Women (un)Connected

Stories of Empowerment

US India Policy Institute | Digital Empowerment Foundation

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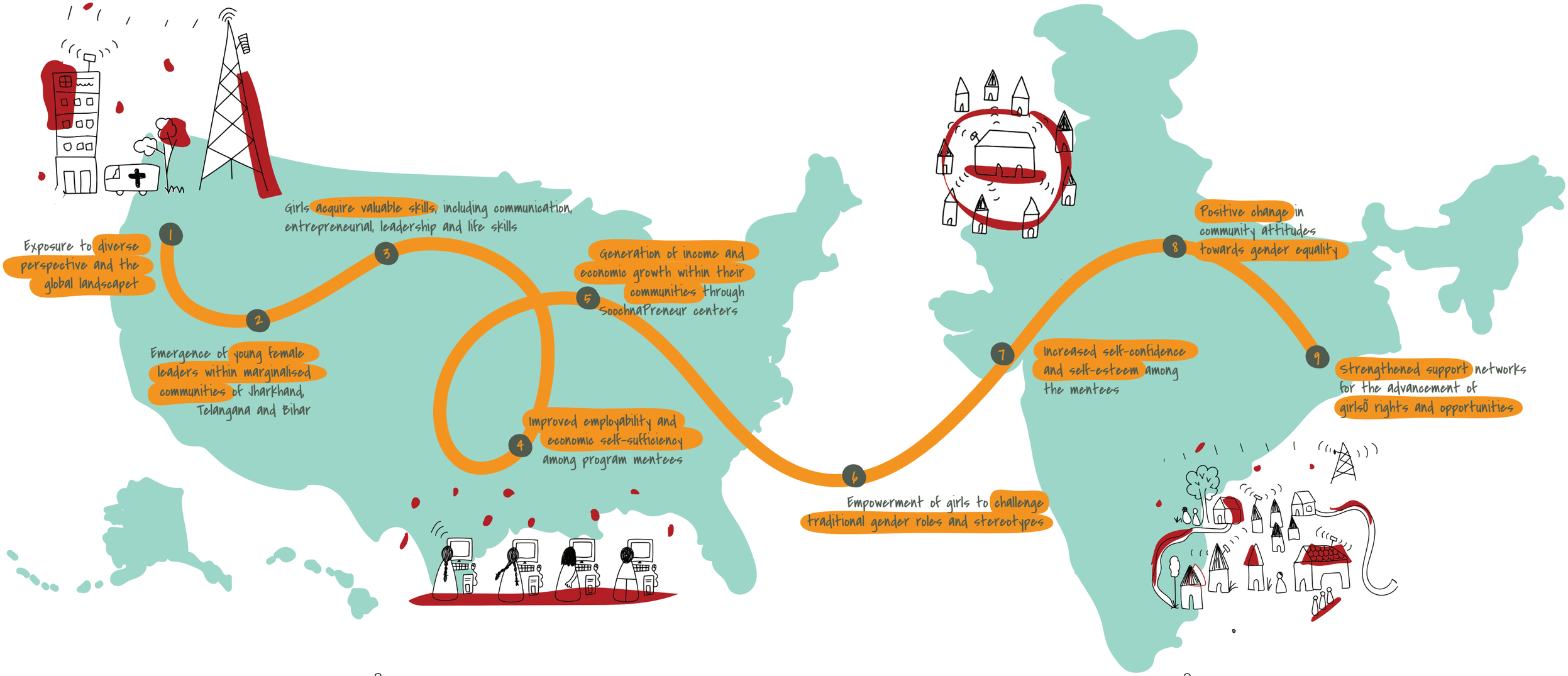
About CAMP GOAL

Self-confidence and the belief that one can and should tackle new and difficult things is an under-addressed barrier to economic participation – especially for women, who are often marginalized and restricted from public life in rural India. GOAL (Going Online As Leaders) is a mentorship program for rural and tribal women and girls that understands this, and works to simultaneously address this barrier while providing high-quality technical skills and language training to mentees.

