



Dear Friends,

Greetings from Plustrust!

We are happy to share the highlights of the year (August 2018- July 2019) as we gear up for our next initiatives, Rural Women Edupreneurs (RWEs) Batch 4 and Anchor Batch1.

Clarifying our Purpose

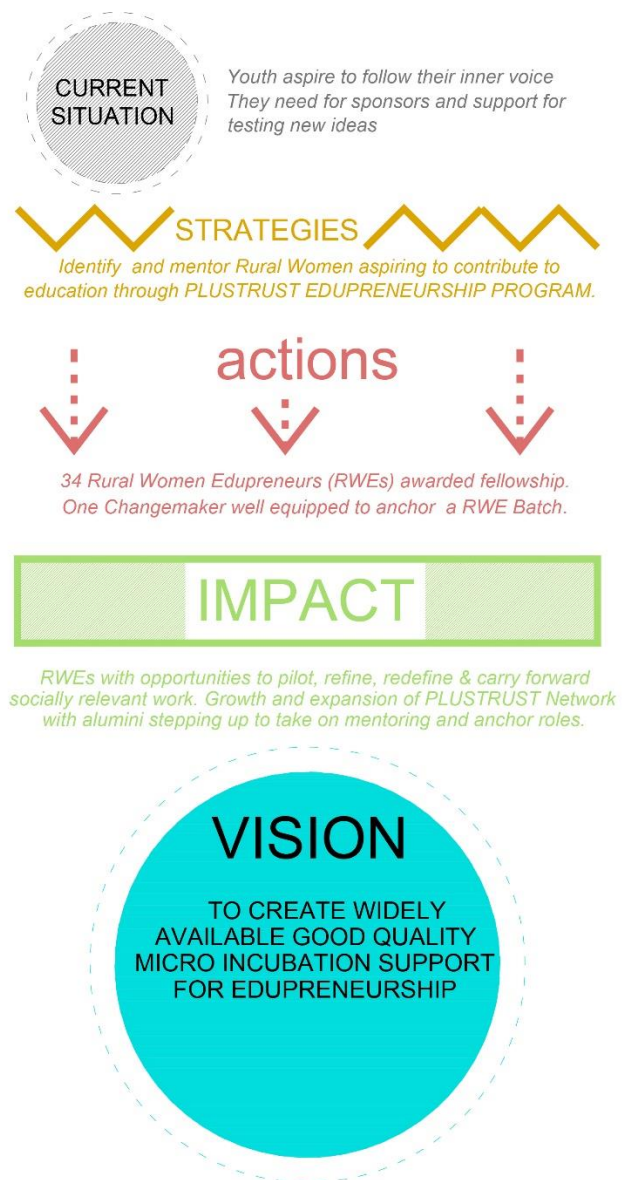
Over the last year we took stock and identified, for our own clarity, the core elements of our work. We used the handy framework of the Theory of Change and the outcome of our ruminations was an answer to the question

‘Why we do what we do?’

We are now able to clearly articulate our focus area, supporting the incubation of micro or even nano social enterprises.

Plustrust Theory of Change

(Diagram to the Right)



PLUSTRUST Anchor Program

Our resolve to extend the RWE program reach is prompted by the deeply satisfying journey with 34 RWE fellowships in the last three years. We have been working on our strategy to expand our coverage without diluting the quality and nature of personal contact. As a next step, we have announced our Anchors Development Program (September 2019). We hope to engage with a group of change makers who will absorb the experience of identifying and working with RWEs. We expect that some of our former fellows having benefitted from this approach and having had direct personal experience of its pros and cons will enroll for the Anchor Development Program. The first Anchor programme will be an immersive experience, with prospective anchors actively involved in the design and facilitation of the next Plustrust workshop for RWEs, along with the core team. They will then work closely with the selected fellows and independently anchor batches of fellows. This can eventually lead to context specific adaptation of RWE fellowships.

(<http://plustrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Plustrust-2019-2020-Programs.pdf>)

As we write now, we seek your support and help in spreading the word and helping us raise money for this expansion.

