

PROTSAHAN INDIA FOUNDATION

ENCOURAGING CREATIVE EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY ART

Protsahan India Foundation

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Protsahan India Foundation

Area of Operation: 107, Hastal, Uttam Nagar East Slums. New Delhi - 110059
Website: www.protsahan.co.in | info.protsahan@gmail.com | sonal@protsahan.co.in

Annual Report 2016-17

Table of Content

Table of content			
Foreword from the CEO	1		
Our flagship programs	3		
Project Educare	3		
Initiatives under Project Educare	4		
Visit to CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrated Biology [IGIB]	4		
Celebrating Vivekanand Jayanti at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra	4		
Public speaking and elocution workshops	6		
Storytelling workshops	8		
Summer camp	9		
Project Innocence	11		
Initiatives under Project Innocence	12		
Understanding the female anatomy to counter abuse	12		
Sexual reproductive health	12		
Training in Government Schools & Grassroot NGOs	13		
Future Ties	13		
Centro de Trabajadores Unidos	13		
Vanguard High School	14		
Project Lightbulb	15		
Initiatives under Project Lightbulb	17		
Photography workshops	17		
Film making workshops	18		
Baking workshops	19		
Film screenings	19		
Design For Change workshops	22		
Theater workshops	22		
Indian classical dance therapy workshops	23		
Henna workshops	25		
Mandala art therapy workshops	26		
Zentangle art therapy workshops	27		
Partnerships and collaborations	28		
Rotary Club of India	28		
FICCI	28		
Shades of Happiness	28		
Corporate Social Responsibility Partnerships	28		
Chicago University Fellows Program	29		
Awards and recognitions	30		
Hope of Rise Achievement Award, 2017	30		
Social Change Agents Panel, 2017	30		
		Cvent	30
		Zee TV	31
		92.7 Big FM	31
		Hindustan Times	32
		BBC	32
		Milestones of progress	33
		Fireflies - A film on Child Marriage	33
		Introduction to technology	34
		Accountability benchmarks for junior and senior batches	34
		BBC Radio interviews girls of Protsahan	35
		The lives we've transformed	36
		Soni	36
		Mala	36
		Om Srivastava	37
		Pragati	37
		Shama	38
		Neetu	38
		Ayesha	38
		What we learned from our girls in 2017	39
		Fashion designing courses for girls	39
		Cooking classes	39
		Refill beauty parlor kit	39
		Rearrange and maintain sewing machines	39
		Self-defense classes for older girls	39
		Spare clothes in school	39
		Annexure 1	40
		Workshops conducted in 2016-17 under Project Educare	40
		Workshops conducted in 2016-17 under Project Innocence	40
		Workshops conducted in 2016-17 under Project Lightbulb	40
		Annexure 2	40
		Protsahan India Foundation - Board of Advisors	40
		Debjani Ghosh	40
		Kiran Khalap	40
		Ramya Nageswaran	41
		Brian Hayes	41
		Jaswinder Singh	41
		Shefali Chaturvedi	41
		Talish Ray	42
		Richa Aniruddha	42
		Ashima Saini	42
		Osama Manzar	42

Foreword from the Founder



In the seven years since Protsahan was established as an 'after-school program' for at-risk adolescent girls, fiscal year 2016-17 has been one of the most exciting and rewarding in terms of programs and projects executed, milestones achieved, and lives transformed. We've learned a few lessons on our journey, and implemented them successfully. Our Board of Advisors, comprising of some very prominent professionals from diverse backgrounds, sectors and experience, was constituted and became functional in early 2017. We improved our processes, and empowered at-risk adolescent girls to take charge of their future with life skills and a strong foundation of education through therapeutic art.

The year also brought many awards and honors for Protsahan, along with numerous partnerships and opportunities for us to share our understanding of how to bring a lasting change in a child's life by healing and empowering her through arts. Some of the notable opportunities during the year were at Harvard University, Chicago University, Stanford University, and Microsoft Office in Chicago.



Our small, but highly motivated and extremely dedicated team of staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to add dignity and bring a ray of happiness to the lives of adolescent girls facing unprecedented risks in everyday life.

Our focus on 'Creative Education' and 'Skill Development' have been the fundamental principles in all our work during the fiscal year 2016-17. Our efforts allowed us to successfully rescue 800 girls and mainstream them into formal schools. We were also able to rescue 28 girls from forced early marriage, and train another 200 in entrepreneurial life skills. 11,000 girls have created powerful media on social issues that matter to them like child marriage, access to toilets, and gender violence through short films, photography, theater, and puppet shows. Our flagship programs 'Project Educare', 'Project Innocence', and 'Project Lightbulb' have been extremely successful in raising awareness on child rights, prevention of child sexual abuse, and menstrual hygiene among 19,800 girls. Our volunteers also set up a library at Protsahan with books and Menstrupedia comics through a crowdfunded initiative.

Our programs have thrived under the most strenuous circumstances due to the steadfast dedication of our staff and volunteers, and an unfettered support from our donors and corporate sponsors from public and private sectors. We are extremely thankful for the continued support we get from each individual and organization associated with us who enable us to bring magic to the lives of at-risk adolescent girls, and help us make the world a better place.

Sonal Kapoor (Founder, CEO)
Protsahan India Foundation



Our Flagship programs Project Educare

Project Educare is our unique grassroots-direct action based program. Based in the dense slum of Uttam Nagar, New Delhi, Protsahan works with at-risk girls of this community, many of whom, unfortunately, have been direct survivors of abuse while the others are at a constant high risk of abuse.

The program follows the HEART principle of Healing with Art to empower the girls and prepares them for the long fight. We believe that to break free from an unending cycle of violence and abuse, and be truly empowered, the girls must heal their past and receive the right education. When the program was started in 2010, almost none of the girls from this community were allowed to go to school. 7-years down the line, the program has helped us raise awareness among the parents and the girls that their education is more important than an early marriage. As a result, the parents now take an active interest in their education and many of our girls are at the top of their classes.



Initiatives under Project Educare

Visit to CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrated Biology [IGIB]



We've had some excellent volunteers in the past who later went on to study at National University of Singapore but never lost touch with Protsahan over the years. Some of them took the initiative to organize a visit for the girls of Protsahan to the CSIR Institute of Genomics and Integrated Biology in New Delhi.

The visit was an eye-opener for the girls as they experienced the fascinating world of science. They got an opportunity to explore bacteria and viruses under conventional and electron microscopes. The day spent at the institute kindled a desire to learn and explore the wonderful world of science in the young minds of our girls, and gave them a new direction to learn. Since the visit to the institute, our girls have become better informed, and are much more eager to learn about science and pursue further studies in the field.

We believe that field trips like these help us in giving our girls a ray of glimmer that education can and will help them bridge the distance between a traditional ideology that shackles their freedom and a future full of hopes and possibilities, and diminish the risk of abuse in everyday life.

Celebrating Vivekanand Jayanti at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra



Vishwa Yuvak Kendra in New Delhi organized Youth Day on January 12, 2017 to mark Swami Vivekanand's 154th birth anniversary. Girls of Protsahan celebrated the occasion with more than 700 students from various NGOs from across the country and participated in the Youth Festival in New Delhi. They displayed excellent teamwork, strength of mind, character and integrity, and love of participation that was their winning spirit.

The day-long event introduced our girls to the principles of camaraderie with their team and other students like them from across India. They learned the value of integrity and sportsmanship by participating in various activities through the course of the day. The event gave them an opportunity to meet and interact with children from different cultures from different parts of the country. Initiatives like the National Youth Day Festival enable our girls to experience and enrich themselves with a better understanding of their country, their responsibilities towards nation building, and value their freedom as accorded and enshrined in the Constitution of India.