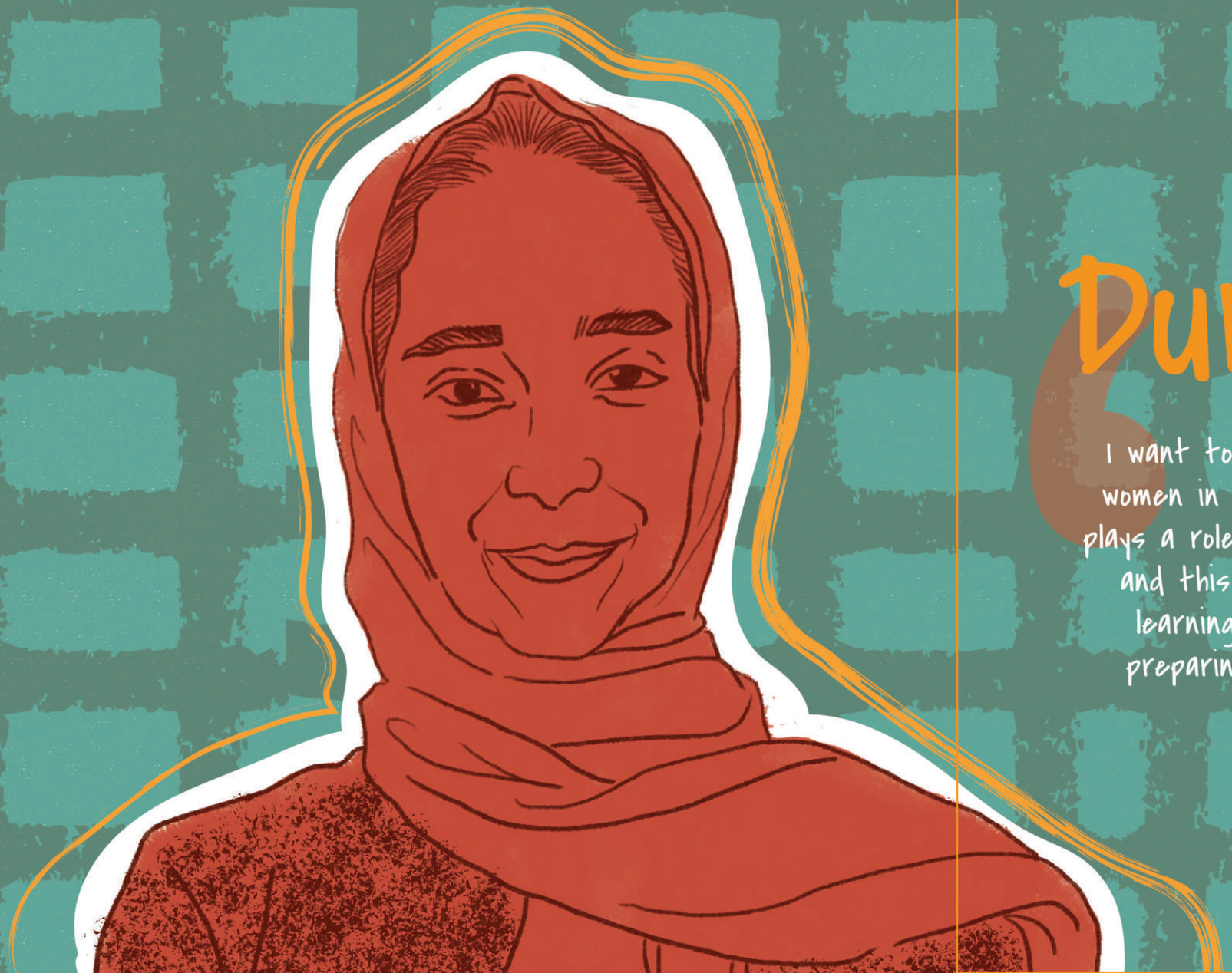
First trained in 2019, GOAL has had a clear impact on the lives of both its mentors and mentees. In 2019, we connected 100 of young women from rural communities across India with 20 urban, professional women to create strong support networks and safe learning communities for new skills. To say these support networks had a life-changing effect on mentees is to say the least. Along with measurable increases in their technological skills, mentees reported a notable increase in their desire to take on prominent roles in their community and work for social betterment. Mentees attributed this to their mentors, who they said were often the first people not to laugh at their dreams.

The success of GOAL 2019 led to its adoption by the Indian Ministry of Tribal Affairs, who have implemented a greatly expanded version of GOAL over the last several years. Now, DEF is returning to launch the latest version of GOAL, which retains the close mentorship and high quality skill training that were hallmarks of GOAL 2019 while incorporating new emphases on English-language ability and global exposure. By partnering with transnational mentors selected by the U.S. India Policy Institute, GOAL 3.0 goes further than ever in expanding mentee horizons and providing them the materials and support they need to be game-changers in their communities.

Milestones of the Initiative



Meet the Mentors



Duriya Khan

I want to gain exposure on the obstacles that young women in India face and how the socio-political climate plays a role. My goal is to become a human rights lawyer and this experience of mentoring 5 young girls and learning about their lives in Bihar will help me in preparing for a career centered around community

I am aware of the privilege I have of peacefully living in America, a privilege that many women across the world have not been afforded, especially in India.

My name is Duriya Khan.

I am a high school senior at the Western School of Technology and Environmental Science. I applied for the CAMP mentorship program because I am aware of the impactful work that USIPI is doing in order to share the stories of marginalised communities in India. As a daughter of Indian immigrant parents, I am aware of the privilege I have of peacefully living in America, a privilege that many women across the world have not been afforded, especially in India. I want to gain exposure to the obstacles that young women in India face and how the socio-political climate of India plays a role. My goal is to become a human rights lawyer and this experience would be very helpful to prepare me for a career centred around community advocacy. I have planned and participated in various community outreach events and this has helped me develop the skills of organisation, time-management, good work ethic and creativity that can help me in preparing for a career centered around community advocacy.

Hiba Siddiqui

The USIPI CAMP Mentorship program offers a unique journey: delving into Indian sociohistorical and cultural contexts, refining mentorship skills in cross-cultural interactions, and bridging academia with community-driven action.

Aligns perfectly with my aspirations to make a meaningful impact by applying my knowledge in real-world contexts.

Hi, my name is Hiba Siddiqui.

The USIPI CAMP Mentorship program is an ideal match for me for several compelling reasons. Firstly, it offers a unique opportunity to immerse myself in the rich sociohistorical and cultural context of India, a subject that has long piqued my interest. Secondly, the program provides a platform to hone and refine my mentorship skills, particularly within the challenging realm of complex cross-cultural interactions, which I am eager to explore. Lastly, and perhaps most significantly, it enables me to bridge the gap between theory-based academic work and community-oriented praxis, aligning perfectly with my aspirations to make a meaningful impact by applying my knowledge in real-world contexts.