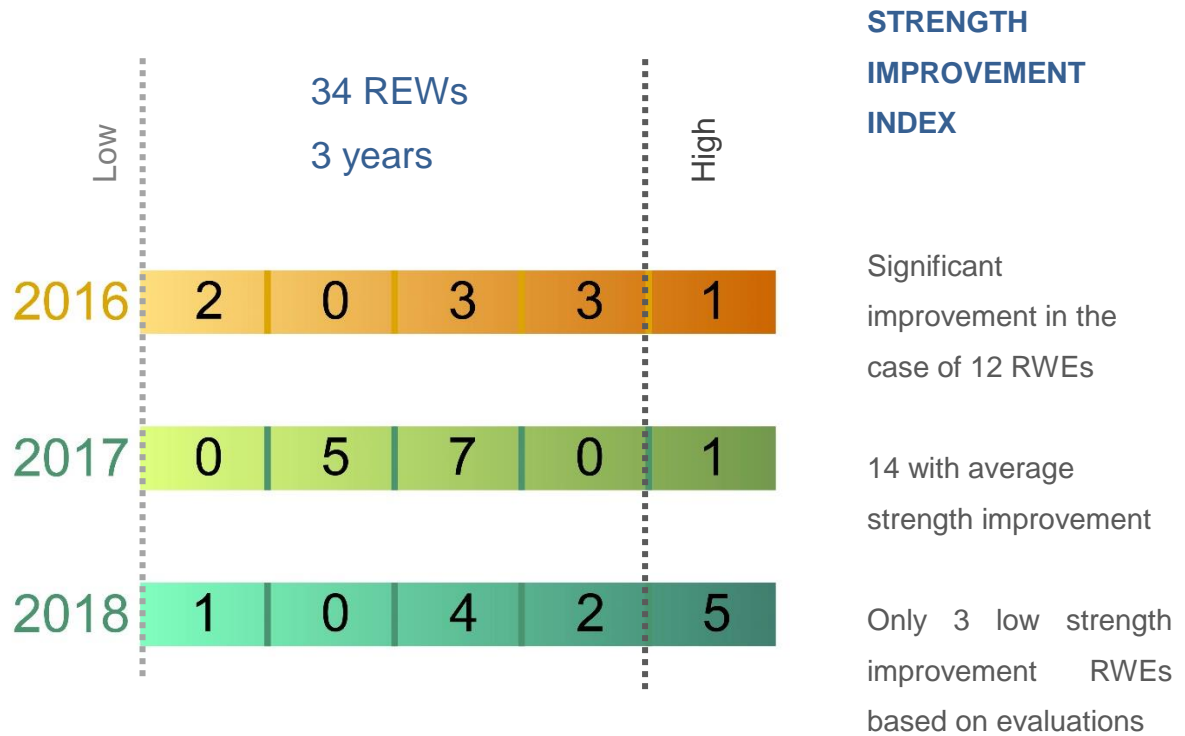
Highlights of the RWE 3 Batch

Our 3Ps model of Professional, Personal, Project Strengths and the strength improvement index was refined to include two more aspects. This model was made available to fellows and served as a guide to the program team to understand and map progress holistically. It has helped us at the selection stage, in the course of mentoring and in the final assessment.

We have been able to calculate the Strengths Improvement index which offers a baseline and finishing line snapshot of the fellowship journey. The adjoining table captures the pattern of improvements over the 3 batches. While these numbers do not bring alive the passion and commitment we saw in the field, it helps us to keep in mind that we are working on all three aspects simultaneously.

We are delighted to share that the 12 fellows of the RWE- 3 batch made significant progress between July and December 2018. We were also able to help most of them settle down to continuing their work. Based on our earlier experiences, we visited all the shortlisted applicants before offering the fellowship, to understand their needs and context more directly. This gave the anchor and program manager a better understanding and they could identify and brief local guides and mentors.





A Short Video on the RWE Fellowships

We were fortunate in locating Rohit Vishwakarma and Priya Yadav, interested in making short films and documentaries on development organizations. Braving the heat, they travelled to many locations filming activities and conversations with 17 of our 34 RWE fellows. A short film is certainly better than a long essay to present our story.

