



News Release for Immediate Dissemination

Educate Girls' Project Pragati aims to empower adolescent girls and young women with a second chance at education

Mumbai, 16 March: Educate Girls is launching Project Pragati with a vision to enable **10th grade credentialing for 10 million girls in 10 years**. It is a flexible approach to secondary education for out-of-school adolescent girls and young women, which brings them back to education through the government-open school system.

India's Right to Education Act covers children between 5-14 years of age; research shows that in India, 66 Million girls aged 15-25 are permanently at risk of never completing their secondary education. Completing 10th grade examination will enable girls to access entry-level jobs, traditional loans, further education, and vocational training. This boosts their agency and increases their potential for autonomy, growth, and aspirations towards an independent and financially inclusive life.

Project Pragati works with digital assistance alongside an empathic, human-centric approach at a programmatic level. At the heart of the program is a *Prerak*, a compassionate adult from within the community who identifies permanently dropped-out adolescent girls and young women, gets them enrolled with an open school and supports them in their exam preparation by conducting village-based learning camps. The *Prerak* also works with the girls to enhance their 21st century life skills and helps develop an encouraging community environment to support the girls. Optimising mission-driven NGO partnerships and a technology-led approach, Project Pragati is catalysing the ecosystem to reach the remotest geographies.

Project Pragati Impact Story:

Jyoti (name changed to protect identity) was a child bride, a victim of domestic abuse and a mother who dropped out of school in 9th grade. Her in-laws refused to allow her to go to school. However, she was determined that her daughter would not experience the same fate, so she left her husband, enrolled in Pragati; she has now passed her 10th grade exams and is working as a social worker. We have many examples of girls whose grit and determination alongside their opportunity to access Pragati have ensured they can gain this all-important qualification to unlock their future.

In the pilot study for Project Pragati, 6000 learners in Rajasthan were successfully enrolled in open schools.

Innovating the 'Second Chance at Learning' Approach:

According to research, a 10th certificate in India has a lifetime wealth effect of USD60,000. However, after the Covid-19 Pandemic, the number of out-of-school adolescent girls has significantly risen. Educate Girls has stepped forward with urgency to bring an immediate solution to this.

"For us, 2022 was about progress, about pushing our ambitious goal to provide education to every girl in India," shares Safeena Husain, Founder & Board Member of Educate Girls. **"With Project Pragati, it is our aim to**

ensure young women who have no hopes of being in school get a second chance at education and build a better life for themselves.”

"At Educate Girls, we believe that a second chance at education is a chance to move forward. Our mission is to build towards impacting a million learners per year through Pragati. Bringing about such a change at a population level scale will need an entire ecosystem to be catalysed, and starting this year that's going to be our focus. We are very excited about the way forward." shared the Project Lead for Pragati, Geetika Higgins.

ABOUT EDUCATE GIRLS: Educate Girls is a non-profit that focuses on mobilising communities for girls' education in India's rural and educationally backward areas. Working in partnership with the Government, Educate Girls currently operates successfully in over 20,000 villages of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. By engaging with a huge base of community volunteers, Educate Girls helps to identify, enrol, and retain out-of-school girls and to improve foundational skills in literacy and numeracy for all children (both girls and boys). Learn more at www.EducateGirls.ngo | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Blog](#) | [YouTube](#)

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