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Dear Friends,

Greetings from Plustrust! Here is an update on the developments in Plustrust, since we last wrote to you a year ago.

It has been a significant year for us and here are the details!

FELLOWSHIPS

We could offer three fellowships in the latter half of 2014.

Kaushiek Pranoo and Shruti Tharayil of 'Rela' began working with Adivasi children in East Godavari District of A.P.

Ashweetha Shetty has set up 'Bodhitree Skills' in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu to prepare rural graduates for careers.

Abhijit Sinha developed 'Makerspace Learning Center' for children, with computers, internet and simple prototyping tools in Banjarpalya village near Bangalore.



Shruti of Rela, learning & sharing forest stories with tribal children, E Godavari



Ashweetha of Bothitree skills during one of her village training Programs.



A luminaire from throw away CDs, by Guruprasad a student at Makerspace.

PLUSTRUST RETREAT 2015

This year we strove to widen our reach, going more local and rural, beyond just the 'word-of-mouth' channels, to locate our fellows and niche as a fellowship programme. Our other challenge was of course to find the money to expand. When we aired our thoughts, Shri Nimesh Sumati of Caring Friends immediately came forward with financial support and reassured us that our niche is at the micro- incubation stage.

In January 2015, Ms.Ranjita Sapkota, IDEX fellow joined us for a six month internship and we began to building a batch of new fellows for the Plustrust retreat in May 2015. When we approached collaborators like Bharat Calling and Samvada, the word spread gradually.

On the 7th of May 2015, we had 25 enthusiastic young friends, keen to visualize their idea for social change or innovation and plan for a pilot-run of their idea.

We were fortunate to have eminent resource persons like V.Sridhar (Renga Foundation), Meenakshi Vijayasimha (Advaya Humanistic Systems), Pankaj Khabiya (Ethik), Kavitha Krishnamurthy (Kilikili founder and Ashoka Fellow), Olina Banerji (Ashoka Foundation) ,Nimesh Sumati (Caring Friends), Tito Chandy(Third Umpire, Notforprofit India) and Shalini Menon (Educators' Collective). Ashweetha, Abhijit , Kausheik and Shruthi shared their experiences as fellowship holders. 15 participants forwarded their plans and 11 fellowships have been awarded.





Plustrust Retreat Participants

1	Sajid Ali	Gulbarga	Computer Learning Centre for Youth
2	Seema Joshi	New Delhi	Education and Life skills for girls
3	Girish Mahale	Pandhurna, (M.P.)	Project based science teaching and learning
4	Daligappa	Ramnagaram	Chemical free gardens in government schools
5	Rose Mary	Ramanagaram	Chemical free gardens in government schools
6	Navendu Mishra	Seoni (M.P.)	Education for citizenship
7	Prajwal H. P	Bangalore	Study skills for poor students
8	Brajesh Patel	Hoshangabad	Resource centre for children in slums
9	Chetan D Nerkar	Kalyan(Mumbai)	Academic support for slow learners
10	Siddaiah B	Mulabagal	Computer education for poor children in government Schools
11	Satyaprakash Chouhan	Itarsi	Sensitivity and kindness to animals in farming communities

