

# THE STEP BULLETIN

Quarterly Newsletter



## BREAKING STEREOTYPES: FROM CONSTRUCTION HELPER TO AWARD WINNER

In Udaipur, the Vigyaan Samiti has been honoring women who defy societal norms and make remarkable achievements through the 'Justice Kanta Bhatnagar Award.' For two consecutive years, this prestigious award has found deserving recipients in the trainees of the STEP Academy. Last year, Kesar Meena, a tailor, trainer, and entrepreneur, earned admiration from the audience. This year, it was Ms. Kamla Kumari, a marble and tile fitting trainee, who was recognized for her outstanding accomplishments.

Kamla, in 2018, enrolled in the STEP Academy's marble and tile fitting on the job training program. Kamla started as a helper, eager to learn and determined to prove herself. Her dedication and hard work quickly transformed her into a skilled marble fitter, earning her respect among her peers and trainers. .

Kamla decided to share her knowledge and skills with fellow trainees at the STEP Academy.

Over time, Kamla's aspirations grew even higher establishing herself as a contractor in the marble and tile fitting industry. Kamla now takes on contracts for various projects, managing teams of skilled workers, and overseeing projects with expertise. Kamla's story is a testament to the power of determination, courage, and skill. She has not only shattered gender stereotypes but has also created a path for others to follow.

Her accomplishments highlight the significance of initiatives like the STEP Academy in empowering women and providing them with the tools to break through traditional gender roles. Kamla's success is a beacon of hope and a reminder that with the right support and determination, anyone can achieve greatness, regardless of societal expectations.

## From the Editor's Desk

Hello Readers,

Warm greetings to all!

This past quarter has provided us with invaluable opportunities to connect and collaborate with like-minded organizations, fostering a vibrant exchange of knowledge and ideas.

Additionally, we take immense pride in spotlighting the incredible journeys of women who have charted unique paths to achieve remarkable milestones in their lives, often fueled by the empowering effects of skill training.

Within these pages, we showcase the inspiring story of Yashwant, hailing from a humble village background, who, through dedicated training, transformed himself into a successful entrepreneur.

In this digital age, we recognize the overwhelming preference of today's youth for the online realm. Consequently, we've updated our methodologies to cater to this evolving landscape.

During the past few months, we celebrated Guru Purnima as a heartfelt tribute to our esteemed trainers who continue to impart invaluable knowledge to our trainees. We also marked Independence Day, remembering sacrifices of our forefathers in shaping our great nation.

Our commitment to creating a brighter future for disadvantaged youths remains unwavering.

Your support and love are the driving forces that empower us to make a meaningful difference. Together, we can truly impact lives.

*Happy Reading.*

*Mona Agrawal*

*STEP Academy Aajeevika Bureau*

# Stitching a New Future: Rural Women Emerging as Entrepreneurs



Even in contemporary rural Rajasthan, women continue to grapple with deeply entrenched gender biases that restrict their agency and autonomy, particularly in decision-making regarding their bodies, lives, and careers. Their substantial contributions to the economic and social well-being of their families, communities, and society as a whole often go unrecognized. These women are often wedded off at a tender age, shouldering the responsibilities of their in-laws, husbands, and children, all while their efforts remain undervalued and their potential untapped. They are also trapped into the whole expectation of abiding to gender roles and norms. Instead of getting skill training to build their career, the women prefer to learn a new skill to develop a hobby. STEP Academy have had many such experiences where women learn

stitching but are unable to develop livelihoods around that skill. STEP Academy formed a group of these women who wanted to earn livelihoods using this skill. Nayi Udaan SHG was formed with an aim to link urban apparel market to the production hub set up with and for these women.

Multiple intervention included capacity enhancement sessions, EDP training to strengthen their entrepreneurial skills and establish themselves into the market. They have now overcome multiple level of challenges (family, societal, market, etc) and now working as a women run service enterprise where they provide stitching service to the market. Their income graph is also on rise along with their social status in their areas.

Women entrepreneurs and their dedication to the social economy are on the increase in India, especially since the Industrial Revolution in 1991, and businesswomen are critical indicators of financial change.

These interventions and experiments enable women specially from rural areas to see beyond the boundaries of family and household responsibilities. The Nayi Udaan group has enabled its group members to nurture the entrepreneur in this, strengthen their negotiation skills in the market.