We invite you to catch a glimpse of what the RWE fellowship has meant by watching this video (please click on this link)

Fellows speak: Plustrust rural women fellowship program 2016-2019

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8v1fCbszIWE&t=5s>

Our website also has short clips on individual fellows they could visit and meet.



2018-2019 EDUPRENEUR STORIES

We offer profiles of our fellows RWE-3 batch and the work they are accomplishing despite odds.

MADHYA PRADESH

We offered five fellowships in Madhya Pradesh, with three going to young women working with the Koruku tribal community.

DR. MINAL KADWE (Pandhurna,MP)

MEHRUN SIDDIQUE (Khajuraho, MP)



Minal a homeopathy doctor, joined the Plustrust RWE Batch to start the Samopchar Health Education Initiative. She developed educational modules on health and hygiene with a focus on reproductive and menstruation health for schools and colleges. She succeeded in getting formal permission to work with Municipal Schools in collaboration with her local mentor Girish Mahale and Pratyaya EduResearch Lab. Smriti's inputs based on her work with Uger in Rajasthan proved very helpful too.

Minal could organize health camps and rope in many collaborators to tackle ignorance and break the silence on these tabooed subjects. To help young couples, she has set up a Planned Parenthood Clinic. Minal has built her report writing skills, session facilitation skills and self-confidence to interact and collaborate with local organizations and officials on these sensitive topics. Her core team is now taking shape.

Mehrun has been working for several years with children of school going age, with a focus on child protection work. Khajuraho, a world heritage site hides child labor and sexual exploitation of children. The dropout rate is high, children are engaged in tourism related activities and run a high risk of being trafficked. With the fellowship she has established a learning and counselling center and identified 40 children. She developed a process of counselling along with bridge courses to support their smooth re-entry to school.

Her center conducts creative workshops and organizes meetings and counselling support for children and parents. She engages with Government school teachers, the police department and the tourist guide networks to help children in need and also connect them to the schools. Proactive in raising funds and networking with other organizations, she plans to expand her reach in other areas around Khajuraho



ARUNA DHRUVE & SADHANA UNIKEE (RichadiKheda Village, Khalwa MP)

Aruna and Sadhna had volunteered at local government schools to teach primary school students using hands-on approaches. They teamed up to work together with the fellowship to establish their own community center, Mauj-Masti Kendra as an adjunct to the formal school.

They faced many challenges. Every day they both walked approximately 7 kms to reach the center. Aruna had to manage her time to prepare for her own graduate studies. Sadhna struggled with her personal and family issues and the fellowship amount helped in this tight situation.

The focus was on working with children and drop-outs or those likely to drop out. Their initial survey helped them to reach out to 15 school dropouts to start with. They taught through activities, games, poems and plays with focus on Hindi and Maths. They gained confidence, designing learning activities and organizing Baal Melas and festivals. They started sewing classes for older girls and women to ensure their own sustainability. Despite odds, they were able to run their center for 6-8 months with 36 students registered. They have improved their networking with local organizations, with support from the local mentor Tausif and Asha Kiran network. However, after the fellowship they had to close their center. Sadhana shifted to another village after marriage where she plans to resume activities. Aruna is working for her graduation and has a center at her home, with about 10 children coming for monthly tuition.



DWARAKA KATARE (Langoti village, Khalwa Block, MP)

Dwarka started BulandShiksha Kendra with the Plustrust fellowship at her village with 20 dropouts (6-14 years of age). She has a good relationship with the community and runs her after-school centre in a government building. She runs two-hour sessions both in the morning (before school time) and evening (after school time). She has developed modules for Hindi and Maths with the help of AshaKiran Community Teacher's capacity building workshops.

The fellowship has helped her deal with issues within her family. With the stipend and her actions on the ground she is respected in the community. She was invited by the local school to take classes and she deems this an honour indeed.

Despite challenges she is keen to work with adolescent girls and is in the process of defining her larger vision and approach.

MAHARASHTRA AND RAJASTHAN

Two RWEs were from Maharashtra and one fellowship was given in Rajasthan since the earlier batches had a number of fellowships in Rajasthan.