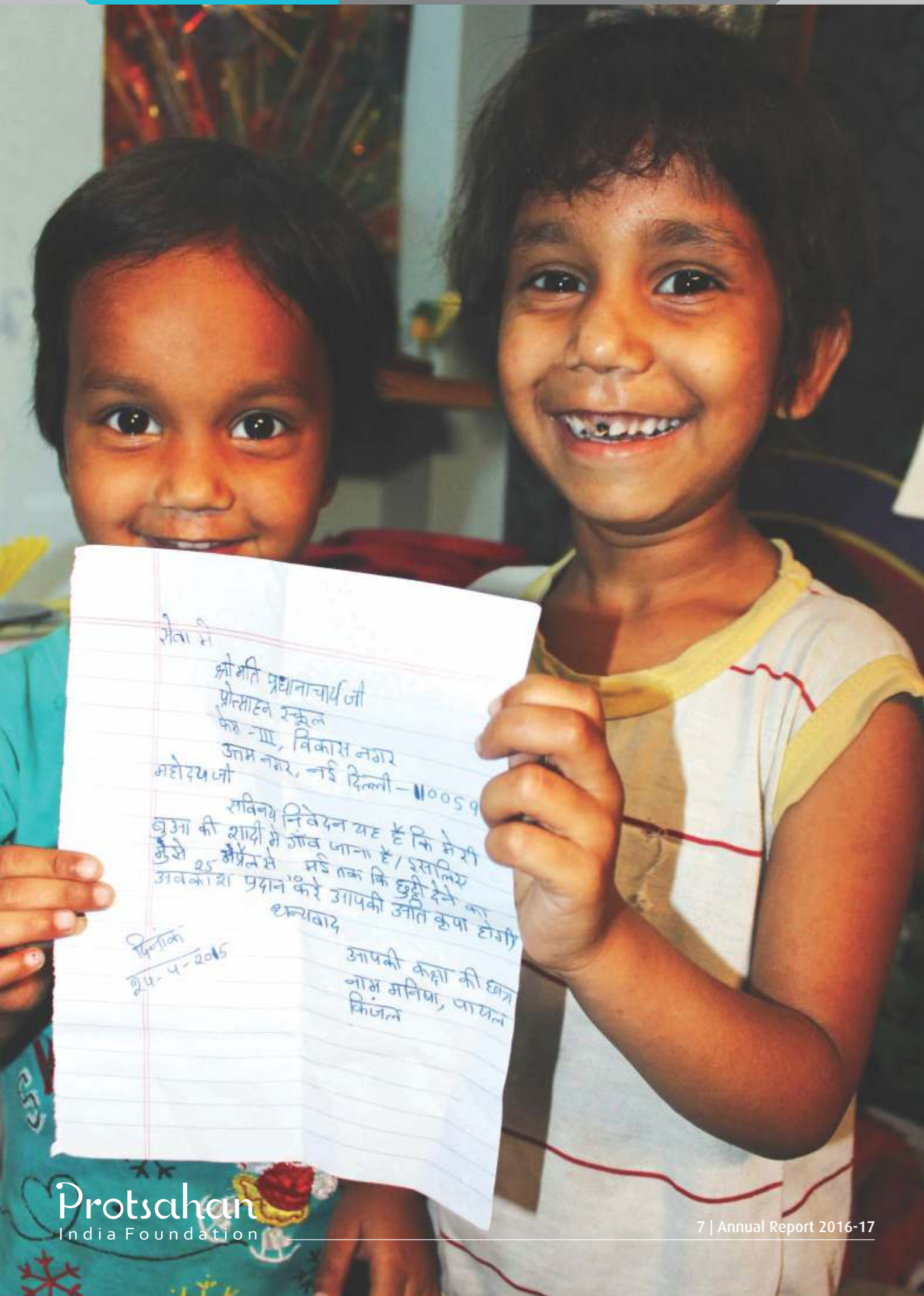
Public speaking and elocution trainings

None of our girls have participated in debates, and elocution competitions at the school level. Their parents and families are not equipped to provide them with an environment at home where their young minds can build self-confidence, and learn to express themselves and communicate effectively. Lack of self-confidence and effective communication skills are the foremost reasons why most children fail to report abuse.

In order to ensure that our girls can break free from an unending cycle of abuse, it was necessary for us to instill confidence in them so that they may speak and express themselves clearly and effectively. With this purpose, we organize public speaking and elocution lessons for our girls at Protsahan. We provide them with an environment where they can learn and practice their public speaking skills freely, while encouraging them at every step of the way to ensure that their mistakes do not let them waiver in their path.

In order for the lessons in public speaking and elocution to be effective, continuity and sustainability of the efforts are extremely necessary. Classes are held every Saturday to ensure that continuity of practice is maintained and the model of the workshops is sustainable over a longer period of time. This workshop is designed to ensure that our girls can not only speak for themselves, but also become responsible citizens of the country and project a strong image of India on the global stage.





Storytelling workshops



India has had a beautiful tradition of storytelling since the ancient times. With time, this art is getting lost, and the younger generations are growing up with no access to the traditions, culture and values of our rich Indian heritage. Along with the cultural importance, the art of storytelling has a lot to offer in igniting creativity in young minds. Keeping that in mind, at Protsahan, we encourage our girls to write and tell their own stories. They are guided by our teachers, and volunteers who take them through the process of writing stories, and telling them in an extremely engaging manner.

Storytelling workshops at Protsahan are designed to enrich the girls with the cultural heritage of India, our social values, and prepare them to take on everyday challenges with creativity and ingenuity. Workshops like these are critical in our work with young, at-risk girls, as it prepares them to fight against an endless cycle of abuse. They develop the confidence to speak-out against abuse, and learn the art of storytelling that they can employ to build a career for themselves at a later stage in life.



Summer camp



Summer time poses a big gap in the school education of young ones. It's the most vulnerable time for many at-risk girls that Protsahan caters to. Not only is it a time when the children do not get to go to school, many of them end up working with their parents, some of whom are daily wage laborers. When the schools restart, some of these children do not make it back to the classrooms. As a result, it becomes important for after-school programs like Protsahan to quickly fill the gap and ensure that every child gets access to quality education even when the school vacations are going on.

To ensure that children, especially young girls do not dropout of school, it is essential to keep the process of learning a continuous one. Summer camp at Protsahan protects the link between children and continuous education, and ensures that our girls maintain a steady performance at school. It often involves home visits and meeting with the parents to convince them to continue their children's school education, and to assure them that the programs at Protsahan are beneficial for their children.

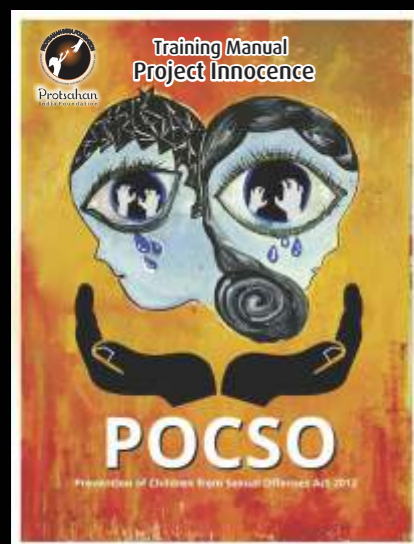
Summer camp is a week long capsule course of creativity that otherwise runs through the year and forms the core emphasis of Protsahan's work. It is open to all the children in the community, where our girls bring along their cousins, friends, mothers, etc. It is during this time that film screenings of quality cinema is done inside Protsahan classrooms. It is also the time when art therapy sessions with storytelling, Mandala and Zentangle designs, and other such activities are organized in Protsahan classrooms. A lot of youtube embroidery tutorials are also played for the older girls interested in embroidery work.

The summer camp gives the girls an opportunity to stay physically active but organizing sports and active games or them. These activities help build their self-esteem by removing academic and social competition from the classroom. Such a non-competitive environment nurtures the girls with a unique encouragement by giving them an environment where they develop life-long skills.



Project Innocence

Project Innocence is Protsahan's outreach program that imbibes learnings and findings from Project Educare, and is redesigned to work in partnership with institutions and organizations to empower their children in understanding, recognizing, and advocating against child abuse. Project Innocence is designed to give scale and replicability to Protsahan's work by transferring our knowledge in fighting against child abuse, and transforming the lives of thousands of girls at-risk of abuse.



Initiatives under Project Innocence

Understanding the female anatomy to counter abuse

In 2016, the workshops under Project Innocence kickstarted with a session by Dr. Preeti Kapoor, a well known sociologist from Delhi University. Dr. Kapoor trained two of Protsahan's core trainers, and one of the eldest girls at Protsahan, an 11th grade student. Her sessions focused on understanding the female anatomy to counter abuse, and on female sexual reproductive health. These sessions were designed to ensure that our girls understand themselves and their own bodies to counter any kind of abuse.

A basic training session on female anatomy and women's rights was conducted by Dr. Kapoor in Hindi to ensure that those attending her session thoroughly understood the message of gender rights, human rights, and their interconnections being conveyed in the workshop. It was necessary for the session to be in Hindi to enable women working in community-based organizations in India with little or no prior experience of working on these issues, especially with adolescent girls, to understand the issue and be able to explain it to young adolescent girls in an effective manner.

