

【Press Release】 LUI Che Woo Prize – Prize for World Civilisation 2018 Positive Energy Prize Laureate Public Lecture

4 OCT 2018

Pratham Education Foundation CEO Shares Insights Into Addressing the Learning Crisis Around the Globe

(Hong Kong, 4 October 2018) – The LUI Che Woo Prize – Prize for World Civilisation today hosted the [Positive Energy Prize Laureate Public Lecture](#) at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). Representing [Pratham Education Foundation \(Pratham\)](#), 2018 laureate of the Positive Energy Prize, was Dr. Rukmini Banerji. As the Chief Executive Officer of Pratham, Dr. Banerji delivered a lecture entitled “Solutions for the Learning Crisis: Building Foundations to Move Beyond Schooling to Learning”, which was very well received.

India is close to achieving universal enrolment for children aged 6-14, and yet challenges remain on how to ensure this schooling translates into learning. Sadly, years of data from Pratham indicate that 50% of children in Grade 5 across India are unable to read a Grade 2 text; and a similar number can't do basic mathematics like subtraction. The learning crisis in India mirrors similar challenges within education systems around the globe. These require urgent attention and an immediate solution if the world's young population is to reach its full potential.

A trained economist and Oxford University Rhodes Scholar, Dr. Banerji has played a key role in developing and implementing the foundation's government partnership programmes and assessment activities for more than 10 years. In her public lecture, Dr. Banerji spoke about the evolution of Pratham's innovative and indigenous approach to helping primary school children acquire foundational reading and arithmetic skills in a short period of time and at low cost. The model has proven effective at addressing challenges in education systems; leading to promising results in ensuring that every child is in school and learning well.

Moderated by Dr. Wang Dan, Associate Professor and Head of Division of Policy, Administration and Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, HKU, the lecture was attended by academics, students and professionals from public and private sectors who hold the belief that education is the foundation upon which we build our future.

This year's Positive Energy Prize has a specific area of focus *Elimination of Illiteracy*. Pratham was awarded for its assiduous and impactful work to improve education quality and drive literacy attainment. Its replicable, scalable models have enabled Pratham to achieve lasting and influential success in India and beyond, driving low-cost interventions to address gaps in the education system.

The LUI Che Woo Prize is an annual cross-sector award which aims to recognise and inspire the efforts of compassionate individuals and organisations working to build a more harmonious world. Founded by [Dr. Lui Che Woo](#) in 2015, the Prize is an international accolade which advances with the times in order to address ever-evolving global needs and challenges. The LUI Che Woo Prize [2018 Prize Presentation Ceremony](#) was held the day prior to Dr. Banerji's public lecture, on Wednesday, 3 October 2018.



Professor Paul Tam, Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, HKU, gives his welcoming address at the lecture.



Dr. Rukmini Banerji, CEO of Pratham Education Foundation, explains how the replicable, scalable and low-cost model helps in transforming India's education over the years.



Audience enjoying the enthusiastic sharing by Dr. Banerji at her talk.