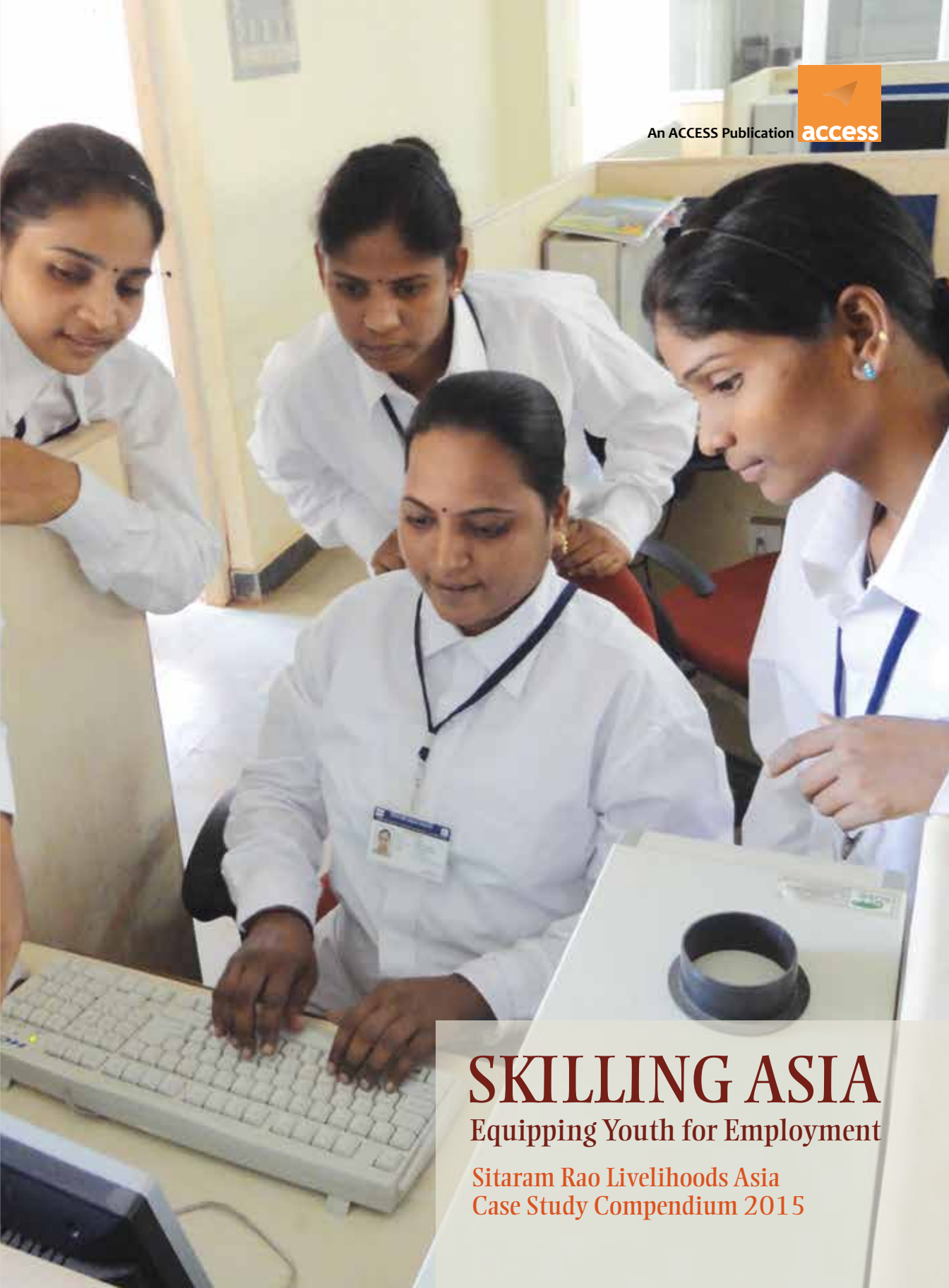


An ACCESS Publication



SKILLING ASIA

Equipping Youth for Employment

Sitaram Rao Livelihoods Asia
Case Study Compendium 2015



ACCESS Development Services

ACCESS is a not-for-profit company whose overall aim is to promote sustainable and innovative livelihoods promotion models to improve the economic well being of primary producers. ACCESS works to build inclusive value chains that enable greater accrual of benefits for the producers. The ACCESS programmes on the ground largely focus on enhancing productivity of small and marginal farmers. ACCESS also provides technical support services to large poverty reduction programmes and a few of its initiatives seek to influence, inform and support pro-poor policy. ACCESS operates in nine states of the country.



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SITARAM RAO LIVELIHOODS ASIA CASE STUDY COMPENDIUM 2015

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Preface

Asia, with a population of over 4 billion, accounts for approximately 56% of the world's population. With an average age of 29 years, about 64% of the total population comprises the working age group in the continent (United Nations 2011). South Asia, especially as defined by the World Bank, will add 1 to 1.2m new entrants to the labour force every year for the next 20 years, and be a source of about 40% of the new entrants to the world's working age population.

The Asian region is swiftly evolving and in turn producing multiple challenges for skills development. Asia is home to numerous transitioning economies which are shifting from agriculture to industry and services, from centrally planned to market economies and new technologies are getting introduced into the market place. In the recent past there has been a growing concern regarding the rising rate of unemployment and a skills and employability mismatch that skews and exacerbates the problem. This has been fuelled by the rapid fluctuation in available jobs and demand for skills given the changes in industries and technology and demands of the “new economy”. Appropriately the need of the hour is not only for producing appropriately skilled human resources but also for skills development to address the challenge of inclusive growth. The focus must be on improving the quality and relevance of skills while also strengthening the inclusiveness of skills training so as to advance economic and social growth on an equal platform. The cultural, ethnic, historical and environmental diversity across Asian regions provides a range of opportunities and experiences in skilling reforms and development, with different countries tackling the issue in their own unique way.

Although the role of the government is extremely important in setting up policies and the environment for skill development, it is essential to include public-private partnerships in Technical and Vocational Education and Training development and delivery.

In this context, the Sitaram Rao Livelihoods Asia Case Study Competition 2015 has brought together cases that have demonstrated breakthroughs in adopting new strategies, new models and forged new partnerships towards providing gainful employment to a large number of youth in countries in the Asian region. The competition sought cases on skills programs that have adapted to the needs of the excluded, taking into account exclusion patterns and contributing factors.

In total, 40 case abstracts were received which covered a range of skill development initiatives in both urban as well as rural settings. The cases explored the socio-economic conditions and needs of focus groups such as underprivileged young women, differently abled persons, workers in the informal sector etc, within the ambit of skilling. The studies described the nature and strategies of skill development interventions and illustrated the innovative programs implemented. Given the nascent nature of the skilling sector, the cases also explored issues and challenges in achieving scale and sustainability of programs.

The Jury of the Case Study Competition comprised of sector experts such as Dr. Joy Deshmukh Ranadive, TCS; Sushil Ramola, BE-ABLE; Mahesh Venkateswara, NSDC; Rathish Balakrishnan, Sattva and Varun Saini, MSDF.

On behalf of ACCESS I would like to thank all those who have shown interest in the case study competition and submitted their cases. I express my gratitude to the Jury members for critically examining the cases and helping us with the final list. My sincere thanks to MSDF, the sponsor for the case study competition. Lastly I would like to thank my colleagues Puja, Ila, Joy and Arushi who did an excellent job in facilitating and anchoring the full process.

I hope this compendium will bring some new insights on the issue of Skilling Asia – Equipping Youth for Employment.

Vipin Sharma
CEO
ACCESS Development Services

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Employability Enhancement for India's Youth: A Case for Mainstream Integration with the Education System

Byomkesh Mishra & Christopher Turillo¹

1. Introduction

Like many countries in the process of economic transition – from primarily agriculture-based to industrial or knowledge-based – India is currently facing a shortage of skills in its labor force as the education and training infrastructure struggles to keep pace with changing market demands. Based on current estimates, while over 75% of India's labor force is employed in skill-based jobs, only 3% have received any form of technical or vocational training (Teamlease, 2007). This low average skill level in the workforce leads to lower relative returns to education, higher unemployment and underemployment, and increased inequality (World Bank, 2008). While these data are concerning, given the current demographic scenario in India – the working age population is expected to grow to from 720 million today to 950 million by 2026, adding between 10 million and 17 million people per year – the future situation may in fact be more alarming.

To address this issue, both public and private sector players have increased resources and training capabilities over the last ten years, however these efforts have been inadequate with recent estimates by the World Bank, International Labour Organization, and various private research firms putting the overall training output between 3 million and 4 million people per year (approximately 1.5 million in the public sector and between 1.5 million and 2.5 million in the private sector) (IDFC-SSKI India, 2009) (World Bank,

¹ Co-Founders, Medha

2008). In addition to the low overall incidence of training, empirical studies suggest the quality of training is extremely poor when measured on both internal and external efficiency scales (ILO, 2003).

To address this huge challenge on a systemic level, Medha was launched in early 2011.

The concept for Medha comes from its founders' shared experiences while working in the microfinance industry in India. While passionate about the impact of income generating loans, over time they began to see the significant effect on economic and social development the industry had through job creation and employment. In 2007, the microfinance company for which they worked hired over 300 rural youth per month, trained them in computers and accounting, and provided them with well-paying jobs and opportunities for professional development. On their frequent visits to rural branches, they saw firsthand how these 10th-pass students with few marketable skills were transformed into mature, driven professionals as a result of the opportunities they were given to work and provide for their families. The ability to control their own destiny through hard work and dedication had an unbelievable impact on their self-esteem and economic independence. Living and working in this microcosm of employment generation for low-income populations inspired us to explore employability issues more generally, and look for ways in which to accelerate these opportunities throughout the country.

After conducting informal research throughout 2008, they were convinced that India, not unlike many high-growth countries, was suffering from an “unemployability” problem as described above, and that the situation was only projected to get worse given the current demographic conditions. They knew that if they could find a way to bridge the gap between the skills demanded in the labor force and the skills obtained in the education system, it could significantly improve employment outcomes for young professionals while at the same time improving efficiency and effectiveness for employers. To understand the root cause of this problem however, they needed to look more closely at the various stakeholders involved in delivering “employability training” (and more broadly education) throughout the country.

They approached this research both academically – trying to understand the historical, social, economic, and political environment in which the training field operates, as well as practically – what models have been proven in the marketplace, and who is positioned to scale and why. At the conclusion of this exercise in the middle of 2009, they were confident that they had a better understanding of the various stakeholders, the incentives by which they operated, and the models and methodologies that had been most “successful.” However, they knew that they lacked in practical experience,

and as a result didn't fully understand the "whys" behind many of the conclusion in their research. Therefore they volunteered to work for an NGO in Jharkhand to help them re-launch their employability training program. Working hand-in-hand with the management team and training staff of the NGO, they gained a better appreciation for the realities on the ground, and the various obstacles to improving employment outcomes for disadvantaged youth.

From 2009 to 2010, they worked on taking the learnings from the aforementioned experiences and refining the concept for Medha. This included more formally articulating the organization's intentions and vision, operational plan and procedures, and funding requirements. Subsequently, they received feedback from various stakeholders on different aspects of the proposed program.

It is important to note that over the course of this initial exploration, they always took the approach that they would start a program themselves if, and only if, they felt the current offerings failed to adequately meet the needs of certain segments of the population. They did not believe in replicating the efforts of others, or starting an organization to make marginal improvements to the current offerings. During those years of research, they became increasingly convinced that a new and unique approach to employability training was absolutely essential, and set out to start Medha in early 2011.

Over the last four and a half years, Medha has grown from just an idea, to an organization of 35 full-time staff that serves 2,500 students across six districts in one of the most disadvantaged parts of the country – Eastern Uttar Pradesh. They have faced, and continue to face, significant challenges in growing the program and ensuring high impact, but remain confident that the approach is not only unique and innovative, but required to address the employability crisis in the country on a systemic level. The remaining sections of the case will outline 1) the problem in detail, 2) innovation, theory of change, and program, 3) the outcomes and impact thus far, 4) the key challenges faced, and 5) plans for future.

2. Key Stakeholders

2.1 Students

I had no choice but to look for work in a daily labour market because I couldn't find work in the formal sector and the cost of living is so high these days. I have to support my family somehow.

– Anonymous MA graduate, Jaipur (NDTV, 2010)

With the overall need so great, the range of students requiring employability development in the market today is extremely diverse. They range from 8th-pass students from low-income backgrounds in rural areas, to college graduates from high-income backgrounds in Tier I Cities. Medha chose to initially focus on low-income college students from Tier II and Tier III cities and towns the following reasons:

- This population is currently underserved by existing providers (see Industry Overview section)
- Employment growth is highest in the formal sector which currently requires a graduate (college) degree for most positions
- College students have a significant educational foundation in which to build on
- College students are easier to identify and access due to aggregation at a campus environment
- Experience gained with these students and employers will better prepare Medha to “scale down” its offering for secondary and higher-secondary students
- While college students were the initial focus, Medha has a medium-term vision of working with students who have only completed intermediate or higher secondary school. They believe their unique program can be tailored for this population’s specific needs, and through the success of our college program they can demonstrate to employers the value of a Medha-educated student irrespective of their formal education level. Accordingly, they initially identified the following two primary segments in the table below:

Table 1

Target Group	Education Level	Household Income Level	Career Opportunities
“Unemployable Graduates” 7.2 million students ²	Graduate degree candidate in government college or government-aided college – BA, BSc, BCom, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below Poverty Line – Rs. 100/day • Low-Income – Rs. 100 – 500/day 	Informal sector employment – family business, daily wage labor, agriculture. Formal Sector Employment – Entry (customer service, sales, operations, administration) and low-level management positions in the following industries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing • Financial Services • Hospitality • Retail • IT & Allied • Aviation & Shipping • Healthcare • Education & Training • Automotive • Construction
“Missing Middle” 40 million students ³	Higher secondary/intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below Poverty Line – Rs. 100/day • Low-Income – Rs. 100 – 500/day 	Informal sector employment – family business, daily wage labor, agriculture. Formal Sector Employment – Entry level position in the following industries: Manufacturing Financial Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality • Retail • IT & Allied • Aviation & Shipping • Healthcare • Education & Training • Automotive • Construction

² Based on 20% of general stream graduates over three years – 20% deemed “employable” according to IDFC-SSKI study in 2009, and graduate data is from India Census 2001 and UGC 2004-2005.

³ Based on intermediate graduates over three years – India Census 2001

AGE	GRADE	GENERAL	TECHNICAL	VOCATIONAL
>23		DOCTORAL ~100,000		
18-23		POST-GRADUATE 4.6m	POST-GRADUATE (TECH) 1.1m	
		UNDERGRADUATE 18m	TECHNICAL GRADUATE 4.5m	
16-18	11-12	HIGHER SECONDARY 19.4m	POLYTECHNIC 1m	ITI/ITC 1.4m
14-16	9-10	SECONDARY 31.8m		
6-14	1-8	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION 197.3m		

*total enrollments

Sources: MHRD, Educational Statistic at a Glance Report 2013, Ministry of Labour Report, 2013, MHRD, All India Survey on Higher Education, 2013

Figure 1: The three levels of the education system that Medha works with

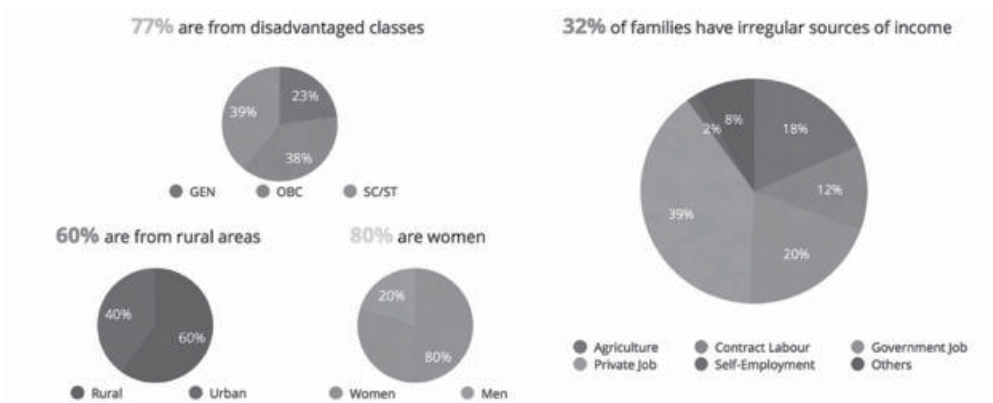


Figure 2: Medha currently works with extremely disadvantaged youth from low-income backgrounds

2.2 Employers

The issue is no longer about finding jobs for people, but of ensuring that there are enough people with relevant skills for the jobs at hand – KV Kamath, Former MD, ICICI

The remarks by Mr. Kamath are unfortunately widely shared by his peers across industries and corporations. Based on industry surveys with leading formal sector employers, over 80% of college graduates from general streams are deemed “unemployable” (IDFC-SSKI India, 2009). Additionally, empirical studies find that 53% of employed youth suffer some form of skill deprivation, while over 55 million “unemployable” youth require “structural repair”⁴ (TeamLease, 2007). Combining these data with the overall college student market, the total market need is estimated at 7.2 million students over the next three years:

4 1-2 years of additional skill development and training

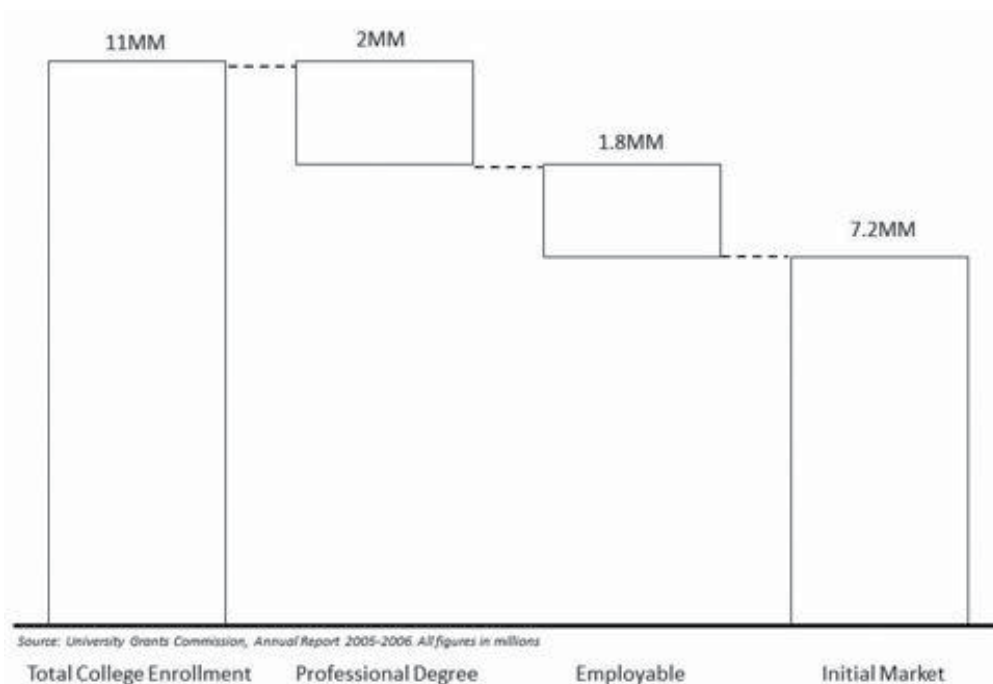


Figure 3

To verify these estimates with industry demand, the table below presents the labour force requirements for four growing industries:

Table 2

Staff Training Requirements	Current Employment	CAGR (%)	Employment last 3 years	Addition over 3 years	Per year addition
Airlines	60,000	65	269,528	209,528	69,843
Retail	880,000	65	3,953,070	3,073,070	1,024,357
Hospitality	70,000	40	192,080	122,080	40,693
Financial Services – Direct	220,000	35	541,283	321,283	107,094
Financial Services – Agents	600,000	35	1,476,225	876,225	292,075
Total	1,830,000		6,432,186	4,602,186	1,534,062

Source: CLSA 2008.

At these projections, these four industries alone absorb over 30% of the projected student supply over the next three years⁵. Based on existing market research, demand in these four industries is projected to result in a \$900MM training industry annually:

⁵ Based on 75% entry-level positions requiring a graduate degree. Total demand over next three years = 3,451,639 employees.

Table 3

Industry Demand	% of Employees Requiring Training	Per Year Universe	Average Training Fee (\$)	Market(\$MM)
Airlines	80	55,874	2000	120
Retail	25	256,089	1000	320
Hospitality	50	20,347	2000	51
Financial Services – Direct	50	53,547	2000	134
Financial Services – Agents	75	219,056	1000	274
Total		604,913		899

Source: CLSA 2008

At Medha, the focus is on providing employability development services to students who do not have the ability to pay up to \$2000, however these estimates demonstrate the significant size of the overall market. To reduce the financial burden on students, they generate financial contributions from both the private and public sectors.

With respect to the public sector, the Government of India recognizes the importance of skills development as a driving force behind economic growth and social development. In 2010, the skills development capacity was officially 3.1 million people per year, however that has increased in recent years due to initiatives like NSDC and the Skill Development Mission. To reach the larger vision of 500 million skilled workers by 2022 however, a different kind of approach is required.

3. Primary Alternatives

To address the overall market need, there are a number of public and private sector players working with different segments of the population. This section provides an overview of the key players and their respective segments. At Medha we also believe there are short and long-term opportunities to collaborate with existing providers and have identified areas to work together:

Table 4

Provider	Brief Description	Medha Innovation	Partnership Opportunities
<p>Public Sector Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and Polytechnics.</p> <p>There are currently over 5,000 institutes across the country</p> <p>Areas of Overlap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with same population –There is some overlap, however Medha will start at the college level and most students in ITIs did not enter college after high school. Working on same issue area - broadly true but ITIs are primarily focused on training for the manufacturing sector. Using a similar model of change - education program but focus on hard skills only. 	<p>ITIs and Polytechnics have been perhaps the only substantial response by the public sector in the area of ‘enhancing individual employability.’ However, these institutions have performed poorly on the parameters of both internal efficiency (number of students enrolled, retained, and successfully graduated, utilization of training seats, capital assets and human resources) and external efficiency (percentage of graduates employed, percentage employed in trades they were trained in, satisfaction level of employers) (ILO 2003).</p> <p>The possible explanations for the limited success of these institutions are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Limited growth in the manufacturing sector combined with these programs’ strong focus on teaching engineering skills. 	<p>Medha addresses these limitations in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on general management tools. Our program is based on core principles applicable and transferable across industries and functions. Besides skill enhancement, this improves the individual’s ability to adapt to rapidly changing market conditions. Bridge between employers and employees. We close the gap between supply and demand by engaging both sides in curriculum development and delivery, on-the-job training, and career services. Use of existing physical infrastructure and human resources. We leverage the existing resources by placing the program 	<p>There is tremendous scope for working in partnership with these institutions and programs. Medha currently provides a number of services to ITIs (similar to other educational institutes) such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum design Teacher and administrator training Career services to existing students <p>Our core program on general business management is flexible enough to be delivered through this channel as well.</p> <p>Medha has worked and continues to work on the overall professionalization of ITIs and Polytechnics through a public/private partnership model. Under this arrangement, Medha provides assistance through a partnership with the Department of Technical Education in Uttar Pradesh.</p>

Provider	Brief Description	Medha Innovation	Partnership Opportunities
<p>Private Sector Vocational Training Institutes</p> <p>Examples: NIIT, Aptech, Jetking, CMS, ICA, IJT, Veta, Frankfin, etc.</p> <p>Areas of Overlap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with same population - some overlap however they focus on a higher-income segment. 	<p>2. Mismatch between skills demanded and skills attained. This is commonly a result of irrelevant and outdated courses, poor delivery quality and facilities, and poor industry interaction.</p> <p>3. Delivery channel is outside the formal school system. Separate infrastructure is built and human resources are hired. This restricts scalability and adds substantial capital costs.</p>	<p>(public and private) school system. This is to minimize duplication (save costs) and maximize outreach (scale).</p>	<p>In the long-run, we hope Medha's approach to skill development and employability enhancement will catalyze a shift (from the manufacturing to services sector) in the public vocational training paradigm in India, and we look forward to working in partnership with the Government of India to implement these changes in a number of capacities.</p>
<p>Private Sector Vocational Training Institutes</p> <p>Examples: NIIT, Aptech, Jetking, CMS, ICA, IJT, Veta, Frankfin, etc.</p> <p>Areas of Overlap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with same population - some overlap however they focus on a higher-income segment. 	<p>To fill the massive quality and quantity gap left by the public sector, the private vocational training industry has mushroomed over the last decade (by some estimates it is currently a \$1.2BN industry). These institutes deliver training in the latest growing industry, recently this has included: 1) IT/ITES, 2) organized retail, 3)</p>	<p>Medha addresses these limitations in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We take the employability enhancement program to the student, working within existing schools and colleges. This will reduce costs and increase access. 	<p>There are a number of ways in which we can collaborate with private sector institutes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> With firms we consider to have strong expertise in a particular industry, and meet a quality standard, we could explore a referral system in which a select number of our graduates pursue further studies in their institutes.

Provider	Brief Description	Medha Innovation	Partnership Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on same issue area – employment in the formal sector. • Using a similar model of change - education program but sector specific and outside the formal education system. 	<p>hospitality, 4) aviation, and 5) banking and financial services. Profit driven, these firms react quickly to employer demand and changing market conditions, but as a result are also more sensitive to market contractions.</p> <p>Barring a few institutes that cater to the IT sector, most private institutes have failed to achieve significant scale or impact (CLSA 2009). Although performing moderately better than the public sector in terms of job placements, private institutes continue to underperform due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limited industry interaction 2. Undiversified course offerings which make them vulnerable to market conditions 3. High costs due to overhead and equipment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. We offer a curriculum that is applicable across industries and developed in collaboration with employers. This increases flexibility and keeps the program demand driven. 3. We augment existing performance metrics and financial incentives to include employability outcome measures. This increase accountability and aligns employer and educator incentives. 4. We continually refine pedagogy and have a dedicated team for teacher training. <p>Medha was established with a long-term vision of affecting the vocational education system in the country. Although we firmly believe that securing gainful employment has a large impact on the average youth's life, our interventions in this</p>	<p>This would be at the student's request, and only in situations where they feel deeper domain expertise is required for their career choice.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. It is important for our program to have the right economic incentives in place for students, education providers, and employers. If there are areas in which we can learn from the private sector on this issue we will explore it. 3. In the future, there may be an opportunity to work with one of the larger, credible firms with a social mission, in a public-private partnership model. We could provide the curriculum and teacher training, and the government could subsidize the cost of delivery. This has the

	<p>4. Poor facilities and training quality</p> <p>In addition, when a particular industry contracts, graduates from these programs are commonly left with few transferable skills and as a result employment options. Finally, many 'fly-by-night' operators take advantage of information asymmetries between students and employers and hurt the overall reputation of these firms.</p>	<p>sector will hopefully also be applied to self-employment issues in the future, and transform the way all youth prepare for life after school.</p>	<p>potential to enhance scalability and the efficiency of the overall system.</p> <p>4. We will partner with them on ongoing research and development to improve our current offering and meet the needs of students and the labor market.</p> <p>While not collaboration, Medha will put forth a sustainable and efficient business model that will fiercely compete with some of these players. We feel this will improve the quality of service to the end student and eliminate some of the weak and poor quality players in the market.</p>
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Provider	Brief Description	Medha Innovation	Partnership Opportunities
<p>Civil society initiatives: NGO and CSR Programs</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Jan Shikshan Sansthan-JSS (government funded program implemented through NGOs for the informal sector), DRF-LABS Program (CSR wing of Dr. Reddy's Labs)</p> <p>Areas of Overlap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with same population - broadly, but also includes low skilled workers, school dropouts, adults and women. Working on same issue area - broadly employment training but they also have additional programs. 	<p>Similar to private sector players, civil society has tried to fill the gap left by the public sector. Most of these programs are funded by private donor organizations, or in some cases through government schemes. In keeping with their mission for social and economic change, these programs typically target low-skilled or migrant workers, illiterate women and adults, and school dropouts. Programs focus on various informal sector trades like carpentry, tailoring, masonry, electrician, and domestic help and are commonly short-term (3-months in many cases). Anecdotal evidence suggests positive impact of some of these programs, but they also suffer from a number of drawbacks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Outside the core competency of the NGO or Corporate in the case of CSR. Many NGOs/ CSR programs engage in a number of different 	<p>Medha addresses these limitations in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our sole focus is on employability training and development (we do not have any other programs). Our initial focus is on formal sector employment where productivity, wages, and benefits are higher and growing. Our model adds value to all stakeholders, and in turn shares the cost burden across students, employers, and the government. Our program is implemented within the existing public sector infrastructure, reducing costs and creating an opportunity for pan-India scale. 	<p>We continue to build fruitful collaborations with some of these NGOs and/or CSR institutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We seek support from some of the credible players on “best practices,” curriculum development, and training methodologies. We work in conjunction with them to educate potential students on the benefits of employability training and professional development more generally. We partner with them in areas outside our core competency. There are a number of social and economic interventions NGOs provide that we are not engaged in. In these instances, we partner with them to ensure our students receive additional support as they prepare

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a similar model of change - education program but informal sector specific and outside the formal education system. 	<p>activities, resulting in a lack of focus, expertise, and investment in employability training specifically.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on the informal sector. Most programs are geared towards local, informal sector jobs where productivity is low and as a result wages are low. The employment share of the economy is also shifting towards formal sector employment throughout the country. Heavy dependence on subsidies. Most programs rely on private or government grants, resulting in ongoing fundraising efforts and uncertainty about the future of the program. <p>Lack of scalability. Most NGOs operate within a specific geographic region and lack the expertise or resources to scale up their programs. Combined, these factors increase costs and restrict the overall impact of their programs.</p>	<p>for life after school (this may include informal sector training as well).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We work in close collaboration with them on policy advocacy to increase and improve the level of funding and delivery channels for employability training. We partner with them on ongoing research and development to improve our current offering and meet the needs of students and the labor market. We leverage our contacts with Microfinance Institutions, CSR programs, and state banks to explore scholarship programs for students who cannot afford the cost of our program.
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4. Medha Intervention

Based on the aforementioned market and industry analysis, Medha set out in 2011 to change the way employability education was imparted in the country. The first step was to build a program that was both demanded by students, while at the same time addressed industry demands. After significant time on the ground working with both parties, Medha built a curriculum that aimed to bridge this gap and brought it to colleges. In their first year, Medha approached 25 educational institutions, one agreed to let them run their program!

They were discouraged by the response but determined to test their program, Medha conducted marketing events at the college and enrolled students. They thought it was an easy sell – improve your employability skills and your chances of getting a job for the very reasonable fee of Rs. 2000. 11 people registered! More discouraging news. But they continued to push on, working with those 11 students as hard as they could, determined to change their lives and better prepare them for life after school.

They had very strong results and impact with that first batch. All students completed internships with local companies, 80% of them were either employed or pursuing higher studies within six months of graduation, and they even had some star students get into competitive programs like Teach for India and IMT Ghaziabad. But they knew they wouldn't survive unless they increased their outreach. It was time for their first big learning – *student mobilization*.

Initially, Medha operated as an 'after school' program, running its training and career services after regular class hours on campus. This approach ended up limiting the number of students they could work with primarily because of scheduling and other conflicts. In response, they started to set up permanent Career Service Centers (CSCs) on campuses to address the issues they were facing. These centers are open during regular class hours, for the duration of the academic year, and are staffed by a Medha Center Manager and Center Assistant. In addition to the training sessions, the center is open for 'drop-in' services and one-on-one counselling. Their permanent presence on campus has led to an over 500% increase in student enrollments and certifications. In addition to significantly increasing their visibility and availability to students on campus, it has also allowed them to build stronger relationships with the college administration and faculty.

After four years of work and improvements to our program and curriculum, their current offering includes:

4.1 Student Services

Medha provides skills training, career preparation, and industry exposure to students from its Career Service Centers (CSC) at existing educational institutions. A summary of services offered includes but is not limited to:



Figure 4

4.2 Employer Relations

Medha provides workforce planning, recruiting, and on-the-job training services to leading employers. A summary of services includes but is not limited to:

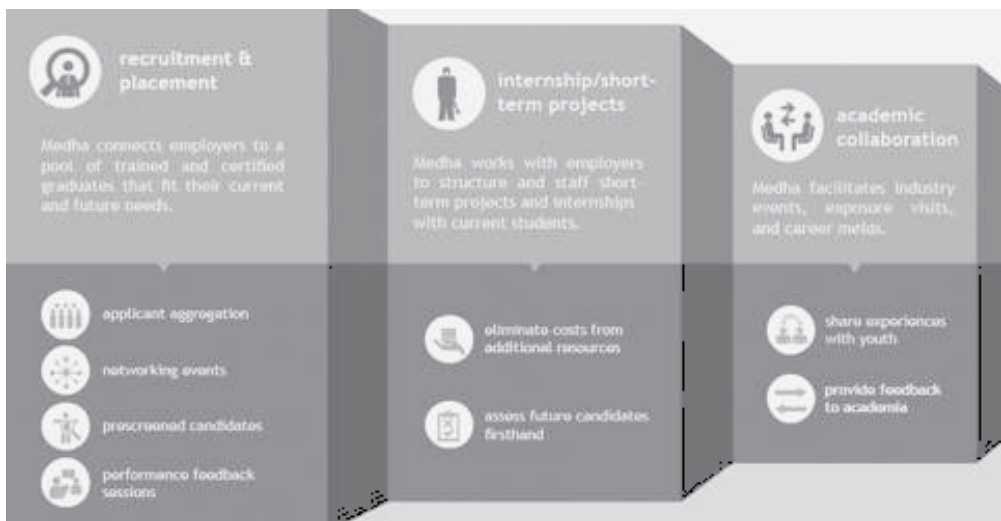


Figure 5

4.3 Educational Institutions

Medha works with the existing education system to enhance employability within the gates of the campus. In return for access to their students and infrastructure, Medha provides industry-linked on-campus events, improved employment outcomes for their students, and employability-based extra-curriculum hours.

5. Milestones & Impact

By the numbers:

- >3000 students trained and certified
- >2000 internship and full-time placements
- >100 employer relationships
- >25 college & university partners

medha students...

- find a job 60 days faster
- are 70% more likely to be in the formal sector
- earn 50% more per month
- qualify for government jobs 2x more often
- increase chances of advanced studies by 50%

*see case studies in annexure

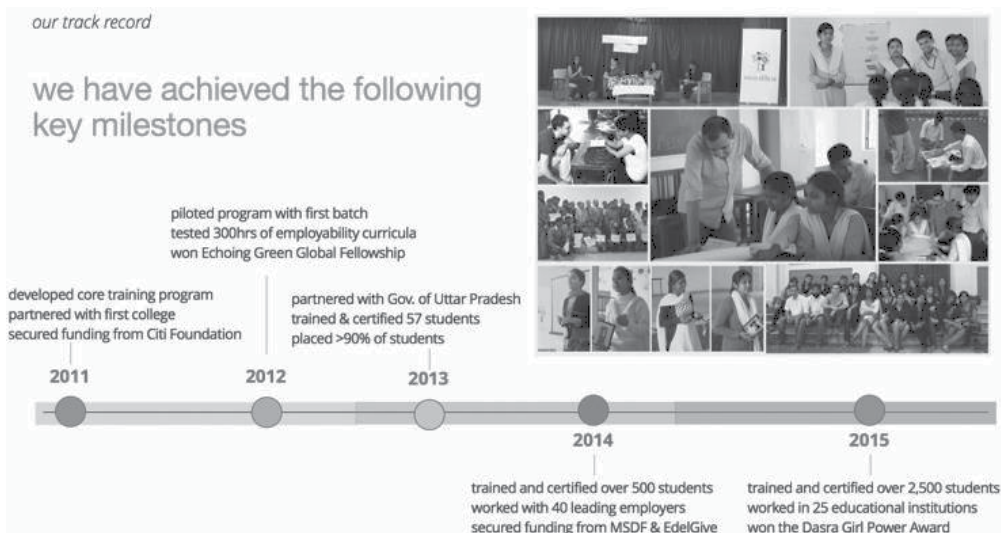


Figure 6

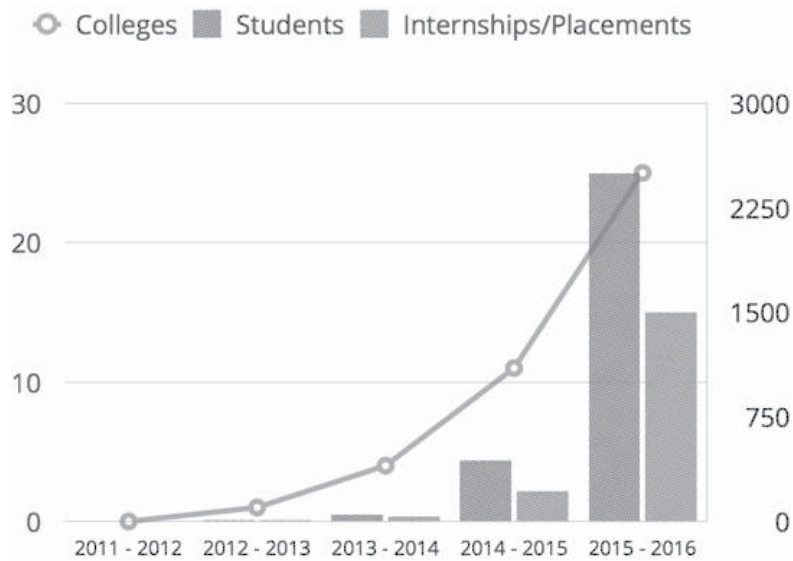


Figure 7: Program Growth

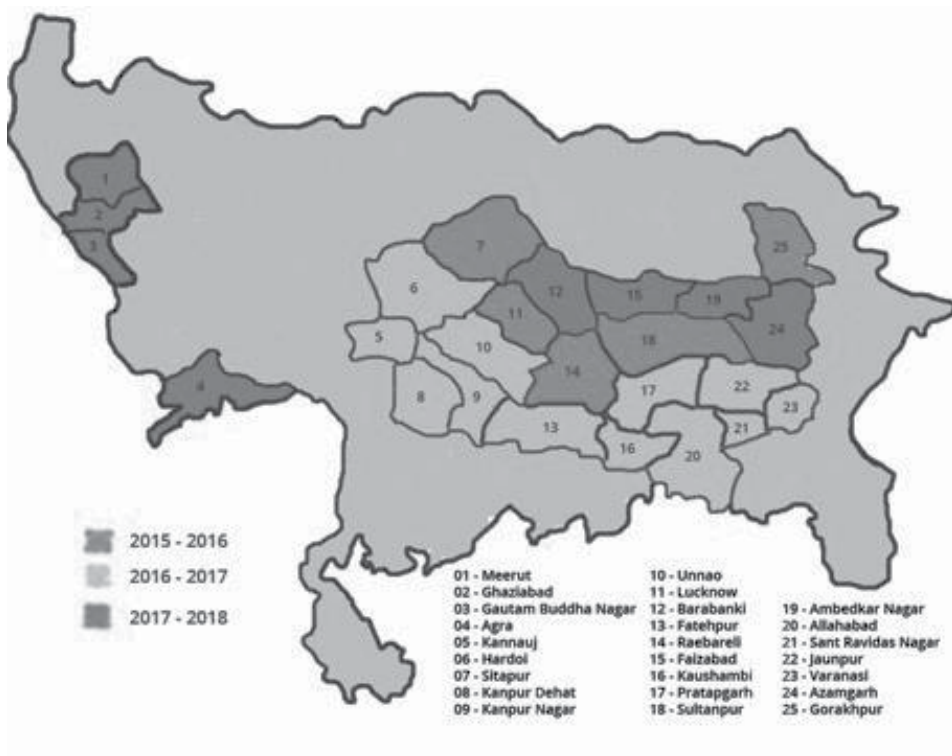


Figure 9: Geographic Expansion

6. Challenges to Scale

In addition to the challenge of student mobilization mentioned in the previous section, Medha has faced two other significant challenges over the last four years:

6.1 Government Adoption

Medha's vision is to mainstream its employability program into the existing public sector education system. To achieve this ambitious goal, they have always taken the approach of working within the education system itself, delivering their program on campuses at both government and government-aided institutions. This approach has presented a significant challenge, as the education bureaucracy is frequently changing priorities, staff, and is in general conservative when it comes to working with NGOs and third parties. Based on the initial and continuing success of the program on that campus, they have been able to expand their relationship with the Government of Uttar Pradesh to now include access to 15 government institutions (10 degree colleges and 5 polytechnics) across seven districts.

6.2 Employee/Employer Expectation Matching

Despite the unsatisfactory level of knowledge, skills, and attitudes imparted in the existing education system, students coming out of general stream degree programs still have high expectations regarding employment outcomes. At the same time, employers have high demands in terms of the capabilities of their entry-level employees. This creates a significant mismatch between student and employer expectations that presents a huge challenge to full-time job placements. To address this gap, Medha structures 4-6 week internships where both students and employers have the opportunity to evaluate one another. This strategy has led to a 60% conversion from internship to full-time job offers, and significantly cut down on the employee/employer expectation mismatch.

7. Conclusion

After extensive research, program development, and pilot testing, Medha has been implementing and scaling its innovative program across Uttar Pradesh for the last three years. From 11 students in one college in 2012, to 2,500 students across 25 colleges today, Medha has experienced tremendous growth and had a significant impact on the lives of young people. However, to have the kind of long-term impact and systemic change Medha hopes to achieve in the future, it still has a long way to go.

In addition to scaling its program across three states and 25,000 students over the next three years, Medha is working on a number of strategic initiatives it believes are crucial to its long-term success. Some of those initiatives are listed below.

Are these the right things to be focusing on? Will they enable Medha to have its intended impact? Will they cause truly systemic change in the way youth are prepared for life after school? These are some of the remaining questions Medha and others in the ‘employability education’ space are still facing and will continue to face for years to come.

operational focus

there are three key areas that require investment



EMPLOYER RELATIONS
 student/employer matching
 HR consulting services
 data collection & management

HUMAN RESOURCES
 fellowship program
 training & development
 expert-led projects

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
 MIS
 LMS
 employer relations interface



**City by Julien Munchet, User & Cloud Computing by Wilson Joseph - all from The Noun Project*

industry leadership

and additional strategic initiatives required for future growth



TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM
 mobile app for career services
 eLearning
 backend infrastructure

POLICY ADVISORY & RESEARCH
 market research
 program evaluation
 government collaboration



MICROWORK CENTER
 business process management
 back office support
 sales and customer service

MEDHA INNOVATION LAB
 experimental pilots
 multidisciplinary collaboration
 internal incubation

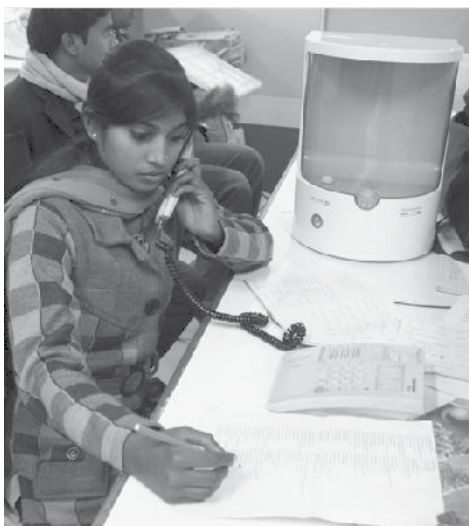


**Smartphone by Konstantin Velichko, Consulting by @accorasmind.com, People by Wilson Joseph- all from The Noun Project*

Figure 10

Annexure 1

Case Studies:



our students

Kanchanlata

BA, Hindi, Economics, Sociology
Maharaja Bijli Pasi Degree College

'During my internship I went door-to-door with the sales team, conducted surveys, and interacted with customers.'

I come from an agricultural family in Kakori, a village north of Lucknow. My father is a farmer and mother a housewife. I have two siblings, one elder sister and one younger brother. There is still a lot of gender discrimination in my village which makes me sad, but also motivates me to set an example of a successful woman entrepreneur and challenge the male domination in my society.

As a part of Medha I selected an internship at Eureka Forbes in the sales function. I went door-to-door, conducted surveys, and interacted with potential customers. I successfully completed my internship and have been employed at Eureka Forbes for four months now. I also plan to do an MBA part time from a good institute in few months.

INTERNSHIP & PLACEMENT:



our students

Shireen Rizvi

BA, Psychology
Avadh Girls Degree College

'When I enter my [Teach for India] classroom everyday.. I am overwhelmed with pride, and know this is where I belong'

When I entered college, I had no idea where my life was headed. Even my chosen degree wasn't something I was passionate about. In my final year, I joined Medha's employability training programme. For the first time, I began to discover myself, and was exposed to my strengths and weaknesses. Towards the end of the programme, Medha introduced me to Teach For India.

I joined Teach for India last summer, and have been teaching 40 beautiful kids in class three in Delhi. When I enter my classroom everyday and see these pocket-size geniuses converse in English, I am overwhelmed with pride and know this is where I belong.

INTERNSHIP & PLACEMENT:





our students

Alka Singh

BA, Hindi, Economics

Maharaja Bijli Pasi Degree College

'I enjoyed the way everything was taught through activities, and my communication and computer skills improved dramatically.'

I am from a village in Unnao district, between Lucknow and Kanpur. My father is a medical practitioner and my mother a housewife. I'm the eldest of three siblings and enjoy playing badminton, reading books, and gardening.

I enrolled in the Medha program because I wanted to get a job after college and didn't know how to go about it. I really enjoyed the way everything was taught through activities, and my communication and computer skills improved dramatically. I was placed with First Flight Couriers for my internship and joined them full-time after graduation. I plan to work for a few years before pursuing my MA.

INTERNSHIP & PLACEMENT:



our employers

Mohammad Fahad

Area HR Head

Eureka Forbes

'Medha students are more productive and stay with our company longer. This increased retention will reduce our costs over time.'

I am the Area HR Head for Eureka Forbes, a leading consumer product company specializing in water purification systems. We have been working with Medha for over a year on various aspects of their program, from industry panel discussions to full-time placements.

In 2013-2014, we hosted five Medha interns from from two colleges. After working with them for over a month, we offered four of them pre-placement offers. Our experience working with Medha and their students has prompted us to change our strategy regarding hiring women for entry-level sales positions.

INDUSTRY PARTNER:



Ability in Disability

Meera Shenoy & Gopal Garg

Youth with disability, especially in the villages, are an underserved population. Youth4Jobs has created a template for skilling youth with disability and linking them to organised sector jobs. The initiative mainstreams recruiting disabled youth by highlighting the business case of hiring these youth with special abilities. In the process, the organisation has demonstrated a scalable and replicable model for the policy makers. The work is important as the “Skill for India” mission cannot be achieved unless the unreached are made employable.



1. Background

1 out of every 7 persons in the world are disabled. 80% or about 550 million of the world's disabled are concentrated in the developing countries making the correlation between poverty and disability very direct. As a result, **Poor people are disproportionately disabled...and people with disabilities are disproportionately poor.** The disabilities of disabled people are accentuated by lack of social support and amenities and makes them highly vulnerable pushing them into marginalization. The disabled, especially children are deprived of basic health and educational facilities and as a consequence are not adequately prepared for employment opportunities in their adulthood. The disabled people's limited access to basic services pushes them further into the spiral poverty. It's a double bind as disabilities increase poverty and poverty accentuates disabilities, as it hampers access to services.



The gender disparity too is entrenched in Indian society resulting in high adversity for disabled among girls and women. In some parts of the country, they are even seen as bad omen. Women with disabilities suffer from double discrimination of gender and impairment. Disabled people are not seen as a productive force in the society, not even as contributors to production processes in the country's economy. They are seen as a burden and dependents in the social economy. Additionally social discrimination and stigma against the disabled people is widely prevalent, including social ostracism in extreme cases. All this compounds the burden on the disabled people accentuating self-stigma and lowering of self-esteem

In India, the major causes of disability are 'social ill-health' factors which have long since been identified. The rural poor are particularly vulnerable to endemic causes like acute malnutrition, poor sanitation (open defecation), large scale communicable diseases and extreme environmental degradation including high levels of water contamination.

Accidents arising out of negligence and lack of adequate protection & safety measures in residential areas and occupational hazards increase risk of physical disabilities. Though it is well known that early detection of impairment can treat majority of disabilities, there has been no significant improvement in public health measures of the Indian govt.

The latest 2011 population census reports that 2.21 % of Indian people are disabled. However unofficial estimates of various agencies, including World Bank estimate that the disabled population would be about 8% of total population.

