



# MEDHA



2015  
SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT



# OUR GOAL



## Medha aims to bridge the gap between education and employment by

1. Working directly with students on campus to deliver 21st Century skills training and career guidance.
2. Building knowledge, awareness and capabilities to succeed in future academic and professional endeavors.
3. Connecting students to the job market through internships and job placements.

## We deliver an employability education program that improves career opportunities for youth



**30-hours of employability training**  
in the Career Advancement Bootcamp (CAB)



**60-hours of technical skills training**  
in the Technology Advancement Bootcamp (TAB)



**100-hours of on-the-job training**  
through internship and career placements

# OUR WORK



Medha aims to bridge the gap between education and employment by providing 21st Century skills training, career counseling and on-the-job experience to its students. Our primary objective in delivering our employability education program is to improve career opportunities for youth. Our CAB and TAB programs are designed to prepare students to secure and excel in their first job. Improving the employability outcomes of youth in urban and rural Uttar Pradesh is not a simple process, however. There are huge challenges and costs to building employer partnerships and creating trust in new, unfamiliar skills training. We are analyzing our impact on key stakeholders to better understand these challenges and develop innovative solutions to address them.



# SUMMARY

Medha was established in 2011 to improve the employability of college students and connect youth to the job market through a range of training and placement services. We are expanding our programs across Uttar Pradesh and eventually into Bihar, and we are looking to better understand our students' experiences and needs, as well as the impact our programs are having on their lives.

An impact assessment of our programs was carried out on our behalf during the Fall of 2015. The objective of this assessment was to analyze social impact – self-perceived changes in the lives of the people to which Medha has contributed – and to better understand how these changes came about.

This report represents the combined results of the Focus Group Discussions (FGD) that took place within three domains - employment, employability and self-image - interviews with employers and college faculty and staff, and in-depth case studies of selected graduates. 70 graduates across 5 districts and 9 institutions of higher learning in Eastern Uttar Pradesh described their experiences with Medha and articulated self-perceived growth in the three areas of interest. The majority of the data for this report was collected between the months of October 2015 and December 2015.

This study was carried out by a William J. Clinton Fellow with the American India Foundation in collaboration with Medha's Monitoring & Evaluation team and a research assistant from a local college. This report presents the main findings of the focus-group discussions, stakeholder interviews and graduate case studies.

The study concluded that Medha's programs have had a significant impact on graduates' personal and professional lives. Our impact is perhaps best demonstrated by graduate satisfaction:

**Nearly 100% of graduates feel the training was well-targeted and applicable to their future goals and 72% felt the program was successful in meeting their needs.**

Employed respondents indicated that the skills they learned from Medha were extremely useful to their current positions. Both CAB and TAB graduates reported gaining new skills that they otherwise would not have learned and provided examples of situations in which they applied those skills. Skill development is particularly evident among TAB graduates, many of whom had never used a computer prior to the training.

**100% of respondents learned new skills.**

Medha's impact also extends beyond the classroom and workplace. Its programs provided a unique opportunity for youth in both urban and rural settings to learn and develop life skills. Through our interactive and introspective trainings, the participants not only learned employability skills, but also became more self-confident and self-aware - particularly the young women.

We are always looking to improve, and this report briefly outlines some of the learning gained from our stakeholders' feedback. Two major areas of focus for 2016 are improving the graduate-employer matching process and connecting youth to industry-specific vocational training programs.

"Medha gave us the opportunity to learn how to express ourselves." - Amita Jaiswal, 2014 CAB graduate

