



PRATHAM USA

CELEBRATING **20** YEARS OF
INNOVATION + EDUCATION + OPPORTUNITY



ANECDOTE DECEMBER 2015

That he was happy was obvious, but more importantly he was proud to have found a career that he liked and would lift his family out of poverty.

In early November, hundreds of graduates of Pratham's vocational program gathered in different towns as part of our Alumni program (PAL). I was surprised that so many took the trouble to come together, but I shouldn't have been. After all, PAL was created to provide support to rural trainees coming from faraway places for jobs and it had helped them immensely. Stabilizing new employees in inhospitable cities is important if they are to succeed. The dropout rate within the first month of work used to be as high as 25%. A new environment, lack of support and several other factors contributed to this. Earlier we focused mainly on training and placement, but we realized there is a need to have a support system, from recruitment to job placement and beyond. As a result, retention rates have risen.

When my friend Raj Mundhe was visiting me in Pune, we decided to go out for dinner. At the Barbeque Nation in the Hotel Sayaji, a bright young face showed up at our table and with a big smile introduced himself as Ishwar from Gadchiroli. He explained that he had received his training at the Pratham Arora Centre for

Education and there were others like him working at the hotel. That he was happy was obvious, but more importantly he was proud to have found a career that he liked and would lift his family out of poverty. Pratham colleagues have encountered others like Ishwar in hotels and resorts across India. After all, we trained and placed nearly 5,000 hospitality workers last year; the probability of running into one is quite high.

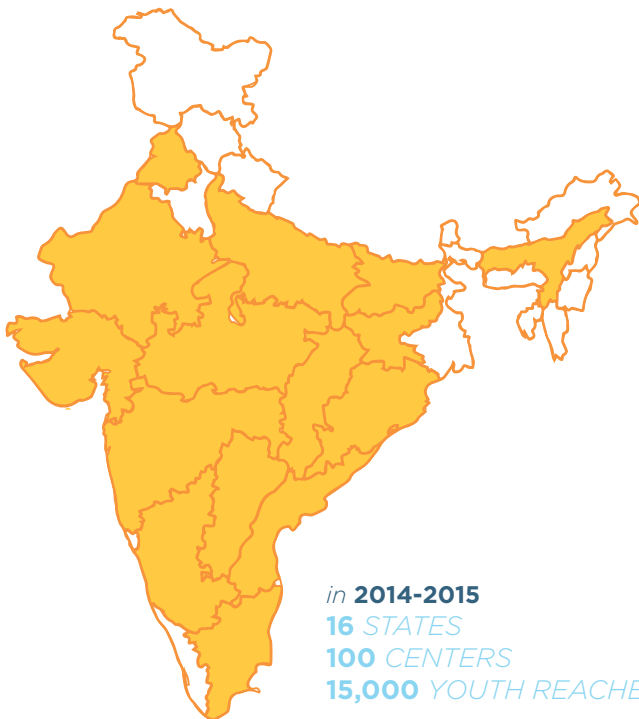
However, many will tell you that although they took the opportunity Pratham offered, others were uncertain about migrating far away for a job, leaving their daily wage work to try their hand at something completely out of their comfort zone. Those of us who migrated to the US in the 60s and 70s can surely relate. That's because the transformation of lives is not an easy process. Life is often very harsh. It takes determination and some support to make the transition.

This is why I am awestruck by stories like that of Radha from Gwalior who escaped a life of abuse and violence to become a micro-entrepreneur. Having been sold into marriage at the age of 14 to a man thrice her age, she is now earning her own living, having returned to Pratham the capital she received to set up her beauty salon. And Radha's story is not unique. When Sudesh Arora, the motivating force behind Pratham's vocational training program, visited India, he heard firsthand many such stories narrated by courageous young individuals.

Pratham touches millions of lives every year. It teaches children the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic on a massive scale. It also trains young people so they can get a job or become entrepreneurs and gives young women a second chance to complete their education. In essence, Pratham creates opportunities for individuals to overcome obstacles and provides support at critical junctures. When we encounter these kids years later, we learn that they are happy to have had a shot at a life of dignity.

