

GOYN

Changemakers

2024-25

A compilation of inspiring stories of GOYN Youth from Maharashtra and Odisha, this booklet is about the work of youth who had the spark to bring a change in their communities.

The youth featured here overcame challenges in their personal lives and in their communities and asked a simple yet powerful question, "What can I do to solve the problems and make the world a better place?"

Flip through the pages to know more about their work!

We hope that their work inspires you to take a step forward to make our world a better place.

GOYN Youth Success Stories



Being A Life Saver

Few days back Tanuja proudly shared over the phone, "I am now a first generation college graduate." She has been applying for jobs and using her time to build her skills during the free hours during the day. In the evening, she gets busy with her tuition classes which she conducts for the children near her community.

"Do you see that crack on the wall? It came during the Pune flood.", she shows as we sit and munch chips and sip tea. She lives with her younger sister, younger brother and her parents.

When Tanuja completed her CPR (CPR, or cardio pulmonary resuscitation, is a manual procedure that provides oxygen to the brain and heart when breathing or heartbeat stops) course, she wondered how she could take this life-saving skill to more people. This led her to run the project, "Be a Life Saver". Every year, countless lives are lost worldwide simply because bystanders lack the ability to provide CPR to a person who has faced a sudden cardiac arrest.

To address this issue Tanuja ran her project in Pune. In this impactful project, she ran a first aid training initiative. She organised educational CPR demonstrations where participants received hands-on practice in this life-saving technique. Participants then engaged in practical sessions to master proper CPR techniques and first aid skills.

"Be a Life Saver" project impacted 127 youth in Dandekar Pool, Hadapsar, and Kharadi areas of Pune equipping them with essential life-saving skills. Her work has helped communities in being prepared to handle health emergencies.

Tanuja's message to the youth of the world is, "Create your own opportunities! No one will serve them to you on a silver plate."

In the future, Tanuja and her team of three plan to conduct CPR sessions for corporates and educational institutions.

In her free time, Tanuja likes to catch up on her sleep, read and spend time in nature.

GOYN Youth Success Stories



Vihaar Shaala: A space for critical thinking

As a student Poorva always wondered, “Why don’t the teachers like the questions students ask? Why does our education system value only the answers while disregarding the curiosity of the learners?”.

To address this issue, Poorva Pillai ran a project titled “Vihaar Shaala”. Vihaar Shaala is a space that encourages questions, which is the soul of critical thinking. Vihaar is a space for resistance and shaala means a school in Marathi. Its main objectives were to develop critical thinking skills in young people, raise awareness about gender and sexuality, and help them to understand how these concepts are relevant in their daily lives.

The activity-based model of the workshops ensured that the participants engage in hands-on learning experiences rather than just passively listening. Before conducting the workshops, Poorva and her team did an extensive reading of authors like bell hooks, Paolo Freire and B R Ambedkar. She also attended workshops on gender by experts from Lighthouse Communities Foundation.

Youth, especially those located in marginalised sections of society, often lack access to conversations about gender and sexuality. As a result, when they pursue higher education, these topics may be unfamiliar to them. This lack of exposure can contribute to feelings of exclusion and may be a factor in high dropout rates, among other reasons.

The project impacted 60 youth from Wanowrie Bazar, Gokhale Nagar and SB Road in Pune.

“Educate, Agitate, Organize!” is Poorva’s message to the youth of the world.

In the future, Poorva would like to run this project for a longer duration of 2-3 years.

During her free time, Poorva likes to dance and sing.



GOYN Youth Success Stories



Kayda Mitra: Empowering Youth through Law Awareness

When Satish's family member got falsely accused by their neighbour, he realised the importance of having legal awareness. This led him to launch his project "Kayda Mitra" to create awareness around legal issues.

Young people need to be familiar with their legal rights and responsibilities. Understanding the law can help them navigate the justice system, stand up for their rights, and actively participate in society. Satish Waghdare's project helped youth in Pune to understand their legal rights in a simple and clear way and build their confidence to deal with legal issues. His sessions uncovered topics like the RTI Act (and how to file it), filing a FIR and understanding laws & policies related to child labour. His project also provided exposure to the participants by organising visits to the police station and the Department of Women & Child Development. Issues like domestic violence & dowry and substance abuse were also discussed. He has been working to ensure that children from low-income communities attend schools and are free from the shackles of child labour.

