conceptualized by the Team. The women were ecstatic with a sense of achievement when they saw the first order! This strengthened the Nandpur people's confidence in the IMT Team as well as the NGO SADRAG. The new-found enthusiasm and vigour with which the women were now approaching the work was extremely rewarding for the

Team to witness.

### **Success in forming three SHGs:**

The IMT Team started in a scenario wherein the Nandpur villagers were averse to the idea of forming SHGs owing to some prior unpleasant experience. Through their work, the IMT Team was successful in changing this negative perception about NGOs. By the time the SSR visits got over three groups of women in Nandpur became willing to form SHGs.

## **Impact**

The IMT Team succeeded in finding an alternative source of livelihood of their liking for the women of Nandpur, who were hitherto working as agricultural labourers, but were not content with their work. The Team identified a product – petticoat, which had perennial demand, facilitated skilling the women to enable them to produce the product, developed market linkages for selling the product, managed to bring the product up to the market standards, and converted one initial order of 100 petticoats from a wholesaler. This provided enough impetus to the women to work on the business idea and produce good quality,

market-ready petticoats. If they continue to maintain the quality of their product, this model will bring in a sustainable impact on them. By the time the SSR visits got over the women were continuing with their work in the field while working on petticoat-making side-by-side. However, the women were hopeful that going forward the business idea would reap enough earning for them to substitute their agricultural work with this new-found source of livelihood. Moreover, stitching was something the women were happy to do, unlike their existing work as agricultural labourers. The housewives, who were willing to earn at least some money so that they would not have to depend on their husbands completely, were also able to find a way of doing so.

However, in order for this model to reap benefit the quality of the product has to be maintained and improved over time as per market requirements. This may call for skill training and up-gradation on a continual basis. The NGO SADRAG is more than willing to continue with this skill training in the village. This may also create scope for other women in

the village to join in.

The project started with the initial idea that the IMT Team would take steps for setting up Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Village Nandpur; and facilitate the creation of sustainable markets for the products made by the village people. The villagers were initially averse to the idea of forming SHGs through NGOs due to certain unpleasant experience in the past. So the IMT Team had to find alternative ways of working with the women. However, through their work the Team succeeded in bringing back the much-needed trust among the villagers and three groups of women became willing to form SHGs. Hence, the project could finally deliver the way it was initially conceptualized. The IMT Team succeeded in helping SADRAG build a solid foundation in Village Nandpur, which the NGO could utilize to take their work forward. Formation of SHGs could go a long way in opening up newer windows of opportunity for Nandpur women, perhaps helping them to become more empowered and self-reliant over time!

**“We observed a completely different angle of life. We saw different drivers of motivation in life. Village Nandpur will always live in our hearts. We can never forget the old lady who wanted us to help her in her family conflict! The people saw us with hope! This hope did not pressurize us, rather it motivated us and gave us confidence to do something for them. We believe it’s their belief towards us that we could deliver the requisite results.”**  
– IMT Team

**“Life has many aspects. Not everybody is equally fortunate! But people who are, it’s their responsibility towards others. We saw how people co-operate with each other in villages, which has become a rare scene in the fast-paced life in a metro. The kind of harmony we saw among the ‘so-called’ different religions -Hindu and Muslim - in Village Nandpur is one of the key takeaways from our SSR journey!”**  
– IMT Team



**Part 2**  
**Financial Inclusion:**  
**Sensitizing Women,**  
**Greeting Change**

**Against  
the Odds:  
Improving  
Lives at  
Mahipalpur  
'Basti'  
through  
Financial  
Inclusion  
and beyond**



*The Team- Anshuman  
Nandwana, Akhil Gupta,  
Anubhav Goel, Apurv Kansal,  
Anubhav Sharma,  
Dushyant Choudhary*

## At a Glance

Working in an extremely challenging and complex environment, the IMT Team - Anshuman, Akhil, Anubhav, Apurv, Anubhav and Dushyant - tried to do their bit towards improving lives of the people living at the bottom-most stratum of the pyramid in a slum called Mahipalpur *Basti* near the posh colony of Vasant Kunj in South Delhi. The Team succeeded in opening bank accounts for one female member each of around 15 families that hitherto did not have any access to banking facilities, thereby contributing towards financial inclusion as well as women empowerment. For the families with newly opened bank accounts the IMT Team also initiated the process of facilitating access to subsidized LPG connections under the *Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana* Scheme of the Government of India with the aim of improving the health and wellbeing of the families, particularly the women and children, as well as to help the cause of the environment.



*Established in 2004, Lakshyam (<http://www.lakshyam.co.in/>) is a pan-India non-governmental organization that works for the welfare of the disadvantaged communities. It is engaged in a number of social welfare activities including child welfare, health, education and women empowerment.*

## The Situation

Mahipalpur *Basti* located right next to the posh colony of Vasant Kunj in South Delhi is a glaring example of Delhi's ugly underbelly, where a neighbourhood of upwardly-mobile traders and technocrats live side-by-side the *Jhuggi Jhopri* colonies (commonly called JJ colonies in Delhi), i.e. slum clusters, populated by poor, often migrant population– the two-faces of Delhi – a microcosm of India co-existing with *Bharat*. The J-J colonies, spread all over the national capital, consist of shacks made of cardboard, tin, straw and mud, which serve as so-called 'houses' for the poor. Mahipalpur *Basti* is no different! People in this slum cluster are living in abject poverty, without access to even the barest minimum needs, such as food, proper shelter, toilets, or even safe drinking water! There are 150 odd so-called 'houses' that are made of tarpaulin, wood and mud.

There isn't a single brick and mortar house, because the land on which the slum is located is in dispute with three parties, namely the Airport Authority of India, Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and a nearby



**Mahipalpur Basti – Delhi's ugly under-belly**

village. Whenever someone from the slum tried to build a permanent brick and mortar house, someone from among these three parties had damaged or demolished it. That the neighboring localities were not co-operative, also created employment and other difficulties for these people. Political leaders were also disinterested about them, as they did not have voting rights! Given the non-cooperation from all sides, the people in this slum are living with the constant threat of demolition attempts, and disconnection of water and electricity supplies aimed at forcing them out of the area.

While the main source of earning for the majority of the population in this slum is begging, some people are involved in menial jobs, such as car-cleaning, cobbling, etc. Earning obviously is irregular and uncertain and barely enough for survival. Most of the male members are used to drinking alcohol, which consumes a major chunk of their household income. Most of the families have more than five children. Even the small kids are often sent out to beg. For the people living in this slum more children means more hands for begging! Because of high



**The IMT Team at Ground Zero**

birth rate, most of the kids and women in the area are crippled by hunger, malnutrition and frequent diseases. Education for most of these families is nothing less than a luxury! Most of the families do not even have any authorized identification proof necessary for enrollment of the children in formal schools. And those few who do have an authorized identity proof are absolutely clueless about the benefits of the same! Even in those rare instances where the families are interested in educating their children, girls above 12-13 years are not sent to schools because the nearest accessible school is far away from

the slum and the families cannot risk the security of the girls. Due to this, many girls drop out of school after the age of 10.

Working in partnership with the NGO Lakshyam, Anshuman, Akhil, Anubhav, Apurv, Anubhav and Dushyant (SSR Group S51) started with the motive of providing basic education to the underprivileged children living in the slum. After their initial few visits to Ground Zero and in-depth conversations with many slum-dwellers as well as the Point of Contact (POC) from Lakshyam, the Team realized that there were far more pressing concerns for the people

than education which demanded intervention! Moreover, Lakshyam itself had an informal school which was catering to the education of the kids out there,

the NGO POC the IMT Team decided to get bank accounts opened under the *Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana* of the Government of India for at least

**“We met a family which had around 11 children. They stressed that having many children means having many hands for begging and hence better income! What they don’t realize is that, this curbs the development of the kids and leaves them mal-nourished in their early years, which burdens their whole lives.”**  
– IMT Team

at least to an extent. The Team, therefore, decided to primarily focus on addressing some basic necessities of these people by getting them enrolled to some existing government schemes for which they could be eligible, notwithstanding the land dispute, so that their lives could be improved at least to some extent.

## Identified Problems/Areas of Intervention

**Lack of bank accounts:** Most of the families did not have any bank account. After consulting

one female member of a family. This would not only provide direct benefits of the scheme as envisioned by the Government, but could also help the families save some money, which would otherwise have been spent on unnecessary activities, such as drinking, smoking or gambling. The wider vision of the Team was to create a window for the people to avail the benefits under various government schemes targeted at the below poverty line (BPL) families, as most of these schemes are now linked to bank accounts. The Team decided to focus only on female members of the families for opening bank accounts,

as it was thought that this move might eventually help the women becoming more empowered.

### **Lack of clean medium of cooking, causing indoor air pollution and health hazards:**

The people in the slum were burning firewood for cooking. This was causing indoor air pollution, further aggravating the health hazards for the

their exposure to health hazards caused by indoor air pollution. Second, it could go a long way in empowering the women members of the families by improving their health and enabling them to become more productive by distributing their time and energy more efficiently. Third, it could help the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) is the National Mission for Financial Inclusion to ensure access to financial services, namely, Banking/ Savings & Deposit Accounts, Remittance, Credit, Insurance, Pension in an affordable manner. Account can be opened in any bank branch or Business Correspondent (Bank Mitra) outlet. PMJDY accounts are being opened with Zero balance. However, if the account-holder wishes to get cheque book, he/she will have to fulfill minimum balance criteria.

Source: <https://www.pmjdy.gov.in/scheme>

families, particularly the women and the children members. The IMT Team thought that after having opened the bank accounts, they would try to facilitate provision of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connection for them under the *Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana* of the Government of India, which could have multi-pronged benefits. First, it could enable the families use cleaner medium of cooking, thereby reducing

**Lack of water supply:** There was no water supply in the area by the government agencies. Hence, the residents had to buy water at a premium price from the nearby households. Having observed that the people in the slum did not have regular and affordable access to as basic a necessity of life as water, the IMT Team decided to undertake initiatives to facilitate access to free water tanker for the families under the BPL scheme

of the government.

**Lack of data:** Given that there were uncountable problems faced by the people in the *Basti* and there was only as much the IMT Team could do within the short span of the SSR course, they decided (in consultation with the NGO) to carry out a survey of the locality to generate better data about the needs and

order to ensure more efficient utilization of the resources and the limited available time, the IMT Team comprising six people divided themselves into two sub-teams. The idea was that while one sub-team would be in touch with the slum dwellers, the other would reach out to banks and various other agencies to expedite the process. Both sub-teams, however, would work

*“India is home to more than 24 Crore households out of which about 10 Crore households are still deprived of LPG as cooking fuel and have to rely on firewood, coal, dung – cakes etc. as primary source of cooking. The smoke from burning such fuels causes alarming household pollution and adversely affects the health of Women & Children causing several respiratory diseases/ disorders. As per a WHO report, smoke inhaled by women from unclean fuel is equivalent to burning 400 cigarettes in an hour. In addition, women and children have to go through the drudgery of collecting firewood.”*

Source: <http://www.pmujiwalayojana.com/about.html>

mindset of the people, which could help Lakshyam develop appropriate strategies for the slum dwellers going forward.

## Execution and Delivery

The deliverables identified by the IMT Team called for liaising with banks and various other agencies, which was expected to be a time-consuming process. In

in rotation so that each got an exposure to both the worlds.

**Opening of bank accounts under ‘Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana’:** For this first deliverable, the IMT Team visited banks to understand the rules, documents required and procedures to be followed for opening accounts under the *Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana* and explored how these requirements could



The IMT Team filling out forms for opening bank accounts, as the women look on

be fulfilled by the people of Mahipalpur Basti. Alongside, they started engaging with the slum residents to enlighten them about the benefits of having bank accounts. To access benefits of various government schemes, the families required an authorized identity proof and a bank account. The IMT Team made an effort to get *Aadhaar* Cards made for those slum dwellers, who did not have the same. However, the effort failed to succeed, as no more *Aadhaar* card camps were being set up by

the relevant authorities. So, the Team tried to identify families in the slum having valid identity proofs (such as *Aadhaar* Card, Ration Card, PAN Card, etc.). After having convinced these families about the benefits of opening bank accounts, the IMT Team approached the Oriental Bank of Commerce, Rangpuri Branch for opening *Jan-Dhan* bank accounts for those families. The forms for bank accounts were filled by the Team members on behalf of around 50 families, following which they guided

the prospective account holders through the whole process. By the time the SSR project got over, around 15 bank accounts had already been opened in the Oriental Bank of Commerce under the *Jan-Dhan Yojana*.

There were several hurdles that the IMT Team had to overcome in their endeavor to open the bank accounts. A major challenge was to gain the trust of the people in the slum. When

accounts. Another unforeseen challenge cropped up when Mr Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, made the surprise declaration of demonetizing high value currency notes on November 8, 2016. This move left 84% of the currency in circulation out of the system. The IMT Team at that point was in the process of filling in and submitting forms for opening bank accounts. As an aftermath of demonetization, the banks

*In 2015, as many as 358 million Indian women (61%) had bank accounts, up from 281 million (48%) in 2014, the biggest jump for "banked" women among eight South Asian and African countries surveyed by Intermedia, a global consultancy. The survey revealed that more women in India were financially included than ever before, and women closed the gap with men by 4 percentage points, the quickest among all the surveyed countries. According to some analysts, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) has largely been responsible for the growth of financial inclusion in India. Although the programme was not targeted at women, financial inclusion among women has grown at a faster rate than among men under PMJDY. Source: <http://www.indiaspend.com/cover-story/77-million-women-added-to-banking-system-in-1-year-34250>*

the slum dwellers approached the bank with duly filled-in forms, some of the bank officials abused them suspecting that they had stolen the forms! The IMT Team had to intervene to make the bank officials understand the whole scenario, which helped in expediting the process of opening the

were over-burdened with work and opening of new accounts was attached much less priority. Nonetheless, the IMT Team pursued the bank relentlessly and finally succeeded in getting accounts opened for around 15 women. By the time their SSR project got over, these 15 families had already started



As the new bank accounts got opened... a passbook of a newly opened bank account (in the inset)

enjoying the benefits attached to the *Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana*.

**Provision of free water tanker:** For facilitating access to water tanker for the slum dwellers, the IMT Team talked to the Delhi Jal Board (i.e. Delhi Water Board) officials. It was learnt, however, that since the area was disputed and a case was pending in the Delhi High Court on the matter, free water tankers under BPL scheme could not be provided to this slum cluster. This was a major roadblock that the Team confronted.

**Provision of subsidized LPG connection under 'Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana' (PMUY):** For this purpose, the IMT Team first visited the dealers requesting information on PMUY and how to make slum people avail the benefits of the same. The Team came to know that only those families who were included in the BPL List of 2011 census were eligible for the benefit. None of the families in the slum area was in the list as most of them got their BPL Cards after 2011. The IMT Team did not stop there, however. Instead, they reached out to the regional

offices of the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). It was learnt from the regional offices that there was an alternate window available - a provision under which the names of these families could be added to the LPG subsidy beneficiary list, following which the benefits could be made available to them. The IMT Team later visited the regional offices

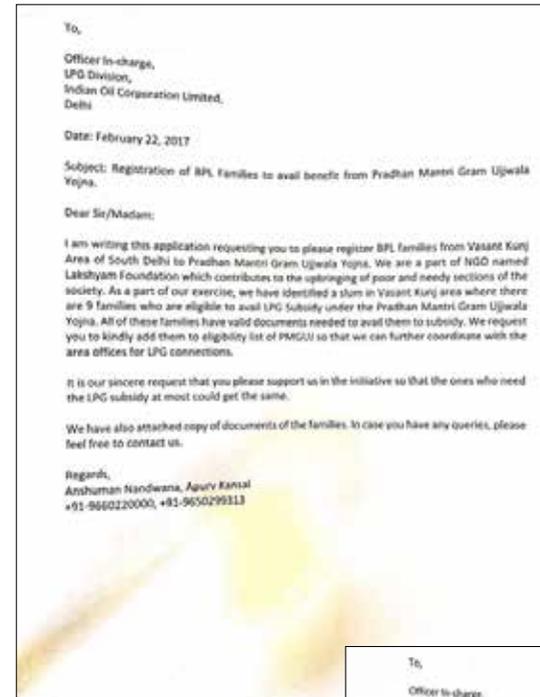
their SSR course so that the process they initiated could reach its logical conclusion and the subsidized LPG connections could be made available to the families in Mahipalpur Basti. However, as it requires government approval to add citizens in the scheme, the process is likely to take some more time to reach fruition!

**Survey of the slum cluster:**

*Launched on 1st May 2016, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) is a social welfare scheme of the Government of India which aims to provide Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connections to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households in the country. The scheme is aimed at replacing the unclean cooking fuels mostly used in the rural India with the clean and more efficient LPG. The key objective is to safeguard the health of women and children by providing them with a clean cooking fuel – LPG, so that they don't have to compromise their health in smoky kitchens or wander in unsafe areas collecting firewood. Towards ensuring women's empowerment, especially in rural India, the connections are issued in the name of women of the households. Identification of the BPL families is being done through Socio Economic Caste Census Data.  
Source: <http://www.pmuujwalayojana.in/>*

with the first set of requisite documents to be verified for this purpose. A few rounds of letters had also been exchanged till the time the SSR project got over. Though the process could not be completed by then, the Team kept following up with the oil companies even beyond

The IMT Team undertook a survey of the slum cluster by interviewing the people with a structured questionnaire. The survey questionnaire contained questions pertaining to demographics, livelihood, economic conditions, education status, and so on. In addition,



**Application submitted by the IMT Team to BPCL and IOCL**



the women members were asked whether they would be interested to learn any skill, such as weaving, pottery etc. The objective of the survey was to help Lakshyam adopt appropriate strategies in the future for the betterment of the

slum dwellers and also provide some skill training to the people, particularly women, enabling them to lead a better life in the future. Around 65 survey questionnaires were filled in by the IMT Team.

**“During the whole execution, we hit many roadblocks but the only thing that kept us going was the ‘Never Give Up’ attitude that we developed in IMT, Ghaziabad. The whole experience was quite enriching, as we learnt that social issues appeared to be small when seen from a distance. But when observed from a real perspective, they go very deep.”**  
– IMT Team

*Studies show that when a woman controls her own finances, she invests in the health, nutrition and education of her family –investments that drive intergenerational improvements and have an exponential effect on the prosperity of communities.*

Source: <https://www.credit-suisse.com/in/en/about-us/responsibility/news-stories/articles/news-and-expertise/2015/10/en/best-way-to-empower-women-let-them-open-a-bank-account.html>

## Impact

The IMT Team succeeded in getting opened around 15 bank accounts under the *Pradhan*

*Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana* of the Government of India, which is aimed at financial inclusion of the underprivileged people. These were all zero-deposit



The IMT Team engaged in undertaking the survey

accounts, which could be used by the families to take advantage of different government schemes. These would also open a window for the families to save some money for the rainy days. Moreover, as the accounts had been opened for one female member of each family, it was likely to help them become more empowered, going forward! The opening of bank accounts is likely to have other spill-over benefits as well. For instance, when the IMT Team got bank accounts opened for the first ten women, many more families also got interested in getting their bank accounts opened. The

Team further enlightened them about the benefits of holding bank accounts. The Team's interventions made people in the slum area more aware about their rights and benefits under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) schemes. They pledged to participate in the next Census Survey of the Government of India and become more involved in other processes.