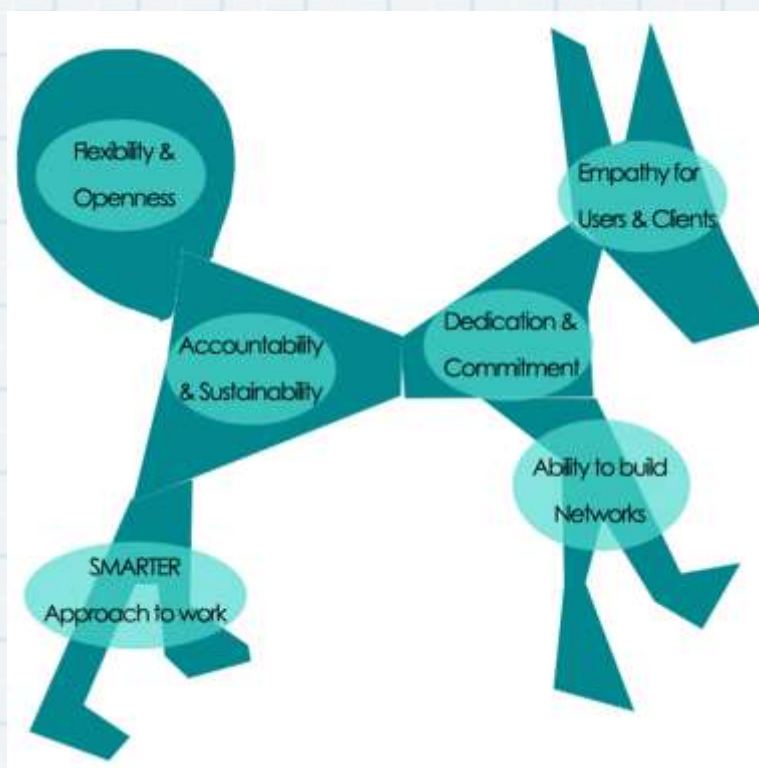


Young energetic participants & organizers, Plustrust Retreat 2015



A four day Retreat for current and prospective fellows, May 2015

Thanks to Nimesh Ji's probing we began articulating and formally listing qualities that would define plustrust fellows and help monitor their continued progression into full-fledged social entrepreneurs. A draft version of these frameworks will be shared shortly.



Core qualities of a Plustrust fellow

Plustrust News 2015

On completing our fellowship, Ashweetha has been awarded the Acumen fellowship and Abhijit Sinha is now in Kerala working on innovation. Kausheik and Shruthi are beginning their work with the residential Schools for tribal children in Vizianagaram District. We wish them all greater success and significant social impact in the years ahead.



Research on Midday Meal (MDM) Scheme

We have made some headway in our efforts to study the supply chains for MDMS. Ranjita studied the processes and mapped them up to the Taluk level taking Padma's support to deal with language barriers. She presented this work on Plustrust Day and has based her M A dissertation on this Research. We now propose to find ways of improving efficiency working with local partners.

Assessment of Government Primary Schools in Kuppam, A.P



A few of the cluster ready schools identified by Plustrust.

In September 2014 we were invited to study Government Primary Schools in Kuppam Mandal of Andhra Pradesh. Padma managed the field research with a local team of research scholars from the Dravidian University. With our findings we identified those schools with the potential to emerge as cluster schools setting examples for quality within the government system.



FGD Methodology for Naandi Foundation

In February 2015, Naandi Foundation invited us to conduct a workshop as part of planning for a nation-wide survey of adolescent girls. The Naandi team experimented with FGD questions and tested it with three representative groups. Feedback through video films of these FGDs offered powerful moments of learning. Participants differentiated between research and activism or facilitation, which came to them more very naturally.



Naandi Foundation Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Visioning Process for the Knowledge Mission in AP

In March-April 2015, Plustrust partnered with the Department of Higher Education in Andhra Pradesh to develop the vision statement and constitute the advisory body. Shanti Yeachuri worked on the project for three months supporting the Principal Secretary, Department of Higher Education in constituting and convening the advisory and executive groups.



Lalitha Iyer worked on the early drafts of the vision statement and facilitated consultations within and across stakeholders to enable the executive team to identify priorities and plan entry stage projects. It was a proud moment for us when Plustrust was named a knowledge partner for the Government of AP.

http://www.knowledgession.ap.gov.in/docs/AP_Knowledge_Mission_16-06-15.PDF

Partnerships and Collaborations

We continue our collaboration with Ananda Bharathi and Padma teaches there two or three days a week. Samvada and Baduku College and Bharat Calling and Spandhana were very helpful in putting us in touch with potential fellows. We benefited hugely from the support and good wishes of the Ashoka Foundation Team. NotforprofitIndia, a newly launched crowd funding platform, has been a sounding board and we have tested crowd funding possibilities with encouraging results. We continue to maintain cordial links with like-minded organizations such as Makkala Jagriti, The Educators Collective, Kilikili, Sathi and RTE activist networks. We also continue to lean on volunteers and former fellows to step in as mentors and advisors.

Our Supporters

We could organize Plustrust Retreat and commence the fellowships for this batch with the support received from Caring Friends. A generous contribution from Mr. M Ramaswami, from Singapore in July covers our commitments towards this batch. The other contributors during the year have been Ms. Meena Koka, Mr. M P Venkatesh, Ms Sharanya Rebba, and Ms Vanaja Muthukrishnan. We are deeply moved by the spontaneous and generous support from all these well-wishers and we hope to live up to the trust they have reposed in us.



Personal Updates

Shanti has been keeping well and is involved in forming a foundation to promote cancer awareness and facilitate support groups, guided by two oncologists. Smriti has published her research on migrant labor in brick kilns and she is currently working on projects related to menstrual and adolescent health. Ranjita is back in Nepal and exploring options on sustainable livelihoods and agriculture. Padma is considering venturing on her own enterprise. Lalitha has co-edited the ISABS publication on T-Group facilitation "The Learning crucible".

Looking forward to your continuing support

Lalitha, Shanti, Smriti, Padma

31st July 2015

