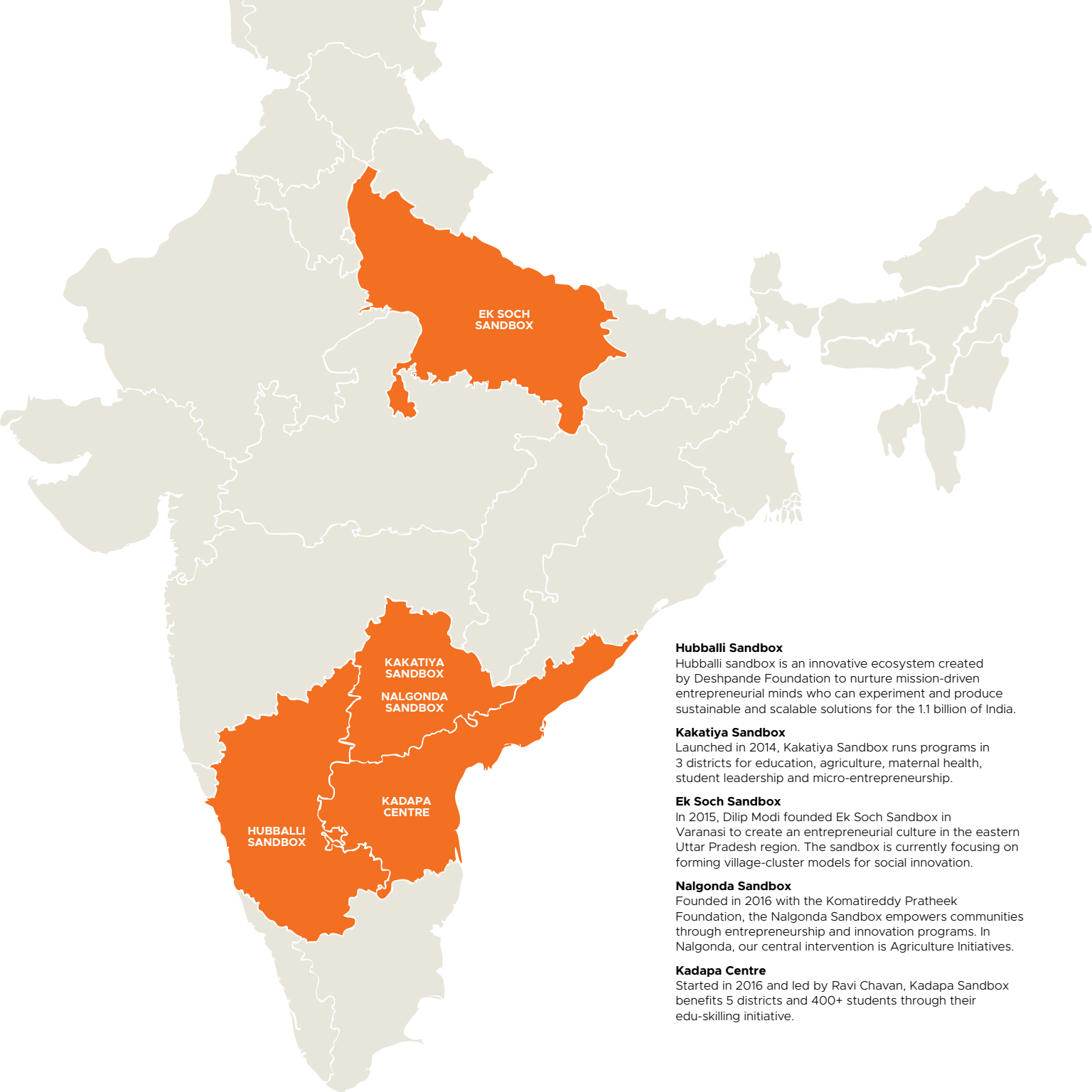




“Reimagining Impact”





EK SOCH  
SANDBOX

HUBBALLI  
SANDBOX

KAKATIYA  
SANDBOX

NALGONDA  
SANDBOX

KADAPA  
CENTRE

**Hubballi Sandbox**

Hubballi sandbox is an innovative ecosystem created by Deshpande Foundation to nurture mission-driven entrepreneurial minds who can experiment and produce sustainable and scalable solutions for the 1.1 billion of India.

