

OUR IMPACT  
REPORT  
2019-20

# A LIFE OF DIGNITY

Through Transformation & Empowerment





Shanthabai of the Antarprerna - Wadi Center (for rural employment) making masks at home during the lockdown

## | Our **Purpose**

We are inspired by the notion of a world of abundance; a world where there is no lack, no poverty.

Our purpose is to eradicate poverty by empowering people and communities to live with dignity, one life at a time.

We do this through the power of breakthrough ideas, always sensitive to the impact that can be had on those who are less fortunate than us.

## | Our **Vision**

Through targeted initiatives such as Make India Capable (to drive youth transformation), Antarprerna (to spur rural entrepreneurship) and Global Action on Poverty (to amplify the impact of changemakers), we strive to tackle and eradicate rural poverty, beginning in India.

We believe in transforming the lives of the helpless and giving them the means to stand on their feet, capably and independently.



# A Note From **the Board**

*Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,  
Where knowledge is free,  
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments,  
By narrow domestic walls,  
Where words come out from the depth of truth,  
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection,  
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way,  
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit,  
Where the mind is led forward by thee,  
Into ever-widening thought and action,  
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.*



**Madan Padaki**  
Managing Trustee

For all of us at Head Held High, these lines from Guru Rabindranath Tagore's classic poem resonate with a deeper meaning and significance. It is no coincidence that these words inspired the name of our organisation.

By empowering the most marginalized vulnerable youth through multiple interventions, we want them to discover a world of abundance and freedom, as opposed to a walled and divided one. We don't think of this as wide-eyed idealism. Over the years, we have seen that the work we do with people who have the dice loaded against them in so many ways sets their minds free from fear and makes them hold their heads high, with dignity.

This past year has been one of impact and growth as an organization and we want to

share some of its standout moments for us.

- The stories we hear, almost on a daily basis, energize and remind us why we do what we do. For example, there was the email we got from one of our trainees – a young man in a Mumbai slum who had transformed himself from the abuse and addiction that had dominated his life so far. His purpose in life was to transform his many friends to discover this new life!
- We have focused on adapting our model for more customized outcomes and to fit the needs of different target groups. Through the 45-day program, we have created a condensed and industry-specific version of our core transformational initiative.



**Rajesh Bhat**



**Sunil Savara**



**Simon Newman**



**Vivek Talwar**

- We were able to roll out an impactful volunteering initiative where we have over 300+ corporate volunteers interacting digitally with our trainees.
- We also made a very comprehensive attempt at documenting evidence of impact through our program. Supported by a team from London Business School, we created a Transformation Index that measures a youth's journey through the transformation process. As a result, we can now say that many of the methodologies currently in place are completely validated.
- The Antarprena Centres (with the first one inaugurated in Kalburgi, Karnataka) lie at the heart of another very impactful initiative that we launched to create local opportunities. We have seen significant success in terms of income uplift and delivering value as an enterprise and we believe that this model of rural entrepreneurship will be even more relevant in the post-Covid environment.
- The GAP Annual Event held last year was incredibly significant for bringing so many changemakers and leaders together to talk and collaborate towards achieving global SDGs. There is nothing more energizing than being amidst passionate changemakers in the serenity and divinity of Sabarmati Ashram. We are truly grateful to our friends at the

Ashram for partnering with us on this journey.

In the current crisis that we are facing, our team's rapid Covid response across communities in India to take care of immediate need (through food distribution) and enable long-term solutions (by creating livelihood options) is one that we are genuinely proud of.

In making all of this happen, we gratefully acknowledge the support of our incredible partners - corporates, institutions, non-profits and individuals - who have stepped in to help with funding, facilities, guidance, and resources. Our impact this year was possible because of this socially motivated and supportive partner ecosystem. We want to thank each one of them for standing by us and look forward to an even stronger partnership in the coming years.

We have our work cut out for us this year. We have to continue to orient ourselves for deeper impact, wider scale and a longer term engagement with the lives we touch so that we can truly make a difference. We are confident that we can rise to this challenge with our passionate, mission-driven, execution-focused team, led from the front by our CEO, Pankaj. This is the year that we aspire to see Head Held High Foundation contributing much more significantly to co-create a world of abundance and oneness.

*On behalf of the Board of Trustees*



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The Magnificent Eight: The young men and women who were part of our first transformation batch in Bangalore back in 2007.

From L to R: Meghraj, Jayaraj, Hemanna, Chandana, Divya, Uttam, Ramesh, Chandru



# It's Possible...

“ *Poverty is the worst form of violence*  
**Mahatma Gandhi**

Poverty has a paralyzing effect on those who are caught in its trap. It strips them of the power to make sound decisions for themselves; it robs them of the ability to think of life beyond their immediate circumstances. And it keeps them from exploring ways to learn and get ahead in life.

Ending poverty in all its forms is at the top of the list of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) mandated for every country. Globally, there is still progress to be made on this front.

**According to UN estimates, as of 2015, approximately**

**736 million people**  
 still lived on less than US\$1.90 a day.

Many still lack access to food, clean drinking water and sanitation. Despite having a job, 8% of the world's workers and their families still lived in extreme poverty in 2018.

In India, indicators of multi-dimensional poverty such as access to sanitation, healthcare, education and nutrition have improved over the last decade. According to the 2019 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) released by the UNDP and

the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), *the population in India living in multidimensional poverty dropped from 55% (640 million people) in 2005-06 to 27.9% (369 million people) in 2015-16.*

Though these statistics are encouraging, there are still many young people living in poverty, particularly in rural areas, where other socio-cultural factors also contribute to higher levels of deprivation and inequality.

