

PLUSTRUST

E- Newsletter





A YEAR OF HOPE

IN THIS ISSUE

- NEW INITIATIVES
- PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS
- FELLOWSHIPS
- ORIENTATION WORKSHOPS
- ANCHOR DEVELOPMENT
- HUBS
- ECOSYSTEM BUILDING
- PLUSTRUST TEAM UPDATES
- ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
- FINANCIALS

Plustrust offers micro-incubation support through Fellowship opportunities for Rural Women Changemakers who wish to test out their ideas to work on themes like Social Change, Inclusive Education, Skill and Livelihoods Community Health and Leadership development.

Over the past twelve months, we have worked with 52 women who wish to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams and contribute to the community while earning a livelihood. We are happy to share that we are moving steadily towards our strategic goals. Our range of Fellowships has expanded, and our Anchor network is growing. We have found grassroot and external collaborators aligned with our vision. As we move forward, we are learning and discovering more about fostering entrepreneurship and innovation.

New Initiatives

We begin by sharing the recent and exciting new developments and we hope to engage with many such initiatives in the coming year.

1. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) – Rise Up/EMpower

Plustrust was awarded a grant by Rise Up and The Emerging Markets Foundation (“EMpower”) to set up ‘maker’ spaces in government residential schools (KGBVs) for disadvantaged girls in July 2022. The project will be spearheaded by Ashwani Tiwari. It will assist 300 girls to improve their understanding and academic performance in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) subjects and help them to continue their schooling and progress from one grade to the next. The girls will interact with relevant stakeholders to improve STEM education for girls and replicate ‘maker’ labs in other schools.

2. Social Capital Credit (SoCC)

We partnered with Asia Initiatives in April 2022 to adopt their Social Capital Credit (SoCC) methodology. The project is spearheaded by Nageshwar Panchal in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh. In this program, mentors (local youth) and children's parents earn SoCCs by working towards a supportive environment for learning for children in government schools. Mentors can redeem the credits for leadership training programs, and parents can redeem them for educational materials for the children.

The program covers 300 children and 300 parents in 10 villages with 10 youth mentors.

New Initiatives

3. Teacher Leadership Program

Parashuram Public School, Amravati in Amaravati (Maharashtra) is striving to offer quality education in a backward region and the Plustrust team is supporting teacher development in the institution. Girish Mahale, Advisor, Plustrust will mentor the teachers to develop an enabling mindset in education. From September 2022, one teacher from Parshuram school will be joining a teacher-facilitator training programme, under the guidance of Vasudha Kapoor to spread new pedagogies. Plustrust has offered scholarships to a few students in the school with support from Just for Humanity, a New York-based charity focused on education.

4. Samvaad- A Micro-funding Platform

Plustrust piloted the first round of interaction and engagement between grassroots Changemakers and potential Donors, based on our research of micro-funding for small, grassroots NGOs. This pilot initiative is a bridge for small NGOs or Changemakers (with annual budgets of less than 20 lakhs) to improve access and availability of resources. A Curator acts as a confidante for the Donors and guides the Changemakers in developing their proposals with needed data. Plustrust acknowledges the role played by the Curators Dr Amir Ullah Khan, Centre for Development Policy and Practice, Mr Sachin Kotangale, start-up veteran and Ms Lakshmi Raman, Kaizen Surya Associates in enabling the Donor-Changemaker dialogue in the first round of Samvaad.

The Samvaad pilot in March 2022, helped to mobilise INR 2.6 lakhs for 6 Changemakers.

To know more about Samvaad click: <https://plustrust.org/samvaad/>



Performance Highlights

We have reached out to 15 Rural Women Edupreneurs, 9 Return to Roots Fellows, 21 Community Health Entrepreneurs, and 7 Coaching Fellows (52 in all) from September 2021 to August 2022. Three new Anchors have joined in Mandla, Madhya Pradesh and Haridwar, Uttarakhand.

We now visualise the path we walk together with grassroot women Changemakers and endeavour to expand the ecosystem to encourage them.

The journey typically begins with a Fellowship and continues as an Alumni engagement. Our Anchors are invariably Changemakers setting up their own NGOs and they become grassroot collaborators, embedding Fellowships as a core part of their strategy. When they in turn come up with their own innovations, they choose to partner with Plustrust on such projects.

