



FROM THE GROUND UP



Plustrust

UPDATES

SEPTEMBER 2024 - MARCH 2025

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EDITOR'S NOTE

“Change that lasts always starts at the roots.”

This edition focuses on the power of local leadership. ordinary people doing extraordinary things in their communities. As we reflect on these stories, we're reminded that the real strength of our work lies in those who live it, lead it, and grow it from the ground up.

Over the last few months, Plustrust has been alive with energy, ideas and action. Here's a glimpse of what we've been up to.



Celebrating 15 Years of Purposeful Change

What started as a seed of an idea has now blossomed into a vibrant network of changemakers, community health leaders, entrepreneurs, and youth who are rewriting narratives in their own towns and villages. From the narrow lanes of Nagda to the far reaches of Bahraich and Muzaffarpur, we've seen resilience take root—and grow.

We paused to reflect and celebrate 15 years of Plustrust—a journey that began with a belief in the power of the individual and a commitment to walk alongside them as they shaped their own futures.



Over these years, we've supported 300+ fellows in bringing their ideas to life and serving their people with dignity and skill. We are steadily consolidating through health camps, digital learning, and life skills workshops.

But more than numbers, it's the quiet transformations—the spark in someone's eye when they believe in themselves for the first time, the steady confidence of a fellow as they take the mic, the CHE who earns respect as a local health expert—that truly define our impact.

Plustrust has always been about the "plus"—that extra spark of trust, support, and belief that helps someone cross a threshold. And as we look ahead, we carry with us the stories, struggles, and dreams of every fellow, every CHE, and every partner who's walked this road with us.

Key Events & Milestones

COMMUNITY HEALTH ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAM: (CHE)

Our Community Health Entrepreneur (CHE) initiative continues to grow, touching more lives with accessible, tech-enabled healthcare.

In a major leap forward, the new batch of CHEs have been equipped with Vitor Health Kits that include a tablet and a printer. This upgrade empowers CHEs to screen, record and follow up on key health metrics right from the field. The real-time data enhances early detection and builds community trust.

We are exploring Sunfox Spandan ECG devices that are portable with real-time doctor interpretation – CHEs can now record ECGs on the spot and send them to certified doctors for quick interpretation and feedback. This provides scope to detect cardiac irregularities early, to ensure timely intervention through a remote expert.