But what if the dynamics around poverty could be changed?

What if we could enable individuals and communities to get past these barriers to growth and financial security?

Through our focused work on the ground, we have found that it is possible to change mindsets to move from scarcity to abundance; to equip rural youth to deal with life and work challenges by building hope and confidence in them; to prepare communities to overcome barriers, to take charge, and to build self-sustaining solutions.

In short, we have found that it is possible to change the story of rural poverty - one transformed individual at a time.



Jyoti Kumari - MIC Batch 2; Bahadurganj (UP) - with her mother



# Head Held High At a Glance

## Pan-India Presence



**130**  
Employees

**19**  
States  
present

**13**  
Aspirational  
districts  
covered

**65**  
Transformation  
centres

**02**  
Antarprerna  
(Entrepreneurship)  
centres

**01**  
Center of  
Excellence  
(Transformation  
Academy)

**800+**  
GAP  
Changemakers

**100+**  
Experts

**200+**  
Coaches

**04**  
GAP Regional  
Chapters (Mera  
GAP)

## Our Impact Last Year

### Make India Capable (Youth Transformation)



### Building work & life capability

- Pathways created for 70% of youth aspiring towards specific outcomes (Jobs, Self-employment, Education)
- Youth provided livelihoods achieved daily per capita income of USD 6.03 (3x the SDG goal of USD 2 for per capita daily income)

### Antarprerna (Rural Entrepreneurship)



### Making entrepreneurship accessible

- 97% of women employed at the first centre have participated in an economic activity for the first time in their lives.
- By creating market linkages, cumulative income of over INR 3 lacs was generated for 43 women.

### Global Action on Poverty (Power of a Changemaking Collective)



### Ecosystem & Capability Building

- Ecosystem of 1100 members
- 80+ Changemaker projects directly supported through GAP Intensive (custom capability building engagements)
- Over 1 lac people living in poverty impacted through focused GAP Intensive projects





## RAMESH'S TRANSFORMATION

Ramesh was part of a poor family from a very small village near Koppal, Karnataka. He dropped out of school after 4th grade and spent much of his growing up years herding buffaloes and working on the fields around his village as a daily wage worker. In 2009, at the age of 21, he enrolled in the MIC program. The classes gave him a completely new outlook on life and allowed him to envision a different kind of future for himself. Over time, he gained confidence and acquired several skills that enabled him to advance his career. Currently, he is the Operations Manager of the 150 bed KS Hospital in Koppal and earns a monthly salary of Rs 50,000. But what is even more special about Ramesh's transformation is that he now aims to help others to dream bigger in order to change their own trajectories in life.

# Ten Years of MIC

## GAUGING IMPACT OVER A DECADE

In 2019, we talked to several youth who had enrolled in the Make India Capable program ten years ago. Their experiences reveal how the program activates change in individuals through various levers.

### Key Insights

- Using a multi-dimensional approach:** Youth from poor socio-economic backgrounds lose at least 5-6 years to poverty before they can break the cycle. We are accelerating this process by focusing on place-based solutions and also adopting a long term multi-dimensional approach encompassing upskilling, mentoring, financial literacy and social security support.
- Youth gain respect in the community:** The program has been able to change their social status – they have earned respect and admiration from their community and are looked upon as role models.
- Asset creation:** As youth start earning, their first priority is to improve quality of life for their families. They gradually then shift their focus towards asset creation, a shift that usually happens 2-3 years after being in a job post the training.
- Seeking a better life for their children:** Most of the alumni we talked to said that educating their children and addressing their well-being was their top most priority.
- Emergence of a changemaker:** A key impact of the program is development of the changemaking spirit in these youth. Our alumni shared that once they moved out of poverty, they realised that they had the potential to help others like them and felt motivated to do so. Most of them make contributions in their community from time to time.