Workshops like these help our trainers create a space where they can freely challenge assumptions, preconceived notions, and even myths, and provide them with resources they can use within their community for the greater good.



Sexual reproductive health

With higher economic contributions into the education system, while a larger number of girls completing primary school, the number of girls completing secondary and high school are still lagging. Adolescent girls face numerous sexual and reproductive health challenges, with an increased risk of sexual assault, harmful traditional practices, and human trafficking. Moreover, not admitting that adolescent girls in the age group of 15-19 are not sexually active, or that even if they are, they belong to economically stronger sections of the society, is wrong. Such an attitude leads to little or no awareness among the adolescent minds about the need for sexual reproductive health training, that ultimately leads to various problems like HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases with far reaching effects caused due to unsafe sexual practices.

Keeping these factors in mind, it becomes extremely important to train adolescent girls in sexual reproductive health to ensure that not only are they aware of their rights, but also of their responsibilities to look out for their own physical and mental health. It is this awareness that is key to ensuring that young people, especially adolescent girls make informed choices in life and take charge of their health and wellbeing.

Trainings in Government Schools & Grassroot NGO's



Protsahan volunteers reached out to several small charity groups, local street NGO's working with children and government schools in Delhi NCR and conducted trainings with children from class sixth to tenth. Protsahan envisions to reach out to several more teachers and school children with understanding of Protection of Children Against Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act so that they are well equipped to take action and seek redressal in case of a case of abuse with the child.

International Collaborations Future Ties NGO



Future Ties, a Chicago based NGO, works with the lower income communities of Chicago. They wanted to add an element of art therapy in their programs they run in the underserved communities of South Chicago. Protsahan conducted a workshop with them to introduce their trainers and the younger children to yoga and basic meditation techniques that would help

them in getting past the hurtful memories of the past and allow them to embrace the path to healing.

Centro de Trabajadores Unidos

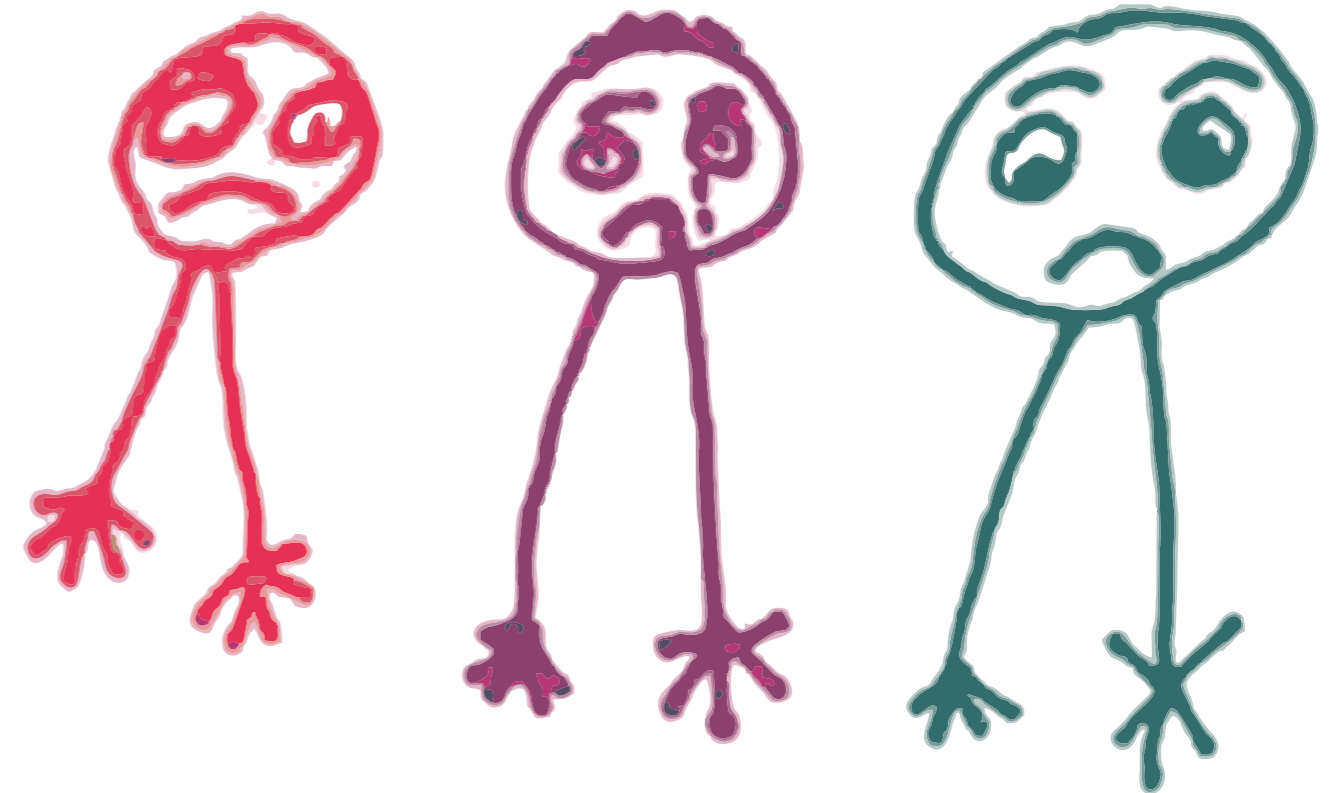


Centro de Trabajadores Unidos: Immigrant Workers Project works with the lower income Latin American immigrant community in Chicago. Their focus group includes children and their parents. Protsahan conducted a workshop with Centro de Trabajadores Unidos to introduce

the concepts of basic yoga meditation that helps families, especially parents with young children, to cope with stress and lead a more fulfilling life.

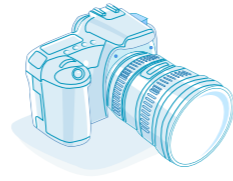
Vanguard High School

A simple coffee table conversation with Tokumbo Bodunde, a teacher with the New York City Board of Education, initiated a collaboration with Protsahan. The subsequent workshop included an exchange of ideas via a youth advisory circle, followed by screening of Protsahan's film, "Soul of Protsahan", post which conversations on child sexual abuse and child abuse began, and culminated in a fruitful dialogue with adolescent girls from Vanguard High School.



It shouldn't
hurt to be
a child.

Project Light Bulb



Project Lightbulb invites experts and volunteers from diverse professions and backgrounds to ignite the spark of lateral thinking among our girls while giving them vocational and entrepreneurial life skills. During the past year, Protsahan has hosted professionals and volunteers who did workshops on photography, baking, performing arts, film making, jewelry and clothes designing, and computers. Under this program, the girls of Protsahan have written, produced, directed, edited, and acted in a film, titled Fireflies, that brings attention to the issue of child marriage. The entire process was crowdfunded with the help of filmmakers and media professionals who worked closely with our girls to encourage them and show them the intricacies of the process of filmmaking.



Initiatives under Project Lightbulb

Photography workshops



Photography workshops have always been an integral part of the arts and crafts sessions at Protsahan over the past 7-years. Many of our girls at Protsahan had on previous occasions, shown a very keen interest in photography. However, given the circumstances of the community they live in, they never had the opportunity to be entrusted with a gadget. With photography workshops, our plan was to change that, but the girls got a lot more in return than just photography skills. They also learned about empathy, finding creative solutions to local problems within their community, and found their hidden reserves of talent, passion and strength to take on various life challenges.

Photography gave them a creative outlet they had never experienced before. It gave them the confidence to speak up and stand up for themselves. They realized that their creative voice was just as powerful to change the course of their destiny and the ideology of their community at large. We've witnessed real change in our girls as they get increasingly proficient in their photography skills. Their self-confidence has increased as they learn to take pride in themselves and their own abilities. Moreover, they've learned the importance of bringing that same change to their entire community with their art work.

Sarika Joshi, an accomplished travel and wildlife photographer from Singapore, conducted one of the workshop sessions with our girls at Protsahan in January 2017, showing them the intricacies of photography and using it to capture memorable moments. Her workshop session introduced our girls to the career options that photography can bring to them. One of our girls who hails from a Muslim family, and was never even allowed to hold a camera for various reasons, is now the most sought after photographer in her neighborhood, regularly getting paid assignments for various functions and ceremonies in her locality.

Such has been the power of the medium for our girls, that many of them have attained high degree of proficiency in photography, and regularly organize exhibitions of their work so that their parents and other people in their community can see and experience their latent gifts. These workshops have always been a continued initiative at Protsahan, and evolved to subsequent higher levels where our girls are now moving towards making feature-length films on social issues that impact them and their community directly.