## Revolutionizing Skill Training: STEP Academy's Inspiring Visit to Vigyan Ashram

A recent visit by a STEP Academy delegation to Vigyan Ashram, an institution known for its "Learning by Doing" approach to skill training, promises to revolutionize the field. Vigyan Ashram, founded in 1983, emphasizes practical experience, aligning training with industry needs, and holistic development.

Their varied training programs including Diploma in Basic Rural Technology (DBRT), Introducing to Basic Technology (IBT), Design Innovation Center (DIC), FAB Academy, Enterprise Development Program (EDP) are customised programs which provide services to youths according to their needs and aspiration.

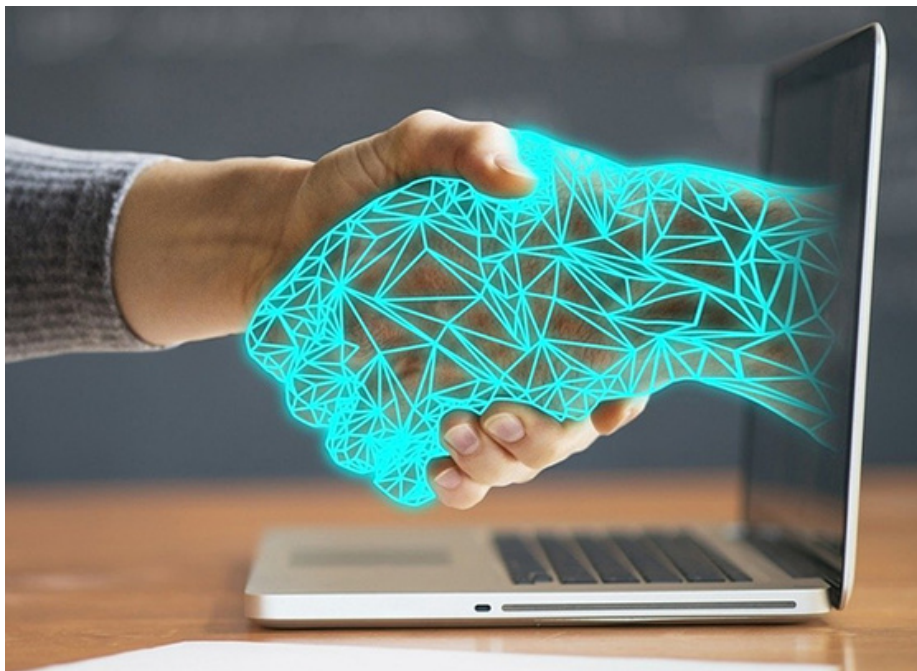
This visit has inspired STEP Academy to update its methodologies, leverage technology, and explore collaborations, enhancing skill training to empower youth for a competitive job market. To read the full report, [click here](#).



# Navigating the Digital Horizon: Contribution of Youth in the Age of Transformation

In our homes, you've probably heard the saying, "When a child misbehaves, blame it on the mobile/TV." This dilemma persists. However, in this evolving world, our youth have also changed their perspectives. When today's youth think of doing something new or strive to adapt to the changing world, they face social challenges.

According to the World Economic Forum report, the prize from the digital transformation of industries could be in the region of \$100 trillion over the next decade. The modern world is advancing rapidly in digital technology, and this transformation is evident in every sector of our society. In this article, we will discuss the relationship between the digital world and our youth.



Several changes have occurred in our world due to digital technology. The advent of the internet has transformed our lives. Social media platforms, online educational resources, and virtual reality have introduced new dimensions to our lives. It's projected that 30% of jobs are likely to be automated by the mid-2030s in developed and successful developing countries worldwide.

**The Role of Youth:** Our youth are the primary beneficiaries of this digital age. They use the internet to share their thoughts and ideas on social media, acquire online education, and study new technologies. The digital world has assisted our youth in enhancing new expertise and instilled in them the belief that anything is possible. They rely on it, whether it's searching for jobs or learning new skills in all sectors. The digital world is steering our youth toward new possibilities. It is taking them in new directions in terms of knowledge and capabilities, helping them move toward global prosperity. We all need to learn and understand how to use the resources of this new age effectively, so that our future and society's development can be beautiful.

**STEP Academy's Initiatives:** STEP Academy has also begun introducing our youth to the digital world through its skill training programs. STEP has digitized its training programs. Moreover, it has initiated New Age Training programs in which young people can learn digital skills to shape their future.

