



Newsletter April - June 2014

## Empowering through Education



### Towards a Skilled India

“What good is education to me if it cannot get me a job” – an impulsive retort from a youth at the risk of dropping out, once left us speechless. Today, it is a question that is being asked by the intelligentsia and the common man alike. Udaan’s approach of taking a child from foundation years to meaningful employability gains credibility as we follow the increasing discussions on unemployment vs unemployability of the educated youth.

It has been two years since Udaan took primary steps towards bridging the gap between education and skilling. Collaborating with Youth Career Initiative (YCI) and Rustomjee Academy of Global Careers (RAGC), Udaan offered vocational training in the areas of hospitality and automobile floor supervision. As we saw our children taking up constructive employment, our primary efforts took the form of a formalized – Skills Enhancement Program (SEP) in the month of April. This three month program focused on enhancing the working knowledge of the youth in four areas – Computer literacy, functional and communicative English (YUVA English), soft skills and vocational training in the sector of customer care service. Collaborating with a knowledge partner, The Skills Academy ensured expert implementation of a credible curriculum validated by NASSCOM and National Skill Development Council, culminating in an evaluation process that would certify the trainee for a guaranteed and meaningful employment.

In these 3 months, we have seen the youth emerge out of closets, exploring realistic career

dreams, resuming abandoned higher education, enthusiastically juggling early morning jobs, classes at Udaan, and night colleges to carve a new future for themselves.

With this program we hope to steadily strengthen the movement of education towards skill development – a movement in which all see the promise of a leading economy.

## Partners Speak

*"General Mills India has an unwavering commitment towards our mission of Nourishing Lives. Udaan's Skills Enhancement Program provides us with a unique opportunity to make a differential impact to the lives of 30 aspiring youth to embark on their own forward looking journey of nourishing life. The partnership with Udaan also allows us to live our core championship value of "Grow and Inspire" and thus help us create a leader in every chair at General Mills."*

Cheryl Bethune, Director, Human Resources, General Mills India Private Limited–GBS

*"Among the youth from low income marginalized communities, the lack of employable skills is higher than the average. In the coming years, Skill development will play a crucial role in realizing the true 'demographic dividend' of the country. Udaan India Foundation's Skill Enhancement program is a firm step towards equalizing opportunities for gaining vocational training and skilled jobs. Udaan India Foundation and Skills Academy have come together to provide employability training in Business Process Management and Telecom sectors by imparting domain specific skills and connecting the youth to employment in these industries."*

Anju Talwar, CEO, Skills Academy

*"Learning spoken English is just one part of the YUVA program. Making new friends and bringing positive changes in the lives of the students are the other components which motivate us to carry on. We taught the class for 1 week and next we met the children after almost a month. We were very happy to see the way they greeted us and spoke to us about their learnings and experiences (and all the conversations were in fluent English). Somewhere, we felt proud of ourselves also. We strongly feel that the learning from the YUVA session is really going to bring in a differentiating factor in all the students in the long run."*

Meleissa Dholakia and Rajat Basu, YUVA English volunteer teachers



*"My communications skills and confidence levels have improved immensely post YUVA English and soft skills sessions. This was an important course for me as my self-esteem increased a lot. I now feel capable of achieving my dream and SEP is responsible for this positive change in me."*

Gajanan Dusange, a student of SEP wants to study and work and hence took up night college after completing his 12th std. He believes that SEP will now help him get the job he needs to support his family and continue his education.

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*"Now that I can work on a computer, I feel more confident about myself. Through the NIIT course I learnt not just to operate a computer and its programs but also understood its importance in today's world. What I will never forget are the lessons for life – to be successful you should have a goal in your life and focus on*



*it. There is no short cut for success, but where is a will, there is a way."*

Amit Yadav, an SEP student believes that the program has helped him chart his path for the future. He has now enrolled for a degree course in Bachelor of Management Studies.

### **General Update**

- Professional development of Udaan staff through workshops ranging from 'The Art of Reading and Storytelling' to "The Skill of Explanation and Questioning". Thank you to Mr. Sameer Bhakhri for facilitating an engaging session with the team on 'The Vision that we work towards' and the JLT team for the energizing team-building workshop. The Udaan team is all set for the new academic year that started on June 16th.
- Permanent FCRA approval received from the Home Ministry. This approval enables Udaan to receive financial support from foreign nationals and corporates.
- Piramal Foundation initiates a relationship with Udaan through employee volunteer engagement.
- Our alumni make us proud with 100% of children clearing the Xth grade and 91% clearing the XIIth grade examination. Congratulations to Archana Yadav for securing 71% in grade 12 and Pooja Pal for securing 82% in the grade 10 examination.

**Udaan is positively impacting over 800 children from low-income communities through their educational initiatives.**

**To get involved and be our partners in change contact us:**

**Email: [udaanindiafoundation@gmail.com](mailto:udaanindiafoundation@gmail.com)**

**Telephone: 022 - 4000 0392**

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Udaan India Foundation, 2202 Odyssey 2, Hiranandani Gardens, Powai, Mumbai 400076