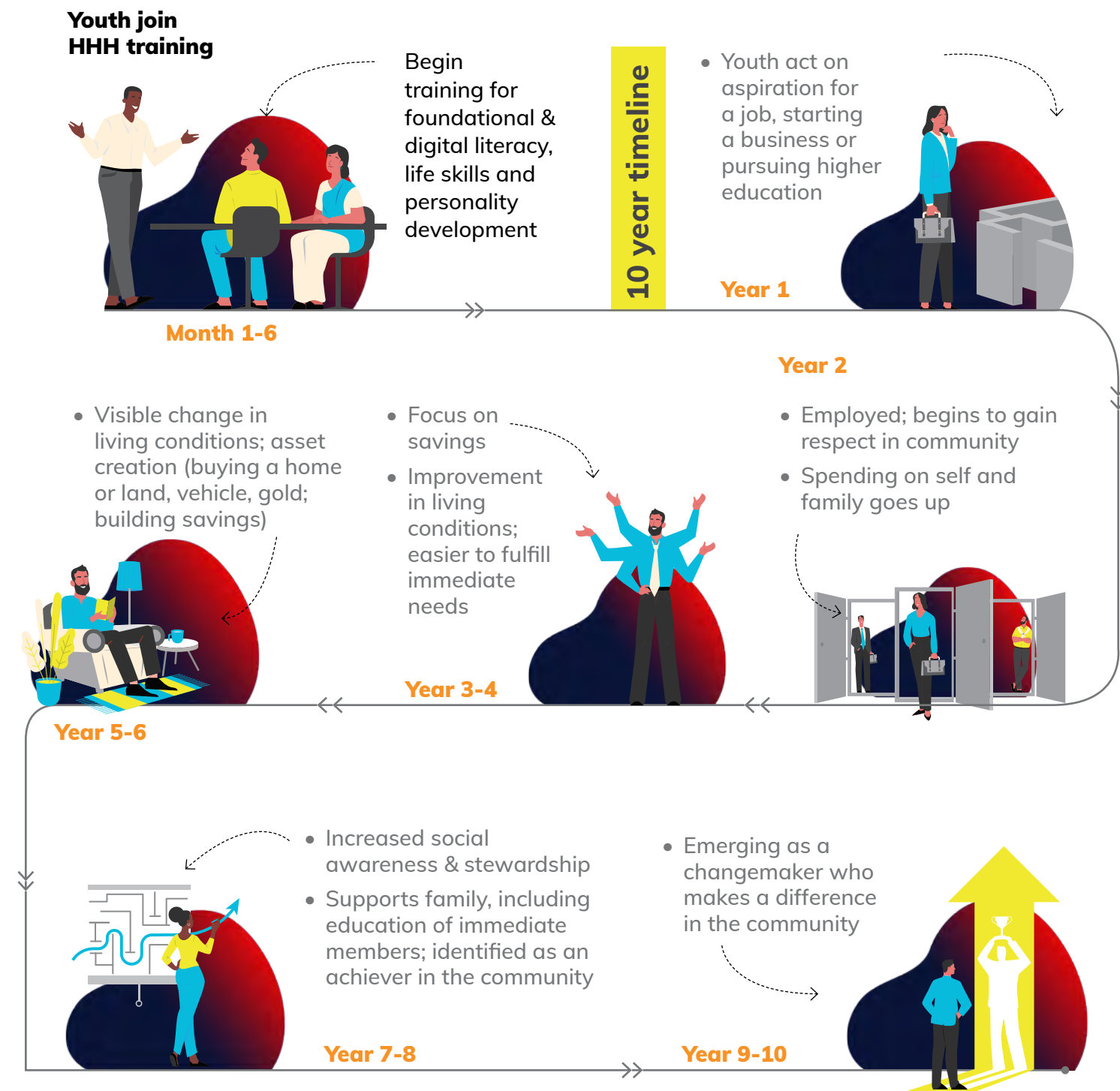
## The Transformation Journey

### BEFORE

Rural poor youth  
18-24 years  
School dropout  
Unemployed or in daily wage labor

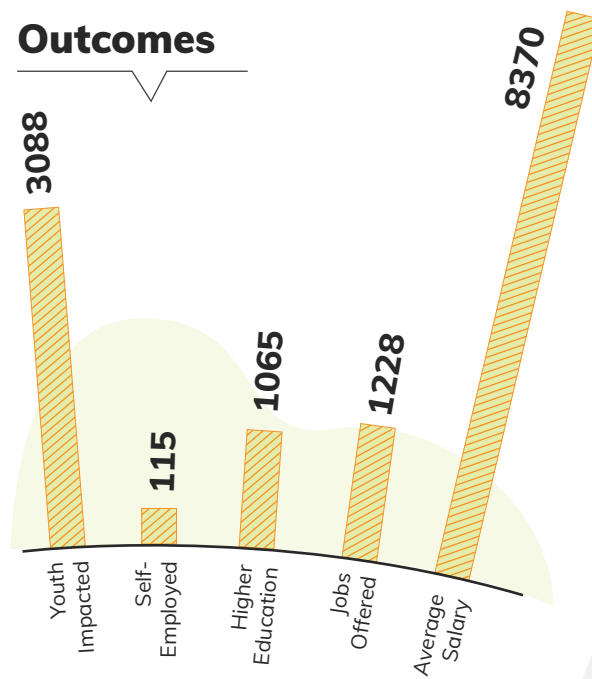
### AFTER

High levels of hope and determination; speaks confidently in English; well-groomed; focused on personal & economic growth

