

AMMACHI Labs' USER EXPERIENCE MAP

#AL-EYE - (AMMACHI Labs' - Emergency Youth Education)

#AL-EYE is AMMACHI Labs' bold new program to educate young people in emergency situations through customized education and skill development courses that incorporate games and innovative multimedia tools, build resiliency to disasters, and empower entire families and communities in rural India and wherever disasters may occur.

Lakshmi and Sita



Ages: 12 and 30

Professions: Student and Home Maker

Lakshmi is a 12-year-old student in rural India, who until recently, was totally oblivious to the poverty in her household and village. She has never been outside the village and has no contact with the outside world. The only life she knows is the simple way of life in her village. She goes to school, plays with her friends, and helps her mother with household chores. She does not think about the future; but like all girls in the village, she has no reason to think that her future will be any different than that of her mother and grandmother.

Sita is Lakshmi's mother, and a home maker. Sita grew up much like Lakshmi. She finished school at age 16 after completing the 10th and highest standard at the only school in her village. There was no chance of her, a girl, traveling to another village for more schooling. And no one saw the need for it. Like all the other girls in her village, that was the end of Sita's formal education. Her focus shifted to learning how to be a good wife and mother. Sita married Lakshmi's father when she was 18-years-old, and Lakshmi was born nine months later.

Lakshmi's father, Sita husband, recently started to drink heavily. He started drinking to cope with depression since his crops were ruined by prolonged rain. The family finances are strained, but whenever he finds a little work, he spends most of his wages on alcohol. Often there is no money in the household but Sita gets food from the kind neighbors. She does her best to shield Lakshmi from her father's drinking, and makes sure Lakshmi always keeps up with her lessons. Sita wants so much more for Lakshmi's future than her own life. Lakshmi should finish her education and get a good job and marry an educated husband and move from the village to someplace more advance and developed, and have a good life.

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An Emergency Disaster



Heavy and prolonged monsoon rains not only ruined the family crops, they caused floods and landslides. Last month Lakshmi's family had to be relocated to a shelter because the landslides threatened their modest hillside home. Damaged power lines and mobile towers left the village without electricity and telephone service. Most of the men were farmers like Lakshmi's father, and they spent their drinking at the village bar since their crops were ruined. The daily lives of families and children were strained and uncertain. Lakshmi now started to understand that her family was poor.

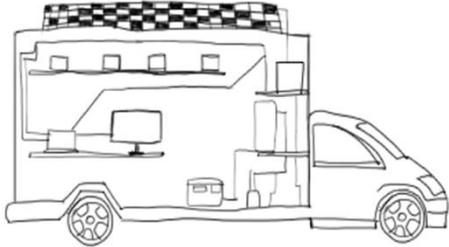
Disaster Response & Needs Assessment



AMMACHI Labs had not previously worked in Lakshmi's village, but a decision was made to intervene and help the distraught community. Immediately after the local authorities gave the all clear, AMMACHI Labs and its sister organizations in Embracing the World deployed to the most affected areas to provide various forms of humanitarian relief. AMMACHI Labs' deployment team conducted needs assessments to determine what sorts of interventions in education and skills training would be most effective in the village. The team met with village leaders and interviewed community members, including those most affected, like Lakshmi's family, to determine the best way forward. Normal classes at Lakshmi's school had been suspended, so a decision was made to deploy the #AL-EYE program there.

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Mobile Classroom



AMMACHI Labs deployed 2 solar powered classrooms on wheels to Lakshmi's school. The sturdy van easily traversed the hilly terrain and landslides to reach the otherwise inaccessible village. One van was equipped with an array of innovative educational tools for educating young people, including laptops and tablets for use by the children. Another van transported machinery and tools for vocational training. The vans provided their own electricity, contained local and central databases, and employed Wi-Fi.

Community Healing



The first activities that AMMACHI Labs organized were healing sessions for the entire community. There were lively singing sessions that all villagers joined. Sita was a good singer and she led many of the traditional village songs. Even the men left the bar and participated in the singing. There were art sessions for the children. Several of AMMACHI Labs' games were introduced to help the villagers share their experiences relating to the disaster. The games were customized to teach about the specifics of disaster preparedness and response in that village. Finally there were discussions about the educational and training programs would be offered to the children and adults in the community.

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Courses to Do.Think.Learn



AMMACHI Labs' team began to teach the #AL-EYE courses on tablets to different student and adult groups.

- Some student groups learned traditional subjects like math, science and English.
- Others took introductory technology courses like computational thinking, maker skills, and robotics, which also incorporated lessons on social problem solving and emotional learning.
- Older students who were about to enter the job market were trained in vocational skills to prepare for meaningful livelihoods.
- Adult women like Sita took the tailoring courses. And men like Lakshmi's father took up training in masonry.
- Life Enrichment Education courses were offered on topics including alcoholism, human trafficking, domestic violence, legal rights and awareness, women's health, and sanitation.

A Bright Future



Lakshmi and Sita's lives, their whole family life, and the entire community was completely transformed by the #AL-EYE program.

Lakshmi liked the robotics class the most. She actually made a small robot and could not believe how easy and fun it was. She began to think about life beyond the limited conditions in her village. She started to talk about going to college and become an engineer like the teacher of her robotics class. She and her friends talked for hours about who would make the most wonderful things and what sorts of things they would make when they grew up and became engineers.

Sita was delighted and comforted that Lakshmi's future would be different. She also had a new outlook. Even after a short time in the tailoring course she realized that she was also very good at making things. She started making small gifts for her neighbors and soon she began to get orders and was well on her way to having a steady income. Even her husband stopped drinking as he found a new purpose in life as a mason in training.

The future ahead was bright for their family and the other families in the village.

The End.