VARSHA ASHOK MALI

(Abdullat, Kolhapur, MH)

In her fellowship journey Varsha set up Jeevan Kaushal Shala, a Sunday Skill School for children from 7th to 10th standards. 44 students were enrolled after a general knowledge test. She runs her centre at the local panchayat hall on Sundays. She has developed a structured schedule and introduced elements such as prayer, cleanliness of the centre, decoration, responsibilities and good manners.

She conducts special sessions on street theatre and self-defense. During the week she works in a school to improve her teaching skills.

SHAILA VASANT YADAV

(AundhThal, Satara, MH)

Shaila established the Mahatma Phule support classes for children aged 6-14 years from the nomadic Kolhati tribe, in three hamlets. Motivated by her personal struggles as a girl from this community, she began with a survey and established the centres in two villages- Mohan Nagar Basti, and Mayani village. In both locations the community offered her a space and she was able to find local volunteers.

Besides regular teaching-learning activities, she engages with the parent community, gathers interns, resource persons and volunteers from a local college, to teach children Primary Maths using JodoGyan's approaches.





Varsha works closely with her brother, Vinayak Ashok Mali who is a WIPRO Foundation fellow and she is part of their monthly capacity building meetings. Going forward she wants to build a Science centre in her village. She is making time to pursue her own higher education, while testing new approaches to make her centre self-sustaining.



Shaila maintains close contact with Varsha, her friend and RWE peer and draws on her mentor Lewitt Somarajan, a former Plustrust Changemaker fellow and Ashoka Fellow. She wants to work more on community issues like water, health and illiteracy along with her work for children



KOMAL KUMARI

(Semari block, Udaipur, RJ)

Komal set out to reduce the hardship generated for families of migrant workers- children(13-16 yrs) and women left behind. Though she planned to work in 16 schools, she was able to achieve 3 schools due to vacations. She adopted a twofold approach, focussing on design thinking for children and to support livelihoods for women through enterprising activities. In this manner she could strengthen the women's groups and promote their enterprises in two villages. The activities she worked on were paper bag making and sanitary pad making.

As part of her fellowship, Komal gained exposure to the WIPRO annual-meet and participated in the JagritiYatra 2018. She also got exposed to Project Uger - Udaipur for deepening her understanding on menstrual health products. . She worked independently throughout the fellowship and has now moved back to her home state, Bihar, with plans to work with women's enterprises.



BIHAR AND UTTAR PRADESH

We had one enthusiastic young person working in a semi-urban slum in UP and three relatively older Edupreneurs in Bihar.

REEMU

(Shahganj area, Jaunpur District UP)



Reemu works with Muslim and SC-ST children in the age group 6-14 from a slum community. With the fellowship she has set up two “Apna TalimGhar learning centres”, one within the slum and another at her house with improved basic infrastructure. She uses joyful learning methods, celebrates Baal Melas and holds regular community meetings to motivate people to educate their children. 45 children come regularly and 12 children were admitted to the government schools. The major challenges include lack of facilities like black board, rugs and poor access during the monsoon. Community conflicts add to her difficulties.

She has support from a good local network, her mentor Rahi and former Plustrust fellow Simmi. She has raised resources like books and stationery and involves herself in teacher capacity building.

Reemu has another fellowship from Misal and collaborates with Azad Hind Sansthan.

VIBHA KUMARI

(KesrawanPhukali ,Muzaffarpur District Bihar)



Vibha is a passionate teacher at heart, who in spite of various alternative work engagements kept her passion alive by running a small coaching center in the compound of her house for many years. Through the fellowship she was able to transform her centre, making it a community learning centre with better infrastructure and teaching-learning practices. Renaming her centre “NavPahal Community Learning Centre”, she switched over to activity-based experiential-learning for teaching Language and Arithmetic. She developed a set of structured learning activities including craft and an annual timetable. Monthly assessments, student projects, parents meetings and festival celebrations are regular features. She now has an engaged community of parents and is able to charge a monthly fee for 14 out of 27 students.

She is more confident and nurtures her initiative in a more structured and disciplined way. She has very good rapport with her local mentor Poonam and took keen interest in building her own skills and capacities. She is also active in the MahilaSamakhya network. She now plans to improve the physical infrastructure of her centre, nurture her team, improve relations with parents and develop her own skills.



