

THE STEP BULLETIN



Empowering Youth for Formal Sector Employment: The Placement Readiness Program

The Placement Readiness Program (PRP) is an immersive 5-day journey aimed at empowering young individuals for formal sector employment. From understanding the complexities of formal work to striking a balance between personal and professional life, the PRP dives into it all. The participants get to learn effective communication, understand salary structures and social security benefits, and master the art of writing standout resumes. Our program also addresses crucial aspects such as workplace harassment awareness, interview techniques, and exploring entry-level job opportunities specifically accessible to rural youths.

The PRP also makes way for job placements through exclusive interviews by recruiters, which not only unlocks career prospects, but also aids in community development as well as personal growth.

This quarter, we focused on expanding access to the Placement Readiness Program by linking more youth to it. It fills us with immense pride to report that an impressive 271 motivated youths joined the program, out of which 66% of youths were successfully placed in multiple companies who are now financially supporting their families.

To know more about this program, kindly, refer to this [document](#).

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From the Editor's Desk

Hello Readers,

Welcome to the first quarter of this financial year, which has been nothing short of exciting as we strive to surpass our own records in providing skill training and placement opportunities to underprivileged youth. In this quarter alone, we have reached an impressive milestone, engaging with 1,719 young individuals through various training and placement formats. While our focus has predominantly been on formal sector skilling and placement, we remain committed to empowering youth involved in self-employment and the construction sector.

We are thrilled to announce that our training formats have now expanded to Pune, thanks to the efforts of our dedicated rural field staff from Aajeevika team. They journeyed to Pune to share their expertise in organizing On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs for unskilled workers. Strengthening our networking and partnerships with like-minded organizations has been another key objective, ensuring that we can reach those in need effectively.

During this quarter, we also conducted an impactful impact assessment of a project supported by the IKEA Foundation. The project aimed to address the challenges faced by Adivasi youth in accessing suitable employment opportunities. We are proud to report the positive impact it has made on the targeted beneficiaries.

As we continue our dedication to these initiatives, we hope you enjoy reading the significant highlights of this quarter. Stay tuned for more inspiring stories and updates.

Happy Reading,
Mona (mona.agrawal@aajeevika.org)

ASSESSING IMPACT OF THE PROJECT: BIDDING FAREWELL TO IKEA FOUNDATION

In a significant milestone, the project titled 'Ensuring Decent Work and Sustainable Employment for Rural Adivasi Youths,' supported by the IKEA Foundation, has successfully concluded its impact assessment process. The project, which commenced in July 2020, aimed to empower and uplift the lives of rural Adivasi youths by providing them with decent work opportunities and sustainable employment.

Over the course of three years, the project worked tirelessly to address the challenges faced by Adivasi youths in accessing suitable employment opportunities. Recognizing the importance of inclusive economic growth and social development, the IKEA Foundation supported this initiative, which sought to create positive change and alleviate poverty among marginalized communities.

• **Livelihoods:** The project successfully fostered a mindset of learning and curiosity among Adivasi youths, instilling in them the drive to acquire new skills and knowledge. This mindset, coupled with the project's interventions, led to increased income and work availability for participants. Through the project's efforts,

adivasi youths gained access to decent work opportunities, providing them with stable and sustainable employment. Furthermore, the promotion of entrepreneurship resulted in job creation within their communities, contributing to local economic growth.

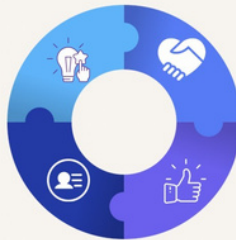
• **Social Capital:** The impact assessment report reveals that the project facilitated the development of a network of friends and role models for Adivasi youths. This network not only offered support but also provided opportunities for seeking mentorship and advanced skills. The project's post-training support ensured that participants received ongoing assistance, enabling them to further enhance their social capital. A notable outcome was the concept of "paying it forward," where participants, inspired by their own journey, extended support and guidance to others in their communities.