Table 1

Proportion of Disabled Population 2011			
Type of Disability	Persons	Males	Females
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
In Seeing	18.8	17.6	20.2
In Hearing	18.9	17.9	20.2
In Speech	7.5	7.5	7.4
In Movement	20.3	22.5	17.5
Mental Retardation	5.6	5.8	5.4
Mental Illness	2.7	2.8	2.6
Any Other	18.4	18.2	18.6
Multiple Disability	7.9	7.8	8.1

2011 census clearly shows that more number of disabled live in rural areas than urban. As far as legislation goes, Person with disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995 has been enacted to ensure equal participation and opportunities to Persons with Disabilities (PwD). This provides for education, rehabilitation, employment, non-discrimination and social security for persons with disabilities. It ensures 3% reservation for PwDs in poverty alleviation programs as well as in certain job categories. It casts obligations on central government, state governments and local authorities to ensure full citizenship benefits to PwDs. However lack of effective implementation hampers progress

1.1 Employment and Work Participation by Persons with Disabilities

PwDs talent, skills and potential mostly remain untapped and under-utilized. The education and employment rates for persons with disabilities are far lower than the non-disabled persons. The opportunities for PwDs, to earn is less and their expenses more resulting in them being one of the more impoverished communities in India. Even though the country is clocking an average annual GDP Growth rate of an average 7 percent, the employment percentage of persons with disabilities actually fell from 43 percent in 1991 to 38 percent in 2002 despite the galloping economic growth. From 2001 census, it is evident the percentage of general population (males) participating in the work force stands at 51.7% and for females stands at 25.6% whereas the comparative work participation rates for the disabled population stands at a dismal 25.8 % for males (almost half that of general population) and at 8.7

% for females. **ILO and World Bank studies show that this low labor market participation results in a 5-7% GDP loss.**

2. About Youth4jobs : The Beginning

Youth4Jobs was set up in 2012 as a not-for-profit organisation with a vision of “**A better Future for Young India**”. The Mission was “**Partnering with Stakeholders and vulnerable unreached communities to co-create pioneering solutions for an inclusive workplace**”. In corporate terminology, inclusion means integrating Scheduled caste and tribes, vulnerable persons like persons with disability (PwD), and transgenders into the workforce.

Youth4Jobs decided to focus initially on skilling this most vulnerable category, youth with disability, and placing them in jobs. Disability was chosen for several reasons:

- The core team of Y4J had worked for six years in skilling rural and tribal youth to the needs of the market when the Founder set up EGMM (Employment Generation & Marketing Mission) for the government of Andhra Pradesh. EGMM was the first state skilling mission of the country. To achieve scale, EGMM had introduced several organisations to the model of short term market linked skilling of rural youth. It made no sense for Y4J to work in an area where several organisations, nurtured by them in a government setup, already existed. Other factors further strengthened this decision to focus on skilling PwDs.
- These were, for example, the sheer scale of the problem. Statistics showed there were 60 million persons with disability of which at least 50% were youth. A study done by NCEPD revealed barely 0.1% were linked to jobs.
- Further, there were no organisations who worked in scale to train and link PwDs to jobs. There were several NGOs who had empathy for the PwDs and understood disability but they were bewildered by markets. As one NGO representative said, “The guards and the walls of the IT company look so forbidding. We do not know how to make a contact”. Lack of placements, even after one year of training in some cases, resulted in youth feeling frustrated even further.
- Moreover, there was a market opportunity. Some multinationals were keen to recruit PwDs, quite often, dictated by their global inclusive HR policy. But they did not find necessary supporting or facilitating organisation.

2.1 Challenges

Youth4Jobs team was confronted with several challenges. **The youth** were widely dispersed in the rural areas and hard to access. Their self-esteem was incredibly low as the entire family and society regarded them as useless.

Their education levels were also poor. **Companies** too had deep mindsets. Since even urban areas are not accessible, companies were ignorant about disability. Some felt it was expensive to hire; others thought it may have a negative impact on their existing non-disabled staff. Many companies did not have accessible offices or were not willing to invest in infrastructure to make the disabled productive. **The government**, on the other hand, believed in giving subsidies and doles. These were so high in some states that it acted as a deterrent to the youth to work and be independent. Also most livelihood funding went for projects which employed disabled youth to make phenyl, soap powder etc since they believed this was what they could do best!

3. Impact in 3 Years

The team had 3 core beliefs which helped them convert the “I Can’t” to “I Can” and become the largest organisation in this space, in a short period of three years:

- The poor have abilities. Y4J was only a facilitator to make these latent talents manifest
- A job to one young member in a poor family takes the entire family out of poverty in a sustained manner
- Transparency will dictate all partnerships.

Reached 0.15 million rural households

1 training centre to 18 centres

1 state to 9 states

Trained 7000 youth with disability

65-70% are placed

40% are girls

200 company network

Youth with disability opportunities widened from housekeeping to the organised growing service & manufacturing sector

Impact on Youth with disability: Kameshwari works in Google in facility management.



Kameswari, with a speech and hearing disability, is from Vizianagaram district in Andhra Pradesh. Their family income was erratic as her father earned money painting walls; fell from a height and died when she was a child. Her mother could not raise Kameswari on her own. So gave her away to her sister and remarried. After her 12th

grade, she tried several times to get a job .But was always rejected on account of her disability.

She married a partially hearing and speech impaired boy recently. Even he was unemployed because of his disability. “No one looks at our ability. They only look at our disability and reject our job application,” she says. Youth4Jobs trained and placed Kameswari in **Google**, Hyderabad. She works in Compass, in the Kitchen Section. Her annual salary is **Rs.1,25,000**. Her husband, Suresh, had enrolled with Kameswari in the Y4J trainings. He was placed, after trainings in **Max retail**, where he works as a folding Assistant. His annual salary is **Rs.1,08,000**. Both of them were formerly poor without any livelihood options. Today, with their combined annual income of **Rs.2,00,000** they can live a decent life. Their self-esteem has increased and they walk confidently, with pride in their new uniforms.

Kameswari says, “From my village, I never dreamt this was possible. I thank God for sending me to Youth4Jobs. The people at my work are really nice. Both my husband and I are disabled and yet earning. Now, we can give our children good education and health,” she adds.

The work spread over three years has three phases: Building the model; Validating the work across three disabilities, and Scaling-up

4. Stage I: Building The Model

Youth4Jobs began their work in this area by partnering with SERP (Society for elimination of rural poverty), government of Andhra Pradesh, to set up the country’s first Centre for PwD Livelihoods (CPDL). As CEO, SERP, Rajsekhar commented, “What can be more beautiful for a youth with disability than linking him to jobs”. The MOU was a non-financial partnership, leveraging the government networks in the villages for mobilising youth into the training centre set up by Youth4Jobs in Hyderabad.

4.1 Leveraging the Government Network for Mobilisation

Mobilisation of youth is an important part of the skilling process. Since youth with disabilities are widely spread in different locations, locating them was the first challenge. SERP, one of the largest World Bank funded government project, had an extensive network of persons with disability organised into self-help groups. These women obviously understood the important of livelihoods in their lives. Thus the work became uniquely “of the disabled, by the disabled”. The Centre also got information about disabled youth in rural Andhra Pradesh through the Government of Andhra Pradesh’s disability data base called Software for Assessment of Disabled for Access, Rehabilitation

and Empowerment (SADAREM). This database provided information for all disabled peoples in the State giving their age, gender, type of disability, educational qualifications and social background.

Four young men and women called Job Resource Persons (JRPs), specially trained on disability issues by Youth4Jobs, went from village to village, identifying youth with locomotor disability who have completed their education upto the 10th standard. They had to address all opinion makers in the village like parents, school teacher, post master, etc to give the message that youth with disability can get jobs. As Rajamma, a JRP, said, “Parents of these youth find it hard to believe that their children could do productive work. They have no expectations from their children who are seen as a burden. So job to a disabled youth most often was faced by laughter and disbelief.”

4.2 Setting up a Training Centre

Youth4Jobs developed a 60 day training course which includes improving spoken English language skills, soft skills and life skills. The entire training pedagogy is interactive and fun filled with games, inspirational songs and uses mixed mode learning. Trainees were provided computer skills in the computer lab and encouraged to reach a typing speed of 30 words per minute required by the industry. Since youth with disability had incredibly low self-esteem, exercises were introduced to build their confidence. Sectoral modules in growing service sectors like retail, ITES, hospitality were developed with the help of industry. This helped the curriculum to be based on the changing needs of the market. This was followed by on-the-jobs training where rural youth were oriented to the needs of the various job roles in entry level jobs in growing sectors like retail, finance etc. All trainings were residential since 90% of the youth came from the villages. This also ensured good attendance in the training centre and the trainees maintain a certain uniform quality at the end of the training.



4.3 Inviting Companies to Hire because of the Business Case

Youth4Jobs was clear that if hiring youth with disability had to be mainstreamed, companies had to hire youth with disability because of the advantage it brought to their business. Several studies clearly indicated youth with disability do not drop out of their jobs and are productive. The mantra was **“Hire not because it is a nice thing to do but the right thing to do”**. This was not CSR or hiring from pity but hiring because these youth added value to the business.

There were several challenges however. Companies had deep mindsets. They asked questions like “Is it expensive to hire these youth?”, “Can I hire and fire them?”, “Will they go on leave because of bad health?” Youth4Jobs leveraged its existing large company network from its previous six years work with rural and tribal non-disabled youth to encourage CEOs and HR heads to visit these trainings. McDonald’s for example, took two trained youth and soon decided to have two in every outlet. Likewise several companies like Tata teleservices, Karvy, Cafe Coffee day took 1 or 2 youth and came back for more. Stories of their loyalty and productivity trickled in from the field. Like, in a mall, when a new retail outlet came up next door, many entry level staff left for a small salary increase except the youth placed by Youth4Jobs. Now the Manager became the best spokesmen for these youth in the retail chain. Such real life examples were matched by **industry studies** done with academic institutions like Indian School of Business. When companies hesitated to hire, these industry studies showed them hard data that they can.

In some cases, like **Gitanjali Jewellery**, began the hiring as a CSR initiative. But soon this became an integral part of their HR policy. The Rs.5000 crores Gitanjali jewellery group had set up a diamond polishing youth in the export processing zone in Hyderabad. The challenge they faced was, unlike Gujarat, diamond polishing was not a hereditary profession and there was no ready-made talent pool. Youth4Jobs realised that youth with severe locomotor disability could be trained as long as they had hand-eye coordination. Simple adjustable stools were designed for young boys and girls with lower limb defects. Working youth with severe disability with little or education won the productivity award every month. This led the company stepping up the hiring to 200 youth with disability. A special bus was arranged to transport them to their residential facility. The company won the President’s award for this work.

4.4 Lessons Learnt

- Disability trainings required some customised services to be introduced at the company end to ensure the youth are comfortable in their jobs and can be productive.

- It is not enough for the CEO to be sensitised. Supervisors and managers had to understand disability. This resulted in designing interactive company sensitisation workshops which all first time hirers had to go through.
- Simple work place adaptations had to be suggested by Youth4Jobs for different disability and different job roles.
- Third party study of the work showed that youth placed in jobs reduced attrition for companies when compared to non-disabled youth and worked harder
- Sectorial reports had to be brought out which highlighted best practises in companies which hired PwDs and showed job role matrix for hiring youth with different disabilities in different jobs.
- Word had spread that youth with locomotor disabilities were getting jobs with this new kind of training of Youth4Jobs. This resulted in youth with varying disability like speech and hearing impaired youth requesting for joining the training. Youth4Jobs had to develop tailor-made products to meet these growing requests to train youth with other disabilities.

4.5 Developing the Template of the Entire Value Chain

The lessons from the first year were incorporated into a template for the entire value chain of taking an unemployed youth to his first entry level job.

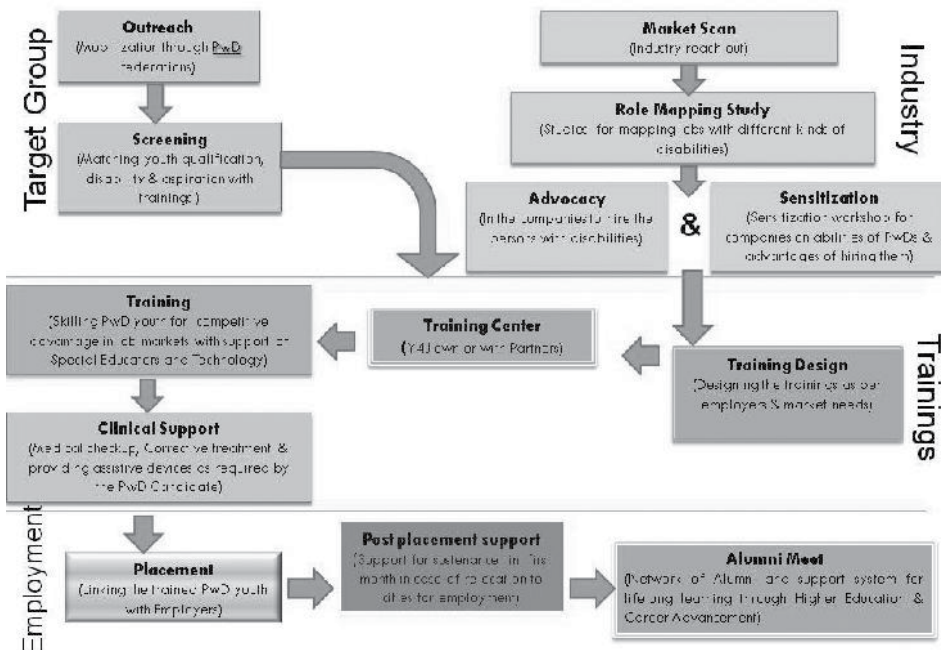


Figure 1: Value Chain/Process to Close all the GAPS



In some cases, like Gitanjali Jewellery, began the hiring as a CSR initiative. But soon this became an integral part of their HR policy. The Rs.5000 crores Gitanjali jewellery group had set up a diamond polishing youth in the export processing zone in Hyderabad. The challenge they faced was, unlike Gujarat, diamond polishing was not a hereditary profession and there was no ready-made talent pool. Youth4Jobs realised that youth with severe locomotor disability could be trained as long as they had hand-eye coordination. Simple adjustable stools were designed for young boys and girls with lower limb defects. Working youth with severe disability with little or education won the productivity award every month. This led the company stepping up the hiring to 200 youth with disability. A special bus was arranged to transport them to their residential facility. The company won the President's award for this work.

5. Stage II: Validating Template Across 3 Disabilities

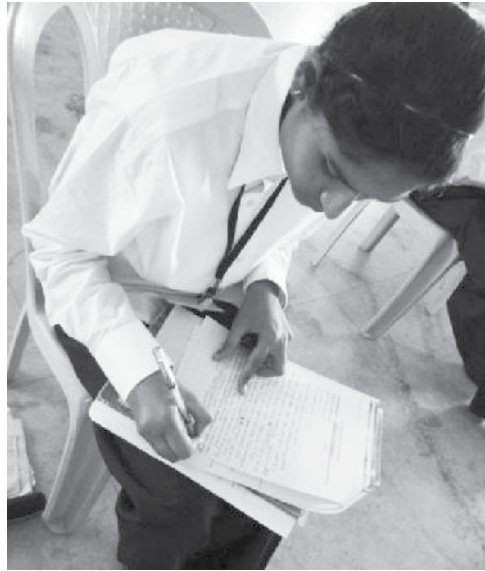
Validation was important for organisations like Youth4Jobs which create social impact as it helps strengthen the model to achieve the targeted objectives. This involved refining and fine tuning and testing assumptions made in the blueprint to strengthen the model and prepare the ground for scale.

The blueprint built was then tested across two more disabilities, speech and hearing impaired and youth with low vision.

For the speech and hearing impaired additional investments had to be made. Special educators and sign language instructors had to be employed. These government trained instructors had no understanding of the market and intensive training of trainers had to be conducted to help them deliver the trainings. The curriculum had to be designed with a pictorial content. The level of English and mathematics of the speech and hearing impaired was incredibly low, because of a lack of special educators in school. Companies were then invited to recruit from this new talent pool.

As the work evolved, Youth4Jobs found different entry points to companies. Like company sensitisation workshops and sign language workshop led to hiring in Google.

New partnerships were developed. In the field of retail, Youth4Jobs joined hands with TRRAIN, a not for profit organisation started by B.Nagesh, Chairman, Retail Association of India (RAI). A brand “Pankh” was formed to encourage the retail industry to hire youth with disability. This partnership of bringing different core competencies on one platform led to new curriculum development at entry level positions like cashiers. A report highlighting best practises was launched as a guide





Google India Pvt. Ltd. Hyderabad campus is among the largest campuses of Google outside USA and the largest in India with close to 10,000 people working. Inclusion of persons with disability in the workforce at Google Hyderabad started last year when Youth4Jobs was invited to conduct a sensitization workshop. It was a 2 hour workshop for Googlers on disability with simulations, activities and tasks to be performed while experiencing disability

To start with it was agreed to begin with the vendors in the services and facility management. The vendors were sceptical and doubtful but with numerous demonstrations they finally agreed. Post which Sensitization and Sign Language workshop for all the Vendor Managers, Supervisors, Team Leaders, were conducted by Youth4Jobs. The entire batch of prospective candidates were taken for the exposure visit to explain the job and also to understand their aptitude, interest and suitability. Simple workplace solutions were introduced like a badge stating “I USE SING LANGUAGE” for the deaf candidates. Candidates with orthopaedic disability were accommodated in suitable job roles like customer help desk, checkouts and data management. ITI (Industrial Training Institute Certified) candidates with speech and hearing impairment were placed as technicians in building maintenance department. All the candidates regularly participate in Google Events and in one of the competition three deaf girls won prizes. After three months review, it was found that performance of the PwD candidates was better than other non-disabled candidates. All the PwD candidates are happy as they are treated equally. Navya, a deaf girl joined dance classes organized for Google employees. 25 youth work presently and a scale up plan is in progress.

to the retail industry resulting in commitments to hire by the leading retail chains like Shoppers Stop,Max,Lifestyle etc.

New sectors were continuously opened up like Media & Entertainment where Youth4Jobs worked with Prasad's EFX to train and place youth in restoring old film. Youth with disability got into the newly emerging gaming sector.

Mekala Trinadh gets into Electronic Arts and Games, India

Hailing from an impoverished agricultural family in East Godavari region of AP, he struggled to secure employment owing to his disability, even though he could talk and communicate well and was a graduate. His life changed when he was waiting at a bus stop to go to school. A reckless driver hit him and ran over his leg. The leg was beyond saving and therefore had to be amputated. He always believed that despite being an amputee he was more than capable enough to get a good job and make a living. Reality though was not so kind. His parents had taken a Rs.2 lakh loan for his education and pulled his sister out of college.



He heard of Youth4Jobs, got trained and employed in the design company Electronic Arts Pvt. Ltd. based in Hyderabad. He was the first employee with disability.

His mother cried when she heard her son was earning an unimaginable salary of Rs.20,000 a month, which exceeded their annual erratic family income. Says Mekala, "I will now ensure my sister goes back to study."

To ensure transparency and seamless data flow, as a preparation for scale, **an IT based MIS system** was developed and tested. This gave data of key indicators like number of youth enrolled, placed, companies with salary details, post placement details. Learnings from the field could be analysed and the trainings and placement network strengthened, where gaps existed.

5.1 Lessons Learnt at this Stage

- Y4J had to strengthen its mobilisation structure as the government of Andhra Pradesh was in transition. This resulted in developing a strong network with NGOs, Associations of the disabled and incorporating this as a key element into its template
- Parents were important stakeholders and invited to the trainings during enrolment and after their children get a job
- **Youth with disability could be placed in most sectors, hitherto thought as impossible!** A meticulous job role matrix needed to be done to understand skills required for the job and fit the youth in with simple low cost work place adaptations.
- Companies had begun looking at Y4J alumni as an “alternative labour pool”. But since the numbers each company absorbed were small, Y4J had to reach to larger number of companies. This led to building partnerships with industry associations like FAPCII (Federation of AP Chambers of Industry) and HMA (Hyderabad management association)
- The work was **innovative**. This led to Y4J **winning several awards** and the Founder being invited to share this new model in prestigious conferences, national and international (like TEDxBerkeley). This gave visibility to the work
- The Founder was commissioned ILO country strategy for PwD& Labour market which became one of the most widely circulated documents. Y4J also actively participated in policy making committees. **This made it uniquely an organisation which worked at the grass root and policy.**
- Social media like Face book was used effectively by the team to reach out to different stakeholders

6. Stage III: Scale Up

Having built strong building blocks, and a replicable model, Youth4Jobs developed a map for scale, to states where requests came for the trainings from NGOs or the government. This helped the work to be **demand driven** as it scaled across geographies. Axis Bank Foundation offered to fund this ambitious program, since nothing like it existed in the country and it fulfilled their CSR criteria of skilling vulnerable youth. “Project Parivarthan” was

launched by Shika Sharma, Managing director of Axis Bank, who gave a clear signal to all the bank team to support this innovative and impactful work.

This helped Youth4Jobs foundation scale across the country in a short period of three years, training 7000 youth with disability



Figure 2: Y4J National Presence

7. Analysis of 7000 youth with disability trained to date

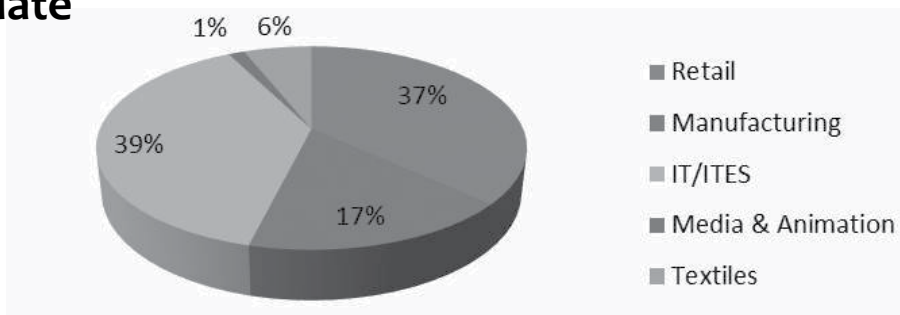


Figure 3: Sectors Employed In

Y4J opened up new sectors for youth with disability like retail, media and animation

- Companies experience the business case
- Lower salary bands were unemployed PwD with education below 7th grade

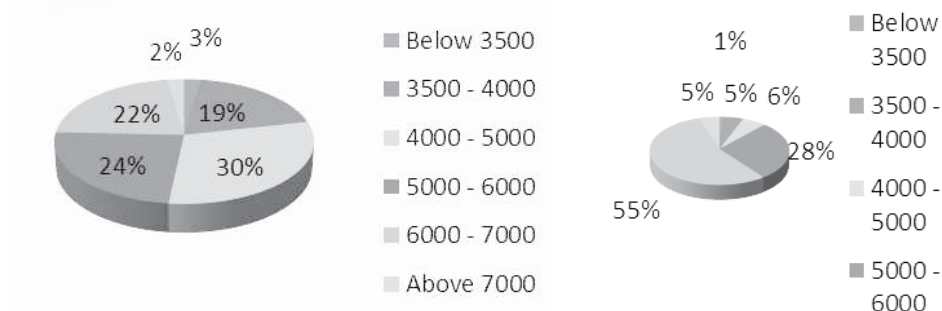


Figure 4: Salaries Increase From Year 1 to Year 3

YEAR 3

YEAR 1

***Does not include other benefits**

Mallika Reddy from the first batch earns Rs.1,20,000 annually as a trainer in a government project.

Table 2: Salaries are Saved and Quality of Life Improves



Clearing High Debt	32%
Savings	22%
Assets	15%
Sibling education	25%
Health	6%



Sign Boards



Safeguard Jacket for Visibility

Valeo in India has 5 Production Sites and 1 R&D centre and employs about 2500 employees supplying to major OEMs in India. Valeo, headquartered in France, follows a matrix organization with Sites reporting to France and in India. As part of the company’s mandate Valeo wanted to initiative inclusion of persons with disability in the workforce. But the company didn’t know how to go about it and was on a look out for a partner to support. Youth4Jobs was recommended for this intervention. Valeo has identified 1 site for pilot namely AVCL (**Amalgamations Valeo Clutch Private Limited**). AVCL produces Clutches for passenger cars and heavy commercial vehicles contributing to better vehicle performance including Fuel efficiency.

8. Approach

It was a holistic approach with five key processes:

- **Role Mapping** of various jobs to clearly understand the tasks viz-a-viz disability
- **Designing work place solutions**
- **Sensitization Workshops for engaging** all the stakeholders – Senior Management, Senior Manager, supervisors and colleagues of the PwD candidate through sensitization workshops, FGDs, etc.,
- **Identification and Linking of PwD youth**
- **Integration in the HR policy and Replication** In first 3 months’ total 25 youth with mixed of speech-hearing impaired and locomotor disability got selected in the areas of packaging, kitting, supply chain management and quality check. Among them 3 of them got employee of the month award in the 5th month of their employment. It was also observed that their performance was higher than non-disabled candidates, with better attendance, productivity & quick learning abilities. Now on successful inclusion of PwD candidates in one plant, replication process will start across others.

Youth4Jobs has also positioned itself as a one stop shop for companies wanting to hire persons with disability. It works now with several companies giving customised services.

9. Way Ahead

Youth4Jobs has set itself ambitious targets of reaching out to 1 million households and training 20,000 youth with disability with placements. The **challenges** are getting good staff across states, like English teachers in north India or sign language instructors in Jharkand. Other challenges are instilling the value system across staff in all states, with the rapid expansion. While this is being addressed by hiring persons not based on educational qualification but their passion for work, it still needs to be continuously addressed. Youth4Jobs is also bringing out short videos depicting how values of every person build the organisational culture.

In a pioneering manner, Youth4Jobs has demonstrated a scalable and replicable model for a most vulnerable unreached segment of society – youth with disability. The model works across geographies ranging from poor states like Jharkand to southern districts like Coimbatore. The heart of the work is bringing different stakeholders on to one platform: youth, their parents, associations of disabled; companies and the government. And a belief in the ability of the disabled. The model thus is win-win for all. For families, the hitherto perceived “useless’ youth becomes a role model for the entire community and supports the family. For companies, they have access to a more productive and loyal workforce. For governments, it helps reap the demographic dividend and achieve MDG goals. And most importantly for youth with disability, a steady job helps them to educate their family; health indicators improve resulting in a better India and a better world.

The EyeMitra Optician Programme: Vision for Livelihood through Vision Care

Suviena Bagrodia & Praniti Maini

Jahid Ali is from the village of Kehriyan Jawahar near Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh. Till last year, like many of his peers, he was an unemployed 25 year old. It was a typical case where education could not sustain his interest and with unpredictable rainfall, agriculture did not secure a livelihood. Yet, like his elder brother, he became one of the many disguised employed on the family's already overburdened small agricultural land. In the hopes of finding alternative employment, he travelled to the city but the living conditions of his friends with 'city' jobs dispirited him.

*In a chance encounter, Jahid bumped into Usman – an ex classmate, who introduced him to the EyeMitra¹ (EM) Optician Programme. **EyeMitra Opticians, as the name suggests, are friendly neighbourhood opticians trained to create awareness on vision impairment and equipped to manage independent optical stores within their communities.** Usman had completed the EM Optician Course in Rampur and had a flourishing shop about 10 kilometres away. Impressed and inspired by Usman's profession, particularly the respect enjoyed by him in his village, Jahid enrolled for the programme.*

Jahid is a certified EyeMitra Optician since August 2014 and has a stable monthly income in the range of INR 12,000-15,000. He has conducted over 30 vision screening events, with average footfall exceeding 100. His shop remains open from 9 am to 8 pm, and he boasts about not having shut it for a single day till date. To set up this shop, Jahid raised INR 40,000 by convincing his family to sell 20 eucalyptus trees. The family had planted these trees foreseeing expenses for Jahid's sister's wedding. However, Jahid's savings from the EM Optician practice more than made up for the price of the eucalyptus trees; his sister got married last month.

Today, when you talk to Jahid, you can hear the confidence and euphoria. He is satisfied with his work and exhibits relevant knowledge. Amongst Jahid's first customers was his own mother, whose vision had declined rapidly in the past 3-4 years. All she needed was a pair of spectacles with the correct power of -5.5, aptly recommended by her son! Since then, Jahid has corrected the vision of seven elders in his own family.

Jahid proudly shares about the young client, whose high cylindrical power deterred him from pursuing higher education, until he used the prescribed spectacles. Jahid does not

¹ EyeMitra is a Hindi word meaning 'friend of the eye'.

hesitate to add that since this was a complex case, he sought help from his teachers² - Shah Nawaz, Pankaj, Nishant and Shahji, who are always available on call. In the same breath, he tells us about his marketing techniques and how he has added sunglasses³ to the product mix.

Talking excitedly about the future, Jahid informs us that the government is setting up electric poles in the vicinity and his shop will soon be electrified⁴. Post that, he wants to purchase an auto refractometer (AR) - a computer-controlled machine used for objective refraction - costing INR 1.5 lakhs. Jahid also plans to enroll his older brother in the programme and has already found a suitable place for his shop. All his cousins and even distant relatives now seek career advice from him. Towards the end of the conversation, he meekly adds that what makes him really happy is the number of quality marriage proposals coming his way.



Jahid Ali – An EyeMitra Optician

2 Teachers, who are part of the EyeMitra Optician Programme, have degrees in Optometry.

3 From a clinical perspective, increased usage of sun glasses is pertinent in rural areas because damage to eyes caused by sun and ultraviolet (UV) rays is maximum among those engaged in agriculture.

4 Jahid's shop is currently powered by solar energy.

1. Introduction

Impaired vision, primarily from lack of vision screening and an appropriate pair of glasses is one of the most widespread disabilities in the world. It affects people across ages and ethnic groups; most being unaware that they need vision correction. India with nearly 550 million people (about half of its population) having vision problems, sees a loss of USD 37 billion (approx. Rs. 240,000 Crore) in annual productivity (Vision Impact Institute). The second leading cause of blindness in India is uncorrected refractive error, with four out of five cases being treatable/ avoidable (Sight Savers India). Yet, there is only one optician per 250,000 people in rural India (Essilor). The colossal numbers indicate the need for trained professionals, inclusive public health strategies and collective efforts.

“At the heart of this problem is a lack of access to eye care services, many developing communities are missing enough skilled practitioners to perform eye examinations, prescribe appropriate glasses, and provide a referral for more serious conditions when necessary, in an accessible location with the resources to dispense ready-made or custom-made spectacles.” Brien Holden Vision Institute (BHVI)⁵

The prospect of aligning an opportunity (demographic dividend of rural youth) to overcome a distinct problem (lack of awareness and access to vision correction) within the same socio-cultural and geographical environment gave birth to the EyeMitra Optician programme. **The objective of the programme is to provide sustainable livelihoods through rigorous training in optical services that have a high success rate in terms of visual acuity⁶, while being affordable, good quality and culturally acceptable.**

The EM Optician programme is an initiative of 2.5 NVG (New Vision Generation) - the inclusive business division of Essilor International⁷, and is currently executed in partnership with five community based organizations (CBOs) in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Odisha.

The lead partner is B-ABLE (BASIX Academy for Building Lifelong Employability Limited) - a pan-India skill training organization with a vast rural network. This study focuses on the evolution, programme

⁵ BHVI is a premier non-profit non-governmental organization with an international focus on eye care research and vision care delivery.

⁶ ‘Visual Acuity’ is acuteness or clearness of vision, such as the ability to distinguish details and shapes of objects.

⁷ Essilor International is the world’s leading ophthalmic optics company, engaged in designing, manufacturing and marketing a wide range of lenses to improve and protect eyesight. Essilor entered the Indian Market in 1998.



EyeMitra Optician Programme Trainees

model, challenges, impact and scale-up plans of the 2.5 NVG and B-ABLE partnership.

Building on the success of a three year pilot started in 2012, the programme aims to develop 10,000 entrepreneurs (75 percent through the partnership with B-ABLE) skilled in the optician trade, resulting in equipping seven million new spectacle wearers, by 2020.

2. Programme Model

The EM Optician programme is designed as a social enterprise/ inclusive business model. The programme imparts technical and entrepreneurial training to rural youth and supports them to set-up and run individual optician shops within their communities. These shops are established as a network of micro-franchisees of 2.5NVG, rather than stand-alone shops. The training and set-up cost incurred at the onset by 2.5NVG, is designed to be recovered from the profits of the micro-franchisees over a period of time, thus building the foundation of a scalable and sustainable development intervention.

At an individual level, EM Opticians create awareness on preventive care through free vision screening events. EM Opticians, in general, do not charge consultation fee and if required, spectacles are made available at an

affordable price of INR 300-400. While EM Opticians are trained to dispense spectacles, complex cases are strictly referred to specialized hospitals like Dr. Shroff's Charitable Eye Hospital.

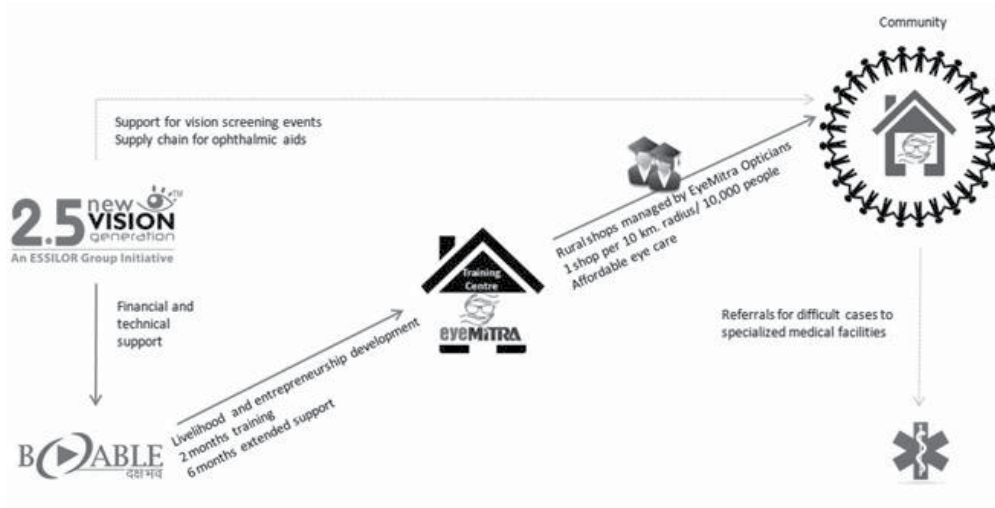


Figure 1: The EyeMitra Optician Programme Model

3. Key Stakeholders

- 2.5 NVG** - the inclusive business division of Essilor International ⁸ is the champion of the EyeMitra Optician programme. The mission of 2.5 NVG is to develop innovative, scalable and profitable inclusive business models that provide accessible eye care and affordable spectacles to combat the problem of preventable impaired vision/ blindness. The threefold strategy adopted by 2.5 NVG encompasses awareness generation, affordable and accessible optical solutions, and product innovation. Essilor, through its corporate social responsibility arm (Essilor Vision Foundation), also provides free spectacles to the poorest of poor. i) **Financial Role:** Programme roll-out, continued investment in research (in product/ technology, marketing and distribution). ii) **Technical Role:** Training curricula, training of trainers, training equipment, innovations in product and technology testing. iii) **Channel Role:** Provision of spectacles at competitive prices to the EyeMitra Optician micro-franchisee network.
- B-ABLE** is the strategic partner involved in all aspects of programme execution, and also serves as advisor to other 2.5 NVG partners. B-ABLE

⁸ Organisational charts of Essilor International and B-ABLE are detailed in Annexure 1

is a subsidiary of BASIX Limited - a pioneering organisation in micro-finance and livelihood promotion with presence across 20 states and over 2.5 million stakeholders. B-ABLE was launched in 2009 with a model skill training campus at Dehradun and since then has extended its reach to 23 states, impacting 75,000 youth. B-ABLE provides aspiration-based vocational education and training using technology and partnerships in a range of sectors including Rural Farm and Non-Farm trades, Healthcare, Hospitality and Manufacturing (Electrician, Welding etc.) i) **Execution Role:** Community mobilization, training, franchisee set-up, post-training support, data collection, management information systems (MIS) and monitoring; Team of over 100 people dedicated to the EM Optician programme. ii) **Strategic Role:** Capacity building of other partners, financial linkages for franchisees, government and community level advocacy, awareness campaigns and marketing

- **Youth**, i.e. certified EM Opticians gain exposure and access to an aspirational career choice, with significant scope for upward financial mobility within one's own community. The programme is open to men and women in the age group of 18-40 years, with minimum qualification being Secondary School Certificate (10th pass), but preference is given to 12th pass.
- **Communities** within which EM Opticians operate get access to trained vision screening professionals and affordable spectacles within the community, resulting in reduced out-of-pocket expenses on health care and preventive treatment⁹.
- **Specialized Bodies** are brought in the loop in complicated cases or problems extending beyond the training of EM Opticians. These professional bodies also ensure programme quality by providing master trainers and carrying out regular audits.

4. Financial Investment, Franchisee and Fees

2.5 NVG invests approximately INR 1,50,000 per EyeMitra Optician. From this, INR 70,000 is invested through B-ABLE for on-field execution activities (mobilization, training of trainers, training, awareness camps, industry and financial linkages, advocacy, MIS and monitoring). The remaining INR 80,000 is the capital expenditure incurred on machinery, including the initial equipment kit (costing about INR 30,000) given to each EM Optician to set up their shop.

⁹ This is particularly pertinent in a country like India, where an estimated 74 percent of health expenses are paid out-of pocket (World Health Statistics 2011).

A candidate pays INR 3,000 as security deposit at the start of program against which s/he gets stock and branding material. On the completion of training, the candidate pays an additional INR 3,000 as the franchisee security deposit to 2.5 NVG, as a two years renewable contract.

The key to the success of the social enterprise model is that the franchisees find it profitable to sell 2.5 NVG products as against other competing products that are currently available or may enter the market in future. 2.5 NVG ensures this by making quality affordable spectacles available at the doorstep of the franchisees.

Given that the villages are spread-out, often with limited infrastructure, 2.5 NVG's traditional model of dealers and sub-dealers was not feasible for the EM Optician programme. The adapted model includes a network of business development executives (in contract with 2.5 NVG), stationed at each of the B-ABLE training centres, who pool demand from neighbouring villages and procure products from authorized 2.5 NVG distributors. This is then supplied at the doorstep of each EyeMitra Optician. The programme also enables supplies from other manufacturers to cater to customer choice, thus taking active measures to check the risk to programme viability, resulting from product competition.

5. Training Delivery, Content and Certification

The EM Optician programme is possibly one of the first of its kind to adopt an eight month blended training model. The training is built on a foundation of two months of intensive classroom teaching (in basic vision testing, edging and fitting spectacles, dispensing spectacles and entrepreneurship skills)¹⁰, followed by six months of on-field training (marketing, customer interaction and trouble shooting) to set-up a viable rural optician business. The course is designed by 2.5 NVG's technical team, following the qualification pack of Health Sector Skills Council¹¹. Each EyeMitra Optician is certified by

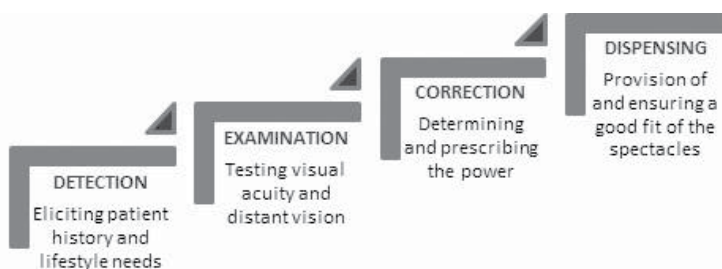


Figure 2: Technical Capabilities of EyeMitra Opticians

¹⁰ For the detailed EM Optician 60 Days Course Outline, refer to Annexure 2.

¹¹ The Healthcare Sector Skill Council is a not-for-profit organization, promoted by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and financially supported by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). Its objective is to create a robust eco-system for quality education and skill development in paramedics and allied healthcare in the country.

B-ABLE, 2.5 NVG and NCVT (National Council on Vocational Training). The curriculum encompasses all topics under two NCVT courses - MED 122 (Optician) and MED 123 (Optometrist). The training equips EM Opticians to perform the following technical activities:

6. Distinctive Elements and Success Factors

6.1 Promotes Dignified Non-Migratory Livelihood

A critique of the current skill development sector in India is that it increases rural migration to congested urban areas. Many such migrants are unable to settle in cities, drop out of their jobs and frequently migrate back. Moreover, vocational education is often equated with blue-collar and/or 'low status' jobs.

The EyeMitra Optician programme provides youth a dignified livelihood option in their villages with a promise of upward financial mobility. Furthermore, the independent franchisee structure gives EM Opticians adequate opportunities for career expansion. The success of this is reflected in the retention rate of over 90 percent, i.e., nine out of ten youth continue



An EyeMitra Optician Shop in Rural Rajasthan

working as EyeMitra Opticians one year after training, as compared to the current vocational training sector's estimated 50 percent¹².

6.2 Goes Beyond Skill Training

The traditional education system in India, including vocational training, emphasizes attainment of theoretical knowledge rather than practical application of technical concepts. Compensating for this imbalance, EM Optician programme fuses classroom teaching with 'real world' experiences. This is done by creating a theoretical foundation supplemented by practical training, followed by on-field mentorship, which reinforces and amplifies the former. The extended training period also instils greater faith among prospective students.¹³ Further, the programme provides an opportunity to be a part of a network of entrepreneurs supported by a renowned international organisation.



An EyeMitra Optician Training in Progress

6.3 Incorporates Inclusive Business Strategy Leading to Sustainability

As a strategic investment, 2.5NVG's business interest (of penetrating the rural market) is aligned to the objectives of the programme, ensuring that it remains relevant and survives managerial changes within the corporate. This is further reflected in the program model; EM Optician shops are not stand alone shops but form a network of micro-franchisees of 2.5 NVG India, complete with technical support, skill up-gradation and supply chain benefits. This inclusive business strategy also ensures that program scale and sustainability is built in the design of the programme.

¹² Based on anecdotal evidence, personal experiences and informal interactions with sector experts.

¹³The NCVT recently recommended shortening of skill training programmes to increase the student turnover. However, research shows that students lose confidence in programmes that are of such short durations and hence do not opt to enroll for the same (Centre for Civil Society).

7. Challenges, Risks and Mitigation Strategies

- **Challenge:** *Mobilizing youth for a livelihood (optician) with no apparent demand*
- **Mitigation:** *Creating a market for vision care through community awareness and role models*

The EM Optician programme, unlike traditional skilling models, does not conduct a market assessment to determine the demand for particular skills but creates a market for a currently faint but necessary need.

“A little lower eyesight hasn’t killed anyone, and with such little income and more grave illnesses, I don’t see anyone paying for spectacles.”

“Only my 80 year old grandmother wears spectacles.”

These were the common arguments heard by B-ABLE’s staff when they started mobilizing youth for the EM programme. The perceived low risk associated with uncorrected vision and the high cost of vision screening (often requiring travel to nearby cities) meant negligible demand for such services. To add to the resistance, the training sounded too technical and though it came with the promise of a viable business, it did not guarantee a job. Moreover, there were no role models in the locality and the nearest optician stores were often more than 100 kilometres away.

To overcome these obstacles, B-ABLE creates market demand for vision care by addressing behavioural and physical barriers. The former are addressed through public awareness campaigns that talk about the adverse effects of neglected eye care, and through vision screening events that demonstrate solutions for better sight. In addition, door-to-door counselling is used to clarify misconceptions/ lower concerns arising from ignorance, fear and indifference. These campaigns are designed keeping in mind the socio-cultural context of each community, and incorporate folk music, theatre, local celebrities and themed awareness drives. Recently, community mobilisers have also used tablets to engage wider audiences.

The physical barriers are addressed by providing access to opticians and affordable spectacles within the respective communities.

The programme, in a new geography, sees the most significant upsurge in aspiration for training when students from the first batch become successful entrepreneurs. This is made possible by encouraging the early adopters, i.e. first few EM Opticians to share their experiences during the mobilization drives. The response is very positive when established EM Opticians from similar backgrounds talk about their individual journeys, emphasizing the support from B-ABLE and 2.5NVG in market creation and business set-up.



An EyeMitra Vision Screening Event

These EM Optician role models identify with potential trainees and thus, are able to better understand and more convincingly address their concerns.

The above approach can be understood as the marketing mix for the EyeMitra Optician programme, i.e., the 4Ps (Product/ Service, Price, Place and Promotion).

The above marketing strategy has given a fillip to the momentum, resulting in exponential growth. It took about four months to mobilize the first batch



A Community Based EyeMitra Optician's Shop

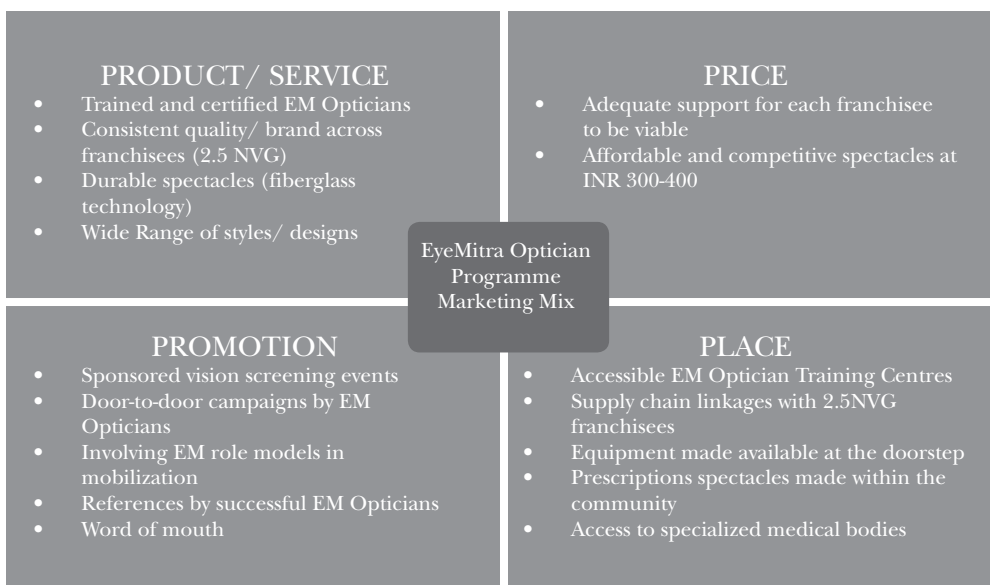


Figure 3: EyeMitra Optician Programme - Marketing Mix

of just three candidates in 2012, despite repeated visits by a team comprising of mobilisers, faculty and senior members from 2.5 NVG and B-ABLE. Currently, each batch of about 20 students takes less than two weeks days to fill up! In some mature districts, the program is even more than two-fold oversubscribed.

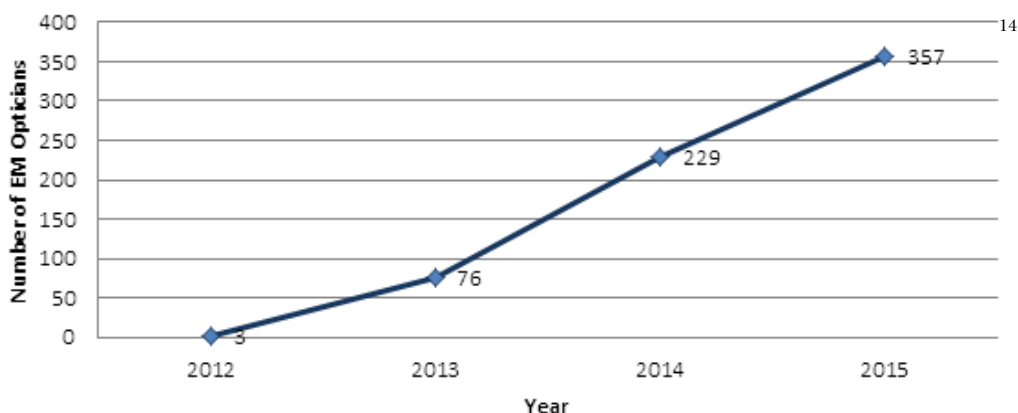


Figure. 4: Year-on-Year Growth of the EM Optician Programme in Uttar Pradesh, under the 2.5 NVG and B-ABLE Partnership

14 The data for 2015 is for the first seven months, i.e., from January to July.

- **Challenge: Ensuring high quality healthcare service delivery**
- **Mitigation: Designing a training and delivery model to address all inherent risks**

The biggest risks of vocational skill development in the health care sector are those that arise from a medical perspective. However, the work that the EyeMitra Opticians do, i.e. primarily measuring and dispensing spectacles, is relatively low-risk (Europe Economics). The following measures are taken to further minimize the inherent risks of the optical profession.¹⁵

Table 1

Risk	Description	Mitigation Strategy
Clinical	Risks to patients arising from the nature of diseases or conditions, and the associated consequences.	The scope of EM Opticians' work covers only vision screening and spectacle dispensing. However, they are taught the basics of other common vision related conditions and trained to strictly refer such ailments to specialized institutes/ hospitals.
Competency	Risks resulting from practitioners lacking the necessary skills or knowledge to diagnose and manage diseases/ conditions or to use appropriate equipment.	The programme has a comprehensive eight months blended training program, comprising 60 days of classroom teachings and an extended six months of on-field training, trouble-shooting support, provision of standard instruments, refresher courses. Regular training of trainers also ensures up-gradation of skills and incorporation of new knowledge in the sector. These trainers are qualified optometrists (4 year degree) and on the payroll of B-ABLE.
Conduct	Risks stemming from the behaviour of practitioners, such as negligence, unnecessary prescriptions or inappropriate communication.	The social stigma and reputational risk of malpractice within one's own community acts as a deterrent, particularly in the close-knit rural communities that the EM Opticians operate in. This is also checked as part of the regular audits conducted by qualified optometrists, independent of the trainers.
Contextual	Risks arising from inherent features of the environment in which a practitioner operates that may influence the severity/ likelihood of other risks; for example, lack of other EM Opticians (in a 10 kilometre area) leading to unregulated costs to beneficiaries.	The EM Opticians centres are not stand alone shops but part of the larger 2.5 NVG franchisee business, thus necessitating the observance of pre-set standards and guidelines.

¹⁵ Table adapted from 'Risks in the Optical Profession' by Europe Economics.

