

The STEP Bulletin

Our Quarterly E-Newsletter

OCTOBER, 2022

Highlights:

- From Physical to Virtual: Reaching out to the needy
- Too Many Voices: Case Study
- Our Impact this quarter
- Learning Continuously: Evaluating our life skill sessions
- Media Coverage
- Picstories from the field

From Physical to Virtual: Reaching out to Nurses through skill training

While working with youth, we come across people already working and cannot afford to take gaps from their work and be physically available for our training programs. These youth, however, need skill training to enhance their capabilities to excel in their working areas. We have been engaging with nurses who work in rural areas to promote the well-being of their communities. While designing and piloting our bridge course, our participants struggled to manage time to attend training sessions. Keeping in mind, their busy schedule, we decided to conduct the sessions online to impart training to them

without hampering their daily livelihoods. In addition to technical knowledge of treating patients, they also learn ethics to practice as a nurse which brings confidence in them to serve better than the quacks available in these areas.



From The Editor's Desk

It has been an eventful quarter, with new initiatives seeing fruition and some good news for our trainees. We saw a huge jump in the number of youths reached from last quarter. The use of digital technologies is increasing to impart skills to underprivileged youths from rural areas.

We dedicate ourselves to learning and from our interventions to improve in future. We thank you, our donors, and supporters, who have helped us come this far in supporting youth from rural tribal areas. There are still many miles to go and we hope you will continue to walk with us.

Happy Reading!

Too many voices: Some to follow, some to ignore (Case Study of Sandhya)

Name: Sandhya

Age: 24

Qualification: 12th Pass

Hailing from a small village, Tapana, in Dungarpur district, Sandhya, grew up dreaming big. Unlike other girls her age, she saw a different dream of becoming a hockey player. But destiny had other plans for her. Unfortunately, Sandhya did not get an appropriate platform to work on her dreams. She could not make a team and thus had to leave her dream of becoming a hockey player midway. She completed her 12th but could not study further because of the poor financial condition of her family. She however wanted to be self-dependent and decided to get a job to be financially strong. Even in present times, It's very difficult for girls from rural areas to come out of their houses and start earning. A bigger turning point came into her life when she convinced her family to let her move outside to earn money.

Sandhya in search of jobs moved to Bangalore and engaged in meager, low-paying, and unsafe jobs like construction helper, stone carving, etc. She returned to her village after some time where she learned to drive through her own efforts after her father went into an accident. She wanted to make this interest and skill into a profession. While trying to figure this out, she got in touch with our team member in "Yuva Mela" organized by STEP Academy in her village. During our career counseling process, she showed interest in getting a job suitable to her skillset. STEP started looking for jobs for her when our team got a request for a suitable driver from an organization. Sandhya passed with flying marks in her interview and driving test and is now working. Within 2 months into this job, Sandhya got a hike of 20% in her salary because of her skill and work.

"You know how people treat girls who are engaged in these jobs. Driving is a tough job. People generally do not like you. I now feel better in this place where I am not judged based on my gender." says Sandhya recalling her earlier days in Bangalore.

Sandhya wants to establish her own driving school to teach other women to drive confidently and see more women driving on the roads. Sandhya through her continuous fights is an inspiration for other girls who are always pulled down because of their gender.



----- Our Impact -----

This quarter, our team has reached out to 5058 youth through counseling. 1183 youth have been trained in different trades under our *Hunar*, *Unnatl*, and On the Job training formats. Multiple youth camps in the form of Yuva Melas, Alumni Meet, and Placement days are organized to engage with local rural youth. A total of 23 Yuva Melas, 2 Alumni Meets, and 11 Placement days were organized last quarter. More than 130 youths have been directly placed in multiple companies. This quarter, we saw a jump of 86% in the number of trainees from last quarter.

Learning Continuously: Evaluating Training Programs

We always put efforts into continuously enhancing our programs. Recently, a study was conducted to evaluate the impact of life skill sessions on our trainees. In addition to technical skill training that is imparted to our trainees, a series of life skill sessions are also delivered to improve the soft skills of rural youth to make better decisions in life. Life Skill sessions teach them to establish their identity as skilled youth in the market. They are coached to set their goals and take rational decisions to achieve these goals. Basic communication skills, good relationships within personal and professional spaces, and a healthy working style are other major components of these sessions. They are also taught about financial management in their day-to-day lives. Gender and health sessions to sensitize them on issues around them and take good care of their health are also conducted. Their Major findings and recommendations have been highlighted below:



There is a need to focus more on designing sessions that talk more about gender, their roles and behavior, and various terms associated with gender, patriarchy, etc, different kinds of institutions like family, marriages, neighborhood, and schools among others portray gender and define roles associated to a particular gender, discrimination faced by both genders both personally and professionally.

- Since youth actively participate in social events, there is a need to now orient them about productive spaces and groups which will help them to make better decisions in their lives. Life skill sessions should now orient youth on developing leadership roles.

• General orientation on health is important in life skill sessions as the youth associated with STEP Academy come from very poor economic conditions and belong to

migrant families who neglect their health conditions altogether. Since rural youth join the workforce at a very early age, they need to learn more about sexual health along with menstruation health, occupational health, and safety.

Other important sessions include enterprise development sessions to strengthen entrepreneurial skills amongst youth along with natural resource management in their areas to be sensitive towards nature.

- Financial awareness sessions are useful for the rural population after increased transactions from bank accounts. With the upcoming digital era, it is also important to inculcate digital literacy among the youth to prevent financial and digital fraud.
- The conventional idea of gender roles is clearly altered through our sessions and clearly established in the findings.

Impacting The Lives of Youth: Media Coverage



----- Picstories from the Field -----

Ahmedabad



Closing Ceremony for a training program organised in "mobile phone repairing" with 18 women in collaboration with Janvikas also attended by V.B. Sheth, Secretary of Vatva Industrial Association in Ahmedabad. This training was also featured on BBC news media.

Udaipur



Humkadam (Quarterly Review cum Planning meeting) organized at STEP, Udaipur to review the previous quarter and plan for the upcoming quarter. Capacity enhancement workshops are also organized to bring efficiency and innovation to our work.

Dungarpur



Shubhangi, from our funding partner, Bajaj Finserv, with our STEP team inaugurating our new satellite training center in Dungarpur district to reach out to more youth and link them with training and placements during her two days visit to understand our work on the ground.

----- Picstories from the Field -----

Salumbar



Session of digital literacy delivered to trainees for "E-Mitra Operator" by resource person from Rajasthan Shram Sarathi Association (sister organization of Aajeevika Bureau) as a part of their life skill session.

Dungarpur



Tree plantation by our trainees in Dungarpur satellite center as a part of extra curriculum activity and life skill organized by STEP team, Dungarpur on the occasion of World Indigenous Day sends a message of conservation of the environment.

Udaipur



Our trainee, Kesar Meena, from Sabla was awarded "Nyaymurthi Kanta Bhatnagar Purusharth Samman-2022" along with a cash prize by Vigyaan Samiti, Udaipur for being an influencing entrepreneur in her area.

Contact Us:

STEP Academy, Aajeevika Bureau
Gattani Research Center, New Krishnapura, Pulan, Udaipur, Rajasthan
Email: step@ajeevika.org
Phone: +91 7568263173, +919660786901