1. LIVELIHOODS

- Fostering a mindset of learning and curiosity
- Increased income and work availability
- Access to decent work
- Entrepreneurship and job creation

3. IDENTITY & SENSE OF SELF

- Having a sense of purpose
- Valuing dignity in work
- Establishing one's identity as a skilled worker
- Becoming a role model



2. SOCIAL CAPITAL

- Network of friends and role models
- Ability to seek mentorship and advanced skills
- Post training support
- Paying-it-forward

4. CONFIDENCE

- Experiencing independence, mobility and urban exposure
- Improved risk-taking ability
- Ability to negotiate better terms of work
- Equity and inclusion in labour markets

- **Identity and Sense of Self:** The project played a pivotal role in fostering a sense of purpose among Adivasi youths, helping them recognize the value of their work and uphold their dignity. By establishing themselves as skilled workers, participants gained a stronger sense of identity and self-worth. Many became role models within their communities, inspiring others to pursue similar paths of self-improvement and empowerment.
- **Confidence:** The impact assessment report reveals that the project contributed to Adivasi youths' experience of independence, mobility, and exposure to urban environments. This exposure led to improved risk-taking abilities, allowing participants to explore new opportunities and overcome challenges. As a result, Adivasi youths gained the confidence to negotiate better terms of work,

ensuring their equity and inclusion in labor markets. The successful completion of the impact assessment process showcases the project's effectiveness in addressing the challenges faced by rural Adivasi youths and empowering them with the skills and resources needed for a brighter future. The findings of the

report demonstrate the project's significant contribution to livelihood improvement, social capital enhancement, identity formation, and confidence building among marginalized communities.

The IKEA Foundation's support for this project exemplifies its commitment to promoting social empowerment and sustainable development. By partnering with grassroots organizations and initiatives, the foundation plays a vital role in driving positive change and improving the lives of vulnerable communities.

The successful outcomes and lessons learned from the 'Ensuring Decent Work and Sustainable Employment for Rural Adivasi Youths' project serve as a valuable resource for future initiatives aimed at uplifting marginalized communities. It is hoped that these findings will inspire further collaboration and the implementation of similar projects to create a more equitable and inclusive society for all.

The full impact assessment report can be accessed [here](#).

Special Services for Specially Abled Youths

At STEP Academy, our unwavering commitment lies in training and facilitating employment opportunities for the individuals of Dungarpur. While our special focus is on youths who face the challenges of distress migration or have dropped out of schools, teetering on the edge of migration. We actively seek collaborations with like-minded organisations in our quest to reach out to these deserving youths through skill-building programs.

In Dungarpur, our STEP team forged one such connection with Sightsavers. For the past five years, Sightsavers has been instrumental in empowering individuals with disabilities, enabling them to attain self-reliance, efficiency, and gainful employment. Sightsavers collaborates with skill training institutes to mobilize and support men and women from special groups. Building on this foundation, a partnership was established between Sightsavers and STEP Academy a few months ago. The primary objective was to identify a group of socially conscious and specially-abled and connect them to skill training programs specially organised for these special groups. In line with this collaboration, a specialized batch for commercial tailoring was organized in partnership with the forum, leveraging the mobilization efforts of the Sightsavers. The identified group received comprehensive training through the STEP Academy, further enhancing their skills and employability. Together, Step Academy and Sightsavers are breaking barriers and paving the way for a brighter future.



"RPL for Youth with Colorful Skills: STEP Academy Udaipur and Asian Paints Join Forces"

Taking into consideration the youth involved in colour paintwork, STEP Academy Udaipur has forged a fruitful collaboration with the renowned Asian Paints Color Academy in Jaipur, resulting in the implementation of a transformative short-term training program called RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning). This program aims to empower unskilled youth in the market by enhancing their skills and providing them with valuable certifications.

Traditionally, these aspiring artisans have faced challenges in learning vital aspects of their craft, such as safety precautions, adapting to market demands, and estimating costs. However, the Asian Paints Color Academy in Jaipur has excelled in imparting these essential skills and holds certification from the prestigious NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation). Offering a comprehensive range of 19 training modules, each spanning two days, the Color Academy covers crucial topics like waterproofing, teacher design creation, wood and metal polishing, and safety precautions during work. The training program spans a period of 10 days, divided into three modules, ensuring a well-rounded education for the participants.