**Kakatiya Sandbox**

Launched in 2014, Kakatiya Sandbox runs programs in 3 districts for education, agriculture, maternal health, student leadership and micro-entrepreneurship.

**Ek Soch Sandbox**

In 2015, Dilip Modi founded Ek Soch Sandbox in Varanasi to create an entrepreneurial culture in the eastern Uttar Pradesh region. The sandbox is currently focusing on forming village-cluster models for social innovation.

**Nalgonda Sandbox**

Founded in 2016 with the Komatireddy Pratheek Foundation, the Nalgonda Sandbox empowers communities through entrepreneurship and innovation programs. In Nalgonda, our central intervention is Agriculture Initiatives.

**Kadapa Centre**

Started in 2016 and led by Ravi Chavan, Kadapa Sandbox benefits 5 districts and 400+ students through their edu-skilling initiative.



### **Reimagining to Reshape our World in a Positive Way**

Over the last 50 years, the for-profit world has developed an ecosystem of nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship that has led to lifting billions of people out of poverty. However, we still have billions left behind at the bottom of the pyramid.

The Deshpande Foundation was created as an answer with a fresh approach to bring about change at the grassroots level. We started initially as a grant-making organization 12 years ago in Hubballi. We have now transitioned into an organization that primarily implements programs in skill development, agriculture, micro-entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship.

The annual Development Dialogue has established itself as a platform that brings together people from diverse sectors with a desire to make meaningful positive change. The theme of this year's Development Dialogue is **Reimagining Impact** – to reimagine the ways we can reshape our world in a positive way by bringing together leaders to engage in a fruitful dialogue.

The space of possibilities expands when you bring the inherent strengths from diverse sectors together in a meaningful way to tackle daunting problems. Here are some of those strengths:

From the **For-profit** sector | Attitude and mindsets to operate in a competitive market and excellence in execution. The current CSR policies also will fuel channeling of more resources from this sector.

From the **Social** sector | Compassion and a deep desire to create opportunities for everyone in society. These professionals also bring the experience that comes with proximity to the problem.

From the **Government** sector | Policy-making, clout, resources and national and regional reach.

From the **Academic** sector | Insights and analytical capabilities to look at problems and come up with innovative solutions.

From the **Foundations** | Resources to fund and support the efforts.

This year's Development Dialogue will have delegates that include, but not limited to representatives from the above sectors. We have programs for delegates to learn, share, interact and potentially join hands in one way or the other to amplify the positive impact.

– **Dr. Jaishree** and **Dr. Desh Deshpande**  
Deshpande Foundation

# WHO WE ARE:

The sandbox is an empowering ecosystem encouraging an entrepreneurial culture to problem-solving in the community. We do this by leveraging the synergies and collaborations created within networks concentrated in a particular geographic area. They are living laboratories for global entrepreneurs and development practitioners to come together and work on pressing social challenges of the local populace. Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for India's emerging economy will be ushered in through collaboration, of a bottom-up grassroots entrepreneurial movement and a top-down structured approach to problem-solving.

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## SANDBOX UPDATES



The Agriculture program has joined hands with the District Agriculture Department of Haveri to scale the farm ponds and the Sustainable Spice Initiatives (SSI) for chilli production in Bellary district.



Deshpande Foundation was the proud recipient of the 'Karnataka CSR Leadership Award' in the education category of the Karnataka CSR Leadership Awards 2018, awarded by the World CSR Day and World Sustainability Forum.



Team LEAD was featured in Eurasia World Records and the World Records Book of India for creating and sending 50,001 greeting cards to the Indian Army on the occasion of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Indian Independence Day, setting a new world record on 16th August 2018.



Startups incubated in FSSI have won several awards, including Startup India - Karnataka Yatra competition and Elevate 2018, a Govt. of Karnataka initiative to support startups, receiving a grant of Rs. 1.8 crores.