Let's explore what New Age Training (jobs of the new world) can encompass for our youth:

- Coding, labeling, and tagging tasks.
- Digital marketing.
- Training in the AI and ML sectors.
- Security system installation.
- E-commerce.

In the coming times, there will be numerous opportunities in these sectors, new technologies, and new industries that will change all the patterns of jobs around us. Therefore, young people must keep searching the market constantly and be prepared for every change.

**Challenges:** Despite the positive experiences of the digital world, young people need to be cautious. There is a risk of getting lost in the online world, and managing it correctly is essential.

In conclusion, the digital world is a realm of immense possibilities for our youth. It empowers them with knowledge and skills that are essential for their future success. However, responsible and balanced use of this digital realm is equally crucial.

*By Jahid Makrani  
STEP Academy, Aajeevika Bureau*

# EMPOWERING RURAL YOUTH: FROM RAJASTHAN VILLAGES TO HOTEL INDUSTRY WITH SAATHIYA, BANGALORE

With the support of STEP Academy, two young women from rural areas of Rajasthan, embarked on a journey from Udaipur to Bangalore, to undergo intensive training at SAATHIYA, Bangalore. As of August 1, 2023, both of them have been working at the prestigious five-star Radisson Blu Hotel in Udaipur, all made possible through their association with SAATHIYA-Bangalore. It all started in May 2023 when STEP Academy joined hands with SAATHIYA, an organization dedicated to providing high-end training in Hotel & Hospitality, ensuring young individuals secure placements in 3-5 star hotels while fostering their career growth in the hospitality sector.



From STEP Academy, our trainees move on to participate in SAATHIYA-LITE training, where they receive four weeks of basic training in Udaipur. After formal selection, they proceed to Bangalore for an additional six weeks of training at SAATHIYA-Bangalore.

SAATHIYA places emphasis not only on technical training but also on essential aspects such as basic English communication, grooming, and interview skills. The program further includes placement services to ensure that the youth are placed in hotels that offer opportunities for continuous career advancement.

To ensure sustained growth, a post-training support program extends for up to five years, allowing personalized follow-ups for career development. SAATHIYA has witnessed numerous success stories, with many youth progressing from working on the floor to assuming supervisory and team leader positions within the hospitality industry.

In July, STEP Academy's Sanjay Chittauda from Udaipur attended a program in Bangalore in collaboration with SAATHIYA. The event included the participation of Shruti, the Director of the Tamra Group of Hotels and founder of SAATHIYA, along with other training



providers, youth mobilization organizations, and HR representatives from various 3-5 star hotels across the country.

In September, STEP Academy sent three more promising youths—Sheetal, Manoj, and Pravin—for training with SAATHIYA. AngelOne-CSR has been a significant financial contributor to this initiative.

We are hopeful that in the coming year, we will be able to connect even more youth interested in hotel careers with SAATHIYA-Bangalore.

## Transforming Lives through Skill Development - Yashwant's Success Story

After completing his 10th-grade education, Yashwant found himself at a crossroads. He lacked the motivation to pursue further studies and spent his days laboring in the fields of his village, assisting his family with agricultural tasks. His life took an unexpected turn when he ventured to the bustling city of Surat, Gujarat, in search of better opportunities.

In Surat, Yashwant found employment in a hotel, earning a meager monthly wage of 6,000 rupees. However, his health took a severe hit, compelling him to return home to Desuri. It was during this time that he stumbled upon the local garage while needing motorcycle repairs. The experience ignited a realization in him – acquiring skills in two-



wheeler repairing could open doors to a more promising future. Determined to seize this opportunity for self-improvement, Yashwant learned about STEP (Skill Training and Placement Academy), an organization in Udaipur offering skill development training. Intrigued, he joined two fellow villagers, and together, they embarked on a journey of learning and skill acquisition. Today, Yashwant Kumar stands as a shining example of what skill development can achieve. He returned to Desuri and established his own successful two-wheeler repair garage, earning a monthly income ranging from 15,000 to 17,000 rupees. Beyond personal success, Yashwant actively mentors and supports other youth in Desuri, guiding them towards skill development and a brighter future.

*By Vinod Verma (STEP Academy, Barwara)*

# Celebrating the auspicious day with our trainers



Guru Purnima, celebrates the relationship between a guru (trainer) and their students and it holds profound significance in various cultures across the world.