Sabah Contractor

"I want to help these young girls succeed in any field they choose and encourage them to dream big. I want them to feel confident and comfortable in every room they enter and show them being a woman, and a woman of color, is an asset."

I want to be a role model for these women, showing them that they can achieve their dreams in any field they choose regardless of their background.

I am Sabah Contractor.

I am a recent graduate from the University of Texas. While I was in college, I mentored freshmen and sophomores as undergraduate biology Teaching Assistant and as a student technician. I want to share with you why I have a deep-rooted desire to mentor young Indian women. Growing up as an American Indian, I have always felt a strong connection to my heritage and culture and was always curious to learn more about it. I want to pass on this sense of pride to the next generation and also learn from them. I want to be a role model for these women, showing them that they can achieve their dreams in any field they choose regardless of their background. I want to encourage them to embrace their heritage and their culture, and embrace the opportunities that come with being a woman of colour. As a young professional and a woman of colour, I have faced a lack of representation, gender-bias and stereotyping in the professional and academic spaces. These difficulties compounded with the lack of female role models and mentorship, made it difficult for myself and other women to feel competent and confident. As a mentor, I want to be there for other young women offering guidance, support and encouragement as they navigate the challenges of their academic and professional world. I hope to inspire them to their full potential and to make a positive impact on their communities, the world and their lives.

Samiya Majid

My worldview broadened from this experience. I got to learn about the experiences and struggles of other people, some of these struggles were very different from my own but some of them were similar and I learnt so much from these sharings.

Such mentorship opportunities and programs are very important for the future of our generation.

Hello, I am Samiya Majid.

I am currently a senior at Virginia Commonwealth University, majoring in Biomedical Engineering with minors in Chemistry and Maths. I'm very interested in learning about my heritage and very passionate about Muslim-Indian rights and advocacy. I love the idea of mentorship in young adults, especially young women. I previously created a mentorship program in Uganda, where students at VCU could virtually mentor students in the villages of Mukono, Uganda. They helped them with subjects like Maths and English. We worked with the Principal of the village and created content packets and documentation that the students could use to achieve their learning goals and pass their tests. Therefore, this program is very interesting to me because I think such mentorship opportunities and programs are very important for the future of our generation.

Maya Khan

I am half Indian and my father immigrated to the U.S. alongside his family when he was 5. I visited India when I was younger, yet I do not have too many vivid memories of it.

I aim to contribute to the growth and unity of our communities, empowering others to navigate life's challenges and opportunities with confidence and resilience.

Hi, this is Maya Khan.

I am passionate about becoming a mentor because I am dedicated to bridging the gaps within our communities, fostering strong relationships, and offering guidance to those in need. Serving as a mentor, I aspire to be a catalyst for positive change, helping individuals connect, understand, and support one another. Through this role, I aim to contribute to the growth and unity of our communities, empowering others to navigate life's challenges and opportunities with confidence and resilience. It is my sincere belief that mentorship is a powerful tool for building a brighter and more harmonious future for all.

sana

"I did really enjoy this experience. I learnt a lot from just the process. It was really hard to communicate with the mentees in the beginning because I don't really know Hindi all that well, I'm learning it in school so it was a really great opportunity to practise those skills."

These experiences of talking to women weekly are incredible and speak to me because I really want to continue to work with other young women, to learn and grow with them together.

Hello! I'm Sana.

I'm a freshman at the University of Minnesota. I was born and raised in Minnesota and I have lived here my whole life and while I love Minnesota, I haven't always been surrounded by people of colour in my neighbourhood and school district, specifically in high school. Which means a lot of my high school memories have been trying to find people and collaborate with other people of colour, specifically ones that looked like me and had similar experiences. This ended up with me joining clubs where people of colour participate, and the more I participated I realised that I can relate with people who look like me but also with people who didn't. That helped me realise how fast and diverse India is as a country. I really wanted to join CAMP because it's an opportunity for me to explore my roots. A big part of doing this and exploring my roots has me connecting back to the culture, the people and the language. So right now in my college course, I'm learning Hindi. But another big event is connecting back to the people which I'm able to do with my time at DEF. These experiences of talking to women weekly are incredible and speak to me because I really want to continue to work with other young women, to learn and grow with them together. I believe that learning and talking to people who have similar experiences to me and other people who do not, is an amazing learning curve for me.

Testimonials from the Mentors

I learnt about Indian lifestyle and culture so from your problems, presentations and solutions I learnt about your lifestyle and the situations of people in India.

It was interesting to see what issues are important to each of them. I knew that 3 of our mentees decided to work on assessing the school system. From that, I learnt that education is a big part of what they want to do in terms of community advocacy, so that was pretty cool to see.

I really enjoyed this experience. I learnt a lot from just the process of being a part of a program where I could get this much exposure

By the end of the mentorship program, I was really happy, because everyone had gotten better at their English, which is kind of a shock.

Serving as a mentor, I aspire to be a catalyst for positive change, helping individuals connect, understand, and support one another.

My worldview broadened from this experience.
I got to learn about the experiences and struggles of other people.