In 2018, Navodyami partnered with UNDP's Disha Project, supported by the IKEA Foundation to create awareness among more than 14,000 rural women and provide business skill training to over 3,500 women in 5 districts of Karnataka.





EDU SKILLING



AGRICULTURE



ENTREPRENEURSHIP



## **Welcome to the Development Dialogue 2019!**

Each year, the Development Dialogue focuses on some critical aspect of creating impact.

Most organizations in the area of social impact tend to direct their efforts to specific areas and specific geographies. Since its inception, Deshpande Foundation has been working on different programs and has impacted more than a million people over the last decade. The Foundation has succeeded in improving the lives of over a million people in the rural hinterland by rolling out awareness programs and initiatives to improve yield and increase farmers' income. We are driven by the desire to provide vocational skills to youth who have to battle the disadvantage of limited exposure, lack of confidence and limited opportunities. So far, our committed efforts have succeeded in enabling more than 7,000 youth gain meaningful employment. Through our dedicated initiatives, we also support micro-entrepreneurs who are striving to have a sustainable livelihood. Our platform for entrepreneurs in Tier II cities aiming to cater to community-relevant problems has yielded over a thousand entrepreneurs.

While we are proud of what we have achieved, we are far from content. Our achievement is minuscule compared to the size of the problem in India. While approximately 200 million people at the apex of our economic pyramid have resources and solutions providers catering to their problems, we have approximately 1.1 billion people at the bottom of the pyramid who remain largely ignored, owing to low economic profitability. It is the lives of these 1.1 billion that we want to touch and transform, but the challenge is overwhelming to surmount by a traditional approach. Time has come to reimagine impact by creating disruption; disruption by bringing innovation through technological interventions and validated research models. Beyond this, we want to develop a collaborative mindset where the development community works together to collect, collate, develop and adopt the best practices in all areas of our work - training, funding and finance, human resources and information technology. We also need to identify and unlearn things which consume more resources to operate than to impact, things which are not suitable for long term sustainability and scalability.

For instance, our skill development initiatives collectively aim at providing adequate infrastructure and appropriate inputs to ensure the training and employability of semi-urban and rural youth. While we have the resources to deliver the programs on the ground, we are looking for best practices for content development, digital pedagogy and assessment for 21st-century skills. The long term goal is to boost the confidence, communication and competence of students so as to empower them for uplifting their own communities.

We need to jointly develop sustainable models that are designed to scale and improve the lives of the 1.1 billion. Let us reimagine and create impact driven by collaboration, empathy and research. Let us connect and create a prosperous India!



**- Vivek Pawar**  
CEO, Deshpande Foundation





Constantly inspired by the challenging goal we have in front of us, we aspire to create an ecosystem that nurtures entrepreneurial mindsets in order to impact grassroots problems through innovation, collaboration and sustainability.

How does one go about it? Here are three pathways we want to share with you in this book, with learnings from the field:

**Collaborating for Impact:** The journey of our agriculture program, impacting the lives of India's farmers by collaborating with the finest resource and knowledge partners. We believe that the best results can be achieved solely by sharing our strengths and weaknesses with the other players in the sector.

**Innovating for Impact:** Can education change the world? We believe it can, when designed and implemented, keeping in mind the pressing needs of the society. Our education and skill development initiatives are ambitious but relevant for they concede the urgency of innovation in education.

**Empathising for Impact:** The most exceptional entrepreneurs are the ones who can understand the people around them - their beneficiaries. Without empathy, achieving impact becomes a mission without contextual relevance. Explore our entrepreneurship story to know how we have incorporated empathy into the very life of the organization.

# AGRICULTURE

The agriculture sector in India is gearing up for the next big revolution. The government has shown a paradigm shift in its approach, from a production-centric to aspiring for an income-oriented agricultural development as is evident from the official press release of the Ministry of Agriculture & Family Welfare, dated 20 July 2018. The target is to at least double the income of farmer household from 2015-16 to 2022-23. Going hand-in-hand with the government, the private sector is pumping in large investments and providing technical expertise for agricultural innovations. Multinational companies are collaborating with agrochemical and farm-machinery companies to bring best practices to raise yields and lower costs.