- **Challenge: Acceptance of previously unemployed local youth in the optician profession by the community/ Government**
- **Mitigation: Demonstrating quality of service and ongoing advocacy**

The EM Optician programme faced initial resistance because the target population was unwilling to accept that the unemployed youth from their own community could pursue a profession (and that too after a short training course) commonly understood to be practiced only by doctors. Moreover, as the programme design restricts number of EM Opticians in a given geography, it led to jealousy from other unemployed youth. There have been instances where disgruntled community members complained to local authorities and disrupted vision screening events.

To counter this, EM Opticians are encouraged to work in partnership with the local panchayats and gain their trust, which positively affects community's willingness to accept the EM Opticians.



An EyeMitra Community Mobilisation Drive

8. Impact

The impact of the EM programme encompasses socio-economic aspects but since the programme is fairly new, with only 3.5 years of history, the data is limited. Consequently, a combination of quantitative data and anecdotal experiences (from interviews with key personnel, candidates and community members) has been used to better understand the impact of the programme.

The primary impact of the programme, as a livelihood intervention, is the increase in income of trained EM Opticians, mainly through their micro-franchisees. The following graph, based on data from a batch of EM Opticians

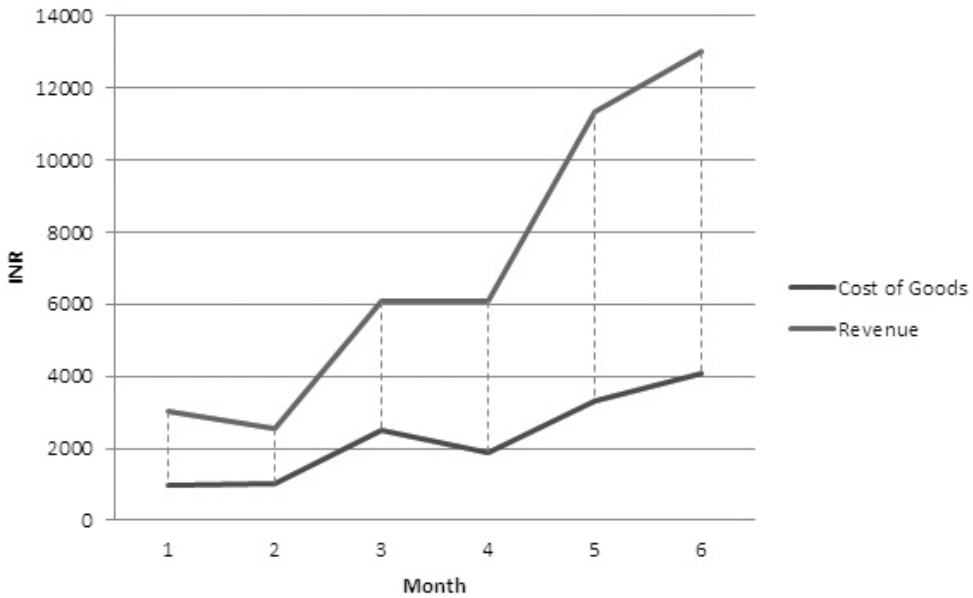


Figure 5: Representative Financials from a Batch of 20 EyeMitra Opticians in Uttar Pradesh who finished training in December 2014, shows a 400 percent plus increase in revenue in the first six months.

A certified EyeMitra, on an average, earns monthly revenue of INR 12,000, with the cost of operation being less than 35 percent. The more experienced and enterprising youth earn up to INR 65,000 per month.

The impact of the EM programme, in bridging the delivery gap in vision care, is reflected in the number of corrected vision cases. An EM Optician, on an average screens 80 people per month, i.e., almost 1,000 annually.

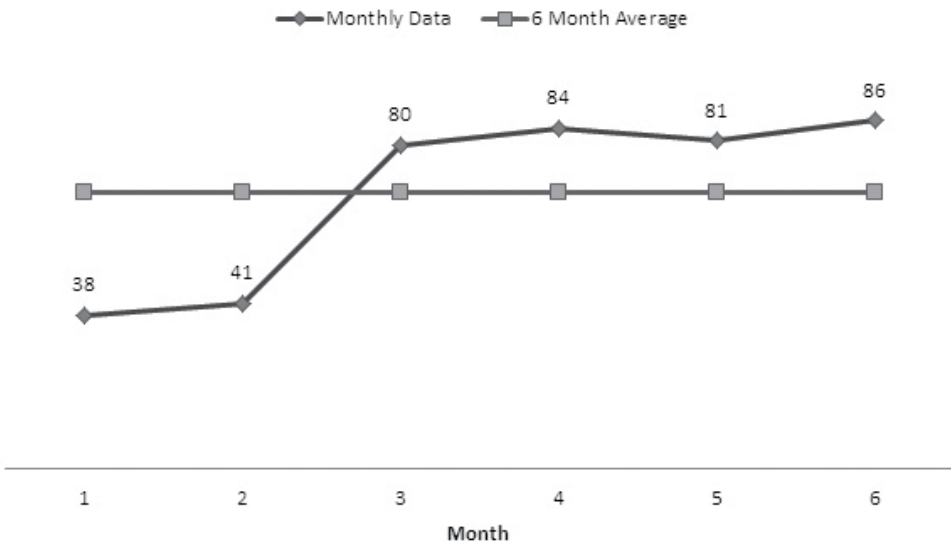


Figure 6: People Screened by an EyeMitra Optician in First Six Months of Practice

The need for EM Opticians is pronounced; evident by the detection of refractive errors in over two-thirds of the population screened as part of the program.

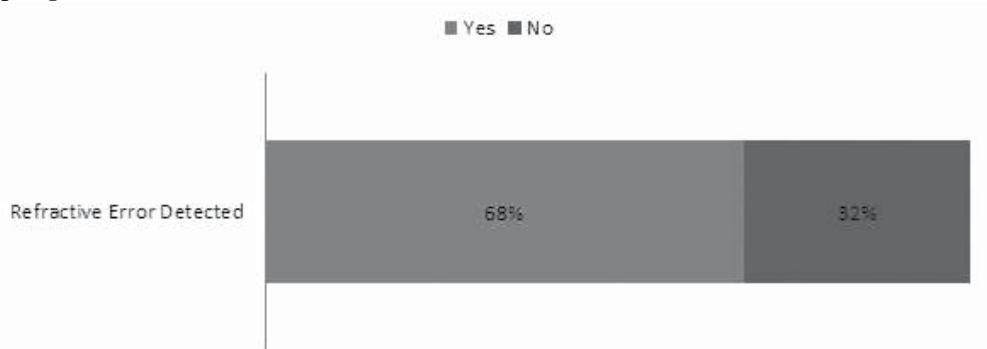


Figure 7: Refractive Errors Detected by EyeMitra Opticians in Screened Population

The community’s growing trust in EM Opticians and recognition of their contribution is reflected by the rapidly spreading voluntary participation in the vision screening events, depicted in the following graph.¹⁶

This access to EM Optician within the convenience of own community, as well as timely low cost treatment results in reduced out-of-pocket expenses on health care. Furthermore, early referrals for complex cases to specialized institutions results in higher curative care and reduced medical expenses in the long term.

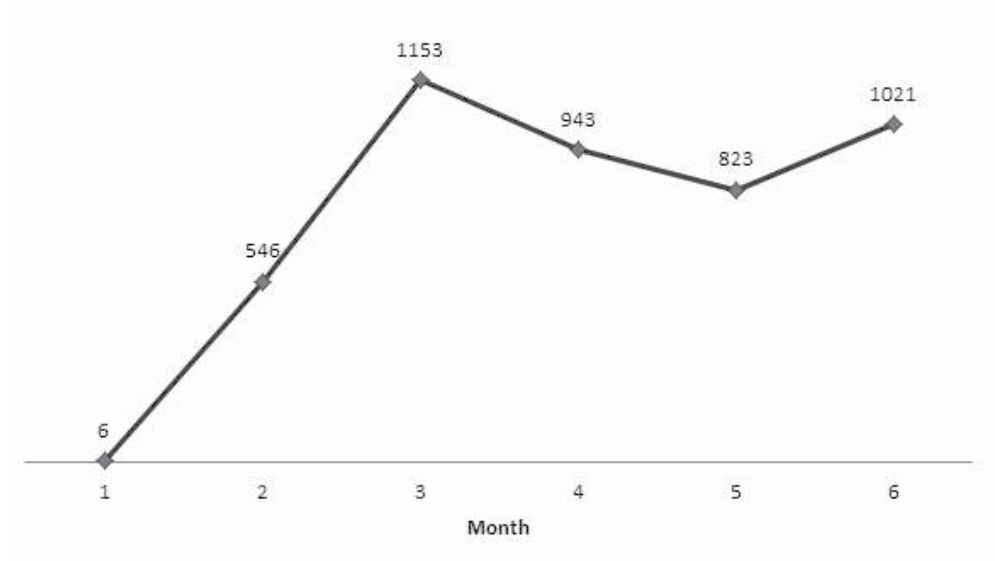


Figure 8: Participation in Vision Screening Events Conducted by a Batch of EM Opticians

16. The data in the graph is from January-June 2015, for a batch of EM Opticians in Uttar Pradesh. Since majority of customers are rural residents engaged in agricultural activity, the dip in participation during months 4-5, i.e. April-May, can be attributed to peak agricultural season/ rabi crop harvesting months.

The cumulative quantitative and qualitative impact of the EM Optician programme on the trained youth, customers and the broader community is summarized using the Bottom of the Pyramid Impact Assessment Framework.

Table 2

	Sellers (EM Opticians)	Buyers (Customers)	Communities
Economic Situation	<p>Major Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased and relatively stable income (lower barriers to entry, increase in demand, product diversification) - Low cost of living (no migration) <p>Minor Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Opportunity cost of loss of other income (most were unemployed, some are able to continue with other vocation as well - agriculture/ teaching) -Debt in setting up shop (recovered within one year of operations for majority) 	<p>Major Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Consumer surplus (affordable quality products, accessible) -Improved livelihood prospects -Improved productivity -Improved income <p>Minor Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase in healthcare expense (eye care previously not in expense mix, except in extreme cases) 	<p>Minor Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -New businesses (manufacturers and sellers) due to increase in demand -Increased/ Reduced income of current sellers (not clear from current data; could be increased due to increase in awareness, but also reduced due to preference to quality)¹⁷ -Increased interest in other businesses serving the community (franchisee model) -New jobs in the community (2.5 NVG Business Development executives)
Capabilities	<p>Major Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased technical skills -Increased entrepreneurial, communication and marketing skills -Increased self efficacy and contentment <p>Minor Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased awareness of self eye care 	<p>Major Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improved vision -Increased contentment -Increase learning/ education levels -Enhanced livelihood options <p>Minor Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Precautionary measures -Prevention of other diseases through referrals 	<p>Major Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased awareness about eye care <p>Minor Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Higher job aspirations -Acceptance of new income/ employment avenues

17. For example, though there has been a surge in demand for sunglasses in general (due to increased awareness of harmful effects of prolonged sunlight exposure), the demand for cheap sunglasses from local street vendors reduced, due to access to quality sunglasses from 2.5 NVG at affordable prices.

Relationships	<p>Major Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Respect in family and social circles (successful candidates refer the programme to other youth, gaining their respect) -Increased access to professional and financial networks <p>Minor Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Better matrimonial prospects 	<p>Major Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improved relationship with family (less dependence) 	<p>Minor Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improved relationships

9. Scalability and Replicability

The intensity of the problem of vision care is indicated by its significance in global policy. All WHO (World Health Organization) countries have endorsed the GAP (Global Action Plan) to reduce avoidable visual impairment and to secure access to rehabilitation services for the visually impaired. Vision Impact Institute estimates that 41 percent of children (under 18 years), 42 percent of workers, 42 percent of drivers, and 45 percent of elderly in India need vision correction.

It is apparent that the opportunity, i.e., demographic dividend of enterprising rural youth and the problem, i.e., basic vision correction are pervasive, transcending geographical and socio-cultural contexts, thus rationalizing the need for the programme. The programme started in Uttar Pradesh in 2012 and in the past year has set roots in seven additional states. 2.5 NVG aims to train 10,000 EM Opticians by 2020, reaching a population of 100 million, across the country.¹⁸ The programme already has a presence in China and the success in India has also started a dialogue to take it to Africa. The elements determining future scalability of the programme are described below.

9.1 Financial Endowment

The programme is substantially endowed by the lead partner, i.e., 2.5 NVG, to allow for upfront investment, pilot activities, restructuring and an adequate gestation period. In addition to its own financial endowment, 2.5 NVG aims to raise funds from Essilor Social Impact Fund.¹⁹

¹⁸ 1,100 EyeMitra Opticians are expected to be trained by the end of 2015.

¹⁹ The Essilor Social Impact Fund is a registered non-profit with many programmes including 'Vision for Life', which has committed 30 million Euros for the next five years to promote various initiatives for enhancing vision care for people who have not had the privilege to access and/ or afford quality vision care. EM Optician has successfully raised money from the Fund in the past and aims to amplify this in future.

9.2 Partnerships

2.5 NVG has already partnered with five CBOs and envisions numerous such partnerships till 2020. Parallel to this, the plan is to facilitate microfinance linkages for the shop set-up cost of INR 30,000–40,000, which is currently sourced independently by candidates.

2.5 NVG sees a partnership with the Government as a promising way forward. However, it is currently not seeking financial support from the same, but looking at a role as a technical and implementation partner. The Government of India, under the centrally sponsored National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) works with NGOs to screen rural populations for a range of eye diseases including glaucoma, and corneal injuries, but the problem is enormous. Moreover, the focus on cataract in traditional screening camps is limiting. Catering to the same population, the EM Optician programme can play the crucial role of providing vision screening and dispensing appropriate spectacles.



An EyeMitra Optician Providing Vision Screening Service

9.3 Product and Technology Innovation

2.5 NVG is actively engaged in development of technology to reduce the risk of human error in spectacle dispensing, and to improve the quality of spectacles (performance, durability and design), while maintaining/ lowering prices. For example, 2.5 NVG is currently piloting an auto-fit frames and lenses collection, where mechanized pre-made lenses (with different correction powers) can be simply clicked/ fitted in a wide range of pre-designed spectacle frames. 2.5 NVG is also experimenting with mobile applications for refractive error testing/ double-checking.

10. Sustainability

10.1 Macro Level - Programmatic

2.5 NVG expects the programme to break-even by 2020, by virtue of economies of scale and innovation. This shows a long term promise towards the EM Optician programme. Adding to this, an exclusive set of professionals at 2.5 NVG are fully engaged in management of the programme. This human resource commitment ensures quality control through ongoing monitoring and active adoption of corrective measures, if required.

10.2 Meso Level – Supply Chain

2.5 NVG is continuously working towards reducing the cost of distribution, and at the same time penetrating deeper. Since the programme is an inclusive business initiative, each link in the supply chain benefits from the scale. Cognizant of this, 2.5 NVG has established a lean supply chain, which fortifies motivation at each level, while keeping product costs in check.



Second EyeMitra Convention Conducted by 2.5 NVG and B-ABLE at Mathura in 2015

10.3 Micro Level – EM Optician

A critical component determining a sustainable livelihood in any industry is an upward career (and income) trajectory. The EM programme safeguards the financial viability of each EM Optician by allowing only one EM Optician shop within a 10 kilometre radius, catering to a population of approximately 10,000. The programme also promotes product up-gradation and diversification to augment income. Besides, the programme offers opportunities for refresher trainings and up-skilling through the Annual EyeMitra Convention.

11. Conclusion

The EM Optician programme has demonstrated how a corporate led strategy can create a successful scalable skill development model leading to self-employment, while bringing missing healthcare delivery to rural populations.

The committed long-term investment in human capital, enterprise creation, community engagement and innovation has built the foundation for long-term sustainability. Cumulatively, these strategies have resulted in a higher demand for vision screening within the community and consequently, a greater willingness to pursue the EyeMitra Optician course. As a social enterprise model, EyeMitra Opticians get their return on investment within one year, and 2.5 NVG expects to break-even by 2020. The programme has thus diverted from the widespread paradigm of non-profit short-term vocational training models leading to job placements barely assuring minimum wages.

At a broader level, the commercial viability of creating micro-franchisees offering door-step delivery of a healthcare service in rural markets in India has set a precedent for other corporate organisations. The entry of such models is expected to bolster additional meaningful non-farm livelihood opportunities.

Annexure 1

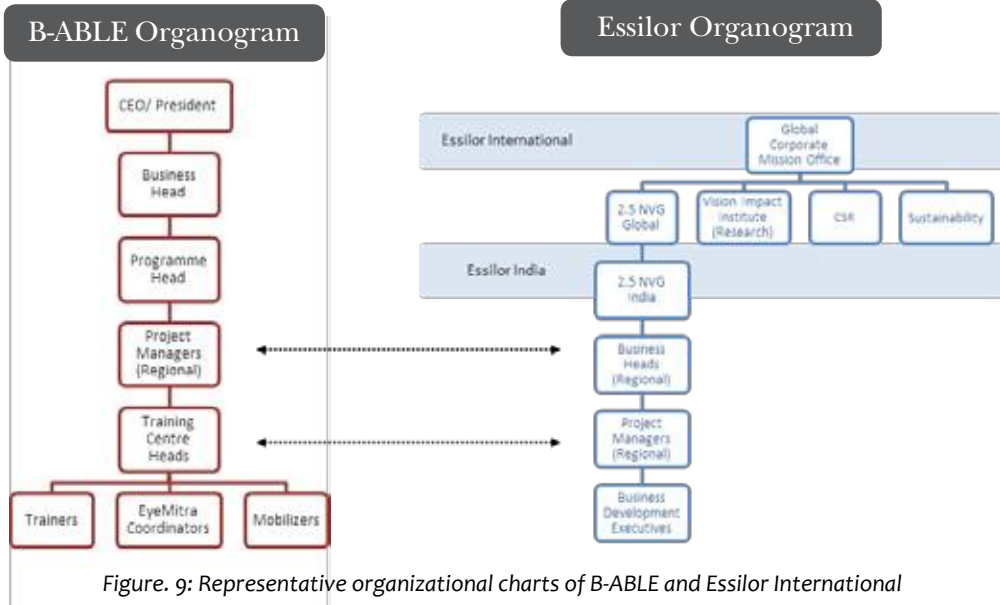


Figure. 9: Representative organizational charts of B-ABLE and Essilor International

Annexure 2

The EyeMitra Optician Course, spread over 60 days²⁰, covers the following topics:

- Anatomy and physiology of eye
- Torch examination and vision screening
- Ophthalmic optics and laboratory
- Refractive errors, presbyopia and correction
- Ophthalmic lenses
- Hand neutralization
- Instruments, frames and contact lens
- Refraction - retinoscopy and various methods
- Prescriptions, medical record safety and confidentiality
- Common eye disorders, referrals and history taking
- Optical dispensing - edging/ fitting
- Soft skills - communication, sales techniques and code of conduct
- Social entrepreneurship/ responsibility
- Planning vision screening events
- Optical management - stocks/ inventory, record keeping and basic computer use

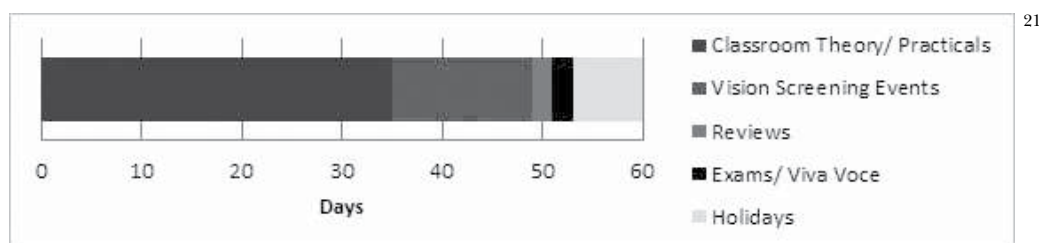


Figure 10: EyeMitra Optician 60 Day Course Structure (Classroom Based)

²⁰ Day = 6 Working Hours

²¹ The image represents various components of the EM Optician Programme training; however, the particular components are not conducted in the above depicted order but are interspersed during the actual delivery.

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Photographs – Essilor, 2.5 NVG, B-ABLE and Jahid Ali

Kushal: Empowering Construction Workers

J.P. Shroff

1. The Issue

The Construction sector is one of the largest seasonal employment providers in India next only to agriculture and is also highly unorganized. Most of the workers are short duration out-migrants, resulting in huge shortage of skilled labour in the Industry. This shortage of talent in the construction sector has been a lingering and a long term problem, leading to an increase in project costs and risks. The education and training capacity offered through various schemes were inadequate to meet the demand of the large percentage of unskilled workers in the Indian labour market. Moreover, absence of a formal training system resulted in workers taking a long time to acquire skills, which in turn, kept their wages at a menial low. This had an adverse effect on the industry, by way of sub-standard quality, material wastage, cost increase, inability to meet time deadlines and unhappy customers.

To add to this, the perennial shortage of construction labour left the developers and contractors with little choice about demanding skilled work-force as the workers did not feel obliged to get themselves trained. Hence, the issue was, how to inculcate a need for skill development and skill enhancement, when, the labour themselves do not see any immediate tangible benefits of getting trained and certified as he gets employed anyways.

The other reason is - there is huge demand for skilled labour since demand and supply for the same is skewed owing to skill gap. This being one of the factors, construction workforce does not see any advantage in getting themselves trained and certified.

Moreover, the construction workers hailed from a very poor socio-economic background, for whom, the loss of a day's earning has a serious impact on their livelihoods. Therefore, it was almost impossible for them to get formal pre-job training and that too, by paying for it themselves. Hence, they preferred on-job-on-site training to formal classroom training.

To make matters complicated, the Planning Commission of India has projected that the construction sector will require another 47 million people in the workforce over the next decade (figures from FICCI 2010:13). But, despite such significance to the Indian economy, there is no specific policy for skill building in this sector. Infact, the current pool of the construction

workforce in India comprises mainly (83%) unskilled workers, please refer to the table below:

Table 1: Current Pool Of The Construction Workforce In India

Category	%	Nos.
Unskilled workers	83%	25.6 million
Skilled workers	10%	3.3 million
Engineers	3%	0.8 million
Technicians and foremen	2%	0.6 million
Clerical	2%	0.7 million

Most of these unskilled workers are seasonal, migrant workers from poorer agricultural states and they lack education and formal training. Usually, they pick up skills on the job, informally from peers or supervisors, resulting in inefficient performance on the job. Among the 10 per cent skilled construction workers, emigration to overseas, like Gulf countries in most cases - for higher wages, is common.

Emigration worsens the shortage of skilled workers and creates an upward pressure on domestic wages leading to a situation where Indian firms have to import workers to meet their requirements. In 2008, DLF, one of India's leading real estate developers, reportedly, brought in skilled carpenters, steel fixers and electricians from China, Indonesia and Philippines as they were cheaper and more productive than their Indian counterparts. Reliance Industries, a major Indian business conglomerate, reportedly brought in 4,000 Chinese construction workers for the construction of India's largest oil refinery at Jamnagar district in the state of Gujarat.

Large firms in the construction business have been vocal about the negative impact of the lack of skilled carpenters and masons on the quality and delivery of their projects. Moreover, the need for skilled construction workers became more pressing for India with the increasing use of technology and mechanization, which is expected to reduce the requirement of unskilled workers on individual construction sites. For instance, the time in laying two consecutive slabs has been reduced from 18-20 days to 7-8 days due to the use of pre-fabricated parts and modular structures. Therefore, in order to remain employable, the current construction workers will also have to upgrade their skills.

Realising the severity of the shortage of skilled construction workers, the government of India is giving impetus to Vocational Trades by launching ‘Skill India’. However, the nature of skill development intervention and strategies of the skill development agencies makes it an uphill task to reach out to the quantum of minimally educated workforce in the sector, who needs to be continually upgraded, upskilled at the national level. Besides the quantitative limitation of the existing training structure, the lack of Construction Skills infrastructure in India, makes it a herculean, but not impossible task to reach out and skill every construction worker; starting with the two major Indian states of Uttar Pradesh (U.P) and Maharashtra, that drive maximum construction activity and employment.

2. The Solution

To combat such acute crisis, developers from Pune, associated came together with the Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India (CREDAI), Pune Metro, and decided to make an impact to the prevailing situation. Thus, KUSHAL was formed as a partnership project, between CREDAI, Pune Metro and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), aiming to improve the skill sets of the construction workforce in India and upgrade their skills in 6 trades, namely: Shuttering, Bar-bending, Plumbing, Tiling, Masonry and Painting.

The vision of KUSHAL is to train, upskill and empower every construction worker in India in order to achieve best quality construction, speed and minimise material wastage by enhancing their wages, uplifting their quality of life as well as their aspirations; while its Mission is to effectively train and enhance skills of 1,00,000 construction workers in 10 years by imparting technical knowledge, soft skills and safety awareness.

KUSHAL believes in the concept of “Earn while you Learn”, therefore assuring no pay loss for the daily worker. This ensures maximum response from the labourers to attend the training. Apart from training the trainees, orientation programme followed by a well-designed training program for the trainers (Train the Trainers) are also undertaken.

2.1. Modus Operandi

The modus operandi of KUSHAL is as follows:

- a) Scale of Operation: KUSHAL’s Training has taken/ is taking place in 170 centres of 71 developers and have hired about 68 expert trainers for training and are on the path of achieving the targeted numbers of 20,160 workers.

- b) **Train the Trainers:** Trainers are experienced foremen doing hands-on work for more than 10-15 years. A month of induction period is spent to instill the pedagogy of KUSHAL into them, most of it being on-site teaching by a mentor trainer. After their installation, once a week refresher courses and guest lectures are held for them to upgrade themselves and pass on the knowledge to their trainees.
- c) **Course content:** It is meticulously developed in-house, based on National Occupational Standards defined by Construction Skill Development Council of India, Trade wise syllabi and trainer, trainee handbooks. The quality of the specially prepared state-of-the-art video trade films cannot be found across the industry in India. References from various books, industry professionals and national level organizations like Durocrete Construction Quality Rating Agency Pvt. Ltd. (CQRA) and Builders' Association of India, Pune (BAI) are taken.
- d) **Delivery onsite:** KUSHAL's aim is to impart training without disturbing onsite work. Our (KUSHAL's) model consists of 80% on-site; 20% classroom based training, and is thus, practical oriented. This is the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of KUSHAL; training the workers in an EARN-WHILE-YOU-LEARN scheme. Although, it is a challenge to implement, this on-the-job-on-the-site model is the reason of KUSHAL's success. Moreover, the trainers, having tremendous experience of working on site themselves, are able to best deliver the training intended for the workers.

Thus, the training is conducted as follows:

- **On-site Training:** Trainers guide the trainees on the site. For a period of one and a half to two months, the trainers are with their batch of about 25 trainees throughout the day at different locations on site. Skills related to technical expertise, safety and productivity are imparted. A separate soft skills trainer is hired to impart soft skills to workers being sine-qua-non to the workers lives!
- **Classroom Training (Half an hour session during the trainees' lunch break):** Technical films, presentations and simple mathematics are covered in the classroom sessions. Imparting knowledge about tools and methods is the quintessential portion covered in classroom. Classroom sessions are conducted according to a proper schedule.
- **Labour Motivation Programs:** CREDAI committee members and developers are invited to interact with the labourers during launch and certification events on sites. Maharashtra and Kerala Labour Minister, Chairman NSDC, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NSDC, CREDAI-National chair holders, Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC), National Academy of Construction (NAC), Indian Administrative

Service (IAS) officials and many other important dignitaries have visited KUSHAL in the recent past.

- e) Other services: KUSHAL Encourages its Trainees (Construction Workforce) to open Bank Accounts and has facilitated the same by opening 7,597 Bank Accounts as on September 30, 2015. It promotes the habit of ‘Saving’ in them, and brings them in the purview of the Banking System, by tying with the Central Bank of India, waived its KYC norms to support KUSHAL’s initiative.

KUSHAL also endeavours to instill and teach soft skills which covers myriad topics like Safety, Health and Hygiene as, in more ways than one, they directly or indirectly affect the workers quality of life and performance at work.

- f) Evaluation Process and Certification: A two step evaluation process is followed:

- **Trainer’s interim evaluation:** Trainer is present onsite full time and is the best judge for evaluating trainees’ performance.
- **Third party evaluation by BAI:** Evaluation is done by an external agency for ensuring total transparency and quality. The Certification is done by CREDAI and attested by BAI (Builders Association of India), a technically competent national level organization.

- g) Audits: In order to ensure a robust and good work practices, the following steps were undertaken:

- **Process Audit (Grant Thornton):** The process audit of KUSHAL is done by the Grant Thornton on a continuous basis for better process-orientation and work effectiveness. The audits make the initiative process driven and not a person driven organisation.

KUSHAL is also the recipient of NSDC’s “Best Compliant Training Partner” Award for meeting all the requirements of standards of Training.

- **Social Audit of Methodology and Scope of Work by social anthropologist (Neeti Solutions):** The aim of the Social Audit is to carry out the social impact assessment of KUSHAL. The audit sets out to assess ethnographic/ anthropological impact of the Project and has covered Stakeholders like Labourers, Trainers, Contractors, Developers with very positive results.
- **Construction Workers are Trained/ Upskilled in 6 Trades viz., Bar-bending, Shuttering, Masonry, Plumbing, Tiling and Painting.** Once trained, they are certified by independent agency viz., BAI.

- Last but not the least, KUSHAL's robust Institutional structure entails that the training is imparted successfully, as is evident from the diagrammatic representations below:

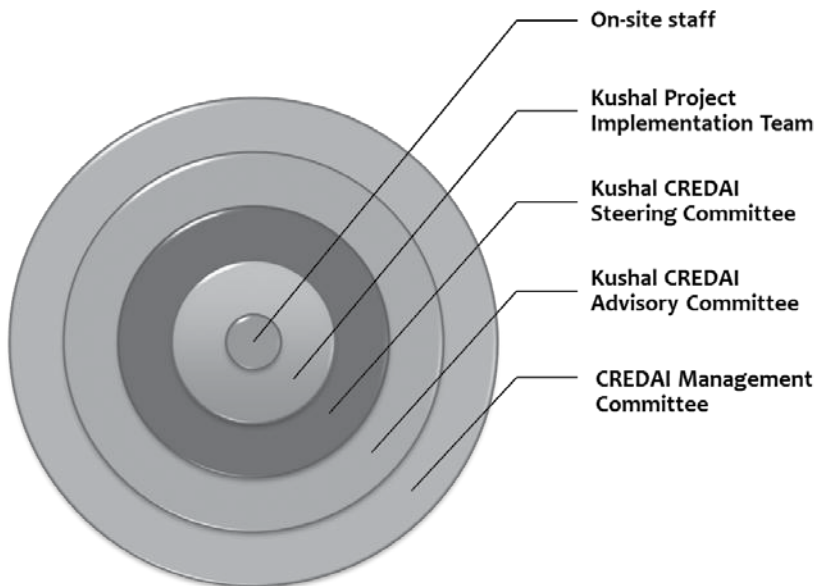
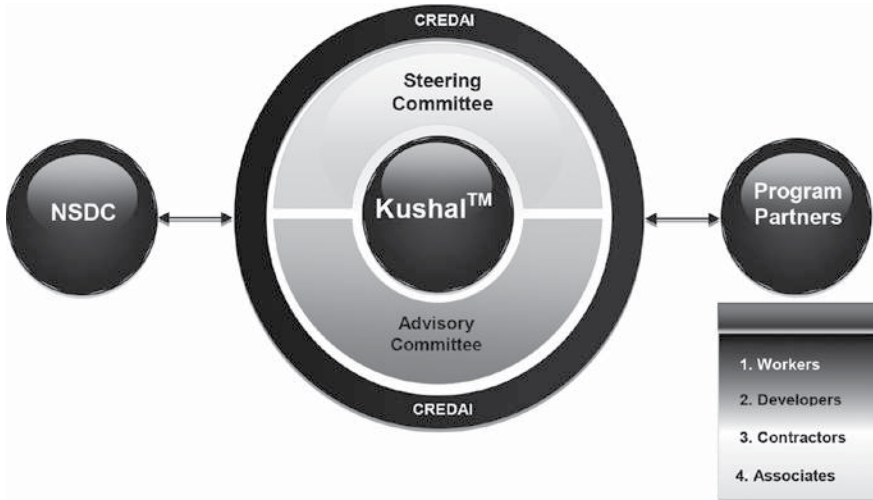


Figure 1: KUSHAL Institutional Structure

2.2. Innovative Use of Information And Communication Technology

KUSHAL uses information and communication technology (ICT) to aid its work, as is evident from the following:

- a) (KUSHAL's) database is fully digitized to the extent that every worker is assigned a 18 digit unique number (as in Figure 1);
 - first 2 digits denote state to which he belongs,
 - next 2 digits denote the district from where he hails.
 - The next 2 digits each are for year and month of his registration, Trade and Centre each make up for the 2 digit code followed by 6 digit unique Trainee number.

18 Digits Unique ID Code for Kushal Trainees								
Trainee Name	Unique ID	State	District	Year	Month	Trade	Center	Trainee number
Krishnened Shriram Paawan	212503040343014752	21	25	03	04	03	43	011752
		Maharashtra	Pune	2013-14	Apr	Masonry	Nyati Wind Chimes	Serial Number

Figure 2: 18 Digit Unique Id Code For Kushal Trainees

- b) KUSHAL also shows trade films and training using PROTAB (Tablet with Projector). Trade Films viewed by Trainees act as a good audio-visual tool, aiding in quicker grasping of the subject, as compared to training imparted verbally alone; hence, the latter is more effective and state-of-art. These films are one of its kind in the country and capable of being understood easily by the construction workforce.
- c) KUSHAL utilizes a state-of-the-art Mobile Van equipped with a big screen etc., to address large audience which goes from site-to-site. The Van is equipped with a flat screen television, DVD Player, Public Addressing System (PAS) which doubles up as an audio output for addressing large crowds, projector, pull down mega-screen (mounted on the side of the Van). This feature helps address large crowds of 500, and with the aid of PAS, trade films, films on health, hygiene and safety can be shown. Trade videos are in Hindi and English and are prepared in a manner that are quickly understood, keeping in mind, the literacy and the intellect level of the audience. The flat-screen TV inside the Van also serves the purpose of conducting refresher courses for the Trainers on the go.
- d) As far as the MIS Database is concerned, it is a Relational Database Management System based Information System that supports trainee registration, evaluation, certificate preparation and distribution and manages data process tracking. Software covers the entire gamut of Tracking activity like:

- Phone call Tracking: Entails calling each Trainee (Construction Worker) individually and seeking his progress. Around 10,000 Trainees have been called and about 80% of the called Trainees have reported Wage Rise;
 - Video-tracking: On-site assessment of post-training, to gauge effectiveness is recorded by video shooting the interaction;
 - Post-card Tracking: Self-addressed post cards are sent to Trainees for assessing wage rise and require mentioning their mobile number on them. Once received back by post, KUSHAL tops-up their Mobile connection by Rs. 50/- by way of talk-time as an incentive for diligently participating in tracking efforts.
- e) Database/ MIS: A properly designed Decision Support System (DSS), an interactive software-based system, intended to help and analyze business data is used so that the management can make business decisions effectively.
- Reports and information: The robust MIS system can give reports like Trainee Registration Report, Site Registration Status Report, Trainee's Personal Data Report, print Certificates and Reports, Trainee Evaluation Report, Certificate Signature, Acknowledgement Data, Audit Reports, etc., to name a few. MIS also helps in getting information through its search programme, based on various search parameters like Trainee Name, Certificate Number, Unique ID Number, Site Name, Trades etc., at the click of a mouse.
 - Photos and videos: Photographing and Video graphing trainees and their progress entails synergy between Supervisors/Trainers and the Database Team. The supervisors are made custodians of KUSHAL and provided Still and Video Cameras through which at the start of Training, at a particular site, all the Trainees at the time of Registration, are photographed and then the camera is brought to office and given to the Database Team, who then, keys-in the information pertaining to the Trainees and Training etc. and downloads the photos from camera. Thus, all the names entered in MIS have a face by way of photographs, which in turn are used for sharing data with NSDC and likes. This also enables in giving out Certificates to successful Trainees bearing their photographs and photo IDs.

Utilization of the above mentioned means of technology was lauded by the Government of India by way of conferring the 'Silver Award' at the 18th National Conference on e-Governance at Gandhinagar on January 30, 2015, which is a 'National Award for e-Governance, 2014-2015' for "Use of Information and Communication Technology for Development by Non-government Institution," The jury (ies) of the Award were the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances.

2.3. Impact of the Initiative

a) Statistically and objectively, the achievements of the initiative are as follows:

Table 2: Achievements (Statistics as on September 30, 2015)

Workers Registered:	35606
Workers Trained:	23862
Workers Certified:	22433
Total sites covered:	180
Total contractors covered:	2500+
Total developers covered:	71
Total Bank accounts opened:	7597
Total Aadhaar Cards enrollment done:	230

b) **At the ground-level, the tangible benefits are apparent:**

- Saving project costs by reducing the time taken in completing the project;
- Reducing wastage at the Construction Site thereby reducing material cost considerably;
- Enhancing the quality of output given by the construction workers, thereby positively affecting better outcome; resulting in less or no re-work.

c) **Impact on Beneficiaries/ Stakeholders: They are as follows:**

- Construction Workers: Labourers are the main intended beneficiaries of the programme called KUSHAL; wherein lies a tremendous opportunity for them to learn technical skills and upgrade their knowledge in a short span of time.

There are more than 15 who have gone ahead to become independent contractors after taking KUSHAL training; 2 workers who were motor mechanics, got motivated to take KUSHAL training at Marvel Isola site, became tiling masons and earning a much better wage than before; 2 workers who have shown interest in learning all 6 trades; one of them got placed in a Dubai based construction company; whereas the other, Mr. Dnyaneshwar Murud, has been selected as KUSHAL's Trainer.

Below are few testimonials from KUSHAL Trainees:

- ★ Shankar Shinde hailing from small village Antawadi in Satara District of Maharashtra State went to Mumbai in search of employment and got a job as Painter. Having worked there for 4 years, he came to Pune as a Painting Supervisor. In coming in contact with KUSHAL, the trainers trained him in the Painting Trade and he became a certified Painter, which gave him the confidence of dreaming big. Started with a small painting contract of Rs. 6,000/-, and moving onto Rs. 12,000/-, he gradually got Building contracts of worth Rs.12 lakhs, owing to his good workmanship and quality. Mr. Shinde has now become a contractor, employing 20 workers under him. Presently his income is more than Rs. 50,000/- per month.
- ★ In another instance of KUSHAL touched the life of construction labourer, Nawab Ali Khan from Lucknow, who is currently working as Painting Contractor in Celestial City, Pune owing to the training imparted by KUSHAL. Mr. Khan states that he has made his team also undergo training which has resulted in speedy, good quality work, and low wastage.
- ★ Maruti Vitthal Murarji from Nanded, Maharashtra is another such person who has become an expert in tiling, having left his earlier vocation of a garage mechanic. He realised that a training by KUSHAL would give him a good career path in the future. Infact, currently he is getting better wages post KUSHAL's training, compared to his earlier vocation.
- ★ Hanmant Handerao, yet another construction labourer in tiling trade from Karnataka would approach KUSHAL for minor details and would get all the answer to his questions, that has enabled him learn nuances in his trade of tiling.
- **Contractors:** Once the contractor got his labour force trained; there was increased productivity and the quality of work increased manifolds that helped him in delivering better quality and quantity to the developer. The Contractors, who were initially reluctant, later, actively participated by getting their workforce enrolled. KUSHAL has also been awarding Contractors, who are pro-actively getting workers trained under its Training Programmes.

As a consequence, the “KUSHAL Contractor” can now demand a better rate as compared to other contractors. All KUSHAL contractors receive a ‘Letter of Appreciation’ from CREDAI, Pune Metro for their support.

Contractors vouch and opine by KUSHAL's Standard of Training so much that they are of the view that their labourers have practical knowledge aplenty. In fact, undergoing KUSHAL Training not only makes them technically more competent, but also benefits the Contractors by: better workmanship, speedy work, reduced wastage and safe working practices of the KUSHAL-trained employees in their Team.

- **Developers:** The Developer fraternity is also feeling the difference, as noted from the figures mentioned below:

Table 3

Total sites covered:	180
Total developers covered:	71

This highlights that KUSHAL's Training is being seen by Developers as some kind of initiative which is unique, exceptional, inevitable, pre-requisite and vital for the betterment of the Construction Industry as a whole. This also implies that at a micro and individual level, the Developer is able to deliver reliable, durable and enduring Housing Projects to the end-customers.

2.4. Factors That Contributed To The Success Of The Programme

Manifold factors have contributed to the success of the Programme, however, only few salient ones are enumerated, especially the ones lending human touch and face to its work of upskilling and training, as described below :

- Developers Support:** More than 10 developers have donated a total INR 37 Lakh over and above their regular onsite contribution. This fact itself is a testimony to the satisfaction level of the developers. Besides getting better quality work, they see a direct benefit in saving of 20-25% construction material wastage because of KUSHAL training. The developers are already contributing more than 60% of total training expense in terms of material, space, manpower on site etc.; an independent assessment by an appointed valuation company.
- The Trainee- Benefit support:** The core factor - Wage Rise is the most measurable outcome of the programme for the trainees. KUSHAL tracks the pre and post training wages of the labourers. Workers have reported wage rise from 5% to up to 40%! For example, even if a skilled worker earns about Rs. 500/day; an increase of even 25% makes it Rs 625/day. This is indeed a great transformation, as, under normal circumstances, without KUSHAL's training, it would take him an average of 30 months to get such a wage rise, which, he/she is able to achieve in less than 6 months. Thus on an average a KUSHAL trained worker makes a LAKH rupees extra in a couple of years, a huge amount
- Financial Inclusion:** KUSHAL is carrying out Corporate Social Responsibility, striving at achieving a balance of economic, social and environmental imperatives. Usually, a daily wage earner has a propensity to spend his hard earned money on alcohol or other unsocial and unhealthy habits. Moreover, due to inaccessibility to Banks and owing to lack of essential documents, they do not have a Bank Account. However,

KUSHAL has helped and encouraged the workers to open a Bank Account with a nationalized bank viz., Central Bank of India. With this tie-up with the Bank, the workers are also waived the KYC norms, keeping in mind the nature and purpose of the project. So far, 7,597 Bank Accounts have been opened (as of September 30, 2015). This initiative has helped in inculcating a habit of forced saving; whereas banking, has created awareness about having funds saved for a medical emergency and/or for their childrens' education.

- d) **Soft Skills Training:** KUSHAL was not intending to just impart Technical Training to Construction Workers and leave things at that, it also wanted to earnestly bring about a holistic all-round development of the workforce in the Construction Sector. Soft Skills Training was a step in the direction. The content of soft skills covers important life skills like health, hygiene, saving money, manners etc. The content is such that even an illiterate trainee should be able to understand. An independent trainer is dedicated to teach the trainees life skills and safety issues.
- e) **KUSHALta Diwas : Day of Reward, Recognition and Appreciation:** KUSHAL celebrates KUSHALta Diwas, where, outstanding and exemplary performances by workers, trainers and contractors are rewarded in front of their peers in an Annual Ceremony. This encourages performers to set higher benchmarks and fuels their aspirations. This function also honours Contractors-turned-Builders. As the function is attended exclusively by Construction labourers and Contractors at Yashada, it creates lots of positive vibes amongst Construction Worker fraternity!
- **KCPL: Capacity Building Initiative:** KUSHAL Cricket Premier League (KCPL) is an annual feature, a tournament that brings together people from across the spectrum in the Construction Industry including construction workers . Sports are a great leveler and through this game, they get an opportunity to play side by side with Developers and Contractors as well.

2.5. Honours, Accolades, Achievements And Awards

KUSHAL has won several accolades for its endeavour, some of them are as follows:

- UK-India Skill Forum Award - 2011 (Best Skill Provider – Government Funded).
- CIDC Vishwakarma Award - 2012 Achievement Award for Construction Skills Development.
- Construction Week India Award - 2012 (Excellence in CSR Award).
- NSDC's Business Innovation Award - 2013.

- eIndia Public Choice Award - 2013 (Certificate of Excellence).
- Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) Gold Award for ON-JOB Training Program 2013.
- Best Compliant NSDC Partner Award - 2014
- Certificate of Recognition Award – 2014, Financial Inclusion and Payment Systems (FIPS)
- Tata Institute of Social Sciences – Leapvault CLO Award October, 2014: Award in “Apprenticeship - Skill Development Efforts - Honourable Mention”
- ASSOCHAM India Award 2014-15 for Best Vocational Training Provider (VTP) - Training.
- Government of India National e-Governance Award 2014-2015 for Use of Information and Communication Technology for development by Non-Government Institutions 2014-15.
- 7th CIDC Vishwakarma Awards, 2015 – Achievement Award for Construction Skill Development.
- GOLDEN GLOBE TIGERS CSR Award 2015 in Malaysia under Training and Development Category.
- 14. Bronze Medals in Bricklaying and Wall and Floor Tiling Category in World Skills Competition held at New Zealand – April 2015.
- 15. Medallion for Excellence in Bricklaying Category in World Skills Competition held at Sao Paulo, Brazil – August 2015.

Amongst many dignitaries, who have visited KUSHAL, is Shri. Rajiv Pratap Rudy, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Parliamentary Affairs on February 13, 2015, wherein he inspected KUSHAL’s on-job-on-site Training Model, visited Classroom, had a word with Trainees (Construction Workers), and, later described the ‘Initiative’ as, “..... *Historical and which shall go down in memory.*”

2.6. Critical Challenges Faced

- However, no success is achieved without challenges; and KUSHAL faced a number of them, some of them are as follows :
- Migratory nature of workers;
- Low aspiration levels;
- Lack of education (semi-literate/illiterate);
- Tendency to drop-out of the Training Programme;
- Developing a curriculum that shall be suitable for on-the-job-on-the-site - a training model that envisages 80% practical and 20% classroom training

at the same time entailing zero wage loss which shall act as an incentive to get trained;

- Hiring trainers who would speak the language of the workers, and would physically be able to teach them by doing the job themselves, be demonstrative and hands-on. This entailed hiring people who have themselves worked in the respective trades for 15-20 years and are thoroughly skilled in their craft.
- Tracking the trainee and seeing if there has been a wage increase.
- Evolving a transparent system of evaluation;

2.7. Issues in Achieving Scale and Sustainability & Efforts Made Through the Initiative to Address Them

As KUSHAL was being provided grant by the NSDC for a certain period of time, it was also clear, that, for long-term sustainability, it will have to become self-sustaining. Hence KUSHAL has always endeavoured to increase its industry-connect. Efforts towards self-sustainability are as follows :

- a) Developer's Contribution towards toolkits (on voluntary basis):**
Participating developers are requested a contribution of INR 500 per worker evaluated at the end of the training program. About 65% developers have agreed to this contribution as of now. This contribution is taken towards distribution of toolkits to trainees, as an incentive to appear for evaluation test at the end of the on-site training course. About INR 53 Lakhs have come from this particular effort.
- b) Sponsorship from building material/other suppliers:** Suppliers of building materials were contacted for giving sponsorship towards KUSHAL and in return, promised visibility and branding among developers who gave them business volume. So far, Asian Tiles Granito Ltd, Cera Sanitaryware Ltd, Godavari Paints, ACC, Daikin Air-conditioners, HDFC and Canara Bank are the ones with whom KUSHAL has successfully associated. We (KUSHAL) have aggregated about INR 12 Lakhs with this effort.
- c) Donation from Developers:** Not only did the KUSHAL training help developers drastically improve the quality of the work on site, but have also reduced wastage of materials as compared to what it was earlier. Having experienced the effect of KUSHAL training on their sites, some developers, like G.K. Associates (donated Rs 10 Lakh), I-Parmar Group (donated Rs 5 Lakh) among others, were generous enough to give donations directly or towards KCPL, the cricket premier league hosted by KUSHAL. **INR 37 Lakhs** have been received in this way, so far.

- d) **Developers sponsor the launch/ special KUSHAL events:** Till date, almost all events like launching, certification, promotion events have been sponsored by the developer on whose site the event is organised. This contribution is mainly due to the well-wishing and gratitude of the developers who have benefited due to KUSHAL training. Expenses like mandap, chairs, PA system, food for trainees/guests, mementos etc. are borne by the developer. In about 50 events till date approx. INR 45 Lakhs is contributed by the developers. This in turn has reduced our per trainee cost.
- e) **Indirect sponsorship from CREDAI, Pune:** CREDAI, Pune has offered KUSHAL to use separate office premises that it owns, without rent. The current KUSHAL office is located in Shivajinagar, a commercial hub in the heart of the city. There is a direct saving of rent of about INR 1 Lakh per month. Being 46 months into the operation, about INR 46-50 Lakhs is the contribution in this regard from the Association, as its financial support to this activity, which also explains the under-utilization of Cap-ex fund.
- f) **Lavasa project of Ashiana Housing Ltd.:** KUSHAL was invited to train construction workers at Lavasa's Ashiana Housing Limited. Lavasa City is a nationally celebrated flagship project at a distance of about 70 km from Pune. About **INR 1.5 Lakhs** is the current revenue with this effort.
- g) **ACC sponsored KUSHAL training:** KUSHAL roped in ACC Ltd. which sponsored training of 75 masonry trainees at a lump sum cost of INR 5 Lakhs at Celestial City, Ravet Pune, a project of Pharande-Rama Associates. The proposal was successfully executed recently to the satisfaction of the sponsors.