To know more: <https://plustrust.org/microincubation-fellowships/>



Fellowships

We saw the emergence of a range of fellows in the last six months. This heartening trend demonstrates the flexibility of the Plustrust model and its potential to address diverse themes. We have been able to double the number of Fellowships and reach out to 52 women during the last twelve months (September 2021 to August 2022).

We have also extended our work into Mandla in Madhya Pradesh and commenced work with young women from the pastoralist Vangujjar community located near the Rajaji National Park & Tiger reserve, Uttarakhand. We have thus been able to reach women from extremely marginalised and vulnerable communities, offering 12 Fellowships to women from the Bheel/Meena community in Rajasthan, 11 women from the Muslim and Dalit communities in Uttar Pradesh, 8 women from the Vangujjar community in Uttarakhand, 8 women from Dalits and OBCs community in Nagda, Madhya Pradesh, 5 women from the Baiga community in Mandla, Madhya Pradesh and 7 from the Korku community in Khalwa, Madhya Pradesh.



Orientation Workshops

We conducted 6 orientation workshops for selecting Fellows in Chawand (Rajasthan), Faizabad (Uttar Pradesh), Mandla (Madhya Pradesh), Haridwar (Uttarakhand), Udaipur (Rajasthan) and Jaora (Madhya Pradesh). 82 women attended our workshops of whom 45 were offered Fellowships (15 Rural Women Edupreneure, 9 Return to Roots and 21 Community Health Entrepreneurs).



ONGOING FELLOWSHIPS

Rural Women Edupreneurs, Uttarakhand

These women are working with primary and middle children from pastoral nomadic and Adivasi communities to provide quality education, build foundational literacy and numeracy skills and improve learning outcomes. Some of them work with parents and mothers to increase health awareness and the quality of education. One fellow is working on educating women and young girls from the Adivasi community to improve nutrition, agriculture and horticulture.



Aamrin Jahan



Anjum Nisha



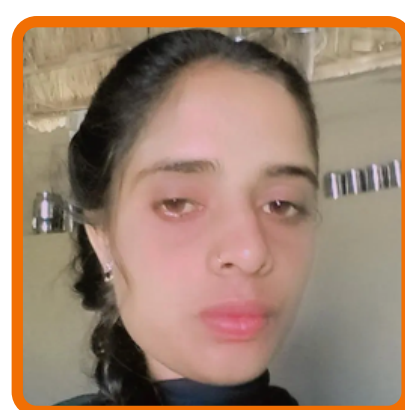
Amna Bibi



Farida



Julekha



Kumari Salma



Najma



Tabish Khanam

ONGOING FELLOWSHIPS

Return to Roots, Rajasthan

The project ideas are more varied and include skill development and marketing. For example, Khushnoor, Sarada, Rajasthan is working with a group to make and sell soaps and detergents in the local market and Sweta Chauhan from Mewar Junction, Rajasthan markets ethnic, organic and processed foods like chips, papads and namkeens (savouries) prepared by the SHGs in rural areas of Mewar. Usha Sewak, Chawand, Sarada, Rajasthan runs her own shop and trains young girls and women to stitch fancy wedding and party dresses.



Khushnoor



Usha Sewak



Sweta Chauhan

Community Health Entrepreneur – A skill building Fellowship

Plustrust has collaborated with Bahaar Foundation and Portea to launch a 'Pilot Project for Community Health Entrepreneurs (CHE)'. The project is a response to gaps in basic diagnostic testing facilities in rural India, highlighted during the pandemic.



The Portea kit consists of 7 devices that help the Community Health Entrepreneurs conduct 7 tests.

Stadiometer: Height | **Weighing scale:** Weight | **Pulse oximeter:** Oxygen saturation (SpO2)

Thermometer: Temperature | **Blood Pressure Monitor:** Blood pressure

Haemoglobin Meter: Haemoglobin | **Glucose meter:** Blood Sugar

These devices are readily available over the counter in cities and middle-class families have easy access to them. However, the situation in rural communities is very different.



The pilot batch of 21 women was identified and oriented to the work in March 2022. They were trained by the Portea team on key topics such as Vital signs, Menstrual Hygiene, First Aid, Fall-Prevention and Management, Chronic Disease Management, Basic Life Support, Medical Screening and Recommendations, and Biomedical Waste Disposal. They also received inputs on topics related to personal effectiveness such as Time Management, Telephone-Mobile Etiquette, Communication, Grooming and Hygiene. The women have begun to offer diagnostic tests in the community from July 2022 at an affordable price and the initial results are promising. In the first three months, a CHE has seen an average of 58 patients and earned an average of Rs.1800. The program not only serves unserved/underserved communities with health testing but also a source of livelihood with dignity for the women. We now plan to expand this work to other areas.

