

MEGA-SkY India



Background



Minority Education for Growth and Advancement—Skills for Youth (MEGA-SkY) was supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and implemented by Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) in collaboration

with International Youth Foundation (IYF). The project operated from 2009–2011 in four states across India: Bihar, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

MEGA-SkY partnered with local organizations and leaders to create learning opportunities for marginalized children and youth, especially within the Muslim community. The project increased access to quality formal and non-formal educational experiences, as well as worked to improve classroom environments for students.

At the policy level, MEGA-SkY implemented successful private sector vocational programs that continue today. The project also supported government employment and education policies that aim to align the skill sets of young people with employers. For more information, visit idd.edc.org.

Results

As a result of MEGA-SKY initiatives:

- **51,580** students and youth participated (28,470 girls)
- **14,168** students received in-school and out-of-school coaching services
- **19,736** minority children transitioned to the formal education system
- **6,590** youth received vocational training services (6,049 female)
- **188** Youth Volunteers recruited across the four states (81 female)
- **50** Tarakki Centers (community centers) established across the four states
- **51** Community Support Groups established with over 500 members





Reinforcing the value of education is crucial not only to widen community horizons and perspectives, but also to allow individuals to move beyond their circumscribed environment, which is particularly important for girls and young women.

—Honorable Chief Minister, Sheila Dikshit, Government of NCT Delhi (at the MEGA-Sky National Dissemination Event)

My Story: Tabbasum

Tabbasum Bano is 14 years old, the second oldest of four children in her family. Her mother passed away when she was 9, and when her older sister married and moved away, Tabbasum was left to care for the household. Her stepmother expected her to do chores rather than attend school, despite her wish to study.

When the MEGA-Sky team arrived in her village and held an educational rally about the project, Tabbasum asked her father for permission to attend the Tarakki Centre (TC). However, like his wife, he believed it was unsafe and improper for a girl to receive an education, and that the community would mock them.

Volunteers convinced Tabbasum's parents to let her attend school for the first time. In the seven months since her enrolment, Tabbasum learned the Hindi alphabet, vocabulary, counting, and basic arithmetic. Combining her literacy and numeracy skills with vocational training, she is well on her way to acquiring the skill set needed to open a tailoring business.

As a result of MEGA-Sky, Tabbasum has developed a newfound love of learning and sense of confidence. She is more outspoken and optimistic, and participates actively in extracurricular activities. Says her father, "The people of this community have a great obligation to the MEGA-Sky project and HWA for bringing awareness among us about the importance of education."



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Accomplishments

As a result of a set of holistic interventions, MEGA-Sky accomplishments include:

- **Delivery** of 64 hours of training modules for 204 Madrasa teachers and 120 leaders emphasizing student-centered pedagogy and the use of teaching-learning materials
- **Application** and testing of up to 40 English as a Second Language Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI) programmes across 100 Madrasas
- **Development** of new linkages between Muslim communities, government stakeholders, and Madrasa staff
- **Capacity-building** of 14 grassroots and state-level non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and technical partners
- **Leveraged** resources from partner organizations to support MEGA-Sky activities: \$1,215,465