The IMT Team initiated the process of getting subsidized LPG connection for the families. As and when the process reaches fruition it will have multi-pronged impacts on the families,

particularly the women in terms of their health, wellbeing and empowerment and will also help the environment by reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

The survey undertaken by the IMT Team would help Lakshyam formulate appropriate strategies for the families, including skill training for women, which would help generate longer term impacts on the families in terms of better life and women empowerment. During the survey, the IMT Team observed that there were at least some

people in the slum, even though a handful, who were willing to change the lives of themselves and their children. They were sending their children to schools and working harder so that they could give their children a better life! The women were also working alongside the male members to earn more. Some of the women were very much open to learning new skills to enable them to earn a better living and life. So, there was still a silver lining in the scenario, which otherwise looked rather dark!

**“Change is not easy! But when you see the spark of change in their eyes, you know you had started something good! This was evident as in the beginning these people hesitated talking to us and we needed a mediator to talk but towards the end they came to us themselves. That was the impact our engagement created.”**  
– IMT Team

**Contribution of the Project to SDGs**

**Being  
Financially  
Literate:  
Story of  
Women's  
SHGs in  
Village  
Poothi**

**The Team-Kapil Juneja,  
Jaspreet Singh Bhatia, Parish  
Goyal, Priya Sinha, Sumit  
Agarwal, Abhijeet Harne**



**विवरण पुस्तिका**

**गांव एवं समूह के  
सदस्यों का  
विवरण**

नारी शक्ति पूथी स्वयं सहायता समूह

## At a Glance

This project focused on facilitating financial inclusion of two women's SHGs and enlightening the members about various aspects of financial literacy in a remote village called Poothi, located in Hapur district of Uttar Pradesh (UP). Working in partnership with the NGO SADRAG, the IMT Team - Kapil, Jaspreet, Parish, Priya, Sumit and Abhijeet - streamlined the operation of the SHGs by decentralizing responsibilities and introduced systems of proper book-keeping and documentation, thereby improving the transparency of their operation. The Team succeeded in getting one SHG (called 'Nari Shakti') in Poothi linked with mainstream banking under the SHG-Bank Linkage Programme (SHG-BLP) of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) - the apex development bank of the Government of India. By presenting in front of them some simple, yet impactful micro-business opportunities like incense sticks and paper plates making, the IMT Team also succeeded in persuading the women to start a business venture in due course. If implemented in future, the business ventures could go a long way in making the women self-reliant.

## The Situation

Poothi is a tiny village in Hapur district of Uttar Pradesh, with a population of about 2500 people. The rural community in the village depends mainly on the agricultural income from their farms. The farms are mainly rain-fed, without access to proper irrigation facilities. The seasonal nature of their farming activities and its high exposure to the vagaries of nature leave the income of the households uncertain, limited and variable. In crisis situations, the villagers are left with no other option, but to borrow from the local money lenders, who charge exorbitant interest rates (around 4-5% per month). After repaying the loans taken at such exorbitant rates to money lenders, the families are left with

little money for their livelihood and are often forced to go for more loans. This often leads them into a debt trap.

Patriarchy rules the roost in this remote village, far away from the dazzles of the so-called 'emerging' India. The male members of the family are the sole bread-winners. They are the ones who make all the financial decisions of the family as well as of the village. The women folks, largely confined within the four walls of their homes, are completely dependent on the male members of the family – financially, socially and in all possible respect. The voices of these women never get heard in this part of the world!

With the aim of empowering these rural women and making

*National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) ([www.nabard.org/](http://www.nabard.org/)) is the apex Development Bank set up by the Government of India with a mandate for facilitating credit flow for promotion and development of agriculture, small-scale industries, cottage and village industries, handicrafts and other rural crafts. It also has the mandate to support all other allied economic activities in rural areas, promote integrated and sustainable rural development and secure prosperity of rural areas. In discharging its role as a facilitator for rural prosperity NABARD is entrusted with: providing refinance to lending institutions in rural areas; bringing about or promoting institutional development; and evaluating, monitoring and inspecting the client banks.*

them self-reliant, SADRAG has initiated the creation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Poothi. Presently there are two functional SHGs in the village: 'Nari Shakti' and 'Gayathri'. The SHGs are mainly focused on solidarity lending. Each member of an SHG contributes INR 100 (approximately \$1.5 @ \$1=INR 65) per month, to create a group fund. A needy member of the group is sanctioned a loan from the group fund at an interest rate of 2% per month. The interest income generated from the loan disbursement is shared among the group members. Kapil, Jaspreet, Parish, Priya, Sumit and Abhijeet (SSR Group S37) aimed at improving the lives of the women in these two SHGs through their interventions under their SSR project.

**Savings lying idle:** It was found that the SHGs had accumulated a corpus of around INR 34,000 (approximately \$523) out of which, on an average, only INR 7000-10000 (\$108 - \$154) was lent out, while the rest of the money did not generate any income.

**No division of responsibility:** An SHG, generally, needs to have three roles - accountant, treasurer and secretary. The accountant is responsible

for maintaining the records of all the deposits and loan transactions in all the books. The treasurer is responsible for collection and maintenance of the monthly payments/loan amounts. The secretary is responsible for recording the minutes of the meetings and circulating these among the members. However, in Poothi, though the women in the SHGs were organized in their approach, there was a lack of transparency and sharing of responsibilities. Each SHG was led by a woman, who was playing all the aforesaid three roles, with no division whatsoever of power and responsibilities.

**No proper book-keeping and other documentation:** With one person being responsible for everything, there was no proper book-keeping and documentation of meetings etc. All transactions were maintained on a rough register.

**No existing business model:** Both the SHGs were operating in the form of self-financing groups and the amounts collected were not utilized in any business.

According to NABARD, a Self-Help Group (SHG) is a small, economically homogeneous and affinity group of 10 to 20 poor persons which comes together to

- save small amounts regularly
- mutually agree to contribute to a common fund
- meet their emergency needs
- have collective decision making
- resolve conflicts through collective leadership and mutual discussion
- provide collateral free loans on terms decided by the group at market driven rates.

## Execution and Delivery

In order to gauge the ground realities, the IMT Team started by attending a meeting of one of the two SHGs, 'Nari Shakti', during their first field visit wherein they closely observed the flow and conduct of the meeting. After the meeting the Team interacted with different women in the SHG for assessing the functioning of the SHG.

The IMT Team studied some relevant literature to develop a better understanding about the working of the SHGs, and the socio-cultural factors affecting women empowerment and financial inclusion in India. They juxtaposed these insights in the context of Village Poothi to identify some of the key problems confronting the

women there and the potential areas of the Team's intervention. For exploring possible solutions, the Team undertook research on the available government schemes for SHGs, particularly under NABARD. They discussed with the Point of Contact (POC) of SADRAG about their observations on the functioning of the SHGs in Poothi *vis-à-vis* what was prescribed by the government. The NGO POC also threw light on the functioning of other SHGs supported by SADRAG in other villages around Poothi. This helped the IMT Team to draw a comparative picture, identify the gaps and potential areas of improvement.

Having identified the key problems, the Team listed down all the plausible solutions related to these problems along with their potential benefits to the various stakeholders. They then



**The IMT Team undertaking workshop on financial literacy**



**IMT Team spreading financial literacy**

prioritized the problems so as to achieve the maximum impact on the stakeholders, given the limited time available at hand.

***Educating and sensitizing the women on financial literacy and its benefits:***

In order to start the implementation of the identified solutions, the IMT Team first and foremost had to sensitize and educate their main stakeholders – the women members of the SHG – about financial literacy and how this could help them. They observed that the awareness of financial literacy was grossly inadequate in the village and the practice of good book-keeping was almost absent. All the members in the

SHG did not have the same sort of education, competence and capability in terms of different tasks that were required to be managed for proper functioning of the SHGs such as financial know-how, banking functions, book keeping, managing accounts, preparing minutes of the meetings, etc. During the course of their SSR visits, the IMT Team held a series of counselling and training sessions with the aim of bridging these gaps. In order to ensure that the SHG women appreciated and grasped the benefits of financial literacy and banking, story-telling approach was adopted and an interactive, humorous animated video was shown to the SHG

women. But learnings came slowly and gradually only.

***Division of responsibility:***

The IMT Team decided to focus on decentralization of the responsibilities within an SHG. This would ease the pressure on one person, reduce the chances of fraudulent borrowings and other transactions, and would increase transparency of the operation. The Team's interventions resulted in appointment of different women from among the members as secretary, accountant and treasurer.

***Training the women regarding proper book-***

***keeping and other documentation:***

A big challenge was to convince the SHG women that their current practice of book-keeping was inappropriate. The IMT Team overcame this challenge by educating them the importance and benefits of efficient book-keeping. Earlier no proper book was maintained and all transactions were recorded on a rough register. The Team succeeded in introducing separate registers on member details, minutes of meeting and transaction details to be maintained by the SHGs. Earlier books were managed by only one member – the leader of the SHG. Appointment of different



**The IMT team helping the SHG women in maintaining monthly accounts**

women as secretary, accountant and treasurer created room for separating their documentation roles and responsibilities.

**Linkage with the banks:**

Another major problem was that the SHGs did not store their money, collected every month, in any bank account. Instead, the leader of each SHG would keep the money with herself. The IMT Team identified linking the SHGs to the banking system as an area of intervention, which could have immense impact on the women members on a sustainable basis. Linking the SHG with the banking system would regulate the incumbent solidarity lending

activities within an SHG. This would enhance transparency of the lending activities within the group. In addition, the SHG would be able to reap the benefit of the interest being paid by the banks on the deposited money, thereby adding to the pool of savings. It would also bring the SHG under the purview of the loan facilities provided by the banks under various government schemes. The IMT Team enlightened the women about the benefits of keeping their money in a bank and convinced them to open bank accounts. By the time the SSR visits got over, the 'Nari Shakti' SHG was successfully linked to the banking system

*Based on the observations of various research studies and an action research project carried out by NABARD, the model of SHG-Bank Linkage Programme (SHG-BLP) was launched by NABARD way back in 1992 as a cost effective mechanism for providing financial services to the unreached and underserved poor households. NABARD has been facilitating the implementation of the Programme pan-India with various partner agencies like banks, NGOs, and government agencies. What started as a pilot to link around 500 SHGs of poor to the formal financial institutions during the year 1992-93, has now become the largest microfinance programme in the world, in terms of the client base and outreach.*

by way of opening an account at Canara Bank, a nationalized bank in India. Proper book-keeping that had already been introduced by the Team helped the SHG comply with the KYC (Know Your Customer) requirements of the bank for account opening.

**Identification of potential micro business opportunities for the SHGs:**

The absence of a business model for the SHGs in Poothi was another major gap that was identified. A business opportunity could create employment opportunities for the women, helping them to earn more and creating scope for them to become self-reliant. For this purpose, the IMT Team had to identify some potential business ventures that the women could start without much difficulty and had then to sensitize the women about

starting such ventures. Through market survey, the Team found that there was a huge demand and business potential for items like incense sticks, paper plates and the SHG women could easily make these stuffs. The tougher part was to motivate the women to start a business venture. Initially the women were skeptical and dis-interested. After showing them DIY (Do It Yourself) videos, which made them realize how simple it was to make these items, the IMT Team succeeded in generating confidence in them that they could make these items. This aroused their interests in starting the micro business ventures in due course. But some capital was required upfront to start these businesses, which could be acquired through bank loans for which the 'Nari Shakti' SHG could apply after six months of proper operation of the bank



The IMT Team explaining the women some of the business ideas that could be implemented

account.

operations.

## Impact

Through their SSR project the IMT Team succeeded in sensitizing the women in the two SHGs in village Poothi on the importance of financial literacy and its potential benefits for them. The Team streamlined the operation of the SHGs by decentralizing responsibilities and introduced systems of proper book-keeping and documentation. All this will have lasting impacts on the SHGs in terms of transparency of

The biggest achievement of the Team was getting one SHG linked with mainstream banking. This would enable the SHG to earn some money out of the savings, which was hitherto lying idle with the leader of the SHG. This would also open an opportunity for the SHG to get loans from the bank in future and avail the facilities of various other government schemes which are now linked with bank accounts. The linkage with bank will also help SADRAG in monitoring the functioning of the SHG with better vigilance.



The IMT Team with the women of Poothi village and the SADRAG POC in front of the Canara Bank

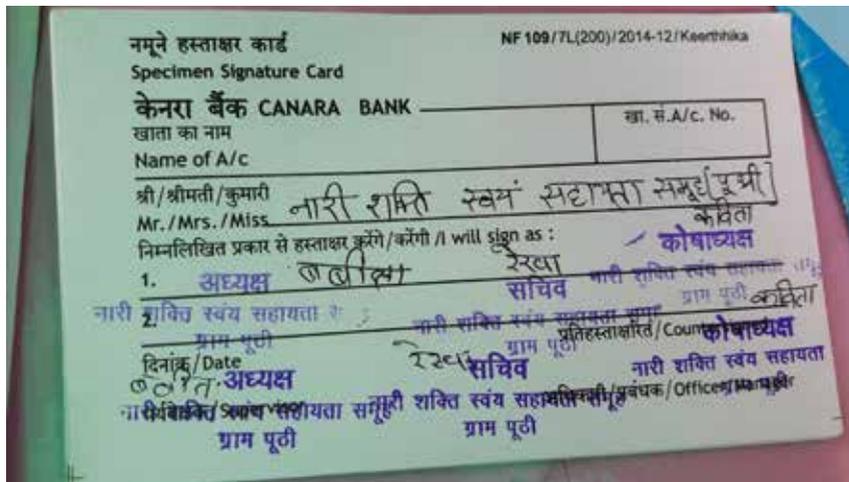
By presenting in front of them some simple, yet impactful micro business opportunities, the IMT Team also succeeded in persuading the women to start a business venture in due course. The initial capital could be obtained through bank loans provided the SHG that got linked to the bank maintained its account properly for six months. If implemented in future, the sustainable business ventures could go a long way in making the women self-reliant. This could perhaps also help them in garnering the much-deserved respect in their families and society at large, which is blatantly dominated by patriarchy.

“**The most pressing issue in rural area is the lack of awareness about various government schemes launched for their benefits. We recommend more engaging and dense campaigning of the schemes.**”  
- IMT Team

The impact of the SSR project is likely to go way beyond the duration of the project. First, although out of the two SHGs in Poothi only one could be linked to the banking system within the short time span of the SSR visits, yet the knowledge gained in the process, particularly in terms of complying with the KYC requirements of the banks would help the other SHG to open its own bank account in future, perhaps with little support from SADRAG. Second, the Team succeeded, through word of mouth publicity, in

getting some women from outside the SHGs to attend the sessions on financial literacy. This was aimed at sensitizing them and encouraging them to participate in the SHGs. If the identified business opportunities are successfully implemented by the 'Nari Shakti' SHG then this may encourage more women in the community to be part of an SHG. During the advanced stage of the SSR project, three women of the Poothi village actually had shown interest in joining the SHG.

“While working on SHG bank account initiation, we faced red tapes that we believe are unnecessary. Hassle-free service should be provided by banks in this regard. Accountability at the bank's end is also an important concern to highlight.”  
 – IMT Team



The specimen signature card of the newly opened bank account of the 'Nari Shakti' SHG, with three different women signing as the secretary, treasurer and accountant

1 NO POVERTY



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



# Contribution of the Project to SDGs

**Part 3**  
**Educating Children,**  
**Ensuring Future**



**'Masti ki  
Paathshala':  
Invigorating  
a Pre-  
primary  
School in  
Village  
Kakrana**

*The Team-Piyanshu Agrawal,  
Rishita Agarwal, Shaunak  
Pathak, Abhilash Mankar, Sahil  
Mehta, Shivam Aggarwal*

## At a Glance

The IMT Team - Piyanshu, Rishita, Shaunak, Abhilash, Sahil and Shivam - worked towards reinvigorating a *Balwadi* (pre-primary school) run by the NGO SADRAG in Village Kakrana, located in district Hapur in Uttar Pradesh (UP). By spreading awareness about the importance of pre-primary education through community mobilization drives in the village, the IMT Team succeeded in increasing enrollment in the *Balwadi* from 18 to 25. They also experimented with various innovative pedagogies to make learning a fun-filled experience for the kids and trained the teacher about those innovative methods of teaching, with the aim of aiding improved learning for the kids going forward. The Team also provided a list of suggestions to SADRAG towards improving the infrastructure and operational efficiency of the *Balwadi* in a cost-effective manner.



*Established in 2004, Social and Development Research and Action Group (SADRAG) ([www.sadrag.org](http://www.sadrag.org)) is a non-profit organization working in Delhi and Western Uttar Pradesh in Northern India and in Bangalore in Southern India. It is an action driven organization which aims at delivering programmes for women empowerment, child protection and better community health, among other areas. It is focused on ensuring that women and children meet their basic education, skill development, and health care needs.*

## The Situation

SADRAG is engaged in a community development programme, 'Life Plus – *Vikas Ki Pehal*', in partnership with Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages Private Ltd (HCCBPL), which is the largest bottling partner of The Coca Cola Company in India. The programme, launched in March 2010, as the corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative of HCCBPL is operational in four near-by rural villages, namely Kakrana, Galand, Poothi and Nandpur spread over Dasna block in Hapur district of Uttar Pradesh (UP). The main objective of the Programme is to improve the quality of life of the people in these four villages. Among other things under the Programme, SADRAG, in association with HCCBPL, has been engaged in setting up '*Balwadis*' in the four villages. A *Balwadi* refers to a pre-primary school run for economically weaker sections of the society in India. Currently a total of six *Balwadis* with around 170 kids are operational in the four villages. The primary aim of the *Balwadi* initiative is to facilitate the mainstreaming of the children to village schools. Till date, a total of 155 Children have been mainstreamed.



Village Kakrana



The IMT Team entering the village

Another key objective of *Balwadis* is to provide a joyful learning environment - full of fun, games and other interesting activities for the village toddlers from underprivileged communities in the age group of 3 to 6 years, which would otherwise not be available to them. Piyanshu, Rishita, Shaunak, Abhilash, Sahil and Shivam (SSR Group S41) worked with the Balwadi located in village Kakrana with the main aim of increasing enrollment of students in this pre-primary school.