Apart from the above, KUSHAL has done some exemplary work at the global level by participating in the World Skill Competition, 2015 at Sao Paulo, Brazil in August this year (2015). KUSHAL-trained worker, Parusharam Naik went on to receive the Medallion for Excellence under the skill 'Bricklaying' for the nation. This was the first time India had sent a contestant under 'Construction and Building Technology'. He was one amongst 27 participants and had stiff competition from the contestants in developed nations' like USA, Germany, Japan, China etc.

Prior to this, KUSHAL-trained contestants had participated in the Regional Competition held under the auspices of the World Skill International (WSI), held in April, 2015 as World Skill Oceania at Hamilton, New Zealand. In that competition, Parusharam Naik and Tikam Singh – both KUSHAL-trained workers, participated under the skills 'Bricklaying' and 'Wall and Floor Tiling' respectively and won Bronze for India. This was a huge success and provided them the necessary exposure to International contests and both emerged confident of performing at Brazil.

All this was possible because KUSHAL was given a mandate by the National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) to conduct National Level Skill Competition and train selected contestants for World Skills. Success stories like these by Non-profit Organizations amplify awareness campaigns and bring corporate partnerships to life, beneficial in achieving vital fundraising goals to reach out and benefit more and more unskilled/ underskilled manpower and give them the dignity that they deserve. This is evident from the sponsorship of Finolex, who sponsored KUSHAL for Sao Paulo World Skill Competition in Brazil, after KUSHAL's success at New Zealand. This has brought India in the purview of the skills map of the world and has got it noticed.

Skilling the Other - The Many Facets of Skill Training for Women in Informal Sector

Poulomi Pal

1. Introduction

Keeping India's current economic conditions in context, Godrej, as a private sector response, has developed a "Good & Green" vision for playing its part in creating a more inclusive and greener India. One of the key interventions of this vision is ensuring employability through skill development. By 2020 Godrej aims to invest in training of one million rural and urban youth. Besides, the company plans to address environmental issues by achieving zero waste, carbon neutrality, positive water balance and a 30 per cent increase in renewable energy use. It plans to innovate such that a third of its portfolio revenue comprises of Good and/or Green products and services.

SALON-i is one such course designed to train women participants in beauty care, skin and hair care and *mehendi* application along with an Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) module. Though SALON-i's employability goal is just a fraction of the country's overall need, the program is unique as it specifically aims at employability, entrepreneurship and empowerment of women.

Empowerment has been defined as a "process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes". Empowerment is about self-esteem and dignity. A large number of women and girls cite domestic responsibilities or family restrictions as a major hurdle in taking up jobs or starting their own ventures. Among the trainees were women who had to quit their government jobs to take care of children at home. We also trained women who had to discontinue their education because of marriage. There were young girls who were unsure about pursuing their interests or vocation once they were married, and women who were graduates and post-graduates but unable to take decisions related to their choice of career. Women and girls, they said, were expected to adjust and compromise all their life, and that now they were resigned to their fate. In such a situation, achieving the goal of employability and/or entrepreneurship, we believe, calls for a process that "empowers" women and girls. Across partners in different states and their centres, we found women and girls were unanimous that the SALON-i course, apart from training them with basic skills related to beauty and hair-care, allowed them to

find time for themselves and venture out of their homes. They found a space where they could come together, make new friends and have fun while being independent. This, according to us, is a great opportunity for GCPL and its partner organizations.



Figure 1

Launched in 2011, the Salon-i programme was envisaged as a highly scalable “shared value” opportunity with its focus on the two main outcomes of training unemployed women in beauty related skill and the creation of new jobs and opportunities in this sector.

2. The Salon-i Plan

The 440-hour SALON-i course involves:

- Identifying partner organizations with the potential to demonstrate viable models and set up 100 centres in the next five years
- Designing and developing technically-sound course content that meets industry standards
- Capacity building of trainers (training of trainers or TOT) and equipping them with the required knowledge and skills
- Providing beauty and hair-care related equipment for setting up of centres
- Providing beauty and hair-care related consumables as a student kit and regular replenishment of supplies to centres for conducting practicals
- Certification of trainees on completion of the SALON-i course
- Establishing linkages with salons (potential employers) and facilitating placements
- Providing support and guidance to strengthen capacities of partner organizations

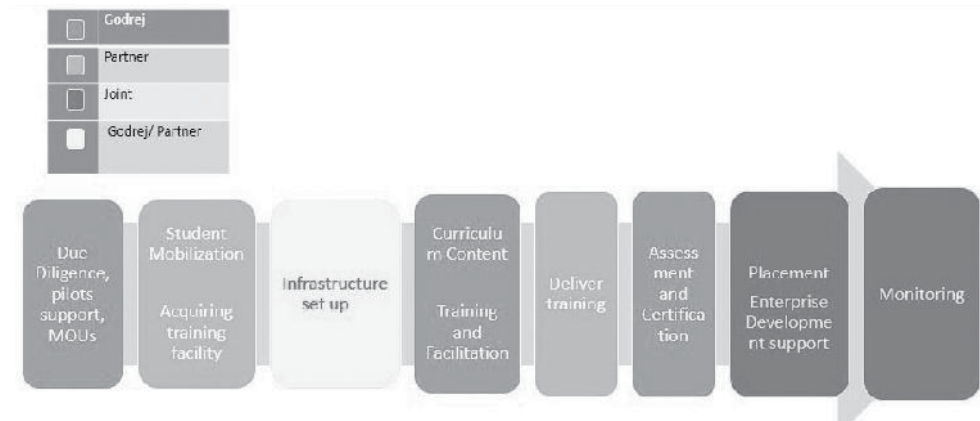


Figure 2: Godrej Salon-i Training Strategy

3. The Gap that Salon-i Aimed to Fill

Why was a programme like Salon-i necessary? With dime a dozen beauty-care courses already on the offer, where did Salon-i fit it? To understand this we look at a few cases where women felt cheated by the previous types of salon training.

Geeta was married at the tender age of 17. She is 32 now and is raising two kids. She wanted the freedom to make her own decisions through financial independence. She found it very difficult to get employment after her training. Employment with a somewhat decent salary came with a daily travel of around 7–10 km each way with 8 hours of work. Such prolonged absence from home was not easy for her because she was also supposed to take care of the household chores. She had found the 3-month training period easy as it hardly consumed 3 hours a day. Her training thus didn't prepare her for the long hours of work. Post training her only options lay with local salons, which were generally reluctant to employ or pay her. - All this made her question the worth of her certificate.

19 year old Leena had undergone the salon training program through a residential training institute (supported by Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL)). Although before the programme she didn't have much idea about the career prospects in this sector, during the course of her training, she learnt of placement opportunities with a large salon chain. The opportunity came with a relocation clause which she took because she wanted to be economically independent. However after joining, Leena, found out that her actual salary was less than the package promised. With no documentation proof, her only options were to either settle for the lower salary in the new city to gain experience or return home, both of which made her equally vulnerable.

Noori was promised by her trainer that she could “work from home” because she knew her family would never allow her to relocate for a job. However post training, she has no idea where to get funds or the source materials from. She also didn’t know how to publicise and get new clients.

19 year old Fahmida, only had formal education till class 8 but was very spirited and optimistic. She latched on to the first opportunity which came her way in a skill training centre. She was deft at Mehendi and really wanted to complete a beautician course to get a job. The training centre had a 3rd party assessment system. After completing her training and getting an A grade in her certificate she set out in search of a job. On her first interview she was asked to ‘cut, file and polish nails in Squa-oval shape’. Fahmida was rejected because she had never heard of filing shapes. In the assessment she filed her classmate’s nails and everyone was happy, but she did not know how to soften and cut the cuticle.

On close examination it was found that the assessment agencies often have no subject expert in the team and these National Skill Development Corporation empanelled 3rd party assessors had no understanding of content. Needless to say, words like “Pedagogy”, “facilitation”, “quality assessment “ had never even been discussed in the technical training domain, which was surprising given that adult learners were involved, most of whom had dropped out of formal schooling system.

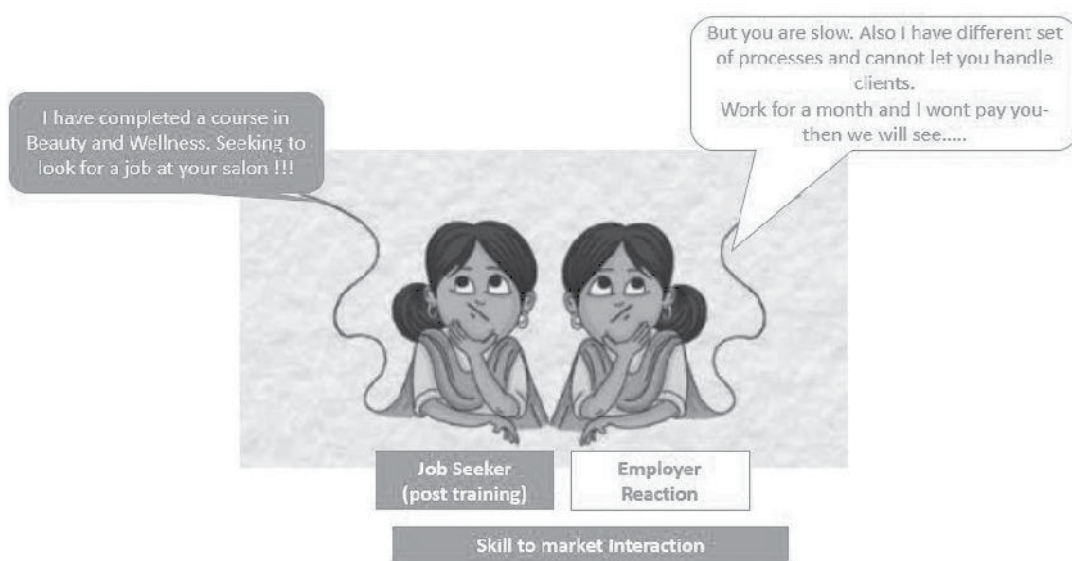


Figure 3

More often than not, the assessments are performed in such a way that everyone is passed without actually being evaluated. A case in point in the following sample MCQ question.

i. Eyeliner is used for:

1. Defining the eyes
2. Defining nose
3. Defining lips
4. Defining ears

There is also a considerable weightage on internal marks given by the trainer who more often than not does not keep proper records. Other than this the course also comprises of practical exams, but the assessment agency has no external clients who can be serviced for unbiased assessment of practical skills.

4. Content and Training

It has been found that the final impact of skill to market connect is impeded due to the non-uniformity of skilling pattern (GCPL works with 15 NGO partners in 22 states). To overcome this we have created an AV (Audio-Visual) demonstrative video of the entire Beauty and Wellness curriculum, which was done through research inputs of the stakeholders (especially the employers)

eliminating subjectivity and enhancing learning outcomes. In the next roll-out, an app loaded Tab-based version is being launched by Oct 30. Creating and transforming technical content (covering both conceptual understanding as well as “how to do” sections) was an urgent need in the skill sector.

In the sector there is no way the employer can spend time on developing skills post-employment. Moreover many of the trainers have dropped out of formal learning environment and even the trainers have not gone through a training and facilitation experience aimed at reaching adult learners. Even at the policy level, a framework for guidelines is provided which often becomes subject to interpretation. Here getting the final granular details from the employer (one who is to finally recognize the skills for gainful employment) is important. Hence it’s more important to remove subjectivity brought in by the trainer and provide functional demonstrative learning modules aimed at providing same outcomes. The unique AV modules ratified by large industry players in the sector and then combining animated videos and demonstrative

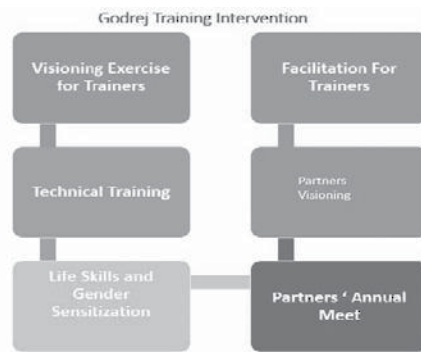


Figure 4

practices with quizzes to check comprehension have made great impact. There are simulations creating onscreen a salon-like environment and thereby helping the students to understand work-place safety guidelines and hygiene standards (something which often is a selection criterion for jobs). The module could be revised to incorporate aspects like the objective of the programme; overview of the industry; career options and possibilities; the range and kinds of parlours and services; scope of self-employment; inputs on risks related to exploitation and abuse.

5. Challenges Faced

The Salon-I program is targeted at women audiences in the 18–35 years category. Through technical beauty training Salon-i wants to be able to influence women at the cognitive level to initiate “social change”. And almost 95% of our target audience comprises girls, who have been forced to drop out of formal education system. They routinely face rejection in the family as a girl child and their dreams of doing something of their own choice are often left unfulfilled. Hence, getting such an audience to connect with the concept of employability is a key challenge.

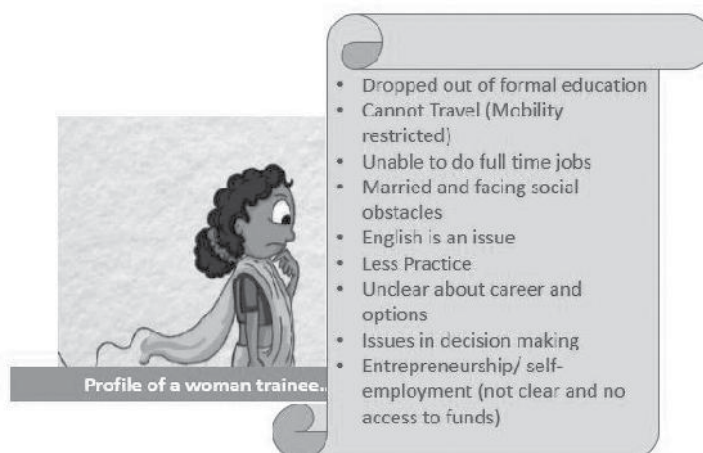


Figure 5

The main challenges came in terms motivating women to join the course, creating the structure of enrolment, addressing post-course concerns and understanding the trends and opportunities of this sector.

And above all, it brought forth what the programme stands for—“empowerment through employability or entrepreneurship”.

6. Studying Impact

Within a span of two years, and in a situation where the current system of training is neither comprehensive nor helpful in providing jobs, the following have been achieved:

- The SALON-i programme has reached out to a large number of women and girls across 18 states covering urban, semi-urban and rural areas.
- There are 21 partner organizations, through 160 centres who have demonstrated a range of strategies on mobilization, formatting and duration of the course, job placements and follow-up
- The SALON-i course helped women fulfil their long cherished dream of pursuing their interest in “beauty”.
- A large number of women and girls felt confident about having acquired a “skill” that could be useful in future –for taking up a job or to explore self-employment opportunities.
- Despite the constraints of having to travel to a full-time assignment with poor compensation, girls felt they had to gain some experience before they could explore better paid jobs or start on their own.
- A few of the girls have explored and succeeded in different models of self-employment such as providing door-to-door services or specialized services.
- The partner organizations value GCPL’s partnerships and recognize its contribution and support, which include the supply of equipment and consumables for the SALON-i labs, content development, TOTs and certification.
- Naturals acknowledged that the SALON-i programme is a timely response to the industry’s needs and the course design matches with industry standards for assistant beauticians. They are keen to absorb SALON-i graduates in their salons across the country.
- The recent partnership with the salon chain to strengthen its upcoming training academy, specifically in the area of content development and pedagogy, is another step into establishing linkages and building shared value.
- For GCPL, the learning drawn from the two-year long process is quite valuable – specifically, gaining a broader understanding of the beauty industry, the possibilities and challenges in “skilling” women and girls for gainful employment or entrepreneurship, and recognizing the scope of the programme in creating a platform for empowerment of women and girls.

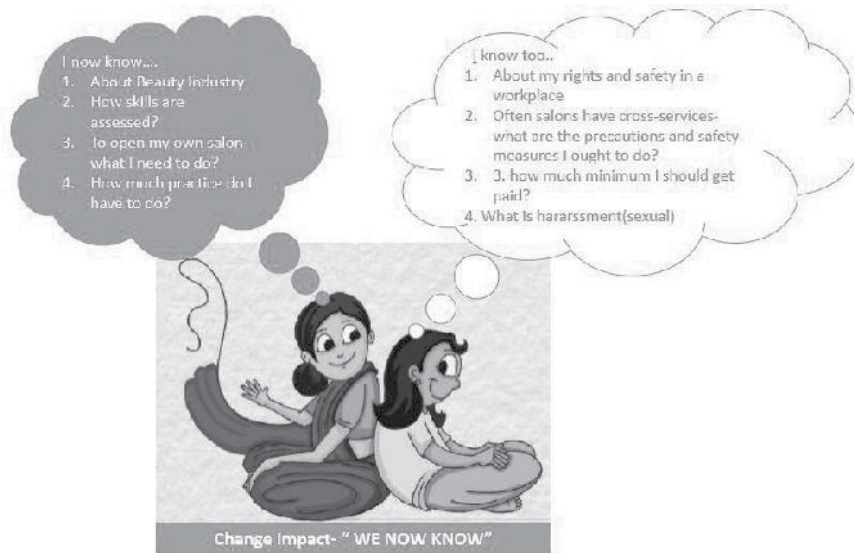


Figure 6

6.1 Suchitra's Story

Suchitra always dreamt of becoming a teacher, so that she could inspire students who would want to respect her and learn from her. Suchitra a trainer in a Thane centre is one of 200 trainers under the GCPL Salon-I program. The fourth daughter born in a Mumbai shanty to a physical challenged mother and an alcoholic violent father, Suchitra dropped out of school early and augmented the family income through odd jobs. Her only support was her mother, through whom she got in touch with a local lady, who ran her own beauty parlour. The world of shampoos and creams and coloured lipsticks and cosmetics was in sharp contrast to Suchitra's own difficult life marked with hopelessness. Soon Suchitra (now trained in the beautician's trade) was the only financial support for the family of 7.

When Suchitra heard of the Salon-i training centre she grabbed the opportunity to become a trainer attracted by the twin promises of an assured income and an escape from a marriage she didn't want to get into. She met with GCPL members during the interview. Of course Suchitra didn't have a regular diploma in beauty care (as is true of many of Salon-i's trainers). But she did possess in abundance, the strong desire and grit to change her circumstances. These were characteristics greatly valued by the GPCL team which hired her.

6.2 Mariya, our Miracle Girl

Mariya was one of three daughters and had been unable to clear her 12th boards. Her parents were reluctant to let her continue her education. In the summers she enrolled into a beautician's course (with Godrej salon-Ias partner organization). Although initially she was not very interested in the course, after the three month training and with post-interactions with her trainer, she changed drastically. Mariya's transformation was remarkable because she soon aspired to be not just a beautician but a trainer.

She respected the way a trainer could motivate and handhold participants with patience and understanding and wanted to be able to emulate that. Unlike the teachers she had in school who ignored students "who were not good enough", here there was someone who took an inclusive approach and tried to involve everyone. Mariya took on life with a new sense of purpose one of the best students in her class. She participated in the zonal skillathon and went on to the National Finals in Delhi. She went to one of our employment partners and had special sessions. She also became the face of our AV based training modules as an inspiration for other girls. And needless to say, she is one of our best trainers today.

6.3 Veiled Victory

Samreen from a conservative Muslim family migrated to Mumbra in 1992, post the communal riots in Mumbai. Life for her was already predetermined— going to school and waiting to get married. She decided to build her own fate instead of sitting as a mute spectator and letting life run its course and that made all the difference. The journey was not easy though. There were societal pressures on her family to keep her veiled and confined. However Samreen negotiated her way through the opposition and completed the course at Salon-i.

Today at 21, she is an exuberant, talkative woman who is proud to be a manager at a parlour in Kandivali (in the Western suburbs of Mumbai) and also the first girl in her family to be working for a salary of Rs 10,000 per month. She has vowed to help her younger siblings achieve whatever they want in life and strives to make her parents' life comfortable.

7. Future Plans

7.1 Life skills and Gender Sensitization: Gender Resource Centre

In consultation with partner organizations, the beauty training centres are being further transformed into gender resource centres with a range of activities and events that equip women and girls with life skills – assertion, negotiation, critical thinking, decision-making, working together, personal/collective goal setting – and prepare them to dialogue on issues related to patriarchy, violence and abuse. Life-skills, gender and facilitation are being introduced as cross cutting themes for empowering women and girls, and to strengthen the spirit of the programme. This will increase the agency of women and girls as employees, entrepreneurs, members of the family and society. They will become confident, be able to negotiate, and to support each other in times of crisis. The trainees look towards building stronger relationships, add value to the centre and slowly develop their own network. A range of issue-based learning resources will be made available, along with activities and events that establish and strengthen a meaningful engagement with women, girls and the larger community, and in turn support the mobilization process, increase visibility and strengthen the shared value of the programme.

7.2 Revisit the intent of the programme, keeping the shared value perspective and defining the 3Es

Alignment of the programme objectives of employability, entrepreneurship and empowerment (3Es) with partner aspirations is important. While empowerment is a cross cutting outcome integral to the process there is a need for reflection within the GCPL team, along with workshops/consultations with partner organizations, center managers and trainers.

Since the SALON-i course is the key activity of the intervention, there is a need to respond to the **specific streams of demand** (if required, by offering two different courses):

- For women and girls who wish to take up full-time employment, the industry (especially professional salons / chains) expects candidates with skills in pedicure, manicure, and facial and as assistants. The need is to provide women and girls with lots of practice that would help strengthen the Standard Operating Procedures. Precision must be maximized and time taken minimized for each service.

- For women and girls who wish to be self-employed, the course will have to be tweaked to include basics of different skills for a range of (culturally relevant) services including bridal make up, hairstyle, haircut, Mehendi and other services. Such a group may not be keen on perfecting only a few skills.

For this to be successful, SALON-i trainers and team members of partner organizations need to identify women and girls with an attitude and aptitude for entrepreneurship. An intensive EDP is designed and offered to such trainees across partners/centres every six months.

7.3 Facilitation and Pedagogical Guidance for the Future

The pedagogy of the ToT and training sessions with participants need to be based on the principles of adult learning and adoption of an engaging process with a focus on “learning” rather than “teaching”

There is a need to create further capacity building opportunities for SALON-i trainers and team members through periodic regional-level refreshers. There is also a need to reflect upon the intent of the programme, overview of the industry, scope and possibilities in terms of career and market opportunities, and on each of the key steps of the programme—mobilization, screening, planning and transacting sessions, mapping and exposure visits, providing support for placement and self-employment.

Designing and development of audiovisuals, films and other learning resources can further strengthen the TOT, the course and the programme.

8. Looking forward

For the Salon-I team the journey continues. They believe that this is a human intervention and not a juggernaut of numbers where people especially women can be put through training inputs and the output/outcome would be livelihood enhancement. The entire ecosystem needs to be considered. The training also cannot be a merely one-size fits all formula, especially with a heterogeneous group of women who all have their own challenges shaped by several social and cultural factors. The intervention is to create change catalysts through trainers who envision transformation thereby kindling the spirit of self worth and self reliance amongst the girls and women. They can then handhold the students and enable and encourage them to dream and imagine.

Vocational Training Program in Physical Education & Sports

Mukul Chowdhary & Jyoti Majmudar

1. Introduction

“Padhoge likhoge banoge nawab, kheloge kudoge banoge kharab”

If you are good in studies (which is mostly limited to your cognitive abilities), you will be successful. If you play, you will spoil your life. This saying in India reverberates the popular sentiment which pushes children early on to make choices between academics and sports. As a result, the students who have

आओ स्वस्थ भारत की नींव डाले,
बच्चों को खेल सिखाएं।


**ARE YOU PASSIONATE
ABOUT SPORTS?
MAKE YOUR PASSION
YOUR CAREER**


**Join the vocational
Course in
Physical Education
and Sports**

**DISCOVER THE
OPPORTUNITIES**

**BECOME A PHYSICAL TRAINER
IN SCHOOLS**

**Vocational Course of
Physical Education and Sports**


GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA


GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA

physical skills and abilities ignore their academics and the ones who have cognitive abilities ignore their physical activity. Education is unbalanced and cognitive abilities get more weightage than physical skills. Most students who do not do well in education get left out of it and have nowhere to go. The socio-economic conditions of this class of students are largely very poor.

Economic growth, on the one hand, has created opportunities of employment for a large section of youth but on the other, has also had its toll on the health and well-being of the population in general. Fast paced, stressful and sedentary lifestyle has resulted in new diseases unheard of in our parent's generation - like juvenile diabetes, obesity, cardiac issues etc. There is a danger that people of today's generation may have a shorter lifespan than the previous one.

2. Background

A significant percentage of students drop out by the time they reach middle school. From middle school to high school is another significant drop. All these students are not able to cope with the education as it exists today. A lot is to be blamed on the quality of education that we offer to our children. A drop out from school is left with no skills and competencies that can be of any use in the market place. Sports are a great way to engage students. The physical abilities of the students disillusioned by our academic system can be put to great use by encouraging their exceptional physical skills and honing them into employment ready professionals who can support the booming industry of fitness, sports and health. An increased awareness and focus on preventive health, fitness and well-being is already accelerating the employment opportunities and career options in this sector. Economic growth is creating a section of society which is suffering the ills of sedentary lifestyle, but at the same time, is willing to invest in preventive healthcare.

EduSports is placed at the cusp of this marriage of economic and social growth. These children who are passionate about sports can be easily trained to be the service provider in Sports and fitness.

EduSports offers a vocational program in physical education and sports inviting all the students who are physical gifted. EduSports trains these students in the skills and competencies required to engage back with the society and offer essential services in teaching physical education, sports and fitness to children in schools. This engagement may also rekindle the passion of pursuing higher level skills and competencies in this sector which is growing at a very fast pace and offering a wide range of opportunities from sports medicine to coaching to media to sports management.

3. About the Physical Education Industry

The immediate need is of good quality physical education and sports professionals at various levels. This demand is going to explode in the coming years offering opportunities for all who want to be associated with Sports and build a career in this field. Several job opportunities already exist and new ones are taking shape.

Table 1: Job Opportunities in the Physical Education & Sports Sector

Self	Schools	Sports Academies	Fitness Centers	Hospitals	Sports Events
-Professional Players	-Physical Education Teachers -Early Years Physical Trainers -Sports Coaches	- Sports Coaches - Facility Managers - Academy Managers	-Fitness Trainers -Nutritionists	-Sports Doctors -Physiotherapists -Nutritionists	-Event Managers -Officials -Commentators -Journalists

There is already a gap today in the demand and supply of professionals in this sector in quantity as well as quality. A vocational course on physical training and sports gives basic exposure of the relevant knowledge and skills required for someone interested in this sector. Participation in such a vocational course should build entry level knowledge and skills giving the student an advantage when pursuing further education in this field or employability skills, should the student decide to go for a job.

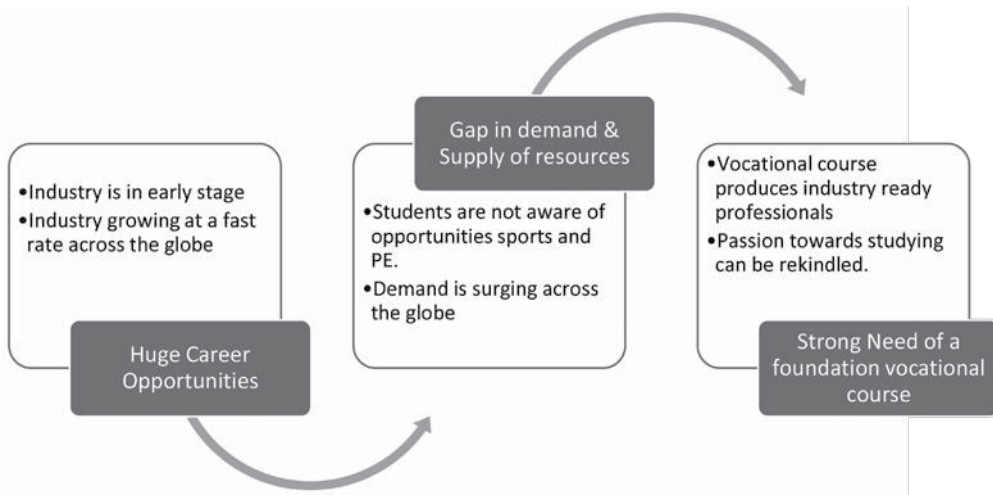


Figure 1: Vocational Course – Why?

The vocational curriculum developed is for students from Standard 9 to Standard 12 – the idea being that once they graduate from 12th grade, they will be equipped to take up jobs in the PE & Sports sector if they require or else continue to develop their skills in the same area.

EduSports had the opportunity to execute such a program for the first time ever in India, in association with the Government of Haryana in 2013. This program is currently running in 37 schools in Haryana and we have students in Grade 9, 10 and 11.

Vocational Course in Haryana: Some glimpses

- **EduSports vocational course on PE and Sports is running in 37 government schools of Haryana, India**
- **19 schools in September 2013 and 18 schools in July 2014**
- **37 qualified & trained resources executing the programme**
- **IT team monitoring the entire programme using EduSports Online**
- **3 Member team monitoring the programme from Head Office**

4. Details of the Vocational Training Program in PE & Sports

Since most of the job roles in this sector require the employee to be dealing with fellow human beings, there is a certain level of maturity and skills required in dealing with the customers. The program is taught at 4 levels – with Level 1 corresponding to Std 9 and Level 4 to Std 12.

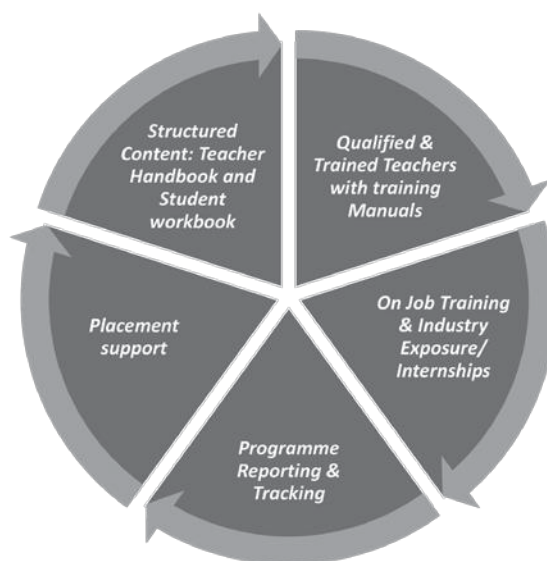


Figure 2: Course - Key Components

Level 1 of this vocational course would give exposure to students on several skills that are required across the sector so that they get a flavor of what is the scope and also get an opportunity to explore their innate choices. As the course progresses to level 2, students would be confident of doing roles like grounds marking, facility readiness, assisting a physical education teacher in a school or academy. By level 4 the students would have confidence to conduct lessons on their own under the guidance of a Physical Education director in a school or a team coach. They would have basic knowledge of Sports like skills, rules, ground markings, conducting tournaments, basic first aid and a lot of exposure to actually conducting such lessons with children. They will have knowledge of skills versus fitness and what can be done to improve both.

Table 2: Programme Content

9 th Grade	Foundation of Physical Education
	Meaning and concept of Health and Fitness
	Age Appropriate physical activities
	Safety measures on play ground
	Roles and responsibilities of a teacher
	Ground and court marking
	Nutrients, balanced diet
10 th Grade	Evolution of Physical Education
	Functions of human body
	Teaching different age groups
	Postural deformities and corrective measures
	Effective methods of teaching
	Basic competencies of event plan
	Calorific Values, diet and weight
11 th Grade	Career opportunities in PE and sports
	Fitness components and tests
	Sports coaching
	Methods of training
	First Aid Basics
	Coaching creed, Communication skills
	Managing Sports Days and Events
	Effect of diet on performance

12 th Grade	Roles and Responsibilities of Early years physical activity trainer
	Code of Ethics, Conduct for a Physical Education Teacher
	Making a Year Plan for the school PE programme
	Projects: Intra School Sports Events
	Talent Detection, Identification and Development
	Sports specific diet and recovery, Rehabilitation, First-aid (Advance)
	Fitness Assessment - Health and Skill
	Introduction to ICT

Please find below the links to the curriculum developed. Level 1 is for Standard 9, Level 2 for Standard 10 and so on.

NSQF Level 1:

<http://www.psscive.nic.in/curricula-psscive/NSQ%20PE%20&%20S%20Level%201-CBC.pdf>

NSQF Level 2:

<http://www.psscive.nic.in:8080/curricula-psscive/NSQ%20PE%20&%20S%20Level%202-CBC.pdf>

NSQF Level 3:

<http://www.psscive.nic.in:8080/curricula-psscive/NSQ%20PE%20&%20S%20Level%203-CBC.pdf>

NSQF Level 4: Under Development

5. Program Tracking and Monitoring

The Vocational Training program is continuously monitored to ensure consistent quality of delivery and complete transparency. Weekly reports are sent to the Directorate of School Education (DSE) and their feedback is incorporated into the program. Also regular tests/examinations are conducted for the students as prescribed by the State Education Board.

Weekly Report Performal (6/7/2015 to 11/7/2015)											
Subject: Physical Education & Sports											
School Name:GSSS ISMAILA , School Code-4020 District ROHTAK											
Class 9th Report -Total Students in Class- 2B											
Date	Topic Covered	students present	Periods in a day	Practical Session/ Role Play	Hobby Classes	E-Learning	Written Test	Guest Lecture	SMS Status	Field Visit	Remarks
6/7/2015	MODULE-2 SESSION-3 TOPIC- THE MUSCULAR SYSTEM,RESPIRATORY SYSTEM	22/28	2	YES	6TH CLASS TOPIC-WHAT IS PHYSICAL EDUCATION	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
7/7/2015	MODULE-2 SESSION-3 TOPIC- DIGESTIVE SYSTEM,CIRCULATORY,NERVOUS SYSTEM	23/28	2	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
8/7/2015	MODULE-2 SESSION-3 TOPIC- REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM,ENDOCRINE,URINARY SYSTEM	23/28	2	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
9/7/2015	MODULE-1 SESSION-1,2 WRITTEN TEST CONDUCTED	25/28	2	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
10/7/2015	MODULE-2 SESSION-4 IDENTIFYING FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS-TOPICS- FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS	26/28	2	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
11/7/2015	SECOND SATURDAY HOLIDAY										
Class 10th Report- Total Students in Class-25											
Date	Topic Covered	students present	Periods in a day	Practical Session/ Role Play	Hobby Classes	E-Learning	Written Test	Guest Lecture	SMS Status	Field Visit	Remarks
6/7/2015	MODULE-2 SESSION-3 TOPIC- HYGIENC, PERSONAL HYGIENC,COMMUNICABLE DISEASE	22/25	2	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
7/7/2015	MODULE-2 SESSION-2 FUNCTIONS OF HUMAN BODY TOPIC-SKELETAL SYSTEM	23/25	2	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
8/7/2015	MODULE-2 SESSION-2 TOPIC- MUSCULAR,RESPIRATORY,DIGESTIVE SYSTEM	19/25	2	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
9/7/2015	MODULE 1 SESSION 1 WRITTEN TEST CONDUCTED	23/25	2	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
10/7/2015	MODULE-2 SESSION-2 TOPIC- CIRCULATORY,NERVOUS,URINARY SYSTEM	20/25	2	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	V.GOOD
11/7/2015	SECOND SATURDAY HOLIDAY										
Teacher Name		Principal Name with Signature									
Vocational Teacher-Physical Education & Sports		GSSS									
GSSS ISMAILA(School Code)4020		District Name									
Distt. Name ROHTAK		Principal Govt. Girls Sr. Sec. School ISMAILA (Rohtak)									

Figure 3: Weekly Report Format

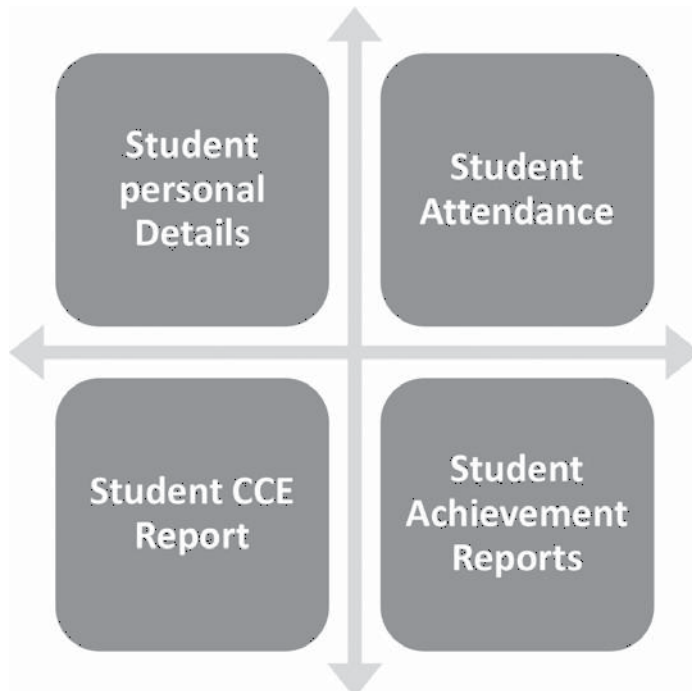


Figure 4: Student Perspective Reports

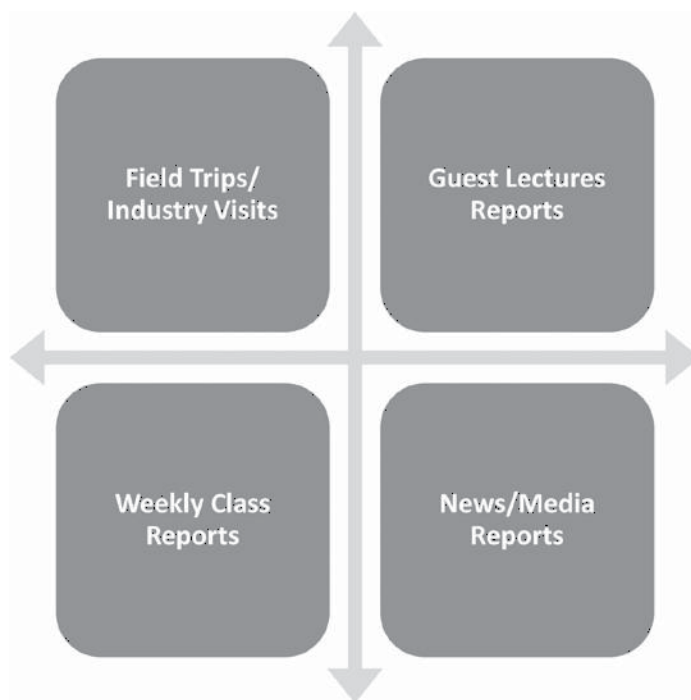


Figure 5: Student Perspective Reports

6. Impact of the initiative

This Course was first introduced in the state of Haryana in Sept 2013 by Department of Secondary Education, Govt. of Haryana. The course currently covers about 2300 students spread across 37 schools in Haryana. Below is some of the feedback collected from students who have undergone the program in Haryana.

6.1 Encouraged to Pursue Sports

“My name is Deepak Sh. Jai Kumar. I am a student of 11th class in G.S.S.S. Model Town, Sonipat. In 11th class, I am studying under the NVQF vocational course physical education and sports. Before joining this course, I am serious about my studies. After joining this course, I started BOXING and now I am a state level player and going towards progress.” **Deepak, Class – 11th – D, G.S.S.S. Model Town**

“Physical education is a good course and I am very glad to join this course. After join this course I am starting playing basketball and today I am a state level basketball player, thank you.” **Jashpreet Kaur, Level 3, GSSS NILOKHERI**

6.2 Improvement in Communication Skills

“My name is Chintu Sh. PuranMal. I am a student of 11th class in G.S.S.S. Model Town, Sonipat. In 11th class, I am studying under the NVQF vocational course

physical education and sports. Before joining this course, I am very weak and having phobia of English. After joining this course, I started to read books of this course in English and now I am good in English reading writing as well as in speaking.”

Chintu, Class – 11th – F, G.S.S.S. Model Town

6.3 Instilling Discipline

“My name is Sahil S/O Angrej Singh. I am a student of 10th class in G.S.S.S. Model Town, Sonipat. In 10th class, I am studying under the NVQF vocational course physical education and sports. After joining this course, I felt lot of changes in my personal life regarding the discipline etc. I feel proud to join this course.” **Sahil, Class – 10th – A, G.S.S.S. Model Town**

“My name is Sandeep S/O Sh. Ram Lal. I am a student of 11th class in G.S.S.S. Model Town, Sonipat. In 11th class, I am studying under the NVQF vocational course physical education and sports. After joining this course, I felt lot of changes in my personal life and aware regarding the discipline, physical fitness etc.” **Sandeep Kumar, Class – 11th – A, G.S.S.S. Model Town**

6.4 Inspiring Others

“My name is Sumit S/O Jai Nath. I am a student of 10th class in G.S.S.S. Model Town, Sonipat. In 10th class, I am studying under the NVQF vocational course physical education and sports. After watching the activities of my elder brother (Amit jai Nath student of class 11th) regarding personal life and class, I decided to join this course. I am enjoying a lot in my vocational course.” **Sumit, Class – 10th – A, G.S.S.S. Model Town**

6.5 Increase in Attendance

“My name is Deepu S/O Kartar Singh. I am a student of 10th class in G.S.S.S. Model Town, Sonipat. In 10th class, I am studying under the NVQF vocational course physical education and sports. Before joining this course, I am irregular student in school. After joining this course, I felt that my dream comes true of playing because I like playing games always.” **Deepu, Class – 10th – A, G.S.S.S. Model Town**

6.6 Gaining Confidence

“My name is Farukh Nur Hussion S/O Mr. Noor Hussain. I am a student of 9th class in G.S.S.S. Model Town, Sonipat. In 9th class, I am studying under the NVQF vocational course physical education and sports. Before joining this course, my nature is shy. After joining this course, I felt lot of courage in my personal life. Now I started to take part in all activities regarding class and school. I feel proud to join this course.”

With Regards

Farukh Nur Hussion, Class – 9th – A, G.S.S.S. Model Town

6.7 Increased Awareness of Health & Fitness

“My name is Shivam S% Sh. Arun Kumar. I am a student of 9th class in G.S.S.S. Model Town, Sonipat. In 9th class, I am studying under the NVQF vocational course physical education and sports. After joining this course, I felt lot of changes in my personal life regarding the fitness and importance of exercise etc.” Shivam, Class – 9th – B, G.S.S.S. Model Town

“I have learned many things in this course that touch my life very deeply like ,

1. FIRST AID = how manage sports injuries and basic normal injuries in our daily life like , abraision , cut etc.

2. NUTRITION = what is the difference between normal man and a sports person diet , what is carbo , protien , fat , vitamins , etc .” Jashpreet Kaur, Level 3, GSSS NILOKHERI

6.8 Change in Lifestyle

“Dear sir I want share my experience after join the vocational course of physical education & sports, in this course my life style totally changed before this course I was wake up late morning, brush the teeth 1 time in a day, no morning exercise no evening exercise, eat junk food, many bad habits in my lifestyle. But when i join this physical education vocational course my lifestyle totally change. I wake up daily early morning 5 ‘Oclock and do many physical activity like that running , yoga , playing basketball etc.

Today I knows what is hygiene and how its effect our life, doing yoga daily and how it improve my immune system. I really say thanks to our Physical education Teacher Mr. Jitender singh for joining this course.”

Navdeep Singh, Level 3, GSSS NILOKHERI

7. Factors that Contributed to the Success of the Programme

7.1 Magic of Sports

Sports has a natural pull when it comes to children. Using the power of Sports EduSports has weaved the curriculum in such a manner that the course is highly practical, engaging and educational. The learning can be put to use immediately in conducting tournaments for the school/ block/district, organising community sports days, supporting sports events etc. This instant gratification that the students can see of the skills and competencies they learn is a big motivator for them to continue with the course.

7.2 Teaching Methodologies

EduSports has also invested heavily on training the trainers. Un-conventional teaching methodologies like role plays, demonstration, debate, peer learning, projects, hands on training are used. Lecture method is the last resort to teach any concept. In addition students are exposed to guest speakers coming from various backgrounds in the Sports sector.

7.3 Hands on Training

Encouraging and positively flexible working environment with the government

All these have been possible due to the trust government has demonstrated by awarding such programs to the private sector who have the flexibility and speed to execute on the program.



8. Number of Gainful Employment Provided

EduSports is currently in the 3rd year of the program and the first batch of students would graduate next year. EduSports will know about the employment statistics only then.

9. Critical Challenges Faced

- Student mobilisation is a challenge. A lot of effort needs to be put in engaging the students and their parents to see the long term benefit of being in this course. These students are generally unable to cope with the mainstream education system.
- Challenges are also faced by the inertia of existing ways of working in some schools. Teaching methodologies are obsolete and in some cases, a feudal mentality exists which treat students as an object rather than a subject. EduSports needs to constantly monitor, supervise and motivate our trainers to not fall into the existing system traps and keep up the enthusiasm and work hard to keep the students engaged.

- Students coming from poor socio economic backgrounds also move constantly with their families in search of better prospects. EduSports loses several students to such movement.
- Due to poor standards in mainstream education, the vocational courses need to also train students in other subjects - especially languages.
- The biggest challenge is the drop out after 10th grade due to failure to pass mainstream education.

10. Issues and Challenges in Achieving Scale and Sustainability and Efforts Made to Address Them

- If the unitised delivery is clearly defined, achieving scale is not a major issue. Budgets need to be allocated and maintained for supervision and monitoring.
- Getting good quality trainers is an issue especially if salaries are low.
- To maintain quality, EduSports needs to invest in the continuous training of the trainers. Often budgets are cut for training.
- Monitoring, supervision, appraising performance of trainers and linking it to student success is required. Sufficient budgets need to be allocated for that.
- Private partnerships can go a long way in bringing fresh ways of working. These new ideas should be encouraged. Again the feudal ways of working need to give way to cooperation, trust and partnership with an eye on the goals.

“I faced so many challenges since starting but I believe deeply that challenges are part of our daily routine as well as our job. Mostly challenges can be solved by our appropriate effort and positive thinking towards challenge. So best of luck and let’s go ahead.”

- Jai Prakash Saini, Vocational PE & Sports Trainer

11. Conclusion

There is so much untapped potential in our children which, due to the restrictive nature of our education system, that may never be uncovered. Vocational education is one tool to uncover this potential early on and offer the children opportunity to become a productive resource. The power of this course particularly is to bring opportunities to physically gifted students and motivate them through appreciation of the skills they have rather than to penalise them for the competencies they don’t have. The course teaches the students to value their skills and achievements and how they can use it to further their development.

- Our experience is that all these students can be easily brought back to mainstream and encouraged to learn.
- This is evidenced by the popularity of this course in all the government schools where it is running. Due to the success of the project in Haryana, EduSports has signed up with the Govt. of Punjab and Maharashtra as well.
- With the rise in awareness of Health & Fitness and the critical health challenges faced by a majority in the world, it is believed that Physical Education & Sports can be used to provide gainful employment to the youth. With the support from progressive Governments, leaders, NGOs and other Developmental organizations EduSports should see increased traction in this field in the years to come and the time is ripe for fruitful public-private partnerships in this domain. This course will not only provide employment but also change the lifestyle of the employee for the better.

Empowering People with Disabilities¹ for Livelihood through Skill Development: An initiative by EnAble India, Bengaluru

Manish Maskara and Sonakshi Anand

Yash (name changed), who comes from a rural background is a person who has a mobility impairment. His family survived on a sustenance economy, and hence there was no scope for them to help him by providing a wheelchair nor were they aware of the government schemes available for the same. Yash used his hands to walk, even with such difficult conditions, both he and his parents wanted him to study. Given his condition, he was mocked and ridiculed at the school around his village, forcing his parents to send him far, where he lived on his own and learned to become independent. However, this did not come easy. No one wanted to employ him and give him any job. His self-esteem and desire to work was lowering day by day. He finally got a menial job that would pay him 50 rupees a day, which was too difficult for him to survive on.

Gautam (name changed) is a visually impaired individual with only two fingers on each hand, living in Bangalore. He was unable to imagine his life without the help of his parents and siblings, who would help in every step. He was convinced that he would never be able to live a normal, independent life and was fearful to think of his future. His father was in service, while his mother was a home maker. Never did she let him do any work nor go out on his own. The family was extremely protective of him. Gautam, would long to have confidence in himself to find a way out, but was not too sure of himself.

Sridevi (name changed) suffers from a slight retina issue, leading to partial visual impairment. Rita (name changed) suffers from a severe hearing impairment, while Pavan (name changed) suffers from cerebral palsy. Sanjay (name changed) suffers from Learning disorders and a slight intellectual disability.

Yash, Gautam, Sridevi, Rita, Sanjay, Pavan and many others in the world are People with Disabilities (PWDs). They come from diverse families like Sanjay is a son of a retired army officers, while Pavan is the son of a farmer. Along with this difference, some of them are suffering from hearing impairment, some from physical disabilities, some from learning disorders while others suffer from mental illness. Such PWD youth of India and other countries also aspire for a decent livelihood.

¹ The authors have used the term Persons with Disability (PWDs) to avoid any negative connotations. PWDs is considered as the politically correct and giving adequate focus on the person, than the disability.

1. Context

There are many more similar youth (as described above) in India who have suffered from low-esteem, discrimination, and lived a life without dignity because they are PWDs. Moreover, being disabled comes with the added burden of becoming dependent physically at an individual level and at the household or societal level both socially and financially. Such dependence shapes the perception of the PWDs themselves as being worthless and feeling left out from the mainstream society hence being socially excluded. It also shapes the larger perception of the society in being only sympathetic towards them assuming that the PWDs would not be able to contribute to the household economy. They are not seen as individuals with any abilities or capabilities for becoming independent.