Meet the Mentees

Socio-Cultural Issues from the Mentees

1. Dowry system in India

2. Gender-based discrimination in education

3. Water scarcity

4. Child labour

5. Unemployment

6. Gender inequality

7. Homelessness

8. Environmental degradation

9. High illiteracy levels

10. Lack of digital infrastructure

Mentees
Of Bihar

Anjali Kumar

In the heart of West Champaran, a remote village in Bihar, lives a remarkable young woman named Anjali Kumari. Her family had toiled the land for generations, struggling against the unforgiving system that had marginalised them due to their lack of access and resources. Despite the odds stacked against them, they persevered as farmers.

Anjali, however, was different. She had a burning desire for knowledge and a vision for change. While her family couldn't afford to send her to college, she fought for her education to pursue her bachelor's in arts. Her determination was fueled by her passion for books and her talent for badminton.

Anjali's life took a transformative turn when she connected with DEF and USIPI's mentorship program. She was able to connect with international women leaders who became a point of inspiration and confidence-building in her life. Through this support, she gained digital literacy and access to the vast world of information. Anjali became a beacon of change in her village, breaking the shackles of gender-based discrimination.

With newfound communication and technical skills, Anjali empowered herself and her community. She brought reflections to the mentorship meetings, discussed the hardships of West Champaran and learnt how at an individual level she can become a beacon of change and transformation for her community. With the support of DEF and USIPI, she went on a journey of independence and entering entrepreneurial avenues.

Laxmi Kumari

In the quaint village of Nautanwa Champaran, nestled in the heart of Bihar, lives a determined young woman named Laxmi Kumari. Belonging to an agrarian family, Laxmi has seen how the family suffered because of lack of information and access to government entitlements or relief services. For generations, they toiled as farmers, clinging to dreams of a better life.

Laxmi, however, harbored ambitions that reached far beyond the fields. She yearned for knowledge and success, a dream her father fervently supported. He had always wanted his daughter to break free from the shackles of rural life and soar to great heights.

Through her unwavering efforts, Laxmi earned her graduation degree, making her family proud. But her journey didn't stop there. Laxmi's love for books, music, and online games fueled her thirst for growth.

Finding out about CAMP GOAL and becoming a mentee with the program helped Laxmi hone her communication skills, expanded her research capabilities and gained digital literacy and access to the vast world of information.

As a beacon of change, Laxmi Kumari shattered the chains of regressive gender roles and gender-based discrimination that had bound her family for generations. She emerged as a leader, using her newfound skills to create pathways of independence and entrepreneurship. With determination and resilience, Laxmi became a symbol of hope and empowerment, not only for herself but for her entire village, lighting up Nautanwa Champaran with the promise of a brighter future.

Raveena Kumari

In the quiet village of Rampurawa in West Champaran, Bihar, a young woman named Raveena Kumari, at the age of 23, was defying the norms that had long relegated women to the roles of nurturers and home-makers. In a place where the voices of women were often silenced, Raveena was determined to make herself heard.

Raveena had completed her graduation in geography and was now pursuing her master's degree, a path that was rarely tread by women in her village. Her love for books, indoor games, and music fueled her thirst for knowledge and personal growth.

But Raveena's journey was not without its challenges. Her association with CAMP, nurtured leadership qualities and brought her out of her shell. She was able to connect with women like her, from rural landscapes who were bringing change in their communities and also connect with mentors who provided her with global exposure and insights. She learnt how to use digital tools for making meaningful connections, designed presentations, and learnt how to articulate her thoughts by building her confidence in speaking and writing English language.

With newfound skills and determination, Raveena became a change-maker and leader in her village. She not only fought the patriarchal mindset in her community, but also professed that she would be encouraging other women in her community to become independent and become change-makers for a more inclusive future.

Sunidhi Kumari

In the rural expanse of West Champaran, Bihar, where patriarchal norms cast a heavy shadow, there lives a tenacious young woman named Sunidhi Kumari. At the age of 23, she is on a relentless quest to break free from the restrictive bonds that a patriarchal society has imposed upon her.

Sunidhi, despite the odds stacked against her, was pursuing her graduation while simultaneously preparing for government job competitive exams. It was a path less chosen by women in Bihar, where labor force participation rates for women lagged far behind the national average.

Amidst her rigorous studies, Sunidhi found solace in playing badminton, listening to music, and diving into the world of books. But her true source of empowerment came through her participation in CAMP GOAL. By connecting Sunidhi to role-models from United States of America, to successful businesswomen, she gained access to positive role models and a support system which honed soft and hard skills in her personality and provided her with a platform to grow.

Armed with knowledge and determination, Sunidhi emerged as a change-maker and leader in her village. She shattered the shackles of gender-based discrimination and became an inspiration to other young women striving for independence. Sunidhi Kumari was not just pursuing her dreams; she was forging a path of entrepreneurship and empowerment.

Susmita Kumari

Belonging to a village called Phachkhara, nestled in Bihar, lives 19-year old Susmita Kumari. She held a fervent dream close to her heart - to become a teacher and bring the light of education to her village, especially for young girls who had been denied access to quality learning for far too long.

Susmita, amidst her pursuit of a college degree and preparations for general competitive exams, found solace in the simple joys of cooking and listening to songs. But her true passion lay in empowering young girls in her village through education and connecting them with positive women role models.