Film making workshops



As our girls progressed with their photography skills, the subsequent level for them to explore was motion pictures and film making. The film making workshops conducted under Project Lightbulb took them through the detailed process that would allow them to make their first motion picture.

With great deal of enthusiasm, our girls at Protsahan participated in the film making workshops, learning everything from acting, facial expressions, script and dialogue writing, dialogue delivery, camera angles and placement, and editing. Armed with this knowledge, 24 of our girls made a feature length film on the scourge of child marriage in our society, titled Fireflies.

The girls started with choosing their own team from among themselves that would work on the project, assigned responsibilities, setting production deadlines, learned acting, wrote the script of the film, arranged for costumes and other items required for the film, scouted for locations to shoot, and made all the necessary preparations.

The film making workshop was an excellent opportunity for the girls to tap into their resourcefulness to achieve their goals. It taught them the value of collaborating with each other, find innovative solutions to effectively address the challenges they face in everyday life, and within their community.



Baking workshops



Most of the girls at Protsahan start cooking at home from a very early age. They do it because they have to, because cooking is still a very gender specific task in Indian households, especially in the community that our girls come from.

Every child loves cupcakes. Baking workshops at Protsahan were an excellent opportunity for them to experience the fun side of cooking. They experienced for the first time how cooking and baking can be more than just a household chore for them, how it can be a fun activity, and possibly prove to be a productive career option in the future if they choose to do so.

Such workshops help our young girls to build confidence in their abilities by learning something new that they can apply in real life, either as entrepreneurial skills or as life skills. Some of the important life skills that children learn are about patience, maintaining balance in every aspect of life, and the importance of curiosity and innovation in learning. These skills are important for our girls as they enhance their cognitive skills, and develop the curiosity to keep learning.

Film screenings

The objective of quality cinema is not just to create enjoyment, but also evoke emotion through its compelling narrative that engages the young adolescent girls whom Protsahan reaches out to, on social issues of relevance. A good film's screening increases general awareness by bringing light to issues and stories in the mind of a young girl that may have otherwise been

unknown or not often thought about.

These film screenings act as a critical building block for both individual change in the mind of a young girl and broader social change in her family and beyond when films drive home their messages that are otherwise easily missed by both the girls and their parents. We've often seen the direct impact these film screenings can have on the relationships between the girls and their parents, and how it impacts their performance in academics and their social interactions with everyone around them. The confidence is clearly visible in our girls when they realize that they have the support of their families, especially their parents.



Dangal

The movie Dangal was an excellent reminder for fathers to start supporting their daughters as they would support their sons, and let them follow their dreams. It was also a reminder for the girls that they do not have to consider themselves any lesser than their brothers, and that they are equally capable of achieving great feats if they put their mind to it.

The screening of Dangal was held at Protsahan, though ideally, we had wanted to invite the girls with their fathers and organize the screening in a large hall. Irrespective, the girls enjoyed the film, and took home the message that they too have the ability to influence the course of their lives.

Nisha, one of the brightest girls at Protsahan says, "the film screenings at Protsahan fill me with hope that my father will stand by me and make me equipped enough to follow my heart. I'm good at maths and science, but I hadn't imagined that I could create a piece of jewelry, take pictures with

a DSLR, and in the evening went back home after watching Dangal. The only difference is that the Dangal girl wanted to be a wrestler, and I want to be a model. Protsahan has given me the greatest opportunity to express myself and to put all my love into making special creations."

Nil Battey Sannata

Nil Battey Sannata, a film about a single mother and her daughter who lacks the motivation to study was screened at Protsahan for the girls and their mothers. In order to inspire her daughter, the mother decides to go back to school and finish her education that she left off in the middle of nowhere, so that she may inspire her daughter to continue with her education and attain a respectable position in society.

The subject of the movie interested all of us at Protsahan and we decided to organize a screening for our girls and their mothers. A good film has the power to shape society's broader thinking. At least, that's what we expected from this film, that it would capture the attention of some of the parents of our girls and help them understand the importance of education in the lives of their children.

The film made a great impact on some of the mothers in our group as they understood what we wanted them to see - to stand by their daughters as they climb the stairs of education and success.





Design For Change workshops



There are a lot of local matters that need to be addressed to ensure better living conditions, better safety for women and children, improved education facilities within underserved communities. The Design For Change workshops conducted by Kids Powered Media are modeled with a clear focus on Human Centered Design.

The Human Centered Design approach, first developed by IDEO, is a crucial element in solving some of the most pressing local problems faced by communities. It focuses on people, and looks at the problem with equal measures of objectivity and empathy in order to develop solutions that address those problems effectively. Ideas generated in the process lead to prototypes; prototypes are shared with the target audience, and eventually, a solution that encompasses all their feedback is implemented with the people in mind.

Every local problem requires a local solution that is tailor-made for the people in the local

community. This inspires lateral thinking in young minds and involves them in solving complex problems. For example, explaining what we do at Protsahan, and making the parents in our local community understand the possible positive implications of our work for the girls is one of the challenges we face everyday. It is a local problem that required a very local solution. And, our girls are the best communication medium to help their parents understand what Protsahan meant to them. Once they had identified the problem, they set out to find a solution to it.

They pitched their ideas like they would do in front of venture fund executives, did their research, prepared a proposal, built a prototype of the newspaper, did the testing with focus groups, and fixed the shortcomings in their prototype. Not only did the process give them an added confidence in their own abilities, it also enabled them to get past their own inhibitions and find solutions to problems they face everyday.

Theater workshops



Theater workshops provide a safe space for expression for the girls of Protsahan. It acknowledges and values the diverse capabilities of children, and builds self confidence when they perform for an audience and makes them trust their ideas and abilities. This confidence is what they apply in nearly every aspect of life. In a world addicted to technology, drama and theater provides the girls hailing from tough backgrounds an outlet for thinking new ideas, making creative choices, and interpreting the essence of empathy and tolerance. By enacting

roles from different situations from their homes, from different time periods, and cultures promotes compassion, cooperation, and concentration in them.

The theater workshops at Protsahan, especially the ones where the girls worked on the issues of gender, child marriage and incest, are the ones that develop a deep sense of understanding the exact evils in which they survive.

Playing, practicing, and performing a certain story developed and scripted by the girls themselves on the issues they face everyday, inculcate a sustained focus of mind, body, and voice, alongside gaining an astute grasp of the issues that plague their lives, and gives them an outlet to verbally and non-verbally express themselves.

Protsahan ensured that volunteer trainers from DU trained the girls on their communication skills that included voice projection, articulation, fluency of Hindi language, and persuasive speech. The girls learned to communicate the who, what, where, when, and why to the audience with their expressions. There were times during the performance when one forgot her dialogues, but the other pitched in to take charge of the situation and save the scene. Such innocent improvisations, we have learned in our experience, have been crucial in fostering quick thinking, on the spot problem solving in no matter how small the scale of the setup might be, which will only lead to greater adaptability in life. Rehearsing and performing the self-written scripts and movements strengthen memory and retention power, while simultaneously building play, humor and laughter into the process of learning. They learned aesthetic appreciation as Protsahan always made sure that all children who are a part of these creative projects always sit down for self evaluation and aesthetic appreciation sessions before embarking on their theater and film projects.

Indian classical dance therapy workshops



For a very long time, Indian classical dance forms have been regarded for their therapeutic value apart from their artistic finesse. The classical arts have traveled far and wide across the globe from India and garnered attention and respect from the global audiences.



Dance therapy with Indian classical dance forms is based on the concept that body and mind are not apart from each other. In fact, they are interdependent on each other for perfectly harmonized physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. Ayurveda too has held dance as a powerful healer for physical and inner awareness. Indian philosophy also supports that Sangeet (song, dance and music) benefit human health physically as well as mentally. It has shown positive results in helping to ease anxiety, depression, anger and post-traumatic stress when used alongside traditional counseling and other rehabilitation efforts. Dance provides an active, non-competitive exercise for the mind and body, leaving a positive impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of our girls. It allows them to rise above the risk of abuse in their daily life, and gives them the confidence that they are capable of overcoming every challenge in life.

At Protsahan, we consider Indian classical dances as not only a therapeutic necessity for our girls, but also to encourage self-respect, courage, elegance and agility among them. Dance therapy is a specialized and therapeutic use of dance for the improvement of cognitive, behavioral and physical conditions in people, especially those who have survived or are at-risk of some kind of abuse in life. The physical state of the body affects the emotional and mental wellbeing, both positively and negatively. As a result, it becomes an important activity for the girls at Protsahan to engage in dance therapy workshops to overcome the negative effects of living in a risk-prone environment.