INDIRA DEVI

(Piyar ,Bandra block, Muzaffarpur Dt Bihar)



Indira Devi is a social activist associated with MahilaSamakhya, keen to strengthen the local schooling system. During the fellowship period she started Adarsh Centre in the government school to work with children of ages 6-12, adolescent girls and parents.

She has registered 30 children from the Dalit community who are unable to read and write, despite being in school. She now uses hands-on and joyful teaching and learning approaches. Children are keenly interested and parents send them regularly. She conducts monthly parent meetings to discuss the children's progress, besides issues around health, hygiene, gender and so on. She also organizes fun filled events for occasions like Teacher's Day or Rakhi. She has improved her skills to design activities, formulate strategies and write reports, learning from exposure visits and her mentor Poonam.

ASHA RANI

(Patna City, Bihar)



Asha Rani was running Priyadarshini Centre for children from marginalized communities at Fulwari Sharif since 2013, mobilizing young college-graduate volunteers, with financial support from her family. With the Plustrust fellowship, she introduced structured interventions in the government school while nurturing her core volunteer team to develop pedagogical modules for basic language & arithmetic. She offers week-end classes with extra-curricular activities and learning visits and documents her teaching methods and experiences.

The fellowship gave her opportunities to attend workshops, visit larger NGOs and interact with mentors and other Plustrust fellows. She is convinced that her centre should become self-sustainable and is exploring local options beyond the family fund. She applied to Wipro Seeding Fellowship Program and reached the final round. Though she did not get the fellowship, she could learn more about organization building and gain self-confidence.



Change Maker Fellowship for Animal Welfare -Samabhava

Plustrust has been a well-wisher of Samabhava over the years. When we learnt that the founder Trustee Sandesh Raju was having financial difficulties, we came forward to offer him a fellowship, build a volunteer base and social media presence so that he can continue his work with greater freedom. We hope to work closely with him to stabilise the organisation over the next year. Samabhava has worked on rescue and shelter for working equines like ponies and donkeys. In 2011, Samabhava was sheltering four ponies. Today it takes care of 31 ponies, which have been either injured or abandoned by their owners. Highest standards of care are maintained. Over time it has become a challenge to maintain the operations, leaving the trustee very little time or energy to mobilize resources or build volunteer team.

Samabhava's story of success with VK(Vijay Karnataka)

VK, a pony at the Samabhava shelter is now able to walk after recovering from multiple fractures on his rear right tibia. The fighter spent more than 5 months in a self created "ICU" type of environment at the shelter. The injured limb was kept in a Thomas Splint and wrapped in a bandage. He was made to lie down every couple of days to rest the three active limbs.

The team often struggled with the thought of euthanizing him, seeing him in that agonizing pain, but 5 months later their efforts paid off. The veterinarians found that the limb was sturdy enough to take him out of the splint. The next step of the journey is to rehabilitate the leg so that VK can go back to a life of freedom and dignity.



The Way Ahead

As we move into the 10th year of our work, we look forward to the spread of our model. We now realize that our biggest requirement is fund raising. We hope to leverage on our FCRA permission which came in March 2019 thanks to support from Sophia Akash Foundation.

We acknowledge with deep gratitude, the generous and sustained support we have received from Mr.Nimesh Sumati and Caring Friends. Kamakshi Rao of Ankur capital and Santosh of N Core have spent time understanding our model and we look forward to their help. Family members Vanaja Muthukrishnan, M. Ramaswami and Neena Ramaswami , Vidya Murali , Lakshmi Radhakrishnan and Dharmambal Vaidyanathan, Sharanya, Varun and Harini, Dr.Nirmala Krishnamurthy have continued to support us with donations and volunteering. Girish Mahale has been a staunch supporter, contributing to the RWE programme at every stage as our first Anchor. We look forward to the continued support of all these people. Hardeep worked closely with the RWE 3 batch and has now decided to leave us mainly because of her own health and family commitments.

We have two new members in our team now, Priyanshi in Udaipur and Leah in Bangalore. We welcome them and look forward to their growth in Plustrust.

With best wishes

Trustees of Plustrust