Her life took a transformative turn when she became a part of CAMP GOAL. Through this initiative, Susmita gained vital digital literacy skills and access to the world of information and opportunities that lay beyond her village's borders. The project enabled her to prove to herself, and the world around her, that with the right kind of support all mentees are perfectly capable of being financially secure and can contribute to society and the economy.

Armed with newfound knowledge and determination, Susmita Kumari was not just chasing her own dreams of becoming a teacher; she was forging a path towards independence and entrepreneurship. With unwavering resolve, she aspired to illuminate the lives of young girls in Phachkhara, giving them the tools they needed to realise their own dreams and aspirations, and paving the way for a brighter future for her village.

Mentees Of Jharkhand

Kolika Kumari

In the remote village of Ramgarh, Jharkhand, a beacon of change named Kolika Kumari, at the age of 23, was rewriting the narrative that had long confined women to the confines of their homes. Hailing from a marginalised community, Kolika was determined to break free from the gender norms and roles that had held her community captive for generations.

Kolika had embarked on a journey of education, pursuing her graduation with a fervor that burned brighter than the challenges she faced. Her love for books, dance, and music were her sources of inspiration and strength.

Her transformation into a change-maker began when she became a part of CAMP GOAL. This initiative not only equipped her with digital literacy but also empowered her to raise her voice on issues that mattered to her community. With unwavering determination, Kolika became a creator of the future, bringing to the forefront the concerns that affected her community deeply.

Kolika Kumari was not just pursuing her studies; she was forging a path of empowerment and progress, challenging norms, and illuminating a brighter future for herself and the marginalised community she hailed from in Ramgarh.

Radika Kumari

In the rustic landscapes of Ramgarh, Jharkhand, there lived an inspiring young woman named Radhika Kumari. At just 19 years old, she was determined to shatter the gender norms and roles that had long confined women to the household. Radhika hailed from a marginalised community, but her aspirations soared higher than the traditional boundaries.

While her family were farmers, Radhika was on a different path. She pursued her graduation with unwavering dedication, fueled by her love for books, music, and her innate desire to make a positive impact on the world. Her heart was always open to helping those in need.

Radhika's transformation into a change-maker was propelled by her participation in CAMP GOAL. Here, mentors and mentees worked together to initiate socio-behavioural, cultural, and economic changes within their community. Digital empowerment became a key focus, as they introduced digital tools and ICT learning aimed at creating not just digital literacy, but also digital entrepreneurship opportunities.

Radhika Kumari was not just pursuing her education; she was forging a path of empowerment and entrepreneurship, lighting the way for a brighter future for herself and her marginalised community in Ramgarh. Her determination and vision were catalysts for change, breaking the barriers that had held her community back for far too long.

Sanju Kumari

In the serene surroundings of Ramgarh, Jharkhand, a young woman named Sanju Kumari, at the age of 19, was determined to defy the societal norms that had long restricted women. In a region where women were often expected to prioritise family above all else, Sanju had a different vision.

While pursuing her graduation, Sanju's love for her subjects illuminated her path to empowerment. She found solace in the world of books, the rhythm of music, and the thrill of travel. Despite the challenges she faced, her unwavering determination drove her forward.

Recognizing the importance of connecting women like Sanju to successful businesswomen, CAMP GOAL became a beacon of hope and building connections. Sanju learnt how to use MS Office to create posters, presentations, learnt how to identify stakeholders in her community for creating a chain of social change and enabling her with access to global linkages. These programs provided positive role models and support systems, challenging the belief that women were limited to traditional roles.

Sanju Kumari was not just pursuing her education; she was forging a path of empowerment and breaking free from the gender norms that had held her community back for too long. She stood as a symbol of hope, showing that women in Ramgarh could aspire to be more than what society dictated, and that education was the key to unlocking their potential.

Savita Kumari

In the heart of Ramgarh, Jharkhand, a young woman named Savita Kumari, aged 21, was determined to rewrite the script that had bound women in her marginalised community to the confines of their homes. While her family toiled as farmers, Savita had set her sights on a different horizon- she was pursuing a B.Com degree, aspiring to excel in the field of commerce.

Her love for books and dedication to her studies were the guiding stars in her journey. In a society where women and girls were often expected to revolve their lives around their families, Savita's pursuit of education was a revolutionary act. It challenged the norms and gender roles that had constrained her community for generations.

Savita's transformation was further catalysed by her connection with successful businesswomen through mentorship programs. These mentors became her positive role models and support system, reinforcing her belief that women could thrive outside the traditional confines of their homes.

Savita Kumari was not just pursuing her studies; she was pioneering a path of empowerment and breaking the shackles of gender norms. She was a beacon of hope for her community, proving that education and determination could create a brighter future for women in Ramgarh.