The classical Indian dance workshops also helped our girls prepare to perform and compete against some of the finest dance students from all over the country at an event organized by Kathak Dharohar at Shri Ram Center For Arts.



Henna workshops



Every form of art, especially the classical arts that are steeped in traditions, possess a therapeutic element in them. Henna is one such art form that has been an integral part of the Indian tradition for millennia. It finds mention in the Vedas, and is a crucial part of Vedic rituals where it's intended to be a symbolic representation of the outer and the inner sun in every human being. It's well known for its medicinal properties as described in Ayurveda, and brings grace and healing. As Vedic customs follow the ideology of "awakening the inner light", traditional Indian designs represent the sun on the palm.

It was for this reason that we included henna workshops for our girls at Protsahan - to awaken the inner light in all of them that was dimmed by the constant risk of violence and abuse within the community that they reside in. The henna workshops were designed to such that the girls acquire a vocational skill as henna is an essential part of some of the most important festivals across India while ensuring that they benefit from the therapeutic effects of the art of applying henna.

The girls learned to perfect their designs, experiment with new designs and ideas, try out their skills to achieve flawless execution of their designs. Some of our brightest girls actually merged the concept of Zentangle designs they learned at Protsahan with the traditional Indian henna designs. The resulting patterns were a beautiful amalgamation of the old and new, that brought a fresh new perspective to the art of henna, and received a great deal of appreciation for them.



HEART and Healing with Art: Mandala art workshops

Mandala' from Sanskrit, literally meaning 'circle', is a spiritual and ritual symbol in Hinduism and Buddhism, representing the intricacies of the universe. In everyday parlance, it has become a generic term that covers any diagram, chart or geometric pattern representing the microcosm of the universe in a metaphysical or symbolic manner. The term appears in the Rigveda, but is also used in other religions and philosophies, particularly Buddhism. In various traditional spiritual practices, mandalas are used for focusing attention, as a tool to guide a practitioner towards the spiritual realms, to establish a sacred space, and as an assistant in meditation and trance induction.

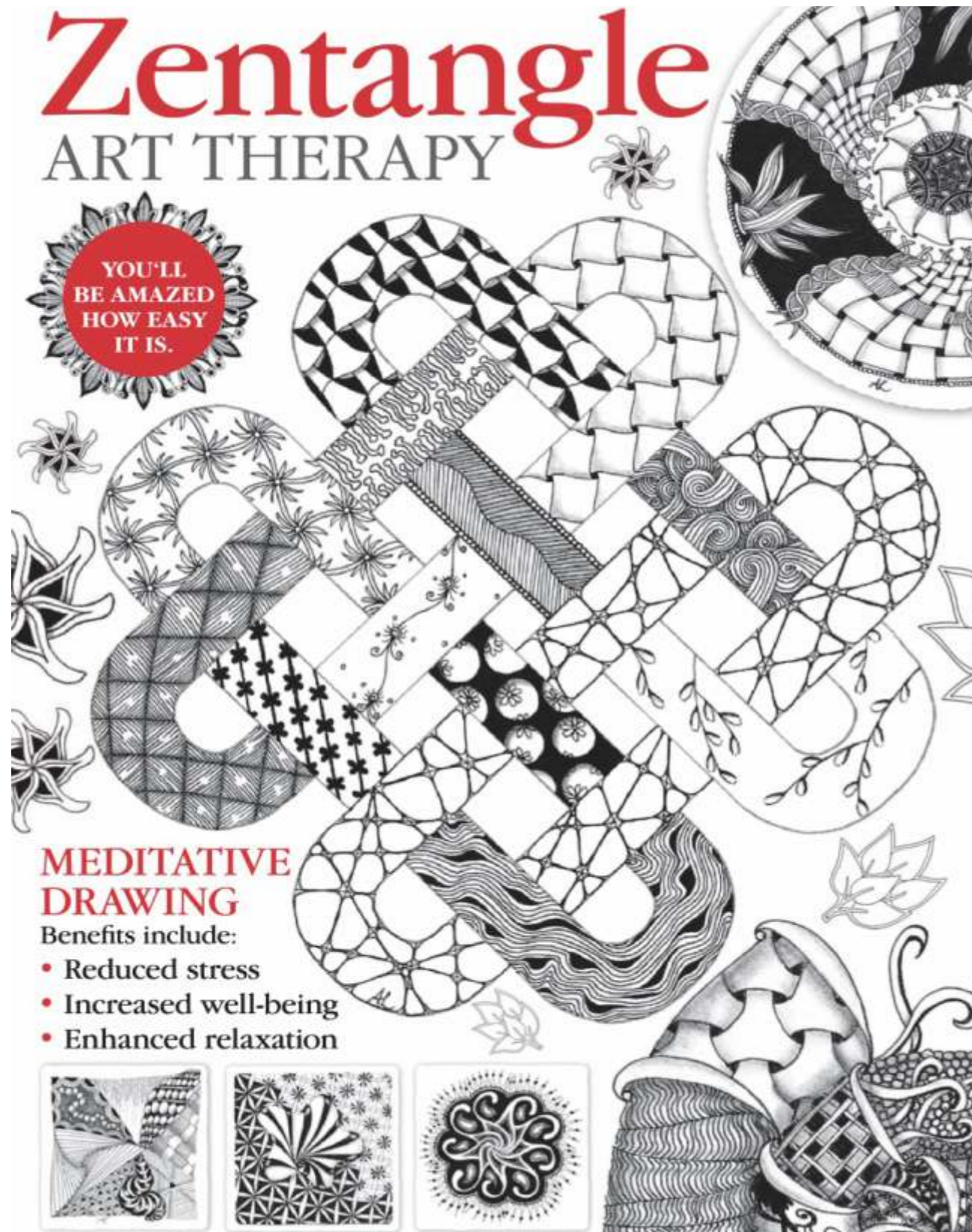
These therapeutic properties of mandala art made it a perfect candidate to assist the girls of Protsahan in spiritual meditations that helped them in overcoming the stress and vulnerability that they face every day. These sessions where the girls learned to meditate with the help of ancient mandala traditions, also helped them to look inwards at their innate strengths and build self confidence. These sessions were conducted by Divya Khaneja of Enlightening Art, a self taught artist in the arts discipline.

Nishu, a 12-year-old who's been attending Protsahan regularly for the past 4 years, said, "While I was creating the mandala for 4-hours, I forgot about the situation at home. By the time I finished my art work and handed it over to Divya ma'am, I had let go of my pain and made peace with the situation. I hope Divya ma'am comes back for more sessions at Protsahan."



Zentangle art therapy workshops

Zentangle is formed by the Japanese word 'zen', meaning meditation and the English word 'tangle', meaning 'jumbled up' or 'in conflict'. Zentangle art refrains from planning the flow of lines, thus allowing the mind to wander and find a meditative state in the middle of creative aimlessness. Within this state, a person can learn to let go of the stress and calm an anxious mind, increase self-confidence, and cultivate awareness of the present moment in a similar way as mindfulness meditation.



Partnerships and collaborations

Rotary Club of India



Rotary Club of Delhi (West), led by Mrs. Jaspal Chadha and Capt. Manmeet Singh, along with the other flagship Rotarians visited Protsahan. They donated food items, new clothes, and toys for the girls.

Through our association with several Rotary Clubs since Protsahan's inception, several ideas have been shared and quick action has been taken to create lasting change in the communities that Protsahan reaches out to. Several volunteer hours each year are contributed by Rotarians that directly contribute to Protsahan's cause.



During the winter of 2016, the ladies from FICCI Youth Wing donated 150 new sweaters to Protsahan girls. Protsahan girls wore uniforms for the first time in their lives with a sense of pride and created an identity for themselves within the community that they hail from.

For the entire winter, this cardigans became a reflection of discipline, and belonging to Protsahan. Ms. Aanchal Sethi, President FICCI-YFLO, was instrumental in organizing the campaign and leading the members of FICCI-YFLO to participate enthusiastically in making the campaign a great success.

Shades of Happiness Foundation



Shades of Happiness, a New Delhi based NGO, works with the slum residents of Central Delhi, and raising awareness about various health and education related issues in these

communities. Protsahan conducts regular workshops on menstrual hygiene for the girls to whom Shades of Happiness reaches out to, and helps them with understanding the importance and need for menstrual hygiene for young adolescent girls. Workshops like these are needed especially in communities with fewer resources for proper sanitation where women and girls face bigger health risks than anywhere else.

