



Work 4 Progress (W4P) Technology Challenge Reflection Workshop

The Work 4 Progress (W4P) Technology Challenge Reflection Workshop for the Work 4 Progress programme of Development Alternatives and la Caixa Foundation was held on 16 July 2020. It was aimed to capture the summary of work accomplished under the project so far and reflect on the approach and methodology through learnings. The Technology Challenge aims to bring a transformative change in the mindset of young women from Eastern Uttar Pradesh to think beyond conventional work towards new-age income opportunities by using ICT. Creating a virtual coworking space, it is envisioned this inclusive platform will enhance access to entrepreneurial opportunities. This intervention will enable young women to overcome the lack of connectivity, mobility, and safety in workspaces and build a bridge between gig empowered young women and digitally connected communities.

Medha Learning Foundation from UP and Janastu from Bengaluru have been associated as partners of DA in this project to implement their proposed solution of "SWARAMBH", Safar HunarKa. Medha as local partners will provision mobilisation of the community, co-create tools of social innovations with the target community and develop online content to facilitating the process of creation of local women entrepreneurs. Janastu on the other hand is responsible to develop required technological components for virtual co-working space. During the workshop, project teams from Janastu and Medha described their experiences from their field visits and virtual interactions with target women groups.

Different levels of Dialogue activities were undertaken that can be broadly classified under Meri Pehchaan: to recognise and realise aspirations within young women, Mere Sapne: to build upon their aspirations towards income-generating opportunities and Mera Game Plan: steps to be taken to achieve their dreams. Team Janstu also demonstrated working of Webinar Pie technology and team Medha shared recordings from their virtual interaction with a women group of dialogue session, under Meri Pehchaan.

Learnings differed from dialogue held physically and over the virtual platform. During the field visits, it is often seen that one or more girls take leadership of interaction with the project team. This was found supportive by our team as it initiated sincere conversations by encouraging other girls also. However, this may further suppress the unheard voice

of the community. Similarly, co-creation of various activities like cook and sell snacks, presenting local problems and expected solutions, dance combined with sewing and makeup were piloted. From discussion on the basic skill set of the girls to the mindset of the local community, response to technology demonstration, to needs and opportunities, limitations and enablers were discussed during the workshop.

The workshop reflected that both the organisations, Janastu and Medha are building synergies to implement the technology challenge; they are working towards building capacities of women and changing mindsets of local communities. They are also responding by developing technologies suitable for the communities to unleash entrepreneurial energies for sustainable livelihoods.