Sulekha Kumari

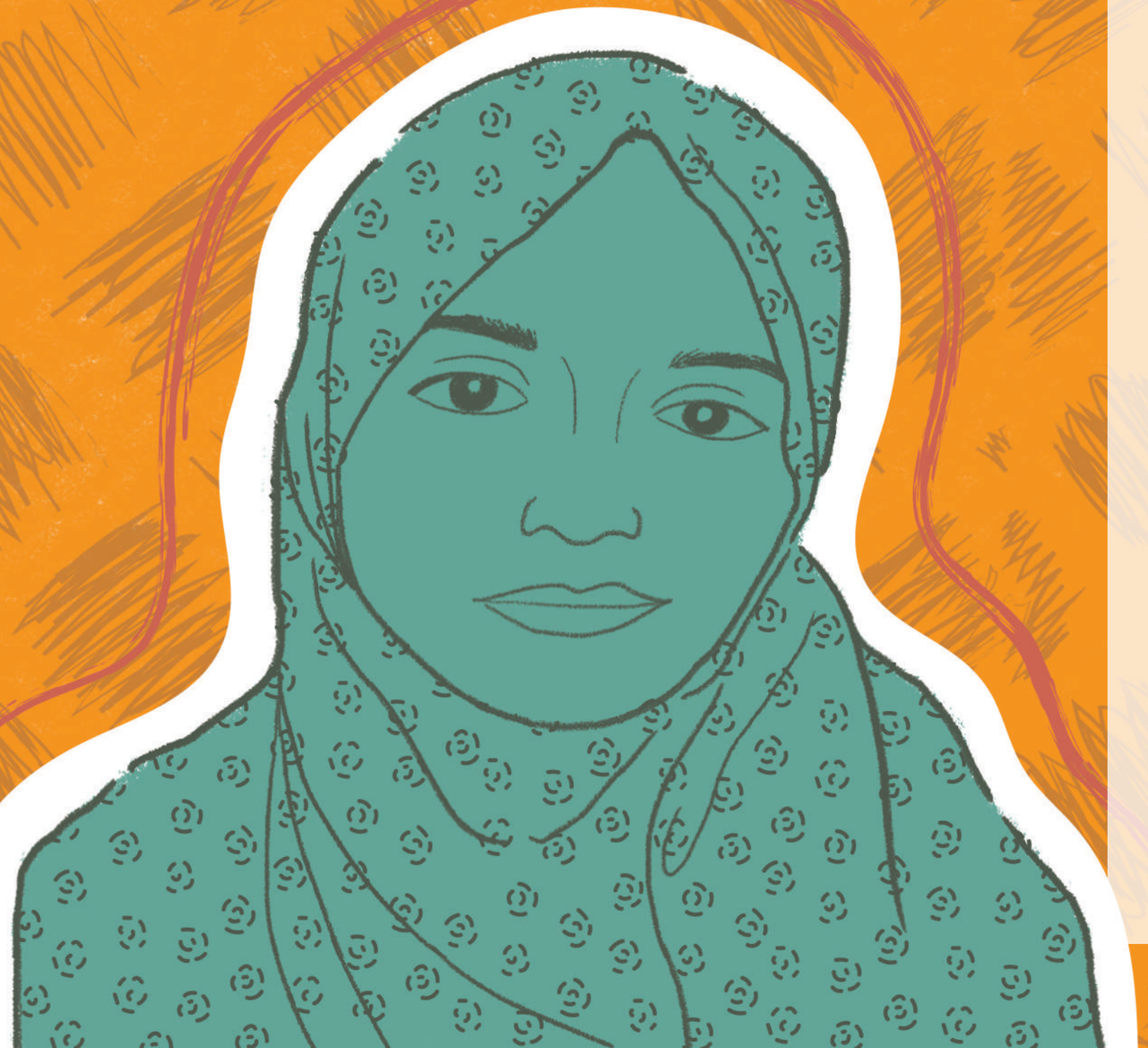
In the heart of Ramgarh, Jharkhand, a beacon of change named Suleka Kumari, at 21 years old, was determined to break free from the age-old gender norms and roles that had confined women to their homes. Hailing from a marginalised community, Suleka was carving her own path towards empowerment.

With unwavering determination, Suleka pursued her bachelor's degree in science, and her eyes were set on a master's degree in a foreign country. Her love for books, the harmonious tunes of music, and her insatiable thirst for knowledge guided her journey.

In a society where women were often expected to prioritize family over personal aspirations, Suleka's pursuit of higher education was nothing short of revolutionary. She was breaking barriers, challenging norms, and proving that women from marginalised communities were capable of achieving greatness.

Suleka Kumari stood as a shining example, a testament to the power of education and determination in breaking free from the shackles of tradition. She was not just pursuing her dreams; she was inspiring others to dream bigger and reach for the stars, no matter where they came from or what gender they were born into.