Government of India, the total geographical area of Kakrana is 452 hectares; with around 660 households comprising a population size of around 3,700 people. The village had a literacy rate of about 64%, as per the 2011 census. The village has two private schools (Class I-X) and one government school (Class I-VIII), with an enrollment of around 700 and 150 students, respectively. Many children also attend private schools located in Dhaulana, which is a Tehsil located near the village.

According to Census 2011 of the

To understand the scenario (the baseline) the IMT Team spent



The *Balwadi* - as it looks from outside

their initial field visit days in visiting the *Balwadi*, interacting with several relevant people and undertaking a survey of the village.

They spoke to the caretaker and the teacher of the *Balwadi* to get some insights about the functioning of the *Balwadi* and other relevant details, such as the number of the children enrolled there. This interaction also helped the Team to develop a basic understanding about the village population and especially the children. It was learnt that there were around 18 children who were enrolled

with the *Balwadi* and were attending the classes regularly. Occasionally, the classes were also attended by a few students who were not enrolled officially with the *Balwadi*. The timing of the classroom sessions in the *Balwadi* was 9 AM to 12 noon. The students in the *Balwadi* were provided with free stationery, books and other learning materials to facilitate their education.

An ice-breaking session with the kids in the *Balwadi* was also undertaken in order to assess the level of their knowledge. It was observed that the children



The IMT Team with the toddlers inside the *Balwadi*

were well versed with the basics. They were quite fluent with the alphabets, both in English and Hindi. They were proficient in identifying fruits, vegetables, animals etc. from pictorial charts, and were also adept at counting numbers. They were excellent at reciting nursery rhymes too.

The IMT Team also visited the village and interacted with the *Sarpanch* (the elected head of *Panchayat* - a village-level statutory institution of local self-governance in India) of the village. This interaction helped the Team in gaining important

insights regarding the issues plaguing the education system in the village. It also helped them to understand the various issues and problems prevailing in the government school located in Kakrana. They also visited the government school to gather information on the demographics of the village.

### Identified Problems/Areas of Intervention

- Most of the people in the village did not value the

education provided in the *Balwadi*, since it was provided for 'free'.

- Majority of the families preferred to send their children to the government school. However, this was not because of their intention to provide quality education to their children, but for other factors, such as mid-day meal facility; free uniform; and scholarship awarded on the basis of merit, popularly known as *Wazifa*.
- Most of the families were of the view that since they could afford to send their children to private schools, so there was no need to send their children to *Balwadi*.
- The caste system prevailing in the village was also a major reason underlying the aforesaid trends, as higher caste children were generally sent to private schools, while the lower caste children were sent to the government school.
- The government school as also the private schools located in the village, however, started from Class I. This resulted in valuable time being wasted for the children. They did not get exposed to any prior

education, which would provide them the much-needed foundation before joining Class I. Consequently, the learning of the children also suffered when they joined the government or private schools.

- Most of the families in the village were dependent on agriculture. The children were also made to work on the fields, especially during the sowing and harvesting seasons. This affected almost four months of their education every year.
- Against this backdrop, both the enrollment of the kids in the *Balwadi* as well as the regularity of the attendance of the enrolled kids were major areas of concern. Only about 18 students attended the classes regularly, while some children, who were not officially enrolled, attended classes only occasionally.
- Another area of concern was the high rate of drop-out in the *Balwadi*, with many children dropping out after attending classes only for a few days.

Though beyond the scope of their intervention in the SSR project, through their primary research the IMT

Team also identified the following problems regarding the government school in the village:

- The books were not provided to the students by the government for the ongoing academic year. Hence, the whole syllabus of the First Term was covered by the teachers only orally, which hampered the learning of the students.
- The teachers of the government school were often given additional responsibilities such as, census duty, which reduced the time available for the students.
- The criterion used by the government school in determining whether a child had reached the requisite age of six years was inappropriate.
- The 'No-Fail' policy applicable up to Class VIII had made students complacent about their studies.

The IMT Team started their project by undertaking a thorough assessment of the existing scenario – the baseline – by undertaking primary survey of the *Balwadi* and the community; and interacting with some relevant people.

To take stock of the scenario in the *Balwadi*, the Team collected quantitative data regarding the attendance of the children in the *Balwadi*, as it was this number that they targeted to increase through their SSR project. This was done by checking the attendance register. This provided them the quantitative data, while the qualitative factors having an influence on the quantitative data were obtained from primary survey and personal interviews of certain key stakeholders.

The Team observed the place and the facilities available at the *Balwadi* and also undertook an ice-breaking session with the children to understand the level of their knowledge and the quality of teaching delivered at the *Balwadi*. They asked them some basic questions like counting and the alphabets in both English and Hindi. Initially the children were a bit hesitant in interacting with the IMT

## Execution and Delivery

### *Understanding the baseline:*



Community mobilization by the IMT Team

Team as they were strangers to them, but later on volunteered for the task when offered sweets. The Team was satisfied with the level of knowledge of the kids.

They interacted with the *Sarpanch* and the local government school authorities to gather understanding about the issues on ground.

They undertook a thorough survey of the community to collect data on demographics of the population, their mindsets and viewpoints particularly about education, and other relevant parameters.

**Undertaking household surveys for increasing enrollment in the *Balwadi* and gathering feedback:**

The prime objective of this project was to increase the enrollment in the *Balwadi*. This was attempted in various ways. First, the Team undertook a door-to-door household survey in the village, during which they visited two categories of houses: (a) those of the families whose children were attending the *Balwadi* on a regular basis; and (b) other houses from which children were not coming to the *Balwadi*. While surveying the first category of houses

the Team tried to find out the reasons as to why the parents were sending their kids to the *Balwadi* regularly and take any other feedback on the *Balwadi* with the aim of further improvement. The parents were, in general, happy with the quality of education being provided at the *Balwadi* and told that their children were quite active because of the learning they received at the *Balwadi*. However, there were some small issues, such as lack of timely delivery of basic resources to the *Balwadi*. From among the second category of houses, i.e. of those families from where kids were not enrolled to the *Balwadi*, the IMT Team tried to identify the children of 3 to 6 years of age who could potentially be enrolled and tried to persuade their families to send these children to the *Balwadi*. The Team tried to make the families aware of the importance of pre-primary education and enlighten them as to how it was important for the child's personal and social development. The understanding gathered from the families whose kids were regular attendees to the *Balwadi* was also used to convince others to follow suit.

The perseverance of the IMT



The kids watching the *Panchatantra* stories on a laptop

Team paid off as by the time the SSR visits got over, the enrollment in the *Balwadi* in Kakranahad increased from 18 to 25.

**Making learning at the *Balwadi* more fun-filled and interesting:** Kids learn best when they are having fun and are actively engaged as they observe more. Lots of research underlines the importance of play especially in the early years. Realizing this crucial factor, the IMT Team tried to improve the kids' learning by way of making the environment at the *Balwadi* more fun-filled

for the children by applying certain innovative pedagogies. Hitherto the kids were learning only through books or by oral lessons delivered by their teachers, which is the standard pedagogy followed by most of the schools. The IMT Team experimented with newer approaches. For instance, the kids had earlier only heard the stories of *Panchatantra* (a renowned ancient collection of moral tales and stories in India). The Team used cartoon videos in their own laptops to share the same stories with the kids. This method was completely new to the kids. It increased the

interest and concentration level of the children and they were willing to watch more stories. This innovation helped in better learning. After watching the whole story, the children could remember the story and could bring out the key learning themselves.

**Training of trainers:** The IMT Team also undertook sessions with the teacher at the *Balwadi* and suggested some new and innovative methods for them to facilitate better learning for the kids. They also helped the teacher in making a time table so that all subjects could be covered properly.

**Suggestions on improvement of infrastructure and operational efficiency at the *Balwadi*:** There were certain key areas which needed improvement in the *Balwadi* in terms of infrastructure and operational efficiency so as to enable SADRAG to serve the community better. The IMT Team provided a list of suggestions to the NGO towards this end. For instance, one feedback received from the parents of the kids who were attending the *Balwadi* regularly was that some basic resources required by the kids were not delivered on time at the

*Balwadi*. So the IMT Team made suggestions towards timely delivery of necessary resources, such as notebooks, pencils, erasers, etc. They also suggested some cost-effective ways of making resources available. For instance, in case of colour books, rather than purchasing 25 copies for the children, the IMT Team suggested that a cheaper option would be to purchase only one color book and get the non-colored part photo-copied.

## Impact

Through their initial surveys, the IMT Team could observe that although the quality of education provided at the *Balwadi* in Village Kakrana was quite good, the enrollment and attendance were low. This was to some extent due to the prestige issue embedded in the social structure of the village, which discouraged families from opting for 'free' education for their children. Besides, there was a gross lack of awareness in the village about the importance of pre-primary education in developing the foundation of the kids' learning. They also did not know about the quality education being imparted at the *Balwadi* run by SADRAG. The IMT Team

tried to combat these hurdles through their community mobilization drives, which ultimately succeeded in increasing the enrollment at the *Balwadi* from 18 to 25. The new kids who got enrolled would definitely benefit as this would lay a better foundation for their primary education, thereby potentially having a long term impact on their lives. The training that the IMT Team provided to the teachers of the *Balwadi* for using innovative pedagogies, if implemented,

could help them in performing their tasks more effectively in the class room. The list of suggestions provided to SADrag on improving the infrastructure and operational efficiency of the *Balwadi*, if implemented, would help the NGO in achieving their social objectives better. All the above interventions, if carried forward by the stakeholders, are likely to have some sustainable impact on the growth of the kids at the *Balwadi* as well as the community of Village Kakrana at large.

**“Since every region has its own set of social and cultural values, there is a risk that while trying do something for the benefit of the community, knowingly or unknowingly, you may say something or act in some way which may end up hurting some core values of the community concerned. If people are reluctant to change and unwilling to adjust to your ways of work, then it becomes difficult to handle the situation. In such sensitive cases, it is important to first study the region, the people, and the core values and practices prevalent there before attempting to bring in any change.”**  
– IMT Team



**“One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world.”- Malala Yousafzai**

**4** QUALITY  
EDUCATION



# Contribution of the Project to SDGs



# **'Made in Maidaan': Imparting Life Skills through 'Power of Play'**

*The Team-Shreeya Dash,  
Aman Chawla, Divya Jain,  
Gunjan Goel, Neelesh  
Gupta, Vatsalya Dixit*

## At a Glance

Working in partnership with 'Project KHEL' the IMT Team - Shreeya, Aman, Divya, Gunjan, Neelesh and Vatsalya - took learning beyond the class room and executed the 'Made in Maidaan' Programme of the NGO in a government school in Ghaziabad. Made in Maidaan, which is targeted at the underprivileged adolescents aged 9-18 years, harnesses the 'power of play' for holistic development through a series of modules that are designed to impart crucial Life Skills Education (LSE) through experiential learning and activity-based learning models. Through their project, the IMT Team was able to help the students learn the importance of life skills, such as, team work, taking ownership, empathy, cleanliness and hygiene, discipline, communication, and decision making. These students, having acquired the life skills would perhaps be able to influence their peer group and families to imbibe these crucial traits, thus helping the community at large, going forward!



*Launched in 2012, Project KHEL (Kids Holistic Education & Life Skills) ([www.projectkhel.org](http://www.projectkhel.org)) is a non-profit organization that works towards empowering adolescents, paving the way to a more equal and inclusive society. They impart 21st century life skills to transform adolescents into informed and gender sensitive citizens, leaders in their communities, prompt societal change, and widen the scope of their opportunities in the future. Harnessing the 'power of play,' Project KHEL creates safe play spaces and implement holistic, interactive and experiential learning methods through sports, story-telling, theatre, crafts, dance and games and also generate awareness on crucial issues, such as child sexual abuse, menstrual hygiene, and puberty, among others.*

## The Situation

Shreeya, Aman, Divya, Gunjan, Neelesh and Vatsalya (SSR Group S31) partnered with Project KHEL to execute 'Made in Maidaan' (i.e. Made in Play Ground) – the core programme of the NGO with the aim of imparting Life Skills Education (LSE) to underprivileged adolescents in a government school in Ghaziabad through the 'power of play'. From among a list of government schools in Ghaziabad the Team had to identify one school for executing their project. M.M.H Inter College, Ghaziabad appreciated the project idea and gave consent to the Team to execute the 'Made in Maidaan' Programme for students of Classes VI and VII of this all-boys' school. The sessions were held on a weekly basis via pre-designed curriculum, which included certain tailor-made games and activities, aimed at imparting LSE and ensuring that the children enjoyed and understood the power of play.

The very first visit of the IMT Team to the school was a need analysis session where the Team interacted with the faculty members of the school as well as the students. The Team closely



**The kids in the classroom during the introductory session**

observed the general behaviour, confidence level, receptivity, and team dynamics of the kids. The objective was to understand the existing scenario so that certain challenges could be identified and the modules of the sessions could be developed accordingly.

they dressed, their mannerisms and behaviour indicated that most of them were not aware of certain basic manners and etiquettes, which were expected from school-going children of their age-group. There was some sort of complaining attitude

*“Adolescence, a vital stage of growth and development, marks the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is characterized by rapid physiological changes and psychosocial maturation. Adolescence is also the stage when young people extend their relationships beyond parents and family and are intensely influenced by their peers and the outside world in general. Adolescence is a turning point in one’s life, a period of increased potential but also one of greater vulnerability.”*  
Source: [http://www.cbse.nic.in/cce/life\\_skills\\_cce.pdf](http://www.cbse.nic.in/cce/life_skills_cce.pdf)

During the first interaction, the physical appearance of the students, including the way

and a tendency to pick up fights over small issues. Some of them would even hurl abusive

language at fellow classmates. Belonging to the lower economic strata, the children had been exposed to unhealthy surroundings that had impacted the way they thought and behaved. This also reflected in their low confidence level and their attitude towards education and life at large. They belonged to families where they had

background and came across as under-confident. The faculty members also shared the view that most of these kids felt constrained by their background. They felt that their financial situation would not let them grow. The IMT Team observed that the kids were hesitant about being pro-active, but not hesitant when it came

*Life skills have been defined as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life” (WHO). ‘Adaptive’ means that a person is flexible in approach and is able to adjust in different circumstances. ‘Positive behaviour’ implies that a person is forward looking and even in difficult situations, can find a ray of hope and opportunities to find solutions.”*  
Source: [http://www.cbse.nic.in/cce/life\\_skills\\_cce.pdf](http://www.cbse.nic.in/cce/life_skills_cce.pdf)

grown-up hearing their family members abusing each other. So, the use of abusive language was something that had become ingrained in them. The children and even their family members lacked an understanding about the value of education. Some of them even considered education to be a burden. As for academics, many of the students could not read or write even a full sentence!

During their initial encounter with the IMT Team most of students appeared to be very conscious about their

to tattle tailing! Also, most of the students did not have any ambition in life.

In their need analysis session with the students, the IMT Team also tried to understand them through games and play. The Team asked the students about their favourite sports, played certain games like ‘Salaam Namaste’ and ‘Chain-chain’ to observe their behaviour. Through a simple game of ‘Chain-Chain’, the Team found that the children kept moving in opposite directions while in a chain. This corroborated to the

lack of team dynamics aspect. However, the kids showed receptivity and appreciated the IMT Team's intervention. They were looking forward to the upcoming sessions.

## Identified Problems/Areas of Intervention

After an extensive discussion with the faculty and observing the students in the class room as well as on the field, the following problems and challenges were identified:

- Unorganized and haphazard approach;
- Prevalence of aggression and impulsive behavior and complaining attitude;
- Extensive use of foul language;
- Lack of team dynamics and team spirit, with the students constantly tattling on one another;
- Lack of sense of basic manners and etiquettes;
- Lack of a sense of personal hygiene (e.g. wearing shabby clothes and un-tied shoes; not washing hands after play or before taking food);
- Very low awareness about life skills;

- Lack of confidence and positive approach towards life.

The IMT Team conducted a baseline survey by interviewing the faculty members with a structured questionnaire. The faculty members were required to score the class as a whole on a scale of 1-10 on certain relevant parameters. The scores assigned by the faculty members on various parameters, each on a ten-point scale in the baseline survey along with qualitative comments are as follows.

1. How much do the students take ownership of responsibilities/mistakes?
  - Score: 2 (out of 10)
  - *Comments:* The students try to hide their mistakes by lying.
2. To what extent do you think the shy students of the class are taking initiatives?
  - Score: 2
3. How conscious are the students about their personal hygiene?
  - Score: 5
  - *Comments:* Students need to be taught the value of hygiene. They are not conscious of the

surroundings. They do not appreciate the implications of wearing a torn shirt or a torn pant.

4. How much concern do the students show about each other?
  - Score: 4
  - *Comments:* Some of them show concern about others. But, in general, the class lacks fellow feelings.

more towards complaining.

7. What is the level of creativity of the class as a whole?
  - Score: 5
  - *Comments:* The class as a whole lacks creativity.
8. What is the level of the listening ability of the students?
  - Score: 4

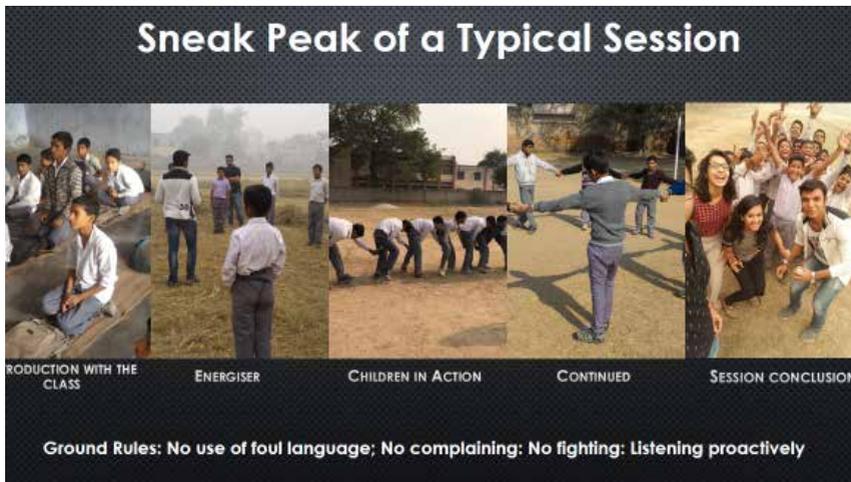
*"Life skills include psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with managing their lives in a healthy and productive manner. Essentially, there are two kinds of skills - those related to thinking termed as "thinking skills"; and skills related to dealing with others termed as "social skills"."*

Source: [http://www.cbse.nic.in/cce/life\\_skills\\_cce.pdf](http://www.cbse.nic.in/cce/life_skills_cce.pdf)

5. What is the level of inquisitiveness of the students?
  - Score: 2
  - *Comments:* They do not ask that many questions and are conscious of clarifying their doubts.
6. Is the attitude of the students more towards complaining or helping each other?
  - Score: 2
  - *Comments:* The attitude is

- *Comments:* Students listen to a strict faculty but, in general, they have a low listening ability. They keep talking while a fellow student is narrating.