The Kaydra Mitra project has been a launchpad for multiple initiatives. To start with, Satish launched a free helpline and a booklet (in the local language, Marathi) to take legal know-how and assistance to the masses. He started his own nonprofit and a popular YouTube channel to spread legal awareness. The Instagram channel has around 1000 followers while the Youtube channel has been subscribed by close to 500 viewers.

The project impacted 75 youth in Aundh and Janata Vasahat areas of Pune. It has helped them to understand their legal rights and built confidence to deal with legal issues.

The young founder of Kayda Mitra, Satish, who is in his 3rd year of BA LLB, deeply believes that legal awareness is crucial for creating a more equitable society.

Satish's message to the youth of the world: "Take a small step. Start small. Adapt according to the changing world. Have empathy for the people around you."

In the future, he aspires to start a social consultancy firm.

In his free time, Satish likes to play badminton and go for morning walks.

Satish Waghdare

GOYN Youth Success Stories



Entrepreneurship Development For Women

As a kid growing up, Sajida would observe the women in and around her home. They were dependent on their husbands for money. They'd stay at home the entire day and not step out. In some cases, when the male member passed away, it'd lead to a financial crisis for the woman. "How do I empower these women to become financially self-reliant?", was a question Sajida grappled with. She answered this pertinent question with a powerful response that would change the lives of the women in her community.

Sajidha Khan led a project titled "Entrepreneurship Development for Women". Entrepreneurship has the potential to empower women and drive economic growth. The project focused on providing jewellery-making training to the women in her community. The training enables the women to start their businesses of hand-made jewellery and achieve financial independence.

Sajida believes that with the right training, individuals can turn their jewellery-making skills into a profitable business venture. They can sell their creations online, at craft fairs, or even open their own jewellery store. Sajida identified a skill that could help the women in her community become financially self-reliant. Jewellery-making training equips individuals with the skills and techniques necessary to create beautiful pieces of jewellery. The project brought valuable training in areas such as financial literacy, product marketing, and self-confidence. Sajida's efforts have inspired a wave of local women entrepreneurs.

The project impacted 22 women in the Kondhwa community of Pune. Many have started their own business. Some have started offering training to other women thus amplifying the impact created by Sajida and her team.

Sajida's message to the youth of the world is: "We ourselves need to take the onus to change our situation. We need to take the reins of our life in our own hands."

In the future, Sajida aspires to pursue a MBA and step into the world of Human Resources. During her free time Sajida likes to travel, read books and engage in gardening. She also loves meeting new people and learning about their lives.

Sajida Khan



GOYN Youth Success Stories



Cyber Crime Alert : Protecting Our Online Spaces

Cybercrime is a significant concern in our increasingly digital world. Protecting our online spaces requires educating ourselves and the youth. The project "Cyber Crime Alert" by Pragati Kopare and Santosh Shinde, focussed on raising awareness, preventing and detecting cyberbullying, online predation, scams, and frauds, addressing privacy concerns as well as legal and ethical issues. The project helped the youth become aware of and safe from these issues and to enable them to recognise and take appropriate steps to address them.

Santosh runs a grocery store which he opens everyday at 6 am. "This helps in having a source of income", he exclaims with a smile. Santosh has been working as a social worker for the last ten years. He is one of the founders of an organisation that works for the welfare of students. Pragati has recently completed her graduation in Forensic Science has been looking for internships. She works with Santosh and his organisation around issues concerning students.

The project included awareness campaigns and sessions by cybercrime specialists and cyber police officers who shared real-world insights with participants. The project successfully impacted 217 youth in Pimpri, Pune.

The founders of Cyber Crime Alert believe that digital literacy is not just about personal protection but about creating responsible digital citizens who contribute to safer online communities for everyone.

Their message to the youth of the world: "Believe in yourself. We often hear it but do we really believe in ourselves? Believe in yourself. Stay curious about things. The world needs your unique perspective. Keep pushing boundaries. Take risks. The possibilities are endless."