## OUR IMPACT

**95%**

of graduates reported feeling more confidence in themselves and their abilities



90% reported increased self-awareness



80% felt they have more access to the job market

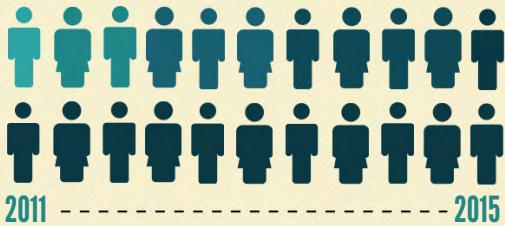


100% have applied skills they learned in their lives or jobs





1274 students trained since 2011



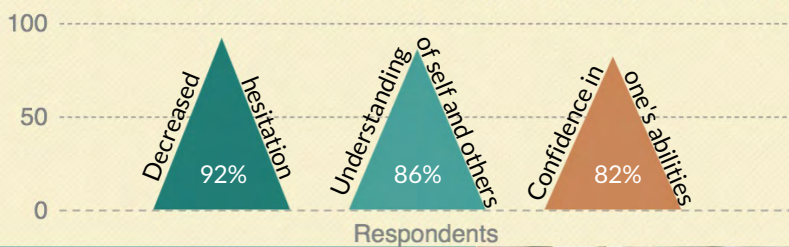
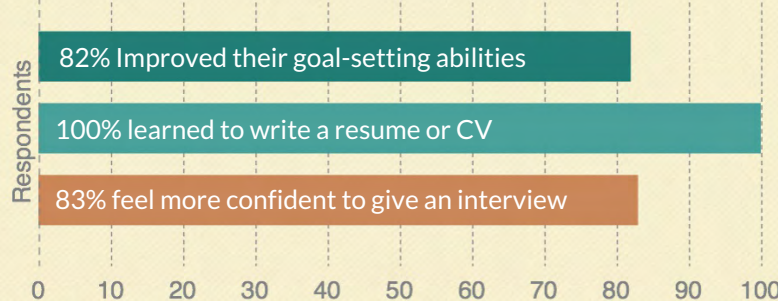
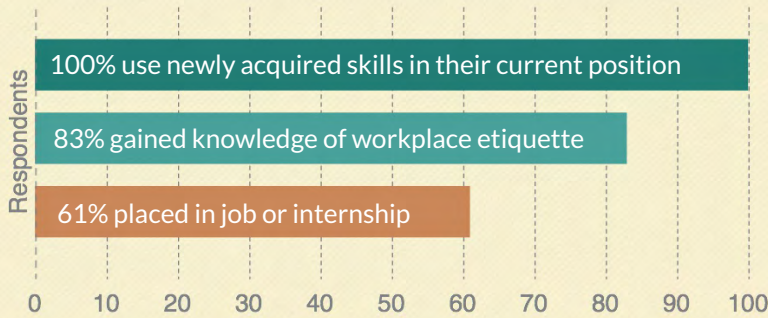
300%  
Annual  
Growth



70 graduate respondents.

5 districts.

9 institutions of higher learning.



## Employment

Job Preparedness  
Workplace Exposure  
Internship & Job Placements



## Employability

Life Skills  
Professional Skills  
Interpersonal Skills



## Self-Image

Self-Confidence  
Self-Awareness  
Self-Efficacy



## Employment

Goal: Employed individuals

Medha's interventions had a positive impact on the employment outcomes of its graduates. 17% of respondents entered into part-time or full-time employment and/or internships after completing Medha's course. Of those, 100% indicated that they have used the skills and lessons they learned from Medha's program in their current position. Additionally, 100% of respondents stated they gained skills from on-the-job experience.



## Self-Image

Goal: Empowered individuals

Medha's program greatly impacted the personal development of its graduates. Graduates reported positive changes in their self-confidence, self-awareness, self-efficacy and interpersonal relationships. 92% of respondents reported that their hesitation had lessened and their ability to express themselves drastically improved as a result of Medha's intervention. Graduates, employers and college staff noticed a positive change in the attitudes and personal attributes of Medha's students.

## Employability

Goal: Skilled individuals

Medha's program had a positive impact on the skill development of its graduates. All respondents reported acquiring skills they did not previously possess, especially graduates learning computer literacy from Medha's TAB program. Graduates of both programs were confident in their ability to leverage their skills in future professions. 100% of respondents could give examples of real-life situations in which they had applied skills they learned from the program.





# 2015 HIGHLIGHTS



" These programs really help you with confidence. Time management, discipline, managing priorities...These are very basic things, but people ignore them. [CAB] was the machinery of building confidence. "

- Gazala Khan, 2015 CAB graduate, University of Lucknow.

" Due to Medha, I have learned many things which I haven't learned in other courses...First I wanted to be a teacher, but from Medha I learned many other qualities about myself. Now I want to be an RJ to entertain other people. "

- Anand Shukla, 2015 CAB graduate, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad Government Degree College.