Based on the insights generated about the scenario and the challenges, as revealed by the interaction with the faculty and students as well as through the baseline survey, the IMT Team identified their deliverables and drew up the action plan for



**A glimpse of a typical session. It always ended with a selfie!**

executing their SSR project

## Execution and Delivery

The main objective of the project was to inculcate life skills among the students through games and play. These life skills have various dimensions, such as inculcating team work, taking ownership, empathy towards others, maintaining cleanliness and hygiene, understanding the value of discipline, effective communication, and right decision making, among others. The parent NGO Project KHEL provided the Team with a framework for each session with specific objectives for each

activity. The objectives and action plan for each session had to be chalked out in advance in consultation with the NGO.

The sessions would start with an energizer, followed by an activity with clearly defined objectives. This would again be followed by another energizer and an activity. After each activity, the IMT Team would ask the students about their learning from the activity. The Team aimed at small developments, such as reduced use of foul language, cohesive behaviour in games, and improvement in the listening skills. There were three ground rules before any game/activity: no use of foul language; no complaining; no fighting;



**The iconic 'Salam Namaste' Game being played by the kids under guidance of the IMT Team. This game is a good energizer as it requires a lot of concentration from the children. The children are to follow whatever has been commanded verbally by a designated person and not necessarily follow the action of the facilitator. The key objectives are: (a) to improve concentration and focus; and (b) to energize the children.**

and listening proactively. The students did make a conscious effort to follow the ground rules most of the times during the sessions.

There were many challenges that the IMT Team had to deal with along the way. The economic and cultural background of the students and their lack of appreciation of the value of education made the students very closed in their approach, which posed a major hurdle. Another challenge was to keep the students engaged,

as they would tend to lose interest very easily and would start wandering or even leaving the session if they did not enjoy it. Another challenge was that the Team had to impart the Life Skills Education among the students in the garb of games and play without sounding preachy.

The progress was slow! However, it was felt that overall the children were open to the idea of learning beyond the class room. Eventually they started enjoying it and became more

receptive. The difference was distinctly apparent towards the later sessions. It was observed that the students were abusing each other to a lesser extent. Through repeated playing, they had slowly started realizing that working in a team was better to achieve the desired outcome. So, they were gradually imbibing the spirit of unity. This helped the IMT Team to further inculcate some of the life skills and good character traits among the students. As the sessions kept going, the IMT Team gradually succeeded in building a close rapport with the students. The students became more responsive and active. Towards the later sessions they became highly enthusiastic and would always look forward to the next session!

To emphasize the message of team work and team dynamics, the IMT Team would introduce the students to a 'new' English word related to the theme, such as coordination, strategy, unity, appreciation and so on. As their 'homework', the students would be asked to write the word, its meaning, and form a sentence in English using the word. The objective was two-fold: (a) to help them think through and internalize the concepts; and

(b) to help them improve their English vocabulary. To help them retain what they had learnt, the students were also asked to prepare a write-up on each session and bring it during the next session. The students were not compelled for the write-ups, but were encouraged to give it a try at least. In most of the visits the IMT Team would find that at least 8 to 10 students out of around 40 would have done their homework. The children were very excited to show the homework and the IMT Team used to give small rewards like chocolates, biscuits, cakes, etc. to all those students who had made efforts, to incentivize their learning further and also to encourage more and more students to do their homework.

The IMT Team never lectured the students, nor did they try to make them conscious about the learning objectives underlying the games and activities. The Team would only give them some hints about the learning objectives, but would make it a point not to spoon-feed them or sound preachy. The Team tried to unleash the creative quotient of the students and helped them think beyond their surroundings. The Team also tried to inculcate a sense of achievement in the students by asking them to clap

for one another. By giving them small rewards, such as biscuits, chocolates, the Team tried to encourage healthy competition. Apart from the games, which were part of the curriculum of 'Made in Madaan', the IMT Team also involved the kids in other team sports, such as *Kho-Kho* and Cricket. All the boys loved playing Cricket, including the most introvert ones. These games further helped in inculcating team spirit and team dynamics in them, which were some of the key learning objectives of this project.

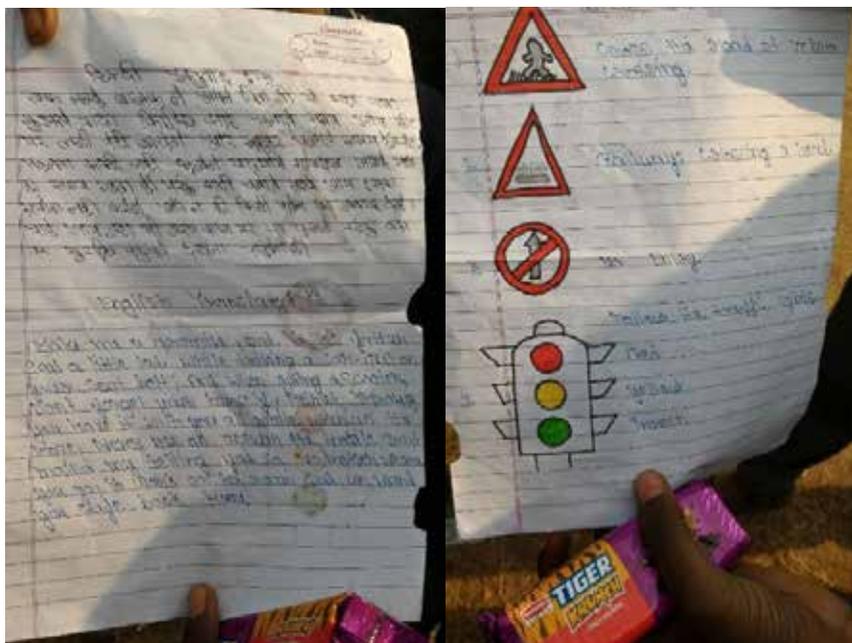
## Impact

The IMT Team started their project with a baseline survey which they undertook by interviewing the faculty members with a structured questionnaire. The same survey was repeated at the end of the SSR project to gauge the impact of their intervention. The scores assigned by the faculty members on various parameters, each on a ten-point scale in the concluding survey along with qualitative comments are as follows.

1. How much do the students take ownership of responsibilities/mistakes?
  - Score: 7 (out of 10)
  - *Comments:* There have been

a couple of incidents when students have accepted their mistake in the past three months. This is a good thing because a few months back they used to blame others for their own wrong-doings. The students used to try to hide their mistakes by lying.

2. To what extent do you think the shy students of the class are taking initiatives?
  - Score: 8
  - *Comments:* Students have become more active in the class. A few of the students who never participated in class have now become active.
3. How conscious are the students about their personal hygiene?
  - Score: 8
  - *Comments:* Most of them wash hands not only before lunch but even after having lunch.
4. How much concern do the students show about each other?
  - Score: 7
  - *Comments:* Their behaviour towards each other has improved slightly.
5. What is the level of inquisitiveness of the



Glimpses of homework

Small reward - a pack of biscuits



The joy of learning!

- students?
  - Score: 7
  - *Comments:* Since more students have become active in the class, the number of queries have also increased.
6. Is the attitude of the students more towards complaining or helping each other?
- Score: 8
  - *Comments:* Students now tend to help each other more. One kid even said "Chugli nhi krna chahiye" (backbiting should be avoided).
- listening ability of the students?
- Score: 7
  - *Comments:* Students listen to a strict faculty but, in general, they have a low listening ability. Still, the condition is slightly better now.

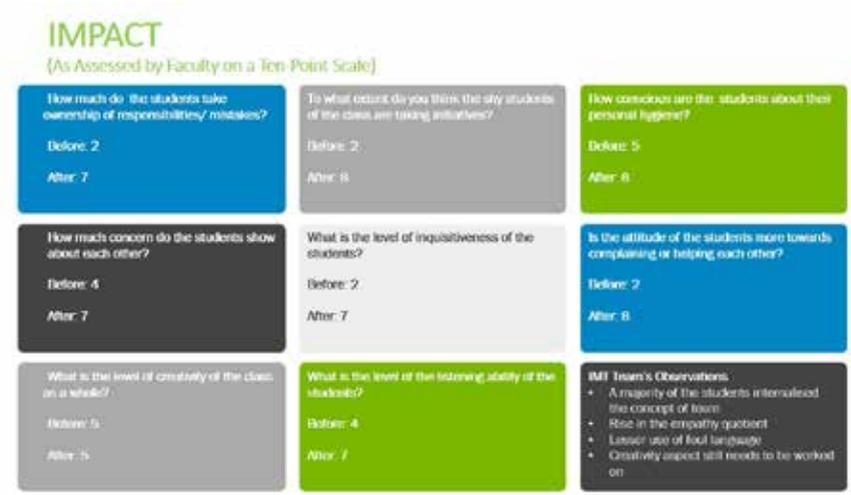
- Another aspect that saw a remarkable improvement was the self-learning ability of the students. The Team conducted a session on traffic safety. In that session the children themselves started pointing out the mistakes they made and how from that session onwards they would rectify those mistakes. This actually showed a spark in the children's eyes that was missing on Day One! The IMT Team could observe visible improvements in most of the aspects except creativity. The faculty members of the school were of the view that creativity could not be increased within such a short span of time and with only as many sessions on the field. Indeed, the IMT Team felt that improving the creativity quotient called for a lot more time and effort. However, the students themselves felt that they were much more united than before. Another point that the faculty mentioned was that the students had learnt how to
7. What is the level of creativity of the class as a whole?
- Score: 5
  - *Comments:* The level of creativity of class on the whole has not increased much. The reasons as stated by the faculty were related to their background and upbringing. The children were never encouraged to think and their awareness level was low. Their parents also had very vague ideas about education. Thus, eleven sessions were not enough to unleash the creativity aspect to the full extent.
8. What is the level of the

greet. In fact, they used to greet the IMT Team ecstatically and always looked forward to their visits.

Out of the 40 students that they worked with, the IMT Team felt they were able to create an impact on around 25, in one way or the other. The faculty members were so impressed with the activities conducted and their impact on the students that they wanted the IMT Team to conduct similar sessions for other classes as well. Many students from other classes were also keen to join in. While the Team could not reach out to

other classes due to time and human resources constraints, they do believe that there is still a lot of scope for spill-over benefits from their SSR project. Through their project, the IMT Team was able to help the students learn the importance of team work, taking ownership, empathy, cleanliness and hygiene, discipline, communication, and decision making. These students having acquired the life skills would perhaps be able to influence their peer group and families to imbibe these crucial traits, thus helping the community at large, going forward!

*"Thus far, our core program, Made in Madaan, has equipped more than 2,500 adolescents with personal, social and cognitive skills that have changed their lives for the better. To date, dozens of stories of change have proven that the transferable skills our beneficiaries learn on the playground are enough to make them aspire for better and previously unthinkable opportunities."*  
 – Project KHEL



**A screenshot of IMT Team's impact: the major improvements**



**One of the many moments that gave them all happiness...  
 SSR=Happiness!**

4 QUALITY  
EDUCATION

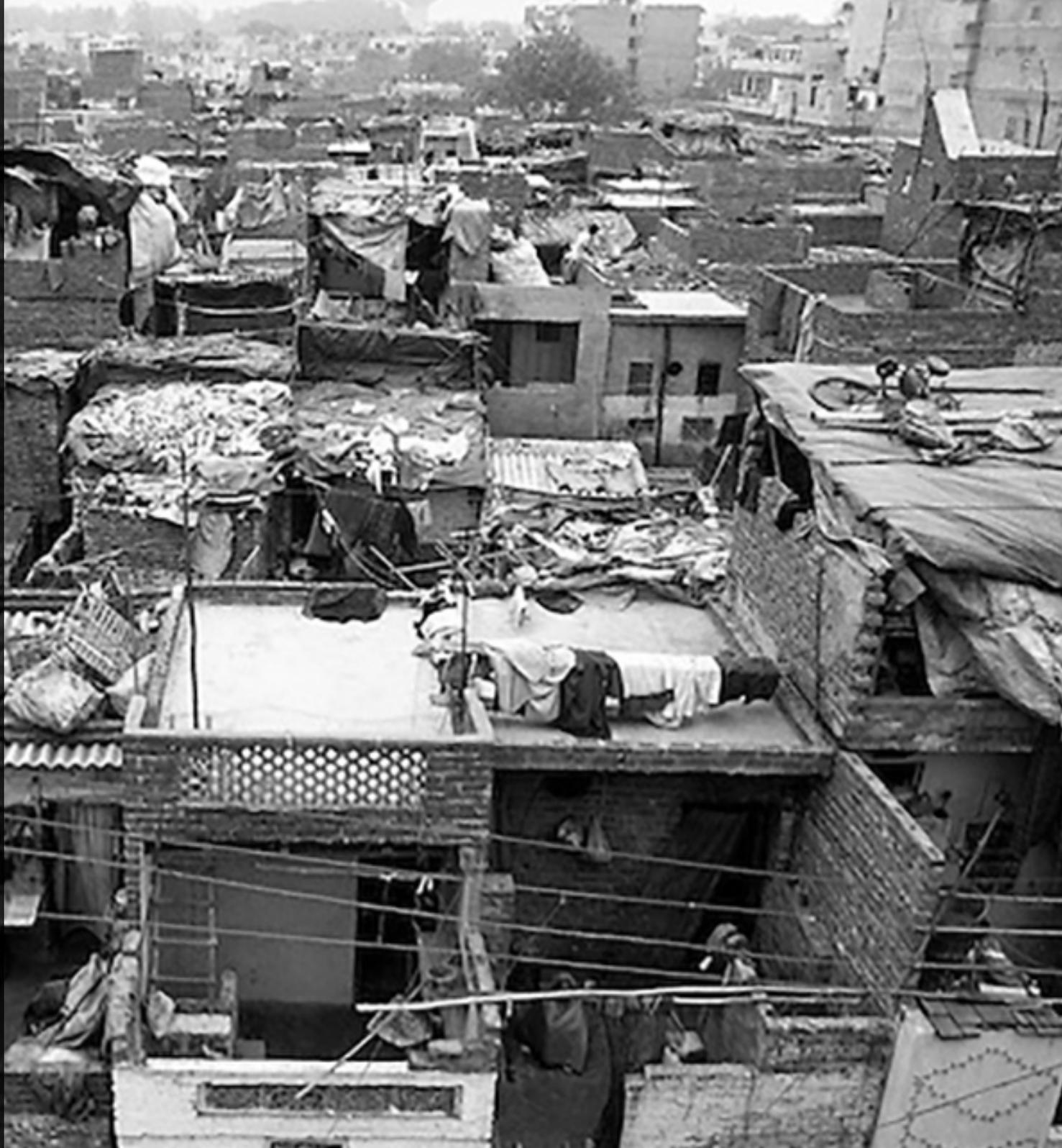


# Contribution of the Project to SDGs

**Part 4**  
**Making India**  
**'Saksham'**

# 'STeP'ping Up: Skilling Underprivileged Youth in New Seemapuri

*The Team-Vaibhav Gupta, Aakash Singhal,  
Devesh Jain, Himanshu Trivedi, Sarthak  
Arora, Srikant Kumar Singh*



## At a Glance

The IMT Team - Vaibhav, Aakash, Devesh, Himanshu, Sarthak and Srikant - worked with the STeP Programme of Smile Foundation, which is a placement-linked vocational training programme for under-privileged youth targeted at some of the booming sectors in India like retail, business process outsourcing (BPO), hospitality, etc. Working in the New Seemapuri area – one of the worst slum clusters in East Delhi, the project had two broad deliverables: (a) to undertake mobilization drive in the locality to persuade more prospective candidates to join the Smile STeP Programme; and (b) to work closely with the existing students at the STeP Centre in New Seemapuri to help them in their personality and soft skill development. The multi-pronged interventions by the IMT Team on personality and soft skills development, awareness generation, orientation and so on have impacted the students in a significant way – traits of which were already visible by the time the SSR visits got over. The Team's interventions went a long way in improving the employability of the students and made them more industry-ready, with concomitant benefits.



*Smile Foundation is a national-level NGO that reaches out to over three lakh underprivileged people through various Development projects all across India. Smile Foundation believes that unless members of the civil society are involved proactively in the process of development, sustainable change will not happen. Believing in this principle of 'Civic Driven Change', Smile Foundation sensitizes the civil society in order to make them partners in its mission. Beginning in the corridors of education, Smile has adopted a lifecycle approach with intensive programmes focused on family health, livelihood and women empowerment, which address the needs of children, their families and the larger community.*

## The Situation

Smile Twin E- learning Programme (STeP) is an initiative of Smile Foundation that aims at creating a pool of young and independent people, from the marginalized section, through skill enhancement in tandem with market requirements. The objective of this programme is to provide job oriented marketing skills to those under-privileged youth whose education and marketing skills need grooming so as to make them eligible for tapping the job opportunities in the fast expanding retail, hospitality and business process outsourcing (BPO) sectors in India. This national level programme trains the urban underprivileged youth in English proficiency, basic computer education and soft skills for enhancing their prospects of employment. It is an effort towards bridging the gap between demand and supply of skilled human resources in the country. At present, the STeP Programme is operational in eight Indian states with a total of 91 centers. Vaibhav, Aakash, Devesh, Himanshu, Sarthak and Srikant (SSR Group S56) worked at the STeP centre located at the BASIC foundation, a partner NGO of

Smile Foundation based in New Seemapuri.

New Seemapuri, located in East Delhi near the Uttar Pradesh (UP) border, is infamous for being one of the worst slums in Delhi. Early 1990s saw large-scale migration from West Bengal and Bangladesh to the New Seemapuri area. Subsequently, migrant population from UP, Bihar, Rajasthan, Orissa etc. also started moving into this locality. The area is characterized by high incidence of poverty, unemployment, unhealthy surroundings, pollution, drug addiction and so on. The locality looks barren without any greenery. Many people live in broken huts in slums which are unauthorized and therefore do not have any legal water and electricity connections. All the houses are closely built with lack of proper space and ventilation. Majority of the population in New Seemapuri is Muslim, with only a few Hindu families. Most of the families have more than six members. A vast majority of the marginalized population living in the area earn their living by picking and sorting clothes. Others are involved in diverse professions, daily wagers, street vendors, residential aides, rickshaw pullers, semi-skilled construction

workers, and so on. Although there are a couple of primary schools and high schools in the vicinity, many children do not go to schools. Literacy rate is quite low, and the proportion of children, particularly the girls, who drop out from schools is very high. The reason for this is not only poverty, but also lack of encouragement from the parents and families coupled with poor quality of education in the schools.

## Identified problems/Areas of Intervention

**Lack of self-confidence among students:** One of the most important problems that was identified by the IMT Team was the gross lack of self confidence among the students of the STeP Programme at the BASIC Centre. They were not confident enough to pitch themselves and present themselves to the outer world, particularly in English.