An event, similar to those mentioned above, occurred in the year 1992 when Hari Raghavan, brother of Shanti Raghavan, was diagnosed with a degenerative eye disorder. He went to USA for rehabilitation since such facilities were not available in India. During 1993-1997, Shanti and her husband, Dipesh were deeply involved in the rehabilitation processes of Hari through teaching him computers with special screen software, improving his mobility, life skills and ensuring he has a well balanced lifestyle that included snorkeling, trekking etc., without being made to feel that he can not perform any activity due to his disorder. In 1997 to continue Hari's rehabilitation, the couple quit their corporate jobs and returned to India bringing them back their experiences and responsibilities of rehabilitating Hari.

As a result of her involvement in her brother's rehabilitation, Shanti initially started teaching a couple of visually impaired students the use of computers, donated by some people. Teaching the students to use computers was not found to be difficult, however the availability of full time jobs for them was a major challenge faced by Shanti. At the another level, the realization of not getting access to full time jobs, even if they were available, was seen as another huge challenge. Slowly and gradually, Shanti started working towards addressing these challenges. Finally, in 1999 the personal experiences got transformed into an intervention for the disabled by the setting up of EnAble India in Bengaluru to strive for economic independence and dignity of the people with disabilities. The need to empower these PWDs occurs from the mental block which most of them possess that hinders them in even trying to live a life with dignity. EnAble India believes it starts with this change that can later be transformed into employment or better livelihood options for them.

Through various social integration projects, Gautam was enabled to think out of the box solutions, so he can become independent. A small step which Gautam thought was necessary, was to cook for himself and his family, since his mother would never let him

cook, since she was afraid that he will hurt himself. He used his life skills training that he received through the intervention and determinedly decided to live a normal independent life. The little gesture of cooking changed him and his family. He got so confident that he learned computers himself and then started teaching computers to workshop candidates in EnAble India. This just proves that little steps will take you a long way!

2. Relevance of the Case

In India, the disability sector is estimated at 4-5% of the population which is close to 70 million people being disabled as highlighted by National Centre for Promotion for Employment for Disabled (NCPEDP).² Despite these figures and provisions for the welfare of the disabled in Constitution of India, the needs of the disabled in terms of meaningful employment remain largely unmet.³ Similar is the case for other countries in Asia who have largely ignored or not addressed the concerns of persons with disabilities. By and large, PWDs are further excluded or discriminated against, through unequal treatment and denial of basic rights by the broader society. The need for meaningful employment for PWDs thus, becomes crucial from the viewpoint of economic growth for India, when it is known that the majority of the PWDs are youth.⁴ Despite the fact that India has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), young PWDs still struggle to gain access to quality education, vocational training and employment.⁵ Moreover due to multiple barriers and challenges associated with the disabled working population, it is in fact quite difficult for them to get adapted to the formal job scenario.

Though there has been a focus on skilling and earmarking of large governmental budgets, whether through individual departments or the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) there is no mandate for specific training for the PWDs. Moreover, taking for granted that the life of disabled is that of dependence, the developmental programs, barring a few, hardly make any efforts to include them. At the same time, it is also assumed that disabled cannot contribute to the growth of the economy and hence tend to miss out on this huge segment of potential economic agents.

2 2015, S. Abhi et al. Social Entrepreneurship-Building Sustainability through business models and measurement of social impact, Chapter 13, pp 299-303 in Manimala and Wasdani (eds.), Entrepreneurial Ecosystem- Perspectives from Emerging Economies, Springer (2015)

3 2011, Shenoy M. Person with Disability and India Labour market: Challenges and Opportunities, ILO Report.

4 According to Census 2001 data, more than 35% of the disabled persons (more than 7.5 million in number) were of age less than 20 years, another 15% were of age between 20 to 30 years and less than 20% of disabled males and females were of age more than 50 years.

5 Maureen Gilbert, Solution Exchange for work and employment community, Query: Access to decent work for Persons with disability, Compilation 19 August 2010.

In the light of the above context, the intervention by EnAble India, Bengaluru holds great relevance and significance. It addressed the concerns of PWDs by providing them with jobs, going one step beyond just showing sympathy to them through laying emphasis on building an enabling ecosystem for empowerment of PWDs. At the Asia level, 2013-2022 is being celebrated as the Asia and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities to emphasize on disability inclusive development.⁶ Considering this phase of time, highlighting the significant contribution of the intervention by EnAble India for the PWDs would serve as a learning model for empowering the disabled through skill development and hence stepping stones in breaking the barrier of social exclusion.

3. The Intervention: Nature, Timeline, Strategy and Activities

EnAble India was registered, as a public charitable trust in 1999 by Shanti and Dipesh to work towards the economic independence and dignity of persons with disability. Since 2004, the founder and managing trustee, Shanti worked on a full time basis for the organization. Dipesh, co-founder and trustee joined her, five years later, in a full time voluntary role after leaving his consultancy services. Initially since the inception, the focus of the organization was on persons with vision impairment due to personal experiences of the founders. As the work grew there was a pressing need to find suitable jobs for the visually impaired and also the need to expand their work to reach out to persons with hearing impairment too.

As a result of this, in 2004 for the first time staff members were hired and by 2005, their office shifted to a 2000 square feet office in Bangalore, utilizing stipend from Ashoka fellowship offered to Shanti to fund the rent and administrative expenses. A couple of years back, the office was relocated to a new place in Bangalore funded and supported by Azim Premji philanthropic initiatives. During 2011-12, *EnAble India Solution Private Limited* as a social enterprise was set up with the help of a consulting firm i.e. Sattva. In 2011, the organization proposed its vision to bring about a change in the consciousness of stakeholders (PWDs, employers and community around PWDs) concerning PWDs.

Currently, the organization caters to PWDs who are largely the youth and have been affected by visual impairment, physical disability, hearing impairment, intellectual and development disability, profound disability, autism, cerebral palsy, mental illness and many others. It has around 50 paid employees out of

⁶ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Disability: Opportunities and Challenges. (Link:<http://www.unescap.org/our-work/social-development/disability/about>)

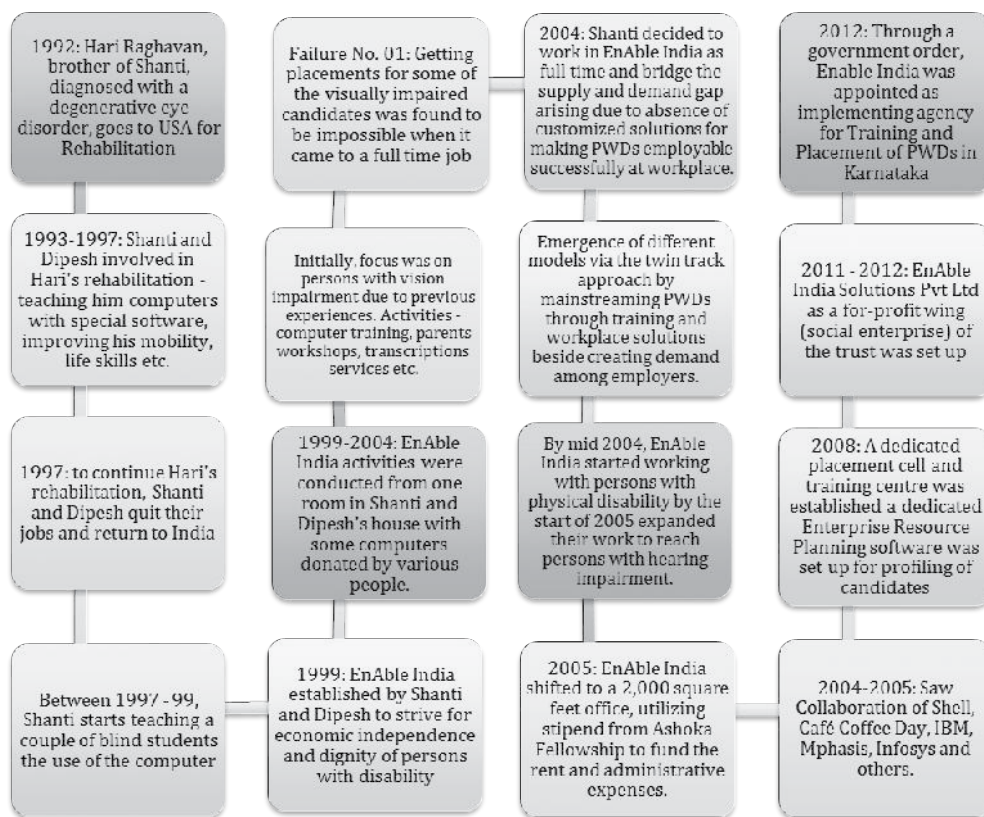


Figure 1: Timeline of key events from the Pre-inception to Inception to growth phases

which 49% of the staff members are persons with disabilities (vision impaired, hearing impaired, physically disabled etcetera) and 36% of the staff members are women. The figure below looks at the entire timeline of the initiatives taken by EnAble India, right from its pre-inception phase to its current phase.

Based on the available reports, including their annual reports, social audit reports, scoping studies etc., it is seen that the organization has two kinds of stakeholders viz. primary and secondary.

Primary stakeholders largely consist of PWD aspiring for employment, organizations employing them, service-delivery partners and implementing team at office.

The secondary stakeholder group comprises of those groups who are regularly updated about the progress of activities at the organizational level like funders/supporters, strategy partners, government and regulatory bodies and family of PWDs. EnAble India strives to build synergy between both the categories of stakeholders towards enabling the PWDs for employment.

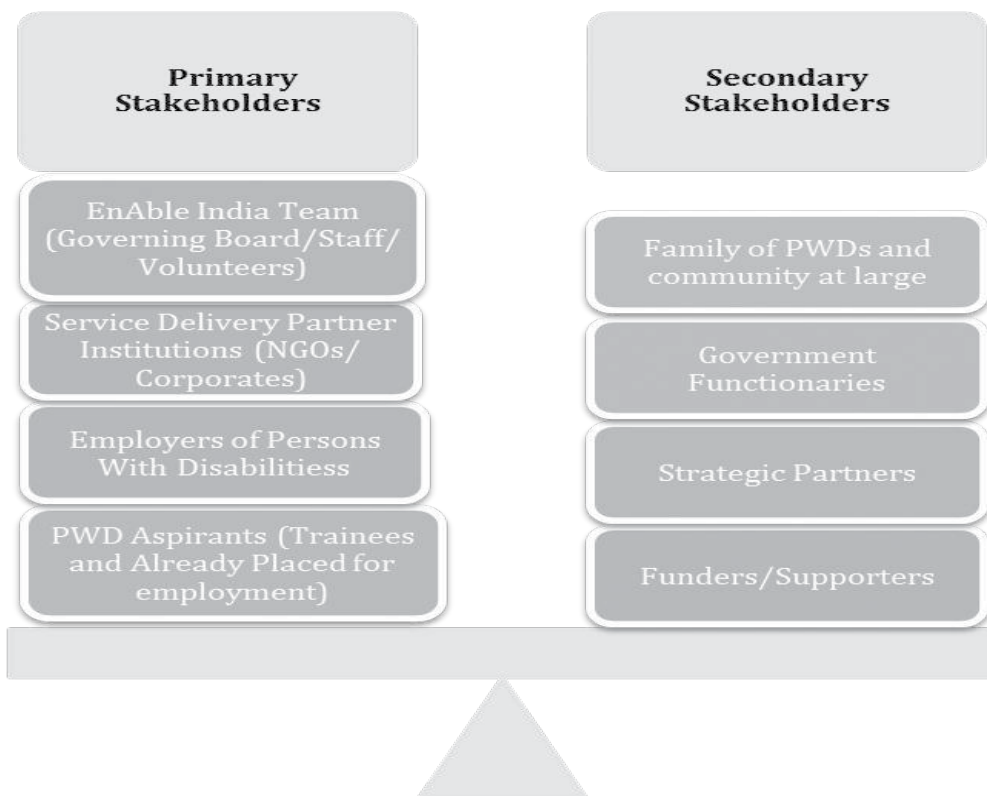


Figure 2: Stakeholders of EnAble India (Source: Social Audit Report 2010)

Given the timeline of the broader activities of the intervention and the concerned stakeholders, the following sections elaborate upon the activities and strategies followed by the intervention in detail.

4. From Registration Desk to the Job Desk

Since 2004, the intervention followed a Candidate Induction Programme (CIP) for all the candidates who registered with them (See Annexure - 1) either through a walk-in or through partner organizations in other states of the country. CIP helped in sourcing candidates for training and employment. Such an idea took shape when there was a growing number of disabled candidates looking for job and also because the work of EnAble India expanded beyond only catering to the visually impaired. The process of registration consists of collecting background information of the candidate on parameters like nature of disability, gender, age, education level, marital status, socio-economic background, prior work experience of candidate in skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled jobs, native location being rural/urban etcetera in addition to the expectations of the candidate from the organization.

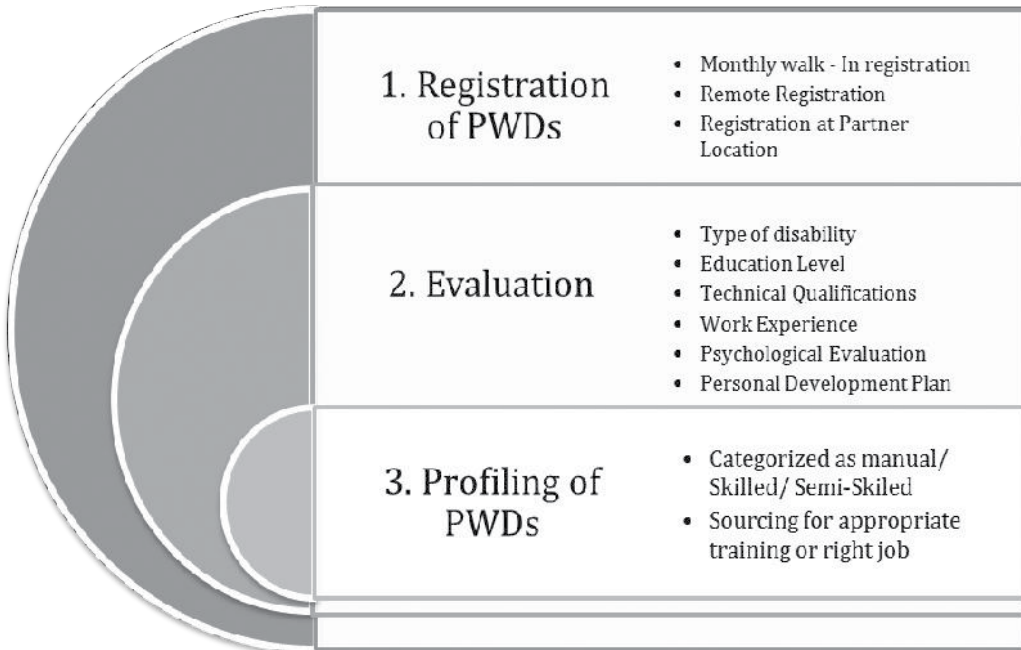


Figure 3: Process of induction for a candidate (Source: Social Audit Report 2010)

Registration is followed by evaluation, which consists of need assessment of the candidate and understanding the reasons behind their preferences. In profiling, which follows evaluation, jobs are identified for the skilled applicants through the existing demand from the client organizations that are willing to hire PWDs. The profiles of the PWDs are fed into ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) software, which was installed in 2008 for efficient database management and improving the efficiency of selection and sorting of PWDs profiles. As a result of profiling and a simultaneous root-cause analysis of disability, a Personal Development Plan (PDP) is prepared in which the relevant type of training is identified and suggested for the candidates who are immediately unsuitable for employment.

5. From being ‘Disabled’ to Becoming ‘Enabled’

Once the profiling of the candidates who have registered with them was done, there were various types of trainings imparted by competent training teams to the ones who require the same. Due to the absence of any means to make the PWDs successfully employable at workplaces, EnAble India came up with a twin track approach on mainstreaming the PWDs through various trainings and workplace solutions besides creating demands among the employers. Trainings are designed based on the nature of disabilities of the candidates and nature of jobs expected by them be it skilled, unskilled or semi-skilled (See Annexure - 1).

Case Study on Profiling

A candidate with hearing impairment came to EnAble India with a B.Com degree. As part of profiling, he was given tests related to graduate, English and aptitude. As part of the tests, he had to write an essay. He not only failed to write an essay but he fared poorly too in all the tests. Realizing that he did not measure up to an average degree candidate with hearing impairment, the organization gave him the tests that the undergraduates would take. He could not perform well in these either. He did not have computer skills and hence, EnAble India could not consider him for semi-skilled category either. They evaluated the nature of his disability and did his psychological profile. They found that he was energetic and interested in working. But since he fell in the below average category, they counseled him that his skills were not matching the average person with a degree. He was fairly realistic and realized this. He was profiled in the manual moving category, which did not require too many skills. Eventually he was given a job as brew master in Café Coffee Day within a matter of a month or two. The company was happy since almost all the people with disability who were shortlisted by EnAble India were selected. The company's return on effort was high and so was the organization's. This remains a classic case for reiterating the importance of profiling. If he had been sent to any company merely on his educational qualification, he would have failed miserably. This would have resulted in loss of confidence for him. Also, the companies' relationship with EnAble India would have been put in a spot on the quality of the candidates coming from the organization.

The screenshot displays the EnAble India Candidate Profile system. The left pane shows the 'Candidate Profile' with fields for personal details, training, and employment. The right pane shows the 'Candidate Section' with 'Profile and History' and 'Job Profile' tabs. Below the screenshot are three callout boxes:

- Basic information about the candidates (Date of birth, gender, disability type, address)**
- Evaluators Comments, "Great attitude, can also try for technical writing job"**
- Recommended Job Types: Skilled Dynamic
Recommended Roles: Administration /Logistics, HR, Service Management**

Box 1: How does EnAble India Profile their registered candidates
(Source: Social Audit Report 2010)

Figure 4

The trainings have well defined pedagogy and applications henceforth to gauge the level of the candidates. They focus on developing both hard and soft skills of the candidates for their future placements that includes Communications and English language training, life skills, computer training, domain specific trainings and much more. Once the candidates were trained based on the requirement, the skills gap was addressed for their prospective employment. Besides this, entrepreneurship development training for the poor, wage employment training for urban, peri-urban and semi-urban areas (largely in tier 2 cities) and community pilot training programmes for unskilled sector were also taken up.

6. Bridging the Demand-supply Gap for the PWDs

For mainstreaming PWDs into the workforce after their training, the efforts of placements started in 2004 when EnAble India, as a part of their twin track approach, created demand for the disabled among prospective employers. They, in turn, made the prospective employees aware about their future opportunities. It helped evolve a business proposition on why companies should hire the disabled. The employer outreach program model was conceived to collaborate with companies. Initially companies like Shell, Café Coffee Day, IBM, Mphasis, Infosys and others started to collaborate from 2004-2005. In addition to this, the organization focused on sensitizing the companies on making the workplaces inclusive through Disability Awareness Workshops for executives, managers and others. Such awareness worked to enable more placements of the disabled. Apart from this, EnAble India also promoted the idea of outsourcing the work of the companies through them to the PWDs.

From 2005 to 2007 placements started across multiple cities including Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Pune with the help of like-minded NGO partners in the local cities. Later in 2008 a dedicated training and placement cell was established at EnAble India. Such a cell gave the needed pace for expansion of activities like organizing job fairs towards Employment Guidance and Placement Services (EGP) to enable the PWDs.

7. Follow-up Activities

It was not only about the placement of the PWDs but also their constant follow-up which was ensured as a part of the initiatives taken up after the placement of the candidates. As and when the PWDs felt their motivation level for their work decreasing, it was easily possible for them to approach EnAble India for counselling. In keeping with the vision of building an

enabling ecosystem for the disabled and not just withdrawing from their efforts after the placement of the candidates, the organization also conducted retention surveys to understand satisfaction level of the candidates from the viewpoint of companies who hired them.

8. Financial Support

For its activities, the organization generated revenue through donations from individuals like Azim Premji through his philanthropic initiatives and institutions like banks, Sir Dorab Ji Tata Trust, Charities Aid Foundation, Sight Savers, American India Foundation, Tech Mahindra Foundation, other like-minded NGOs; corporate sponsorship, fund raisers and events like Marathon in Mumbai and Bangalore, professional charges, recruitment income and training and seminar fees⁷. Funds were also mobilized through the revenues generated by EnAble India Solutions Pvt. Ltd. along with the support from the Disability Department, Government of Karnataka.

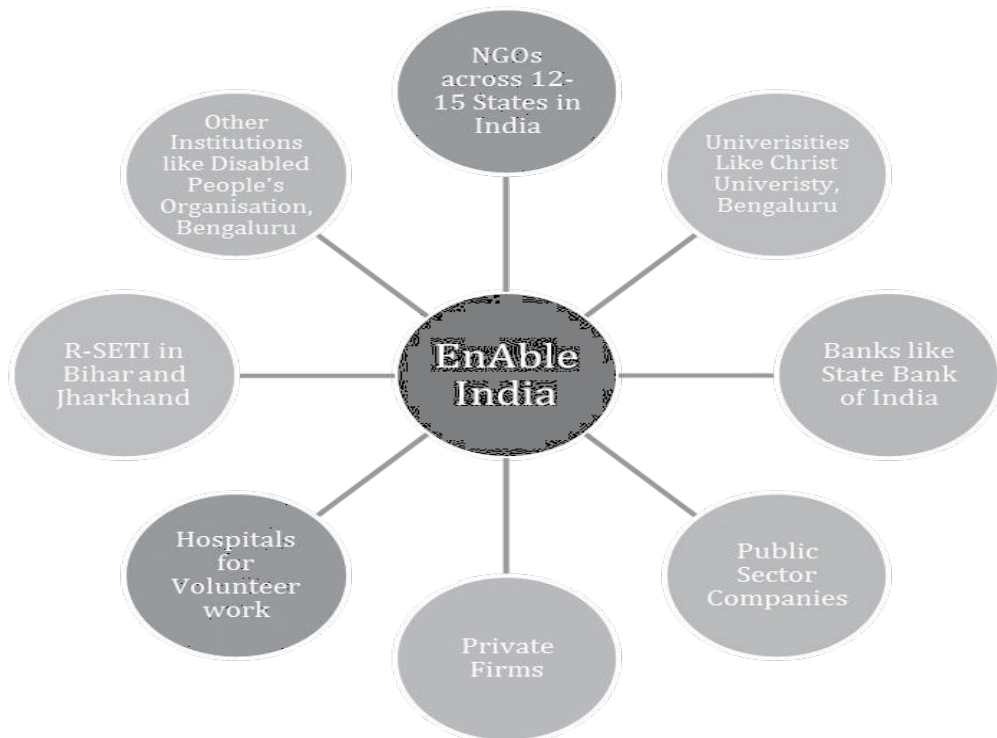


Figure 5: Partnership and Outreach of EnAble India

⁷ 2015, S. Abhi et al. *Social Entrepreneurship-Building Sustainability through business models and measurement of social impact*, Chapter 13, pp 299-303 in Manimala and Wasdani (eds), *Entrepreneurial Ecosystem- Perspectives from Emerging Economies*, Springer (2015)

9. Outreach and Partnerships

EnAble India engaged in partnerships across 12-15 states in India with NGOs for different purposes like receiving applications from the candidates, building capacities of NGOs working for the disabled etcetera. They had also partnered with universities in and outside Bengaluru for employability training of their disabled students, banks like State Bank of India and other public sector companies for capacity building and training of the disabled employees of such organizations, private firms and hospitals for volunteering work for its operations and activities like awareness building for inclusive work atmosphere. Through a government order in 2012, EnAble India was appointed as implementing agency for Training and Placement of Persons with Disabilities in Karnataka. Recent partnerships have been sought with R-SETI (Rural Self-Employment Training Institute) in Bihar and Jharkhand.

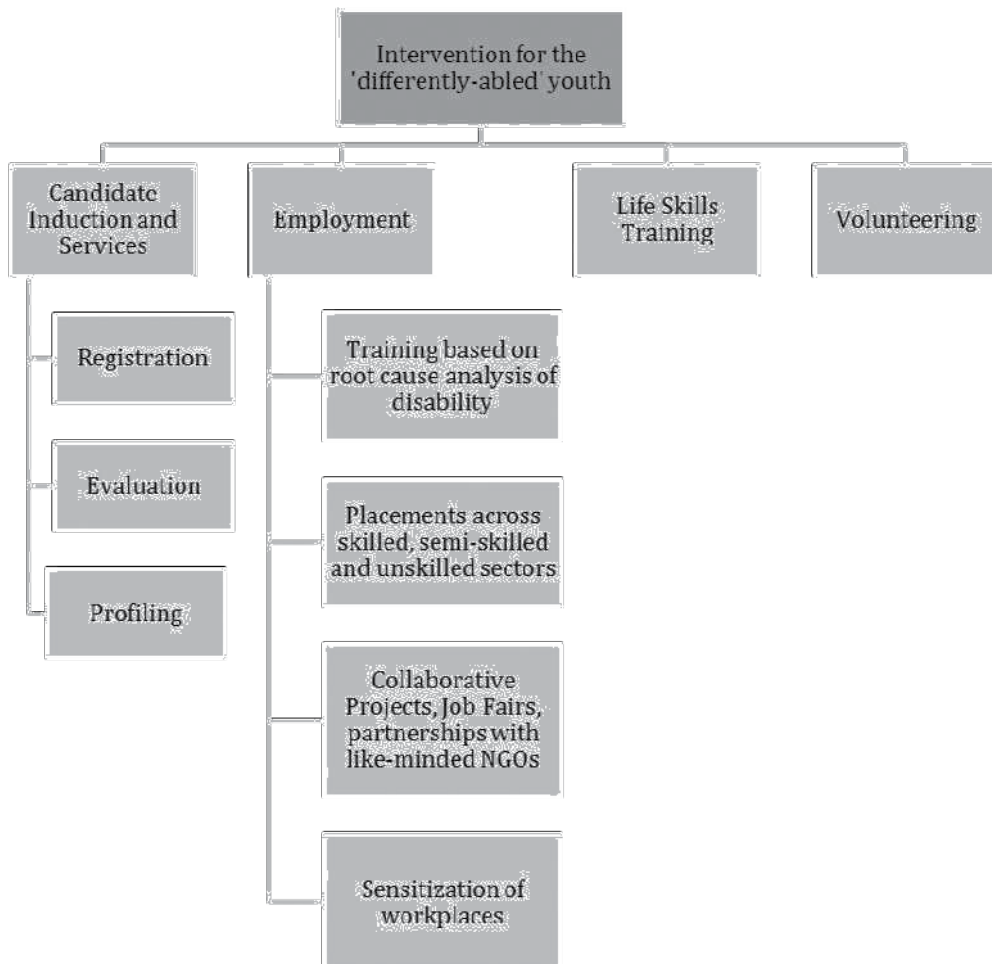


Figure 6: Schema of EnAble India's Intervention

In addition to this, partnerships with other institutions like Disabled People's Organization in Bengaluru have also been in place for emerging urban models to empower communities for their livelihoods. The strategy of having partners across India enabled in serving a larger section of the disabled in India. Lastly they engaged in partnerships outside India for instance the recent collaboration with Mauritius to provide training, content and expertise for PWDs in Mauritius making Enable India a global organization.

In a nutshell, the intervention catered to all the necessary activities that would enable a disabled youth to get a decent employment. This was ensured through the processes of initial induction, suggested trainings including life skills trainings based on the nature and causes of disability; placements across skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled sectors; follow-up of the same and sensitization of workplaces for an enabling ecosystem. Volunteers from partner companies, as a part of their CSR initiatives and otherwise, helped EnAble India in managing the day to day operations for the cause of disabled.

10. Spread and Scale

In the course of establishing partnerships, EnAble India scaled up through developing resources on disability like training manuals, e-learning modules, flash-based material for visual learners, audio plays for auditory learners etcetera. Apart from this, the organization engaged in capacity building of partner like-minded organizations and training of trainers through which they were able to reach out to more disabled youth in the country. Their disability awareness workshops for the companies have really helped them expand their operations to a great extent. EnAble India opened up the doors for the disabled in 400 new companies, found new roles for the disabled in new sectors like domestic BPOs, BFSI (Banking, Financial services and Insurance) services, auditing firms, hospitality, telecom, retail in addition to creating demand in 26 existing sectors.

11. Impact of the Initiative

The impact of the intervention for the disabled can be identified at multiple levels. At the level of employment, it is concerned with the immediate placements of the candidates in skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled sectors based across the country. It also spans across the incomes of the candidates as a result of employment that helped them financially. From the perception of the candidates themselves, increase in the level of their motivation to innovate and also serve the society through volunteering work was quite visible. Moreover, with them getting employment, they felt driven and inspired to help their fellow disabled youth. From the viewpoint of the companies in which the candidates got placed, impact can be identified in terms of

satisfaction level of the companies in retaining the disabled who are hired and being open to hire more such disabled youth. Largely, the impact is also seen in terms of the respect and dignity earned by the PWDs for their work from their families, the society and largely their work places.

11.1 Placements

During 2004- 2014, more than 70% of the trained candidates received employment through the determined efforts of the intervention which is visible in the table 1.

Looking at the placements in terms of the disabilities, it is visible that the intervention placed candidates with different kinds of disabilities although placements in physical disability, vision impairment and hearing impairment were significantly higher.

The candidates who got jobs were placed across the length and breadth of the country in 18 cities with different companies and in different roles as well with a majority of placements happening in Karnataka. (See Annexure – 1) The process also kept the aspirations of the candidates in priority when choosing a city.

Table 1: Registration, training and placements- From 1st Jan 2004 to 31st March 2014

Total no. of candidates registered	7266
Total no. of candidates trained	2932
Total no. of candidates employed	2057
Total no. of candidates employed (includes self-employed)	2266

(Source: Annual Report, 2014)

Table 2: Placement vis-à-vis nature of disabilities of candidates (2004-2014)

Candidate's Disability	Total no. of Candidate
Physical Disability	1104
Vision Impairment	480
Hearing Impairment	606
Cerebral Palsy	29
Mental Illness	16
Mental Retardation	21
Deaf and Blindness	4
Learning disability	6
Total number of candidates placed	2266

(Source: Annual Report, 2014)

From a sectoral lens, the organization directly placed more than 1,250 PWDs in the skilled sector⁸ not undermining the outputs visible in terms of self-employment aided through the intervention. The chart clearly indicates that there is no particular preference for employment of the candidates by the intervention since it is largely driven by the needs and aspirations of the PWDs.

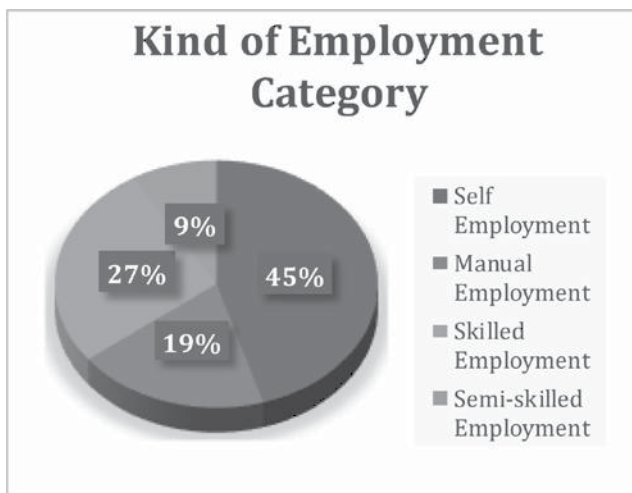


Figure 7: Kind of Employment Category

The candidates after their placement across different sectors have been able to earn an average monthly income ranging from Rs. 5,000 for manual jobs to Rs. 12,000 for skilled jobs. The distribution from a sectoral lens is given below⁹.

Table 3: Job category vis-à-vis salary

Job category	Average Monthly Salary
Manual	Rs 5000
Semi-skilled Non computer	Rs 6500
Semi-skilled computer	Rs 8000
Skilled Jobs	Rs 12000

(Source: Social Audit Report 2010 and Annual Report, 2014)

68% of the candidates earning Rs. 1.2 Lac/annum and in white collar jobs. The highest salary is earned by a visually impaired person is close to 12 lacs/annum.

The following chart gives a clear picture of the year on year growth indicators of the intervention during the period 2009- 2014.

⁸ 2015, S. Abhi et al. Social Entrepreneurship-Building Sustainability through business models and measurement of social impact, Chapter 13, pp 299-303 in Manimala and Wasdani (eds), Entrepreneurial Ecosystem- Perspectives from Emerging Economies, Springer (2015)

⁹ Annual Report, EnAble India 2014.

11.2 From the Perception of the Enabled

On one hand, placements have helped the disabled financially and on the other hand the disabled youth were empowered enough to reach out to other vulnerable sections of the society. For instance, a disabled candidate volunteered with transgender community in Bangalore to empower them, some served the old age people during their free time etcetera. The PWDs came up with innovative solutions and were highly motivated for the same. For instance, a candidate with vision impairment developed an all accessible bag while another developed an all accessible menu card for a restaurant in Bangalore (See Annexure – 2). Apart from the individual efforts of the candidates, it becomes important to understand the perception of the candidates about their workplaces. As revealed by the figure, more than 70% of the candidates who are placed in different companies felt good and happy about their work.¹⁰ Their team mates and colleagues too treated them with respect and not excluding them as ‘disabled’. Not only in their work, the candidates after going through the activities at EnAble India have received positive responses in their social life too along with a dignified perception of their work.

Table 4: Growth indicators through the years (2009-2014)

Growth Indicators	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	Total
No. of PWDs registrations	694	725	849	662	1558	4,488
No. of PWDs trained (directly)	420	402	508	299	900	2,529
No. of volunteers	180	283	260	312	172	1,207
No. of companies recruiting	149	69	57	44	68	387
Total no. of placements	176	208	291	132	384	1,191
No. of workplace solutions	49	73	69	199	130	520
No. of states covered	13	14	19	12	14	NA

(Source: S. Abhi et al. 2015)

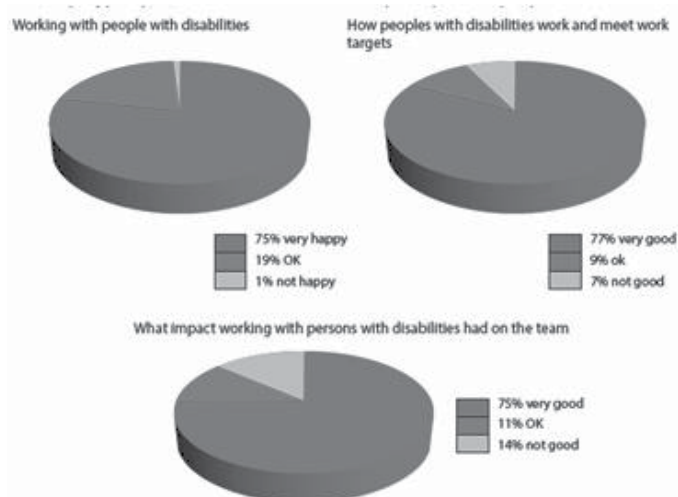


Figure 8: Feedback of the candidates placed by EnAble India in various companies

11.3 From the Viewpoint of the Employers

Apart from the responses and feedback of the enabled candidates with regards to their employment, its also critical to understand the perception of the companies about their employed PWDs. Retention surveys of the companies reported that 93% of them have had high a impact by hiring of PWDs in their organization.¹¹ More than 70% of the companies felt happy about working with PWDs. They also felt that the PWDs were dedicated to their work and also brought in positive energy in their team¹². As a result of this, other partner companies felt convinced to hire PWDs.

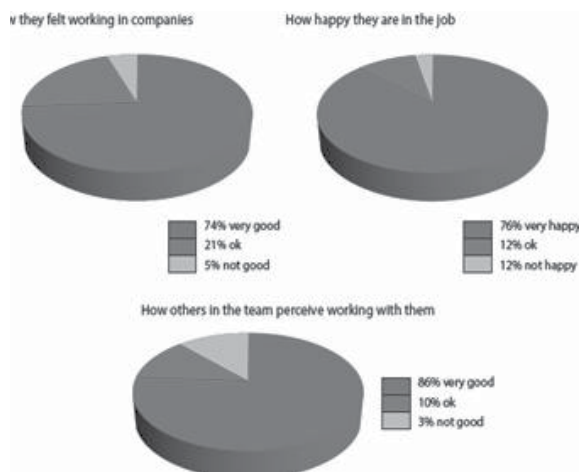


Figure 9: Responses of the Employers who have candidates from EnAble India in their organizations

11. Annual Report of EnAble India, 2012, 2013 and 2013

12. Social Audit Report, EnAble India 2010

11.4 Changed Perception at Multiple Levels

EnAble India contributed to the change in perception of the disabled in a three-dimensional approach, firstly, in their own eyes, secondly, in the eyes of the society and thirdly, in the eyes of the companies hiring them. At an individual level, the activities under the intervention like training, placements and employment made the disabled recognize their own self-worth, inherent strength and abilities, cutting the assumption of different dimensions of dependence. They now see themselves as fully functional and autonomous individuals who can contribute worth-fully to their household income and the economy. Secondly, at the family and society level, there was a realization that the disabled are not someone who need to be sympathized with rather their work needs recognition. Lastly, the intervention made the economic institutions like the hiring companies think that the disabled were highly productive individuals, and that their disability poses no barrier to their efficiency.

12. Issues and Challenges in Achieving Scale and Sustainability

The nature of the activities that the organization followed and kinds of networks that it leveraged in order to scale up has in turn made the intervention to come across some issues and challenges. They have largely been listed below:

12.1 Capacity Building of Partner NGOs

In the effort of identifying potential like-minded NGOs to work with not undermining the existing ones, the aspect of building capacities of NGOs in the right direction remained a challenge. Moreover, sometimes it is a trade off between the priorities of the partners and EnAble India to establish a good working relationship for the cause of the disabled.

12.2 Coordination and Management

Considering that the intervention leveraged a wide network of institutions, government agencies and NGOs, it is highly challenging for an effective coordination among them for day to day operations. Apart from this, the high usage of IT tools for training makes it critically challenging for a smooth management.

12.3 Ensuring Retention and Satisfying Dreams

It is true that when the intervention generated feedback of the disabled who were employed, some candidates were found unhappy with their job due to

unforeseen reasons. This makes it challenging for EnAble India to satisfy the candidate's aspirations or dreams on one hand and live up to the expectations of the companies on the other.

12.4 Workplace Sensitization

For companies who have an interest in hiring the disabled out of their CSR initiative, it is challenging for EnAble India to sensitize companies for hiring them within a regular HR policy from the viewpoint of mainstreaming the disabled in the organizational culture.

12.5 Lack of Necessary Resources

Lack of qualified professionals in the field of livelihoods and disability makes it challenging for the organization. Apart from this, ensuring that the needs of the disabled are met in their respective companies in terms of the required infrastructure for a particular kind of disability is difficult to put into place.

12.6 Successful, Unique and Sustainable Intervention

Having taken a note of the impact of the sectoral intervention from different perspectives, the intervention can be termed as a successful one. The twin significant contributions of EnAble India are in recognizing the potential of disabled and in mainstreaming them in the employment and labor market through a well designed skill training cum placement program. Building capacities of like-minded NGOs and entering into multiple institutional linkages and partnerships was a significant contributor to the success. EnAble India has also brought in multiple innovations through usage of IT tools, their Community Pilot Training Programme, 'work-at-home for disabled' programme that have made substantial difference.

The uniqueness of the intervention lies in the corporate experience of the founders, who instead of judging the companies, understood their pressures and responded to them by providing a business paradigm for hiring disabled. Apart from this, the companies were also provided with solutions and services to enable them in their hiring of persons with disability.

Besides the impact, the intervention in itself is quite different from very few civil society organizations, working for the disabled. EnAble India's work goes beyond just doing rehabilitation and legal level advocacy. Some of the key highlights of the intervention that make it a sustainable one are that it has created the necessary space for building an ecosystem for mainstreaming the PWDs through changing the mindset of the stakeholders. Adopting a solutions-oriented approach; the organization lays emphasis on not only training and skill building of PWDs, but also valuing the dignity of their work.

The nature of activities and strategies followed makes it compelling for the intervention to be replicated across India and Asia. One of the positive signs in this direction is EnAble India's recent partnership with Mauritius.

The intervention has received a lot of awards and recognition since their inception for instance Manthan Award for ICT Innovation, Rotary Award for vocation excellence, hosting and organizing the India Inclusion Summit etc. It has also received TV and press coverage. Not only the intervention, but the employed staff who were earlier candidates at the organization have received awards for their excellent performance in their respective companies.

13. Way Forward

Apart from EnAble India having been registered as a public charitable trust, operations of the for profit wing, *EnAble India Solutions Pvt. Ltd* is to increase so as to enhance inclusion of the disabled in companies. In addition to this, a dedicated website to bring the employer and the employee to a common interface to bridge the demand supply gap known as *EnAble India Academy* is also in the pipeline. Moreover, the organization has plans to penetrate more in the rural areas through agreements with the government like the ones with RSETI of Bihar and Jharkhand. No doubt, the larger intent of the organization is to take a step forward and focus on sustainable inclusion of the disabled. For doing the same, consultation from key stakeholders based on their role and method of engagement is perceived to be critical. This is also because, as perceived by the organization, an enabling ecosystem is needed for the successful inclusion of the disabled. The realization of building such an ecosystem will definitely go a long way in the vision of inclusion of the PWDs.

Annexure 1

Table 1: Break up of registered candidates according to the nature of disability
(Registered from 1st April 2012 to 21st March 2014)

Nature of Disability	Number of PWDs Registration	Nature of Disability	Number of PWDs Registration
Physical Disability	865	Mental Illness	25
Hearing Impairment	323	Cerebral Palsy	17
Visual Impairment	293	Others	3
Mental Retardation	29	Deaf Blind	3
Total			1558

Table 2: Types of Role offered specific to disability

Type of Disability	Offered Roles/ Responsibilities
Person with Visual Impairment	Service Management, Sales executive, Tele-caller, Medical transcriptionist, MIS executive, Logistics exec, Verifier, Programmer, BPO executive, Soft skills Trainer, Computer trainer, Massage therapist, Market analyst, Business development, Procurement executive, Admin executive, Packer, Telephone operator and more
Person with Hearing Impairment	Back office executive, Data entry operator, Network assistant, Graphic designer, Tester, Programmer, Training coordinator, Brew-master, Cashier, Quality checker, Doorman, Housekeeping, Car washer, Kitchen Assistant, Traffic attendant, Store keeper, Traffic attendant and more
Person with Physical/ Mobility Impairment	HR, System operator, Incident management, BPO executive, Programmer, Tester, Telecaller, Librarian assistant, Data entry operator, Cashier, Receptionist, Room reservation exec, CCTV operator, Assembly, Quality checker, Filing assistant, Sales executive, Store keeper, Admin assistant, Customer sales assistant
Person with Other impairments (Cerebral Palsy, Intellectual Disability, Mental Illness, Learning Disability)	Programmer, Online research analyst, Tester, Back office executive, Retail sales attendant, Traffic attendant, Stacker, Machine operator, Packer, Data entry operator, Quality checker

Table 3: Job Profile and the roles or Position offered based on the level of skill and/or Education of the PWD registered

Job Profile	Education and/or Skill Level	Roles/ Positions offered
Manual/ Unskilled	SSLC or less, No Skills Experienced, No Skills Required	ATM Caretaker Petrol pump attendant House-keeping attendant Helpers Customer service attendant
Semi Skilled	SSLC/PUC, Computer SSLC/PUC PUC, Computer PUC/Diploma/Graduate	Physiotherapist Dietician Customer Attendant Telephone Operator Tele-caller Clerk Computer Trainer Sales Assistant Admin Assistant Travel Desk Operator
Skilled	PUC/Diploma / Graduate	HR Executive Voice and Accent Trainer Computer Programmer Medical Transcriptionist Training Coordinator Web accessibility tester Executive Roles such as Tech Help Desk, Back Office, Business Development, Finance, Marketing, Quality Assurance, CSR, PR, Logistics, MIS etc. Market Analyst Translator Lecturer Counselor
PUC: Pre University Certificate equivalent to 12 th pass from school		

Table 4: Candidate development Programme Course Summary

Scope of Employment	Course Content
<p>Career Centric Computer training for Visually Impaired</p> <p>This is an initiative by EnAble India towards giving quality computer training for visually impaired people who have completed their studies and are seeking a job along with those who want to continue their studies in the field of computers</p>	<p>Computer Fundamentals (Introduction to Windows and applications, Editing, Dialog boxes, File and folder management)</p> <p>Microsoft Office with web applications like internet, accessing emails, using outlook express</p> <p>Communication skills with English training</p> <p>Keyboard Typing, Speed and Accuracy</p> <p>Screen reader fundamentals (using screen reader help)</p> <p>Miscellaneous concepts like scanning, software installations, computer physical connections, CD burning etc.</p> <p>Life skills training for including learning sessions, analytical skills training, exposure to case study.</p> <p>Specialized courses for employment of VI are Cisco Certified Need Assessment Training (CCNA), Need Based Computer Training (NBCT) and Need based online training.</p>
<p>Medical Transcription for Visually Impaired</p> <p>Medical Transcription (MT) is a growing industry which will always be having a demand all around the world. Medical transcription is a process of documentation of patient's history, diagnostic tests and involves just listening-typing.</p>	<p>Revision of Computer advanced – Word, Internet, Excel with MT specific JAWS Training</p> <p>Language of Medicine (anatomy and physiology, disease processes and pharmacology & laboratory medicine)</p> <p>Orientation of MT technology, practice and quality standards</p> <p>Communication skills – English grammar & Phonetics</p> <p>Privacy, ethics, and other medico legal issues</p> <p>Information about Healthcare records</p> <p>Required skills like attention to detail, accuracy and speed</p> <p>Preparatory sessions for facing interview and company test preparation</p>

<p>Business Process Outsourcing Training for Hearing Impaired</p> <p>Non voice positions are available in all major companies such as Mphasis, Reuters, IBM Daksh, TCS BPO, HTMT, J P Morgan, TESCO, HSBC.</p>	<p>Concept of BPO, associated terminology, use cases, types etc.</p> <p>Understanding requirements, handling templates</p> <p>Concept of quality</p> <p>Reading comprehension, communication skills and written English skills</p> <p>Analytical skills, common sense usage</p> <p>Microsoft Office with web applications like internet, accessing emails, using outlook express</p> <p>Keyboard Typing, Speed and Accuracy</p> <p>Preparatory sessions for facing interview and company tests preparation</p> <p>Disability specific component to work efficiently in the job</p>
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Table 5: Job Profile and the roles or Position offered based on the level of skill and/or Education of the PWD registered

Location – District/ cities in which Candidates have been placed	Number of Candidates
Bangalore	144
Bijapur	23
Kolar	25
Chikkaballapur	10
Davangere	20
Dharwad	20
Haliyal	16
Harohalli	8
Holalur	21
Kunigal	2
Mysore	22
Nelamangala	5
Vajrahalli	29
Hyderabad	7
Chennai	2
Mumbai	16
Uttar Pradesh	14
Total	384

Annexure 2



Figure 1: Accessible bag and Menu Card Developed by the PWDs registered at EnAble India

Designing an Inclusive Skills Development Programme

TVET Reform Project in Bangladesh, Project Team, ILO

The TVET Reform Project is an initiative of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). It is funded by the European Union (EU) and executed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in partnership with government agencies. Bangladesh is the eighth most populous country in the world which presents an immense opportunity in terms of labour force. TVET is essential in ensuring the country's competitiveness in the global labour market and ensuring decent work for all.

The ILO's TVET Reform Project in Bangladesh is working on methodologies for enabling access of underprivileged groups to technical and vocational training courses. The pilot programme described in this case study is an important step in encouraging government and employers to consider the rights of persons with disabilities. The ILO's overall objective is decent work for all and programmes such as this demonstrate the benefits of integrating persons with disabilities within mainstream development efforts. This programme also aims to simultaneously reduce other barriers to inclusion such as negative perceptions to disability, confidence and leadership capacity of persons with disabilities.

Talking to people in the field was the first step in the process of developing a training programme for persons with disabilities. Consultation was carried out over a number of months and included government training institutions, private organizations and disability-focused organizations. Consultation was done through a combination of desktop meetings and visits to different areas, to directly experience what people with disabilities face in Bangladesh. Extensive situational research was also conducted, into disability statistics, labour, training and employment in Bangladesh. The quality of the consultation and research conducted was integral in the ILO developing a relevant, industry-oriented, flexible programme.

After looking into these different sectors, the ready-made garment sector was selected for the pilot program. The following factors contributed to this decision:

- Availability of employment after graduation.
- History of successful programs implemented (e.g. Marks & Start)
- Demonstrated industry enthusiasm for including persons with disabilities and underprivileged persons.

- Industry need for skilled workers and scope (through training) to meet this need.
- Contribution of RMG sector to national economy and annual gross domestic product.

Next, there was a glance at the existing programme which focuses on employment of persons with disabilities in the readymade garment sector to thoroughly investigate. In order to plan the training methodology for the pilot, there was a need to look at an existing programme and find out which approaches had been tried, what had worked, and most importantly, what had not worked in Bangladesh.

The focus was on Marks & Start, a program which was implemented in 2006 by Marks & Spencer. A corporate social responsibility initiative first trialled successfully in Sri Lanka, the model offers two months of specialized training for persons with disabilities identified by the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) in Bangladesh. The program is funded by a group consisting of 22 organizations and is not only a successful example of disability inclusion in TVET in Bangladesh but also a sustainable income-generating activity model. The programme consistently achieves high retention rates and over 200 persons with disabilities have already been successfully trained to date. These trainees have then been employed by readymade garment companies across Bangladesh.