Mentees Of Telangana



Gulnar Shireen

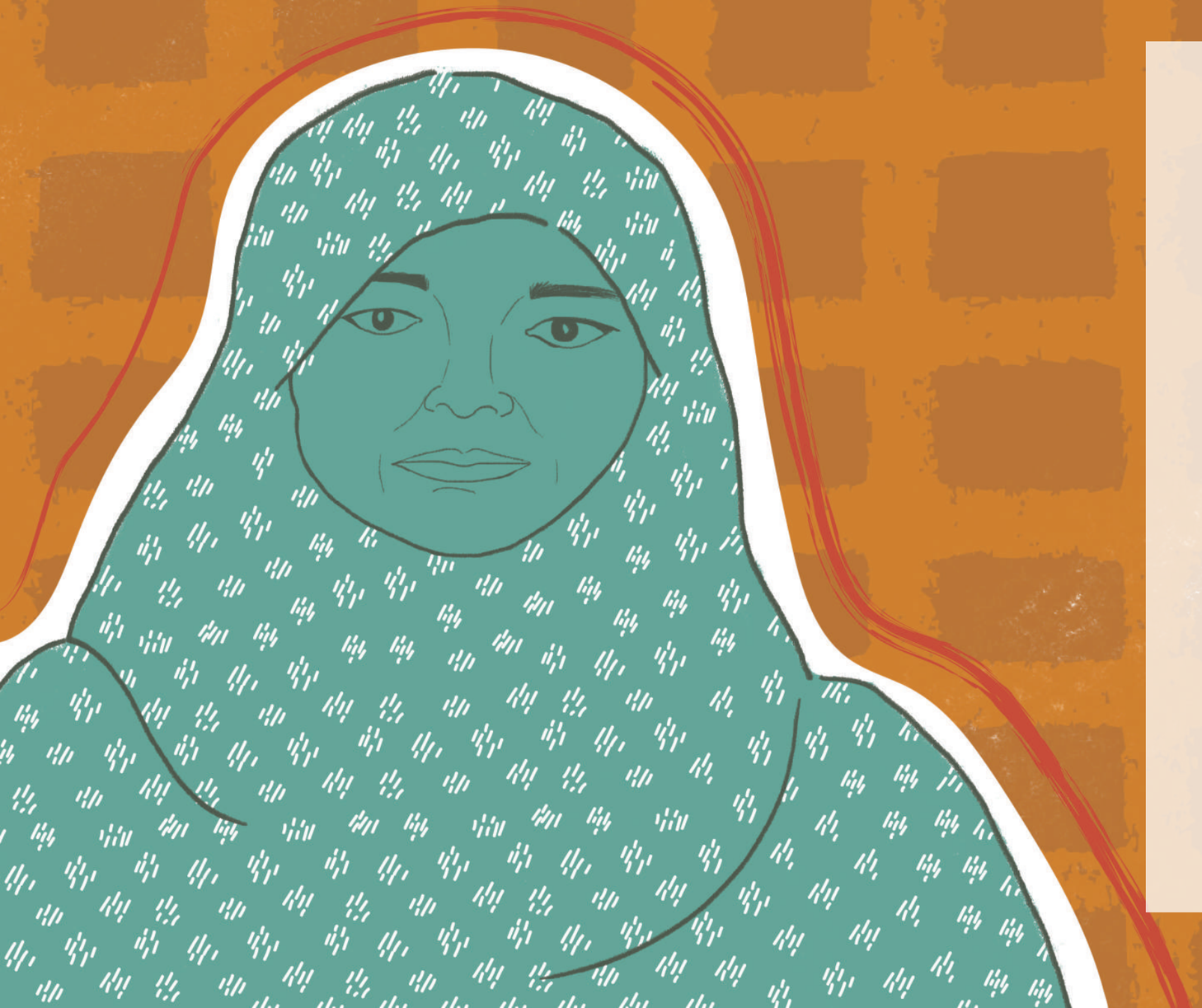
In the vibrant neighbourhood of Chachalguda, Hyderabad, hails a remarkable young woman named Gulnar Shireen, an ambitious and hopeful girl. Born to late Mohd. Aleem and Zehra Fatima, who is a dedicated homemaker, Gulnar is the embodiment of determination and resilience.

In a family of two sisters and one brother, Gulnar is the one rewriting the script for her generation. Currently pursuing her B.Com (C.A) degree at Sadhana Degree Women's College, she is breaking barriers and forging a path of empowerment.

What sets Gulnar apart is her unwavering commitment to learning. She has embraced the world of digital skills through DEF, USIPI and EquallyAble Foundation's Digital Excellence Centre, opening doors to a realm of opportunities. With her association with CAMP GOAL, her journey has not only been about digital literacy but also about discovering how the global landscape can connect her to the world in more profound ways.

Beyond her studies, Gulnar finds solace in playing games, listening to music, and nature gazing. Her favourite foods, noodles and biryani, reflect her zest for life, just as her favorite colours, red and black, symbolise her passion and strength.

Gulnar Shireen is not just a young woman from a marginalised community in Telangana; she is a symbol of hope and possibility, showcasing how education, digital access, and determination can pave the way for a brighter future, transcending boundaries and connecting her to the world.



Rayees Fatima

In the bustling streets of Saidabad, Hyderabad, resides a determined young woman named Rayees Fatima. Born to Mohd Yousuf and Haseena Bee, a hardworking self-employed woman, Rayees is the embodiment of resilience.

In a family of two siblings, both pursuing their education, Rayees stands out with her eagerness to learn and her unwavering determination to uplift herself and her family. Her hobbies include learning digital skills and lending a helping hand to those in need.

Rayees's transformative journey began with Digital Empowerment Foundation, where she learned essential computer skills, including Microsoft Word proficiency. This knowledge opened up a world of opportunities, enabling her to create documents, format text, and work with data effectively.

But Rayees's transformation didn't stop there. She also became part of the CAMP GOAL program, which equipped her with vital soft skills, digital tools, and literacy. Moreover, it connected her to the global community, expanding her horizons beyond her neighborhood.

Rayees Fatima, with her newfound skills and global linkages, is not just pursuing her own dreams; she's also uplifting her family and community. She is a testament to the transformative power of education and empowerment, showing that with determination and access to resources, anyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve greatness. Her journey is an inspiration to all.

Syeda Firdous Mujthedi

Mrs. Syeda Firdous Shafeeq, a proud resident of Chanchalguda, Telangana, is a testament to the transformative power of education and determination. Despite holding a Master's degree in English, she recognized the importance of computer knowledge in the modern world, an area where she felt she was lacking.