Medha expanded its operations to 5 new districts



Medha formed partnerships with 15 new educational institutions



Medha started working in 5 Government Polytechnics



Medha established computer labs on 2 college campuses



Medha trained and certified over 1200 students



Medha placed 200 graduates in jobs and internships



# TESTIMONIALS

## Case Study - Suraj Kumar Gupta

19 year-old Suraj Kumar Gupta, a graduate of Medha's Technology Advancement Bootcamp program, is currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree from Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur University.

Suraj and his family hail from a small village 10 km outside the town of Gorakhpur. Suraj's mother is a housewife and his father serves food to students at a local engineering college. Unsatisfied with his livelihood options, Suraj decided to pursue his education.

**"When I saw [my father] working, I didn't like it. It seemed strange to me to think of becoming my father. I wanted to do something more."**

Suraj has since become the first person in his family to attend college. Before participating in Medha's TAB, Suraj had never touched a computer. Now he can create presentations, manipulate spreadsheets and compose documents.

**"These are skills I could have never learned at home. I learned everything from Medha."**

One of Suraj's biggest takeaways from his time with Medha, he says, is his increased self-confidence. Before Medha's program, he was very shy and hesitant to speak in front of others. As a result of Medha's public speaking and group discussion sessions, he feels has gained the confidence to express himself in front of his peers, family and future employers.

In terms of career, Suraj has very clear short-term and long-term goals. After graduation, he plans to join a small company where he can get the opportunity to learn and grow as a professional. He intends to use this time to self-study and learn skills that will aid him in a future career with the government. He hopes to eventually join the Indian Administrative Service (IAS).

**"I will stand on my own two feet and become more in life."**

## Faculty Response

"After taking Medha's course, students are more disciplined and confident. They can properly convey their thoughts, they have greater control over their emotions and decisions, and they have more access to earning sources which means they have more of a chance to live their own lives."

-Teacher, Munshi Raghunandan Prasad  
Sardar Patel Mahila P.G. College,  
Barabanki



"We allowed Medha to deliver its training in our college, at first because it was a kind of experiment to see what they are doing. But then we saw the results - the confidence they developed in students and the internship opportunities they provided - so we really liked it."

-Principal, Avadh Girls Degree College,  
Lucknow

## Employer Response

"We had nine student interns and we have hired three....They were very serious {about work}. Their training is over, yet still they are coming. They are coming because they want to learn. That is what makes them different."

-Rajat Goyal, Pratyaksh Web Services  
Private Limited, Lucknow



"Medha's graduates have good soft skills. They have good communication and presentation skills and a good understanding of workplace etiquette, but their technical and IT skills are lacking a bit."

-Dinesh Agarwal, Institute of Chartered  
Accountants of India, Lucknow

# CONCLUSION

Evidence of impact was observed in each of the three key domains of Medha's work in Eastern Uttar Pradesh - employment, employability and self-image. Medha's programs and services have had a positive influence on students' lives. Through Medha, students learned skills applicable to both their career and personal aspirations and gained the confidence to voice opinions, set goals, and think critically about their futures.

Despite this, there are a few areas in which Medha could improve its program to better address student and employer needs. Medha's program was designed to be industry-agnostic and flexible enough to accommodate students' varied backgrounds and career aspirations. Employers, graduates and college faculty, however, suggest that industry-specific trainings and language courses to improve fluency in spoken English could add value to Medha's program and further connect students to the job market.

Additionally, while numerous internship and employment opportunities were generated for students, conversions were lower than expected for various socioeconomic-related reasons. Medha's students often face barriers of mobility, family restrictions and preferences for public-sector jobs. Mobilizing students to gain workplace exposure and on-the-job experience remains a significant challenge and focus for Medha to address.

We have identified some areas for improvement and developed solutions to address these challenges. ----->

	Area of Improvement	Medha's Response
<b>Employment</b> 	Mobilizing students to pursue internships or placements	Organizing industry exposure visits to raise awareness about private-sector jobs
<b>Employability</b> 	Improving language skills necessary for the globalized economy and society	Offering an English course to enhance language proficiency for professional purposes
<b>Self-Image</b> 	Providing individual attention and feedback to students throughout the program	Developing self-assessments to track student progress and providing one-on-one soft skills counseling