**Lack of awareness about self, career goals and potential opportunities:** The students had no set goals in their minds regarding the field they wanted to work in future. There were

many 10th and 12th standard dropout students who were not aware about the courses they could take up, which would enhance their employability. They did not know how to grab the best out of the career opportunities available in front of them. Most of them were not even aware of the job roles in sectors like Retail and BPO for which they joined the STeP Programme. They were not aware about their own interests

got married at a very early age. Such problems, however, are prevalent almost in every stratum of society in India!

**In consultation with the NGO Point of Contact (POC) the IMT Team decided to focus broadly on two areas:** (a) to undertake mobilization drive in the locality to persuade more prospective candidates to join the Smile STeP Programme at the BASIC Centre; and (b) to

*Most industries in India are currently struggling with scarcity of skilled labor. Although more than 40 million people are registered in employment exchanges, only 0.2 million get jobs. The current education system does not focus on training young people in employable skills that can provide them with employment opportunities. Today, a large section of India's labor force has outdated skills. With current and expected economic growth, this challenge is going to only increase further, since more than 75% of new job opportunities are expected to be "skill-based".*

Source: <http://www.ey.com/in/en/industries/government---public-sector/strategic-and-implementation-framework-for-skill-development-in-india>

and strengths also.

**Gender discrimination:** Most of the parents in the region were reluctant to send their girl children out for education or skill training. They believed that all they must do after getting secondary education was to learn how to manage household chores. Also, most of the girls

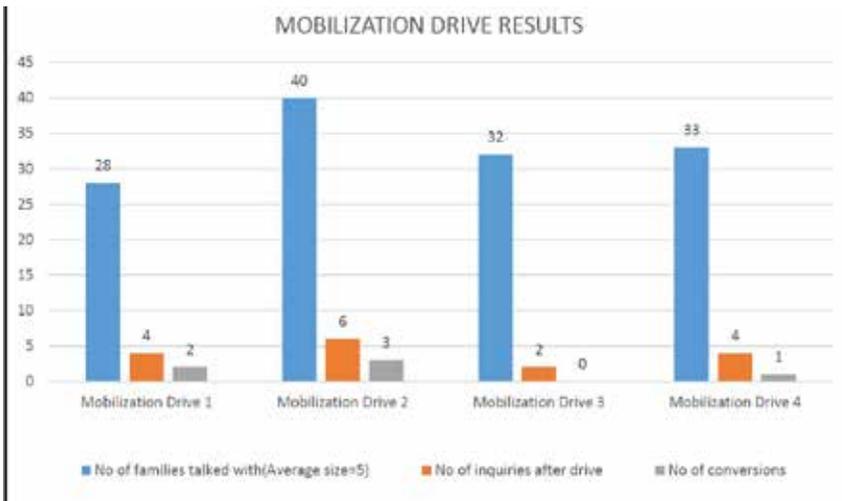
work closely with the students to help them in their personality development and shedding their inhibitions

## Execution and Delivery

**Mobilization drives:** The IMT Team conducted four community mobilization



Community mobilization drive by IMT Team in New Seemapuri, East Delhi



Results of the mobilization drives

drives in the New Seemapuri area, which included door to door knocking, distribution of leaflets, and town hall-style sessions to make people aware of the Smile STeP Programme and its benefits. They succeeded in converting six people and generating a few more inquiries.

**Personality Development of the students:** A major

various group activities and introduction sessions, which required the students to communicate with everyone in English. This allowed them to practice more, which ultimately improved their self-confidence.

- **Spoken English:** The Team conducted some sessions on spoken English, which helped the students

*The Government of India is strongly emphasizing on upgrading people's skills by providing vocational education and training to them. 'Skill India' is an initiative of the Government of India which has been launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15 July 2015 to empower the youth of the country with skill sets which make them more employable and more productive in their work environment. For the first time in the history of India, a Ministry for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has been formed to focus on enhancing employability of the youth through skill development. The objective of the National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015 is to meet the challenge of skilling at scale with speed and standard (quality).*

Source: <http://www.skilldevelopment.gov.in/>

challenge confronting the IMT Team was the gross lack of self-confidence among the students and their hesitance to public speaking, particularly in English. Sessions on personality development were planned in such a way as to help the students overcome this problem and also to prepare them to face the placement processes better. The Team conducted

hone their knowledge of sentence formation and pronunciation of words.

- **Self-introduction:** The favourite question of a recruiter is "Please tell me about yourself". The students were taught how to introduce themselves within two minutes in front of the prospective recruiters. Most of the students were



The IMT Team addressing the students of BASIC foundation



Encouraging the STeP students to shed inhibitions and participate actively

unable to speak sentences when the IMT Team met them for the first time. However, over the course of the SSR visits the students could gradually perfect their pitch by continuous practice and delivery of their pitches in front of the Team.

- **Presentation:** The IMT Team tried to develop the art of presentation in the students by giving them assignments to speak about their favourite topics. As part of this, they had to talk to the other students, faculty, parents and all other

acquaintances and improve upon the content of their topics.

- **Video analysis:** The IMT Team would undertake video analyses of the students when they used to deliver presentations. This method yielded significant improvements, as the students could see their videos and improve upon their expressions, body language and vocabulary. The successive videos clearly depicted the improvements the students had undergone in their personalities.



**Role Plays being conducted by the IMT Team involving the STeP students**

- Role Plays:** The IMT Team applied various other innovative pedagogies, such as Role Plays. A group of 3-4 students would be called and a real life workplace situation would be given wherein they would be required to play a particular role. This kind of exercise not only allowed the students to practice tackling some real-life situations, but also allowed them to understand the styles of communication that should be used in different situations. The IMT Team used to play some videos in their own laptops to help the students to get a better understanding of situation-handling and communication styles.

**Counselling:** To generate awareness among the students about the target sectors of the STeP Programme the IMT Team undertook counselling sessions with the students and also made them aware of the present scenarios and potential opportunities in those sectors. The nature of the jobs was explained to them through practical demonstrations. The objective was to enable the



**The IMT Team undertaking counselling sessions with the STeP students**

students to take more informed decisions about their career, based on their respective interests and strengths. Also, revision of concepts related to respective elective was provided, which brushed up their concepts.

**Inspiring:** To orient the students to the corporate world, the IMT Team narrated inspiring stories from the corporate world, which helped in generating interests among the students. This increased their knowledge, motivated them, and made them believe that winning was possible under the worst of circumstances.

**Customer Relationship Management:** The students were enlightened about the importance of customer relationship management. They were explained how they would be in jobs, which would make them the first points of contacts with the customers. Hence, they needed to be very particular while interacting with the customers, as they would be the faces of their companies. The students learned how they should deal with the customers, keep a smiling face and put

the customers first ahead of everything and try to serve them better. They were also explained as to how with the changing business environment, the companies altered and developed their products as per the customer surveys, needs and tastes.

**Basics of computer:** The students were taught the basic nuances of computing and information technology. The Team also taught them how to use various social networking websites, emails and their importance in professional life. Apart from this, they were introduced to the art of selling and the use of AIDA (attention, interest, desire, and action) model to their benefits. They were sensitized as to how building their basics of networking and maintaining a good relationship with customers were some of the key factors in the sectors like retail, or hospitality.

**Typing speed:** The IMT Team helped to improve a few ways in which the typing was being practised by the students. This helped in increasing their typing speed.

**Recruiter information:** The IMT Team provided the students with

a lot of information about the potential recruiters, such as their vision & mission, history, the work performed by them and so on. This made the students more confident and they could eventually talk at length about the companies that could be their prospective recruiters. The IMT Team felt that it would leave a favourable impression on the recruiters if the candidate was found to be aware of the company.

**Personalized discussions:** The IMT Team would often undertake one-on-one discussions or interactions in small groups to help the students sort some of their personal problems that they shared. Some of them were unable to cope up with their jobs along with their studies, some felt family pressure to do household chores, while others had relationship issues, and so on. The IMT Team realized that the general problems coupled with the societal pressures could only be taken up in such close discussions.

## Impact

The IMT Team undertook four mobilization drives in the

most down-trodden regions of New Seemapuri in East Delhi to generate awareness about the STeP Programme and its benefits, including placement of the candidates. Such drives had been conducted by BASIC Foundation earlier also. However, the impact was not substantial due to scarcity of human resources. The IMT Team helped fill this gap, thereby enabling them to achieve a wider reach with the mobilization drives. Their mobilization drives helped in converting six candidates, while few more came up with inquiries. The youngsters who got enrolled to STeP would enhance the prospect of their employment and a better livelihood, going forward. This may inspire others in their peer groups to join in also. The Team also sensitized the existing students to encourage their peers to join the programme. So, there would be a lot of potential of word-of-mouth publicity in future as well.

The multi-pronged interventions by the IMT Team on personality and soft skills development, awareness generation, orientation and so on impacted the students in a significant way – traits of which were already visible by the time the

SSR visits got over. The Team's interventions went a long way in improving the employability of the students and made them more industry-ready, with concomitant benefits. In their own feedback, the students shared that they always felt the need for someone apart from the regular teachers at the BASIC Foundation. The students felt a very different kind of connection with the IMT Team since they were neither their teachers, nor their friends, but the IMT Team always kept pushing them to work hard and give their 100%.

The regular teachers of BASIC Foundation would often attend the sessions conducted by the IMT Team and take notes on anything 'new', which they thought they could include in their own sessions, particularly the pedagogy. Towards the end of the SSR visits, the IMT Team conveyed to BASIC Foundation the importance of continuing with sessions on personality and soft skill development. The NGO agreed to take it forward. If these changes are actually implemented by the teachers and the NGO then the IMT Team's interventions would have a greater carry-forward impact on the students.

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# Contribution of the Project to SDGs

# 'Smile's Smiling Heroes': Skilling up the Youth in Trilokpuri

*The Team-Dharmesh Goyal,  
Devesh Varshney, Sachin Mandot,  
Pooja Garg, Pradhyumna Bhat,  
Siddhant Gupta*



## At a Glance

The IMT Team - Dharmesh, Devesh, Sachin, Pooja, Pradhyumna and Siddhant - worked for the STeP Programme of Smile Foundation, being implemented by their partner NGO AiDENT Social Welfare Organization located at Trilokpuri in East Delhi. Through their project the IMT Team was successful in helping the students in their overall personality development, by way of making them more confident, by improving their communication skills and by helping them shed their inhibitions. The Team also increased their awareness about career options and job market through career counselling – both online and offline. Through role plays, simulations, and other interactive pedagogies the Team helped the students understand the organized retail environment and increased their interest in opting for this career option, something they were not interested in, to begin with. The Team introduced several innovative techniques to create a relaxed, fun-filled and engaging learning environment, which went a long way in improving the students' interest and learning.

## The Situation

Smile Foundation's Twin E-learning Programme (STeP) is an initiative that aims at creating a pool of young and independent people, from the marginalized sections of society, through skill enhancement in sync with market requirements. The key objective of the

What is particularly important for the participants of the STeP Programme is that it is placement-linked. The Programme has been successfully placing the urban youth in corporates. Last year around 22,600 youth got trained under the STeP Programme, of which 55% were women. Among all participants, around

*India is a country with 65% of its youth in the working age group. If ever there is a way to reap this demographic dividend, it has to be through skill development of the youth so that they add not only to their personal growth, but to the country's economic growth as well. Urgent and effective action to skill India is needed to capture the demographic potential of India's youth. India, however, continues to face a skilling challenge of vast proportions. It is estimated that 104 million fresh entrants to the workforce will require skill training by 2022, and 298 million of the existing workforce will require additional skill training over the same time period.*

Source: [http://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news\\_updates/national-skill-development-mission/](http://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/national-skill-development-mission/)

Programme is to bridge the gap between demand and supply of skilled human resources in the fast-growing services sectors in India, such as hospitality, retail and business process outsourcing (BPOs). This national-level Programme not only aims at equipping the youth with English proficiency, basic computer education and soft skills, but also aims at developing their personalities.

14,500 got placed. AiDENT Social Welfare Organization located in Trilokpuri in East Delhi is one of the many implementation partners of Smile Foundation for its STeP Programme. Dharmesh, Devesh, Sachin, Pooja, Pradhyumna and Siddhant (SSR Group S55) worked with this particular STeP Centre.

Trilokpuri, New Ashok Nagar and neighbouring areas in East

Delhi are densely populated with the people of low income groups living in slums and small houses, commonly referred to as *Jhuggi-Jhopri* colonies (or JJ colonies) in this part of the world. The place is mostly inhabited by migrant workers from different parts of the country - Bihar, Uttar Pradesh (UP), West Bengal, Kerala, and so on. The average income of households here is often not proportionate to the number of family members. Hence, most families do not attach much preference to education of their children. They would rather prefer their children to get engaged in daily wage earning at an early age to make both ends meet.

Most of the students enrolled at the AiDENT STeP Centre belonged to low-income families residing in the nearby JJ colonies. Most of them were from Hindi medium government schools and were either studying in 12th standard or pursuing their graduation mainly via open universities and spent most of their time helping their families in small businesses and household chores.

## Identified Problems/Areas of Intervention

A baseline assessment was conducted by the IMT Team in the form of a qualitative survey, wherein they assessed the IQ level of the students. The answer scripts of their entrance examination were also analyzed for the purpose of assessing the baseline. The students were then asked to share details about themselves in a prescribed format. This was followed by a one-on-one counselling session to understand the issues and barriers better.

The IMT Team interacted closely with the faculty at AiDENT to understand the students in a better way. They inquired about the job offers available to the participants of the STeP Programme and the requirements of such jobs. The Team also tried to understand what kind of problems the faculty were facing and how they could help.

Certain major problems were identified by the Team in the process.

### **Lack of communication skills**

**and self-confidence:** Most of the students lacked basic communication skills and had low level of confidence. They were shy and were hesitant to communicate, particularly in English. Also, the students were hesitant in asking questions or clarifying the things that they did not understand.

**Lack of career orientation, motivation to work and high tendency to drop-out:** The students were not sure what they wanted to do in life. They had limited knowledge about alternative career options and the kinds of jobs that were available in the market. Another major issue underscored by the AiDENT faculty was the lack of motivation among the STeP participants. Many of them would tend to leave the job provided by the Centre within a short period of time. Since the fees for this Programme was nominal, it provided a perverse incentive for the students to drop-out after attending a few sessions. Through interaction with the existing batches the IMT Team got to know that many students did not have much interest in retail jobs, as these paid low initially.

**Social and psychological barriers:** On critically analyzing

the possible reasons underlying the students' approach the IMT Team concluded that the poor communication skills and the lack of confidence in the students had more to do with their social background. The locality where they lived lacked exposure. The social barriers also discouraged girls from taking up jobs. After the few initial visits once the IMT Team could build a rapport with the students, they started opening up with the Team members. It was then that the Team could discover that these students were actually filled with ambition and energy; it's just that they did not know how to channelize them! They were connected digitally, yet disconnected! They were not aware of the ways to use the Internet for enhancing their skill sets.

The Team also interacted with the passed-out students who came to visit the Centre and took their feedback on the course and how to further enhance its quality and effectiveness. Through personal counselling sessions and interviews the Team could gauge some of the psychological barriers confronting the students.

Based on their analysis the IMT

Team identified the following areas of intervention:

- To help students shed their inhibitions and psychological barriers;
- To make students feel comfortable enough to raise their voices and opinions and ask for clarifications;
- To make students converse in English;
- To create a more interactive and fun-filled learning environment, which would make learning more interesting for the students and would also help them hone their communication and inter-personal skills;
- To make students realize the importance of the subjects being taught in the STeP Programme;
- To reduce the attrition rate by generating interest;
- To help them know about various job opportunities in the market;
- To provide them assistance and counselling and help them identify their interests and their respective career goals;
- To align their goals and aspirations with the market requirements;
- To help them understand the nature of work that they would be required to do

post-placement.

## Execution and Delivery

### **Tackling the communication problem and low level of confidence of the students:**

A significant challenge faced by the Team was a gross lack of self-confidence among the students and their hesitation in communicating. All the students were smart but had issues communicating in English. They were hesitant to open up even in Hindi, despite the urge to do so. The IMT Team therefore designed and executed all their sessions keeping in view these issues. The focus was on making the sessions interactive and interesting. The team devised an overall oral and practical activity-based method of instruction, keeping in view the limited text documents that the students had access to, and the generally low confidence levels. The pedagogy involved individual and group activities. They conducted several innovative and interactive sessions and activities, such as funny introduction, role plays, demonstrations, extempore, one-on-one counselling sessions, random tasks, motivational



A counselling session

stories, etc.

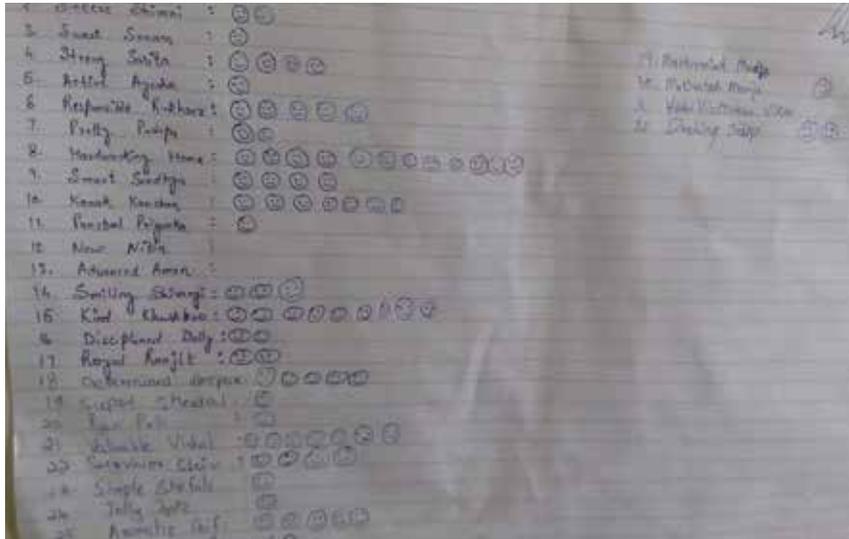
**Personality development activities:** For helping in personality development, the Team conducted various innovative and interactive session, such as:

- Ice-breaking session- know yourself;
- How to introduce yourself;
- Talking about likes, dislikes, hobbies, places, etc.
- How to attend a phone call/ customer;
- Asking for and giving opinions;
- Congratulating people;
- The art of saying 'no'

- apologizing;
- Counselling sessions;
- Mock interviews, etc.

**Practical lessons on retail management:** Through role plays and other interactive methods the IMT Team provided various practical lessons to the students on retail management. These included:

- Basics of working in an organization;
- Sales and marketing;
- Greeting and directing a customer;
- How to make a sales pitch;
- Product demo and closing the deal;



### Funny adjectives before names and the Smiley System

- Workplace ethics and rules of retail store;
- How to handle queries and complaints;
- Organizing and packaging of products;
- Promoting a product;
- How to handle the superiors;
- Building goodwill, etc.