Her journey towards digital literacy began when she learned about the Digital Excellence Center from a neighbor who had already benefitted from it. Mrs. Syeda Firdous Shafeeq took a step forward and joined the institute, where she discovered a friendly environment and knowledgeable faculty.

With the support of the institute and the cooperative trainees, she quickly grasped the essentials of MS Office, MS Excel, and PowerPoint. Her newfound skills not only empowered her but also expanded her horizons, allowing her to operate a computer with confidence.

Moreover, Mrs. Syeda Firdous Shafeeq's thirst for knowledge led her to explore computer languages through TASK, enriching her education further. She didn't stop there; she also embraced other opportunities by joining CAMP GOAL.

Her story is a testament to the importance of continuous learning and the power of education to bridge gaps and empower individuals. Mrs. Syeda Firdous Shafeeq has not only enhanced her own life but also contributed positively to her community.

Tahreem Fatima

Tahreem Fatima, a determined student from Malakpet, Hyderabad, is paving her way towards a brighter future. While her father runs a bag repair shop and her mother takes care of the home, Tahreem is the embodiment of ambition in her family.

As a student at Sangamlaxmi Bai Junior College, she recognizes the importance of digital skills in the modern world. Tahreem joined the Digital Excellence Centre to enhance her digital literacy. In her digital class, she learned to navigate various tools, including Note Pad for versatile writing tasks, MS Word for document creation, Excel for data management, and PowerPoint for dynamic presentations.

Her journey towards digital proficiency not only empowers her academically but also prepares her for future opportunities. Beyond her studies, Tahreem's participation in the CAMP GOAL program has equipped her with essential soft skills, digital tools, and global linkages. This comprehensive development has transformed her into a confident and empowered young woman, ready to face the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead. Tahreem Fatima's story is a testament to the transformative power of education and empowerment.

Syeda Noorein Ishaqui

In the bustling neighborhood of Chanchalguda, Hyderabad, resides Syeda Nooreen Ishaqui. At the age of 19, she is already a shining example of resilience and ambition. Born to the late Syed Mahmood Ishaqui and Nasreen Vizarath Unissa, a devoted homemaker, Syeda is the second of three siblings, surrounded by love and support.

With a passion for music and a penchant for singing, Syeda finds solace in the melodies that fill her days. But beyond her hobbies, she harbors a grand aspiration- to study in the U.S.A. Her dreams are fueled by an unwavering belief in herself and her abilities.

Syeda's journey towards realising her dreams took a significant turn when she joined CAMP GOAL. This mentorship program recognized the importance of self-confidence and the need to break down the barriers that marginalised women often face. It provided her with not only technical skills but also the belief that she could tackle new and difficult challenges.

Syeda Nooreen Ishaqui, with her indomitable spirit and newfound self-confidence, is on a path to greatness. She is proof that with the right support and belief in oneself, even the loftiest dreams can become a reality. Her journey is an inspiration to others, a testament to the power of mentorship, and a reminder that barriers can be broken down, opening doors to a brighter future.

Testimonials from Mentees

From the mentorship meetings, we learnt how to speak and talk about ourselves. We learnt all of this from our mentors.

All of you mentored us very well, whenever we made mistakes, you explained it very well.

I have never spoken to someone outside of my country, connecting with Samiya and Sabah didi was amazing because they talked to me in Hindi and English and made me feel confident that I could speak with them in my broken English too

I learnt how to make presentations and my family was so proud to see what all I could do from a mere smartphone

Whatever I have learnt from this program, I will take to my students and let them know about the power of digital tools so they can also learn and get connected

I learnt that there are other people who are facing the same challenges as me, I didn't think that I would ever be able to talk to someone sitting in the U.S.A but a phone made that possible.
That was incredible!

I gained confidence in how to speak in front of other people, especially in English. No one at home talks to me in English and being in these mentorship meetings gave me a lot of confidence

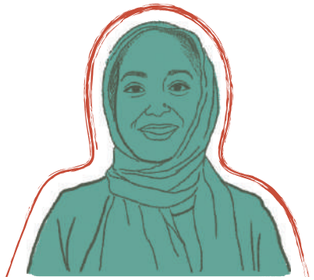
All the mentors were very patient through the process of these meetings and did not scold us at all, and taught us so much through this program!

Team CAMP Goal

Osama Manzar
Founder-Director,
Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)

Dr. Hyder Khan
Board President,
US India Policy Institute (USIPI)

Arpana Sharma
Deputy Director, DEF



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About the Collaboration

Part of the overarching GOAL program, CAMP (Community Advocates and Mentorship Program) is a new initiative launched by DEF in collaboration with the U.S. India Policy Institute (USIPI). CAMP is designed to address the digital divide in India, empower young women in underserved localities in India, and build the next generation of advocates in the US and India. Through CAMP, young women and girls in both countries will unleash their potential to become leaders of change in their communities, while forging lifelong bonds in the process.

In previous iterations, GOAL connected urban women mentors from India to rural and tribal mentees with disabilities. Through these previous programs, we learned that mentees placed a high value on their exposure to new lifestyles and the opportunity to learn and practice English with their mentors. Thus, CAMP places these opportunities front and center by connecting rural and tribal women with young women mentors in the United States.

Women (un)Connected

Stories of Empowerment

Read more about CAMP GOAL at goingonlineasleaders.

DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT foundation

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