The Community Health Entrepreneurs (state-wise)

Rajasthan (3 districts)



Jashoda Pujari,
Udaipur



Jaya Rao,
Dungarpur



Kamini,
Dungarpur



Mehjbin Bano,
Udaipur



Monika Patel,
Udaipur



Ravina Kunwar,
Dungarpur



Sunita Kunwar Rao,
Dungarpur



Vidhya Rao,
Banswada

Khandwa district, Madhya Pradesh



Aarti



Bhuri Pallavi



Durga



Maya Baghel



Ramvati



Sushila

The Community Health Entrepreneurs (state-wise)

Ujjain district, Madhya Pradesh



Amita, Ujjain



Astha Panchal,
Ujjain



Kavita Parmar,
Ujjain



Kavita Limbila,
Sehore



Pratibha
Pandya, Ujjain



Pooja Malviya,
Ujjain



Ranu Upadhya,
Ujjain

KIRANAA - Coaching Fellowships

Coaching helps to inspire and maximize an individual's inner capabilities and is especially relevant for women in restrictive cultural settings. However, experienced coaches are not readily available in remote locations. To bridge this gap, Plustrust has collaborated with the **Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry-Karnataka Coaching Council (WICCI) - KCC Bangalore**, for a pilot programme to offer Coaching Fellowships.

Seven people from our network (all women) joined the initial batch of KIRANAA (meaning ray of light)

KIRANAA Coaching Fellows

Jagriti Sonkar, Awadh People's Forum, Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh

Iqra Ullah, Awadh People's Forum, Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh

Nikita Panchal, Former Plustrust Fellow, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh

Priyanshi Sharma, Programme Manager, Plustrust, Udaipur, Rajasthan

Pramila Chouhan, Plustrust Anchor, Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh

Shaila Yadav, Plustrust Anchor, Satara, Maharashtra,

Dr. Nilofer, Hyderabad, Telangana

Anchor Development

We have also expanded our Anchor network over the years. We are now 14 Anchors strong and working in 7 states of India – Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Bihar, Karnataka, and Maharashtra.

Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

Anand Tandiya, our former Rural Women Edupreneure joined the Fellowship in 2019 to work with the Adivasi Baiga community in Mandla district, Madhya Pradesh on bridge education. During her Fellowship, she was also actively involved in the Covid – 19 relief work and helped many tribal families in dealing with the lockdown crisis.



As an Anchor with Plustrust, she is currently mentoring a group of 5 women working as a collective with the Baiga community to change the negative attitude towards education of their children.

Haridwar, Uttarakhand

Tanya Khera and Prashant Anand are founders of Samanta, an organization working with the forest-dwelling, pastoral nomadic communities of the lower Shivalik range of mountains (Rajaji National Park & Tiger reserve). They joined our anchor network in April 2022.

Tanya Khera works to engage young girls and women from the community to realise their dreams and have a space for sharing and learning. As a Plustrust Anchor, she hopes to bring girls and women of the community together to be a part of the program – learn, share and do.



Prashant Anand is working towards building the ecosystem for education across Van Vidyalayas (Forest schools) and public schools. The vision is to enable education access to all for the holistic development of communities. As a Plustrust Anchor, he will support the efforts in the region to work with youth, children, and parents.

HUBS

The Shanta Raghavan Plustrust hub at Udaipur is now 'real' with the opening of our field office in Udaipur. The hub will be managing the project to set up maker spaces in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBVs) which are government-run residential schools for girls who missed out on the first five years of schooling. The area covered by the hub includes Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand besides Rajasthan. There are 8 Community Health Entrepreneurs from Udaipur. We hope to take our work further in Rajasthan and beyond.

The Caring Friends Plustrust Ujjain Hub is active with Fellowships including the pilot of Community Health Entrepreneurs in 2 locations. The hub has innovated in building a post-Fellowship group of 5 Fellows in Mandla. The local Anchor is coordinating their work and helping them access financial support through a contributory revolving fund. This experiment could lead to more such groups in other locations becoming financially stronger.

This hub is also managing the Social Capital Credit (SoCCs), Asia Initiative pilot to encourage students, their families, and young leaders to come together to improve learning outcomes.