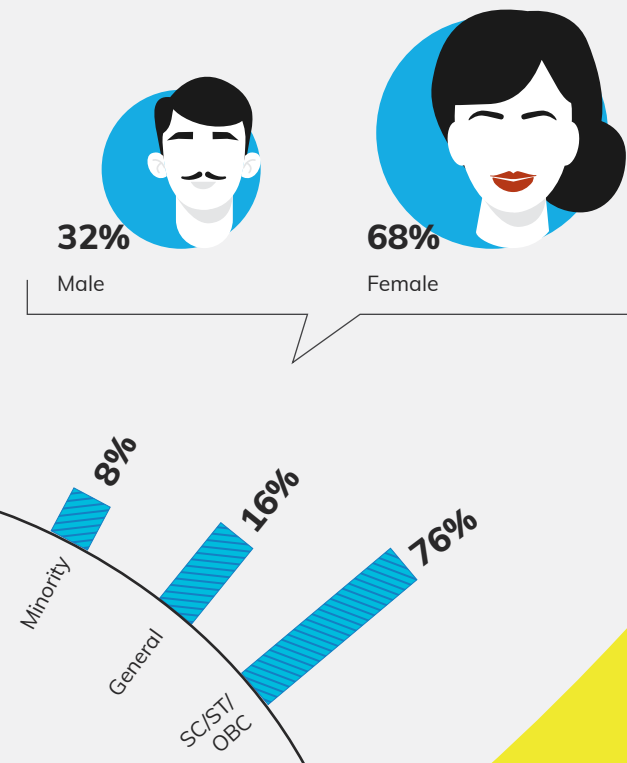




## Outcomes



## Demographics



## Hiring Sectors

7.22%

Education

17.46%

Manufacturing

6.49%

Business Services

12.41%

F &amp; B

5.19%

Health

14.72%

IT/ITES

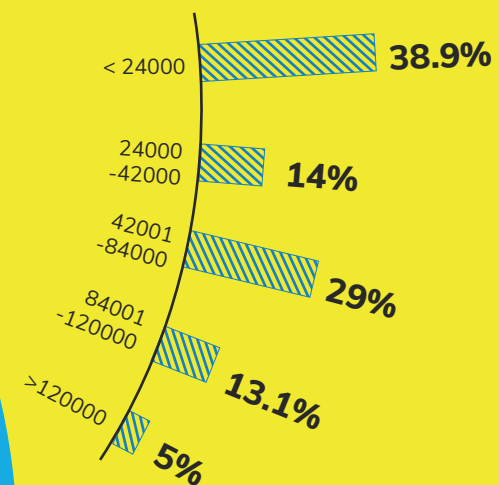
36.51%

Retail

Started in 2007 with a batch of eight people from Koppal in Karnataka, the MIC Program is currently into its second decade of implementation. The program is now technology-enabled and is backed by a number of partners. Given that the core of the program is the content in the training

curriculum, this model is easy to replicate and scale. We continually refine and rework the methodologies used based on surveys and feedback. And we are always on the lookout for partners who can help us set up in new geographies or broaden our reach in other ways.

## Annual family income



Median Household Income  
**40,000**

# The Make India Capable Program

DRIVING TRANSFORMATION







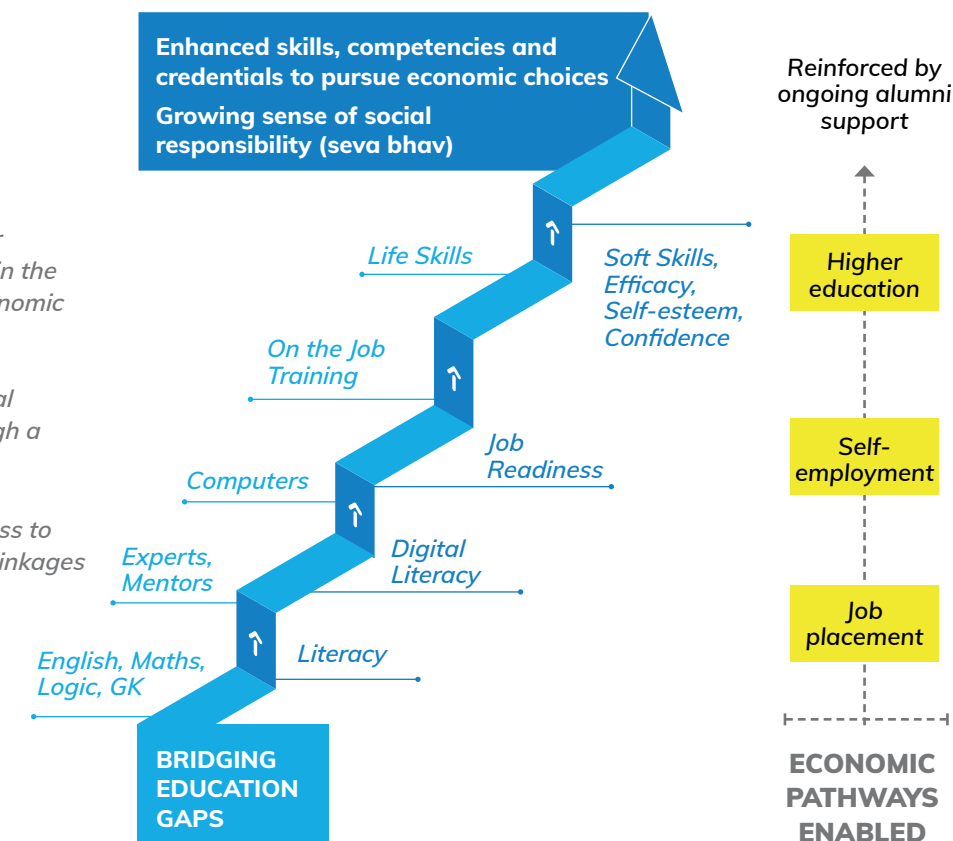
Trainees of MIC Batches  
2 & 3; Vizag, AP

### Our Theory of Change

...for the MIC program has evolved from understanding the problems faced by youth living in poverty. We aim to transform disconnected youth by equipping them with life and work skills, giving them a real chance to pursue their aspirations (through higher education, employment, or entrepreneurship), and invoking in them a sense of responsibility towards society (seva bhav). This approach, we believe, places the youth, their families, and their communities on a path to socio-economic progress and also motivates them to become societal changemakers.

### Path to Transformation Through MIC

- 01** Entry: Youth (18-25 years); School dropouts - from rural, marginalized and very poor families; and mostly girls - join the program to pursue socio-economic aspirations
- 02** Social, economic and personal capability of the youth through a transformative program
- 03** Social inclusion through access to social security schemes and linkages
- 04** Exit: A life of dignity and abundance for a life & work capable individual with a strong sense of social responsibility



### HOW ASRINA WAS ABLE TO BREAK FREE

Four months into the MIC Transformation program, 22 year old Asrina decided to leave her village in the Dhanbad district of Jharkhand for a fresh start in Bangalore. The environment at home was proving to be toxic. There was pressure to get married to an older man and she knew she would have to give up any personal dreams or aspirations she had for herself if she stayed. In Bangalore, the HHH placement team connected her with Shell Oil Company for a job as a service attendant in one of their petrol pumps. Her promised monthly salary was Rs 12,000.