Precision agriculture, block-chain technology and artificial intelligence are set to transform the face of agrarian India in the years to come. Additionally, there is a reinforced focus on developing irrigation facilities, warehousing and cold storage with special interest in agri-tech innovations. From aquaponics to genetically modified crops, agriculture seems to be undergoing a massive shift from the traditional cropping patterns. The multi-modal focus encompasses building a strong network of rural credit institutions, farmer producer organizations and developing risk mitigation schemes and online marketplaces to ensure fair pricing for products.

Resonating with the steadfast efforts of the government, our agriculture program has been designed as a holistic ecosystem that brings together the best practices in water management, sustainable cropping and soil analysis. In Navalgund taluk alone, the Foundation has helped farmers construct 2,000 plus farm ponds that irrigate more than 3,200 acres of land. Joining hands with Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) and IDH (Sustainable Trade Initiative), we aspire to incorporate sustainable practices for cotton cultivation for 1.5 lakh farmers the next year. Forging ahead, we are also creating an Agriculture Research Impact Lab that will guide data-driven decision making in real-time for remote farmers. Additionally it will be a platform to develop and test relevant agri-tech innovations for marginal farmers of India.

Such impact is only possible through effective collaborations. We have joined hands with NABARD, Hitachi and TATA, while being supported by many others, to impact more than 1 million farmers by 2025. Aligning with the philosophy of the Foundation to impact 1.1 billion of India with sustainable solutions, the program is preparing for functional collaborations with the government and actively seeking other like-minded partners.

Farmers benefited  
**70,000**

Additional income  
**100cr**

Villages covered  
**400\***

Farm ponds created  
**4,500\***

**50** MILLION WOMEN CAN BUY SAREES FROM THE COTTON OUR FARMERS PRODUCE ANNUALLY





- Eshwarappa Shekharappa Kubar from Navalgund,  
Dharwad is one of the many beneficiaries impacted by the Neer Sinchana Program.



Eshwarappa, a 67-year-old traditional farmer in Kadadalli village in Navalgund, is a happy man today. The reason for his joy: his farmlands, barren until a year ago, have started flourishing, and begun to yield profits now. Thanks to the two farm ponds he built in his 25 acre land, Eshwarappa has found a perennial solution to the acute water shortage that ravaged his crops in the drought-hit taluk.

Until 2014, despite his hard work, the rain-dependent agriculture failed incessantly owing to the acute drought in Navalgund and neighbouring regions. Like the 150 farmer households in Kadadalli, he too incurred tremendous losses, and slipped into debt. "Despite owning large farmlands, we lived in penury and were like daily wage laborers," he reminisces.

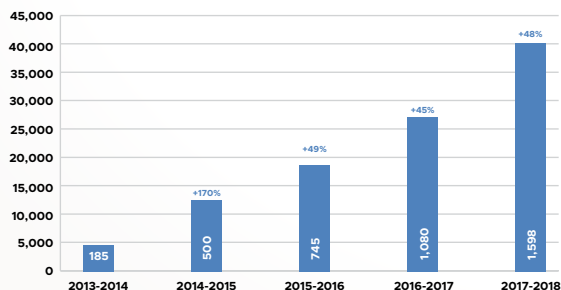
In 2014, Eshwarappa's life took a better turn, after he met the Deshpande Foundation's Agricultural program team that was promoting the construction of farm ponds in drought-prone areas. Although skeptical, Eshwarappa built the first farm pond in his 9-acre plot in 2014. The Foundation in collaboration with Tata Trusts, helped construct a farm pond that would allow him to harvest occasional rains and store water that could be used to feed his crops at regular intervals.

When the hitherto parched land was irrigated systematically from the pond, it began to give rich harvests. For the first time in many years, Eshwarappa earned INR 3 lakh, a big change for a farmer who had not long ago struggled to make both ends meet.

