

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

NAME OF PROJECT: Empowering Poor Girls Through Technology.

Grant amount: \$37,650

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Project Objective: Prepare girls for a new technology driven market through development of IT skills and improving outcomes by integration of technology into lesson plans.

Challenges Faced: As implementation started, COVID 19 hit and life in the slums was turned on its head. Families living on daily wages saw incomes reduced to zero overnight triggering a return to villages. Schools were closed, teachers were being retrenched, schooling virtually stopped. The entire Vimukti enterprise was at risk of collapse,

Project Redesign: In consultation with erstwhile DFW, the budget was reoriented to the needs of the COVID emergency. The project was a major and critical component of a 5 component COVID Action Agenda launched to save the enterprise.

Covid Action Agenda consisted of

- (i) Distribution through the girls of rations for 600,000 meals to save families from financial ruin in the first lock down till official help arrived.
- (ii) Keeping teachers on the payroll and training them in the use of new technology;
- (iii) Providing all 600 girls - not just grade 9 and above as originally envisaged- with personal tablets in place to laptops as planned, loaded with syllabus linked software to take home.
 - (iv) Incentives to students to stay in school and perform; and,
 - (v) Mobilizing educated mothers in the slums to be mentors to girls.



The cost of CAA was about \$110,000. The technology component cost was about \$60,000 of which the TWR project provided 62.5%. The remaining funds came from supporters of Edu-GIRLS.

The TWR Project was reformulated to put into effective use tablets for **all** 600 girls enrolled after the lock down, in place of 110 laptops for grades 9 to 12 planned originally. TWR funds were used to procure:

- a. Syllabus linked software packages;
- b. Security software to keep keep tablets secure and avoid improper use;
- c. Data plans to ensure connectivity.

By October 2020 all systems were in place and girls were taking their tablets home with them to continue to learn online working with trained teachers and mentoring mothers, with incentives to stay and perform well.



Project Objectives: The original proposed outcome was to increase computer time from 2 hours to 12 hours per week; train 15 teachers in use of technology; help 15 girls get an IT certification; and improve school board outcomes from 33% to 50% achieving “1st division”.

Computer time was significantly enhanced to perhaps 40-50 hours a week and upwards of 25 teachers were trained. **On the academic front, the achievements were amazing!**

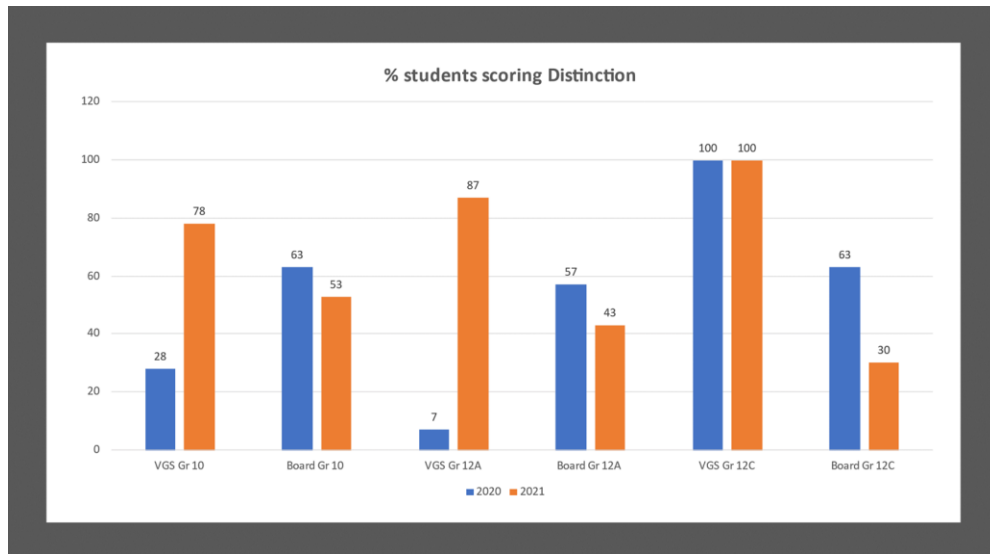
	Baseline	Goal	Outcome
% girls scoring “First Division” in Grade 10	33%	50%	100%
% girls Scoring “Distinction” in Grade 12	7%	None established	89.5%

Affected by COVID, while the overall performance of all children in the Rajasthan School Board exams has gone down, Vimukti girls’ performance was shooting through the sky!

Other Positive Outcomes:

The tablets enabled us to conduct other development and skill enhancement programs such as Financial Literacy and Computer Literacy by external institutions and conduct online Vocational Counseling sessions by industry experts. We have further arranged to impart life skills training to our girls in association with HOPE Collaborative of USA.

Additionally, we have recently provided a self learning tool (MindSPARK) to our girls and are able to conduct independent assessment to benchmark our girls performance with respect to other schools. This



VGS Girls outperform State wide Cohort.

will enable us to track progress over the years for classes in which board exams are not held.

In summary, through TWR contribution and flexibility in blending resources with other supporters, we have been able to achieve far more than originally envisaged.

Challenges Ahead:

This school for poor girls producing amazing results DOES NOT HAVE A CAMPUS!



Vimukti Girls wait as kids of the other school leave.

It rents space from a private school, using the afternoon down hours and making up for a short school day by operating on Saturdays. The school has moved three times in the last five years. The time has come to give these girls a place of their own to call school, where proper facilities can be built and a full range of learning services can be offered.

Land has just been acquired and construction is to be completed by March 2023 IF ADEQUATE RESOURCES CAN BE RAISED.

Websites:

edugirls.org

vimuktisanstha.org