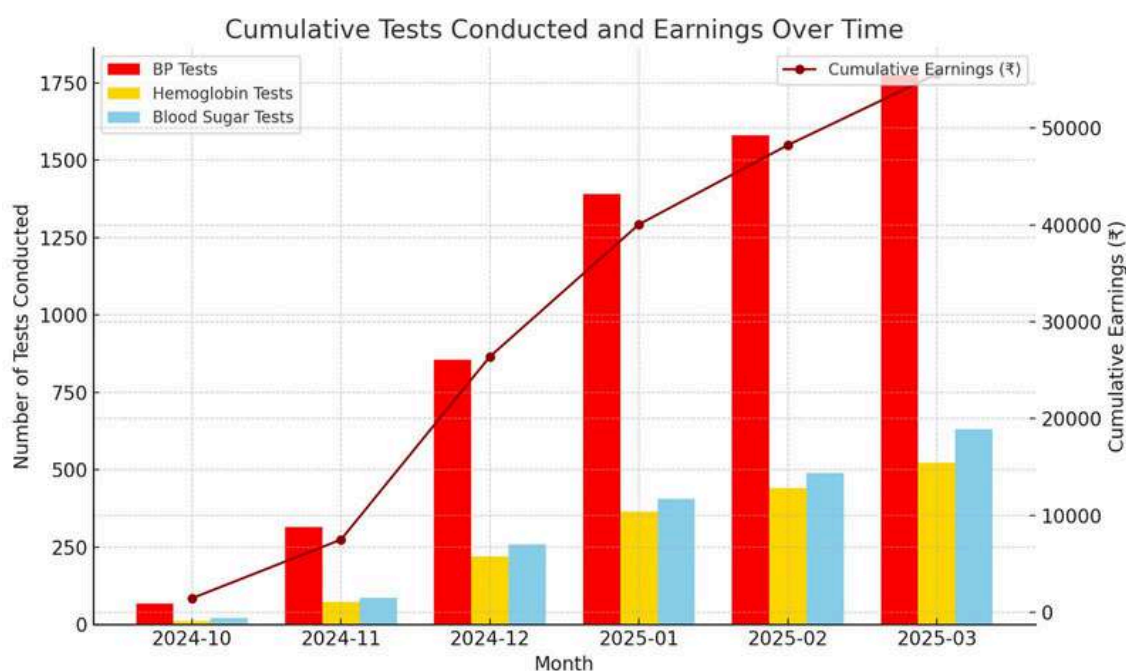


HEALTH CAMPS AND TRAINING:

In September 2024, a health camp was organised in Muzzafarpur, Bihar in collaboration with Zeiss Foundation's Aloka Vision Program. 300+ community members (including 200+ children) participated in the camp. In addition to eye testing and prescription for glasses, tests for BP, sugar and thyroid were conducted.

In March 2025, a similar health camp was organised in Koyal village, Nagda, MP. 100+ community members benefitted and over 19 spectacles were delivered in addition to basic tests. Doctor consultations were conducted, primarily in orthopedics and gynecology. 20+ patients were able to speak to doctors to resolve their health issues. Basic vision testing training and testing kits were provided to CHEs in Nagda and Bihar.

Average earning per test increased from Rs 15 to Rs 20 during this period.



ANCHOR WORKSHOP

Anchor development has been a cornerstone of our growth and remains a dynamic, immersive process. Over time, we've continually refined the Anchor Development Program to better equip potential anchors. This year, we successfully inducted seven new anchors, further fueling our optimism for the future.

In January 2025, we hosted an Anchor Development Workshop, bringing together 16 grassroots leaders from 7 states. This event served as a valuable platform to share our fellowship model. We are grateful to have connected with such dedicated individuals—many of whom have already begun reaching out to support our programs. Through hands-on involvement, they've gained the skills and confidence to independently engage with RWE batches, fully understanding the process from start to finish.



These new Anchors have embraced the core values of Plustrust, ensuring that they uphold the quality and intensity of engagement that defines the Plustrust fellowship experience.



DIGISHALA

Digital literacy is a key enabler—especially for rural entrepreneurs navigating today's fast-changing world. Through Digishala, we've created a space where learning is hands-on, accessible and empowering. Weekly sessions are conducted for our fellows that help them adapt to basic phone operations and apps that are necessary for their day-to-day operations and business development. Our sessions on spoken English are popular among the fellows.



Our collaboration with Creative Dignity (CD) further extended our impact. CD invited us to conduct sessions on entrepreneurship, business skills, and marketing for three different cohorts of craftpreneurs focused on design. This collaboration enabled us to align our approach with their fellowship program and connect with 40 artisans.

Online sessions were conducted after the workshop that helped understand and navigate the tools necessary for their entrepreneurial ventures.



Orientation Workshops

Between Sep 2024 and Apr 2025, we conducted three orientation workshops to reach out to potential women changemakers. We also conducted one in-person training for identifying new CHEs in Nagda, MP. Through these efforts we could identify 33 fellows. The location wise details are presented below:

Location	Anchor	No of Participants	No of fellowships
Uttar Pradesh	Shailesh Singh	27	5
	Simmi, Afaq	22	8
Madhya Pradesh	Disha, Amita	12	11
	Balmukund & Radheshyam	29	8
Total		90	33



Fellows Speak – Voices of Change

Rimpi's Journey - From Hesitation to Leadership

My name is Rimpi Singh, and I'm from Patna Ghushiyari village in Bahraich district, Uttar Pradesh. I'm currently pursuing a Master's degree in Economics.

Before the fellowship, I used to run a small coaching class. But after joining Plustrust, I enrolled 40 children from Pasi Purwa village and started teaching them full-time. That's how Ekta Coaching Center began — and today, I run it as a training center, hoping to reach even more children.



