

*Professionals*

# CATALYSTS of CHANGE





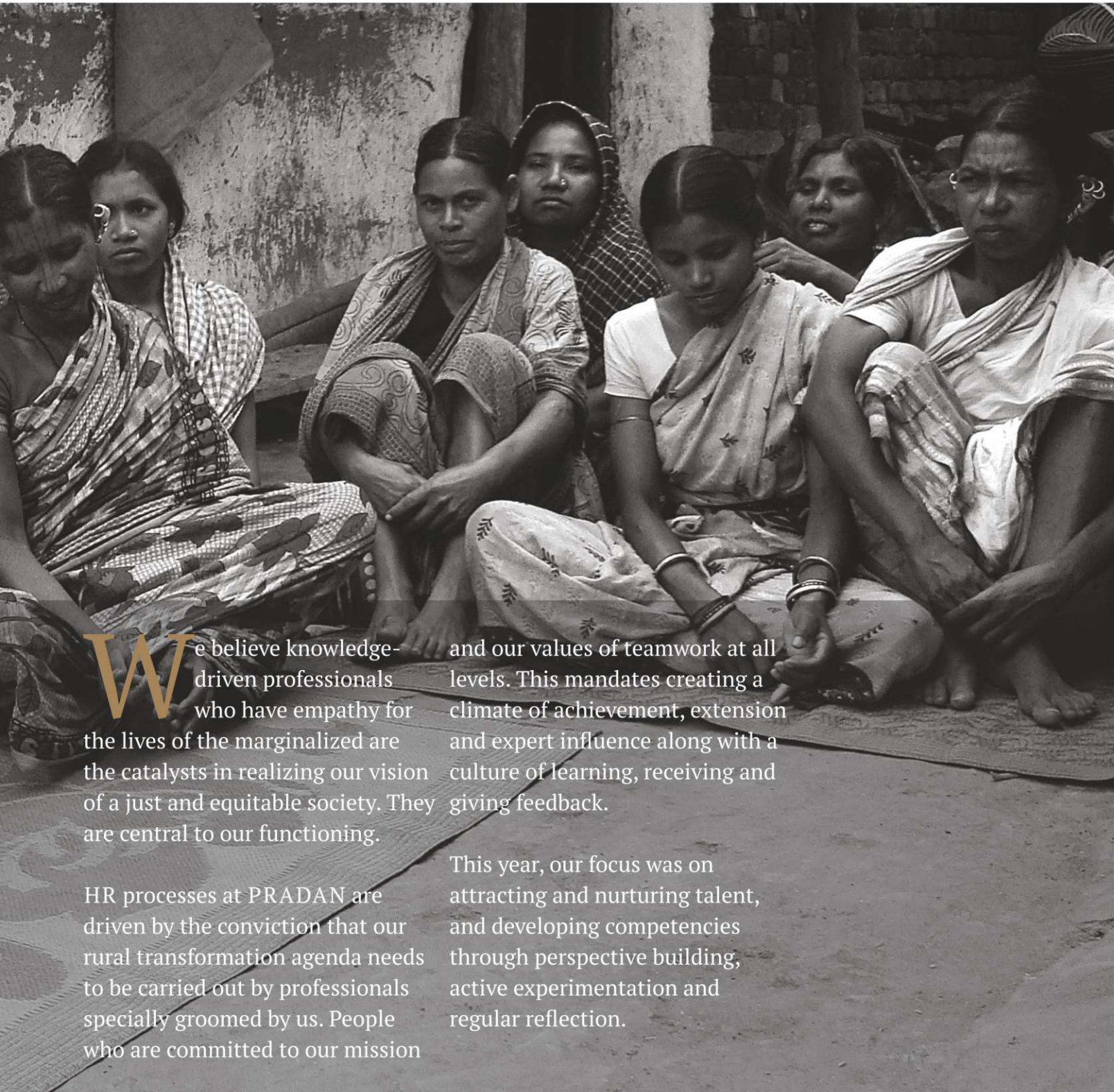
## INSIDE

Building a Community of Young Leaders 42

The Higher Education Initiative 43

Building Relationships with the Larger Fraternity 45

Developing Competencies for Effectiveness 46



**W**e believe knowledge-driven professionals who have empathy for the lives of the marginalized are the catalysts in realizing our vision of a just and equitable society. They are central to our functioning.

HR processes at PRADAN are driven by the conviction that our rural transformation agenda needs to be carried out by professionals specially groomed by us. People who are committed to our mission

and our values of teamwork at all levels. This mandates creating a climate of achievement, extension and expert influence along with a culture of learning, receiving and giving feedback.