You are all an important part in giving them this shot. Here's to your spirit of support and generosity!

Dr. Madhav Chavan
Co-Founder, Pratham



in 2014-2015
16 STATES
100 CENTERS
15,000 YOUTH REACHED



Between now and 2025, an estimated 130 million young adults will enter the Indian workforce, but **only 2% will possess the skills necessary to get a job.***

PROGRAM UPDATE

Pratham offers disadvantaged rural young adults an opportunity to build skills and gain employment through its 100 vocational training centers across 16 Indian states. In addition to short-term courses that focus on hands-on learning, students receive pre-enrollment counseling, job placement and post-placement support. For those who cannot work outside the home or are interested in setting up their own business, Pratham provides the seed capital, mentoring and support to start micro-enterprises.

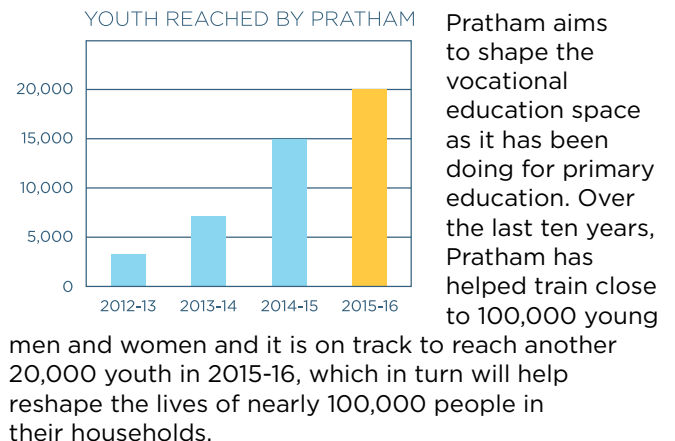
Courses are led by industry-experienced faculty in sectors that employ large numbers of youth. As a result, the outlook for trainees is very good—job placement rates range between 95% for the hospitality sector and 60% for the healthcare and automotive industries. New graduates are earning \$150/mo in hospitality, \$75/mo in healthcare, and up to \$200/mo in construction-related fields (doubling and tripling their household income), and roughly 600 trainees have gone on to launch their own businesses in beauty, construction and auto repair.

Over the last year, Pratham activated a post-placement tracking and support system to provide new trainees with on-the-ground assistance so they can deal with the various difficulties of relocating to an unfamiliar city, such as arranging housing, counseling and social networking, mediating with employers, and accessing health services. Pratham coordinators have helped to ensure that more than 75% of trainees retain their jobs beyond six months, compared to the 40% retention rate of comparable vocational training providers.

There has also been a 75% growth in program reach as well as an expansion of offerings and geographical scope. But more importantly, there is conclusive evidence that youth are actually benefiting from these initiatives and progressing in their careers.

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The next challenges are to scale up the programs, while maintaining quality, and to improve outreach, retention and career opportunities. With this in mind, PAL was established in order to bring graduates together, and a Learn Now, Pay Later option was added to allow trainees to pay a portion of their fees upfront and the remainder after they are placed into employment. A large-scale village volunteer network and basic employability courses for teens are also being developed alongside new entrepreneurship models and placement abroad.



* "Wasting Time." The Economist. May 11, 2013. <http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21577373-india-will-soon-have-fifth-worlds-working-age-population-it-urgently-needs-provide>. Indian Labour Bureau. 2013. http://labourbureau.nic.in/Report_Vol_1_final.pdf.

In Profile:

ANAND (KARIMNAGAR)

Like many vocational trainees, Anand hails from an extremely poor family, which meant higher education was out of his reach. To help provide for his parents, he had become a day laborer and went about his days without purpose. Then, in 2012, Pratham mobilizers came to his city of Warangal. They met with him and showed him the various ways he could find and develop a career. Anand decided to enroll in the automotive training program in nearby Karimnagar.

Anand attests to having had very little direction before beginning his training at PACE. But as his day-to-day activities became more defined, he and those around him began to notice a change—he was speaking differently; he interacted with strangers with a new found self-assurance. Beyond learning a trade, Anand was building the confidence and positive attitude that would allow him to enter and succeed in a professional setting.