In the beginning, I was scared. I couldn't speak comfortably with people, and I doubted myself. Surveying children for the first time felt overwhelming. But I pushed myself to visit homes, talk to parents, and slowly, the hesitation faded. The children became my strength — and the community, my confidence.

This journey changed me. I now love working with people, traveling, and being independent. Through the fellowship, I built not just my skills but my identity. I've also learned from other fellows and from the children I teach — they've supported me even in difficult times.

I continue running the center today and dream of expanding it into a larger training hub. I want to support as many children as possible — and stand beside anyone who wants to bring positive change to their community.

Mansi's Journey - Planting Seeds of Learning

My name is Mansi Haldia, and I'm from Shyampur, Haridwar. I come from a small family with my parents, two brothers, and a sister. After completing my B.Sc., my brother told me about the fellowships.

When I learned I'd have to attend a three-day workshop in Dehradun, I was nervous as I had never traveled alone. But once I got there and met others like me, my doubts disappeared. That training helped me gain confidence and clarity about what I wanted to do.



Through the fellowship, I started Mansi Kindergarten, a small center for children aged 3–4. I teach them basic habits, storytelling, and learning through play, preparing them for school in a safe, home-like space. My goal is to help kids build confidence, make friends, and learn happily.

The idea came from my college days when I used to teach in a school. I noticed that younger kids often cried and didn't want to stay as there was no one to ease them into school life. That's when I decided to create a space just for them. I started in a small room in my house with basic furniture, toys, and games. On the first day, only two kids showed up, both scared and crying. I spoke gently, made them smile, and slowly they adjusted. More children joined, and I used fun activities to help them learn.

There were challenges, especially convincing parents. Many said, "Why pay when we have anganwadi?" I explained how our approach was different and helped their children learn better. Slowly, they saw the change.

One of the most rewarding moments was with a child who didn't talk to anyone. I worked with him patiently every day. Over time, he began speaking, sharing stories and smiling, his mother was amazed. That transformation meant everything to me.

Before the fellowship, I only did a bit of sewing at home and wasn't known in the community. But after starting the kindergarten, people began to recognize me. I discovered my skills, built confidence, and became independent.

In the future, I hope to grow Mansi Kindergarten into a larger center that supports even more children, continuing to bring joy and learning into their lives.

Anju's Journey - Building Beauty and Confidence

"My name is Anju, and I'm from Shyampur, Haridwar. After completing my MSW, I spent a lot of time preparing for government jobs, but things didn't work out. That's when I remembered the beauty skills I had learned after 12th and thought why not turn my passion into my profession? With the strong support of my family, I opened my own beauty parlour in Shyampur.

The beginning wasn't easy. I didn't fully understand the market, and sometimes customers wouldn't even pay properly. But the encouragement I received by people saying things like, 'There's no parlour like yours in all of Shyampur' kept me going.



Slowly, the love and respect I earned through my work brought more customers. Today, my parlour serves women and children, and I also train young girls many of whom had previously received poor training. One of my trainees, who once lacked confidence, is now ready to apply for jobs in Haridwar. That makes me proud.

Through the Plustrust fellowship, I received a stipend, mentorship, and training in finance and the Constitution. These not only helped me run my business better but also built my confidence. I met other fellows too, hearing their stories helped me see the strength in my own journey. For the first time, I found a space where I could express emotions I had never shared before.

My dream? To open a bigger salon, launch a second branch, and start my own Beauty Academy. I also want to teach girls how to ride scooties and drive, to help them become truly independent. My message is simple: never lose hope. Success might come late, but it does come, because every lock has a key."

Gayatri's Journey - Stitching Dreams Together

My name is Gayatri Sharma, and I come from Palamau, Jharkhand. I belong to a middle-class family. I teach stitching to women, especially housewives, through live sessions. I help them learn this skill so they can stand on their own feet.

