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This Engineer Turned Educator Is Providing Excellent Education To Rural Haryana Children

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It is not uncommon to hear stories about change makers creating ripples of change in different capacities within the education sector. However, fortunately, and unfortunately these stories majorly feature change makers from within the urban areas and metropolitan cities like Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad etc.

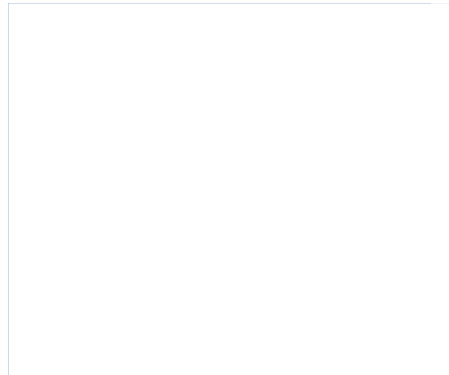
This story is about Surender Yadav and his team – Biswajit Brahmma, Akash Mishra along with his college batchmates Lucky Gautam and Shyam, who are creating circles of love, trust and friendship within the community through their organisation, [Self Reliant India](http://www.srindia.org) (<http://www.srindia.org>) in an endeavour to open pathways of opportunities for students of a small village, Raliawas and other neighbouring villages in District Rewari, Haryana.

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Surender (first from right) and his team comprising of Gandhi Fellows and VIT batchmates_()



Surender is an engineer, B.Tech from Vellore Institute of Technology. Post his engineering, Surender became a part of Gandhi Fellowship 2015-17 batch. The problem that Surender and his team are trying to address is complex, multi-faceted and seems obscure at least till we scratch below the surface.

“The children and the families who live in poverty, till the time they come out of poverty, they won’t get good opportunities and even if they do, they will drop out. SRI will work with those students who get an opportunity to get a world-class education and later on they get opportunities and are able to financially sustain their families”, says Surender Yadav.

The long-term vision of Self Reliant India is that no one should remain in poverty and every single child without exception must get the quality education. If every child gets a quality education, they will not be stuck in the vicious cycle of poverty. What drives them on a daily basis is that not a single child should be deprived of an excellent education because of lack of resources and finances.

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A Nanhe Kalam Centre being run by Self Reliant India volunteers_()

Self Reliant India has a two-fold program in the schools that they engage with – Nanhe Kalam and Whole School Transformation.

As a part of their flagship program, Nanhe Kalam, they run classes for Mathematics and Reasoning in Hindi. The end goal of Nanhe Kalam is to empower the enrolled students to secure admission into Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, residential schools, fully funded by the Ministry of HRD. There is one Navodya School in every District of the country and the students gain admission into Grade VI through a highly competitive entrance exam.

Once they get into an agreement with the local government schools, they start running classes for a total of 2 hours after school. The teachers who help children prepare for the entrance exam are locals who are aspiring teachers, preparing for JBT and B.Ed. The most heart touching part is that all of them are working with Self Reliant India as volunteers, inducted after a rigorous selection process – a written test and interview by the local BEO(Block Education Officer).

Surender and his team conduct monthly capacity building workshops for the volunteer teachers. The purpose is to equip them with the latest pedagogy, best teaching practices which they are going to use in their roles as future teachers. They also conduct weekly assessments of the students to gauge their progress which is then conveyed to the parents during the most joyful and lively Parent-Teacher Meetings.



Team Building activities being conducted during monthly capacity building workshops_()

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The second program to secure an admission make every government

in the long run, they are working on the entire school system and par with Navodya.

toilets, paint, white boards, green boards and to top it all, the school was beautified by greenery – plants and trees. Now, 90% of the students in their village have enrolled in Government Schools, while many dropped out of private schools and enrolled in government schools. (In one school, the enrolment increased from 60 to 120 and in the other school from 98 to 155).

The journey of Self Reliant India, though very inspirational, isn't devoid of challenges that they keep facing time and again and overcoming each one of them with humility, love and perseverance.

"The most difficult time for us was when we started the program, the government promised that they will pay their volunteers, however, the arrangement did not work out due to administrative hurdles. We had selected the volunteers and the classes had started. As we weren't in the capacity to pay the volunteers they were initially clueless on how things will unfold for them. Our team told the volunteers about the situation honestly and with a pure heart. 25% of the volunteers left but a whopping 75% stayed back for the sake of children, village and society. The situation at that time was such that the existence of the organisation was on the brink of collapse", recalls Surrender.

At another instance, the Navodya examination paper was supposed to be conducted in the second week of February but due to an abrupt change, it got shifted to April 21. The volunteers had made commitment till February post which they had their commitments in other engagements. Ultimately, the Self Reliant India team did a crowdfunding campaign to raise some minimum stipend to compensate for their time till late April.



Students practicing for the entrance examination in one of the classes_()

Appeal To The Logical Indian Community

Self Reliant India would like to make an appeal that every citizen, irrespective of their different backgrounds, take an active interest in the government school within their neighbourhood. Schools are a part of the larger community in which we live and the children, irrespective of their social background deserve the best education and opportunities. They urge every citizen of the country to visit their neighbourhood school and with utmost respect, humility and empathy, understand their challenges and contribute in any way possible towards the progress of the school.

If you are someone passionate about the cause of education and would like to enable government school students to get admission into Jawahar Navodya Vidyalayas or work on Whole School Transformation programs in your local schools and villages, contact Surrender Yadav on +91-8295023543 or connect on email at contactus@srindia.org (<mailto:contactus@srindia.org>).

Website – <https://www.srindia.org> (<https://www.srindia.org>).

Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/SRIndia.org>

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