

## **‘TARA Akshar’, the literacy program of Development Alternatives bestowed with the 2016 WISE Awards for promoting education through technology**

TARA Akshar Literacy Program receives the 2016 WISE Awards for 'combatting illiteracy through a computerized literacy program.' This Programme was one of the six winning contestants that "demonstrated a positive impact on society."



TARA Akshar Literacy Program is being

implemented by the Society for Technology & Action for Rural Advancement (TARA). TARA is a social enterprise of the Development Alternatives' Group. TARA as an “enabler”, is instrumental in the creation of livelihood support systems, training and capacity building for the rural poor and marginalised communities. Implementation of the TARA Akshar+ Literacy and Numeracy programme is a systematic process, carefully designed to deliver significant results in minimum time, and at the lowest cost. A comprehensive package of learning tools, methods, and materials is delivered through proprietary software, customised books and learning aids, by a cadre of intensively trained managers, instructors, quality control supervisors and testing experts. TARA Akshar delivers a systematic and uniform pedagogic experience to learners at each rural centre, while empowering the centre instructor with mentoring tools and skills. The programme has been running successfully in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi/NCR, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Rajasthan since 2007. The program's primary targets are women in rural India, so that they can break free from the cycle of poverty. The number of validated Tara Akshar graduates now exceeds 165,000. This programme has a tremendous reach of about 1.5 lakh women and still counting.

### **About Development Alternatives**

Development Alternatives (DA), the world's first social enterprise dedicated to sustainable development, is a research and action organisation striving to deliver socially equitable, environmentally sound and economically scalable development outcomes. DA envisions a world where every citizen can live a secure, healthy and fulfilling life in harmony with nature. The DA Group has organised its work around six thematic programmes namely Natural Resource Management, Clean Technology, Enterprise development, Employment creation, Basic needs fulfillment and Institutional strengthening; with the objectives to track their interdependent outcomes with respect to savings in energy and finite resources, reduction in carbon footprint of economic actions, regeneration and conservation of natural resources, community empowerment to access basic needs and entitlements, job creation, economic growth of target population and creation of physical assets that lead to improvement in the quality of life of the poor. DA's green technology innovations for habitat, water, energy and waste management, which deliver basic needs and generate sustainable livelihoods, have reduced poverty and rejuvenated natural ecosystems in the most backward regions of India.

### **About WISE**

Each year, the WISE Awards recognize and promote six successful innovative projects that are addressing global educational challenges. Since 2009, WISE has received more than 2,850 applications from over 150 countries. Today, 42 projects have been awarded, from a wide variety of sectors and locations for their innovative character, their positive contribution and their potential for scalability and adaptability. These projects represent a growing resource of expertise and sound educational practice. Year by year, WISE is building a community of educational innovators which offers a fertile environment for groundbreaking collaborations. Today the WISE Awards network comprises pioneering projects that are helping bring real change to societies and communities.