During her free time, Pragati keeps herself engaged in healthy conversations with people around her. She loves to learn about new topics and takes her daily dose of music without fail. Santosh, during his free time, indulges in photo and video editing on his phone.



GOYN Youth Success Stories



Scholarship Buddy

Shreyas, a quiet person who enjoys writing poetry, found his purpose through helping students access scholarships. Working with Yuva Shakti, a NGO near his home helped him in finding his calling. This personal experience inspired him to launch "Scholarship Buddy," a project designed to help youth with the financial aid process.

Access to higher education often depends on financial support, yet many deserving students miss opportunities due to complicated application processes and lack of guidance. Shreyas and his team created comprehensive scholarship listings, conducted application workshops, provided one-on-one form completion assistance, and established follow-up systems to track application progress. A partnership with Eklavya Foundation provided additional expertise and resources, helping them to extend the project's reach and effectiveness.

The project impacted 200 youth in Chavan Vasti, JM Road, and Chikhalwadi areas of Pune thus helping students unlock funding that would transform their educational journeys. Many students who previously saw finances as an insurmountable barrier to education now have pathways to pursue their academic goals.

During the project he faced numerous challenges - finding eligible students, fixing application errors, and managing his family's initial disapproval of his late work hours. Despite these obstacles, Shreyas developed remarkable patience as he dedicated himself to this important work. "What I really liked about the work was that people in the area slowly started to recognize me," he shares with pride. "They would ask me for updates on their scholarship applications."

The scholarship project not only gave Shreyas a meaningful break from his routine but also transformed his relationship with his community. As he helped students secure educational opportunities, this thoughtful young man discovered both personal growth and a new sense of identity. Shreyas's message to the youth of the world: "Be active, come to the front and lead, take ownership and help each other."

In the future, Shreyas aspires to work in the development sector. During his free time, Shreyas likes to watch anime.

Shreyas Kshirsagar

GOYN Youth Success Stories



Step for our Generation

Gousia started thinking about health and hygiene early on in her life. This happened because she saw her relative struggle with PCOS. Inspired by her mother, who motivated her to speak about these issues, Gousia started her project, "Step for our Generation".

Through this project, she created awareness around menstrual health and hygiene. Along with this, she has been fighting to get the girls their educational rights. She noticed that the girls in her community were being forcibly married early on in their lives. This led to them dropping out of school. Through her project, Gousia has been the pillar of support and the ray of hope for countless girls and women in her community.

Gousia's project addressed the critical gaps in menstrual hygiene and education by combining education advocacy with health awareness campaigns. She conducted home visits, counseling sessions and outreach activities like nukkad natak (street plays). Along with this, she collaborated with influential community members such as local leaders, Anganwadi Sewikas, and ASHA workers. Expert-led sessions featuring gynaecologists provided crucial health information. The distribution of reusable sanitary pads served as a practical component of the health initiative. The project formed partnerships with organizations like Masoom to help youth access 'Form No.17' for continuing education.

The project impacted 184 youth in Shivneri Nagar, Kondhwa, Pune. Gousia's message to the youth of the world: "Pay attention to the small things in life. Life should never have a full stop; only commas. Don't stop, keep moving forward. Keep an open mind and move ahead in life"

In the future, Gousia aims to pursue a masters degree in social work (MSW) and then work in the development sector.

(Form no. 17 is a form open-schoolers have to fill to write the exam which completes their school education.)



GOYN Youth Success Stories



Ranji: Action for Equal Opportunity

Growing up in Laxmi Nagar area of Yerwada, Pune, Manish saw high crime rate at close quarters. He wanted to work towards reducing youth delinquency. This led him to start "Ranji", an organisation focused on creating educational opportunities for the children and youth in his community.

Manish's day begins at 7 am with exercise and breakfast before managing his father's spray-painting business. By afternoon, Manish shifts his focus to Vikas Ghar, a learning centre where his organisation Ranji operates from. In his rare free moments, he enjoys reading books by social thinkers and watching documentaries. Inspired by Ambedkar's philosophy that everyone should contribute to society's development, Manish believes deeply in the transformative power of education. Having experienced how education unlocked his own potential, he is committed to creating similar opportunities for youth and children in his community—a mission that gives meaning to his busy life.