Corporate Social Responsibility Partnerships

Protsahan, since the very beginning, has been successful in organizing support from the corporate sector through both in-kind and monetary cooperation that has a direct impacts on the lives of the girls that Protsahan reaches out to.

We would like to acknowledge the teams at CVENT India, Sunlife Financial, Deloitte, Google, KPMG, and Tower Watson for their undulating support for Protsahan's cause. Delhi University, Birla Institute of Management and Technology, Netaji Subhash Institute of Technology, and Avignon School were some of our flagship collaborations that allowed us to impact a larger section of the community we work with.



Chicago University Fellows Exchange Program

Common Purpose arranged for an exchange program for the delegates of Chicago University. Common Purpose runs leadership development programs that inspire and equip people to work together across boundaries to challenge the evils that plague our societies.

Now, more than ever, emerging student leaders need to think wider, seek out new connections with grassroots organizations like Protsahan, explore opportunities to collaborate, and inspire others to do things differently and better. The collaboration between Common Purpose, India and Protsahan India Foundation created a program with the University of Chicago students to ensure that they achieve just that.



Awards and recognitions



Hope of Rise Achievement Award, 2017

Kathak Dharohar was established to raise awareness about India's cultural heritage of classical dance and music art forms. The organization works with children from underserved communities to help them overcome stress, abuse and poverty through art. Kathak dance maestro, Sadanand Biswas, trained our girls in the dance form as a part of our art therapy workshops. Our girls were then invited to perform and showcase their classical dance talent at Shri Ram Center for Art in front of an audience comprising of some of the top dignitaries from the Government of India. The girls of Protsahan won accolades and standing ovation for their dance and theater performance from the audience and were conferred with the Hope of Rise Achievement Award 2017 by Kathak Dharohar.

Social Change Agents Panel, 2017



Harvard Graduate School of Education invited Protsahan to be a part of the Social Change Agents Panel 2017. The panel discussed the need for scaling up efforts at NGOs across the board to ensure that a larger impact of efforts can be achieved.

Protsahan's model that emphasizes on empathy in every program more than scale was well received at the event. The panel comprised of some of the most well renowned academicians, thinkers, and representatives from various other NGOs from around the world. Protsahan's approach with a strong support from a rich Indian cultural and artistic heritage, including classical dance therapy, yoga, and other traditional art forms as an agent for bringing social change received a resounding recognition from the gathered dignitaries at the event.

cvent

Cvent is a global MNC with offices in India. The Cvent team spent a lot of time with our girls at Protsahan to better understand the work we do. During this time, Cvent evaluated some of the top performers at Protsahan, and later at a beautiful ceremony held at their office in Gurugram, they recognized these exceptional young girls for their talents, dedication and unparalleled enthusiasm to be the change they want to see in their own lives.

Our girls were felicitated on stage by Cvent leadership, who also recognized Protsahan's contribution in making the world a better place for the young adolescent girls we reach out to.



Zee TV, a mainstream television news and entertainment channel with a very high reach among the Indian and overseas audiences featured Protsahan's work on the talkshow 'Zindagi Live'. The show sheds light on various social issues, and attempts to mobilize social change through acceptance of social evils and furthering the cause of trying to find a solution to those social evils.

Among the topics of discussion on the show were child abuse and child sexual abuse, where Protsahan's work was not only appreciated, but also recognized as pivotal in bringing effective change in society, especially for young adolescent girls living in underserved communities of urban India.



92.7 Big FM, a leading radio channel featured Protsahan on its show, Big Heroes. The show highlights individuals and organizations working on various social issues, and talks about the relevance of programs and individual efforts in bringing about a lasting change in society.

Big FM recognized the work Protsahan does to bring dignity and happiness in the lives of young adolescent girls residing in unfavorable environments in underserved urban communities. The hour long radio talk show allowed us to share our cause with millions of listeners and raise awareness on the matters of child abuse and child sexual abuse in the country.

hindustantimes

Hindustan Times, a leading English language daily with a wide reach across India featured Protsahan's work this year. The article highlighted the need to raise awareness on child abuse and child sexual abuse in a progressive society like India.

The article in a prominent mainstream daily newspaper was the kind of recognition that allowed Protsahan to reach out to a larger set of people and ensure that such social evils are rooted out so that the future generations of this country can look up to better things in life.

BBC

BBC produced a documentary highlighting the cause taken up by Protsahan in the underserved urban communities to bring dignity and happiness to the lives of young adolescent girls through education and creativity. The documentary was released online on the BBC website, and played on BBC London during prime time.

Such recognition allows us to share our cause with millions of viewers and raise awareness so that our efforts create an unfading impact and the future generations are fully equipped to tackle social evils like child abuse and child sexual abuse.



BBC Media Action-Hindi radio show - Full-On Nikki - in collaboration with UNICEF to bring attention to every girl's right to access to a safe passage to school featured Protsahan and our work in the community we reach out to.

Through the show, along with the cause of Protsahan, the voices of our girls reached out to millions of young adolescent girls across India and other parts of the world. We believe that such recognition for our work helps us take our ideas to many more people, especially young girls, and inspires them to be the change in their local communities.

BBC RADIO

BBC Radio interviewed and followed the lives of 5 of our girls who fought traditions and harsh realities of life to educate themselves. The show's host stayed in touch with our girls through us over a period of time to document the progress in their education.

One of our girls at Protsahan fought against her family who wanted her to get married at the age of 12, and insisted on completing higher studies. She's studying very hard to clear her 10th grade exams these days. Another of our girl's parents have been physically unwell over a long period, and yet she refuses to give up on her education. The show highlighted such stories of our girls, and recognized their efforts as they remained resolute and dedicated in receiving an education and changing the course of their lives. The show also highlighted how Protsahan is an encouragement to these girls to get out of the cycle of extreme poverty, and risk of abuse through creativity and arts.



Milestones of progress

Fireflies - A film on Child Marriage

More than 40 percent of the world's child marriages occur in India. 47 percent of India's women are married before attaining the legal age of 18, and in rural areas, this number stands at an even higher 56%. Most commonly, poor socioeconomic conditions are the primary explanation given for child marriage. However, data suggests girls in urban centers of India where socioeconomic conditions are slightly better, girls in cities only have a marginally higher chance of escaping such a fate.

It's easier for some of us to dismiss these facts as ones emanating from lower rungs of society where higher education is not as easily accessible, and that the girls are unaware of the laws, or their own physical capacity to be in a marital relationship. But the surprising fact that becomes clear only when one has spent time at the grassroots is that the girls who face this scourge of society are fully aware of it. The only reason they resign to their fate is because the community would not allow them to make an informed choice in their own favor.

At Protsahan, we've often faced such situations where one of our girls had to fight for her right to refuse to get married before she was physically and mentally prepared to take the responsibility of a marital relationship. Sometimes we succeeded in getting the message through to the family of the girls, sometimes we learned.

The girls of Protsahan, some of whom have been through the situation, wanted to do take a decisive action to ensure that other girls in their community do not have to go through the same experience. They proposed the idea of a film on child marriage that they would script, produce, shoot, edit, and act in. Their grooming commenced as a professional film crew under the guidance of experienced film makers. Everything had to be planned from the ground-up - the story, the script, cast and crew, production deadlines. With experts guiding them at every step as they took charge of the project, our girls started on their journey.

The production manager was chosen, who was in charge of the whole process and seeing to it that everything was delivered on time. Once the story and script writers had submitted their work, then it was time for the acting workshop, auditions and casting calls. Choosing the filming locations, costumes and props was next. Once everything was ready, they were introduced to camera equipment and some of them were asked to actively assist in the filming process.

The girls had planned everything beautifully - crossed all the T's, dotted all the I's. The film, Fireflies, is the result of their labor of love, and will be released to mark Protsahan's Annual Day. It is their message to their own community that they have the potential and skills to shine bright and build a future for themselves.



Introduction to technology

Children and technology are the best of friends. Especially for our girls, technology is the best way to break through the endless cycle of poverty and risk of abuse by opening up the doors to new opportunities. It is the key to unlock the floodgates of knowledge, creativity, and communication skills in an increasingly digitized world.

With these benefits in mind, our girls were introduced to laptops this year. For them, it was a whole new world of information, knowledge, and fun where they not only learned about technology, but also learned to use it to their advantage, and learned with technology. After having witnessed the positive results of introducing the girls to technology, we will be adding more laptops to our classrooms to ensure that more of our girls can have access to technology in the near future and are fully equipped to shape their destinies in a digitized future.