The next step was to select the government and industry partners. This was done early to ensure that all parties were involved in the planning stages as well as in the implemented stages. When selecting partners, there was a lookout for organizations that would be committed to the project's goals and focused on developing a sustainable model which could be replicated by industry. After a series of meetings, the following partnerships were finalized:

- Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed
- The Viyelltex Group
- Interfab Shirt Manufacturing Limited
- Gazipur Technical School & College, Directorate of Technical Education, Bangladesh Technical Education Board, Ministry of Education

Now that the sector had been decided and the partnerships needed to run the pilot had been established, a program outline was planned. The pilot would focus on training persons with disabilities and disadvantaged women for work in the ready-made garment sector and it would have two stages of competency achievement:

- Stage 1: (4 months) Off the job training and formative assessment conducted in the CRP vocational training centre. After summative assessment/training, trainees could exit at this point, graduating with a National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF) Pre-Vocational 2 Certificate.
- Stage 2: (8 months) on the job training and formative assessment conducted in the Interfab Shirt Manufacturing Ltd after which they could graduate with an NTVQF Level 2 certificate.

Three steps were then undertaken:

1. A basic skill need analysis was conducted to specifically identify what a person needed to know and be able to do to work in that job. Industry representatives were consulted to ensure that the skills attained would be relevant industry-wide, not just for a single organization's needs.
2. This analysis was then discussed with disability experts to identify the combination of skills that would be most feasible for the trainees, given their specific physical limitations. Many factors were taken into consideration, such as maintaining certain postures for long periods of time, repetitive movements using certain limbs, and required equipment adjustments.
3. These finalised tasks were converted into units of competency under the NTVQF and, then, based on this, a Competency Skills Log Book (CSLB) was designed. For organizations considering specifically replicating this woven RMG course, the first step would be to obtain copies of these units of competency and the CSLB, through contacting the ILO TVET Reform Project, relevant Industry Skills Council or RMG Sector Working Committee or the BTEB.

For a new course or a different occupation, the organization would need to work with the relevant Industry Skills Council, Sector Working Committee or the BTEB to develop additional units of competency or consider running a partially-accredited course, using a mix of the nits developed in conjunction with some newly-developed units.

Before procuring equipment, extensive consultation was undertaken involving a number of experts. Both venues were taken into consideration; the facilities for Stage 1 at CRP and Stage 2 at Interfab.

Stage 1 Venue:

The room designated for the course was approximately 600 sft and had previously been used for tailoring and dress making. It contained a number of older model pedestal sewing machines and a few items of basic furniture. When analysing the venue, there were two main challenges:

1. Originally, 20 trainees were to be included in the program but after assessment of the space available, it was found that a maximum of 16 electric sewing machines could be comfortably accommodated. Inclusion of 4 extra trainees would require expansion of the room by approximately 400sft, as well as the installation of a fabric cutting table of approximately 80 sft. To solve this, it was decided that 12 trainees would be included in the course.
2. There was a need for a mini-cutting (rotary) machine with a retractable overhead flexible electrical coil, with a cutting table underneath to cut fabric pieces of 2-3 inches. This was not possible in the space available, and so an arrangement was instead made with industry to supply the necessary pre-cut fabric.

Stage 2 Venue:

Interfab is one of a very few RMG factories in Bangladesh which includes persons with disabilities in its workforce. In placing the trainees in the venue, the only adjustments that were needed were an adjustable table (for a trainee who is extremely low in height), a specific placing on the ground floor for a trainee who needed two crutches for mobility and the implementation of a buddy system for the same trainee, for physical as well as social support. Much work was done however, in terms of capacity building and training of staff involved.

Fire is a significant danger in many factories, due to electrical short circuiting, discarded cigarette butts, heat emitted by machines and the abundance of flammable material. Fire fighting equipment and training are extremely important, particularly when persons with disabilities are employed. Production managers, floor supervisors and general staff need to be aware of what action to take in an emergency situation. Both venues in this program were also thoroughly assessed for any other existing occupational safety and health hazards, which were then minimised as much as was possible. These included inherent risks in machine use and trip hazards arising from cords running across floors. It was also ensured that well-equipped first aid box/s were easily accessible. It is important to remember that special training facilities do not have to be built in most cases; existing facilities just need to be assessed and modifications made if necessary.

Industry involvement was the key to the success of this program; representatives of industry were involved in all consultations and major decisions. Developing the course of line with their needs meant that the skills developed matched current industry needs and so not only were skill gaps filled in factories, but the probability of employment of trainees after graduation was vastly increased.

It is integral that a strong relationship is developed with industry, as much is needed from them as a partner. To build the capacity of all partners, the ILO provided formal and informal training sessions to a number of areas.

In terms of staff capacity development, traditional training is based on knowledge and understanding. The emphasis in competency based training and assessment (CBT&A) is however not just on knowing, but on performing. CBT&A is focused on the development of work skills that have been identified and agreed on by industry. Instead of a theoretical approach, competency-based training and assessment is a practical, workplace-based approach which equips students with the skills that industry needs. It focuses on real work skills which are observable and measurable.

The outcomes of competency based training and assessment are clearly stated at the beginning of the training, so that learners know what they have to be able to do, trainers know what training or learning is to be provided and organizations know the skill level required by people.

An imperative factor in the success of this course was the emphasis placed on building the competency-based training and assessment skills of the staff. This ensured that they understood competency-based methodology and, in addition, that their technical skills were relevant to the current needs of the industry.

Within the NGO capacity, the instructor completed an intensive CBT&A training program and a one-week industry attachment at Interfab. Training coordinator completed an intensive leadership and management development program to equip him with the skills needed to coordinate the training program. A social mobiliser received informal training in the holistic approach of CBT&A.

In the public sector capacity, the instructor completed an intensive CBT&A training program and a one-week industry attachment at Interfab. He also spent four months co-delivering and co-assessing the training in CRP, and experience which will be invaluable in replication.

CRP operates approximately 68 outstation centres in Bangladesh including four fully operational divisional centres. It is in these centres that pre-screening for training suitability is conducted, which includes consulting parents to obtain their consent. After the pre-screening process identified a list of potential candidates, the following process was adopted for the programme wherein it was tested whether the potential candidates met the basic selection criteria or not, then an interview was taken with industry participation. After the selection, the training coordinator must ensure all staff members are willing to execute a coordinated approach to the training program and show respect, care, empathy and sensitivity at all times. Working with persons with disabilities can be very rewarding, but must be planned and documented. The environment must be conducive to positive, integrated learning and adequate support networks must be established. Instructors also need to be aware that they will have to manage a dual role of being a social counsellor as well as a trainer.

The development of the course content took place as the industry needs were first identified, then they were discussed with disability experts and then units of competency were developed. Units were developed in close consultation with industry, to ensure that skills developed would match the current and future needs of the sector. An emphasis was placed on multi-skilling, to ensure the trainees could be flexible in the workplace. Before development of any material began, a thorough analysis of existing training materials in the market was undertaken, to minimise any possible doubling of effort. Competency skill log books were also developed. They were used in competency based training and assessment to record and certify skills attained during training, mainly to benefit persons with low levels of education.

Competency based training and assessment stipulates two fundamental aspects for effectiveness. The first being to develop competency by intensive practice of essential skills and the second being to make the training environment a highly conducive one and to learn with fun! The fun part of it being that a positive learning environment was created through soothing colours, colourful posters and success stories of past trainees, health and safety reminders, sewing displays, finished garments, trainee achievements and artwork. Instructors engaged the trainees in lively information exchanges and participative discussions to take the focus from physical and social constraints to future achievement.

During breaks and allocated free time, instructors joined with trainees to play board games, spend time outside in the natural surroundings, share stories and watch videos together. Regular meals and a nutritious diet were an important part of the program and basic life skills sessions were interactive and included topics like health, water conservation, and maintaining personal hygiene among other things.

The Timeline Looked Like This:

- April 2011: Agreement signed between ILO and CRP
- May 2011: Agreement signed between Interfab and ILO
- May-June 2011: Training facilities upgraded and selection of trainees
- July 2011: Inauguration ceremony and training commencement
- July-Nov 2011: Off-the-job training at CRP training centre for 4 months
- Dec 2011-July 2012: On-the-job training at Interfab for 8 months
- August 2012: Graduation with an industry-recognized qualification and twelve months industry experience (subject to assessment, submission of CSLB, etc.)

This programme has had a huge impact on the lives of the beneficiaries, who have not only experienced immense personal benefit, but are also now role models within their families and communities. They are becoming confident advocates for disability awareness and becoming financially independent. The project has succeeded in creating a model for integrating persons with disabilities into the mainstream workforce of Bangladesh.

This program has further strengthened their commitment as an organization but more importantly, it has strengthened their linkage to industry. The RMG sector is quickly expanding in Bangladesh and one of the major constraints to its growth is the lack of skilled local workers. Persons with disabilities can help to fill this gap, particularly in factories based in less urbanised areas, where workers are increasingly difficult to recruit. As skill needs exist across a number of industries in Bangladesh, it is even hoped that the RMG sector itself will become a model to other sectors in employing persons with disabilities and underprivileged persons.

With the recent approval of the National Skills Development Policy, public training institutions will be updating the programmes which they deliver to meet the requirements of the National Training and Vocational Qualifications Framework. This will mean converting all training programmes delivered into CBT&A format, and up skilling all staff to deliver and assess these. It is hoped that the RMG sector will become a model to other sectors and qualifications in different areas in public training institutes will also include persons with disabilities and underprivileged persons.

There were many lessons learned during this pilot programme. First off, this pilot has demonstrated that a mainstream competency-based program can be reasonably adjusted to include persons with disabilities and underprivileged trainees. By networking with industry, successful training models can be developed to provide training and employment opportunities to persons with disabilities. Industry is interested in recruiting persons with disabilities not only to fulfil corporate social responsibility obligations but also because

it makes good business sense. Persons with disabilities across the world face stigma in many facets of everyday life. In developing countries particularly, disability is seen as a sign of misfortune to the family and the community. The confidence that developed with the skills learnt in this programme helped individuals to focus on their ability instead of their disability however, and allowed them to realise that they could become skilled employees of a reputable organization. Their families and their communities realised this, and one of the most basic examples of a change in mind set is that graduating trainees regularly face multiple marriage proposals from local families.

Shuely is one such inspiring individual who did not let her disability stop her from being able. Many persons with disabilities face major barriers to social inclusion in their communities. Many are not able to access mainstream training or decent education and this leads to significantly decreased employment opportunities. World Health Organization statistics suggest that as many as one in ten people are disabled in Bangladesh.

In a year, Shuely became a confident young skilled worker completing her first year of employment as a sewing machine operator in a reputable apparel factory. Shuely does not have the use of one of her legs due to polio, and the two young female apprentices who are picking up their crutches nearby are also persons with disabilities.

Growing up in the rural town of Barisal, Shuely's father was a rickshaw-puller and her mother was a housewife. She managed to pass Class 9 even though she was unable to regularly attend school because of her disability but in Class 10 her family's financial problems forced her to quit her studies and seek employment. Shuely saved money through doing small tailoring jobs for her neighbours and moved to Dhaka to look for employment opportunities. She looked for three months but she was unable to find anything and, with her savings spent, she headed back to Khulna. Shortly after returning, she received a call back from the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed and she was straight back on a bus to Savar to enrol in a sewing machine operator's course for underprivileged women and persons with disabilities. Shuely has now finished her apprenticeship and is a skilled worker with nationally recognize qualifications who plays a mentoring role to other young apprentices as they finish the course she graduated from and they also enter the workplace.

Shuely is a skilled young female who has secured employment through the TVET Reform Project, an initiative of the Government of Bangladesh, executed by the ILO and funded by the European Union.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Brief on DDU-GKY

Deen Dayal Upadhyay–Grameen Kaushal Yojana (DDU–GKY) is the placement-linked skill training initiative of the Ministry of Rural Development (MORD), Government of India.

The main features of this programme are:

- Exclusive focus on **rural poor youth**
- **Social inclusion** agenda
- **Pioneering innovations** like:
 - Support to candidates for job retention (direct benefit transfer to bank accounts)
 - Incentive to training partners for career progression and international placements
 - Tablet-PC as a training tool
 - Training in functional English, basic IT skills and soft skills added to employable skills
 - Framework of guidelines and detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs) to define quality with transparency and accountability
- **Market-linked training in public–private partnership (PPP) mode:**
 - Curriculum framing and assessment through National Council on Vocational Training (NCVT) or Qualification Packs–National Occupational Standards (QP–NOS) as identified by Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) of National Skill Development Council (NSDC)¹
 - Multi-modal industry partnerships
- Training in over **450 job roles and skills**

¹ NOSs – National Occupational Standards (NOSs) specify the standard of performance, knowledge and understanding when carrying out a particular activity in the workplace. Each NOS defines one key function in a job role. Example: For a Sales Associate, one of the NOS would be to ‘To help customers choose right products’

QPs – A set of NOSs, aligned to a job role, called Qualification Packs (QPs), would be available for every job role in each industry sector. These drive both the creation of curriculum, and assessments.

- **Placement for 75% of all candidates** at a minimum monthly salary of Rs. 6,000/- (CTC)
- **12 month tracking performance post placement**

Till date, DDU–GKY has been implemented in 22 **states and UTs, across 576 districts**, by over 280 project implementing agencies (PIAs). At present, DDU–GKY has over 1.55 lakh candidates currently in training and placements. In the next couple of years, DDU–GKY has **committed to an investment of more than Rs. 4,038 crore in more than 600 projects, to impact 11.94 lakh rural youth.**

DDU–GKY follows a **three-tier implementation architecture** with the **National Unit (NU)** as the policy-maker, technical support and investor tier. The second tier is the **DDU–GKY State Skill Missions (SSMs)** or State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLM) who co-invest as well as monitor implementation agencies. The last tier comprises the **project implementation agencies (PIAs)**, which are the real doers on the ground. This scheme uses technology to strengthen monitoring processes and building scale. Some examples of technology being used are as follows:

- A geo-tagged time stamped **biometric attendance record**
- Provision of a **tablet PC** for all recruits, as a teaching-learning tool
- Process flow driven **internet enabled ERP** system
- **Computer labs and e-learning labs with dedicated internet access** at training centres
- Use of **CCTV captures in remote monitoring** and evaluation of classroom activity
- **Blended learning content**, comprising of videos, interactive sessions and classroom sessions.

This scheme has helped a lot of rural youth by partnering with various organizations. A few of the success stories are as follows-

- A Champion Employer Policy wherein organizations promise to train and place 10,000 rural poor youth in two years. Café Coffee Day is a Champion Employer of DDU–GKY and promises to recruit 100,000 rural poor youth in 5 years.
- A Captive Employer Policy in which an organization provides 500 or more captive jobs annually in own or subsidiary companies.
- An Industrial Internship programme for skilled manpower driven industries that enables them to scale up.

- DDU–GKY also gives preference to training agencies, which have proven experience in providing overseas placement in jobs starting at a minimum of US\$ 500 per month.

1.2 Introduction to the Case

Over the last 3 years, the MORD re-engineered government processes for efficiency, increased transparency and quality across multiple levels. A few examples of such re-engineering are as follows:

1. Development and stringent application of norms through the framework of guidelines and SOPs
2. Modification and project-wise implementation of public financial management system (PFMS)
3. Capacity building and empowerment of richer states without compromising service delivery in poorer states
4. Unique funding model to promote quality skill training through private sector

In this case, we try to capture the motivations of change, thought leadership and implementations effected by the MORD in the space of skill training. However, it must be remembered that any such exercise, is evolutionary and continuous. the impact as on date is captured even when some or many of the implementations are being rolled out on the ground and are likely to post results only in the coming years. In this document, the following aspects of the scheme have been discussed:

- **Context:** A historical perspective on skill training, and a summary of the problems discovered over time are presented. Some problems emerged when solutions to a different problem were being implemented. Context section summarizes all the major problems encountered in the course of the re-engineering project.
- **Problems on the ground:** During the course of implementation of the scheme, the MORD, in its routine processes like inspections and audits, mined problems. In this section, the attempt has been to present the problems as they were discovered.
- **Administrative reforms:** Essentially, in this section, the attempt is to capture the thought-process and executive actions employed to present innovative solutions.
- **Implementation strategy:** This section outlines that methodology adopted to implement the solutions across the skilling eco-system, including state governments.
- **Impact:** Impact of the process re-engineering effort of the MORD as on date is presented in this section.

2. Historical Perspectives and Summary of Problems

In 2004/05, MORD launched a centrally sponsored scheme of skill training as a means to **diversify the incomes** of rural poor families and create a platform for **upward mobility** out of poverty. Working in PPP mode, several NGOs and other organizations proposed projects with outcomes in either creating self-employment avenues or wage employment. In the absence of prescribed standards, clear goals and expectations or defined outcomes, small successes could not be capitalized upon.

The scheme was implemented in a two-tier architecture with MORD at the centre offering policy development, technical support through their Central Technical Support Agencies (CTSAs) and the central share of funds. The involvement of the states did not extend beyond the contribution of their respective share of funds. On-the-ground implementation of the programme lay with PIAs. However, the nascent skill training industry had more than its fair share of problems, some typical to the country and others, unique to the task of skilling.

Some of the bigger challenges facing the industry and the programme, progressively discovered, were:

- **Poor aspiration for skill training among rural poor youth.** Even when inaccessible, rural youth preferred basic degree or diploma training over skills training.
- **Disproportionate mid-term redistribution of funds and targets to states.** Typically, the richer states performed better than the poorer states resulting in higher offtake of resources and targets. This would also affect the poor and disadvantaged youth in poorer states adversely.
- **Government's traditional problems in procurement** also had a role to play. Oriented to 'least cost', it often overlooked innovations and better systems that would ask for more time and cost.
- **Quality and quantity of placements.** The design of the programme focused on empowerment through skill training. Therefore, most of the organizations employed in skilling had no linkage with industry, job-roles and demand for trained manpower. As a result, placements were more a result of personal relationships than demand and supply.
- **Retention in jobs.** Upward mobility out of poverty requires that beneficiaries once placed in jobs continued working and growing into higher income. But the incidence of drop-outs was high, right from classrooms to jobs. This also had a deep impact on the overall perceptions about skill training (point 1 above).

Several external forces also impacted the performance of the programme. Some of them are:

- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) ensured that youth had access to paid work in their native places without any time or monetary investment in skilling.
- Increased media penetration ensured that a portrayal of urbanized lifestyle reached deeper into the country resulting in diverse lifestyle aspirations which created unrealistic demands from work life.
- In 2009, with the coming of the National Policy for Skill Development, Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) were developed with industry partnerships, to identify job-roles for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers across several sectors.
- Also, the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), Ministry of Finance, and Government of India launched a financial management platform for all centrally sponsored schemes, now known as **PFMS**. And the development of direct benefit transfer mechanisms for several socially oriented schemes added dimensions to effectiveness, transparency and accountability in the use of government funds.

In 2011, MORD was tasked with creating a special skilling and placement sub-programme for the poor youth of Jammu & Kashmir. This is when MORD, learning from its set of experiences, implemented some guiding principles and innovations. **The success of this sub-programme, called ‘Himayat’ spawned the re-thinking and re-engineering of DDU–GKY on the whole.**

In a span of 24 months, MORD identified clear-cut **Programme Guidelines** (launched in September 2013) and initiated the process of developing detailed SOPs to standardize processes and bring quality into skill training.

3. Problems on the Ground: Discovering Problems through Normal Processes

Typical to government procurement processes, even skill training projects were implemented on a least cost (L1) model not linked to any outcomes. Additionally, learning from the failures of the education system, the approach was to make skill training accessible to rural poor. As a result, PIAs had to set-up training centres and programs in and around villages which limited their ability to identify sufficient or adequate physical infrastructure.

Inspections of MORD identified poor physical infrastructure as one of the primary causes for poorer perceptions of skill training. Not only were the

buildings inadequate to house tools and build scale, the power supply was also erratic, resulting in high attrition. PIAs would often start and shut training centres, in their effort to manage costs within the fixed lowest cost. **As a result, skill training per se got labelled as a short-term option or quick-fix.**

In contrast, even in smaller cities like Annamalai (Tamil Nadu, Fig 1) or Roorkee (Uttarakhand Fig 2), universities and degree colleges were large, impressive structures and their stature commanded adulation and respect.

Physical infrastructure also had a role to play in fashioning expectations and aspirations around skill training.

For instance let us look at the picture of a dormitory. Life within the training programme was not any different from village life outside of it. As a result, perceptions and expectations from it did not promise a better life after the intervention. The residential facilities did not build adequate difference in living experience between a typical rural home and a training centre dormitory.

Another instance is that of computer labs with poor hardware. For instance, in the pictures below you can see 3 monitors connected to one PC. Furthermore, it was **observed that block and district administration were not involved or engaged.** This often resulted in poor mobilization



A typical Skill Training Center in a village



Residential facilities that looked like this did not build adequate difference from true home

of beneficiaries into training centres, both in terms of quantity and quality, creating avoidable delays and poorer outcomes in terms of numbers trained and placed.

Additionally, **money utilized was tracked manually**, demanding audited financials from the PIAs. This provided opportunity for leakages and misuse of public funds; detection of fraud or misuse of funds was delayed. The process would await the closure of the financial year and relevant documentation.

Most of the **skilling programs would follow non-standard curricula not necessarily linked to job requirements or skill demand** of the region. While, Modular Employable Skills (MES) curricular framework did exist, not many NGOs engaged in skill training were either aware of or were using them. Competing intensely for government funds, most of the better organizations treated their teaching-learning content as Intellectual Property (IP). As a result, MORD was **unable to identify and equally share 'best practices'**. Rural poor youth are already disadvantaged due to lack of access to schooling. Along with it, **a skilling intervention that trained them inadequately and placed them in jobs was a higher risk**. Another resulting **barrier was of compliance and certification**. As the curriculum was discretionary and typical to a job role in a particular organization (in case of placement linkage) or as the training organization deemed sufficient for self-employment, there was no organized process for third-party assessment and certification. Multiple certificates abounded and differentiation was poor. Also, the **beneficiaries were ill-prepared for an urbanized environment, work culture with daily, monthly and annual targets, and hire & fire policy**.

Employers were not sensitive to the challenges of displacement or motivating retention which resulted in high attrition and growing discontent.



Make-shift classrooms in a drive-way and poor use of teaching-learning techniques and pedagogy

Most of the ground-level problems arising out of discretionary processes and practices were as follows:

- **Herding of beneficiaries into classrooms without adequate measurement of inherent ability**, attitude or family situation resulted in putting together certificate seekers and above-poverty-line (APL) candidates who had different priorities. This was mostly because PIAs needed numbers to justify their revenues and the state machinery was ill-equipped to identify the poorest of the poor or needy beneficiaries and families.
- **Short-sighted approach to skill training and placement resulted in starting and closing of limited training programs with no orientation on sustainability.** For instance, a PIA tied up with a media publication for training of 100 newspaper delivery boys. This was a two-week training programme which was not aligned to any MES or other source for curriculum or content and was not a sustainable job-role. In the absence of a what-next, not only did the beneficiaries drop-out, the employer also used the force to achieve a particular business goal and then reduced overheads by cutting down staff. **Such programs did more harm for perceptions around skilling and skilled workers.** In addition, APL beneficiaries would either have access to better income or lifestyles and as a result would quit on their own.
- **Poor placements.** Catering to short-term manpower demands ensured that there was **no clear career path and therefore no clear charted growth in income or role.** As a result, even among those who sincerely remained in jobs, there was less or poor incentive to continue working.
- **Poor retention in jobs after 6-12 months of being placed.** Catering to short-term manpower demands also **allowed PIAs to work with lesser number and quality of trainers.** This would enable PIAs to start fast and close faster thereby maximizing revenue and managing costs. Again, this harmed skilling and weakened the entire eco-system. Seasoned trainers would cost higher and demand longer-term employment and hence the PIA would retain the services of less qualified trainers to push numbers into and out of classrooms. As a result, **the eco-system did not evolve, better teaching-learning and testing practices did not seep in (like it was doing in formal education) and relationships between organizations and beneficiaries did not develop.**
- Last but not the least, in most cases, courses with the **least input cost resulted in skewed workforce development** where even self-employment facilitation could not create adequate income. For instance, training beneficiaries in sales was cheapest as it did not require costly equipment for training and specialized trainers and assessors. Hence, projects for sales persons abounded. Supply economics with poor wage specifications

resulted in poorer placements and salaries in jobs. And self-employment was not possible. Lateral movement was further limited as the courses were most often tailor-made for a pre-determined organization.

- The deeper and far-reaching impacts of these interventions were beyond the immediate task of skilling and retention. **Skill training as a business became unattractive for larger educational institutions or globally leading businesses with better talent and processes. Trainers as a community saw no potential for sustained income or career in skilling. And state administrations did not perceive skilling as a long-term intervention to create super structures or pool resources.**

4. Administrative Interventions for Reform

Introducing reform in skill training as an intervention required systemic changes and planned evolution over time, finding solutions for problems that would emerge as each process was being strengthened. The first step in reforms was **clear identification of goals and outcomes**. Processes can only be defined when outcomes are clearly mapped. In keeping with goals of MORD (diversity in incomes and upward mobility), the primary outcome of the programme was deemed to be **wage employment** with some breathing space to cater to differing or evolving career aspirations among rural poor youth. The goal therefore became: guaranteed wage-employment for a minimum of 75% of the beneficiaries in each skill training project. Promising 75% wage employment as the outcome is a bold step which clearly differentiated MORD's skill training programme from all other government sponsored training interventions. To add, MORD clearly defined wage, placements and retention. Wage has been defined as a minimum monthly salary of Rs. 6,000/- (Cost to Company). Placement has been defined as paid work for 3 continuous months in a job. Retention has been defined as working for a period of 12 months. To facilitate placement and retention, MORD then identified a support directly to the beneficiary in the form of Post-Placement Support, in addition to subsidizing the cost of training by 100%.

Additionally, to impact upward mobility, due emphasis was laid on placement linkage, post-placement tracking, job retention and career progression. It was deemed that **project funding would be directly linked to achievement of physical targets**. This would enable MORD to take remedial actions like reallocation of targets and funds as well as cancellation of non-performing project assets. Further, to motivate performers, **incentives were identified and structured for physical achievement in retention and career progression**. Career progression is identified as a 150% jump in the monthly salary of a candidate within the course of the first 12 months in a job. PIAs were to be rewarded for prompting retention through counselling of candidates and their families, negotiations with employers pre- and post-placements,

and tracking progress of placed candidates. PIAs were also to be rewarded when their placed candidates achieved career progression or international placements, because each was evidence of a better output and better run training programme.

As a result, the **funding policy was changed from a least cost model to a success-linked incentive led cost model** wherein performing PIAs could demand and receive more than twice the base fixed fee.

The new funding norms were published and released in the **Programme Guidelines** in September 2013. The extract of the Guidelines for Cost Norms is presented in Annexure 1.

The next step was to map a high-level government service delivery process (Figure 1) to start the making of detailed SOPs. The primary need was to evolve and impose a common minimum set of standards for skill training across the eco-system through the framework of guidelines and detailed SOPs. This is also a ‘good governance’ measure to introduce transparency and accountability in programme management, eliminating possible ‘inspector raj’.

A process of registration of PIAs at the level of the centre was introduced to ensure that better organizations applied for and received support from the government as PIAs across the centre and the states. The result was a **rigorous, objective and transparent process for a Permanent Registration Number (PRN)** and on-boarding of potential PIAs. The criteria included verification of registration of the organization with the Registrar of Companies or Societies as applicable, the leadership team and a visual reference of existing business delivery or management facilities.

The next step was to **facilitate market or demand linkage to project proposals**. The guidelines clearly identified the role and responsibility for the PIA in making project proposals. In Figure 2, the four pillars of success were identified for PIAs.



Figure 1: Government Service Delivery Process

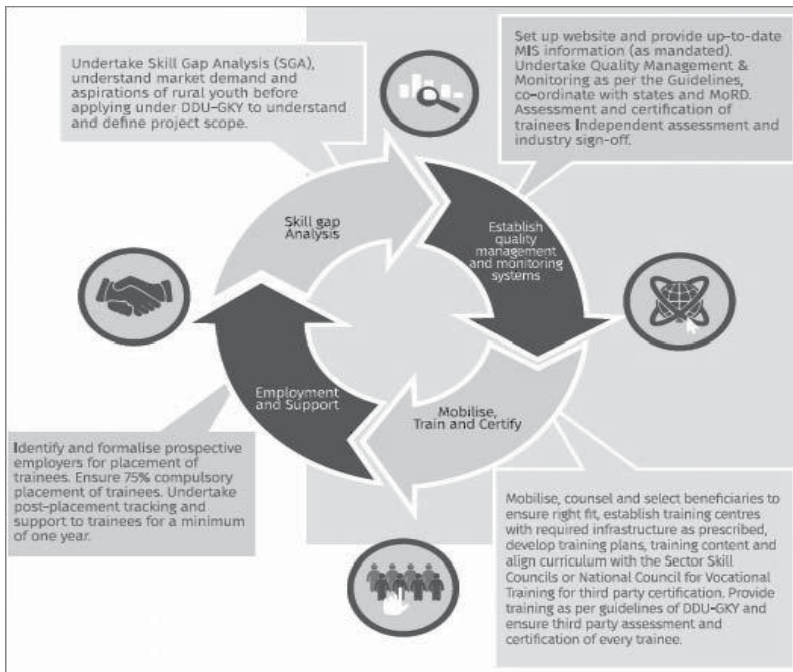


Figure 2: Roles of PIA

Sector Skills Councils and NSDC commissioned a detailed nation-wide study on skills gap across several workforce rich sectors. PIAs were required to **use the Skills Gap Study to perform Skills Gap Analysis as part of their project proposal**. Further, they were required to identify potential employers and/or recruiters for trained candidates and include a demand letter as part of the project proposal.

In addition to encouraging PIAs to undertake such studies and engagements, the Programme Guidelines also identified clear and defined multi-modal direct engagement with employers as a means to facilitate demand linkage. The guidelines have outlined 3 clear policies:

4.1 Champion Employer Policy

A numbers driven approach where potential employers are required to train and place 10,000 rural youth in two years. This policy provides for costs and incentives as applicable for any PIA, but accords special status to proposers by way of prioritization and improved response time. Here, it is understood that the organization can absorb as well as place candidates in its own or subsidiary business as well as in the wider industry.

4.2 Captive Employer Policy

A demand driven approach where potential employers are required to train and absorb 500 or more rural youth annually. Here, it is understood that the

organization or its subsidiaries, including co-owned subsidiaries are to absorb a minimum of 75% of the candidates trained. This policy again provides for costs and incentives as applicable for any PIA, but accords special status to proposers by way of prioritization and improved response time.

4.3 Industrial Internship Policy

A demand driven approach, this is significantly different in its content. The costs and incentives structure is changed and follows the approach of subsidizing the cost of talent acquisition. And the training period is fixed at 12 months with a guarantee of employment and progression upon the successful completion of training. There are additional considerations in this policy which will be pointed out later in this document. An extract of the Programme Guidelines mentioning the possible employer engagements and weightages to be accorded is presented in Annexure 2.

The next step was to identify a prioritization for project proposals in appraisal clearly indicating preferences linked with MORD’s desired outcomes and expectations. A 4-stage appraisal process was evolved (Figure 3).

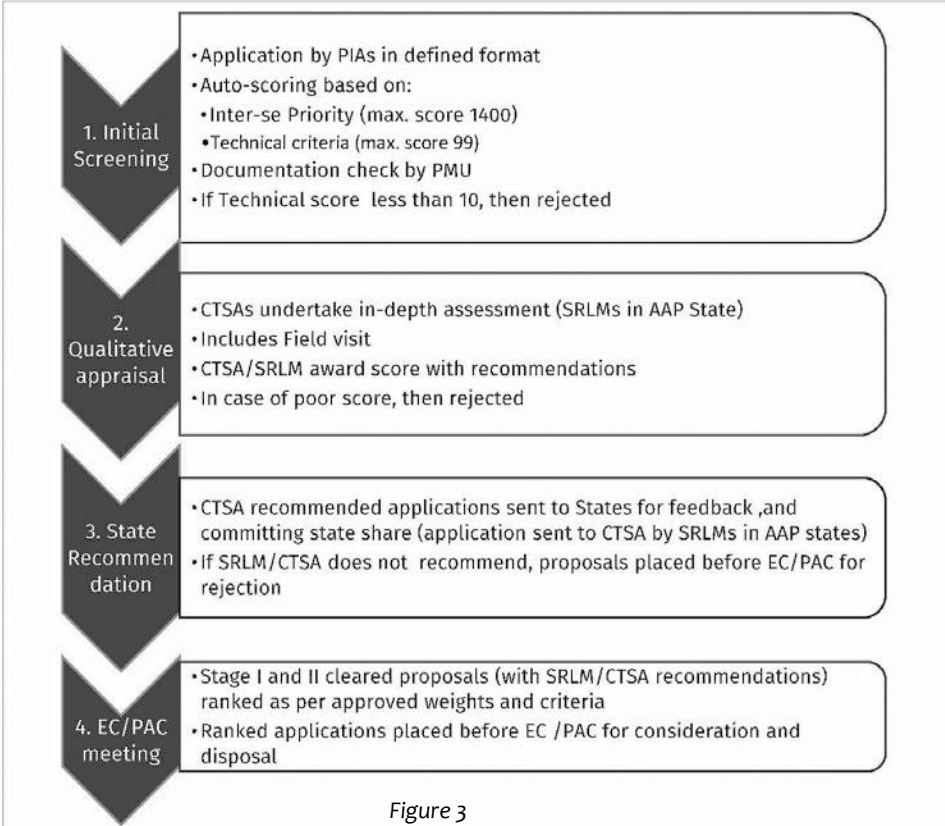


Figure 3

(Note: Project Implementation Agency (PIA); Project Management Unit (PMU); State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM); Central Technical Support Agency (CTSA)

The appraisal process included scoring of potential projects on the merits of:

- Strengths of the organization (brand, past experience, management capacity and financial resources)
- Merits of the proposed project (skills gap, linkages with state and regional demands, course content, delivery mechanism and pedagogy).

The next step was to identify and standardize course and curriculum content. MORD mandated the adoption of standards and set-up national bodies to align with and recommend job-roles as well as course content, trainer qualifications (where available), teaching–learning methodology and assessment methodology. Further, it has been prescribed that PIAs engage with academic specialists and ensure training and certification within the framework established by the **National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF)**. This is essential to gain global recognition as well as portability.

It was **prescribed that all PIAs would follow either NCVT curricula for MES or QP-NOS as developed by SSCs of NSDC.** It was further prescribed that all assessments would be third-party through **accredited assessors of the respective bodies** as above.

Also, the durations of skill training programs were identified. The minimum intervention was **proposed for three-months duration with 576 hours of training**, and 15 days of on-the-job training (OJT) and the maximum intervention was **proposed for 12 months duration with 2,304 hours of training** and the completion of school year in association with National Open School where needed. The 12 months programme would also include 3 months of OJT. The duration of projects is detailed in the Programme Guidelines and is presented here as Annexure 3.

In several employer engagements over time, it was discovered that soft skills formed a large part of employer expectations. Hence, **training hours in Soft Skills or Life Skills, basic IT skills** (handling and working with a computer, accessing the internet etc.) and **functional English** were included in every project and training calendar to ensure that rural poor youth were able to access a broader labour market upon successful completion of training. These are also instrumental in delivering sustainability to the skilling intervention. Another component identified was **‘work readiness training’** aimed at preparing candidates for work-life in a city or industrial centre is the primary objective of the ‘work readiness training’.

The next step was to define physical infrastructure. It was found in repeated interactions with successful candidates and partner organizations that the **training centre was central to perceptions of skill training as a route to income**

and employment, seriousness of the activity as well as **value and esteem for skilling and skilled workers**. In consultation with diverse specialists and domain experts as well as research teams as present in the CTSA, a detailed blueprint was evolved for the **size and scale of a training centre, its academic and non-academic areas, and design for a physical strength** among others factors.

Several innovations were made here. The most important was the inclusion of **Domain Labs**. A domain lab is a representative sample of the final work environment complete with necessary tooling for the learning of skills, as would be available in the actual work environment when the beneficiary is placed in the job, and as shown in the image. For instance, the domain lab for a machinist or operator's job role would include a lathe machine wherein beneficiaries would be taught how to use and work with it.

A sample of the detailed SOPs for 'training infrastructure' is presented in Annexure 4. The **SOP also identified a concurrent monitoring approach of MORD and its action-arm, the CTSA and respective state governments through MORD or dedicated Skills Missions or their appointed technical support agencies (TSAs), with a view to build transparency in governance and administration**. The number of visits, composition of the visiting team and checklist etc. have been included in the applicable Standard Forms (SFs) of the SOP.



Domain Lab of Wazir Advisors (DDU-GKY PIA) in Karnataka

With the identification of minimum benchmarks for physical infrastructure, MORD encountered a new problem, the **need to attract and motivate better talent and organizations of repute or seed organizations to adopt quality skill training as a business**. Here, the traditional government approach of procuring services and paying post completion of the projects was a barrier. The physical infrastructure required capital investment on behalf of the PIAs which would then be amortized over longer periods implementing larger projects. **MORD needed to structure its payments to facilitate capital investments as well as ensure quality outcomes**. The funding norms needed to be changed so that sanctioned PIAs had access to funds immediately to invest in training centres. Payments were broken down into four successive instalments subject to utilization of funds and achievement of physical targets. The revised funding norms were:

- **Front-loading payment through advance (25% of the total project cost) immediately upon sanction** of the project. Against this, the PIAs were required to establish necessary infrastructure and complete 10% of the proposed physical targets of the project in terms of training and placement. If they succeeded in the above and utilized 60% of the funds, they were then eligible for the second instalment.
- **The second instalment, comprising of 50% of the project cost was paid when projects and PIAs demanded, subject to completion** of the targets as specified in Point 1. Upon disbursement of the second instalment, the PIA would have access to 75% of the total project cost. However, now the physical achievement goals were set at 90% of total project in terms of training and placement. Utilization also had to keep pace, at 90% of all funds till then, to prove eligibility for the third instalment.
- **The third instalment, comprising of 15% of the project cost, would then be disbursed on demand and subject to verification of claims** as identified in Point 2 above. At the instance, the PIA would have already received 90% of the project cost. The goals were to achieve 100% of the proposed project in terms of training and placement targets. Achievement would make them eligible for the fourth and final instalment.
- **The fourth and final instalment was disbursed upon the completion and closure of the project.**

This structure automatically ensured availability of funds at all times with PIAs to ensure sustainability of the projects and the activity of skill training. However, this **structure of funding projects exposed MORD to higher financial risks**. In order to mitigate risks, MORD needed to modify PFMS for delivering a project view and MIS. PFMS was then to be adopted across all projects, through the CTAs. **PFMS, with its unique linkage to Core Banking Solutions (CBS) of banks would allow MORD and its designated authorized**

personnel to access and identify how every rupee is being spent in real time. This ensured that MORD could implement the proposed funding structure with lower risk of non-performance or creation of non-performing assets. It would also allow MORD to detect fraud in time and take remedial action in a timely manner.

PFMS and approach to funding allowed MORD to introduce quality skilling. While PFMS manages the risk on behalf of the centre, states needed to manage their risk while committing their share of funds in a timely manner to ensure smooth implementation of the skilling projects. This required that MORD put in place **a system of concurrent monitoring with a clear role for state teams to ensure that they are involved and appraised of progress and plan their funds and contributions in a timely manner.** As a result, a concurrent system of monitoring and evaluation was developed and identified in the Programme Guidelines with roles for State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs)/ SSMs by way of visits, audits and engagement through the skilling lifecycle, from mobilization to tracking placed candidates for success in job retention. The guidelines for concurrent monitoring are presented in Annexure 5.

Concurrent monitoring and an active role in implementation for state teams required capacity building and creating institutional framework across the country. This is where MORD needed to devise **a cooperative design in a federal structure.** The structure identified and facilitated the capacity of the state in building institutional support without compromising access to the poor and needy in states that have developmental delays. This implementation design framework ensures that the poor in India do not become a victim of state governments' lack of capacity while respecting the principles of cooperative federalism. Some states acquired capacity to implement and manage their own programs. Such states were labelled as **Action Plan States (APS)** and empowered with the right to choose their projects, PIAs and implementation cycles. They were also empowered to appoint their own TSAs in addition to engaging the services of the CTAs where needed. In others, the centre still invests in resources to plan and implement the programme, referred to as **Year Plan States (YPS).**

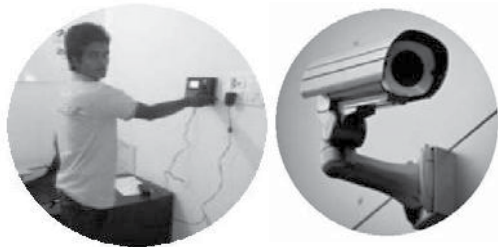
In order to grow capacity uniformly and where needed, MORD has also provided for budgets or **funds for capacity building, recruitment of TSAs, implementing communication and advocacy programs and monitoring and evaluation to states, in both YPS and APS implementations.** In APS, MORD provides the states with a fund and a physical target and disburses funds in two instalments of 50% each.

Currently, MORD is working towards migration of a larger number of states to the APS model and is facilitating the same through the preparation and use of an **APS Transition Toolkit**.

Concurrent monitoring of financial transactions was possible in real-time through desk access of PFMS project accounts. Physical verifications, however, were limited to visits which could only be performed on pre-designated occasions. It was physically not possible for the authorized representatives of MORD to be present in all training centres at all times.

As a result, MORD followed an empowerment model. In addition to the Operations Teams (Op-teams) in its PIAs who would implement the training programme on a daily basis, MORD **seeded the formation of Quality Assurance Teams (Q-teams) in the PIAs** who would impose and monitor quality standards. Technology was extensively used to facilitate the role of the Q-teams and CTAs/ SRLMs/ SSMs. The idea behind usage of technology was to **facilitate replication of visits or simulate physical presence of monitoring agencies** in the training centres, in a literally 'fly-on-the-wall' approach. Some of the implementations are:

- **Geo-tagged Bio-metric Attendance record.** It is mandated that training centres record attendance of all members (beneficiaries, trainers and administrative personnel) using STQC compliant and UIDAI compliant devices. The data is then locally stored as well as made available as MIS on the website of the PIA. Visiting teams can retrieve and evaluate attendance data for any day in the previous 30 days.
- **Use of CCTV recording of training days at the training centre as a monitoring tool.** Each of the academic areas is recorded using CCTV cameras with audio recording facility and this information is locally stored for access for a period of 6 months post completion of training of the batch. The recording is also analysed for assessing quality of training delivered, trainer ability and functioning of domain labs etc.



Finally, in a unique first, MORD **has branded the programme**, with the name DDU-GKY and the trained worker as the output or product. **Branding is a strategy to fashion and cater to aspirations of consumers.** Herein, rural poor youth between



the ages of 15 and 35 years are the primary set of consumers, and employers from industry form the second set of consumers. Employers are consumers of the brand through consumption of the product offering, the skilled workforce.



Career aspirations are fashioned and managed through brand-led engagement and pride of association. This has been architected through the SOPs by way of **co-branding of training centres and physical branding elements for beneficiaries like uniform, course material etc.**

Branding abounds in the **training centres thereby creating clear differentiators and perceptions of quality skill training.** The concept of co-branding has been extended to training centres established under the multi-modal employer engagements as well.

5. Implementation Strategy

5.1 Rollout/ Implementation Model

Implementation of all the process reengineering initiatives as per the following approach:

- Identification of champions within the DDU–GKY national unit and CTSA
- Comprehensive training and capacity building of PIAs with identified champion for quality assurance, financial SOP, and MIS systems
- Conducting training programme across identified nodal officers of state government
- Establishment of a central helpdesk for proactive guidance and clarification

As on date, at least 600 functionaries from PIAs, 160 state government functionaries and 40 officers of CTSA and 30 members of the national unit have been trained in the reengineered processes and systems. Further, Ministry with the help of CTSA have developed e-SOP certification module which will be rolled out shortly.

5.2 Communication and Dissemination strategy and approach

In addition to the training and capacity building sessions detailed in (3) above, the programme has ensured wide-spread communication and dissemination through:

1. Office orders
2. Website
3. Video-conferences with state heads and heads of PIAs
4. Personal communication with secretaries in state government
5. state level meetings

The above has ensured that the information and awareness is widely disseminated from the top level functionaries to the operational levels.

5.3 Technology Platform

1. Towards enabling GPR initiatives through technology, an Online PRN system has been used which helps potential PIAs to register with DDU-GKY for further submission of proposals
2. Online proposal application management, which automates the submission and processing of proposals submitted by PRN holding PIAs, is also being implemented.
3. End-to-end ERP system enables concurrent monitoring of training centres and training quality.
4. PFMS, which helps integrating and automating fund management from the source to the last beneficiary
5. e-SOP certification website

6. Impact of the Re-engineering Process

The Programme Guidelines were adopted in September 2013 and the detailed SOPs have been developed and adopted in two parts, first in September 2014 and the second in July 2015.

Table 1

The geographic coverage of the programme is as follows:

Number of States Implementing the programme	22
Number of districts impacted	576
Number of blocks impacted	6,297
Number of approved Training Centres	680+
Number of Job-roles offered	450+
Candidates Trained/ in-training at the time of writing this Case	1.55 Lakh (~ 40,000+ are in training)
Candidates Placed in jobs	69,000+
Number of Action Plan States	12
Number of Projects implemented on PFMS	153
Number of Beneficiaries tracked through PFMS	5,30,000+
Number of PIAs (registered with PRNs)	1,200+
Number of PIAs with sanctioned Projects	290+

Physical Infrastructure has been one of the key areas of impact. There has been a remarkable shift in the exterior look and internal ambience of the training centres. Recently, the Champion Employer Training Centre of Café Coffee Day was dedicated to the nation in Bengaluru.

Not only is the training centre visually inspiring, it is also unique. The basement houses the training facility with an installed capacity of 80 candidates. The ground level houses a functional Café Lounge (premium kind of coffee outlet of the brand), serving 10,000 captive customers working in the Global Village complex in leading IT companies. A candidate enrolled in the skill training course here learns for a period of 2 months. Once ready, OJT commences in the Café above.



External view of the Champion Employer Training Centre of CCD in Global village, Kengeri, Bengaluru



Classroom with AV equipment and Coffee machine



Coffee Lab with 2 machine, Chiller, Ice maker, Washer etc.



Functioning Café Lounge at the Ground Level of the TC



Entrance of the co-branded TC



Café Coffee Day, keeping with the DDU–GKY SOPs, has identified the Lesson Plan (Figure 4) as well as a **clear and defined career path for each candidate, starting as a ‘Trainee’ and growing into an ‘Area Manager’ in 7 years.** The Area Manager is responsible for more than 50 Café outlets in the area.



Figure 4

While the physical transformation has been taking place, impact of the reform and re-engineering has been felt across the DDU–GKY and skill training ecosystem. The making of **the Internet enabled Monitoring & Evaluation ERP** (developed on DDU–GKY norms and SOPs) is a case in point (Figure 5).

This ERP platform is currently being implemented through DDU–GKY’s CTAs (NABARD Consultancy Services and National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj). It is expected that the ERP will be fully functional in the coming 6 months.