Equal access to education, skills training, and livelihood opportunities is essential for community development. In Yerwada, many young people face systemic barriers to a better life. Manish Bhosale's project addressed these challenges by focussing on community ownership of youth development and transforming community spaces into learning hubs. At Vikas Ghar, Manish and his team have created a safe haven for learning. Activities include coding (using the SCRATCH platform), career path development workshops, and social value training on equity, gender equality, and child rights in partnership with ECF Foundation.

The project impacted 73 youth from Yerwada, Pune.

Manish's vision for Ranji demonstrates that meaningful change begins with creating spaces where community members can gain the tools, knowledge, and confidence to overcome barriers to advancement, even when faced with implementation challenges.

Manish's message to the youth of the world: "Education is important for growth in life. As we grow, we must remember to pay back to society."



GOYN Youth Success Stories



Youth Professional Capacity Building Program

Samrat Pawar spent almost a decade of his life in the field of education. During these years he closely observed and experienced the challenges faced by the teachers as well as the students. Everything was happening: teachers were teaching, students were attending the classes but the results were missing: the students weren't finding jobs, they weren't equipped to start a business and everything seemed bleak. But this did not deter Samrat. He wanted to bring the light of education to these youth, a majority of whom were from lower economic strata in rural areas. Combining his interest and experience in the education sector, Samrat started a Youth Professional Capacity Building Programme.

In today's competitive job market, academic credentials alone are often insufficient for securing meaningful employment. Young graduates need practical skills and tools to navigate their career. Samrat's project addressed this need by implementing a comprehensive employment readiness program. A structured approach was followed beginning with college partnerships to identify participants. The program organised participants into two cohorts to ensure personalised attention and maximise learning outcomes.

The project impacted 83 youth across Garware College, S.P. College, and Rayat Shikshan Sanstha in Pune.

Samrat's vision demonstrates the powerful difference that targeted skill-building interventions can make in bridging the gap between education and employment. By addressing specific barriers to workplace success, the Youth Professional Capacity Building Program has helped break cycles of unemployment and created new pathways to professional achievement for participating students.

Samrat's message to the youth of the world: "Be the change, bring the change."

In the coming future, Samrat will be studying at the London School of Economics. He will be pursuing a master's in Social innovation and Entrepreneurship. Post this, he wants to start an educational institution for school students. This institution will be a space for skill development and will equip the youth with 21st century skills.

In his free time, Samrat likes to explore the world by going on treks and travelling.

Samrat Pawar



GOYN Youth Success Stories



E-Learning for All

When Chaitanya Bavdhane observed the growing digital divide in underserved communities of Pune, he recognised how this gap was limiting educational opportunities for local youth. This realisation inspired him to create the "E-Learning & Technology Accessible for All".

In today's increasingly digital world, technological literacy has become essential for educational and professional advancement. Yet many youth lack access to digital tools and the skills to use them effectively. Chaitanya's project addressed this critical need by establishing e-learning centers and providing both the technological resources and guidance needed for digital empowerment. These centers have become sustainable resources through the "catalyst model," where trained youth share their knowledge with peers, and through ongoing support from Yuva Shakti Foundation.

E-learning sessions utilizing platforms like Khan Academy, YouTube, and NPTEL (Swayam), and expert-led seminars on EdTech tools and digital literacy were conducted. A partnership with Digital Equity Foundation provided specialised expertise in digital education methodologies.

The project impacted 74 youth from Padal Vasti, Barate Vasti and Chandramani Sangh in Pune.

Chaitanya's initiative shows how targeted digital access programs can help level the educational playing field for underserved communities, creating pathways to greater academic achievement and career readiness through technological empowerment.



GOYN Youth Success Stories



Mental Health Matters

“The WHO-led Lancet Commission on global mental health estimated that mental disorders could cost India approximately \$1.03 trillion between 2012-2030 in lost economic output.”

Mental health affects every aspect of a person's life from relationships and productivity to physical health and overall well-being. This domain has been long ignored due to stigma and mental health issues being seen as a taboo. To change this and increase the awareness and importance of mental health, Yash conceptualised this project.