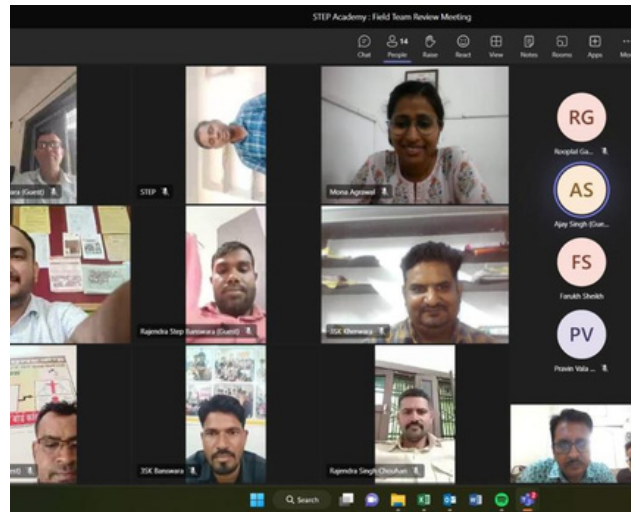
The relevance of working with gurus, trainers, or mentors on Guru Purnima extends far beyond just the spiritual realm. In today's fast-paced world, the relevance of working with gurus on Guru Purnima remains as vital as ever. It is a reminder of the enduring value of mentorship, guidance, and the continuous pursuit of knowledge and wisdom in all aspects of life. STEP Academy celebrated this day with our trainers who impart their invaluable hands on knowledge to our trainees and help them build better future. We also used this day to familiarize our trainers towards digital technologies preferred by today's youths and how we can integrate these technologies into our training methodologies.

# Visibility of Women in formal job spaces



In our last edition, we highlighted our efforts in exploring multiple job opportunities in industries and factories in Ahmedabad and there has been a transition in employers approach towards including more women into this space. STEP Academy also started searching for young women who could give a fresh start to their career through such opportunities and in this process different teams of such bright young women were linked to such industries in Ahmedabad after undertaking them through our Placement Readiness Program model where they learn about various aspects of formal job settings, ethics of a workplace, legal protection provisions in case of any mis happenings and others to help them settle in their new yet exciting journey towards financial independence.

# Humkadam: Walking Together for a Cause



"Humkadam" within STEP Academy serves as a dynamic platform where our team members unite to collaboratively navigate the journey of our projects. It is a space where we openly share our progress, lessons learned, and the challenges we face during the on-ground implementation process. We conduct virtual Humkadam sessions every month. Additionally, we recognize the value of in-person gatherings, and as such, we convene physically once every quarter to foster a deeper sense of collaboration among team members. Our most recent in-person Humkadam event was held in July 2023. Humkadam extends beyond project updates; it also serves as a forum for team members to bolster their skills and capabilities across various dimensions. It offers a platform for continuous learning and development, enabling us to bring innovative perspectives and fresh insights to our activities.

## New Partnerships: Launching a new project with JK Lakshmi Cement



Skill Training has been the need of the hour as the unemployment rate denies to fall and the skill gap is also increasing. This issue is now being taken up by many government, non government organisation and companies and industries. The CSR of JK Lakshmi Cement is also collaborating with STEP Academy to identify the skill gap in Sirohi district where the prime livelihood option chosen by the unskilled workforce is into the stone carving industry which is a life threatening occupation for the workers.

Through Skill Training, we want to provide them with alternate and better livelihood options which will help them save their lives. A three months pilot phase has been launched in this quarter in the area of skill training and placement.

# Glimpses From the Field



Youth Mobilization Campaign on wheels, an innovative model to reach out to a number of villages and communities also to interact with people who could not reach out to us.



This photo is from the ongoing motor winding training in Step Banswara. In this, Kaluram is providing training to the youths who has received training himself earlier He is now he is teaching others and helping other youths to become self-employed. Kaluram is becoming a role model for other youths.



Launch of new tailoring course in commercial tailoring for male youth in newly established STEP Academy centre in Saagwada block of Dungarpur district.

# Glimpses From the Field



Independence Day Celebration by our trainees at STEP Academy, Pratapgarh.



Yuva Mela Organised in Anandpuri block of Banswara district by STEP team in Banswara.




Concluding Ceremony and toolkit distribution to the trainees of On the Job Training organised by Aajeevika Bureau in Pune, Maharashtra.





Focused Group Discussion conducted with alumni of STEP Academy as a part of data collection process for an impact assessment to be conducted for the project funded by Bajaj Auto Ltd. CSR

## Contact US:


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