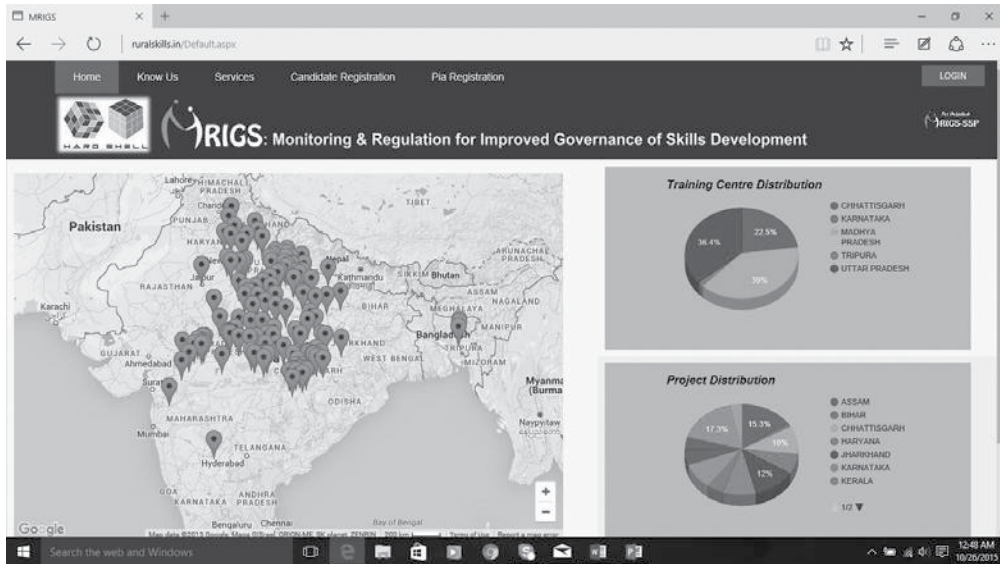


Figure 5

The PFMS is also being modified in parallel. It was originally developed to track and report fund utilization in an agency wise structure. As DDU–GKY PIAs could sanction multiple projects, it was necessary to modify PFMS to track and report fund utilization in a project wise structure. A small team of experts were engaged, both at MORD as well as in the source team (CGA, Ministry of Finance) to modify PFMS. In 6 months, this was achieved and **PFMS was then rolled out across the Yerala Projects Society (YPS) projects, through the CTAs.** Through PFMS, the following has been enabled for MORD:

- Tracking of fund movements up to the last credit to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries
- Tracking of project expenses across vendors of PIAs
- Preparation of Utilization Certificates

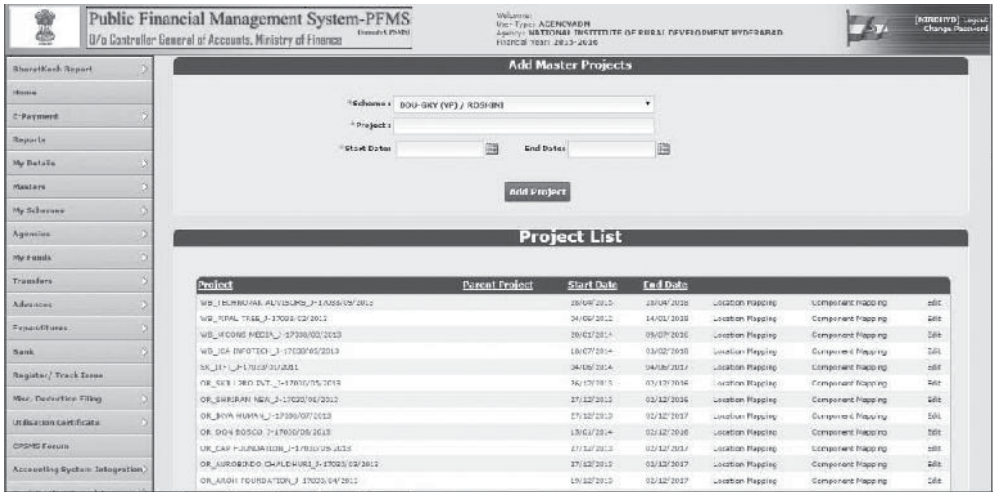


Figure 6

With the implementation of PFMS, MORD has been able to track and monitor the usage of advances released. Detection of fraud or misuse of funds and recovery of funds has also been facilitated. For instance, when a PIA in Karnataka diverted funds acquired from MORD for purposes other than skill training, MORD was able to take suitable remedial action and recover about Rs. 7 crore within a short span of 30 days. This was made possible as MORD could identify the entire fund movement in real-time through PFMS.

With physical and financial infrastructure in place, MORD is now focused on addressing the other challenges, viz. job retention and international benchmarking. Some of the actions initiated by MORD are:

- **Training of Trainers (ToT):** is an initiative where working trainers in PIAs are put through a 2–3 day retreat focused on domain as well as facilitation skills. These sessions also apprise the trainers of new methods and teaching–learning aids available globally, techniques for developing and implementing internal assessments etc. Till date, such programmes have been conducted in five states (Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and Rajasthan), impacting over 130 trainers.
- **Setting-up of an e-learning and certification portal on DDU–GKY SOPs:** access to trained personnel across the eco-system is essential to building capacity, either through introduction of newer PIAs or through enhancing the staff strength of existing PIAs. This is made possible through the launch of the e-SOP portal. It covers all the modules of the DDU–GKY SOPs, and also has an assessment and certification process.
- **Working with SSCs of NSDC to develop new QP NOS:** In association with MNREGS team, DDU–GKY is developing a new Quality Pack for

'Bare Foot Engineers/ Technicians'. These are for training and creating manpower resources at the village level to assist in creating rural assets like water tank, bio-gas plants etc.

- **Working on detailed module on mobilization:** PULL strategy for skill training requires a different approach in mobilization. Extending branding to attract rural youth for skill training and fulfilment through PIAs lies at the core of this strategy and MORD has invested time and resources in creating a unique identity and communication for the brand. It is now planning and implementing mass mobilization campaigns in states. This will not only ensure that the needy candidates are pulled in, but will also allow PIAs to choose the right training programme for the candidate.
- **Release of framework for the establishment and running of Migration Support Centres:** It has been observed that a large number of placements result in migration of labour. To ensure job retention, MORD has evolved a guiding framework for the set-up and running of Migration Support Centres (MSCs). The MSC would act as a 'home away from home' for migrant labour and provide several necessary services like accommodation, refreshments, identification, medical and legal aid among others. In its Programme Guidelines, MORD has earmarked an initial corpus of Rs. 10 lakh for the same.

While there is still a long way to go, MORD has put in place the fundamentals needed for constructing and managing a large skill training programme that will not only offer options to cater to the aspirations of rural poor youth, but will also over time work as a strategic tool in poverty alleviation.



Annexure 1

The design of funding model for the programme has been reengineered to achieve the core objectives of retention and career progression for the trainees so as to achieve sustainable outcomes of poverty alleviation and economic transformation for the poor rural youth. Accordingly the DDU-GKY funding model provides incentives for career progression, job retention and overseas placements which are 1.3 times the support for skill training cost provided in the programme. Such a design has begun to enable the programme to attract champion employers and captive employers (those organizations that can skill for internal HR requirements) to partner with the programme.




Table 1: Unit Training Cost per candidate of basic sub-components under DDU-GKY for courses of different duration*

S.no.	Item	3 month	6 month	9 month	12 month
1	Training Cost (Rs.)	13696.00	19152.00	23562.00	26602.00
2	Boarding and Lodging (Unit Cost/day for residential training)				
a	State Headquarters @ Rs 166 per day	14940.00	29880.00	44820.00	59760.00
b	District Headquarters @ Rs 120 per day	10800.00	21600.00	32400.00	43200.00
c	All other locations other than (a) and (b) above @ Rs 75 per day	6750.00	13500.00	20250.00	27000.00
3	Food and To & Fro charges	9000.00	18000.00	27000.00	36000.00
4	Post Placement Support				
a	Placement within District of domicile (Rs 1000 per month for 2 months)	2000.00	2000.00	2000.00	2000.00
b	Placement within State of domicile (Rs 1000 per month for 3 months)	3000.00	3000.00	3000.00	3000.00
c	Placement outside State of domicile (Rs 1000 per month for 6 months)	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00
5	Uniform cost (cost of one pair is Rs 1000, 2 pairs provided in case of 9 m and 12 m course)	1000.00	1000.00	2000.00	2000.00
6	Minimum wages for placements in India (per month)-Cost to Company (CTC) or minimum wages whichever is higher	6000.00	8000.00	12000.00	15000.00
7	Minimum wages for placements abroad	25000.00	25000.00	25000.00	25000.00

Note: A PA may claim only one of the costs given in S.No.2 or No.3 while costing for the project.

Annexure 2

Employer engagements and priorities as envisage in the Guidelines:

This is an extract of the Guidelines categorizing PIAs/ projects. The priority for projects in the SOP is derived here from.




Table 5: PIA categories

No	Category of PIA	Eligibility criteria	Project size & period (Rs.)
1	Category A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Foreign placement PIA, i.e. an eligible entity which has annually placed 500 or more overseas jobs with a minimum salary of USD500 or more per month in the last two years from the date of application for a project; or b. A Champion Employer who has a valid "Champion Employer MoU" with MoRD; or c. A Captive employer, i.e. an eligible entity which has provided 500 or more captive jobs annually in own or subsidiary agencies/ companies in the last two years from the date of application for a project; or d. An eligible entity owning an industry with a turnover of average Rs.100 crore in previous three years, and placement of 500 or more candidates in own or subsidiary agencies / companies in last two years from the date of application for a project; or e. An Educational Institutes of high repute, i.e. a PIA, which is an educational institute with a minimum score of 3.50 on CGPA out of 4.00 in NAAC grading or is a Community College which has received funding from UGC or AICTE in the last two years; or 	UptoRs. 50 crore per project (total approved cost including State share). Project period maximum of five years

Annexure 3

Duration and content specifications appear in separate places in the Guidelines and SOPs. Some of the extracts are:

found to improve his/her competency. Class room performance, results of tests and quizzes, placement success, retention, career progression, trainee selection practices and trainer quality should be correlated and follow up action taken to improve quality.

3.2.2.2.3 Content

Course content should be in tune with the requirement of industry/trade. This is to be certified by the employer if the training is for captive employment. In all other cases it should be certified by National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) or Sector Skills Council (SSC) or any other agency notified for the purpose by MoRD. In special cases certification by nationally acknowledged proprietary training brands will also be considered provided it has been approved by MoRD. Other important aspects are:

- i. Training and course content should facilitate learning by rural poor youth who may not have exposure to English.
- ii. There should be mandatory modules on soft skills, communication and IT.
- iii. Mixed media modules, interactive pedagogy which includes games, role plays should be used. Curriculum and daily session plan should be uploaded on the PIAs website and transferred on to <http://ddugly.gov.in>.
- iv. Adequate practical and on the job training /internship must be incorporated into the training module where necessary.
- v. Course material and exercises should be available online so that trainees who wish to use it to revise and improve themselves are able to do so. Keeping in mind the proliferation of mobile based learning opportunities, the development and deployment of mobile phone based content is expected.



- i. Persons who are placed after a training program on skills, soft skills, English and IT ranging from a minimum of 576 hours to a maximum of 2304 hours.
- ii. Persons who are placed after a training program on skills, soft skills, English and IT of 2304 hours which includes a two part training program of nine months + three months. The nine month period is used to enable acquisition of a National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) qualification (8th or 10th class), and the three months period is the standard skills, soft skills, English and IT intervention of 576 hours.
- iii. Persons who are placed in a foreign country after a customised training program of not more than 2304 hours duration.
- iv. Persons who are placed after a three months (576 hours, six months (1152 hours), nine months (1728 hours) or twelve months (2304 hours) training program with a provision for On-the-Job Training (OJT).

3.2.2.2.5 Finishing and work readiness module

PIAs should mandatorily have a finishing and work readiness module as a part of curriculum.

It should preferably be done in PIA established finishing and work readiness centres located in places with high concentration of job opportunities. These centres should be staffed by specially trained high quality trainers who are adept at providing inputs that ensure high success rates at placement interviews and post placement retention. These centres should:

- i. Run short residential courses typically seven to ten days long. During this training alumni should meet and inspire the current batch. The last few days should be used to bring prospective employers to the centre for on-campus recruitment. In case of non-residential courses, whenever said residential training is undertaken, the PIA may claim residential charges for each candidate as per approved rates in Table 1 under section 3.2.2.4.
- ii. Have a dedicated team that helps candidates find suitable accommodation, get access to health care etc.
- iii. Provide support for finding alternate jobs in case the initial placement is not successful
- iv. Provide counselling and advice on personal issues.

These interventions are expected to improve retention and help trainees make a smooth transition from their homes to the new work place. A one-time travel cost to the training centres will be allowed based on actuals with a maximum limit of Rs 4500/- per trainee.

1.3.1. Shift in emphasis - from training to career progression

In the skills sector the emphasis traditionally has been on skilling. With the Special Projects for Skill development under Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), MoRD broke new ground by insisting on placement. This was further refined by defining placement as continuous work for three months with salary slip as evidence. These guidelines extend/sharpen this as follows:

- i. Proof of regular wage employment demonstrated by the salary slip from the Human Resources department of the organization. In case the organization does not have a HR department, certificate issued by the employer indicating wages paid and counter signed by the employee along with the bank statement indicating that wages have been paid by crossed demand draft or money transfer will demonstrate proof of regular wage employment.
- ii. Introducing post placement tracking, counselling and facilitation for a period of

Annexure 4

The specifications of the standards applicable and Standard Forms are covered in Chapter 5 of the SOP Part 1. Some of the extracts are:

5. Training centres

Part B: Standards for due diligence of a training centre and instructions for filling the form

- Standards are prescribed as per the table given below.
- Most items in Part A have two sets of data. First is the physical measure as per units mentioned with the item and second is its conformance to the prescribed standards.
- At places where data is not required then column need not be filled and it is shaded like this:

Clause	Particulars
1	Basic Information To be filled as per instructions given in the form.
2	Physical Infrastructure
2.1	Basic details
	Conformance of centre to standards
	Note: These are the minimum prescribed standards. These do not replace any standards prescribed by statutory bodies as per the acts, rules and codes in force.
1	There should not be any visible marks of leakages from walls and roof.
2	All the balconies, stairs and other locations should have protective walls or railings. Even if one place is unprotected the centre should not be commissioned.
3	The height of the roof should be at least 9 feet; however the desirable height is 10 feet.
4	The training centre should conform to Aajeevika skills look and feel standards as section 5.1.1 of SOP.
5	The circulating area (which could include all covered areas not specified for academic and non-academic uses) area should not be less than 12 % of the total area.
6	The width of the corridor should be at least 4 feet.
7	The number of toilets for the candidates should be calculated as given in the annexure - I to the standards.
8	The number of washbasins for the candidates should be calculated as given in the annexure - I to the standards.
9	No prescription.
10	There should be an Over Head Tank (OHT) for a training centre. The water connection in the taps and toilets should connect to the OHT. Water should be available during the working hours of the training centre.
11	No prescription.
12	Establish the centre in a safe and easily accessible place. It should be close to the road with good access but should not be located in a busy market place.

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5. Training centres

13	No specific standards
14	The sound in the class room should not be more than 75 decibels (A). The measurement should be taken by closing door and turning off all the equipment. The data should be sampled for 5 minutes at 15 seconds interval. Average of 20 observations should be taken as reading.
15	No specific standards
16	The training centre should preferably (not mandatory) have around 100 sq.ft of open space for people to gather and interact. However, where domain training requires open space the prescribed minimum should be followed as per the needs of the domain.
17	At least 5 bicycle parking slots should be available for every 100 non-residential trainees. These can also be used for staff parking.
18	All the wires should be properly secured and tapped. Concealed wiring is not mandatory.
19	All the switch boards and panel boards should be fully covered.
20	Training centre name board should conform with standard form SF-5.1A2
21	Activity summary and achievement board should conform with standard form SF-5.1B1
22	Student entitlement banner should conform with standard form SF 5.1C1
23	Contact details of the important people should conform with standard form SF-5.1B2
24	The board should contain the centre level information and common equipment. (information about the academic rooms will be provided in the respective room).
25	The centre in charge should be able to easily access the central monitor of CCTV
26	CCTV should conform with Aajeevika Skills standard as per section 5.2.3
27	The training centre should have proper and secluded place to store the recorded data of CCTV
3	Physical Infrastructure
1	Academic – At least 10 sq ft space per trainee should be available in all academic areas including domain labs and IT lab.
2	Combining of theory and practical class room is permissible. Office and the counselling area can be merged with minimum of 180 sq.ft with a partition for the counselling area.
3	Ventilation: Area of the windows should be minimum 12% of the total floor area of the classroom.
4	Class room information board: It should have information on size of the room, number of chairs, tables and the details of domain specific equipment.
5	Reception area has to be located in the prominent place preferably at the entrance of the training centre.
4	Equipment
4.1	Common equipment
1	Gensets

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Annexure 5

Roles and responsibilities of concurrent monitoring are identified in multiple places in the Programme Guidelines. Some of the extracts are:



6.5 Concurrent monitoring outputs

6.5.1 Fortnightly monitoring and guidance notes to PIAs using online MIS of PIA: TSAs will monitor the online MIS on a regular basis and issue/upload fortnightly guidance notes to identify and notify non-compliance and for improving the use and functioning of online MIS.

6.5.2 Monitoring of compliance by PIAs on points raised in guidance notes: PIAs will be required to comply with the points raised in the guidance notes within a week of the upload of guidance notes.

6.5.3 Monthly inspection of training centres by Q team of PIA: Q team of PIA will undertake monthly inspection of training centres. The proceedings of these visits will be recorded through GPS-enabled video/audio clips and uploaded along with action points for compliance by the training centre manager and trainers in the workflow MIS and monitored for compliance.

6.5.4 Bi-monthly inspection of training centres by State TSA: SRLM officials/ State TSA will undertake bi-monthly inspection of training centres. The proceedings of these visits will be recorded through GPS-enabled video/audio clips and uploaded in the workflow MIS along with action points for compliance by centre managers and trainers and monitored for compliance.

6.5.5 Tri-monthly inspection of training centres by MoRD's CTSA: MoRD's CTSA will undertake tri-monthly inspection of training centres. The proceedings of these visits will be recorded through GPS-enabled video/audio clips and uploaded in the workflow MIS and monitored along with action points for compliance by centre managers and trainers and monitored for compliance.

Concurrent Evaluation in DDU-GKY is done through:

- i. Fortnightly review of the PIAs web site and issuing advisories on shortfalls or deviations with respect to performance targets. This is to be done by the SRLM or by the Technical Support Agency (TSA). PIAs are required to ensure that the daily status of geo-tagged time stamped attendance of both trainers and trainees are available on their web site as is the daily status of all equipment, teaching aids and consumables. Trainee-wise details of tests and quizzes administered along with questions and answers and marks should also be available for inspection on the web site.
- ii. Monthly inspection of each training centre by the Q team of the PIA. During these inspections the Q team will use protocols developed by NIRD for this purpose and post the results on their web site along with

tagged, time stamped biometric devices for taking attendance of trainers and trainees and pushing it in real time to a central server visible to the Q team of the PIA and State/MoRD CTSA will be one of the pre-requisites for starting up a training centre.

6.5.7 Read-only access to project bank account: PIAs will have to open a separate bank account for the DDU-GKY project and register the account details on PFMS so that read-only access is available to the TSA/SRLM of the bank account of the PIA. Using this the TSA/SRLM will monitor:

- i. Timely salary payment to trainers
- ii. Timely payment of monthly post-placement support to placed candidates
- iii. Timely payment of monthly transport and food support to non-residential trainees.

6.5.8 Online logging of training centres: Daily opening and closing of training centres has to be logged online along with geo-tagged time stamped photographs of the class room and lab.

6.5.9 No monitoring other than the above: No separate progress reports are to be submitted by the PIAs. Instead the State and NRLM Skills IT platform should be exchanging information on real time basis as they are internet-enabled and workflow driven. This will ensure that all stakeholders will have up-to-date information on all aspects of each project on a real time basis. Till such time that the State and NRLM Skills platforms are rolled out, monthly reports may be uploaded on the NRLM Skills website.

6.5.10 Evaluation: Evaluation of DDU-GKY projects serves two key purposes. First it improves systems and processes for programme delivery. Second it encourages and supports learning among stakeholders including PIAs. Evaluation by reputed external agencies brings in newer perspectives and helps improve efficiency and effectiveness.

of these inspections will form the basis for improving the quality of the programme.

- v. PIAs using internet enabled accounting software to manage their funds and using this to provide view only access to SRLM or its TSA. Voucher level data should also be available through this. PIA will use a singly designated bank account to receive and make all payments of DDU-GKY funds. This account will be mapped on to Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System (PFMS) and view only rights will be given to the SRLM and the TSAs. Financial monitoring of projects required for assessing fund release readiness conditions will be done using bank account details on PFMS and accounting details on the online software. Once in three month visits to physically check the veracity of the online accounts will also be undertaken by the SRLM and the TSA. During the physical check of accounts, the

¹ <http://www.ctda.nimr.nib.gov/pms/articles/PMC29%2A%2Fforabscipconcewhylblinprsantrawst.QK5>

Yuva Junction - Empowering Rural Youth

Ms. Shiji Abraham¹

The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (India) is a non-denominational, non-government development organization. AKRSP (India) works as a catalyst for the betterment of rural communities by providing direct support to local communities to promote activities and develop models for sustainable natural resource use and development of human resources. AKRSP (India) is active in over 1900 villages in three environmentally challenged and economically vulnerable regions of Gujarat: the tribal block of Bharuch - Narmada, Surat, Dangs, Tapi, coastal salinity affected areas of Junagadh - Porbandar and the drought prone Surendranagar - Rajkot. Since 2004, AKRSP (India) is working in the remote and tribal blocks of Khandwa, Khargone, Burhanpur, Badwani and Dhar districts in Madhya Pradesh. And since 2008, AKRSP (India) has initiated work in the flood prone districts of Muzzafarpur and Samastipur in North Bihar. AKRSP (I) operates in incredibly remote, rural and tribal villages where income from agriculture and agricultural labour have been the predominant source of livelihoods. Due to limitations associated with small landing holdings and access to markets, increasingly income solely from these sources is quite a challenge. For younger generation, the need to diversify income sources is becoming increasingly apparent, which has led to shifting from agriculture to industry and services.

This shift has led to growing frustration among the younger generation due to the rising rate of unemployment and a skills and employability mismatch that skews and exacerbates the problem. This has been fuelled by the rapid fluctuation in available jobs and demand for skills given the changes in industries and technology and demands of the “new economy”.

Appropriately, to meet up with the need of the hour AKRSP (I) started an initiative that provides youth between the ages of 18 and 35 an opportunity to explore more diverse sources of livelihood beyond traditional agriculture through its “Yuva Junction” programme by not only producing appropriately skilled human resources but also for skills development to address the challenge of inclusive growth. What makes “Yuva Junction” unique is that it enables trained individuals to realize their potential by providing necessary support post training, through AKRSP (I)’s placement and entrepreneurship development initiative, for utilizing and applying their newly acquired skills to

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various facets of their lives and enhance their quality of life and opportunities. The programme also ensures that the benefits of skills training reach the lowest rung of the community and that the community optimizes the training received to enhance their quality of life.

I met Keshu Parmar, 22 year old from Mander village in Porbandar district who attended one of Yuva Junction's seven training centers in Gujarat. Keshu represents the typical profile of Yuva Junction's trainee. He is from a family of five. His family does not own any land and survives on farm labour. Their average annual income is about Rs. 1.2 lakh. Keshu had dropped out of school after completing 12th standard due to



poor finances and had to do labour work to support his family. Keshu got information about the training from one of his friends in the village. With a hope to change his future, he quit labour work and decided to try his luck by joining Yuva Junction which is being offered free for Below Poverty families. He successfully completed his three month modular training on Domestic BPO from Yuva Junction wherein he picked up the nuances of Spoken English, Life Skills, Work Place Readiness, and Computer along with basics of Domestic BPO. As fortune favours the brave he was selected as customer care executive in one of the reputed call centers in Ahmedabad with a starting salary of Rs 6500 at his first attempt. Keshu was very determined to use the opportunity to build a career outside of anything he could have imagined for himself. Initially he found it very difficult to understand the verbatim of call centre and the nature of work. Answering calls and helping customers with their problems is his responsibility and he does it quite efficiently. When his friends decided to call quits and return back to village, he was determined to stay on. He was constantly guided by his facilitators at Yuva Junction Centre. His perseverance has today yielded results. He has been awarded for being the best customer care executive. His voice quality has also been adjudged the best. He currently earns Rs. 7000 per month inclusive of allowances within a span of 4 months. He is now an inspiration to the new joinees. In his words "If Mr. Narendra Modi can scale heights and become Prime Minister from tea vendor then nothing is impossible. Our economic condition should never deter our dreams. Never say die. Preserve, just follow them, and you will become what you want."

Similar is the inspirational case of Pravin who was the first boy to step out of the village to advent in job of retail business. When Pravin Arjanbhai Vadher, a young boy from Itali village of Junagadh district decided to take up retail course in one of the Yuva Junction Centres, many of his friends tried to discourage him by saying that it was not worth it. Pravin was determined to come out of the drudgery of labor and uncertainty

of income. His parents are not literate and did labour work for earning their livelihood. When his father was taken ill, Meniben, Pravin's mother had to take the responsibility of feeding the family from the meagre income earned by doing labor work. Things changed when Pravin decided to take up the skill upgradation program of AKRSP (I). Pravin feels very proud in saying that, "My parents never forced me to quit studies for earning an income. They always wanted us to study well and take up a job." Pravin's father echoed same feeling: "We have spent our lives struggling to make a living but our children should get something better in their life."



Pravin's father learnt about the course in one of the regular meeting held by Yuva Junction Centre. His father was curious and asked Pravin to visit the Centre. Pravin joined the retail course there. After 3 months of rigorous training, he was selected at Café Coffee Day as crew member with a starting salary of Rs. 6500.



He is now working as a team member at Cafe Coffee Day outlet at Maliya (Miyana) block of Rajkot district since February 2015. Initially, he found it difficult to adjust to the new conditions and place of living. In his own words, "I was afraid to talk to customer in English, but gradually I overcame my fear." Attending to customers, taking orders, making coffee and accepting payment, are all his responsibilities. He now, feels confident in talking to customers and capable enough of managing the cafe single handedly. There are two shifts running in the cafe, morning 8 to 4 and 4 to 12. Alongside this salary, he earns an incentive of Rs.100 for meal per day. His ambition is to become the manager of the cafe one day.

The change in Pravin is visible and noteworthy, says Meniben, mother of Pravin. She says "Earlier, he used to be very shy, would not talk much or go out on his own. When he asked for permission to join this course, we were worried about how he was going to cope up. We are happy to see his progress. We are very thankful to the organization for giving guidance to my child. Our status in the village is enhanced. We feel happy when people know us as parents of Pravin."

Pravin feels more confident than before. Those who were discouraging him from taking up the course are now inquiring about the procedure for taking admission for it. Other parents take lesson from Pravin's example and are convinced to send their children to cities for job. Pravin is happy to set a good example for youth of his village and the support he provides to his parents. His zeal for studies is not affected by job. He is determined to complete his graduation for a better future.

*Another person who inspired me is Ketan Vasava. Ketan belongs to the village of **Racchwada in Sagbara** tehsil of Narmada district of Gujarat. He is 20 years old. Ketan's father had always been struggling financially. Therefore Ketan was unable to pursue education after he completed schooling till Grade 12th.*

*After a meeting with Ketan and his parents at the Selamba Centre, he was convinced to join the skill development programme in order to become eligible for a job with sustainable and exponential salary. Ketan joined **Yuva Junction** with great spirits and aspirations. His motivation to earn money as quickly as possible made him a fabulous listener, learner and in later stages, led him to perform extremely well in his job. He took his training as seriously he could. It did not come as a surprise to everyone that he cracked his interview in the very first attempt.*

These days, Ketan works at KFC at the Adajan outlet in Surat. When he first joined, his initial salary was only INR 5,500 but just in a matter of 8-9 months he has managed to get successive increments which makes him earn INR 9,000 a month as base pay. In addition to this, he also gets multiple benefits from the company and additional pay for finishing off various sections of the outlet.

Ketan is a very shrewd saver too. With all his planned savings he has recently bought a top-notch bike (Yamaha FZ) which costs nearly INR 80,000. Ketan financially contributes financially to support his father.

*Ketan is just steps away from becoming a manager at KFC and is only to finish one more section before he becomes eligible for the post. The way in which Ketan's career has progressed so far suggests that it would not take him long to do so. His present manager informs that customers fall in love with Ketan because of the warm relationship he maintains with them. He is a great role-model to all who undertake training at **Yuva Junction** today.*

Ketan, Pravin and Keshu are few of those who have faced odds but with their sheer determination have become role models for the community. The Centres, infuse a



sense of hope and courage, and hence have become more conscious of their roles that impact the future of youth.

It was heartening to learn that the skills training initiative of “Yuva Junction” had snow ball effect not only at the community level but also at the village level. One such example is that of village Kolvan. A sleepy village in Narmada district of Gujarat located on the border of Gujarat and Maharashtra, it is quite untouched by the happenings in the cities. This village has a total population of 3294 comprising predominately of Scheduled Tribes. Literacy rate is 69.88%. Kolvan’s mainstay livelihood is farming and cattle rearing. Most of the villagers migrate to nearby district as the farming is largely rain fed. In spite of being educated, the youth from Kolvan migrate for labour work for lack of better options. The information about skill training of “Yuva Junction” reached the villages through a parent’s meeting. Subsequently, six girls joined the training in Selamba Yuva Junction Centre and completed 3 months as Retail Sales Associate. On completing their training, they got selected by Jubilant Food Works to work at Dominos Outlet with a starting salary of 8300/-. This was the first step for the girls out of their village to earn a decent livelihood.

1. About Yuva Junction

“Yuva Junction” began in the year 2007 with the initiative called “Computerji... jode Duniya se” with an intention to bridge the urban and rural divide by making technology accessible to rural youth through computer training. Using a low cost model of utilising old computers donated by companies, it reached out in remote villages to train more than 20 thousand youth through a hub and spoke model. These centers also started disseminating information based on the needs of the community and hence doubled up as village resource centers. Services included provision of information on government schemes, examination results, job opportunities and market price of agriculture commodities. These centers also undertook to educate the local communities on their rights as citizens. This helped the community to avail basic services like power, transport and regular visits by government nurse and postal services through grievance redressal mechanism of Right to Information Act.



This initiative used a strong mobilisation strategy to take spread the awareness to the villages. Street plays, songs, posters, and pad yatras were organised in and around the villages to spread the word. Initially, computers were carted

to the villages but now a days most things happen using mini projectors. All it requires is just a press of a button.

Villagers were also enthused to see these centers as their own facility which can be used as per their need.

Job placement emerged as a demand from many of the youths and placement services were added to the portfolio. Over a period, this programme metamorphosed into “Yuva Junction” in year 2012 which strives to “Inform, Educate and Employ” the rural youth to hone skill based training and help them get employment. “Yuva Junction” has seen an organic change in its offering from “supply based approach” to “market oriented approach”.



To ensure this change, a systematic approach was adopted from mobilisation to job retention to ensure that the rural youth are absorbed by the market after the training. Real-time and dynamic market scans of both, destination cites for Yuva Junction’s job placements, as well as local markets were organised. The market scan report suggested demand in trades like hospitality, retail and financial services. It also emphasises on opportunities available in entrepreneurial trades. Focus group discussions were organized with the rural youths to understand their aspirations and challenges. This discussion helped to understand the barriers affecting the youths in getting employment. It was realized during the discussion that the rural youths feel that that the jobs are often unattainable or undesirable and they continue to be farm / unskilled labourers in spite of being educated as they have constraints in getting access to counselling, information, education and services that will support them in preparing for and being placed in suitable jobs.

To suit the requirements, the market oriented training pedagogy was adapted. Role plays, digital tools for learning basic English, Life Skills and workplace readiness, along with interaction with employers became an integral part of the curriculum. The trainings now occur in trades such as Retail Sales, Domestic BPO, Computer Hardware, and Accounting using Tally along with

trainings on cross cutting skills like Computers, Life Skills, Spoken English and Work Place Readiness. The curriculum and duration of trainings varies by trades, and adhere to the selected assessment and certification standards for each trade. The trainings on mobile repairing, sewing and stitching along with entrepreneurship training is also offered to populace more focussed on enterprise development. The trainings are recognised by certifying bodies like National Council for Vocational Training and Usha. This holistic approach to training has helped these rural youth bridge the urban rural divide in terms of employment opportunities.

Placement drives are organised at the training locations for candidates who have completed their trainings. Placement Day is also organised in Ahmedabad along with training partners to provide a wide array of opportunities to trained youths to help them explore a new world. Job fairs are also organised regularly at block level to provide equal opportunity to the rural youth. Employers like Eureka Forbes, Dominos, Café Coffee Day, Big Bazaar, Vodafone, Raymond, Strategic Management Private Limited have recruited trained candidates with an average salary of 84,000 per annum. Each candidate usually has at least 2 job offers which gave them the choice of best employer.

Given the geographies, Yuva Junction placements largely call for migration to slightly larger nearby cities. However, Yuva Junction actively scope out local employment opportunities for youth who do not wish to migrate. Yuva Junction maintains existing partnerships with employers and proactively scope out and engage with potential employers, both in local and destination cities. Yuva Junction partners only with responsible employers that place trainees in jobs that provide a conducive and healthy work environment, as well as potential for upward professional mobility. The process guidelines can be referred for more information.

The programme understands that most of the trainees are first time migrants and migration causes intense day to day challenges at the workplace for the youths and their family. Loneliness, fear about performance, concerns over pay levels until the first pay check arrives, pressure from friends and family back home, difficulty in adapting to a structured workplace and numerous other factors may result in the youth deciding to return back to home. In acknowledging the difficulties and challenges that arise with job-related migration, especially given the profile of the youth that the programme works with, the programme undertakes several measures that allow for ease of transition and job retention. Exposure visits, pre-placement talks and parents meetings have been embedded in their curriculum. Parents and alumni are actively involved in creating an ecosystem that enables youths to explore their potential, and in so doing, explore the world beyond what they know of it.

In addition to the above measures, Yuva Junction has also started migration support center in Ahmedabad to provide accommodation assistance and counselling services to support the first time migrants, especially girls to adapt themselves to new workplace and environment. It has a capacity to accommodate 30 girls who will be supported till they adjust to their new work place and environment. It also ensures the physical and mental health of the girl candidates.

An IVRS toll free help line “75678 75679” also has been launched to guide the rural youth on issues related to education, career and job related options. The calls are recorded and the queries are answered by a counsellor who provides the rural youth with career assistance.

Yuva Junction has a mandate to work in rural geographies with economically poor population who are limited in their ability to pay. There are special batches of BPL candidates whose fees has been subsidised by the government, whereas others have to pay a nominal token amount. This cross subsidization helps the centers to generate revenue. Some of the employers also pay a token amount when the candidates have been retained in jobs for a minimum period. The programme will not achieve complete financial sustainability through training fee. However AKRSP (I) is in position to sustain the programme through grant partnerships with donors and partners from corporates, foundations and support from overseas. The programme is projected to attain approximately 33% cost recovery.

The initiative continues to be supported by corporates like Microsoft who gave initial support to nurture the programme in 2007. Later in year 2012, it gained support from Quest Alliance. The partnership with Quest Alliance plugged the gap of training quality through blended learning approach where the learners and facilitators were supported through a combination of high quality digital tools on curricula. Quest Alliance support also includes work books, digital lessons, and weekly tests, to create an environment to share and learn. Regular Training of Trainers also ensures that the trainers are graduated as facilitators to help the trainees to take empowered decision of life.

The concentrated and structured approach of imparting skill based training to rural areas has helped AKRSP(I) to garner support in Gujarat from Ministry of Rural Development - Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushalya Yojana that supports youth from BPL families to get skill based trainings and later support them with employment opportunities.

Yuva Junction has won eINDIA 2010 Jury award for Skill Development initiative of the year in 2010.

2. Organisational Structure

Currently, AKRSP(I) has 12 Yuva Junction centers – 8 in Gujarat, 1 in Madhya Pradesh and 3 in Bihar and plans to scale up to include trainings in new domains. These centers are managed by 50 enthusiastic professionals who support trainings, mobilisation and placements. Management team consists of Skill Development, Placement Manager and MIS Officer at Central Office. Each Region is headed by Project Coordinators and is supported by Placement Officers. This regional team support the day to day activities of the centre.

3. Progress till date

Till date, 32536 youths have been trained under Yuva Junction, and it has been able to facilitate meaningful employment for 5346 youth. 173 youth have started their own enterprise. In the year 2015, Yuva Junction has enrolled 1015 youth, trained 804 and 211 are undergoing training. Out of 804 youths, 400 have been placed and are in jobs while 317 have been offered jobs but are looking out for better prospects. The youth who have been placed work at entry level with leading service providers like Vodafone, Airtel and various retail outlets like Big Bazaar, Café Coffee Day, Dominos, and KFC with an average salary of Rs. 7000 per month.

4. Future

Skill Development is the national priority and many private companies as well as non-profit organisations have entered this arena. While private agencies capitalise on skill development initiatives as part of their corporate social responsibility, non-profit organisations take a different view point. Though it is a tough balancing act to undertake development initiatives with targets to meet, the operating norms if modified can resolve this dilemma.

I am sure Yuva Junction through AKRSP (I)'s support will leverage on its existing long-term relationship and access to rural community. Yuva Junction will continue to build on its ability to work with a niche population of “hard-to-train”/ “hard-to-place” youth. This gives us hope that youth like Keshu, Ketan and Pravin and all the trail blazers Yuva Junction has created and continues to enable, will create an ecosystem that will bring a little bit of rest of world to their homes.

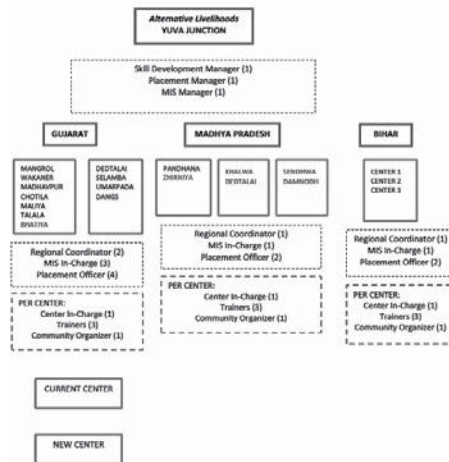


Figure 1

Annexure 1

Skill Development Value Chain



Figure 2

This section highlights Yuva Junction’s planned work in each component of the skill development value chain identified below.

1. Sourcing and Enrollment

Yuva Junction will enroll youth between the ages of 18 to 35, irrespective of caste, religion and other socio-economic affiliations. A 30% female enrollment rate will be ensured across all Yuva Junction geographies. The recruitment strategy hinges on leveraging existing Yuva Junction and AKRSP (I) relationships and infrastructure (e.g. SHGs, Women’s Federations, Panchayat and local leadership support) for community mobilization.

Trainees will be sourced from villages in approximately 20 km radius of the Yuva Junction Centre. Mobilization will involve the dissemination of information regarding the programme through community and falia meetings, followed by door-to-door campaigns for target groups. On-field registration of interested parties will be followed by an assessment and enrollment process at the Yuva Junction Centre. Building from its experience in niche geographies, Yuva Junction will ensure parental involvement at defined stages of the skill development value chain as a crucial aspect of its strategy. Trainees will undergo an aptitude test that will provide a baseline assessment of skills after which a joint determination of suitable trades will take place.

Certain pre-training services, such as the setting up of trainee bank accounts, counseling on training objectives, awareness of benefits and challenges of job-related migration, and timelines will be shared and agreed upon to ensure programme success. Parental consent will be acquired and training fees collected before training commences.

2. Training

Yuva Junction will ensure high quality training that is holistic in nature. In addition to their selected trades, trainees will simultaneously receive trainings in basic digital literacy, English and life skills to enhance overall employability and job readiness.

While the mode of delivery and duration of training will vary based on the selected trade, Yuva Junction's core offerings will predominantly be classroom-based and will employ teaching pedagogy that is interactive, engaging, and one through which an on-going assessment of trainees can be made. The trainings will comprise digital lessons, theory-based lectures, role-plays, presentations, and on the job training, when applicable.

Highly competent local trainers will be selected from communities around the training center. It has been Yuva Junction's experience that trainees benefit from trainers who are familiar with the local language and context. When a trade calls for it, outside trainers will be seconded to Yuva Junction Centers on a part-time or permanent basis. Trainers will play a part in curriculum development by adapting to context-specific needs, as required. The programme will remain committed to building trainers' capacities by conducting regular Training of Trainers by third-party experts on subject matter and/or teaching pedagogy.

3. Assessment and Certification

Yuva Junction will align itself to and keep updated with sector-wide efforts towards standardization of skill development training, assessments and certifications. The programme will adopt curricula and assessment guidelines prescribed in the National Occupational Standards and Qualification Packs in the different Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) set up by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and endorsed by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. In sectors where these are still under development, the Modular Employable Skills (MES) curriculum approved by the National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) will be used (as is current practice). In both cases, trainees will bear the costs associated with third-party assessments that lead to certification (Approximately INR 1000-1500).

Yuva Junction will develop an operational strategy to implement the transition from the current MES curriculum and NCVT certification to the new SSC certification.

4. Placement

Given the geographies that Yuva Junction works in, placements will largely call for migration to slightly larger nearby cities. However, Yuva Junction will actively scope out local employment opportunities for youth who do not wish to migrate. Yuva Junction will maintain existing partnerships with employers and proactively scope out and engage potential employers, both local and in destination cities. The programme will aim to attain a 75% placement rate.

In acknowledging the difficulties and challenges that arise with job-related migration, especially given the profile of the youth that Yuva Junction works with, the programme will take several measures that will allow for ease of transition and job retention. These measures are highlighted below:

- Yuva Junction will only partner with responsible employers and place trainees in jobs that provide a conducive and healthy work environment, as well as potential for professional upward mobility. Yuva Junction will seek out and favor employers who provide extended support (housing, meals, etc.).
- The programme will provide counseling services to both parents and trainees so that trainees can better anticipate and respond to migration-related challenges.
- Yuva Junction will create a network of “Yuva Junction Ambassadors” that will include alumni students and parents who will engage in the programme as speakers during trainings, in community mobilization, as well as in job preparedness activities so as to create an ecosystem of support.
- As part of training, the programme will offer a self-dependency and problem resolution module. The module will be experiential in nature, drawing from learnings from previously placed alumni of the programme and from programme trainers and personnel. Importantly, the module will introduce trainees to potential scenarios they may encounter when they enter the workforce and coping strategies, introduction to managing personal finances and budgeting, as well as suggestions on personal care, safety and time management.
- In certain geographical and social contexts, self-employment may make more sense. In those instances, Yuva Junction will also support entrepreneurship through assistance in helping secure start-up funds, technical assistance and enterprise incubation service.

5. Post-placement Support

Given their niche population, Yuva Junction is committed to enhancing job retention rates through the provision of awareness-raising and preparatory services to both, trainees and their parents through training, as well as through post-placement services.

Yuva Junction will engage with graduating candidates for six months after completion of training through Migration Support Centers that will be instituted at strategic destination locations to provide trainees with logistical and emergency-related information and assistance. The centers will enable a strong network of support through active alumni engagement and linkages between alumni and recent graduates.

6. Market demand assessments

While not included as a separate component in the value chain above, the annual market demand assessments will be a cross-cutting feature of Yuva Junction's activities. The dynamic and real-time assessments of market demand (both local and at destination cities) will inform the trades offered at Yuva Junction Centers and link skill requirements, both current and those in the pipeline, to trainings offered. The assessments will also enable partnerships with potential employers. The programme will adapt and react to these on-going assessments in a timely and efficient manner to ensure the provision of ample and relevant job placement options.

AISECT's Endeavors to Empower Semi-urban and Rural India through Placement Linked Skill Development Initiatives

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This case study aims to showcase the exemplary work that has been done over the last three decades by Bhopal-headquartered AISECT to bridge the skills gap that exists between urban and rural India. In a country where 80% of the population resides in semi-urban and rural areas, it is impossible to have a Skilled India unless the skilling initiatives are executed at the grassroots. This fact was realized by AISECT's Founder Mr. Santosh Kumar Choubey way back in 1980s and he took the pioneering initiative of empowering the semi-urban and rural masses through quality ICT-based vocational education. The journey of the organization to become the country's largest skills and ICT based education group, the challenges faced along the way, the innovations that were introduced to overcome the challenges and the impact that the initiative has had on the society are encapsulated in this case study.

1. Introduction

Skills and knowledge are considered the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. As India moves progressively towards becoming a 'knowledge economy', it becomes increasingly crucial that the country should focus on advancement of skills. The institutes of higher education in India have been largely focusing on formal degrees rather than on the vast mass of people outside the formal system requiring some or the other skills training in order to contribute to the bulk of employment at the entry level of each industry. Be it technicians, sales officers, retail staff, banking operations staff, data entry operators or office assistants, the infrastructure required for training such a huge mass is currently not available. Here is where AISECT came as a blessing in disguise.

A brainchild of Mr. Santosh Kumar Choubey, this entrepreneurial pioneer of skill development was established in 1985. Ever since its inception, AISECT has been untiringly reaching out to the remotest corners of the country to empower people, generate employment for the youth and unfold entrepreneurship based initiatives to create an inclusive society. It is a self-sustainable, demand led model which reflects the demand side of

communities for various skills required in the unorganized sector. While initially only ICT and vocation based courses were offered, AISECT today offers over 150 courses in 13 different sectors. The organization has partnered with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to train over 13 lakh people over the next 10 years. As part of this partnership programme, eleven major academies have been formed which offer low cost, high quality teaching through university certified undergraduate, postgraduate, certificate and diploma courses in areas like IT & Management, Hardware & Networking, Teacher Training, Telecom Skills, Retail Management, Agriculture, Insurance, Banking & Finance, Textile Training, Fire Safety & Security, Livelihood & Vocational Training and Auto Skills.

AISECT has also launched 'aisdiction.com' to enable students with anywhere anytime access to education. Another portal that has been launched by the organization is 'rojgarmantra.com', which is rural India's largest job placement initiative. The Group has also taken major steps towards including skills training in the higher education framework through its two universities - Dr. C.V. Raman University in Chhattisgarh and AISECT University in Madhya Pradesh.

Dr. C.V. Raman University (CVRU) was established in 2006 in Kota-Bilaspur as the first private university in Chhattisgarh. The University offers short-term skill development courses to students in addition to their regular courses through its CVRU Academy for Skill Development. The Academy is currently affiliated to the Electronic Sector Skills Council and plans to apply for affiliation to various other Sector Skills Councils including Telecom, Retail and Construction. CVRU is the only university in Chhattisgarh that has been selected as the Center for Knowledge Acquisition and Upgradation of Skilled Human Abilities and Livelihood under the self-financed category for the execution of the Deendayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra Yojana. The Academy has designed many short term skill development courses as per National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) for Deendayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra. It has collaborated with various industries for market demand based course development and vocational training. Through the Academy, the University seeks to fulfill its objective of spreading quality vocational training and increasing employability opportunities for its students.

The AISECT University was established in Bhopal in 2010. Skill development courses have been introduced right from entry level at Diploma/UG courses at the University. Every academic year, minimum one skill-based course has been made compulsory. These skills, ranging from four wheeler repair to installation of mobile tower to repair of mobile etc., are on subjects beyond normal curriculum. A Skill Academy has been established which has introduced over 30 type of skill courses which are beyond normal

curriculum. The courses include Renewable Energy, Mobile Communication and Automobile Energy and various engineering as well as non-engineering subjects. Entrepreneurship Development Programme have also been introduced for students who want to set up their own enterprise; this has helped in generating number of entrepreneurs in various fields.

2. Impact

The organization has so far trained over 17 lakh people through its widespread network of over 20,000 Centres which are spread across 388 districts, 1070 blocks and 6000 panchayat in 27 States and 3 Union Territories. Its skill development initiatives are targeted towards all categories of people from the community – school students, graduate program students, office goers and job holders, working women, housewives, Below Poverty Line Youth, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Parent Teacher Associations and Government Departments. Over 10 lakh people, i.e. about 60% of the students trained so far, have secured gainful employment. Moreover, about 45 lakh people in semi-urban and rural India have been impacted through the various skilling, vocational training, financial inclusion, e-governance and other developmental initiatives of the organization.

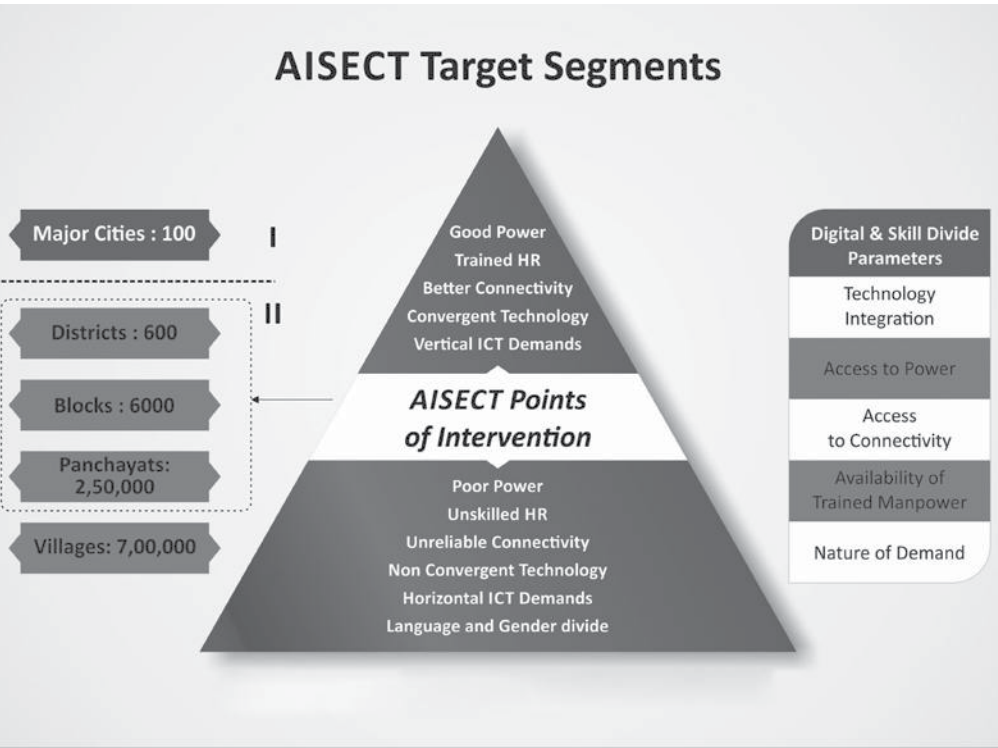


Figure 1: The Indian Pyramid and its Digital and Skill Divide

3. Major Challenges Faced

As the pioneering organization in the country to work towards empowerment of semi-urban and rural masses through ICT and skills based education and services, AISECT had to face a number of challenges along the way. Some of them include:

- **Lack of Power & Connectivity:** Rural areas are typically characterized by the lack of continuous power supply and connectivity. Since AISECT programs were IT based and required working on the computer, this posed a challenge. The organization overcame this hurdle by switching to a flexible schedule of centres' timings. They were opened whenever there was electricity. In some cases solar power was tried. With the availability of laptops and mobiles, the power and connectivity situation has considerably eased.
- **Language Barrier:** The founding team at AISECT realized quite early that in order to demystify Information Technology, it was essential to communicate to people in their language of comfort. Since most available books were in English, Mr. Choubey and his peers set themselves the task of coming up with good Hindi content (a language spoken by most of India). AISECT became a pioneer in it and developed over 100 modules in Hindi on Computer Science for students of all ages. AISECT also developed the course material in various regional languages which helped in the scalability of the model across centres. This gave the organization a huge leap within a short span of time.
- **Mindset of people towards skills:** In India, formal degree is still given a lot more importance as compared to skill enhancement and vocational courses. The organization addressed this issue by increasing the respectability for an AISECT Academy course. This was done by providing courses which were certified by AISECT University and Dr. C.V. Raman University.
- **Fee paying capacity of students:** In rural India, a large section of people are daily wage earners with very little money to spare for education. Such people can't afford to pay the yearly fees for the courses. Hence, low fee structure was adopted and the option was given to the target groups to pay the fee in installments.
- **Lack of funds for marketing:** The AISECT model was a creative yet robust solution for aiding the penetration of IT & skills based education in rural India. The AISECT team had to go down to a district or a block to demonstrate how the centre could be run, how training was to be given to students and how financial stability had to be achieved. Since the organization did not have adequate marketing funds to build the brand

across India, it had to rely on word of mouth, referrals and direct contact to open centres. This considerably slowed down the organization's growth. However, over the years AISECT was able to apportion funds and slowly but surely marketed the brand, geography by geography.