Accountability benchmarks for junior and senior batches

At Protsahan, one of our core learning over the years has been that without setting performance benchmarks for ourselves and the children we reach out to, we would never be able to impact real change at the grassroots level. As a result, it was imperative for us to set a baseline for performance and measure the progress of each of our girls individually, and as a group to ensure that our work had permeated down to each of our girls and their families.

The girls were divided according to their age groups, and baseline scores and grades were identified for each of our girls by our team. Group baselines were also identified that enabled us to refine our efforts to ensure that our girls receive the education and through direct and indirect co-curricular activities based on art and creativity. These benchmarks also enabled our team to ensure that the girls who were falling behind made up the distance quickly and be at par with their peers in every sphere of their education and development process.

BBC Radio interviews girls of Protsahan

BBC Radio interviewed and followed the lives of 5 of our girls who fought traditions and harsh realities of life to educate themselves. The show's host stayed in touch with our girls through us over a period of time to document the progress in their education.

One of our girls at Protsahan fought against her family who wanted her to get married at the age of 12, and insisted on completing higher studies. She's studying very hard to clear her 10th grade exams these days. Another of our girl's parents have been physically unwell over a long period, and yet she refuses to give up on her education. The show highlighted such stories of our girls, and recognized their efforts as they remained resolute and dedicated in receiving an education and changing the course of their lives. The show also highlighted how Protsahan is an encouragement to these girls to get out of the cycle of extreme poverty, and risk of abuse through creativity and arts.



The lives we've transformed

Soni



Soni came to Protsahan for the first time when she was 8-years old. She hails from a large family with limited means. Her mother had not been very keen to let her continue her education, and had pulled her from school on three different occasions. Her older brothers even tried to get her married at the age of 11. However, it was her father who always supported her, and in spite of his meager earnings, always encouraged her to continue her education.

Soni is a brilliant student, and in spite of the intricacies of the system that put up roadblocks for her, she has persisted and appeared for her 10th grade exams this year. She is one of the most talented girls at Protsahan, and actively participates in theater and dance workshops. She dreams of becoming a dance instructor one day. We have witnessed the growth in Soni over the years as she has grown from being a shy child to confident young adolescent girl who know when and how to pick her battles. Soni truly is an inspiration for all the girls at Protsahan and beyond, and is an embodiment of the legacy of Protsahan.

Mala

Mala is yet another child Protsahan is proud of. She too comes from a family with limited means. Her father works as a carpenter and was the only bread-winner for a family of seven until her brothers started working. The conditions at home and within the community had turned Mala into a survivalist. When she came to Protsahan

four years ago, she was very temperamental, and would easily pick up fights with other children. However, over the past four years, the progress Mala has demonstrated in her performance and her behavior with other girls has been nothing short of remarkable. Her survivalist attitude has morphed into a feminist attitude. Our very own Mala has transformed into a young lady with a voice of her own and a strong opinion on issues that not only matter to her, but go beyond her and have the power to impact all the other girls of Protsahan.

For this very reason, Mala was the one to attend the workshop with Dr. Preeti Kapoor to thoroughly understand body issues, teen issues, women's issues, gender rights, human rights, and their interconnections that can enable young adolescent girls to break free of an endless cycle of abuse. From being a child who did not want to finish her schooling, today Mala is the first girl from Protsahan to appear for her 11th grade, and aspires to be a lawyer. Her father has always supported her education, and now that she is the most educated person in the family, he consults her on every important matter.

A word from Mala

"I've changed my entire schedule to accommodate Protsahan in my life because I can't afford to not be here, nor can I not be alongside my mother who needs me for household work, especially now, during summer vacations. So now, I get up by 4am, and study till 7am, then help my mother in the kitchen before my father leaves for work, wash the dishes, clothes, and then come to Protsahan in the afternoon where I find my own safe space to be me. I find my best friends with whom I learn concepts in history, political science, and general awareness. I meditate to calm my mind, I sing, I paint, I lead discourses on simple community issues on the health of adolescent girls, e.g., a journalist from Indian Express visited us today. I sat and worked with him on a news piece on why failure should not be shunned, and be treated with equal dignity, as much as success. I learnt today that it's okay to fail, as long as I do not give up. I want to be a lawyer when I finish my college education."

Om Srivastava



Om is one of the teachers, or as we like to address them - a coach, at Protsahan. He coaches the girls in mathematics, one of the most feared subject among many children. As it happens, most of our girls were afraid of the subject, some of them even deeply feared appearing in mathematics exams. Om, on his part, had no idea of the situation in the beginning, and started with the standard approach of dictating how the girls must work. Om, on his part, had no idea of the situation in the beginning, and started with the standard approach of dictating how the girls must work hard to get the fear of mathematics out of their minds. He had lost hope, and believed that most of the girls would fail in their exams. It was then that he was apprised of the traumatic past of some of the girls. He started talking to them to learn more about what they truly feared about mathematics. He learned that most of the girls had a weak handle on the basic concepts of mathematics. Equipped with this new understanding of the girls he was trying to educate, he set out on the mission to change their understanding of the subject and let go of their fears.

Om decided to give a crash course in basic concepts to the girls, to cover up for all the weaknesses that they demonstrated in their understanding of the subject. Om also started regular tests in mathematics to give the girls confidence in their abilities and enable them to give up on the fear of exams. Through this baseline course, the girls started clearing their mathematical concepts, and gained a new confidence and greater interest in the subject. Gradually, their performance in exams improved,

and in some cases the improvement has been as much as 40% over a period of time. Om believes he has learned and grown too while he taught the girls at Protsahan. His perception towards girls and women has changed, and he has truly understood the importance of education in changing the lives of young adolescent girls at-risk of abuse of any kind.

Pragati



Pragati is a young 21-year old English coach at Protsahan. She has been instrumental in changing the way English language coaching is structured for children with little or no formal education in the language. She started with the basics and went on to gradually introduce the girls to the intricacies of the language, and helped them converse confidently in English. The girls of Protsahan learned complex sentence formation and elocution under Pragati, as she coached them to be proficient in every aspect of their understanding of the language.

Anju, one of Pragati's students, says, "When Pragati ma'am teaches me English, that helps me earn dignity in my community, because until the day you talk in English within my community, you don't get respect."

Pragati embodies the very essence of Protsahan. She understands that the core of Protsahan is not about bringing literacy to a handful of young people, but about ensuring that every single person who walks in through our doors receives an education, and the respect that each of them deserves.

Shama



Shama is one of the most prodigious girls at Protsahan. In spite of having been through a lot as an 11-year old, Shama refuses to let her past be the benchmark for her present and her future. She lost both her parents over a short span, and lives with her brother and his wife at present. Shama is excellent in mathematics and Hindi, but dislikes English because she does not understand it much. But more than studies, she loves to participate in dance and theater activities.

Shama has a younger sister, Shabana. Since the untimely demise of her parents, Shama has stepped up to the mantle of being the elder sister, and the same attitude is evident in her interactions with other girls at Protsahan. She takes responsibilities beyond her years with absolute grace. Both sisters, irrespective of the loss of their parents, are very keen on ensuring that their education is never hindered by any circumstances.

Neetu



Neetu has a remarkable story of transformation and growth at Protsahan. She joined Protsahan at

the age of 6. A very shy little girl, Neetu had a tough time adjusting to the classroom as she was not able to express herself properly. It was a long journey to help her overcome her shyness and fear of speaking in front of a large group of children. But the love and tireless efforts of our teachers and a few of her peers have contributed in transforming this beautiful child.

Today, at the age of 10, Neetu is no longer the same shy little girl. She is no longer afraid to express herself effectively in front of any number of people. She is an active participant in theater workshops and plays. Along with theater, Neetu has discovered her love for illustrated books. Her favorite book is "I'm Not Afraid" by Pratham Books.

Ayesha



Ayesha is the one girl at Protsahan who has an absolutely unflinching support from her father to finish her education. Her father, who is disabled and uses a wheelchair to move around, is not only supportive, but also makes sure that nothing comes in the way of his daughter's education. Ayesha's father even comes down to Protsahan to pick up all her notes and classroom study material when she cannot attend for some reason.