“There was something about the (HHH) program,” Asrina said. “I felt proud to be there. Although in the beginning I also felt angry and disappointed with myself for the person I was. But over the next few weeks, I gradually began to feel better about myself. My self-confidence grew and I began to dream of a different kind of a life – with a job, respect, dignity...”





*I feel proud when I see positive change in a young person's life. I feel responsible for 30 lives in the classroom."*

**Rekha**  
Trainer in Sedam,  
Karnataka



*I hope to start my own NGO some day."*

**Mounali Jain**  
Trainer in  
Mumbai

### A Center of Excellence

The Transformation Academy in Tumkur (Karnataka) sets the standards in terms of program delivery. It lies at the core of our training operations and helps establish quality control measures for that part of the program.

### The Trainer as Catalyst

Trainers are incredibly vital to the program. They not only deliver the curriculum in a way that preserves the integrity of the content, but also use their local and contextual knowledge in order to modify it and make it more relevant to the group. By providing a safe space for these individuals to be heard, trainers help shift their perspectives and build greater agency to make informed choices. The catalytic role of the trainer is the single biggest contributor to the transformation of youth.

### Enabling Technology

Here are some technology platforms we leverage for greater efficiency in data capture and transparency in reporting.

- **Supernova** - HHH's internal Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software system that was fully developed in-house. It captures MIC program details at a granular level and provides summarized reports at a zone or donor level.
- **Umeed** - In order for us to continually improve our training program, we need a view into both demographics and aspirations of potential trainees. Umeed is a tool to help us capture and maintain this information.



## CHANDANA, A COMMUNITY ROLE MODEL

*Chandana's relationship with HHH began in 2007 when she joined its first youth transformation batch (see photo on p. 6-7). Later she had to convince her parents to disregard the convention in her village. "Why do girls have to go out of the house?" they asked. She ultimately prevailed and joined the 30-day course for aspiring trainers at the HHH Transformation Academy. Now having successfully trained 15 batches of 25 candidates each, Chandana continues to grow as a trainer within the organisation. In addition, she is a driven changemaker and an entrepreneur who finds time to produce and market her brand of homemade pappads (based on her mother's recipe).*



### Impact Measurement and Tracking

The MIC Program's impact framework to measure youth transformation was developed in collaboration with the London Business School and Project Aasha, an initiative focused on creating social impact through pro-bono consulting. The framework provides a view of various incremental effects of the MIC program on multi-dimensional poverty by assessing youth in the program across three dimensions – economic, social and personal. This data is gathered through surveys administered at specific points during and following completion of the program. We also conducted a comprehensive impact assessment in the second half of 2019 with over 600 youth in the program. One of the objectives of this exercise was to obtain inputs to drive accountability and scale.

### Transformation Index: A Real Measure of Change

Based on the outcomes of the impact framework, we derive a Transformation Index score at both the trainee and batch level. This is a concrete measure of change in disengaged youth. The Transformation Index serves as a predictive tool that can give us a sense for how long it will take an aspirant to move out of the cycle of poverty.

### Alumni Engagement

The completion of the six-month training period is not the end of our relationship with the new program graduate. In 2019, we started the Alumni Engagement initiative with the aim of connecting with and tracking the progress of those who had completed the youth transformation program. In the year and more following the training, the Alumni Engagement team connects with the program graduates at different points to ensure they are able to persevere with their stated outcomes and have access to guidance when required.





### Innovation in Transformation

Through customised transformation initiatives developed for corporate and non-profit partners, we have been able to support many other demographic groups in their quest for personal growth and financial security.



**777 graduates** distributed across three custom programs



**42%** of job aspirants received an offer of employment



**36%** of program graduates opted for higher education

### Bridge program for the young career aspirant

This is an industry-specific training initiative that was designed based on our insight that youth from disadvantaged backgrounds (even those who have completed their schooling) often lack access to information about careers in specific sectors. The 45-

day program bridges this gap by building job-specific skills and confidence in young trainees. So far, we have conducted versions of this custom program for those seeking careers in the hospitality and banking industries.



**FORAM NAGORI**  
Head - CSR, Tata Power



*I believe skilling is not a pre-requisite for many entry-level jobs, especially in the service industry and that a lot of company standards appropriate skills get picked up more on the job than in training classrooms. However, the right mindset, attitudes and readiness for work are important to build amongst our underserved youth; especially in non-mainstream parts of India. [That's why] Indian Hotels Company Limited collaborated with HHH to co-develop this short industrial-exposure based 'Bridge Programme' to enable work readiness amongst less-privileged youth. This is an innovative pilot to address the large-scale gap in our country w. r. t. career awareness, exposure to contemporary work settings and attitudinal training before approaching the several regular skills training models (especially in smaller towns and remoter locations).*



### Feedback from SEWA trainees



*Assignment activities and debates were useful in building my speaking skills"*



*Built up vocabulary, learnt effective mail writing and speaking English..."*

### Spoken English for the women of SEWA



SEWA

SEWA is a tremendous force in the mission to bring marginalised working women together and empower them in their quest for equality and a better life. They have developed several programs designed to help women navigate various challenges in this journey. One key need identified is helping these women acquire essential spoken English skills.

HHH collaborated with SEWA to develop a customised transformative program with a focus on spoken English, essential business skills and core values of self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

The SEWA-HHH-MIC curriculum includes 200-220 hours of instruction spread across three months. Classes are based on incremental learning and packed with training, assignments, and a variety of indoor and outdoor activities.