- **Lack of funds for adequate training:** In a mass entrepreneurship model such as AISECT's, maintaining standards and quality poses a major challenge. Training of 50,000 faculty members across 20,000 centres is a herculean task. For a long time AISECT was unable to fund trainers who could go and train all of these faculty members. The organization again overcame this challenge by investing in a studio at its Headquarters. This studio created audio visual content which was put onto CDs and dispatched to the entrepreneurs for them to train faculty through the AV content. Through effective use of technology, AISECT has been able to now improve standards and quality of delivery of the various vocational courses across its centres.

4. Solutions Deployed

The skill development and capacity building requirements of the rural population is vastly different from those living in cities. Over the years, the AISECT Management Team has come to an unparalleled understanding of the needs of the target groups and has deployed a number of innovative solutions to aid the process of skilling the masses. These innovative solutions include:

- **Pioneering a 'Multipurpose IT Centre' Model:** A self-sustainable, demand-led and flexible model was developed to address the multifaceted ICT & skills-based education and services requirements of rural India. While vocational education remains the mainstay of the centres, a host of other products and services, including placement assistance, banking facilities, mobile recharge, internet access and G2C services, were also mounted over the years to the AISECT Centre's offerings.
- **Adopting regional languages:** It was important that the organization communicated with people in their regional languages. Thus, AISECT became the pioneer of IT content creation in Hindi and other regional languages. This required innovative courseware and software research and development. This, coupled with the requisite awareness drives, raised the level of utilization and understanding of technology.
- **Developing an Entrepreneurial Model:** For achieving scale and sustainability, a franchise model has been adopted where the centre owner is responsible for the day to day running of the centre and for creating awareness in his area about the various offerings. Constant handholding

in terms of provision of course material, faculty training etc. is done by the Head Office. State offices have been set up which guide and monitor the centres in their areas. Annual franchise renewal ensures regular quality checks.

- **Designing the first ever IT Yatra in India:** AISECT organized the first ever Information Technology Yatra of rural India with a view to initiate awareness in schools and colleges about IT and various IT based skill development programmes and services offered by AISECT Centres.
- **Forging developmental linkages:** The organization partnered with Government Agencies and Departments for executing ongoing developmental programs in the areas of literacy, education, ICT proliferation, watershed management and health.
- **Launching a portal ‘aisectonline.com’:** This portal empowers students with anywhere, anytime access to education, thereby fostering a collaborative and interactive approach to learning. AISECT Online has been developed keeping in mind the basic issues of accessibility and affordability in distance education, due to which a large number of youth still don’t have access to quality education infrastructure. This portal endeavors to bridge this gap by making quality education accessible to greater number of students.accessible to greater number of students.
- **Introducing India’s biggest rural job portal ‘rojgarmantra.com’:**
Realizing that offering skills training only will not lead to the empowerment of the rural masses, AISECT took the initiative of assisting the trained youth in placement. The organization has launched a rural job portal ‘rojgarmantra.com’ which is focusing on fulfilling the entry level job requirements of private and public sector enterprises at the small town, district and block levels. With over 4 lakh job seekers already registered with the portal, Rojgar Mantra is poised to be the biggest rural job placement initiative of India.
- **Launching the most cost-effective multimedia content solution ‘Eduvantage PRO’:** AISECT recently launched Eduvantage PRO Interactive Multimedia Content with the objective of bringing in a low cost, high quality multimedia classroom solution for K-12 school students at the small town, district and block levels. The product has been assembled in the form of a pen drive thereby making it affordable for both private as well as Government schools.

- Integrating skill development within the higher education framework:** Skill development has been introduced at the two universities of the Group - Dr. C.V. Raman University and AISECT University in Madhya Pradesh - right from entry level with two mandatory skill based courses incorporated in every course curriculum of undergraduate degree.
- Launching India's first ever community radio station by a university:** Dr. C.V. Raman University has launched a community radio station named 'Radio Raman' with an objective to broadcast necessary educational and entertainment based content which focuses on the basic rights of the local community in terms of education, health and law. The classroom lectures that are delivered by the University's faculty are also recorded and broadcasted through the radio station thus benefitting students in rural and far flung areas.
- Introducing online live lectures through Distance Learning Centres:** This initiative provides great opportunity for students of Dr. C.V. Raman University to learn in a live interactive mode and increases the University's reach to various geographical locations across India.

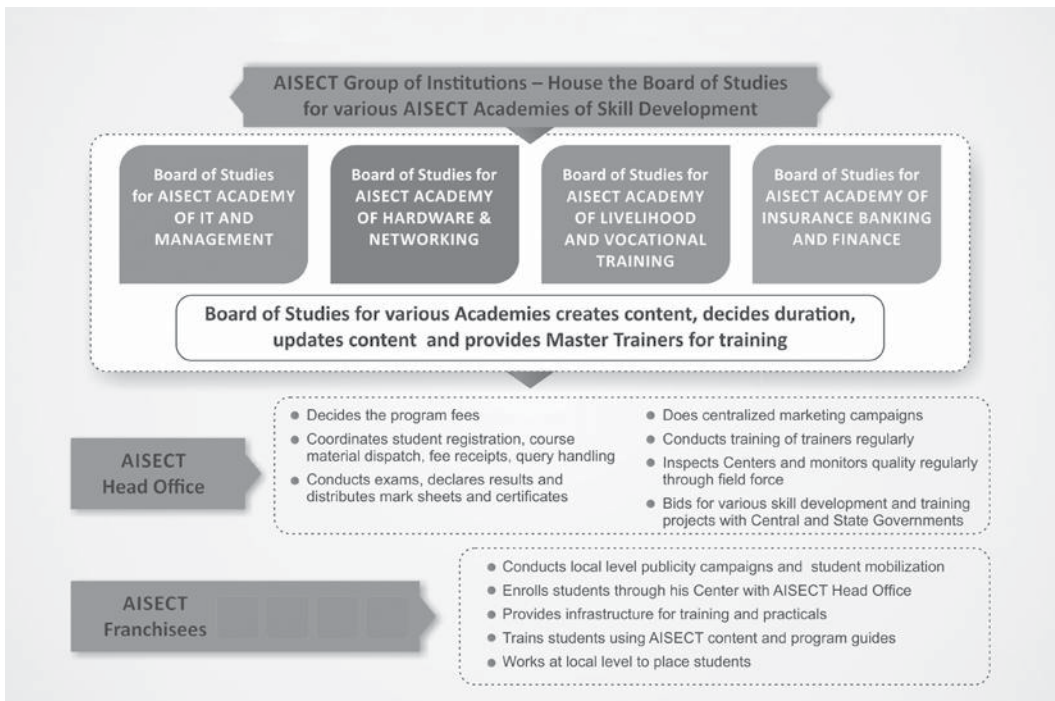


Figure 2: AISECT Model of Skill Development and Training

5. Placement Linked Skill Development

Placement linked skill development has been a key focus area of AISECT. Over the years, the organization has built strong industry links owing to its ability to provide good quality skilled people who meet the entry-level recruitment needs of the national and local companies working in the semi-urban and rural areas of the country. With an extensive experience of providing skilled workforce in semi-urban and rural India and an unmatched understanding of the recruitment needs of the unorganized sector at the grassroots level, AISECT follows a unique online/offline methodology for placement.

In the offline methodology, the organization has been conducting Rojgar Melas (rural job fairs) for a number of years so as to provide placement assistance to the trained youth. Under the AISECT-NSDC partnership, Rojgar Melas have been conducted over the last two years across 10 major states. The AISECT-NSDC Rojgar Mela 2015 was organized across 33 locations in 10 states and saw a footfall of over 16,000 job seekers. Approximately 230 companies participated in the Rojgar Mela across the 33 locations and over 5,000 candidates were shortlisted. The jobs offered by the companies included that of Business Development Executive, Sales Officer, Marketing Executive, Assistant Branch Manager, Web Developer, Customer Care Executive, Tally Operator, Machine Operator, Security Guard, Technician and many more. Depending on the profiles for which they were being recruited, the offered salary varied from 5,000/- to 20,000/-. The organization's objective is not merely to provide placement assistance to the trained people. A placement tracker process is also in place where the AISECT Centres follow the progress of the students in their areas for a year after they have graduated. This follow-up is done through emails, phone calls and SMSs.

In the online methodology, AISECT has launched a rural job portal 'rojgarmantra.com' with the aim of assisting the placement of the skilled candidates. The portal is focusing on fulfilling the entry level job requirements of private and public sector enterprises at the small town, district and block levels. With over 4 lakh job seekers already registered with the portal, Rojgar Mantra is poised to be the biggest rural job placement initiative of India.

Hundreds of national and local level organizations are empaneled with AISECT for their recruitment needs. Some of them include ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, SBI Life Insurance, Nav Kisan Bio Plantech, Jeevansathi, YKS Hotel, Eureka Forbes, Dish TV, India Infoline, HDFC Bank, Dhiraj Son's The Mega Store, Randstad, JBG Group, Welspun, Drupar Chemicals, Vardhman, Future Retail, Shivshakti Bio Fertilizer, Reliance Communication, Idea and many more.

6. Major Skill Development Projects Executed

AISECT has implemented various skill building training programme across the county. Most of these initiatives were for beneficiaries belonging to weaker and underprivileged sections of the society like SC/ST, OBC, Women, minorities, BPL, Scavengers etc. These trainings have been supported by the various Ministries of Government of India and the State Government Departments. AISECT is empaneled with State Skill Development Missions in new project states like Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission (UPSDM), Gujarat Livelihood Promotion Company Ltd. (GLPC), Haryana State Rural Livelihoods Mission (HRSRLM), Rajasthan Skill and Livelihoods Development Corporation (RSLDC), Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) along with Madhya Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Mission (MPSRLM). Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) erstwhile Aajeevika Skills Projects of Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India have been initiated in multiple states like Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh. Over the years, AISECT has been associated with the Central and State Governments for a number of skill development and capacity building projects including.

- **Swarnjayanti Gram SwarozgarYojana (SGSY):** AISECT has conducted this project in Madhya Pradesh wherein it provided skill development training to 13,000 rural BPL youth for employment and self-employment opportunities. The project was successfully implemented where the beneficiaries were trained in various skill based programmes and most of them are now placed through Rojgar Melas to earn their livelihood owing to their newly acquired skills.
- **Implementation of vocational Education in Senior Secondary Schools:** AISECT implemented NSQF in more than 150 Government schools of Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab & Delhi in IT/ITES & Retail sectors. Activities undertaken during implementation of project include vocational teacher deployment and management, weekly reports, guest lectures, industry visits, practical training, E-learning and hobby classes, salary disbursement, replacements, student counseling for placement and placement tie-ups,
- **Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation:** AISECT is working with the Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation Department of the Madhya Pradesh Government to provide computer education to Gas Tragedy affected victims or their dependents.
- **Employment Based Training for BPL Youth across MP:** AISECT is working under District Poverty Initiative Project (DPIP), Government of Madhya Pradesh, to provide placement linked skill development training.

Skill development of BPL youth at 11 locations was conducted under 4 trades namely Computer Operation and IT enabled Services, Insurance Agent Training and Soft Skills training, Spoken English and Personality Development and Mobile Repairing.

- **District Poverty Alleviation Programme (DPIP):** AISECT is conducting employment and self-employment linked capacity building programme for rural BPL youth in various trades like IT & ITES, insurance agent training, Spoken English, personality development for agri, retail and banking business, mobile repairing etc. Till date, more than 1000 beneficiaries have been trained.
- **Placement Linked Skill Development of OBC Candidates:** Under the Department of Backward Class and Minority Welfare, Government of Madhya Pradesh, placement linked IT and Insurance training for the students of weaker section of the society was conducted. Candidates were provided with relevant course material customized as per the trade requirement. Approximately 1260 candidates have been trained till date and about 792 have been placed in related sector locally.
- **SJSRY project under Urban Development Authority, Government of Madhya Pradesh:** AISECT has been conducting SJSRY Project in the districts of Madhya Pradesh for the respective Zila Panchayats supported by the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development. Under the programme, 3 to 6 months skill based training is imparted to urban BPL youth. The skills in which training is conducted include Computer Applications, Hardware Maintenance, etc. About 500 BPL candidates have been trained and appropriately placed by AISECT under this scheme.
- **Rajasthan Skill Livelihood Development Corporation:** AISECT offers various skill development programme for the student and till now has trained 1041 students and 549 have been successfully placed.
- **Vocational Training Partners of NCVT, Ministry of Labour:** AISECT has established about 50 Vocational Training Providers (VTPs) under the Skill Development Initiative Scheme (SDIS) of the Ministry of Labor and Employment, GoI for providing training under Modular Employable Skills (MES). AISECT is conducting various demand driven short term vocational training courses in the trades of ICT, Retail, Insurance, Electrical and Electronics and Banking etc. Currently these 50 VTPs across MP are functional in the districts of Khandwa, Vidisha, Indore, Satna, Bhopal, Mandla, Jabalpur, Dindori, Narsinghpur and Umaria. About 150 candidates are enrolled at these VTPs for various skill upgradation programs.

- Partnership with BSF Wives Welfare Association (BWWA):**
 AISECT partnered with BSF Wives Welfare Association (BWWA) to provide employable skill training to the families of BSF personnel at 6 locations. The project was fully funded by BWWA. Under this partnership, three short-term employment based courses, namely Desk Top Publishing, Office Automation & Internet as well as Book Keeping and Accounting using TALLY, were offered at 6 BSF locations.
- Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS):**
 From 2012 onwards, AISECT has conducted various projects in Odisha. NRLM ORMAS project is one such project being conducted in Orissa in collaboration with Panchayati Raj Department, wherein 2,334 students have registered till date for availing training in the trades of IT & Retail.
- Swashakti Project:** In 2000-01, AISECT started the Swashakti Project for setting up self-help groups in Tikamgarh. In the following years, two more districts – Raipur and Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh were included in this SHG project. Tikamgarh got nearly 100 SHGs functioning in 15 villages with a total of about 1000 members. These groups have undertaken both community-based (creating and maintaining community halls, sewage systems, wells, bath places and nurseries) and individual/group based (setting up cycle repair shops, bangle shops, grocery stores, cultivation farms, wood and metal processing centres and grain banks) self-help initiatives. SHGs of Raipur and Bilaspur have about 50 groups. They are functional at Raipur in 15 villages with about 500 members and in 24 villages of Bilaspur with about 600 members. These groups are engaged in training, group formation, organization of awareness camps and theme camps, mobilization campaigns through art forms, awareness about food and nutrition, cultural programmes and similar activities.
- Tejaswini Project:** AISECT was selected by Madhya Pradesh Vitta Vikas Nigam (MPVVN) as a facilitator NGO for Tejaswini Project, an extension of the Swashakti Project in Dindori district of Madhya Pradesh. The project envisages enhancing the skill of SHG members by linking them with market for sustainable livelihood activities and helping them in forming women federations. AISECT is implementing Tejaswini Project of women SHGs in Dindori and Shahpur and has, till date, formed about 500 women SHGs, trained all SHG members on livelihood based activities and is now linking them with various income generation activities (IGA).
- Digital Literacy of Women:** Training and Empowerment of Women and Adolescent Girls on Basic Computer Concepts under the e-Vidya programme where basic computer course was provided to 8000 SABLE women in Punjab and Chhattisgarh. Under the Women Digital Literacy Programme for Training and Empowerment of Women on Basic Computer

Course through CSCs, around 2500 women were trained in Madhya Pradesh.

- **Backward Rural Grant Fund (BRGF) scheme:** AISECT is the training partner of Water and Land Management Institute (WALMI), Department of Panchayat and Rural Development, Government of Madhya Pradesh (GoMP). It conducts the induction training for elected members of Panchayati Raj Institutions under the Backward Rural Grant Fund (BRGF) scheme of GoMP. The organization provides adequate training resources and local manpower at block level all over the state in 50 districts and 313 development blocks for WALMI.
- **Agriculture Technology:** Management Agency (ATMA) Scheme: AISECT has trained about 1200 farmers from Satna, Sheopur, and Dindori districts of Madhya Pradesh by conducting various Capacity Building Training Programmes under Agriculture Technology Management Agency Scheme..
- **SRMS Project:** During the year 2008-10, AISECT undertook the SRMS Project in 12 districts of Madhya Pradesh. 1327 persons were trained under this project in various trades including computer hardware maintenance, tailoring, fashion designing, mobile repairing, computer data entry and tally, etc. In the meantime in 2008-09, AISECT trained 2693 beneficiaries under the same scheme. AISECT has also provided training to 100 SC candidates at the district level in 2009-10. Additionally, it has provided training to other weaker sections like ST training in Tribal Hostels with MP Council of Employment & Training (MAPCET) in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. In 2007-08, 700 SC & ST students were trained across 7 districts of MP whereas 7309 students in 198 tribal hostels of Chhattisgarh were trained in 2009-10.
- **Capacity Building of Government Employees with Centre for Research and Industrial Staff Performance (CRISP):** AISECT is the channel training partner of CRISP for conducting various training programmes of employees and officers belonging to various Government Departments. Under this association, AISECT conducts massive employee training programmes at district and block level all over the state. The prominent clients are Department of Agriculture, Department of Industries and Department of Information Technology, etc. AISECT provides training infrastructure, training contents and resource persons at district and block level for all such trainings. About 5000 employees and officers have been trained under this programme till date.
- **Computer Literacy and Awareness Programme (CLAP):** Along with State Council Educational Research and Training (SCERT) (GoMP),

AISECT has been the architect of Computer Literacy and Awareness Programme (CLAP), Madhya Pradesh which was conducted by AISECT for over ten years before it was taken over by the Department of Public Instructions (GoMP). AISECT itself converted CLAP into an All India Programme with the support of MCIT. About 100-150 schools, involving about 10,000-20,000 students, are covered under this programme.

- **National Animal Disease Reporting System (NADRS Scheme):** AISECT has worked with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), Government of India for the NADRS Scheme. Under this project, AISECT provided specialized software training to 700 veterinary doctors
- **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan:** AISECT is actively partnering in various schemes under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan including the awareness generation and trainings conducted under PTAs, preparation of ICT-based educational primers and development of motivational song CDs on literacy, women empowerment, science and environment
With Directorate of SC & ST, Government of Chhattisgarh, Computer
- **Skill Development of Candidates in SC/ST Hostels of Chhattisgarh:** With Directorate of SC & ST, Government of Chhattisgarh, Computer Training in SC/ST Hostels was provided in Jashpur, Ambikapur, Kanker, Mahasamurd and Jangir districts of Chhattisgarh. The programme helped in empowering 7309 SC/ST students through Computer based skill enhancement programmes. Course material in Hindi and infrastructure support were provided in the hostels to make the learning easier and more effective.
- **IT Skill Development of College Students in Chhattisgarh:** In partnership with Directorate of Higher Education, Government of Chhattisgarh, AISECT trained students of 100 colleges in 18 districts of Chhattisgarh about Diploma in Computer Applications (DCA) and Post Graduate Diploma in Computer Applications (PGDCA). Computer Training centres were established in the allocated colleges and around 10,000 students were trained to increase their employment opportunities. The course material was provided in Hindi/English to facilitate the teaching learning process.
- **Indira Suchana Shakti Yojana (ISSY):** This is one of the most prestigious programmes of AISECT under which over one lakh girls were trained in ICT skills in about 1297 schools of Chhattisgarh. Conducted in collaboration with the Government of Chhattisgarh and Chhattisgarh Information Technology Promotion Society (CHIPS), the programme also invited attention of various State Governments as well as National and International agencies.

7. Sustainability and Scalability of the Initiative

- To ensure sustainability, a model was established which is not dependent on Government grants or donor support. An entrepreneurial model was established wherein Industrial Training Institute (ITI), polytechnic graduates and other technically qualified youth were invited to attend an IT based Entrepreneurship Orientation Program followed by quick disbursement of loans. All the 20,000 AISECT Centres are run by people from the local community.
- The centres were set-up with basic infrastructure so that students would not get intimidated and could relate to the set-up.
- AISECT has developed course material in various local languages which helps in the sustainability of the model across centres.
- Industry-based programmes were introduced to increase the demand for AISECT students in the jobs market.
- The course fee was kept very low in order to make them affordable for the target audience.
- Periodical training of Rural Entrepreneurs ensures sustainability of AISECT's model. At AISECT, training is a constant and continuous process. Rural Entrepreneurs are continuously exposed to several workshops and training modules at various levels - central level workshops at the head office, state level workshops and if he is at a district town, the organization conducts meetings and demos there as well. Faculty training is more subject-oriented and various groups are formed who are trained by master trainers.
- The organization is closely working with the leading Ministries of Government of India like the Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Human Resource Development and others. Apart from this, AISECT is also closely working with the multilateral agencies like United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, World Bank etc. This has helped AISECT in gaining acceptance and trust of the rural masses across the country.
- The scalability factor of the AISECT model is evident from the fact that what started as a single centre in 1990 is today a widespread network of over 20,000 centres covering 388 districts, 1070 blocks and 6000 panchayatats across 27 States & 3 Union Territories of India.

8. Awards and Recognition

- AISECT has won numerous awards and recognitions at various national and international platforms for its innovations and endeavors which are as follows:
- Listed in World Bank-IIM (A) Joint Report as “the most sustainable and scalable form of IT penetration and popularization in India”
- Recognition by UNDP for AISECT’s innovative ICT based vocational training to youth in rural and semi-urban India (<http://www.iicpsd.undp.org/content/istanbul/en/home/presscenter/articles/2015/04/17/aisect-provides-innovative-ict-based-vocational-training-to-youth-in-rural-and-semi-urban-india>)
- Ashoka Senior Fellowship awarded to Mr. Santosh Choubey
- Schwab Foundation’s Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award instituted by the World Economic Forum (Finalist)
- Indian Innovation Award
- Skoch Corporate Leadership Award
- NASSCOM I.T. Innovation Award
- ASSOCHAM Excellence in Education Award
- NASSCOM EMERGE 50 Leader Award
- TiE Lumis Partners Entrepreneurial Excellence Award
- World Education Summit Award
- Inc India 500 Award
- Asian Forum i4d Award
- Best Practice Recognition Award by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

9. Conclusion

AISECT can be called a true path-breaker in terms of its vision, reach and passion for spreading education, technical expertise, generating employment as well as revenue opportunities for thousands from its unique business model. Through its unique offline-online skill development and placement methodology, the organization is making rapid strides in fulfilling its objective of bridging the skills and ICT gap between semi-urban and rural areas.

Give Them A Second Chance A Case Study of Yuva Parivartan Initiative for Building Vocational Skills among the School Dropouts and Creating Pathways to Employability

Dr. Suniti Nagpurkar & Dr. V.H.Iyer

1. Introduction

In the year 1998, India was passing through a realignment phase as a consequence of the introduction of the New Economic policy (NEP), 1991. Globalization resulted in the stumbling of the economy with competitive pressure from the global firms on one hand and the changing aspirations of the youth mesmerized by the glimpses of the “bold and beautiful” new world on the other. The Indian economy was slowing down; many industries were closing; employment opportunities were shrinking in many sectors; though, some new age sectors like the IT, started emerging.

After the NEP of 1991, India’s youth began to emerge from oblivion, eager to participate in the globalizing, knowledge-based economy, flocking to the centre of opportunity – the city. However the process of liberalization marked by a shift from the somewhat socialist policy outlook without adequate safety nets led to wider economic gaps. As a result, the already existing ‘dualism’ in the economy further intensified with the technology divide, digital divide, social divide and most prominently, the education and skill divide.

During this phase while policy experts were still unsure about the sure path ahead, **Yuva Parivartan** emerged as a beam of hope for many. Yuva Parivartan is an initiative of the **Kherwadi Social Welfare Association (KSWA)**, an NGO set up in 1928 by Late Shri B.G. Kher, the first Premier of the then Bombay Presidency, working at the time, in community programmes for the slum dwellers in and around Bandra, Mumbai.

2. The Initiative

By the 1990s, the baton at **Kherwadi Welfare Association (KSWA)** was in the hands of the new trustees Mr. Kishor and Mrs. Mrinalini Kher, who treated this work less as a job, and more as an inner calling. Initially, they started

working in the area of health intervention for the women and children in the slums of Bandra. Repeated visits to these areas, where they would see young and teenage boys and girls idling away their time, having nothing to do and nowhere to go, made them aware of the ground realities.

Ongoing interactions with the kids revealed that many of them were children of migrant workers who had come to Mumbai with their parents, leaving their schools half way. Some had repeatedly failed in school and therefore dropped out. And then there were still others who had simply discontinued schooling for no specific reason.

No amount of counselling helped initially. Therefore, to break the ice and win the confidence of the children, KSWA started a gymnasium and “desi” sports club, where the young people could play traditional “no equipment,” no cost games like kabbadi, khokho etc. While this initiative brought some of the kids into the fold of KSWA, it did not really help them get into schools. At this point, KSWA got a reading hall ready for them, since the children neither had adequate facilities, nor a conducive environment to study in their small residential quarters. Even then, the failure and dropout rates remained high.

It was then, that KSWA took cognizance of the deep rooted and multifaceted nature of the problem and redoubled its efforts at resolving it while grappling with some key questions. **Where do these drop outs go? Youth who drop out of school, are unable to earn a livelihood and the only option left for them is to work as casual labour in the informal (and sometimes even illegal) sector. What will their future be? How will they get their livelihood? How can they be kept away from a life of crime?** After careful thought and long deliberation through sleepless nights, Kishor Kher, an IIM-Ahmedabad alumni and Mrinalini, a sociologist and social activist decided to take on the mission of giving the slum dwelling school dropouts a second chance at building a dignified life for themselves.

KSWA commissioned a market research study of the health sector intervention and educational intervention. With 50% of India’s population under 25 and with over 80% school-dropout rate, the need for skill development can hardly be overestimated. It was therefore decided that a vocational skill building programme for these children would be taken up.

Working at the community level, the social workers soon found that the young girls—sensitive to the plight of their unskilled mothers engaged in back breaking work as domestic servants or rag pickers—were more forthcoming participants in the programme. They understood the crucial importance of skill building in ensuring economic independence and a better quality of life. Moreover, they also had the dreadful examples of their alcoholic,

irresponsible fathers to demonstrate the possible outcomes should their future husbands turn out to be of the same ilk.

In 1994, therefore, KSWA introduced two programmes for the school dropout girls:

1. A six-months long beautician's course for those who could at least read and write
2. A year-long paramedical nursing course for Class X pass outs.

At that time, there was a dearth of trained nursing staff as colleges offering Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Nursing programmes were few. Moreover, the trained nursing staff preferred the Middle East or top-notch city hospitals as job destinations where salaries were attractive. Therefore, small private hospitals or even municipal hospitals were constantly under-staffed in terms of this essential, auxiliary medical support service.

Initially, KSWA's courses were unrecognized and therefore did not really serve the purpose, though many of their nursing trained girls were getting absorbed as helpers in the private hospitals. KSWA therefore modified the programme to combine nine months of classroom training with a three-month apprenticeship with a hospital (for a small stipend). Strong practical hands-on training under the professional guidance "in situ" became the USP of the programme, which got recognition through market acceptance on the basis of their performance.

The ice was more difficult to break with the boys. **KSWA** had introduced vocational training for boys in motor mechanics, home appliance repairing, mobile repairing etc. without much success. It became clear that just skilling without job guarantees was not enough to attract boys to these courses. However, with the economy slowing down, industries were restructuring to face the global competition and ensure competitiveness. Jobs were difficult to come by and certainly so for school dropouts with minor training. Potential employers simply would not look at them.

At this juncture, **KSWA** decided to enter into their first partnership with Shramik Vidyapeeth (a not-for-profit career and education counselling and training institution in Worli, Mumbai) on one hand and Blue Star Ltd (a leading electronics company at the time) on the other. Shramik Vidyapeeth offered their instructors and some additional courses like gas welding, wireman and fitters etc. while, Blue Star agreed to give offer placement opportunities to the trained youth. The first batch of about 100 trained apprentices successfully emerged in year 1998. Thus, was born, **Yuva Parivartan (YP)**, the idea which was tried in 1998; but was officially launched in 2003 by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

3. Modus Operandi of the Initiative

The programme operates through three routes:

- A. Livelihood Development Centre (LDC) model:
- B. Camp model:
- C. Partnership model:

3.1 The Livelihood Development Center

This is a centre that offices the **YP** unit. Each unit of the traditional model of the Centre has one LDC manager, who operates as a coordinator with all the stake holders, along with a team of social workers and facilitators. The facilitators are course instructors. They are not only trained in their own trade skills but also as counsellors and motivators. The main **YP** centre / original centre of the parent organization is at **KSWA**, Bandra East, which the researcher has visited a number of times during the course of this study. Today **YP** offers 33 vocational courses of varying durations from 3–12 months.

The academic courses offered with manuals and handbooks are Basic Beautician Advance, Beautician, Mehendi, BPO, Food & Beverage, Basic Tailoring, Advance Tailoring, Jewellery Making, Fashion Designing, Refrigeration Mechanics, Mobile Repairing, Nursing Assistant, Male Ward Boy, Basic Computer, Tally, DTP, Computer Hardware, Motor Mechanic, Two Wheeler Repairing, Wireman, Welding, Plumbing, Masonry, Fitter Multi Skill, Spoken English, Home Appliance Repairing, Retail, Call Centre. All the programmes can be availed of for a nominal fee.

- a) Course contents and syllabus making: The parent centre at Bandra, besides running the vocational courses of its own, is mainly responsible for preparing the syllabus for different courses. For this purpose, right from the beginning, they adopted the **Modular Employability Scheme (MES)** in consultation with the industry in need of the work force with the specific skill set being imparted through these courses. For instance, for the Wireman's course, an industry partnership with Eureka Forbes was forged; for the motor mechanics course, YP consulted service stations and auto dealers like Shah and Sanghi to assess the kind of skills that would make the trainees employable not only in indigenous garages but also at the service stations of the major auto makers in India. These partnerships are meant for gaining industry knowledge only and it is not binding on these units to offer employment at the end of the road.

But experience shows that this type of involvement greatly helps in placing the successful candidates. For instance, through the beautician course, the

trainees get in touch with the local beauty parlours, not only for content guidelines, but also hands-on training. Moreover, they receive information about a variety of products/ popular and reliable brands and their availability, wholesale market prices for procurement etc. After training, many beauticians are absorbed as parlour employees. Others start their own parlours from their homes or take up assignments for bridal make up etc. In the course of an interaction with one of the facilitators, who, was herself a drop out at one point of time, the researcher was informed (with a deep sense of pride), that, some of her students had even migrated to Dubai and were doing very well there.

The practical component of the courses provides hands-on experience to the students and helps them get a sense of the actual work environment, team dynamics and real life exposure. This is very essential since the students have absolutely no social grooming in terms of communication, manners and etiquette. The practical training component of these courses has become so popular and effective, that ITI s send their students to **YP** for practical!

After developing the syllabus, the most important task is to prepare the **instruction manual** and study material. In the opinion of Ms. Shivani Mehta, the CEO, Livelihood Development Centre, Kherwari Welfare Association this is absolutely necessary to ensure standardization in instructions across all centres, pan India. The instructors are given this **instruction manual** along with the lecture plans which indicate the distribution of different topics throughout the course. This is nothing less than the “teaching learning” plan prepared by the faculty in many of the best business schools.

- b) Training the trainer: The courses are implemented by **facilitators**, who (along with the social workers) **interact with the community** to create awareness, and mobilize the target audience. The facilitators are usually selected from the neighbourhood. Now, after about 12 years of YP’s existence, many of the facilitators are alumnus of the YP programme. The facilitators are given three days **training in soft skills and instructions on skills in administrative basics** like attendance records of students, follow up of absentee students and most importantly, the skills to implement a very novel, **complementary** and **compulsory** programme for all the courses - called the “**Soch Ka Parivartan**” SKP “**Mindset change**” programme.

What is Soch Ka Parivartan? How and why was it started? Early on in YP’s working, it was realized that the students not only suffer from **economic** and **academic deficit** but also **social deficit**. Given their family

backgrounds, the students lacked “tacit skills” (different from trade skills and soft skills). Their attitude to work, life, and sense of commitment left much to be desired, as, there really was no clear goal in their lives. They were also not ready to put in hard work. The approach was very casual.

This, the **YP** learnt the hard way. As part of their course in retail management, YP put in a lot of effort to get big retailers like Shopper’s Stop, Big Bazaar, and Life Style to offer campus placement for their students. However, out of some 100 odd students only 60 turned up for the interviews, that too after much persuasion. Job offers were made to about 40 students. Out of these, only about 10 reported to work on the appointed day and a follow up showed that at the end of the first week, only 1 person had stayed on and others had already quit. The reasons offered were inconsequential, the general drift being that the work was too tiring. The whole experience was very disheartening for YP.

But, **YP turned it into a great learning**. Realizing that the students need to be more responsible, realistic in their expectations and committed, the challenge then was to build these traits in them. And, thus was born, **Soch Ka Parivartan (SKP)**, a one month activity based training workshop, where seven thematic issues were handled through **storytelling, role playing, group activity and group discussion and games**. The themes included:

- Responsible behaviour
- Goal setting
- Honesty and sincerity
- Regularity and punctuality
- Work place etiquettes
- Team spirit and cooperation.
- Resume writing and interview facing

To communicate these traits, the counsellors and the social workers developed short stories and skits which the students could relate to. The facilitators are trained in storytelling, skits, conducting and observing group activities and group discussions. Participating in these activities help students slowly and gradually differentiate between right and wrong professional behaviour, understand that they are responsible for their actions and the outcomes. **In a broad sense, they are the life skills which form an integral part of all their courses.**

While **SKP** is slowly and gradually making the impact, the counselling team, which was very actively involved in the development of the

programme contents and implementation, expressed that the programme still needed to be made more effective. Presently, the programme is being implemented by facilitators who actually come from similar backgrounds and therefore probably lack some of these traits themselves. YP is considering the idea of involving external trainers in the future.

Nirmala Niketan, a highly reputed institution of training in social work carried an external audit of **Soch Ka Parivartan**.

Besides **SKP**, all students are given complimentary basic English language training to make them “**job ready**”.

This conventional LDC model has grown substantially. In 2003, there was only one centre in Maharashtra; today, in 2015, there are 65 LDCs and 200 centres including community centres and partner centres pan India.

According to Ms. Shivani Mehta, both **KSWA** and **Yuva Parivartan** are managed very professionally. **Yuva Parivartan**, is an ISO certified initiative. Internal checks for quality are carried out every month with respect to the academic programmes and a 360 degree internal quality audit is conducted every six months. An external audit is conducted once in two years. This has also helped YP maintain documents and data systematically and standardize their procedures.

Around 2009, the management decided to get out of their comfort zone and tread new paths. They organized a seminar for their top employees, “**Orbit Change 2010**”. Through the deliberations, the Camp Model evolved.

3.2 Camp Model

This model is particularly useful for the **YP** programme to penetrate even to the remote parts of the country. Under this, the counsellor from LDC/camp coordinator identifies a village or a small town where the **YP** courses can be offered. The camp coordinator visits identified locations with one or two social workers. They go there typically on the day of the weekly bazaar or some village festival, put up **YP** banners and posters for display and distribute pamphlets about different vocational courses offered. Then they get in touch with either the Panchayat or SHG members or school teachers; organize a meeting with the prospective students and offer the courses of 80 hrs to 160 hrs depending upon the response.

At the camp, the course material is provided by the YP but local resources are used for training. Basic Beautician, Basic Tailoring, Advance Tailoring,

Jewellery Making, Fashion Designing, Refrigeration Mechanics, Mobile Repairing, Basic Computer, Tally, DTP, Computer Hardware, Motor Mechanic, Two Wheeler Repairing, Wireman, Welding, Plumbing, Masonry, are some of the popular programmes. The camp coordinator is sometimes a local person and at other times from the LDC in that area. Instructors are generally local resources who connect better with the trainees and also offer a more cost effective option. External assessors and auditors visit the camps periodically to ensure proper implementation of the course.

Till 2015, the **Yuva Parivartan** has organized close to 9000 camps throughout the country. From their camp model developed the idea of a “**Remote Workforce**”. The camps conducted at Nagpur and Jaipur were pilots for this innovation. For their very popular tailoring course, the parent **YP** in Bandra won an order for a large quantity of ready, stitched women and children wear and other items like aprons etc. Through the tailoring course, as a part of practical hands-on training, they got this order ready and delivered it to the readymade garment company. This not only helped them introduce “**earn while you learn**” principle but also ensured future avenues for livelihood. Outsourcing is however not the core activity of the **YP**. It therefore trained local entrepreneurs to develop this as their own enterprise and thus generated local self-employment as well as paid-employment for many. Now they are taking this **Remote Workforce –a form of outsourcing** to other camps also.

3.3 Partnership Model

Skill development cannot be viewed in isolation. Skills are germane to, but not always sufficient for securing adequate economic dividends. Skills need to be an integral part of life skill education-employment and economic growth strategies to spur employability and productivity. Coordination with other national macroeconomic paradigms and growth strategies is therefore critical. Skills development is the shared responsibility of the key stakeholders. Partnering is therefore absolutely essential.

Partnerships have always been the mainstay of **YP**. The idea was launched with the partnership with Shramik Vidyapeeth and Blue Star Ltd. This **Industry–Academic–Civil society partnership** has grown from strength to strength since then. Some of their early courses were introduced in association with Khadi and Village Industries Commission. The types of partnerships forged are as follows:

- a) **Industry Partnership:** The partnerships enrich **YP** with the latest course curriculum, upgrading curriculum, staff training, modern equipment

and teaching tools, exposure visits, certification and placements for **YP Stakeholders**. Presently many of the courses of the **National Skill**

- b) **Development Council** are being implemented by **YP**. **YP** has a strong conviction that the “Skill India” agenda needs to help create an appropriate ecosystem that facilitates imparting employable skills to India’s growing workforce over the next few decades.
- c) **NGO Partnership**: Besides industry, YP is partnering in a big way with small NGOs, public and private trusts and even educational institutions who are entering in vocational/skill training.

4. Multi-Dimensional Training and Employment

To make a foray into rural India, the Multi-Dimensional Training and Employment (MDTE) department was formed with the intent of carrying out skill training through government and corporate projects. Some of the courses conducted are: Dairy Farming, Goat and Poultry Farming, Food processing, Vegetable cultivation, Agarbatti making, Carpentry, Construction Supervision, Fabrication, Bar-bending, Jewellery making, Retail Management, Hardware maintenance, Four and Two Wheeler Repair and Entrepreneurship Development. MDTE’s clients include several prominent corporate firm and state government agencies like: Tata Housing, Tata Chemicals, Skills Academy, Bharat Petroleum, NSDC, NABARD, MAVIM, Vishwa Yuvak Kendras in the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, M.P., Bihar, Rajasthan and Delhi. The MDTE has provided training to 7000 students in 2013–14 and provided livelihood opportunities to over 95% of their students.

Through years of working on the ground, YP has realized that the problem faced by school dropouts from underprivileged families is not only of economic poverty but also of social poverty. **Yuva Parivartan** has identified four areas of work, which form the pillars of its unique model:

- a) **Community Engagement - to mobilize youth and prepare them to unleash their potential.**
- b) **Livelihood Training** - including vocational skills, work readiness and life skills.
- c) **Industry partnership** - for creating industry relevant curriculum, industry exposure and on-the-job training and funding support of the Yuva Parivartan programmes.
- d) **Placement Support** - to get them successfully aligned to the mainstream.

Each of these initiatives is aligned to the single objective—to **provide the socially disadvantaged youth with employability-linked-vocational skills**

thereby helping them get self or wage employment. The programme provides these youth with exposure to market realities, training in relevant skills and practice in the skills. This exposure leads to opening of their minds where they start thinking of the future. The programme helps build their confidence and realize their potential. **Yuva Parivartan** goes a step forward and also enables them to take up employment through their placement cell or start their own business and hence become contributing members of the society.

5. Scaling Up

Through their Integrated Rural development YP has also entered the rural space for skill development.

Yuva Parivartan is today a partner to the National Skills Development Mission. The current operations span over 17 states in India, viz. Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar.

Table 1: Journey till date

Year	No. of Students trained	Centres	States	Formats
1998 – 99	100	1	1	1
2005 – 06	1500	3	1	1
2010 - 11	18,000	44	2	3
2011 - 12	85,000	100	10	5
2012 – 13	1,00,000	200	17	5
2013 - 14	1,30,000	200	17	5

Of these, approximately 60% are gainfully employed either through wage or self-employment.

True to the spirit of “Giving them a second chance,” **YP** extended its programme to the inmates of the Arthur Road Jail and some of the juvenile criminal rehabilitation centres with the help of prison authorities. In addition, counselling and guidance on life skills was also provided. In Pune’s Yerwada Prison, working with both male and female inmates since 2007, training was offered to over 1750 women in tailoring, and over 600 men in motor-rewinding, wiring and plumbing and arts and crafts. Work in prisons has since been expanded to jails in other states as well.

YP joined hands with the Mumbai Police to counsel and train vulnerable First-Time-Offenders who were out on bail but vulnerable to exploitation. Approximately 280 youth were trained from 15 police stations in two years

and about 84 youth were placed in jobs as electricians and cable operators, and with dealers of air-conditioners and refrigerators. Rehabilitation of such at-risk youth is very important. At-risk youth are a substantially marginalized segment of the population at risk of physical, sexual or emotional abuse and drug and alcohol abuse. These boys and girls are usually not educated and lack avenues to restart their life. This compounds their frustration; often driving them to criminal behaviour. YP now extends its helping hand to them.

Last year, **Institute of Development Studies, London** wanted to study the impact of Vocational Training on school drop outs as a deterrent of the Juvenile crime situation in India. They studied the impact of **YP** on school drop outs and juvenile crime and found the YP initiative very effective.

6. Impact Analysis

6.1 Placement Linked Camps: Pilot Project Highlights

In one of the villages in Rajasthan, the YP programme was introduced in 2011. In the camp, out of 138 students 44 women enrolled in tailoring courses. All the women formed SHGs and got a contract for sewing school uniforms for 500 students. This was the extension and modification of “remote work force” model piloted earlier.

6.2 And the Real Beneficiaries

Renuka Dede had dropped out from school in Class IX. Later, she started assisting her mother in domestic work. **IDEA, YP** Partner NGO in Pune, identified her while working in her community. She was counselled to rejoin the school but she wasn't interested. So the social worker motivated her to join a vocational course. She showed interest in nursing and joined the course at **IDEA-YUVA PARIVARTAN**. The field visit and the internship boosted her interest in the area. She successfully completed the course with A+ grade. She continued her job in the same hospital where she had done her internship. Today she is earning Rs. 3000 per month and is proud to be called “Sister Renuka.” Her parents who engaged in rag-picking and casual domestic and other labour are happy to see Renuka's success as she is the only skilled worker in her family.

Panchasheela, at 22, is a creative and ambitious young woman. She graduated from **KSWA's** tailoring course in 2005. She had finished her SSC. While completing her tailoring course at **YP, Kherwadi**, she was assisting a fashion designer for some time. Then she decided to branch out on her own. For last two years she has managed to start a small business from her home. Currently she employs two assistants and one master tailor. Working from home, she makes a notable profit of about Rs.4,000/- per month. She says, “**Whoever comes into this line learns ways to survive**”.

Mobile Camps – Pangari Village, Nasik: Five students (earlier casual construction workers earning approximately Rs 2500 per month) who attended the Wireman Camp Course at Pangari village, Nasik in January, 2011, have come together to start their own business with a construction contractor for wire fitting and electrical works. Today this group has become self-employed and has started earning an average of Rs. 5000/- per month each. **It's a Magic of Second Chance.**

6.3 Feedback of Some Other Beneficiaries

Over the years, **YP** has indeed created a huge battalion of young boys and girls who have either been trained at **YP** or have joined **YP** as trainers or social workers. In their opinion **“you do not remain same person after you join YP”** It was very nicely expressed by one of the participants **“I changed my technical mind to a very social mind. Now I have become a social worker and I am glad to serve society.”**

6.4 Other Stakeholders Experience

“I have been connected with Yuva Parivartan for more than six years. They have been tirelessly working to provide vocational training to the youth. I have visited their training centre for girls at Bandra many times and tried to up-scale their potentialities particularly those who are in the field of beautician and hair designing. Two of the YP girls are now working in a senior position in my parlour. I think YP is doing a great job in our society by making the youth socially productive.” Nalini of Nalini & Yasmeen.

6.5 Feedback Systems

The organization has a 360 degree feedback system in place. At the end of every course, the students are contacted by tele-callers for their feedback on facilitators, infrastructure and facilities made available, course contents and delivery as well as placement assistance given by **YP**. The employers are also contacted for their feedback. It is through the feedback of the employers, that **SKP** is made more rigorous. The independent assessors also give their feedback.

7. Key Success Factors

Course Delivery

- Largely practical – about 70 %
- One stop solution: trade skills, life skills, English language skill together.
- Interactive methodology
- On Job Training - an important component of the course
- Learning from experience all the time
- Exposure visits
- Guest lectures

Strong Partnerships

- Partnerships with Industry for Infrastructure Finance, Course content, Certification
- Strong Industry representation in Advisory Board
- Placements.

Early bird advantage

Professionalism transparency and openness in operations

8. Challenges

Some of the challenges of the programme are as follows:

- Limited availability of trained manpower
- Cost management particularly compensation for trained instructors
- Attitude of the learners

9. Future Plans

- **Nodal Agency:** YP is harnessing the capacities of tiny NGOs and envisages developing an ecosystem that supports small NGOs through its newly started **YP Authorized Training and Certification Centres (ATCCs)**. There is a need for NGOs and other bodies like public private trusts, educational institutions to come together in order to reach out to the 500 million unskilled youth in India.
- **YP University for Vocational Courses:** In the changing scenario, YP team members are also focusing their efforts on leveraging the power of Information Technology. The target of skilling one million youth in a year is what drives YP to look beyond the present; it makes them reach

into the future. To achieve this ambitious target the **YP** is entering into “E learning.” Use of IT, will help reach out to areas hitherto not reached, impart training, conduct assessment and certification of students at their own centres, as well as at partner centres, and manage the large database of the existing and potential students and map them to employment opportunities available. For this, they are standardizing course content, delivery, examination and evaluation in their courses offered anywhere in India. **Assessment and evaluation standardization will help in creating the Yuva Parivartan Virtual Academy. This will help conduct National Level Examinations and Certification Activity.**

- **Starting Yuva Parivartan Livelihood Exchange:** YP is planning an initiative on the lines of an employment exchange where the prospective employees and employers can meet. The YP keeps data for all its students enrolled with them. This data is available in soft copy which can be easily accessed by the future employers. YP is creating opportunities in the organized sector by providing placement to those youth through Placement Assistance and setting up a Rural Employment Exchange to aggregate job opportunities in the unorganized sector.

10. Summing Up

As India moves progressively towards becoming a global knowledge economy, it must meet the rising aspirations of its youth. This can be partially achieved through focus on advancement of skills that are relevant to the emerging economic environment.

The skilling needs of the country are however diverse, as also skilling gaps. **Yuva Parivartan** addresses the three most important paradoxes confronting the Livelihoods and skilling space in India today:

- 80% of all youth who do not complete school, but, receive only 20% of the attention;
- 90% jobs are in the unorganized sectors, but, they receive only 10% of the attention and resources;
- 60% of the population lives in the villages, but, receive only 30% of the attention and resources.

The **Yuva Parivartan** Model attempts to address these concerns. **Yuva Parivartan** is an inspired movement with a desire to bring about a change for the betterment of the society and the nation by mainstreaming the section of population that is likely to get side tracked.

Dedicated to Late Sitaram Rao, mentor and guru of Indian microfinance and livelihoods movement, the Case Study Competition seeks to compile best practices, breakthroughs on the ground, sectoral innovations and efforts that have helped the poor to move from subsistence to sustainable levels of livelihoods. The Compendium which is a part of the Knowledge Series is envisaged to inform and influence practitioners, promoters and policy makers supporting livelihoods promotion.

The theme for this year's Sitaram Rao Livelihoods Asia Case Study Competition 2015 was **Skilling Asia - Equipping Youth for Employment**. The Case Study Compendium covers cases that have demonstrated breakthroughs in adopting new strategies, new models and forging new partnerships towards providing gainful employment to a large number of youth in countries in the Asian region.

Photo Courtesy: Youth4Jobs Foundation

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