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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

In conjunction with India Giving Day, a consortium of partners join hands to bridge the urban/rural digital divide for India's rural schoolchildren.

Des Moines, IA – Project Umeed, a groundbreaking initiative dedicated to promoting education and digital literacy in rural India, proudly announces the launch of a $1 million project to establish digital libraries in underserved communities in a landmark partnership between Trees for Life, India Development Relief Fund, Guru Krupa Foundation, and Sehgal Foundation—to be implemented by S M Sehgal Foundation on the ground in India.

This pioneering collaboration underscores a shared commitment to democratizing access to knowledge and empowering communities through technology-enabled learning solutions. Fostering inclusive development and opportunity, Project Umeed will help to bridge the digital divide and equip rural schoolchildren in underserved areas in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Telangana with the tools and resources needed to thrive in the digital age.

With the generous support of esteemed partners and donors—Project Umeed will implement a comprehensive strategy to deploy digital libraries in rural communities across India.

Key features of the $1 million project:

Establishment of Digital Libraries
Project Umeed will leverage innovative technology and infrastructure to establish fully equipped digital libraries in remote villages, providing schoolchildren and community members with access to computers, internet connectivity, educational software, and digital learning resources.

Figure 1 Digital Library in Alwar, Rajasthan

Capacity Building and Training Programs
Project Umeed will conduct targeted training sessions and workshops to enhance digital literacy skills among individuals of all ages, empowering them to navigate the digital landscape, utilize online resources, and unlock new opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Figure 2 Schoolgirls Learning in the digital library in Alwar, Rajasthan

Content Development and Curriculum Enhancement
Project Umeed will collaborate with local educators, content creators, and subject matter experts to develop high-quality educational materials and curriculum content tailored to the needs and interests of rural learners to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

Community Engagement and Sustainability
Project Umeed will prioritize community engagement and participation throughout the project lifecycle, working closely with local stakeholders to foster ownership, sustainability, and meaningful impact in each target community.

> "We are delighted to embark on this transformative journey as we work together to realize the vision of Project Umeed. With the generous support and expertise of these partners, we are confident that our shared efforts will bring about positive change and create lasting opportunities for individuals and communities across rural India."
> —Navneet Narwal, Project Umeed Lead, S M Sehgal Foundation

As Project Umeed mobilizes resources and expertise to implement digital libraries in rural India, the collaboration of Trees for Life (https://treesforlife.org/), India Development Relief Fund (https://www.idrf.org/), Guru Krupa Foundation (https://www.guru-krupa.org/), and

Sehgal Foundation (https://www.smsfoundation.org/) represents a significant step forward in advancing education, digital inclusion, and sustainable development.

India Giving Day was initiated by the India Philanthropic Alliance in 2023 to highlight and commemorate the contributions made to India by Americans, and notably Indian Americans.

For more information, email: Jay Sehgal, email: sf-usa@smsfoundation.org