### Core skills for the teenagers of Rainbow Homes



Parwaaz Jeevan Shala (Rainbow Homes)

Parwaaz Jeevan Shala in New Delhi is part of the Rainbow Homes Program and is an NGO that provides shelter and education to homeless children. PJS supports 16-18 year students in acquiring vocational knowledge and job-related skills. The children are enrolled in the NIOS education system to complete their academic requirements.

HHH worked with PJS to design a training program in key areas of Communication, Digital and Life Skills, which is outside the NIOS curriculum.

The five-month experiential training program covered a variety of topics. These included public speaking, interview skills, email writing, resume writing, online research, social media and computer applications. There were also sessions dedicated to life skills such as decision making, problem solving and more.



# Igniting Rural Entrepreneurship Through Antarprena

Our latest and extremely promising initiative for rural India is called Antarprena (inner motivation). The objective is to bring multiple stakeholders together to create opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship in places that are cut off from large job markets and trading centers.

The Antarprena model of taking livelihoods to people (instead of the other way around) grew out of the insight we had from running our flagship programs that many women in rural areas cannot go too far from their homes in search of work.

Local livelihood options are a viable and necessary alternative to urban migration. And for most rural women, this may be the only route to financial independence.

In the months since our first project in Wadi (in the Gulbarga district of Karnataka) began in September 2019, the forty-three women we started

out with, led by their trainer Devaki, have been through a remarkable journey that has dramatically changed their view of and aspirations for themselves. Having stepped out to work outside their homes for the first time in their lives, these women feel immensely empowered, both personally and financially.

## HOW MANAMMA TOOK CHARGE OF HER LIFE



“

*Manamma and Mahendra are a married couple with two school-going children. Mahendra was an alcoholic who was unable to hold down a job. Their house was largely bare and didn't even have a door; there were no dishes or a place to cook. Mahendra would sometimes sell her sarees to get money to drink. The family was under high financial stress.*

*But things are different now. Manamma now makes around Rs 2500 a month and this is enabling*

*her to forge a path towards greater personal independence. She is starting to take charge of her life in ways that would have been unimaginable for her earlier. She is able to assert herself, and even approached the police for help when Mahendra demanded that she quit her job. She enjoys coming into work and it is clear that the job has given her a new sense of identity. Manamma has grown from passively accepting her lot in life to proactively planning for a better tomorrow.*



# Global Action on Poverty: Amplifying Impact

At the heart of poverty lies exclusion from social systems, opportunities and income sources. There is a need for a systemic intervention to tackle poverty along multiple battle lines. Global Action on Poverty (GAP) is designed to be such an intervention: one that uses the pillars of learning and collaboration to drive action and maximise impact. The GAP philosophy rests on the idea that it takes a village - or in this case, an ecosystem

of change makers, collaborators and enablers -- to tackle poverty in all its forms. GAP, in essence, creates a platform to enable small NGOs, without extensive resources, to accelerate impact by drawing on the expertise and knowledge base available through a larger network. The GAP community currently has more than 1100 members, including changemakers, experts, coaches, volunteers and others.

## GAP's SDG Impact

Area of Impact	Number of GAP Changemakers	% of GAP Community	SDGs Impacted
Education & skill development	342	46%	1 NO POVERTY, 4 QUALITY EDUCATION
Healthcare	58	8%	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, 1 NO POVERTY
Agriculture	96	13%	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION, 2 ZERO HUNGER, 1 NO POVERTY
Livelihood & entrepreneurship	140	19%	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES, 1 NO POVERTY
Water, sanitation and energy	41	5%	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION, 1 NO POVERTY
Financial inclusion	9	1%	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES, 1 NO POVERTY
Others	64	8%	1 NO POVERTY

### GAP Intensive: Helping Changemakers Succeed

The GAP Intensive program facilitates many productive engagements between changemakers and various business and social organisations. These interactions are structured and run for a specific length of time, typically a year or more. During this period, the experts (or change leaders) provide guidance on core organisational aspects, including strategy, fundraising, finance, marketing, talent management

and more. Other engagements are driven by a particular requirement or project. For example, it could involve an expert stepping in to provide a website redesign, an architectural plan, or an effective social media marketing strategy. Every time there is such fruitful interaction through this platform, we count it as a win for the entire community and another step forward in the quest for an equitable society.

### ENABLING ‘GOOD SAMARITANS’ TO GROW WINGS



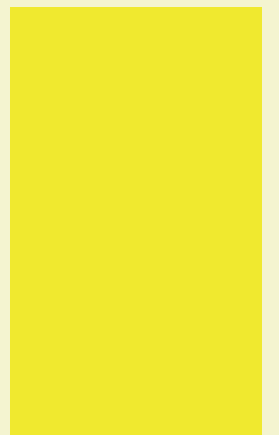
A.I. George Rakesh Babu is the founder of Telangana-based Good Samaritans, an NGO that runs shelter homes for the elderly and destitute. Since 2008, they have cared for more than 1500 old and sick individuals who had no place to call home. Through GAP, George was able to connect with change leaders, mentors and volunteers who helped him overcome several hurdles to better outcomes. A crowdfunding platform generated more than one lakh rupees in funds and additional funds came in through the GAP Community. One person donated 20 acres of land in Madhya Pradesh for the NGO to set up a state-of-the-art shelter home. Several volunteers pitched in to help them streamline various systems and processes.