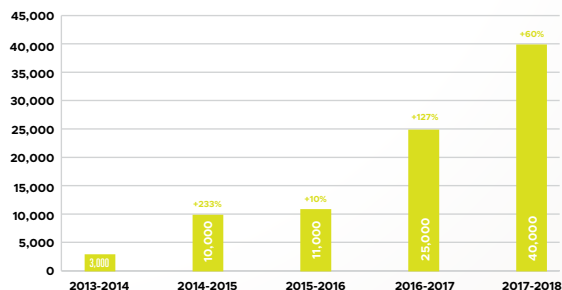
Encouraged by the returns, Eshwarappa sought the Foundation's help to construct a second farm pond in his other plot in 2016. The two ponds helped Eshwarappa to cultivate water intensive and commercial crops such as papaya in addition to the traditional crops he already grew, like maize, cotton, onion and pulses.

“The program is driven by a team of highly motivated individuals from the local community who can relate to and empathize with the problems of the farmers and come up with realistic and focused strategies instead of Utopian solutions. The field staff spends 5 days a week with the community, delving deep into their daily challenges and ensuring a bond beyond professional roles.”

**Farm ponds over the years**



**Farmers in the BCI Program**





# EDU-SKILL

**42%** of the global population comprises of people under the age of 25. India has the world's largest population of about 500 million in the age bracket of 5-24 years. This is more than the combined population of USA and Canada. These statistics highlight the immense opportunity to shape the future leaders of India by focusing on education, skill development, health and infrastructure.

We are witnessing increasing public-private partnerships in the skill development sector. To increase learning outcomes in schools across the country, the government has several initiatives including NITI Aayog's project 'Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital in Education'. It is promoting vocational education, skill development, teacher training and introducing technology in classrooms. To leverage technology and enhance the teaching-learning experience, EdTech startups have rolled out offerings such as personalised assessments, gamification, digital libraries, peer-to-peer learning platforms, learning analytics, language tools, and real-time scenario engagement.

This is all possible through consistent innovation and the engagement of technological and data-driven research initiatives. Hopping onto the bandwagon, we aim to change the academic landscape from K-12 to higher studies, equipping the students with 21st-century skills with an emphasis on creativity, culture and communication. By bridging the chasm between textbook education, hands-on learning and practical skill development, and integrating them with socio-emotional learning and leadership, we aim to create entrepreneurial youth in rural areas and smaller towns. Our initiatives cater to different stages of learning, focusing on early childhood education, K-12 education, skill development and training for university students.

## Skill in Campus

India is likely to have the world's largest workforce by 2027, with a billion people aged between 15 and 64. At present only 4.69% of the current workforce is formally trained. This is in stark comparison to countries like Germany and Korea with 75% and 96% respectively. To compete with emerging technology and prepare for evolving job roles, we need to create individuals with multi-sectoral skills. By leveraging technology, the Skill in Campus program aims to enable and empower the rural youth for their professional careers. With a multifaceted focus on language, technical skills, the program aspires to develop leaders with entrepreneurial mindsets and relevant industry skills.

State of the art  
training space  
**300k sq.ft**

Youths  
skilled  
**8000+**

Placement  
partners  
**300+**

Higher  
salaries  
**UP TO 3X**

Placement  
**75-80%**



### **Skill in College**

Extending the Skill in Campus program, we realized the need for an impact model that allowed intervening while students are still in college. This scalable, non-residential parallel of Skill in Campus program involves self and peer-to-peer learning and encompasses a diverse spectrum of horizontal skills including leadership, sector-specific skilling, effective communication and digital literacy. Through customized online & offline training, holistic assessments and practical exposure, we hope to equip these young minds with employability skills, meeting the diversifying expectations of the industry.

### **Skill in Village**

Our second target group is school children. By bridging the gap between rural and urban education, this program serves to shape our rural students into confident and competent citizens who can improve the quality of their own lives and that of others. The program currently enhances English proficiency including comprehensive reading, writing and conversational English practices by providing exposure, opportunities and appropriate resources, thus laying the foundation for the child's future academic, career and personal pursuits. We are in the process of innovating content, bringing technology to the classrooms and empowering teachers with the best tools and training to encompass modules on critical thinking, creativity and reasoning.