After completing the three-month training, Anand was offered a job at Kakatiya United Auto Garage with a monthly salary of Rs. 6,000 (\$100), along with bonus incentives. This opportunity, coupled with Pratham's

ongoing counseling and career guidance, gave him the experience and support necessary to begin building a career. He now enthusiastically recommends PACE to his friends and hopes they too will one day seize the opportunity to make a meaningful change in their lives.

Anand has been shown that he can emerge successful when faced with even the toughest adversities. He can support his family and sees the world through a new lens. Because of PACE, he found much more than a job—he found himself.

"I can't think of any better path to prosperity than to have millions of young people working, taking care of their families and pursuing happiness. As the saying goes, 'Teach a man to fish, and you've fed him for a lifetime.' That is why I support Pratham's skills program."

- Sudesh Arora, National Board, Pratham USA



ENABLING ENTREPRENEURS

Pratham provides resources and support to exemplary graduates so they can start their own businesses.



1 Educate

Counseling and three-month training in an industry-specific field



2 Encourage

Promising graduates given support to establish an enterprise



3 Empower

Financing and 6-12 months of mentoring provided to launch the enterprise

Automotive • Beauty • Construction • Tailoring



Young people need to be made to understand the harsh realities of life. Because, you see, we cannot fool them into gaining skills. The desire must come from them.

In Profile:

DEEPALI SATARDEKAR

At just eighteen years of age, Deepali Satardekar became a teacher in the Balwadi program. Her tenacity and hard work quickly advanced her to the position of Area Head. Today at 36, she heads Pratham's Healthcare Training Center in Nasik.

After nearly two decades with Pratham, Deepali's views about the organization and its impact are nuanced and insightful. "I came from primary education to skills training and the difference between them is huge. Young people need to be made to understand the harsh realities of life. Because, you see, we cannot fool them into gaining skills. The desire must come from them."

Having explored the vocational field from end to end, Deepali has implemented many pilots, some that have failed, but others that have succeeded. She is very proud of the women she has trained and helped place at local hospitals, stressing, "they have excelled because of their desire to turn their lives around. They pursued an education beyond PACE and have become Head Nurses! They are now given the responsibility of handling Intensive Care Units—which is a big deal."

Reflecting on her own journey, she hopes she can pass her experiences on to others: "My learning has been immense and I want to lead by example. A leader should expose people to opportunities in order to create more leaders, not followers."

Industry Impact:

LARSEN & TOUBRO

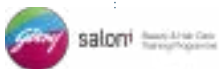
Larsen & Toubro (L&T), one of the world's largest providers of engineering, construction and manufacturing services, has partnered with Pratham for nearly a decade to help indigent youth across India. As knowledge partners, L&T helps to develop curriculum and impart training for construction-related trades including masonry, bar bending and formwork, electrical, and most recently, welding. The company also provides job placement to students upon successful completion of Pratham's three-month program.

Through this collaboration, Pratham and L&T strive to give young adults the skills necessary to meet the needs of industry and to help them earn a sustaining wage. Since 2008, the partnership has managed to create economic opportunity for 4,000 youth. L&T's support as an industry partner has been invaluable. It has meant that students learn industry-relevant skills of the highest caliber and finish their training feeling confident about themselves, ready to face the job market.

The Larsen & Toubro Public Charitable Trust also provides financial support to sustain training centers in construction-related fields in Maharashtra, Mysore and Gujarat.



KNOWLEDGE/PLACEMENT PARTNERS



ABOUT PRATHAM

Founded in 1995 with the goal to have "every child in school and learning well," Pratham is now one of the largest NGOs in India's education sector with operations in 21 of 29 states. Pratham employs low-cost, scalable methods and works in partnership with government and community stakeholders to deliver quality education to underprivileged children and youth.

Pratham USA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a four-star rating (the highest possible) from Charity Navigator. It accepts tax-deductible contributions from US donors to create educational reform throughout India. To learn more about Pratham and its programs, visit prathamusa.org.

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