



LEARNING BY LOCALS

What we've been up to - Jan/Feb/Mar 2023

EMPOWERING YOUTH | SAFE SPACE | SKILLS EDUCATION | OPPORTUNITY TO GROW | EMERGE

2023 has started strong for the Learning by Locals team. We continue to grow our classes, our Emerge program and our organizational structure. Please enjoy this newsletter!

Completion of the UnLtd India Mentorship

This past year, Learning by Locals has been honoured to be part of the UnLtd India (www.unltdindia.org) incubation program. The UnLtd India mission is to “serve as a canvas for early-stage social entrepreneurs to design long-lasting solutions to pressing problems in India and grow as true artists of change.” The program has provided some financial support grant money - but more importantly has provided the LBL leadership team with invaluable mentoring to help build a strong organizational foundation. The LBL team has always brought passion, enthusiasm, ideas and hard work, but the instruction, guidance and support received through the UnLtd India program have been invaluable in helping the LBL team build a more mature and effective organization.



From the funding presentation developed with UnLtd India's guidance

From June 2022 through to the end of March 2023, LBL - and 22 other early stage NGOs and social entrepreneurs - were part of the program which included workshops, leadership development and customized coaching. As part of the program, the LBL team had homework, created a business plan, and was held accountable to the plan. This helped the team develop good habits and a more organizationally mature way of working. The LBL team is so grateful to time spent, and the lessons learned, and are excited to continue growing and building on this excellent start.

The program has also provided excellent networking opportunities. The 22 participating organizations have formed an amazing peer network - enjoying social events like ultimate frisbee, and for peer support to help each other grow their programs. UnLtd India also provides access to a motivated philanthropic network and gives support on how to approach these organizations.

We are so grateful to UnLtd India for letting us be part of this amazing program. We are very excited to implement what we have learned to continue to serve our mission to provide a safe, supportive space to educate, empower and elevate slum youth.



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LBL Teacher Retreat

For the first time, the Learning by Locals Leadership and teaching team held a 3 day, off-site team retreat and planning session. The structure and goals of this retreat has been inspired by ideas and events from LBL's UnLtd India mentorship. These types of retreats are standard practice in the corporate world, but the first time for LBL.

The team traveled by bus to the hill station of Dehradun for a 3 day working retreat with all the LBL teachers, to share ideas, experiences and challenges, set goals for the upcoming year, and develop bonds and build our sense of team and shared vision. The 21 teachers and leaders participated in workshops and planning sessions which taught the importance of creating structure and milestones for the curriculum. They shared their challenges as teachers, and came away with new strategies to help meet them. At the end of the session the team had concrete plans, curriculum and structure for the upcoming year. It was exciting to see the enthusiasm for the process inspired by the UnLtd India tools - and the sense of responsibility and importance the teachers felt.



In addition to the working sessions, this retreat was an amazing opportunity for the young teachers to experience a trip outside Delhi for the first time, and immerse themselves in nature. This environment was inspirational to them, giving them the benefits of the fresh air, the awesome beauty of nature - making the working sessions more effective, but also building team cohesiveness through this unique shared experience.





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EMERGE - End of batch 3, start of batch 4

The third batch of the Emerge program completed their program in early March. The 13 young women have spent the past 6 months as part of the program, and are excited to move forward using the new skills and confidence they have gained as part of the program. Some of the highlights of this third batch were locals trips on every Saturday, expert sessions with educators and mentors, and an amazing trip outside of Delhi to Amritsar. As well as the skills they have learned, the participants have created their own support network with each other, and are there for each other to answer questions, and find solutions to problems going forward.

One of the goals of the Emerge program is to give these young women the skills and belief in themselves to pursue job prospects outside the home. We also understand that this may require changing the attitude of the girl's family

towards her capabilities and what she should be allowed to do.

The Emerge program also seeks to prove to the family that outside work is something that she can, and should be doing if she chooses. We are excited to report that 7 of the 13 batch three participants have already secured outside work, with some others pursuing further education, and others still pursuing jobs in various sectors.



For example, Harjeet has recently started work in a financial call centre. She has been proud to apply the skills she has

learned in Emerge. She is able to communicate with strangers- both in Hindi and English, and to work effectively and professionally as part of a team. Before Emerge, she did not have the confidence, or the permission from her family, to leave her house alone. She now travels independently to her job by Metro, and is able to make an important financial contribution to her household. She has new confidence and sense of self-worth, and a new respect from her family.