He truly believes that education for his daughter has the power to pull him and his family out of the abyss of poverty, and give them an opportunity to build a future full of hope and dignity. He has instilled these values in Ayesha and her siblings, and she lives up to each of his expectations in her school performance. She is a brilliant student

who only needed a little encouragement and support to outshine herself in the classroom. Ayesha and her father are a reminder to all of us at Protsahan that the work we do does make a difference in someone's life and encourages them to opt for a better future.

What Our Girls Want



There can be no real improvement without feedback. And the best feedback is from the little girls Protsahan works for. In order to ensure that our work was reaching out to the girls and making a real impact in their everyday life, we asked them for their feedback on the year gone by, the things that they liked and the things they thought could've been managed better by Protsahan.

Fashion designing courses for girls

The girls of Protsahan want us to include more in-depth workshops on fashion designing that give them vocational life skills. In our endeavor to provide them the best opportunities, we have organized such workshops regularly, and with this feedback from the girls, we will continue to focus on vocational life skills that would help our girls break free from an endless cycle of poverty, risk and abuse.

Cooking classes

Most of our girls cook at home, not because they want to, but because they often have to do so to help their mothers with the household chores. However, many of them have shown a keen interest in learning to cook better. We see it as an opportunity that can give them yet another vocational life skill that they can utilize to improve their quality of life. As a result, cooking workshops are high on our priority list for the coming years, especially for some of the older girls at Protsahan.

Refill beauty parlor kit

One of the things we take pride in is that our girls have matured over the years and learned to appreciate themselves as they are. Self-love in an important developmental aspect covered at

Protsahan, and grooming is integral in promoting that self-love. Along with that, access to beauty parlor kits allows the girls to practice their grooming skills and gives them an opportunity to consider it as a vocation at a later stage.

Rearrange and maintain sewing machines
Sewing and stitching are favored by many of our girls, as it gives them the independence of not having to rely on others for their dresses and other household needs. It also adds value to their vocational skills that they can use at a later stage in life as required. Protsahan has regularly conducted stitching and sewing workshops for the older girls and their mothers. Over time, the sewing machines have aged and are in need of proper servicing and maintenance. In order to continue our efforts to equip the girls with life skills that they value most, and in-line with their feedback, the servicing and maintenance of equipment will be high on our priorities in the coming months. Self-defense classes for older girls
The most unnerving fact is that our girls face some of the harshest possible living conditions in their community for a young adolescent girl. They are often accosted by situations where strangers, neighbors, and sometimes even male members of the family pose a threat to their safety. As a result, self-defense classes by experts have become a necessity for our girls. They also requested access to pepper spray to stave off any physical threats. Considering the gravity of the situation and the request from our girls, we will be taking steps to ensure that some of the best self-defense experts can come to Protsahan and share valuable tips on the matter at the earliest.

Spare clothes in school

As our girls mature and come of age, we need to start taking care of their physical and emotional needs in a better way. Some of the girls have requested that Protsahan provide them with spare clothes at school to ensure that menstruation does not come in the way of their education at any time. We have acknowledged this request and are considering this as top priority that needs to be addressed.

Annexure 1

Workshops conducted in 2016-17 under Project Educare

1. Visit to CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrated Biology (IGIB)
2. Participating in Vivekanand Jayanti Celebrations at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra
3. Public speaking and elocution workshops
4. Storytelling workshops
5. Summer camp

Workshops conducted in 2016-17 under Project Innocence

1. Training the trainers under Dr. Preeti Kapoor
2. Sexual reproductive health workshop
3. Workshop on Understanding The Female Anatomy to Counter Abuse

Workshops conducted in 2016-17 under Project Lightbulb

1. Photography workshops
2. Film making workshops
3. Baking workshops
4. Film screenings (Dangal and Nil Battey Sannata)
5. Design For Change workshops
6. Jewelry making workshops
7. Theater workshops
8. Classical dance therapy workshops
9. Henna workshops
10. Mandala art therapy workshops
11. Zentangle art therapy workshops

Annexure 2

Protsahan India Foundation - Board of Advisors



Debjani Ghosh

“ Debjani Ghosh is former VP SMG Intel and MD Intel South Asia. She started with Intel in 1996 and has held numerous leadership roles over her 21-year career with the company. She currently serves as Additional Non Exec Director on the Board of Yes Bank and is a member of Cisco's India Advisory Board. She has served in many industry forums like NASSCOM, MAIT, FICCI to strengthen industry advocacy for Digital India and increase the urgency on action. She dreams of India emerging as the most innovative country in the world, and also a country where women achieve full representation.



Kiran Khalap

“ Kiran is an advertising professional, an author, and the first speaker at TEDs first Indian meet. He has worked on over 200 brands through the course of his career, and authored books in the fiction and non-fiction genres.

One of the most prolific professionals in the Indian advertising industry, Kiran has been the brand consultant for UIDAI, Government of India program that developed the Aadhar biometric identity cards for the citizens of India.



Ramya Nageswaran

“ Ramya has a law degree from India and Masters in Counseling from Australia. She has worked in the United States, Switzerland and Singapore in the early part of her career.

Ramya's keen interest in the social sector motivated her to co-found Focus India Forum in Singapore in 2002 and Bridge Able in 2013.

Ramya is an author who has published books in English and Tamil, and was one of the top five nominees for SONY-IWA woman of the year award 2014.



Brian Hayes

“ Brian established the South Australia chapter of the Australian India Business Council in 2004, and was the first President and later the National Chairman of the AIBC. He has led eight business delegations to India with the Premier of South Australia and three Federal Government trade delegations, and has been involved over the last twelve years in building bilateral trade between Australia and India. As National Chairman, he has chaired two Joint Business Council Meetings in Australia and India.

In 2008 he was appointed the Premier of South Australia's Special Envoy to India to develop bilateral trade and business ties between South Australian and Indian companies.



Jaswinder Singh

“ Jaswinder is a former features journalist and public relations professional with a strong inclination towards digital content marketing. He works on shaping the digital marketing strategy for some of the biggest brands in consumer space. An avid reader, technology enthusiast, and an aspiring fiction novelist, Jaswinder divides his time between following his passions, work, and assisting Protsahan in streamlining our digital presence.



Shefali Chaturvedi

“ Shefali is a story teller by nature and story finder by profession. She believes that for any nation to develop and prosper, it is important to harness the potential of women in society. She loves to experiment with platforms and radio content formats.

Her print and electronic media exposure has given her tremendous opportunities to work towards socially relevant causes and organizations.

At present, Shefali works as Executive Producer at the India office of BBC Media Action, and is a winner of Laadli Media Awards 2012 and Rangkriti award 2014.



Talish Ray

“ Talish is a highly experienced lawyer and the founding partner of TRS Law Offices in New Delhi.

An alumna of La Martiniere Girls College, Kolkata, and Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University, Talish trained as a lawyer in one of the foremost law firms in India. Through the course of her career, she has appeared before The Supreme Court of India, as well as various High Courts and Tribunals across India. Talish was a delegate at the Australia India Youth Dialogue, 2015, and is currently a part of its Steering Committee.



Richa Aniruddh

“ Richa, a celebrated Hindi journalist and a very well known television personality is best known for hosting the talk show 'Zindagi Live'. The show is regarded as a powerhouse of emotions that raised many burning social issues, and won the Best Talk show awards in all of its 6 seasons.

Richa is very active as an RJ for an FM radio channel in Delhi where she hosts a breakfast show that highlights civic issues. She also takes a keen interest in youth matters, and publishes and edits a monthly magazine targeted at school students, giving them a space to express themselves through reviews, blogs, poems, and stories etc.



Ashima Saini

“ Ashima is a highly experienced sales and marketing professional with an MBA from Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi University.

She has worked with leading organizations like ABN AMRO Bank, The India Today Group, and Ernst & Young. She has been a visiting faculty at premiere management institutes across India as well. At present, Ashima works with HelpAge India as Director of Resource Development, driving national corporate fundraising and supports communication development for individual fundraising for the organization.



Osama Manzar

“ Osama Manzar, a veteran social entrepreneur on a mission to eradicate information poverty from India using digital tools, dons many hats as an author, columnist, impact speaker, angel investor, and a mentor. He is a member of several government and policy committees in India, and international organizations working in the areas of Internet access and digital inclusion.

Over a career spanning 20 years, Osama has worked in journalism, new media, software enterprise before establishing Digital Empowerment Foundation that works to digitally empower the masses in India with a footprint of 200 locations and interventions in more than 10 countries, mostly in South Asia. Manzar is a British Chevening Scholar, International Visitors Leadership Program Fellow of US State Department, and has coauthored more than 5 books including Internet Economy of India.