The inspiration for my work came from within. I always believed I could do something meaningful, but it became real when I got support from Plustrust. That was the moment I truly understood my own potential. I felt confident that I could build something of my own.



When I started my stitching classes, it was not easy. In the beginning, very few people came to me. I didn't have the proper tools or equipment, which made things difficult. But after I connected with Plustrust, those basic needs were taken care of. Slowly, things started changing. More women began to join my sessions, and step by step, my journey started to grow.

The fellowship gave me confidence I had never felt before. Earlier, I used to feel nervous while talking to people or explaining things. Now, teaching has become part of my daily routine. I feel proud and strong. I no longer feel dependent on anyone. I manage everything myself and give 100% to my work. More and more women are now coming to learn, and the response is very good.

Looking ahead, my goal is to become even better at stitching and work closely with more women. I hope to form a strong group of women who support and learn from each other. I believe if we trust ourselves, we can do anything. My message for anyone who wants to bring change in their village or community is this:

If you have knowledge, don't keep it to yourself, share it. Help others grow. Everyone has talent, sometimes, they just need a little support to discover it.

Shakuntala's Journey : Building Dreams

My name is Shakuntala, and I live in Risiya block, Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh. I studied up to 12th grade and have four children. For the past year, I've been working with Sarju Foundation.

Before the fellowship, I enjoyed decorating and sewing. With encouragement from Shailesh Didi, I expanded this work into making bouquets and decorations. I work with skilled women in my community, starting small meetings and talking with them to build my work.



I received a fellowship from PlusTrust, which helped me grow my business and gain confidence. At first, I struggled to leave the house and convince others to join me. Traveling was scary. One day, I had to travel 180 km alone to get materials and returned late at night. My family was upset at first, but this experience changed everything. Now, my family and community support me even when I come home late.

This journey changed not only how others see me but also how I see myself. I've learned that our perspective shapes our world, and this has made me feel stronger and happier.

Through the fellowship, I found a new identity and increased my income. I am also part of a self-help group under NRLM, where I lead and help women save money regularly. This has taught me the importance of community and mindset.

My views on menstruation and other traditional beliefs have changed. I now openly discuss these topics with women and girls in my community, helping break taboos.

Thanks to Sarju Foundation and PlusTrust, my income has grown, my confidence has soared, and I've become a proud, independent woman. I love learning new things, traveling, and sharing my journey with others.

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

English Learning Classes

We started with spoken English class led by our alumni Sufi Rani from Jharkhand RWE Batch 2023, who is now guiding 20 fellows through their English learning journey. The sessions focus on building a strong foundation from learning basic tenses and sentence structure to speaking about everyday topics like hobbies and daily routine. With each class, our fellows are growing more fluent, expressive, and ready to use English in their daily lives.

Digital Literacy Classes

Our digital learning sessions are helping fellows become more confident with everyday technology. From using mobile apps like Google Drive, WhatsApp, and PhonePe to learning how to take screenshots, convert photos to PDFs, and join meetings on Google Meet or Zoom. The sessions are hands-on and practical. Fellows are learning how to use these tools in real-life situations, whether for work, communication or daily tasks.



ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

With the growing complexity in our work, we sought ways to strengthen internal systems and processes and build our team. We were fortunate to find two opportunities in the past few months to help us.

Guidance from Tech4Good

Tech4Good has provided expert guidance to assist us with the setup and prospective use of Google Analytics. Their support has equipped us with the foundational knowledge and technical preparation needed to implement this powerful tool effectively.

By leveraging Google Analytics, we anticipate gaining valuable insights into our website traffic and user engagement, which will enable us to make data-driven decisions to enhance our digital strategy.

Mentoring by Jupiter 360

We are grateful to continue receiving invaluable mentorship from Jupiter360. Their expert guidance is instrumental in helping us strengthen our strategies, enhance our capabilities and achieve our organizational goals.

With Jupiter360's ongoing support, we are better equipped to navigate challenges and seize opportunities for growth and impact.

TEAM UPDATES

We are excited to announce that this year, Plustrust has welcomed two new trustees to our Board .