#### George says:

With help from GAP, I felt strong enough to face every kind of hurdle... as the journey is always unpredictable. I connected with intelligent mentors who helped me see that nothing is impossible. With this support, we became the first official rescue partner for TATA Trust's Elder Spring Response...





### **GAP 2019: A Magical Gathering in a Special Place**

For four days in 2019 - between Jan 31 and Feb 3 - more than 350 passionate individuals, working across several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across India and abroad, converged at Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad and pledged to continue the fight until poverty is eradicated. The event was powerful and magical for a host of reasons - the passion and conviction of those in the gathering, the calibre of the ideas and thoughts presented, the whole-hearted support provided by various entities, and the unmatched history of the venue. The event was supported by grants from ONGC, Facebook, Tata Chemicals Society for Rural Development, Andhra Pradesh Innovation Society as well as contributions by participants. The binding theme of the event was based on the Gandhian principles of Truth, Love and Equality.





## With Gratitude to **Our Partners**

We would like to acknowledge the many partners who have been with us through the journey so far. It goes without saying that their vital support - in the form of funding, resources, facilities and guidance - and ongoing engagement have been the most important factors in our impact during this last year.



### UNICEF/YuWaah

In September 2018, on behalf of UNICEF, we facilitated sessions in six states - Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand - as well as a national level workshop in Delhi to bring together young people and solution providers for conversations on education, skills, aspirations and opportunities. More recently, Head Held High has been selected to work with Yuwaah (UNICEF's youth-focused alliance in India) as a solution provider for youth education and skilling.

### Other Impact Partners

HHH supported the implementation efforts of several partners by providing capacity building, monitoring, quality assurance, impact measurement and access to economic choices. These included Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM) in Mysore, Rishi Infotech in Gulbarga and Oxus Academy in Jagaluru, Chitradurga who collectively have impacted over 700+ rural and tribal youth by implementing our transformative program.

## Looking **Ahead**



*Head Held High CEO,  
**Pankaj Singh Thakur**,  
on navigating the  
uncertainty ahead*

Along with human tragedy, the COVID-19 pandemic is widely predicted to alter the world order as we know it.

Although we believe in a more equitable society, paradoxically when the dust settles, the pandemic will have probably caused exactly the opposite.

Much of the agenda of HHH through the economic and social shutdowns in these trying times will involve sustaining the communities' trust and balancing the prerogatives of adaptation and mitigation. This isn't business as usual but a time for us to show compassion and address the necessities of the moment coupled with collaborating with the affected communities to heal the wounds. Our

efforts should ameliorate the effects on vulnerable sections of society.

If our immediate Covid response is an indication, then we are more than equipped to handle the journey ahead. It's the small acts of kindness that start a revolution and seeing how team HHH has risen to the occasion in recent months has been a source of personal inspiration.

This crisis has adversely impacted many groups and communities, including several of our beneficiaries. Now, more than ever, they need our intervention and support to get back on their feet and prepare for the future – with a sense of hope and confidence in their capabilities.

We can't afford to slow down now.





Ragini Kumari (extreme right) - MIC Batch 2; Bahadurganj (UP) - receiving a dry ration kit with her mother and siblings

Here are the areas and initiatives that will be on our radar as we move into a new working year in a very altered landscape.

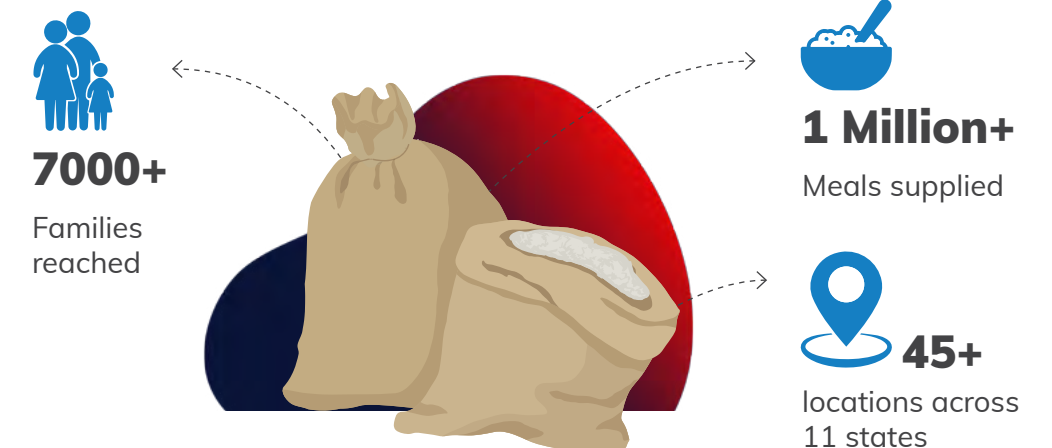
### Ongoing Covid-19 Response

#### Food Security

Immediately following the lockdown, we began a pan-India food campaign to support communities that were economically impacted. For many individuals and families, living in interior areas or identified hotspots, the impact was severe, as their primary means of livelihood

through farming or other daily wage activity, was shut down. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our community-centered approach is designed for providing food security and self-employment opportunities for the poorest and for migrants who have lost their livelihood

#### Highlights of dry ration distribution (as of July 2020)



#### Migrant Support & Self-Employment Grants

Many migrants to large cities who lost their means of livelihood during the lockdown have now made the arduous journey back home. We plan to initiate community 'build back' efforts in hard-hit areas of states such as Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka by designing self-employment opportunities for financially needy individuals and families. Under this initiative (and

to eliminate the need for urban migration) we plan to implement the Antapruna model of local employment to create sustainable economic opportunities within communities. HHH will identify enterprise options, cultivate the entrepreneurial mindset required, and provide support, mini-grants and incubation to establish an enterprise.





