



Geeta Ramakrishnan

Host organization: Educate Girls (Educate Girls)

ICats role: Fundraising Strategist

ICats duration: Dec 2013 – June 2014 (full-time)

Degree: Masters in Commerce, University of Mumbai

Professional experience: 8 years of professional experience in business consulting at firms like Ernst & Young and development consulting for Indian Parliamentarians (government officials) on socio-economic challenges in their constituencies

Summary

Geeta applied her consulting and fundraising experience to not only help Educate Girls (EG) plug their \$1 million+ deficit but also add to their existing donor portfolio as the organization prepared to expand to 3 new districts in 2014. She capitalized on her networking abilities to help EG increase its brand presence, mobilize future funds and enter into strategic partnerships to enhance its program.

The problem Educate Girls aims to tackle

- Throughout India, gender disparity remains a significant barrier to education. The result: more than 3.7 million girls across the country are out of school, the third highest number in the world.
- Government provides free education for all but there are deep rooted social, societal and cultural dimensions of marginalization. Some of these aspects include a paternalistic society, and severe bias towards the male child.

Educate Girls challenges – Massive Expansion

Educate Girls has been working in 3 districts of Rajasthan and based on its success hopes to expand to other parts of the country and world in the future

Educate Girls solution

- EG has created an innovative model comprising community empowerment and ownership of public schools that does not create a parallel delivery system rather complements the existing government educational set up.
- EG is focused on improving the Enrolment – Retention – Learning cycle of every girl child in the gender gap districts in which it operates.

Opportunity for an ICats Fellow

There was an opportunity for an ICats Fellow with both consulting and fundraising experience to help Educate Girls plug a \$1 million+ deficit in 2014 as the organization prepared to expand into 3 new districts

“The ICats fellowship was the ideal platform for me to observe and understand both sides of venture philanthropy i.e. the functioning of the implementing NGO and the evaluation techniques of an impact investor. My fellowship was especially unique because EG launched India’s first Development Impact Bond in 2014 in its effort to create long term sustainability and impact. Assisting on the launch and learning more about such market based solutions to social issues was a tremendous value add for me.”

Geeta Ramakrishnan

Geeta's achievements ...



- Mobilized grant applications for over \$2 million and plugged organizational deficit of \$1+ million for 2014
- Streamlined donor monitoring and reporting by instating Salesforce CRM systems
- Increased EG's fundraising outreach among Indian corporate CSR and foundations with an expected lead of approximately \$300,000 - \$500,000 from Deutsche Bank
- Initiated strategic partnership with ICICI Foundation to create incentives for EG's Team Balika (community volunteers) thereby improving the sustainability of EG's program

Geeta's next challenge

She is headed to Duke University to do a Masters in Business Administration and hopes to pursue a career in providing market based solutions to international development issues

...contributing to Educate Girls impact



- Fundraising efficiency at EG increased by 10X from 2012-13 to 2013-14
- Expanded to 3 new districts in 2014 covering over 4200 schools and about 550,000 beneficiaries
- Hiring over 3000 Team Balika (community volunteers) in a phased manner in 2014
- Directly managed Smarter Good – strategic partner hired to create inroads to global donors

“Prior to Educate Girls, Geeta has had great private sector experience, something that is much needed in the development sector. She brought in great analytical skills, a penchant for writing and amazing people skills and opened some really difficult corporate doors for us. Most importantly, she helped submitting grant/award applications for over US\$ 2 million. Had it not been for her Grad school plans, we would have expanded her role at Educate Girls.”
Maharshi Vaishnav – Senior Manager, Educate Girls