This year, our focus was on attracting and nurturing talent, and developing competencies through perspective building, active experimentation and regular reflection.



# BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF YOUNG LEADERS

We continued to reach out and build a community of young leaders, connecting them with communities and rural poverty

Nurturing people who can actively choose and create a life that is meaningful to the individual as well as the larger society has always been our focus. During the year, we continued to reach out and build a community of young leaders who are seeking to explore their inner calling in life - a journey from the inner to the outer world that inspires a connect with communities and rural poverty.

We designed and facilitated experiences that helped build sensitivity to issues of rural poverty, and reflect on the choices one could make as responsible young citizens.

## Development Internship

To engage with the larger community of educated young people we created structured experiences in the form of internships. These were short-term engagements in development at the grassroots.

Development internships were offered to 13 students from India's premier institutes. The Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA), Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar (XIMB), Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and Azim Premji University (APU).

Internships were followed by interventions at campuses to share and consolidate students' learnings with peers. These engagements generated interesting ideas and suggestions of how to move forward in building partnerships with these institutions.

## Development Apprenticeship

This year, PRADAN's Development Apprenticeship (DA) program had 57 young professionals graduating after completing their year-long apprenticeship.

A new batch of 88 graduates and post-graduates from different disciplines and institutions joined this program for an opportunity to understand the realities of a development professional's life and work.

By the end of the year-long DA program, an apprentice develops a threshold of competencies required to directly engage with women collectives in the spirit of citizenship. And also understand the causes creating oppression in the human condition. These skills enable them to function effectively as PRADAN's on-field executives.

The curriculum of the DA program was revised based on our past experiences, and also to incorporate PRADAN's new approach to development where rural women are seen as transformation drivers.

To strengthen our focus on the concepts of 'person', 'group' and 'making informed choice', a three-phase module on Process Awareness and Sensitivity (PAS) was included in the apprenticeship design.

## Connecting with Campuses

- Total placement offers made: 152; joined: 88.
- Female apprentices comprised 42% of the total batch, as against 33% in 2014-15.
- Increase in percentage of students from the Social Work discipline.
- Re-established relationships with IRMA, and Presidency College and Jadavpur University in Kolkata.



# THE HIGHER EDUCATION INITIATIVE

PRADAN and the Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD), in 2012, established a professional course in rural development that blends practice and theory organically to transform the human condition.

The endeavor was for 'development practice' to emerge as a socially meaningful and legitimate arena of work. The course institutionalized, in a university setting, the professionalization of rural development practice. It also served to build capacities in terms of developing and increasing the pool of quality human resource in the development sector.

## M.Phil. in Development Practice

The M.Phil. in Development Practice with AUD was a first step in the journey. During the year three cohorts of students were on board. The second cohort completed the program in May; the third cohort was in the second year; and the fourth cohort joined in August.

This program has been supported by the TATA TRUSTS, Rohini Ghadiok Foundation, Help Your NGO, and National Securities Depository Limited e-Gov (NSDL e-Gov).

An external review of the M.Phil. program, commissioned by the AUD, commended the uniqueness and success of the collaboration between AUD and PRADAN. It observed that setting up an M.Phil. in Development Practice was a strong beginning with 'potential to emerge as an important prototype, indeed as a pioneer, for the field of development practice.'

Programs like this have a long gestation period to gain recognition, credibility, and legitimacy, mainly because it takes the alumni and faculty some years to make their mark. The challenges as articulated in the review are to be 'confronted through robust institutional calibrations among all of the stakeholders' and included broadening the institutional base of the program; faculty

The M.Phil. in Development Practice that PRADAN established with the Ambedkar University has institutionalized the professionalization of rural development practice





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recruitment, faculty sharing and faculty development; building an ecosystem in the university and longer-term financing.

The University also underwent a National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) review during this period.

**Towards Improving Development Practice**

To enrich and build the discipline of development practice at AUD, a Center for Development Practice (CDP) was set up at the campus in July 2013.

The CDP is envisaged to be a center for collaborative research, documentation, and capacity building for development sector scholars and agents. It is to provide an engagement with development practice in active participation with communities. And bridge inherited divides between theory and practice, natural and social sciences, self and group, and individual and collaborative research.

The focus this year was on establishing the newly set-up CDP as a vibrant platform for dialogue between development practitioners and academics, and perhaps even communities we intend to serve, in the longer run.