### **Early Childhood Education**

Our third target group is kids in the age group of 3-5 years. We are piloting an interesting intervention in early childhood education focusing on the child's behaviour, personality, learning and development to improve cognitive abilities, sociability, motivation and self-esteem in the long run. The program aspires to train early childhood and primary school educators in rural India by adopting the teaching methods and approaches of progressive educators. More on that next year!



- We believe in peer-to-peer learning, here, a student conducts a session and is seen interacting with her friends in the classroom.





# ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The entrepreneurial journey is a unique one and each entrepreneur has an exciting story to narrate. From designing a business model to correct customer segmentation, it is an uphill but exhilarating trek. The challenges are further heightened for entrepreneurs in rural and semi-urban areas. They have limited access to resources and often do not have the right guidance to scale up their businesses. Only 11% of adult population in India is engaged in “early-stage entrepreneurial activities”, and only 5% of Indians go on to establish their own business. This dismal statistic is among the lowest rates in the world, while the business discontinuation rate in India is among the highest at 26.4%.

At Deshpande Foundation, we collectively acknowledge the implication of these numbers and recognise the need to support social entrepreneurship as it is the need of the hour. We have realized that it is the best way to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the country. Our entrepreneurial project focuses on the bright and empathetic entrepreneurial minds residing in villages, towns and Tier-II cities and catches them in their nascent stage. We have developed an entrepreneurial ecosystem to provide the necessary resources, technical knowhow, mentoring and guidance that is pivotal for sustaining and scaling up any business.

## Navodyami

Marrying the twin concerns of employment generation and economic sustenance, micro-entrepreneurship has emerged as a brilliant way to create jobs and encourage self-sufficiency with the use of minimal resources in smaller towns and rural areas. Navodyami aims to champion micro-entrepreneurs who are proactively working towards developing their businesses by providing training, credit and marketing support. We want to sprout the seeds of micro-businesses and foster entrepreneurship culture in rural and suburban geographies by evaluating aspiring and struggling micro-entrepreneurs, their business acumen (Entrepreneurship Readiness Level) and their Product Readiness Level. Combined with the right mentoring, these micro-entrepreneurs can learn to innovate and upgrade their products, venture into newer customer segments and create long-term viable businesses.

People touched  
**14,856**

Micro-entrepreneurs trained  
**7,000**

Cumulative turnover  
**12cr**

Credit linkages  
**1.82cr**

Employment generated  
**1000+**



- Mrs Uma Ugalat, a Navodyami micro-entrepreneur, at a Santhe (exhibition and marketing event) that helps her earn approximately Rs. 30,000 in three days.

“ UNDP’s Disha Project partnered with Deshpande Foundation and envisaged to provide the right kind of support to rural women to start their entrepreneurial ventures. The support ranges from awareness generation, business skill development, access to finance, market and mentorship. We are in the process of introducing a community mentorship program to support all aspiring and existing women micro-entrepreneurs.

”

- Niranjan Karagi, a LEADer, Started his journey of entrepreneurship as a college student and is now an Incubatee with Sandbox Startups.



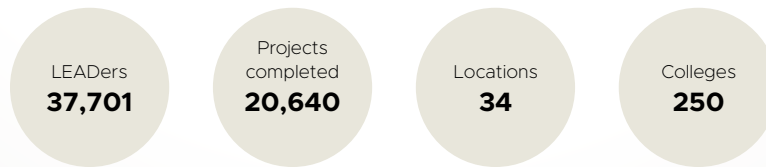
### **LEaders Accelerating Development (LEAD)**

Going beyond regular academics, there is a need for students to connect with community and come up with relevant solutions for deeper social change. Taking entrepreneurship beyond classroom, the LEADers work on projects that bring together innovation with implementation and knowledge with experience. Some of the successful LEAD projects have created significant impact in their communities, especially in areas such as public health & sanitation, mental health and career development for rural children. The LEAD program has become the foundation's proud platform for fostering young minds to find and solve social issues with local relevance. Consequently, it has become an active pipeline that identifies and nurtures entrepreneurs from a young age and helps them evolve into empathetic, socially conscious individuals with a strong connect to the grassroots.