Alumni Updates

Despite the pandemic last year our Fellows showed tremendous determination in continuing their journey to pursue their dreams to become social entrepreneurs and help their communities. 17 out of 27 Fellows continue to work on their projects even after the completion of the Fellowship. Others have gone to government jobs, social sector organizations, other Fellowship opportunities, further education and in search of new opportunities.

Alumni Batch

Rural Women Edupreneurs



Aarti Yadav, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh



Anjali Yadav, Mavai Dist. Mandla, Madhya Pradesh



Birajo Sonwani, Mavai, Dist. Mandla, Madhya Pradesh



Kahakashaan Ayyoob, Faizabad, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh



Madhuri Yadav, Bicchiya Dist. Mandla, Madhya Pradesh



Surabhee Paneriya, Bicchiya Dist. Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

Return to Roots



Deepa Gaud, Faizabad,
Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh



Dharmavati, Palia Risali, District –
Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh



Gudiya, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh



Kanchan Yadav, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh



Shailesh Singh, Bahraich,
Uttar Pradesh



Poonam Kumari, Uttar Pradesh



Vandana Pandey, Uttar Pradesh

Alumni Engagement

1. Mandla Fellow Meets

A recurring monthly virtual meeting was initiated for Mandla Fellows to support their work in the field and improve outreach activities to mobilise more local support. All 5 Fellows and their Anchor, Anand, participate regularly.

2. Workshops for Mandla Fellows

Dr Gurveen Kaur, the trainer, is the founder of the Center for Learning (CFL Hyderabad), an organisation focusing on Alternative Education methodologies offered an online workshop for the Mandla Fellows on quality in education. The workshop explored fundamental questions about quality in education and what purpose it serves. Prashant Anand and Tanya Khera, our Anchors working in a forest area, had conversations with our Mandla Fellows to brainstorm ways to align with the local community to bring them on board.

2 sessions were also conducted by Ms Lakshmi Raman, Development Consultant, in May 2022 to help the Mandla group develop a strategy to achieve financial sustainability after the 6-month Fellowship period was ended.

A session on a baseline assessment of the education situation in the Baiga community was conducted by Vasudha Kapoor our hub Manager in August 2022. The Mandla group learnt some baseline-specific skills which involved collecting Foundational Literacy & Numeracy (FLN) data by using Survey, Assessment, Evaluation and Research (ASER) tools and mapping the community to design better-informed interventions.

Alumni Engagement

3. Post-Fellowship Engagement

We reconnected with 21 Changemaker Alumni of 2020-21 to understand what they were doing and what their plans were for going forward. Some 55 percent of our Alumni are currently working in the development sector and a few (around 5 percent) are running their own small enterprises. Reasons for discontinuing their work continue to be marriage, pregnancy and other household responsibilities.

4. Workshop on Budgeting

An open workshop was organised for the Plustrust network (including Alumni) on making a simple project budget and 22 participants attended. Using the example of how to run a tea stall, the participants identified budget components like 'capital cost', 'recurring cost', 'operational cost', 'salary', 'travel' and so on. They then drew up their own budgets and discussed doubts and questions with the trainer. This workshop was conducted by our Anchor Vasudha Kapoor.

5. E – workshop series

A 3-month E-series workshop to learn basic Microsoft Excel, Word and PowerPoint were offered for the Plustrust network (including Alumni) on mobile phone and desktop. 8 participants attended the workshop. We plan to have the next round of the E-workshop series in October 2022. Priyanshi Sharma, Programme Manager, Udaipur designed and offered these sessions.

Ecosystem Building

Research

Micro-funding for small NGOs in India

Plustrust partnered with the Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP), a research organization based in Hyderabad, Telangana to study Philanthropy in India with particular emphasis on micro-funding for smaller organisations. The study focused on ways to make it easier for small NGOs (<20 lakhs expenditure pa), family businesses and small charitable Foundations to work together and improve access and availability of financial resources for community initiatives through outreach, publication, and dialogue platforms.

Through the study, Plustrust gained insights on:

1. The recipients' perspective, which is usually overlooked in studies of philanthropy.
 - How do last-mile Changemakers envision and approach their relationship with individual Donors?
2. Individual Donors' vision and aspirations for their funding and support
 - Individual Donor expectations and how they could become more effective contributors in micro-funding?
3. Ways to build and sustain micro-funding relationships to develop a robust action agenda for the future
 - How the contact between Changemakers and individual Donors can be facilitated for a strong and sustained, synergetic relationship?