Mental wellbeing is fundamental to overall health, yet remains poorly understood in many communities. When working with disadvantaged youth Yash observed many young people struggling silently with mental health issues without access to proper support or awareness. This project addressed the critical gap in mental health awareness among lower-income and disadvantaged youth who often lack access to psychological resources and education. By focusing on building understanding and reducing stigma, the initiative has helped participants recognize the difference between temporary mood fluctuations and genuine mental health conditions requiring attention.

Reaching 250 youth in the Janata Vasahat and Swargate areas, the project helped the youth with coping mechanisms, creation of judgment-free spaces for emotional expression, improved self-awareness, and in increasing the well-being among participants. Along with this, Yash came up with a toolkit for Mental Health. The toolkit discusses various aspects of mental health through a creative storytelling format by using Akbar-Birbal as the characters.

Yash and his team deeply believe that early intervention among youth can prevent more serious issues in adulthood.

Yash's message to the youth of the world: “Take care of your mind like your body, because strong minds build strong futures.”

Yash's vision is to focus on the digital well-being of the youth of this technological era. He wants to empower individuals to thrive in a digitally connected world without compromising their mental health.

During his free time, Yash likes to read novels, watch documentaries and play sports.



Yash Karale

GOYN Youth Success Stories



Resham Apparel

When Maumina Banoo left her data entry job at the Municipal Corporation, she was stepping away from financial security but moving toward a passion that had always been threaded through her family history. Coming from a household where tailoring was a way of life.

In Mangalabag Basti of Cuttack, many young women face limited economic options despite possessing untapped skills and potential. Recognising this gap, Maumina created "Resham Apparel", to transform traditional craftsmanship into sustainable livelihoods while preserving Odisha's rich textile heritage.

Maumina conducted community surveys to identify needs and potential participants. She carefully selected women who were school dropouts and unemployed. Participants learned to create finished products including Sambalpuri kurtas, kurtis, school and college uniforms, and cloth bags. The initiative also developed market connections through visits to schools, colleges, local markets, and malls to secure orders, while simultaneously developing an online presence for broader reach. A culminating exhibition showcased the women's craftsmanship to potential buyers and partners.

What began as a small training program has grown into a registered company with Maumina at its helm. Today, she oversees a workshop where she creates designs and distributes assignments to the women she has trained. The enterprise specializes in creating garments using traditional Sambalpuri and Naniyabandh fabrics, preserving cultural textile techniques while creating contemporary products.

The project has successfully impacted 140 women in Mangalabag Basti. Participants have gained not only tailoring skills but also financial independence, market knowledge, and the confidence to contribute meaningfully to their household income.

Currently pursuing training in digital marketing to expand her customer base, Maumina continues to weave together tradition, innovation, and empowerment—stitch by stitch

Maumina message to the youth of the world: "Dream. There's no age or time to dream. And work to turn your dreams into a reality".

During her free time, Maumina likes to go for treks.

Maumina Banoo



GOYN Youth Success Stories



AI for Accessing Jobs

When Satya Priya Mishra observed talented students repeatedly failing to secure employment despite their potential, he recognized a critical disconnect between skills and job market success. This insight inspired him to launch "AI for Accessing Jobs," a project designed to bridge the technological gap being faced by job seekers in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, in Odisha.

In today's competitive employment landscape, technical qualifications alone often prove insufficient without the digital literacy to navigate modern hiring processes. Many capable young people struggle to create professional CVs, identify legitimate job platforms, or understand how their applications are evaluated. This project addressed these challenges by creating a program that leverages artificial intelligence tools to enhance employability for youth.

The project started with employer outreach to understand legitimate recruitment platforms and hiring practices. Along with this, AI tools for CV creation were evaluated, expert facilitators were invited, and live CV-building workshops.

The project impacted 330 youth across Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. Beyond the technical benefits, participants gained increased confidence and expanded their professional networks.

Satya Priya's vision shows how technology (AI) can be leveraged to support the youth to access employment opportunities. By taking AI tools and recruitment processes to the youth, the project has created new pathways to professional success for hundreds of young people who might otherwise have remained on the sidelines of the job market.

Satya's message to the youth of the world; "Don't fear technology—learn it, use it, and let it open doors for your future."

During this free time, Satya likes to engage with the youth, explore new ideas for community development and play badminton.

GOYN

Changemakers

2024-25