Jahida has joined FilmArts as the Film fellowship coordinator. A very hard worker, she had been working within Sanjay Colony packing fabric - a job with low pay and a limited future. Her new role supporting the Film fellowship participants is a much better use of her talents and intelligence. Her family is very proud and supportive of her new independence, and are appreciative of the additional income she will be able to contribute to the household.

Annu impressed with her ability to take initiative, and her professionalism. Her love and appreciation for the Emerge program, and her demonstrated responsibility and enthusiasm has resulted in her now being hired as the coordinator of Emerge batch 4.

As new leaders in the LBL admin team, Jahida and Annu were part of the teacher retreat. Their families were initially hesitant to let them travel so far without family - but the confidence they had in the LBL program, and the new confidence they had in their daughters changed their minds.

Applications and interviews for the third batch of Emerge students have just completed and the new session will start in April. More than 150 young women applied to be part of the program, and the process of selecting the 15 was approached seriously and professionally.



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LBL Classes

We are currently conducting regular LBL classes in English, computers, and arts/dance/drama. We are so proud that our student population has grown to over 325 active students.

The teachers have been applying the plans developed at the off-site retreat and we have been seeing results!

In addition to the regular classes, LBL has hosted some special sessions and educational events to enhance the classroom learning.



NGO Nav Gurukul runs a program providing free coding classes to girls. Former LBL student Amisha, has gone through the program and is now working as a software engineer, and she ran a program overview session to 21 potential students. We were excited to see that more than a third of the session attendees applied for program selection, and we are proud that 4 have been selected to move into final selection process. We wish them luck!. This free educational program exposed the participants to a new area of study and career which has now provided new opportunities. LBL is committed to letting students know about this type of program, and supporting them in navigating the logistics of applying. And it is always so valuable when LBL alumni come back to inspire our youth with their experiences.

Artificial Intelligence presentation



Chiranjeet Shah from Akshay Patra gave a presentation on artificial intelligence, the technology, and what that means for the future of work. The students learned how advanced the technology has become and how AI can help us with our daily work. They also learned about chat Gpt, and which future jobs might be replaced by AI. It was a very interesting session which helped give the students perspective on the working world of their future.

CUET overview

Former student Shobha gave a very valuable and interesting presentation on taking the CUET (Common University Entrance Test). It was a very important lesson for the students who aspire to higher education. It was practical and informative and the students appreciated the session very much.





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Career in tourism speaker/ slum tour

Salman from Delhi by Locals gave a very interesting talk to the students about a career in tourism. Salman talked about his experiences providing tours to visitors from all over the world, and the challenges to the industry during Covid, and the different facets of the tourist industry including hotels and transportation, and what is important to visitors in India.

One important lesson was that to work in this industry, speaking English was a critical skill - and so the session was given in English with "No Hindi allowed". This also gave the students the opportunity to practice their English skills in a real life situation.

As part of this presentation, the students were taught about the design and delivery of a guided tour, and were taken on a tour of their own Sanjay Colony community- as if they were visitors to Delhi. This gave students a new perspective on their community, as well as understanding the experience of a tourist visitor.



Already this career presentation has had a concrete impact, as one of the students who took part in this session has now decided to pursue a career in tourism and is currently being trained as a guide.

LBL in the community

Our regular Eye camps are not only an excellent way to provide access to this important health service to our community, but also a great way to get the word out on who we are and what we do. Maybe this child getting her eyes checked will be a future LBL student or teacher some day!



LBL also participated in several drama presentations - raising the profile of LBL while also providing valuable messages and information. These presentations also help the students build confidence as they gain experience in front of large groups of people.

Here you see our students performing a Nukkad Natak (street play) at Harkesh Nagar Okhla metro park highlighting the problems of gender inequality.

Community outreach is very important to Learning by Locals - it is a critical way that we become known in the community so that potential students learn about what we offer.



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Fun and Celebrations

There are many festivals and celebrations in the first half of the year. In January we came together to celebrate Republic Day.



Several students prepared and presented speeches on the meaning and significance of



Republic day, and others performed a dance. It was an opportunity to come together and share the lessons of the festival.

And in March we had the pleasure of celebrating Holi together.



In March, we also held our quarterly celebration of accomplishments. More than 100 students, teachers, and volunteers gathered at Astha Kunj park at Nehru place to commemorate the completion of classes, any birthdays which took place in Jan, Feb or March, and for fellowship.



Maybe even more important than the classes themselves, being part of Learning by Locals is being part of a supportive, inclusive community.

Are you interested in learning more about LBL activities, success stories and volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, contact learningbylocals@gmail.com visit www.learningbylocals.org or our [YouTube channel](#) Follow us on [Instagram](#) to get regular updates of Learning by Locals activities.