Key activities during the year were:

- Organizing a series of summer schools (held for the first time) on Development Practice for PRADAN executives who also function as 'field faculty' for M.Phil. students. The idea was to update the faculty with new developments and field realities to enrich their guidance of students.
- Two research projects were initiated on the topics of 'Caste and Class: Need for a Theoretical and Empirical Re-examination' and 'Unlocking the potential of non-timber forest produce in creating value across the chain'.
- A collaborative symposium and workshop, supported by the Australia India Council,

This year, students graduating from the M.Phil. program joined organizations such as TATA TRUSTS, Harsha Trust, Khemka Foundation and MAMTA Health Institute for Mother and Child.

Graduates from the first cohort continued in organizations which included Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), AZAD Foundation, Tata Steel Rural Development Society, Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Vikas Pariyojana (RGMVP), TATA TRUSTS and PRADAN.

Two initiatives of students from the first cohort to set up new community-based initiatives are being supported by the Rohini Ghadiok Foundation and Price Water House Coopers Foundation.

was held in April 2015. The objective was to advance mutual understanding and cooperation for rural development. This is now envisaged to be an annual symposium titled 'Transformation for Rural Development' (TRD).

- A virtual hub for rural transformation was initiated. The idea is to build a membership-based platform, collaboratively initiated between researchers, practitioners and members of the communities we serve eventually.

# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE LARGER FRATERNITY

We advocate an inclusive community of organizations committed to working with young people on social issues, for sharing ideas, content, approaches and expertise that upholds the spirit of co-creation. With this outlook, we began collaborations with youth organizations.

Nine such organizations met to generate and develop ideas of working with young people on a diverse development issues. Participants included student organizations such as AIESEC and ENACTUS.

We partnered with Youth Ki Awaz, an online platform for youth with more than 2 lakh viewership to showcase 'professionals against poverty' and PRADAN's model.

PRADAN was invited to 'Kaizen', a social mobilization event organized by the National Service Scheme (NSS) at IIT-Delhi to showcase the organization and its work among IITians.





# DEVELOPING COMPETENCIES FOR EFFECTIVENESS

Building supportive norms and climate to make PRADAN a better place for women to work has been an important area of focus

PRADAN expects all its teams to enhance their own sense of agency, develop interdependence and establish facilitating norms. This includes setting high standards of performance, valuing expertise, supporting fellow members, making decisions through consensus, encouraging leadership, reflective practice, professional orientation, and giving and receiving feedback. All to make PRADAN an effective and a supportive place to work in.

The focus of our professional development efforts this year was to build team and group processes, strengthen development perspectives, field guiding competencies, and communication skills of team members.

Based on our experience of conducting the Development Apprenticeship programs, our in-house training for new recruits and insights we gained from our collaborative work with AUD; we further developed a three-phase program on Development Perspective. It is conducted by the faculty from AUD.

In the process of building more internal faculty for the programs related to group processes and PAS, a program on Group Facilitation was designed and developed. Seven PRADANites and 2 external participants participated in the first phase last year and an intermediate feedback event during the reporting period.

For meaningful collaborations with stakeholders, PRADAN field executives are expected to be the organization's goodwill ambassadors. They are also expected to attract the best talent to join the development sector. These asks require team members to have effective public speaking skills among others. To equip our executives with effective public speaking skills, 9 senior PRADAN executives participated in a program titled 'Inspirational Ambassador'.

The knowledge of English language and skills to communicate effectively are critical for professionals to learn from and share information and experiences with local and global audiences. To improve our teams' skills a three-phase program was developed with the help of a language training organization. Twenty PRADAN executives participated in this program. For continuous improvement an online facility has been provided for the participants.

In all, through the year, 319 professionals participated in 18 training programs covering 1,834 training days.

**Towards a More Gender-sensitive Work Place**  
Building supportive norms and climate to make PRADAN a better place for women to work has been an important area of focus. Gender mainstreaming is being institutionalized through concrete steps, mechanisms, and processes in all parts of the organization.

STAFF STRENGTH	2014 -15			2015 -16		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
PROFESSIONALS	270	81	351	289	93	382
ASSISTANTS	79	16	95	84	19	103
STAFF ON CONTRACT	130	14	144	126	16	142
Total	479	111	590	499	128	627
DA (on board)	45	23	68	38	25	63
Grand Total	524	134	658	537	153	690





Following the recommendations of a scoping study, as a first step, we prioritized the formation of a women's caucus, introduction of gender audit in the organization, and a new curriculum on gender in the Development Apprenticeship program.

As per the requirement of 'The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013', members of PRADAN's Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) underwent a training to enhance their understanding and efficiencies required for the role. Two rounds of orientation workshops

were conducted for members of the ICC in January 2016. New members replaced those who had either moved out or were transferred to a different state.

PRADAN's new policy on prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace was widely disseminated and shared with all new recruits. IEC materials and staff training workshop will be our focus in the coming period.

No complaints were received during the year.