Micro - funding for small NGOs in India

Learning from the study and building on Plustrust's experience, 'Samvaad' - a curated platform for Donors and Changemakers to interact and engage, was organised. It brought together 6 individual Donors and 6 Changemakers, facilitated by 3 Curators.

Link: <https://plustrust.org/publications/>

Our study on Microfunding was presented at the virtual conference of the **Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy (CSIP)** organized by Ashoka University, Haryana and the **Conference on Gender & Inclusion** at Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad, Telangana in mid-2022.

Entrepreneurial Mindset Profiles

Dr Lalitha Iyer, our Managing Trustee and Ms Lakshmi Raman, Consultant to the Social Sector presented a paper on '**Increasing Women's Agency through Entrepreneurial Mindset Development - The Plustrust Model**', at the Applied Behavioural Science Summit organized by the Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS) in September 2021. The paper compared and identified the common elements in the Plustrust 3Ps (Personal, Project and Professional Strengths) model with the Entrepreneurial Mindset Profile (EMP) model developed by the Eckerd College, Florida, USA. Based on this research Lakshmi and Lalitha enrolled for the EMP course of the Eckerd College and received certification to administer and interpret profiles.

Thus far, the EMP has been used for individuals, businesses, and educational institutions to assess the entrepreneurial mindset. Here in India, its use with women in rural India will be pioneered by Plustrust.

South Asia Young Women's Leadership and Mentorship II (SAYWLM II) Program(CREA)

Dr Lalitha Iyer, our Managing Trustee, was invited as a mentor for the programme focused on building young women feminist leaders for the future. Along with Dr Anuradha Prasad of the Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS), has been mentoring 6 Executive Directors of organizations based in India to facilitate the growth of Young Women Leaders.

International Day of Rural Women celebration: 15th Oct 2021

To recognize the crucial role played by our rural women and girls towards the well-being of their communities in the wake of the pandemic, Plustrust organized a virtual panel discussion on the theme '**Rural Women and Girls - Building Resilience**'. Our Fellows talked about their personal journeys and how they built their own resilience in these challenging times. We also discussed the roles of NGOs and the efficacy of Government schemes. The event concluded with a Q&A session and conversations with the audience.

Plustrust Team Updates

New Team Member

We welcome our new team member, Disha Mehta from Nagda, Madhya Pradesh. A commerce graduate, she would like to extend herself to different sections of society. Disha enjoys her work at Plustrust where she has developed more confidence to manage data and maintain relationships with aspiring women Fellows and our Alumni.



Acknowledgements

Collaborators from Bahaar Foundation and Portea

Our gratitude to Ms Meena Ganesh, Ms Mahita Nagaraj, Mr Mohammed Saleem, Dr Kavita, Dr Saswati Chatterjee, and others for seeing value in our work and trusting us with the first pilot of the CHE programme.

Coaches from WICCI - KCC

We would like to acknowledge Ms Ivy Saldanha, Ms Pushpa BN and Ms Usha Raghunath(WICCI - KCC) for their enthusiastic support for the pilot batch of coaching Fellowships. The coaches offered their time generously and we are looking ahead to the next round of coaching.

Our grateful thanks to our esteemed coaches Ms Anuradha Prasad, Ms Ivy Saldanha, Ms Jyothi Dass, Ms Lochan Narayanan, Ms Malini Venugopal, Ms Priyanka Singh and Ms Usha Raghunath.

Micro Funding Research and Samvaad Project

We would like to acknowledge the efforts of Ms Rukmini Datta, Social Sector Consultant for her valuable contribution towards the study on Micro funding for small NGOs in India and the success of our new initiative Samvaad. Our grateful thanks to Rukmini for continuing to offer time and effort towards building and scaling Samvaad to newer heights.

Our Donors

Although we mention them here at the end of our Newsletter, they are our biggest strength., Without their unstinting support, Plustrust would not have been able to reach out to so many vulnerable communities across the country. Our grateful thanks to our donors for their trust and continued support of our work.

Financials

Plustrust has continued to rely more on individual contributions as we touch Rs.50 Lakhs in terms of total expenditure in the last financial year. We hope to scale up significantly in the current financial year.

Hope you enjoyed reading the newsletter.

If you would like to contribute to our Micro-incubation Hubs For Rural Women Changemakers, please click on the given link : shorturl.at/GIJN4

All donations will be eligible for 80 G exemption (Tax benefit) and FCRA permission.