### **Niranjan Karagi, LEADer and Changemaker**

"We used to play in front of a government school on the outskirts of Belgaum. We would encounter children drinking water from the nearby tank. While we could afford the filtered and purified water, it disturbed me to see them drinking the non-potable water directly from the taps. As it is with most other inventions, it was my moment of epiphany as I realised it was an opportunity for making a social enterprise addressing a dire need of the community. But how would I go about doing this as a normal college student? That was when LEAD pitched in. I had first heard about LEAD when they gave a presentation at my college. I was intrigued as they supported social entrepreneurs. What was social entrepreneurship, I had wondered back then. Now, I was a man on a mission. Since joining LEAD, I have received constant motivation and networked with other students, aspiring entrepreneurs and successful professionals. Relentless efforts gave birth to Nirnal, a reusable and portable water purifier. With partial funding for prototype building from LEAD and assistance from the Government of Karnataka for lab testing, the project was successfully piloted. With already 25000+ filters sold and Nirnal becoming a handy companion for rural students, Army jawans and daily wage labourers, we are trying to create a niche in the market with the support of Startup India. I was asked to join the DF Sandbox Startup's incubation centre at IMER, Belagavi. Sandbox Startups is now my one-stop destination for all startup needs including mentoring, networking, angel funding and connecting to government bodies. Market access has been a challenge and we, with the help of Sandbox Startups are working to address it."

Niranjan is a great example of a student LEADer getting a taste of social entrepreneurship and transitioning into a formal entrepreneur with incubation and acceleration support from Sandbox Startups.





### Sandbox Startups

Sandbox Startups is dedicated to support aspiring startups through an ecosystem of resources, networking, knowledge, talent, financial assistance, industry expert and mentor guidance. This ecosystem helps entrepreneurs to test, pilot their ideas, validate solutions and build successful ventures.

This new incubation center, spread over 100,000 sq.ft, is equipped with facilities including a Makers Lab with 3D Printing, IOT, Electronics & Mechanical CNC labs to support. The setup is designed to encourage creativity and innovation as start-ups turn their ideas into products, create prototypes, and conduct experiments to determine the feasibility of their ideas. The setup also has an ESDM cluster with automated Surface Mounting Technology (SMT) Line.

Startups supported  
**80+**

Patents filed by startups  
**20+**

Wealth added to economy  
**60cr+**

Hours of mentoring  
**2500+**









Engage in your own development conversation

# INNOVATION FOR IMPACT

The Skill in Campus program at Deshpande Foundation aims to enable and empower the rural youth for their professional careers by leveraging technology.  
**Why don't we drive the innovation we want to see in the world?**



# INNOVATION FOR IMPACT

Our Skill in Village program emphasizes on creativity, culture and communication. Let us hold hands to change the academic landscape from K-12 to university education by equipping the students with 21st-century skills.





Engage in your own development conversation



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Deshpande Center for Social  
Entrepreneurship Building, Vidyanagar,  
Hubballi - 580031, Karnataka, India.

Landline No: 0836-2378500



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# COLLABORATING FOR IMPACT

The agriculture program at Deshpande Foundation has been designed as a holistic ecosystem that brings together the best practices in water management, sustainable cropping and soil analysis.

**How do we learn from each other to impact the 1.1 billion of the country?**



# EMPATHISING FOR IMPACT

Our entrepreneurial project focuses on the bright and empathetic entrepreneurial minds residing in villages, towns and Tier II cities and captures them in their nascent stage.

**Let us practise empathy and compassion while enabling big change in the world.**



*Engage in your own development conversation*



# Meet our fantastic team that is committed to impact India.

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Find us here





# THANKS TO YOU

Sridevi can confidently speak English now. Thank you for your resources, ideas, presence and time.

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## DESHPANDE FOUNDATION

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Landline No: 0836-2378500

[www.deshpandefoundationindia.org](http://www.deshpandefoundationindia.org)

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