*It has been an amazing experience from Day 1 when we started the virtual training. Working with my candidate has truly helped me to forget my problems. These are kids we see every day, with every right to better opportunities. [They are unable to access these] because they haven't had the luck, or due to financial and social constraints. But they still have their dreams, as much as every one of us. There is nothing better than to see these kids taking steps towards these dreams, and knowing that you played a small part in that."*

**Neha Ranade**  
Volunteer from BMC India



*I learnt so many things in these sessions -- thought development, self-discipline, the drawbacks of smartphones, the power of active listening. These sessions are very good for learning new aspects of personality development."*

**Shahnawaz Khan**  
Trainee from Gohana, Haryana

### Provide Ways for Partners to Engage Virtually

Starting in April this year, we onboarded several organisations and their employees into our Virtual Volunteering effort. These volunteers connected with our trainees to cover topics (hygiene, financial planning, etc.) outside of the MIC curriculum. They also provided life advice and

served as mentors for the youth.

This model shows a lot of promise in the current environment – as a viable way for corporate and other volunteers to make a difference in the lives of rural youth.

### Make Proven Models Better Than Ever

- 1. Continue to reinforce our Graduation Model for MIC (for moving vulnerable and marginalised youth out of poverty and to where they can give back to society)**

Catalyse rural youth transformation through life skills training, career guidance, mentoring, sector-based exposure and peer networks.

- 2. Scale the Antarprena Model substantially**  
Take this tried and tested

model for community enterprise and empowerment (especially of women) to more rural locations across the country.

- 3. Enable a ground-up approach to SDG Impact**

Focus on core SDG imperatives when connecting changemakers with target communities and when designing GAP Intensive engagements to amplify the impact of changemakers.

### Support Communities with Livelihood Information & More

We plan to leverage our presence across the country and operate 'community response centres' in different locations. Through these centres, youth can access

reliable information on economic options and social security schemes, in addition to counselling and psycho-social support.

### TESTIMONIALS



**Pratyush Panda**  
Head - CSR  
ACC Limited, Mumbai

Adopting and re-energizing communities through training and sustainable livelihood support have been a big part of our CSR focus over the years. The connect and trust that Head Held High has built in many parts of the country, combined with their operational agility, make them a very effective and reliable partner for us in this mission.



**Akshita Shukla**  
CSR Manager  
Asian Paints Limited

The Asian Paints-Naya Savera program with Head Held High(HHH) as the implementation partner, enabled us to impact the lives of many young individuals from less privileged communities. Due to unfortunate conditions and personal challenges these youngsters were forced to drop out of school. The program equips them with tools to regain control and work towards specific goals of achieving employment and leading a good life. Head Held High has done commendable work in delivering this program. With the mobilizing, implementational and training capabilities of HHH, we were able to give these individuals reasons to be hopeful and optimistic about the future.



**Mrityunjai Ray**  
Senior Specialist -  
Tata Power Community Development Trust  
Maithon Power Ltd.

For poverty alleviation efforts to take hold, there has to be an attempt at tackling some underlying factors that keep communities stagnant from a socio-economic perspective. Head Held High's initiatives are designed to address these root causes. We are happy to partner with them in this mission, particularly where it intersects with our own CSR goals.





## GANGA'S STORY

*Ganga grew up and lived in a small town in North Karnataka till the time she got married, at the age of 18. Her husband was from Gujarat and she moved there with him. But soon after, the physical abuse began in the marriage. When she finally decided that she could no longer endure it, she packed a small bag with a few belongings and returned to her hometown to move back in with her parents. But they now lived with her brother and his wife and Ganga was often reminded of the fact that she was not contributing to the family; and that she was a burden on them. Although this was not an easy situation, Ganga continued to stay there because of her mother who supported her.*

*The women in the town were largely financially dependent and had never stepped outside of their homes to work. However, in 2019, when Head Held High started a community employment project there (with support from ACC) to make textile products for external markets, things began to change. Local families quickly warmed up to the idea*

*because of the trust quotient of both Head Held High and ACC in the community. Ganga was able to join the project mid-stream when another woman left and a vacancy opened up. She soon became known for being extremely hard-working and was one of the more productive workers at the centre.*

*Now, she already makes Rs 2500 a month, and has the potential to make more as her output increases. Her brother and wife acknowledge her status as an earning member of the family. While she had to handle the bulk of household chores earlier, they no longer have that expectation of her since she has a full working day outside the house. Her mother is happy with her daughter's situation and believes that she is in good hands, with those at the centre looking out for her.*

*Ganga's status has changed overnight – from being stigmatized and targeted for a personal situation over which she had little control to being treated with respect by those around her.*

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### Credits:

*Content:  
Parul Singh*

*Editing & Coordination:  
Sangita Srinivasa*

*Design:  
Litmus Ink*

*Photos:  
Mohammed Hammad Arshad, Chandana TR,  
Devaki H Pujari , Sharon Vijjeswarapu, Garima Sharma*

*Other inputs:  
Team HHH*

*Cover Photo:  
Graduation Day for trainees in Kymore, MP*





Head Held High Foundation, No – 172, 1st Floor, 9th  
Cross, 5th Main Road, Indiranagar-560038 (Land  
Mark – Opposite Kairali Nikethan High School Main  
Entrance, Indiranagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560038

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Website: [head-held-high.org](http://head-held-high.org)