Gita Narasimhan



Gita served with the State Bank of India from 1976 to 2015, retiring as General Manager, where she led the marketing vertical for third-party financial products. Her career spanned key roles in branch banking, credit, training, and corporate finance. She brings a deep understanding of entrepreneurship in India, having worked closely with businesses of all sizes, from microenterprises to large-scale projects. Gita

currently serves as an Independent Director on the board of Bank of India Investment Managers Private Limited, and was formerly with IDBI AMC.

A supporter of Plustrust since inception, Gita now formally joins our Board, enriching it with decades of leadership and unwavering commitment to grassroots change.

Girish Mahale

Girish is an Education Scientist and founder of Pratyaya EduResearch Lab, a not-for-profit action research organization he established in 2013. Since then, he has worked extensively across diverse educational settings, from designing pedagogical frameworks for primary to high school levels, to capacity building for volunteers, teachers, and grassroots leaders.



His focus lies in developing self-sustainable educational ecosystems within the existing system and local resources, particularly in the Pandhurna Block of Chhindwara District, Madhya Pradesh. Girish previously worked in R&D engineering at IBM and holds a postgraduate degree from IIT Kharagpur.

He brings to Plustrust a powerful blend of research, innovation, and field experience in rural education.

THE ROAD AHEAD

As we step into the next chapter of Plustrust's journey, we do so with renewed energy to deepen our impact.

Stronger Collaborations, Local First - Anchor Network

We will continue to build and nurture partnerships that recognize the power of local leadership with anchor workshops. By collaborating with like-minded organizations, and community champions, we aim to co-create context-specific solutions that respond to the real needs of people on the ground.

Network-Building for our fellows

We're investing in a stronger ecosystem where our fellows, CHEs, alumni, and partners can learn from each other, share resources, and collaborate across geographies. The idea is to create a living, breathing network of changemakers who uplift one another.

JanSehat Kendra

We are working on the JanSehat Kendra model that will function as a well-being center managed by a group of CHEs. Diagnostic services, telemedicine, and wellness services with the necessary infrastructure will bring innovators to the communities that need innovation.

Scaling Digital Training & Access

Digital is no longer optional—it's essential. Our goal is to expand access to digital learning modules, health tech tools and life skills training for our fellows and CHEs, enabling them to grow as confident, connected leaders in their own right.

We remain rooted in the same belief that started it all: change begins when someone is trusted, supported and seen. We will be building our strategy to continue to be sustainable and impactful.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to acknowledge and thank Ms. Shanti Yechuri as she steps down from our Board of Trustees. As one of the founding members, she played a vital role in establishing the foundation of our organization. We remain grateful for her support and commitment to our mission during the formative stages. We wish Shanti all the best in their future endeavors and thank her for being part of our journey.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our esteemed partners and collaborators for their unwavering support and commitment. Your expertise, guidance and shared passion have been invaluable in shaping and advancing our programs, especially as we strive to uplift marginalized communities. Each milestone we achieve is a testament to your dedication and we are deeply appreciative of your belief in our vision.

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To our grassroots partners, we express our deepest appreciation for your trust, support and steadfast involvement. Your generosity has enabled us to reach the heart of communities, touching lives in meaningful ways and nurturing resilience at the grassroots level.

Our grassroots partners

Awadh People Forum, Coral tree Foundation, Disha Sansthan, Jeevan Dhara, Mera Gaon Meri Duniya, Neergram Foundation, PANS India, Samanta Foundation, Samaveshak Samajik Vikas Sanstha, Sarju Foundation, Teach for Green.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The contributions from our donors have helped us to expand our impact, foster inclusion and drive lasting change. Their commitment fuels our work and strengthens our resolve to continue on this journey of empowerment and transformation.

Our gratitude goes to:

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and all our individual donors.

Thank you for walking with us and believing in our mission.

We seek your continued support for our Micro-incubation Hubs For Rural Women Changemakers.

Please use the given link to donate:

<https://r.give.do/SYCW7yiA>

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

THANK YOU



Our team, in our element.