**Counselling:** The root cause of the students not opting for jobs in the organized retail and other target sectors of the Smile STeP Programme was the lack of knowledge. The IMT Team focused their efforts on highlighting the various career options available and importance of having a stable

job.

**Feedback:** The IMT Team provided feedback on the students' performance – both orally and also in writing.

**Motivational videos:** In order to motivate students about working in the organized retail sector, the students were shown inspirational videos based on the lives of the founders of MDH Masala and Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). They were also shown videos on speaking confidently in English.

**Funny Adjectives before names:** The IMT Team christened each student by



A screenshot of the Facebook page

adding a funny adjective before his/her name starting with the first letter of his/her name. For instance, "Sincere Shivani", "Advanced Aman", etc. The students would be called by these names in the class, which increased the fun quotient of the class room.

**Funny reward systems:** The Team devised a methodology based on rewards for standing out and made it a point not to provide only negative feedback to any student. The positive effects of this methodology could be seen by the 7th session wherein it was observed that the students were trying to participate in activities and encouraging their friends to do so as well. Two interesting innovations introduced by the group were:

- **The smiley system:** Smileys were awarded on the white board for incentivizing participation in the class. One extra smiley would be given, if a student participated in English. A small reward (e.g. biscuits, cakes, juices) would be given to the student, who would get the highest number of smileys.
- **The yawn-clap system:** Another funny system that was introduced was that the students could yawn if they felt bored and could clap if they felt excited. The IMT Team managed not to get a single yawn!

**Use of Social Media:** The IMT Team created a Facebook page called 'Smile's Smiling Heroes' to answer queries of the students

beyond the duration of their SSR visits.

## Impact

Through the SSR project the IMT Team was successful in helping the students of the Smile STeP Programme at AiDENT, Trilokpuri in improving communication skills, shedding hesitation, and in their overall personality development. To help students take informed decisions about their future career options, the Team provided career counselling – both online and offline. Through role plays, simulations, etc. the Team helped the students understand the organized retail environment and were able to improve the motivational level of students to work in the organized retail sector after completing the STeP Programme. The students used to enjoy the sessions a lot and as reported by the faculties at AiDENT, the students looked forward to the IMT Team's sessions. The sessions

also left a significant impact on the students. Initially the Team had conducted a baseline assessment. Towards the completion of the project, the Team again collected feedback from the teachers as well as the students in the form of in-depth interviews. It was found that the confidence level and participation of the students had improved significantly. They were now able to communicate their thoughts in an effective way. The change among the students was clearly visible.

The faculty and the head of AiDENT were of the view that the IMT Team's interactive pedagogies helped the students to get involved, boosted their motivational level and made the students more open. Their communication skills had also improved. Now they could easily communicate both in English and Hindi. The carry-forward effects of the interventions would be felt when the students face the upcoming placement processes and join the job market.



The IMT Team with a batch of students at AiDENT

**“We planned to teach things we knew; but ended up learning more about their struggle, liveliness, joy!”**  
-IMT Team

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# Contribution of the Project to SDGs

**Part 5**  
**Nurturing**  
**Business Avenues**  
**for Sustaining**  
**Livelihoods**



**'Jagruti'- The  
Awakening:  
Towards  
a Better  
Tomorrow  
for the  
Suppressed  
Women of  
Bhatti Mines**

*The Team-Shubham Utsav,  
Viraj Agarwal, Shweta  
Khurana, Rahul Prasad, Mansi  
Verma, Aman Kejriwal*

## At a Glance

The IMT Team - Shubham, Viraj, Shweta, Rahul, Mansi and Aman - worked with Sshrishti India Trust on their women empowerment project- 'Jagriti', located in Bhatti Mines, one of the most impoverished slum clusters in South Delhi, which is home to a large migrant population. The IMT Team focused on identifying the strategic lacunae that were plaguing the sales of the products made by the women under the Jagriti initiative and identified ways and means to address the gaps, with the aim of increasing the earning of the women, thereby improving their livelihood. The Team suggested strategic interventions in a number of areas ranging from market segmentation, identification of target market, product design and quality, pricing, supply chain efficiency, and so on. They also identified an alternative source of livelihood for the women.



*Since 2013 Sshrishti India Trust (<http://www.sshrishti.org/>) has been working in the fields of child education, women empowerment, skill development and livelihood generation. They have seven schools in Delhi for early year education and have learning centers for skill development in Delhi, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh. Sshrishti also runs 'Mahila Panchayats' in Bhatti Mines area of Chhatarpur, New Delhi to empower the women to have a dignified life and to deal with issues of harassment.*

## The Situation

Bhatti Mines, situated in posh South Delhi, remains one of the most impoverished settlements in the national capital of India. It is home to a large migrant population. Once labouring in southern Delhi's many quarries, which have since got closed, the large populace of Bhatti Mines is now living on meagre livelihood options, such as digging and other manual labour as daily wagers at construction sites. Vulnerable to uncertain wage employment, adverse working condition and exploitation at the hands of the contractors, the community lives in a constant state of despair. Even the most basic civic amenities are lacking in Bhatti Mines.

The women of the community are the worst sufferers of this situation of extreme deprivation. They suffer from malnutrition, ill health and are victims of domestic violence and abuse. Mostly illiterate, these women are absolutely clueless about their basic rights.

The NGO Sshrishti India Trust initiated and facilitated the formation of 'Mahila Panchayat' at Sanjay Colony in Bhatti Mines. The Mahila Panchayat aims

at upholding the safety and integrity of the women in this area. It fights for the women victimized by domestic violence and other crimes by attracting the attention of police and other authorities to bring justice to them.

One of Sshrishti's projects is 'Jagriti' (which literally means "the awakening"), in which they educate and train young

much more. These products are then sold by Sshrishti at various places. The sales proceeds from these products are used to pay the women at Sanjay Colony.

Shubham, Viraj, Shweta, Rahul, Mansi and Aman (SSR Group S62) worked for the Jagriti project of Sshrishti. Their SSR project focused on identifying the strategic lacunae that were plaguing the sales of

*Sshrishti's 'Mahila Panchayat' – run in partnership with the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) provides a platform for articulating rights-abuses and securing legal counsel and redressal for women from one of Delhi's most impoverished and vulnerable communities – the Oudh community residing at Bhatti Mines on the fringes of Delhi. The 'Mahila Panchayat' conducts periodic workshops for rights-awareness and has weekly meetings to hear grievances. It provides counsel and facilitates familial or legal redressal of rights violations. The key aims of the 'Mahila Panchayat' are: (a) creating rights' awareness amongst women from marginalized communities; (b) providing a platform for articulating rights' abuses; (c) facilitating redressal through counseling and legal procedures; and (d) mobilizing men and women towards communal vigilance and proactive action.*

Source: <http://www.sshrishti.org/mahila-panchayat.php>

girls and women from this colony. The women are trained in weaving and tailoring, in batches of around 30 for two months. With their skills, the women make cloth products like laptop covers, shoe bags, hand bags, caps, shawls, and

the products made under the Jagriti initiative and identifying ways and means of bridging these loopholes with the aim of improving the demand as well as the supply for the Jagriti products. The ultimate objective was to increase the earning of

the women of Bhatti Mines who were working with the Jagriti initiative, thereby improving their livelihood.

## Identified Problems/Areas of Intervention

### *Lack of motivation among the women to work and aspire for a better life:*

During their initial field visits, the IMT Team visited Sanjay Colony in Bhatti Mines with the NGO Point of Contact (POC) to understand the ground realities there. They interacted with the women working with Jagriti. The NGO POC informed the Team that it was hard to motivate the women to work, given that they belonged to

backward communities which were patriarchal and did not allow the women any freedom. The women had become used to living in poverty, deprivation and suppression. They did not believe that they could earn and lead a better life. The Team got to see all kinds of products produced by the women: pillow covers, blankets, bags, and a lot of other stuff. What fascinated the Team most was their work on 'Sindhi Kadhai', also called 'Sindhi Embroidery', in which designs are made using colourful threads. The IMT Team was convinced about the potential of the products made by the women. They felt that if they could strategize to increase the sale of these products through their SSR project, then going forward the implementation of that strategy could help the



Samples of 'Jagriti' products

women earn more and perhaps also garner respect in their family and society eventually.

**Strategic issues plaguing the 'Jagriti' initiative:** The IMT Team examined the Jagriti products made by the women of Sanjay Colony and collected other relevant information like material costs, sources of raw material, locations where the products were sold, customer feedback, etc. By analyzing all this information and studying the products the Team realized that although the products were appreciable and customer feedback also suggested that there was demand for them, there were certain fundamental problems which prevented SShrishti from scaling up the initiative. There were also a lot of inefficiencies in the supply chain.

**Quality and standardization issues:** Products were not standardized. The raw material used was different for different products of the same category, which made it difficult to sell the product in bulk to one customer. One key reason was that the cloths which were used as raw materials in making the products came from a corporate donor, who would donate only the spare cloths that were of

no use to them. Thus, the fabric that Sshrishti would get each time would be different and not consistent in quality, leading to irregular quality of the final product. To expand the Jagriti brand and to meet the market demand there was a need to have a continuous supply of cheap and quality raw materials.

**Issues in product design:** There were several issues with the designing of the products. For instance:

- **Variants of different products were not available as per the demand they might attract:** For example, the laptop covers/bags were made for 11 to 13 inches laptops, but were sold at corporate offices where people used 15.5 inch laptops.
- **Need for identifying popular products:** There was a mis-match between the number of products which the women made under the Jagriti initiative and the number of products for which there was demand. Some products might be popular, while some might not be. There was therefore a need to identify and scrap those products, which took time to

produce, but did not fetch enough money.

- **Multiple use of the same product:** A product like specs cover might be used both as a specs cover as well as a cell phone cover. More such uses for different products could be identified to assess demand and increase sales.

**Issues in pricing strategy:** The IMT Team noticed that the prices of different products were set randomly and had no correlation with their demands and quality. Area-wise/market-wise prices were not allocated to products, keeping in view that the same product could fetch different prices at different places, such as a corporate office, a road-side stall, and a fair. This indicated a lack of understanding about the customer psyche and buying pattern.

**Lack of clarity on target market:** Another lacuna was the lack of strategic identification of the target markets for different products. There was therefore a need to define a target market for each product being produced. For example, a *Chapati* (Indian bread) cover could be sold to housewives, while laptop covers could be sold to students and office

goers.

**Need for strategic identification of points of sale:** There was also a need to strategically identify the possible points of sale for each product. For instance, a *Chapati* cover may be sold at grocery stores where housewives visit frequently, whereas laptop covers could be sold near colleges, etc. There was also a need to identify possible geographical areas, for example, *Dilli Haat* (an open-air craft bazaar cum food plaza situated in Delhi), emporiums, corporate houses, metro station stores, etc. for each product.

## Execution and Delivery

**Understanding the ground realities:** During their initial field visits, the IMT Team visited Sanjay Colony in Bhatti Mines with the NGO Point of Contact (POC) to understand the ground realities and interacted with the women working with Jagriti. Through these visits the Team realized that the duration of the SSR project was too short a period to make much of a difference in the lives of these women. The Team therefore

decided to come up with a strategic action plan for Jagriti initiative which, if implemented by Sshrishti even beyond the duration of the SSR project, could help increase the sales of the Jagriti products and could eventually improve the lives of the distressed women of Sanjay Colony.

**Identifying the strategic lacunae in project Jagriti:**

The IMT Team examined the Jagriti products and collected other relevant information like material costs, sources of raw material, locations where the products were sold, customer feedback, etc. They studied these data as well as the products closely to critically assess the strategic issues demanding intervention. The existing business model of Jagriti was too dependent on corporate donors. The IMT Team proposed strategies with the aim of making the business model self-sustaining, so that ultimately the livelihood of the women of Sanjay Colony could be improved and the women could make the best possible utilization of their skillsets and live with dignity.

**Attending the trade fair at the Australian Embassy:**

The Team accompanied the NGO POC to a trade fair that was held at the Australian Embassy in New Delhi, where many NGOs had participated to sell products produced by under-privileged communities. The Team closely observed how Sshrishti sold their products, to whom the products were sold, how much were the customers willing to pay, which products were most in demand, what kind of products other NGOs sold, what kind of products attracted the crowd, and many other things. The Team then applied their learning at IMT to analyze the observations and presented their insights to the NGO POC. They also gathered opinions, insights and suggestions from Sshrishti. This exercise helped the Team chalk out their action plan.

**Undertaking market research:**

The Team visited various other fairs and markets, which helped them in assessing the right market and customer segments for Jagriti products and plausible avenues for the scale-up of the initiative.

**Finding ways to tackle the standardization issues:**

The Team had already realized that to tackle the problem of standardization of Jagriti products and to scale-up the



**Sample of Sling Bags made to order by the women of Bhatti Mines for the I'M The Change Day, March 22, 2017. It was one of the items in the kitty, which was created for felicitating the dignitaries and winners in the competition on SSR projects**

initiative there was a need to have a continuous supply of cheap and quality raw materials, instead of remaining dependent only on the corporate donation of cloths as the main source of raw materials. For an NGO like Sshrishti the costs could not be very high, as there was immense pressure to sell as many products as possible, for which the prices had to be kept reasonable. This required the Team to look for suitable vendors from whom the NGO

could procure raw materials at a reasonable cost, so as to ensure regular supply of low-cost, standardized raw materials.

**Identifying vendors:** The Team visited many markets in Delhi, like Connaught Place, Nehru Place, Chandni Chowk, Anand Parbat, Karol Bagh, Ghaffar Market, Janpath, etc. to look for vendors who could provide good quality fabrics with attractive designs at minimal prices so that the women in Bhatti



The label created by the IMT Team for the Sling Bags

Mines could showcase their talent by making good quality, standardized products. Through a lot of trial and error the Team could get hold of some suitable vendors. They were able to collect samples from the vendors and were able to get quotations at prices which could justify the requirements of the NGO.

**Strategic product designing:** The Team suggested how the same product could be pitched to different customers for different uses. For instance, a product like specs cover could be used both as a specs cover as well as a cell phone cover. They

suggested finding more such uses for different products to increase sales.

**Strategic pricing:** The Team suggested a pricing strategy, which could help Sshrishti fetch different prices for the same product by selling it to different segments, such as road-side stalls, embassies, corporate offices and so on. They suggested selling the same product at a discount, at par, or at a premium, depending on the target segment of customers. The Team also noticed that some of the products made by the women were unique, such as those with Sindhhi



The IMT Team at Sshrishti India Trust office where they were felicitated by Ms Sanghamitra Bose, Founder trustee and CEO (sitting)

embroidery which was slowly fading. Sshrishti was selling such products cheap. However, if targeted well, such products could be sold at a premium to a niche segment of buyers, such as the expatriates, the upper-class Indians and the non-resident Indians, who would be willing to pay a higher price for such products. The Team, therefore, suggested a correction in the pricing strategy in this respect.

**Product line trimming:** There was a mis-match between the number of products which the NGO made under the Jagriti

initiative and the number of products for which there was demand. The IMT Team suggested that the product line could be trimmed and a few product categories could be concentrated on, thereby allowing Jagriti to specialize on a few core products and sell these products at a profit.

**Proposal on a new source of livelihood for the women of Sanjay Colony:** The Team felt that there was a need to find an alternative source of earning for the women of Sanjay Colony over and above

what they were already earning through various products made of cloth. After some market research and analysis the IMT Team identified candle-making as a potential new avenue that Sshrishti could consider. The product took less time to make and had high demand, particularly during festivities, such as *Diwali*, Valentine's Day, Christmas and so on. They undertook a market survey to get all the details about material requirement, prices, labour requirement etc. to understand the full operational model of candle-making. The Team also identified prospective vendors who could supply wax to Sshrishti for candle-making. A trainer was also found, who could train the women in candle-making. The Team prepared a presentation with all the details about Sshrishti, Jagriti, the candle-making project, cost and financial analysis of the project, and so on. This could help Sshrishti to pitch for corporate funding for the candle-making project, if they wished to take it forward.

## Impact

The IMT Team worked with Sshrishti India Trust on their women empowerment project-

'Jagriti', located at Sanjay Colony in Bhatti Mines, one of the most impoverished slum clusters in South Delhi, which is home to a large migrant population. The IMT Team focused on identifying the strategic lacunae that were plaguing the sales of the products made by the women under the Jagriti initiative and identified ways and means to address the gaps, with the aim of increasing the earning of the women, thereby improving their livelihood. The Team suggested strategic interventions in a number of areas ranging from market segmentation, identification of target market, product design and quality, pricing, supply chain efficiency, and so on. They also identified a new source of livelihood for the women of Sanjay Colony.

The Team did want to implement the suggested strategic interventions on ground to increase the sales of the products. Given the short duration of the SSR project this goal could not be achieved. However, the Team is confident that if the suggested interventions are actually implemented by Sshrishti, it would increase the sales of the Jagriti products and improve the livelihood of the oppressed

women of Bhatti Mines.

**“We believe that collaboration scores over competition, especially when competition is aggravating the world's problems, whether it is competition in politics, in business or between nations. Collaboration exudes collective responsibility. It was because we, as a group, collaborated, that we could make some difference!”**  
– IMT Team

**“We, a group of six, had applied our marketing and finance concepts, learned inside class rooms, to a real-world scenario. We had learned to negotiate pricing better and were more aware of society's grave problems, being on the ground to mitigate them.”**  
– IMT Team

1 NO POVERTY



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



# Contribution of the Project to SDGs

**'Aalika'  
Candles –  
Towards a  
Brighter  
Future for  
Kakrana  
Women**

*The Team-Tanvi Vakil, Nikhil  
Kalmankar, Saniya Gadhve,  
Saurabh Menon, Abin Arjun,  
Karthik Srigiri Revadi*



## At a Glance

'Aalika'. That's the name of the brand that the IMT Team – Tanvi, Nikhil, Saniya, Saurabh, Abin and Karthik – created for production and sale of candles made by a women's Self Help Group (SHG) in Village Kakrana in Hapur district of Uttar Pradesh (UP), which is working with the NGO SADRAG. 'Aalika' refers to self-confidence, expressive and positive nature with excellent organizing ability – an appropriate reflection of the women of Kakrana. The vision behind the proposed brand is to empower the women of this remote village by establishing a profit-generating business model, which could eventually be run by the members of the SHG, which is already operating successfully in the village. The SHG members were already aware of the technique of candle-making to some extent. The skill could be honed further without much difficulty through a few training sessions. What the IMT Team aimed at doing was to develop 'Aalika' as a premium brand of candles targeted at a niche segment of high-end buyers, who would be willing to pay a premium price - not for the quality of the product as such, but for the purpose it stands for! Going forward, the IMT Team aimed to develop an efficient supply chain for 'Aalika' candles and help the women of Kakrana build a successful self-sufficient enterprise.

## The Situation

Working in partnership with NGO SADRAG the IMT Team – Tanvi, Nikhil, Saniya, Saurabh, Abin and Karthik – landed up in Village Kakrana in district Hapur of Uttar Pradesh. While interacting with the women members of a Self Help Group (SHG) in Kakrana during their initial visits, the Team realised that the SHG comprising some 30 odd women was running quite smoothly and efficiently. The Team tried to understand the women of the SHG, their life, daily routine, skillset, and

the difficulties confronting them. It was realized that for past many years the SHG was only confining itself to the role of a chit fund and no expansion in terms of the number of participants, operations or functions had taken place. The Team aimed at taking the SHG to the next level by way of finding a sustainable business model for the women members of the SHG. It was learnt that the women had in the past attempted to run a candle-making business. Due to lack of supplier knowledge, and proximity to the dealers, vendors



Women of the SHG in Village Kakrana



**An IMTG student with the kids of Kakrana**

as well as customers, however, the business could not be continued for long. Nonetheless, most of the women were still keen to participate in activities, which would help them earn extra money to support their families and would eventually make them independent.

## Identified Problems/Areas of Intervention

It was realized by the IMT Team that the SHG was only

confining itself to the role of a chit fund for past many years and no expansion in terms of the number of participants, operations, or functions had taken place. The Team thought an important way to create a difference in the lives of these women could be through finding a sustainable business model for the women members of the SHG. This would also take the SHG to the next level from its current *avatar* of a mere chit fund.

Production and sale of candles



**Understanding the market**

appeared to be a suitable option. This was because the women had in the past attempted to run a candle-making business. Candle-making is an industry which requires certain skillset, which the women of the village would be comfortable with and they could learn these skills easily through a few training sessions.

It was initially planned to sell the candles using a B2C model. However, around their 5th visit to the market the IMT Team realized that the candles

made by the women could not compete in the retail market because of the advantage of economies of scale that the retail players possessed. The economies of scale was difficult to achieve by the women of the SHG, given limited capital and capacity constraints. Thus, competing in the retail market turned out to be a difficult proposition for the SHG women. The margins that the women could earn would also be less if they were to compete in the B2C market. In comparison, the margins that the women could



**Market survey is on**

earn through the B2B model would be much higher. Based on an extensive market research the Team, therefore, had to tweak the business model from a B2C to B2B, targeting corporate events, industrial institutes, and educational institutes.

## Execution and Delivery

Having identified the B2B market as the one to be tapped, the IMT Team felt that

branding and packaging were very important to be able to operate in this segment. Hence, they started conceptualizing the brand proposition. The Team thought that developing a brand that stood for a social 'cause' would help them tap the high-end market. Thus emerged the brand - 'Aalika'. 'Aalika' refers to self-confidence, expressive and positive nature with excellent organizing ability – an appropriate reflection of the women of Kakrana. What the IMT Team aimed at doing was to develop 'Aalika' as a premium brand of candles targeted at a niche segment of high-end



**The product portfolio**

buyers, who would be willing to pay a premium price - not for the quality of the product as such, but for the purpose it stood for!

The Team identified a few designs which could be used for making the candles and studied various packaging options. They planned to sell the candles by using varied premium packaging - depending on the clientele. They also came up with stickers and booklet designs, which would be present in each of their products and tell the stories of the women of Kakrana and the 'cause' that the brand stood for.

During their initial visits to the village it came to the notice of the Team that more than a quarter of the candles made by the women earlier were rejected, as they did not meet the quality standards of the buyer. The shortfall in quality standards was highlighted to the partner NGO SADRAG and during their meeting with the SADRAG Point of Contact (POC), the IMT Team offered their assistance in identifying suitable experts to train the women in candle-making. The Team's idea was that once they could get hold of an order. SADRAG would train the SHG women to make the candles as per the specifications of the order.

SADRAG would also monitor the entire process to ensure quality of the products.

It was noticed that the women in the village would rely heavily on SADRAG for the procurement of the raw materials and to help find the buyers for the candles. The Team wished to make the business model self-sufficient for the SHG eventually by making the members aware of the entire end-to-end process. Hence, they planned to help the women gather skills beyond manufacturing - training and guiding them to handle the processes themselves, so that eventually they became equipped to handle the entire business themselves without depending on anybody else. The plan was to systematically encourage participation in all parts of the process, envisioning a self-reliant business model.

SADRAG was intimated on the branding study done by the Team. The NGO POC thought that the branding idea contained potential. It was decided along with SADRAG that the products would be sold under the brand name 'Aalika' and multiple packaging options were provided to them.

Prospective wholesalers and

suppliers of raw materials were identified and economic order quantities and batch sizes to be produced were formulated. The lists of suppliers were provided to SADRAG to help them procure materials at cheap rates. Intimating the SHG about the entire supply chain could not be concluded during the short duration of the SSR course. But SADRAG offered their assistance in the knowledge transfer process to the women and it was decided that this process would be conducted at a later date by them.

To begin with, the IMT Team planned to tap the potential market, which was available within IMT Ghaziabad. Their target customers were the various committees of IMTG, who could potentially procure these as gifts for events, guest lectures, etc. The candles could also be given out as gifts to the faculty and staff of IMTG as *Diwali* (the festival of lights in India) gifts. Once the business was established and the quality of the candle was ensured, the Team planned to tap other colleges in Ghaziabad and Delhi. They also planned to approach the corporates by designing customised candles, which could be promoted under their corporate social responsibility

(CSR) initiatives.

The Team came up with a detailed proposal with appropriate products of different price range, which would suit different committees at IMTG and approached these committees with their sales pitch based on their brand proposition. To test the viability of this model, they held meetings with the IMTG

administration and various student committees and clubs within the college. Feedback received on the samples provided to them were positive and initial bulk orders were in the pipeline when the stipulated time of the SSR course got over.

## Impact

The vision behind 'Aalika' - the

**Perks**  
So why buy from us !

- **Empower women**  
Every product purchased would be directly contributing to the livelihood of these women. Financial empowerment of women spurs economic growth within a country- which can lead to the country becoming more stable, reducing poverty, and becoming a bigger player in the global market.
- **Acheive CSR goals of IMT**  
This is an IMT initiative. As part of the ecosystem; support us to give back to the society.
- **Engraving the 'Sustainability' seed**  
Support it to encourage students to understand sustainability in business and make them responsible business leaders and aware citizens.

Sales pitch within IMTG

proposed brand conceptualized by the IMT Team - was to empower the women of Village Kakrana by establishing a profit-generating business model, which could eventually be run by the members of the SHG, which was already operating successfully in the village. The Team thought that the profit margins that the women could earn through this initiative would be a major motivating factor for them. If this initiative was successful, it would eventually help them become

self-reliant. By the time their SSR project got over, the Team could not succeed in securing any order, due to the paucity of time! However, the discussions with various committees within IMTG were quite positive and orders were in the pipeline. The Team is willing to take the initiative forward beyond their SSR project so that it gets implemented on ground and the women members of the SHG in Kakrana get to reap the benefit of Brand 'Aalika'.



A sample packaging box

### Product Features

Casual sophistication.  
This word drives all that we do. Everything we offer, from our high quality fragrances to our customizable colours, everything is provided to have just the right appeal...to make your home, office so cozy and inviting that you may never want to leave!  
Also make for excellent gifts...

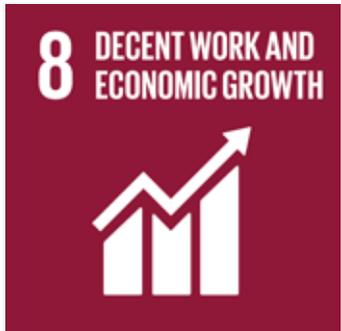
Hand crafted			Aromatic
Colourful			Non smokey
Funky holders			Custom gifting

Product features

**“The passion and will shown by the women of this Self-Help Group is un-paralleled. With the limited resources at hand they have learnt to make fancy candles, and mind you, this is alongside working at home, helping in the farm and taking care of the house. Not a small feat at all! Coming from a state known for oppression of women; the commitment and enthusiasm shown has been one of the biggest sources of inspiration for us. This initiative by our college has given us the freedom to contribute towards a cause close to our hearts and understand the true state of India as well as appreciate the beauty of our land.”**  
-IMT Team



But we have miles to go...  
and promises to keep...

 <p>1 NO POVERTY</p>		 <p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p>
	 <p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	
<h1>Contribution of the Project to SDGs</h1>		 <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>

**Annexures**

**I'M The Change  
in the News**

## **IMT Ghaziabad Walks the Talk; Launches Mandatory Course on Sustainability and Social Responsibility**

**Course is Part of the Initiative 'I'M The Change',  
Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi**

*Published: indiatoday.in | October 04, 2016*



IMT Ghaziabad, India's premier management school with a distinct focus on innovation, execution and social responsibility, launched a Sustainability and Social Responsibility (SSR) initiative titled I'M The Change on Saturday, October 1, 2016, on the eve of Mahatma Gandhi's birthday. The initiative was launched in the presence of eminent Gandhian Shri Ramesh Bhaiya of Vinoba Sewa Ashram and dignitaries from Ghaziabad local administration at the institute's campus in Ghaziabad, Delhi NCR. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's teaching 'Be the change you want to see in the world', the initiative I'M The Change is the institute's endeavour towards not just preaching but also practicing SSR. The first steps taken under the initiative are a course on SSR and a Talk Series.

The course, titled 'Sustainability and Social Responsibility' is a mandatory three-credit course for the first year students of IMTG's flagship two-year PGDM Programme from the 2016-18 batch onwards. The purpose of this course is to enable the students imbibe the ethos of sustainability, social responsibility and distributive justice and realise 'contribution' as a value through hands-on execution of live social projects in and around Ghaziabad and Delhi NCR. Students, working in groups will be exposed to situations that will allow them to see how people live, especially the underprivileged. Each group will then identify a particular social challenge to be addressed and/or zero in on a specific area with a potential for making a meaningful

contribution to society by applying their knowledge, skills, aptitudes and innovation. With the identified objective in view, each group will propose an implementation plan with concrete deliverables and will go about implementing it on the ground (through 10/11 field visits). Learning will be predominantly experiential, with the course containing only a few indoor sessions. The main focus of the pedagogy is on the 'doing' component (i.e. execution of a social project as a member of a team with ample scope for acting innovatively), while the vision underlying the course is on the 'being' component, i.e. to help inculcate values, attitudes, and beliefs that form a manager's worldviews and professional identities. The course will allow students an experiential appreciation of social contexts and challenges at the 'bottom of the pyramid' – people who are unlike oneself.

Introducing the course, Dr. Kasturi Das, Associate Professor, IMTG and Faculty-in-Charge, SSR mentioned, "In order to offer our students a bouquet of options to choose from, we have developed partnerships with several district-level government agencies (including the District Magistrate's Office, Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam, government schools through DIOS), and a number of renowned NGOs, such as Agewell Foundation, AROH Foundation, Asha Deep Foundation, Empowering Minds Society for Research and Development, Society for Development Activities (Project KHEL), Social and Development Research and Action Group (SADRAG), Smile Foundation, Sshrishti India Trust, Teach For India, and Udayan Care."

The launch event witnessed active participation from the Ghaziabad local administration and public representatives. Ghaziabad Mayor Shri Ashu Verma was the Chief Guest at the event while ADM City Smt Priti Jayaswal and SP City Shri Salman Taj also graced the dais. Shri Satish Kaura, Padma Shri awardee and CMD, Samtel Group represented the IMTG Governing Council at the event.

Speaking on the occasion, Director, IMT Ghaziabad

Dr. Atish Chattopadhyay said, "Today, we're embarking on a new journey. In life we are either a consumer or a contributor. The whole objective of this initiative is how we have the joy of giving, how we become sensitive to distributive justice, and to understand and appreciate how different strata of society live."

Delivering the keynote address, Chief Guest, Mayor Ghaziabad, Shri Ashu Verma said, "I congratulate IMT Ghaziabad for taking up the cause of SSR and making the course a compulsory part of the PGDM curriculum. Today, business graduates have options to serve the society while earning well in the social sector as well as to pursue the social entrepreneurship track. SSR is a positive step in the direction of the young people making an impact to their own society, their own country." He emphasised on the course correction in the way the corporates spend their CSR funds and said, "It is time the corporates must begin utilising their CSR funds in the on-ground social projects in addition to running awareness campaigns on media."

"Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam has already partnered with IMTG for social projects and the students played an active part during the Swachh Bharat Week on the 2nd anniversary of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Many more projects are lined-up," he added.

The event also marked the launch of I'M The Change Talk Series. In this series, IMTG will invite persons with exemplary contribution in the area of sustainability or towards bringing in positive social change. The first talk of the series was delivered by an eminent Gandhian Shri Ramesh Bhaiya, Founder of Vinoba Sewa Ashram, Shahjahanpur and recipient of the 2011 Jannalal Bajaj Award for the Outstanding Contribution in the Field of Constructive Work.

In his talk, Ramesh Bhaiya covered several aspects on the relevance of SSR while quoting from his experiences with Acharya Vinoba Bhave, great freedom fighter

and the protagonist of Bhudan Andolan (The Land Donation Movement) and his own work amongst the underprivileged. Speaking of why social responsibility is a necessity, he said, "SSR was always a part of the lifestyle of Bharat but was forgotten/left behind once it became India. Mankind, animals, birds, trees and insects are the five living beings on this planet. Mankind has always made up excuses to not being able to take care of the other four, as well as his own, only to realise that a man lives in extreme selfishness and intends to take care of himself alone. We have to work towards changing this, and serve the entire ecosphere. When you study a bit, you should give back to your family, when you study further you should give back to your village, and when you study higher, you should give back to the nation."

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Kasturi Das.

## **Making an Impact Through Experiential Learning – Experiences from the Institute of Management Technology (Part 1)**

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Business schools around the world are exploring a range of experiential learning opportunities for students across their programmes. At the Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad (IMTG) experiential learning has become not only a key part of the MBA programme, but a mandatory one. Staff coordinate projects on the ground with NGOs and government agencies for 450+ students a year. The aim of this course is to enable the students to imbibe the ethos of sustainability, social responsibility and distributive justice and realise ‘contribution’ as a value through hands-on execution of live social projects.

I spoke with Dr Kasturi Das, Faculty-In-Charge of Sustainability and Social Responsibility at the Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad (IMTG) about this course.

### **Introduce the ‘I’m the Change Initiative’**

The ‘I’M The Change Initiative’ is IMTG’s initiative on Sustainability and Social Responsibility that was launched on October 1, 2016, on the eve of father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday (which is October 2). The Initiative is inspired by Mahatma Gandhi’s vision “Be the change you want to see in the world”. The initiative includes a mandatory 3-credit experiential learning course on Sustainability and Social Responsibility (SSR Course) for the first year students of IMTG’s flagship two year full time MBA programme, as well as a Talk Series called “I’m The

Change”.

### **How it came about?**

Last year, under the leadership of Dr Atish Chattopadhyay, IMTG underwent a comprehensive review of its programme architecture and curriculum. The overhaul was aimed at achieving the alignment of the curriculum with the Institute's vision of contributing to the development of business and society through grooming leaders who are innovative, can execute effectively, and are socially responsible. The I'M The Change Initiative on Sustainability and Social Responsibility is an offshoot of this entire exercise and has been conceived in alignment with the overarching three-pronged focus of IMTG on 'innovation', 'execution' and 'social responsibility'.

### **What are the key features of the programme and how does it work?**

The SSR course is a full-fledged 3-credit course, which each of our 450 odd first year students have to compulsorily complete. The course has its well-specified objectives, desired learning outcomes, requirements to be fulfilled, as well as a multi-dimensional evaluation structure. So, it is not like 'volunteering' for social work, nor is it 'optional' for the students. The course is predominantly an 'experiential learning' course, with only a few in-door sessions. The main focus of the pedagogy is on the 'doing' component (i.e. Execution of a social project as a member of a team with ample scope for acting innovatively).

The vision underlying the course is on the 'being' component, i.e. to help inculcate values, attitudes, and beliefs that form a manager's world views and professional identities. Our objective is to allow students an experiential appreciation of social contexts and challenges at the 'bottom of

the pyramid' – people who are unlike oneself. The endeavour is to make students think about their responsibilities to the community and wider society and the environment looking beyond their narrowly-focused private interests alone, thereby helping them to become better corporate citizens going forward.

Students, working in groups, identify a particular social challenge to be addressed and zero in on a specific area with a potential for making a meaningful contribution to society by applying their knowledge, skills, aptitudes and innovation. With the identified objective in view, each students' group (comprising six students) proposes an 'Implementation Plan' with concrete deliverables and implement it on the ground. The evaluation structure is multi-dimensional and innovative. It includes evaluation by self, by partner organization, and by faculty. Faculty evaluation is based on submission and presentation of the Implementation Plan, as well as final outputs in the form of 'white paper'. Another unique feature is that it is getting administered through direct involvement of a students' committee, called the Community Outreach & Social Projects (COSP) Committee.

### **What are the social projects focused on?**

This is really a 'glocal' model. The live social projects that our students are undertaking are in alignment with the overarching sustainable development goals and the 2030 Agenda (i.e. global). However, the social projects are embedded in the Indian context (i.e. local). First, the social projects are in tune with the development frameworks and policies adopted by the Government of India, including on SDGs and CSR. Second, the social projects are aimed at addressing, at least to the extent possible, some of the crucial challenges confronting the under-privileged communities in India, much of which are case and context-specific.

The social projects are aimed at making a contribution to the lives of the underprivileged in a range of areas including education; women empowerment; marketing/ market linkages development for products produced by the communities; skill development (including soft skills); distribution of free medical equipment and winter garments among old destitute; development of life skills among children through games and play; awareness generation on health and sanitation, child sexual abuse; financial literacy; recycling of waste papers; welfare of rag pickers community old destitutes, special children and so on. etc.

## Making an Impact Through Experiential Learning – Experiences from the Institute of Management Technology (Part 2)

*Published: [primetime.unprme.org](http://primetime.unprme.org) | January 25, 2017*



### **What kinds of partnerships have you developed to make this course possible?**

For execution of the social projects we have developed partnerships with several local-level government agencies, and a number of renowned national-level NGOs, such as Agewell Foundation, AROH Foundation, Asha Deep Foundation, Empowering Minds, Lakshyam, Project KHEL, Social and Development Research and Action Group (SADRAG), Smile Foundation, Sshrishti India Trust, Teach For India, and Udayan Care.

Our model brings business, government and the civil society all together. In various cases our students are working as part of programmes run by our NGO partners wherein an NGO is working as an 'implementation agency' for the CSR initiatives of some big Indian or multi-national companies. As you may be aware that India is the first country to introduce a 'mandatory' CSR provision in the Companies Act 2013, according to which big corporates are 'obliged' to spend certain portions of their net profit on CSR.

Our students have been involved in contributing towards certain flagship initiatives of the Government of India including (i) Swachh Bharat Mission (for anti-open-defecation campaign); and (ii) Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana which has the dual objectives of adding diversity to the incomes of rural poor families

and cater to the career aspirations of rural youth. In collaboration with the local-level government agencies our students are working with government schools as well as Missing Children's Homes situated in Ghaziabad.

### **What have been some of the challenges?**

There have been many challenges, given that we are doing it for the first time. We are learning as we are developing the programme. First the programme involves a large batch of students, around 450, working on the ground and the programme had to be implemented within a couple of months! But we have been able to convert that challenge into an opportunity, because it allowed us to work at scale and on diverse areas, with potential for greater impact. I have had intellectual and moral support in the development and delivery of the course from Dr Anurag Danda my colleague in the Initiative,. Our director and dean-academics, Dr Ravikesh Srivastava have extended whole-hearted support to the programme. Above all, we could not traverse the hurdles without constant support from my students, particularly Ayush Gupta and Udit Mathur who have been relentlessly working with me to make it happen!

Another challenge is physical safety and security of students, particularly girls. It has been a major cause of concern and demanded a no-compromise approach as and when students shared their concerns and worries.

### **Successes?**

It is gratifying to share that we have been able to conceive this unique model and bring it to fruition for the entire batch within a very short span of time. It is also delighting to see the impact that we can have and the extent of interest there is among the stakeholders to work with our students. In September 2016, I met with the local municipal commissioner of Ghaziabad to collect a list of slum areas in Ghaziabad where or students could work. When he got to know about our initiative, he proposed that our students could work with the Municipality to perform street plays

(*'nukkad natak'* in Hindi) to generate awareness on harmful effects of open defecation on the opening day of the Swachh Bharat Week that was scheduled just two days from then. We brought together a group of 16 students who managed to stage it in slum areas of Ghaziabad with just few hours of preparation. People in the slum areas shared their concerns and plight to such an extent that these students came back motivated to do their bit for these under-privileged. One of our students created a video of that day ([click here to view the link](#)).

### **What advice would you have for other schools thinking of putting something similar into place?**

We are being contacted by other leading intiatituions in India who are interested in our programme and the lessons that they can learn from it, especially in terms of pedagogy which is very gratifying! Some advice I give them is;

- Have someone lead the initiative who believes in it and is passionate about it. Otherwise it's very difficult to make it happen!
- Be clear about your objectives and deliverables.
- If you decide to work with partners then choose your partners and corresponding projects in such a way that these are in alignment with your objectives.
- Have your well-thought-out implementation plan in place well in advance. That said, when you are going out of the secured corner of your classroom and trying to work at the grass-roots, things may not go the way you plan as you will not have control over most of the external factors. So, be prepared to deal with unforeseen challenges and unexpected contingencies which may crop up out of the blue moon.

### **What's next for the initiative?**

The initiative is mid-way. Our first goal is to bring it to its conclusion to the best of our ability. We are also collecting in-depth feedback from students and all our stakeholders. The endeavour will be to take it to its next level in the next academic year by learning from the rich experiences we are already gathering in its maiden year. We are also in the

process of including it in other programmes. For instance, we have just now introduced SSR in the curriculum of our Executive Programme. However, rather than replicating the model of the Two-Year Programme, we are trying to come-up with a tailor-made model to suit the architecture, timeline, deliverables and participants of that programme, as one size may not fit all!

## Future MBA | 100 seeds for a sustainable future: Part 3

*Published: greenbiz.com | February 27, 2017*

### **Day 25: I'm the Change**

Every year, more than 450 students at the Institute of Management Technology in Ghaziabad, India take part in a compulsory course called I'm the Change. This course is primarily an outside-of-the-classroom learning experience where students work in teams to identify a particular social challenge to be addressed. The students zero in on a specific area with potential for making a meaningful contribution to society by applying their knowledge, skills, aptitude and innovation. With this in view, they propose an implementation plan to put it into practice. Teams work with a wide range of NGOs, as well as government agencies, on social projects relating to education, female empowerment, skill development, distribution of medical equipment, engaging children, health, sanitation and financial literacy.



## **Magsaysay Awardee Anshu Gupta Delivers the 2nd 'I'M The Change Talk' at IMT Ghaziabad - 'Look Beyond... See Invisible'**

*Published: telegraphindia.com | February 16, 2017*



IMT Ghaziabad, India's premier management school with a distinct focus on innovation, execution and social responsibility, hosted the 2nd 'I'M The Change Talk' on Tuesday, February 7, 2017, by Anshu Gupta, Founder of 'Goonj' and Magsaysay awardee of 2015. The talk was titled 'Look Beyond...See Invisible.'

The 'I'M The Change Talk Series' hosts stalwarts who have made an exemplary contribution in the area of sustainability or towards bringing in positive social change. This Talk Series is a part of the 'I'M The Change' Initiative of IMT Ghaziabad on Sustainability and Social Responsibility (SSR). The initiative was launched on October 1, 2016, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's teaching 'Be the change you want to see in the world' and also includes a mandatory 3-credit experiential learning course on SSR for the first year students of IMT Ghaziabad's flagship two-year full-time PGDM.

Setting the context, Dr Kasturi Das, Faculty-in-Charge, SSR said, "*The I'M The Change Talk was conceived as an integral part of the SSR course to expose our students to real change-makers like Anshu ji so that our students feel inspired to do their bit for the society, and perhaps also to sow in them the seeds of becoming change-makers themselves, going forward!*". "*The SSR Course is a unique pedagogical innovation that IMT has developed and implemented ground-up – something that has been*

*vindicated when the 'I'M The Change Initiative' was recognised globally by the United Nation's Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). All our social projects are in alignment with one or more of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that the UN adopted in September 2015," she added.*

Following which, it was a moving talk by Anshu Gupta where he touched upon a range of topics including misallocation of resources, government subsidies, alternative currencies, menstrual hygiene, and lack of drinking water and electricity among the urban poor, etc.

The celebrated social entrepreneur, in his hard-hitting talk, pulled no punches as he talked about the recent event of Kailash Satyarthi's Nobel Prize getting stolen. He pointed out the gross misallocation of resources in the country as chandeliers in airports somehow rank higher on the policymakers list rather than clean drinking water at train stations. *"One of the best airports in the world, the one in Mumbai, coexists with one of the largest slums in Asia– Dharavi,"* he said. Himself, a student of a government subsidised college, Anshu Gupta stressed upon the need to give back to the society once one has reaped the benefits of a subsidised education. On the issue of farm subsidies, he questioned its economics as the real price of agricultural products would raise the prices out of reach of the common man. Hence, farm subsidies were more of a case of the farmers subsidising the produce for the common man rather than the government helping the farmers. Citing the alarmingly high number of farmer suicides, he stressed on the ineffectiveness of farm subsidies as an economic measure. He also talked about developing alternative currencies for development-labour, skill, time and material. He said, *"Our initiative is that of creating a parallel economy – not cash based but trash based."* He was talking about the initiative called Cloth For Work started by 'Goonj', where villagers work on infrastructure projects providing skill and labour, and in return compensated with clothes and food grains.

Sharing anecdotes and personal experiences, Anshu Gupta talked about clothing (lack of clothing) as an essential development goal in developmental agenda.

And finally, in a country where menstruation is still a taboo subject, Anshu Gupta touched upon the topic of sanitary napkins. He pointed out the acute shortage of basic sanitation for women in the rural areas, where products such as carbonated drinks and biscuits could reach quickly. He urged the students to work, innovate and undertake projects on women's sanitation as small steps could bring in massive changes in the field.

Throughout his talk, he stressed on the need to get our hands dirty to solve the fundamental problems the country currently faces, *"We as a nation want to treat Malaria, but not deal with the mosquitoes."*

While explaining the importance of the SSR course, as part of which IMT students are working hands-on in live social projects with the disadvantaged communities, Director – IMT Ghaziabad, Dr Atish Chattopadhyay explained how the issue of Sustainability and Social Responsibility is ingrained in the institute's philosophy of grooming leadership. He said, *"The founder of our institution, Shri Mahendra Nath ji, an entrepreneur and a successful industrialist, established IMT Ghaziabad as part of his social responsibility, to give back to the society."*

## **IMT Ghaziabad Students Celebrate 'Joy of Contribution' on I'M The Change Day**

**The Event Saw Representation From Tata Trusts, Bharti Foundation, Ghaziabad Development Authority and Sixteen Partner NGOs**

*Published: [businesstoday.in](http://businesstoday.in) | March 28, 2017*



IMT Ghaziabad, India's premier management school with a distinct focus on innovation, execution and social responsibility, organised the I'M The Change Day - the recognition and closing ceremony of the first chapter of the Sustainability and Social Responsibility (SSR) Course, on Wednesday, March 22, 2017. The programme included a competition among eight short-listed SSR projects that reached the final round among the 74 SSR projects undertaken by the entire first year batch of the Two-year full-time PGDM Programme of IMTG. The shortlisted groups presented their projects in front of a panel of distinguished judges that included Ms Shireen Vakil Miller, Head - Policy and Advocacy, TATA Trusts; Mr Antony Nellissery, General Manager - Programs, Bharti Foundation; and Dr Nitin Madan, OSD, Ghaziabad Development Authority. The second segment of the event saw felicitation of the partner NGOs for the SSR course by Dr Ravikesh Srivastava, Dean - Academics, and Dr Kasturi Das, Faculty-in-Charge, SSR, which was followed by the distribution of certificates to all 74 SSR groups by the partner representatives. The event found representations from all partner organisations including Agewell Foundation, AROH Foundation, Asha Deep Foundation, Empowering Minds, Lakshyam, Project KHEL, Social and Development Research and Action Group (SADRAG), Smile Foundation, Sshrishti India Trust, Teach For India, and Udayan Care.

While addressing the students, Ms Shireen Vakil Miller

said, "I congratulate all the students and the IMT for developing a mandatory course on sustainability and social responsibility. Social responsibility has always been at the heart of the work of the Tatas, and the Tata Trusts which hold 66% equity of Tata Sons have been working on various aspects of social development from health to livelihoods for over a 100 years. Do hope that every student who leaves IMT goes out with this spirit of responsibility in mind. "

"Truly commendable job done by the students of IMT Ghaziabad towards Sustainability and Social Responsibility. Making it mandatory as part of the MBA course of IMT is a good strategy for the students to imbibe the ethos of social responsibility in this era of materialism. The impacts of projects undertaken by the students in such a short time are remarkable and praiseworthy. Cheers to IMT team for changing with the signs of times," said Mr Antony Nellissery.

"Given the high quality of work, commitment and passion demonstrated by most of the SSR groups, it was a herculean task to shortlist projects for the competition," said Dr Kasturi Das, Associate Professor & Faculty-in-Charge, SSR. Among 74 SSR groups, 22 cleared the first round of screening," she added.



## Inspiring Sustainability and Social Good

*By Elliot Davis | Published: AACSB.edu | Date: April 14, 2017*

Business schools are increasingly at the forefront of a variety of sustainability-related efforts, and a gamut of innovations in this area are shared within the Innovations That Inspire collection, from the environmental to the socially responsible.

### **I'M The Change**

*Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad (India)*

The focus of this initiative is to enable students to understand the ethos of sustainability, social responsibility, and distributive justice through the hands-on execution of live social projects. The initiative is a step toward addressing a critical unmet need in today's world, namely "the role, responsibilities and purpose of business," as underscored by Srikant M. Datar et al. in their seminal book *Rethinking the MBA: Business Education at a Crossroads*.

The initiative is a three-credit, required course that runs for six months. The desired learning outcomes are for students to appreciate, through experience, the societal contexts and challenges of people who are unlike themselves, and for the students to develop an understanding of social responsibilities in individual as well as business contexts. The pedagogy is premised on the "Know-Do-Be" philosophy outlined in *Rethinking the MBA*.

Student groups are exposed to underprivileged communities across different religions, ethnicities, cultures, languages, and livelihoods. Each student group then focuses on making a contribution to the community, proposes an implementation plan with concrete deliverables, and executes it on the ground.

**About Innovations That Inspire**

From a pool of 315 submissions spanning 33 countries, the 2017 Innovations That Inspire collection demonstrates business education's engagement across disciplines, with diverse groups, and with business practice. Thirty-five of these innovations were featured at the 2017 Deans Conference and are available for public browsing. The complete collection of Innovations That Inspire, including the 2016 Innovations That Inspire collection, can be found using AACSB's DataDirect.

**Right from the  
Horse's Mouth**

## A Sneak Peek Into SSR Journey – IMT Ghaziabad

*By: Archit Kacker (PGDM 2016-18)*

*Published: insideim.com | February 22, 2017*



Recently my college – IMT Ghaziabad has introduced a mandatory three credit course on Sustainability and Social Responsibility (SSR), aimed at action-based learning on efficiently catering to the needs of the society. So when our batch was assigned this course, I was naturally wary of it. Firstly, because I had my own apprehensions and notions regarding social work. I consider social initiatives are a work of great responsibility and compassion which might get diluted by grades and assessments. And secondly, I sometimes don't like to do things that I am simply forced to do. So my main objective while choosing the project was that I really wanted to do something in which I would not worry about marks and academics, but in turn try to do something that would make an impact, however small it may seem in the lives of the innocent children, with whom my team: 'Being Social', and I would be associated.

Previously I had been a part of an NGO, called Ashirwad from July 2009 till June 2013. It helps children with cerebral palsy. My little journey there, contributed enormously in evolving me into the person that I am today. So naturally, my expectations were similar from Project KHEL, which is a Lucknow based social welfare organisation and the partner organisation of our SSR group.

KHEL basically stands for Kids Holistic Education & Life-skills and with their program 'Made in Madaan' in which we are working towards educating children outside the conventional classroom by harnessing the 'Power of Play'. This concept helps in development through a series of modules designed to impart crucial Life Skills Education (LSE) through experiential learning and activity-based

learning models.

Over the past few months, as a part of this beautiful program, we have weekly group visits where we try to help children who do not have the privilege of being a part of such an ingenious and holistic child development program. We have tried to teach them about the need of basic hygiene and we tried to promote gender equality and inclusion. We have also taken up other things like making them understand traffic rules and its basic guidelines.

Over a course of few visits, what was presumed to be a one way learning from our team to the children, completely changed into a healthy two-way sharing of knowledge. The amount of learning that they might have received from me is nothing compared to what I have learnt from them. I have learnt to be simple and modest. I have learnt to find happiness in the little things around us.

What we are trying to do is a slow and eventful process. Week after week, activity after activity, we have tried to impart a life skill/lesson in each student. We really hope that we are able to touch the lives of the young souls of Ingraham Primary School (where we go for our visits) and when they venture out in the outside world, they are no way restrained in their thoughts.

We would achieve our purpose if these students are eventually able to distinguish right over wrong and also educate their friends on the same.

## SSR – Course With A Difference At IMT-G

*By: Sachin Mandot Jain (PGDM 2016-18)  
Published: insideiim.com | April 7, 2017*



It was Oct 2, 2016. 500+ Seater auditorium at IMT Ghaziabad was packed to its capacity. It was a different day for the first-year students who are used to the talks of CXOs and Industry leaders, the guest of honor for the day was noted Gandhian Ramesh Bhaiyaji who delivered the first I'm the change talk. Something was different in his address, market share was replaced by social responsibility, the bottom of pyramid seemed more than just a demographic entity. There couldn't be a better day than 2nd Oct to mark the beginning of course 'Sustainability and Social responsibility' (SSR), which in the words of Mahatma Gandhi was aimed to inculcate the philosophy 'Be the change you wish to see in the world'.

IMT-G is one of the few management institutes in the country to introduce a compulsory 3-credit course on Sustainability and Social Responsibility. Students were needed to voluntarily form a group of 6, choose an NGO and project from the list provided by the college. Some of these partner NGOs were Sadrag foundation, Smile foundation, Project Khel, Ashadeep, DM office Ghaziabad. SSR group had to make first 2 visits to their NGO on Saturdays and come up with a 'Detailed Implementation Plan' where they would identify a problem with help of NGO and propose their solution to be implemented over next 9-10 visits. A wide variety of projects proposed from Skill development to Livelihood creation, from

Women Empowerment to Financial Inclusion. As it happens with the things for the first time, there were doubts in the minds of students regarding implementation and the relevance of the course. Some NGOs were located

far-off and many of them were in the slum areas of Delhi-NCR. But as the course progressed, with visits every Saturday, these doubts began to mellow down. These groups began to develop a connect with the community and started feeling the gravity of problems that the community faced. It was the beginning of a phase when solutions were not about just the PPT, it was about impacting the on-ground realities.

The core idea of this course was to sensitize the students with problems of the community and then leverage their management skills to draft sustainable solutions for them. As the theme says 'I'm the change', students should act as a vehicle for change.

When SSR course came to an end in March 2017 with final report presentation, each of the 73 groups had a different experience to share. Somewhere from getting marks from 3 credit course, it went on to become a matter of 'making a mark'.

Here's experiences of some of these groups:

Group of Tanvi, Sourabh, Karthik and Abin, Nikhil, Saniya charted out robust and sustainable marketing strategy for the products made by women SHGs in rural communities of Dasna, U.P. Tanvi Vakil, who has 3 years of work-ex in Market research, wanted to help these groups in identifying their unique skill and then developing that into a livelihood which makes them the differentiated in the market.

Group S55 worked with Smile Aident foundation for Skill training of 12th pass out and graduates. Dharmesh Goyal and Devesh Varshney focused on Retail training of these students, Pooja Garg tried to develop a connect with female students of the center, so that they can participate more. Siddhant Gupta came up with innovative ways to engage students while Pradhumna Bhat who is from Chennai, nicknamed ACP tried to motivate Students while

students helped him with his 'Hindi' skills. I was a part of this group, helping in all the functions above. We did extempore, roleplays, introduction sessions, interviews for the students. From my experience, I can say that this course helped us with our teamwork and interpersonal skills.

Shreeya, Vatsalya, Neelesh, Gunjan, Divya, Aman who worked with Project Khel with the motto of taking learning beyond the classroom, implemented the curriculum in a government school in Ghaziabad. Curriculum involved very little classroom teaching and more of play. Group taught children life skills via play, who thoroughly enjoyed it and at least 40% of the class started to assimilate the learnings."

Group S51, who also received Best Project's award, worked with Lakshaym foundation in Mahipalpur Basti, an illegal settlement in Delhi. Apurv, Anubhav, Anshuman, Dushyant, Akhil of this group worked for Financial inclusion. Facing bureaucratic hurdles, they were able to open bank accounts for residents of this Basti and initiated attempts to avail benefits of Pradhanmantri Ujjwala Yojna for basti.

Dr. Kasturi Das and Dr. Anurag Danda, who were the faculty mentors for this course worked relentlessly to ensure a smooth experience along with Committee of Social Responsibility.



**Institute of  
Management Technology**  
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