Upon successful completion of the training, the participants are awarded certificates and provided with the necessary tools to kick-start their careers. STEP Academy's partnership with the Color Academy began in January 2018, and to date, a commendable total of 845 youths have completed the program. Notably, these skilled individuals now enjoy an average income that is 40% higher than their previous earnings, demonstrating the profound impact of this initiative. In the current quarter, STEP Academy is proud to announce that 102 enthusiastic youths from Kumbhalgarh, Sayra, and Gogund blocks

have successfully completed the training, further enriching the talent pool of skilled professionals in the region. With such remarkable achievements, this collaboration serves as a beacon of hope for young individuals seeking to build a prosperous future in the vibrant world of colour paintwork.

~ By Ajay Singh
Senior Associate
STEP Academy, Udaipur



OJT in Pune: One STEP ahead in Social Compact initiative



Ashok Darade, hailing from the Jalgaon district in Maharashtra, migrated to Pune as a labourer after completing his 12th-grade studies. Through his connections at the labour centre, he got the opportunity to undergo On-the-Job Training (OJT) in his interest area, "Two-Wheeler Mechanic". Ashok's dedication paid off when he received a Rs. 2000 raise from the workshop owner after completing the training. Ashok dreams of opening his own garage after a year of practice. He and his fellow centre colleagues are delighted with this achievement and will continue pursuing OJT for other skills in the future.

In Pune, Ashok Liba Darade stands as one among 41 youths who have transformed their lives through OJT, acquiring new skills and witnessing a boost in their income. The Workers Facilitation Centers in Chakan and Bhosri, situated in Pune's industrial region, have been dedicated to providing social security, labor education, and services related to labor laws to migrant workers since 2021. Under the initiative of the Aajeevika Bureau's 'Social Compact Program,' these labour assistance centres are collaborating with major local companies such as Forbes Marshall, Thermax, and Bajaj Auto Limited.

Expanding their range of labor services, both centers have organized On-the-Job Training in various skills such as masonry, bar-bending, two-wheeler mechanics, and electric motor winding. OJT, a unique skill training format introduced by the STEP Academy, Aajeevika Bureau, enables trainees to learn a new skill within 45 to 60 working days. This format creates a win-win situation for both trainees and trainers.

Trust forms the foundation of this training, instilling confidence in the workers and laborers of Chakan and Moshi centers. During the training, regular site monitoring, skill assessment, life skills sessions, and a concluding program involving all stakeholders are conducted to provide an opportunity for an unskilled migrant worker to establish a new skilled identity.

Empowerment through Skill Training: Story of Kamla from Labourer to Contractor

In the Kherwada block of Udaipur district in Rajasthan, a 34-year-old woman named Kamla Kharadi had an encounter that made her question the traditions she had been following for many years, both in her work and family life. Kamla got married at the age of 15 when her husband worked in a hotel in Ahmedabad.

After few years into marriage and consistent financial crisis, Kamla realized that she would have to work hard raise her two children. Unfortunately, she had not received much education and could only write her own name. In this situation, Kamla started working as a laborer on a construction site, where she worked hard but earned very little money. During this time, she got in touch with STEP Academy which was organising On the Job training for unskilled labourers. Kamla expressed her desire to learn marble and tile fitting from Mansaram, the contractor on the site. Mansaram was also a member of a labor union and had a deep understanding of workers' rights and fought for their rights. No one had expressed such a desire to him before, and he started teaching Kamla the work.

After the training, Kamla started taking contracts for marble and tile fitting. Along with increasing earnings, it also boosted her self-confidence. Kamla has now achieved another milestone of success. She is no longer just a trainee; she has become a trainer in marble and tile fitting for both men and women.

She has two dreams: first, that her children do not become laborers and have a better future with education, and second, to build her own house and personally do beautiful marble fitting in it. Kamla, who saves 20,000 to 30,000 rupees per month, credits her success and confidence to the Step Academy of the Livelihood Bureau. She believes that without skill training, her empowerment would never have been possible.



Youth and Sports: The Significance of Organizational and Personal Development for Youth

Sports hold immense value when it comes to the holistic development of youth, involving their mental, physical and social growth. The relationship between youth and sports is crucial as it inspires them to lead healthy lives, develop a strong character, face challenges, and overcome struggles. Taking cognizance of the impact sports has on youth, the Rajasthan government introduced Rural Olympics.

This article aims to inform readers about the relationship between sports and youth while providing insights into the Rural Olympics. Rajasthan, renowned for its rich cultural heritage, also has a rich tradition of sports. In line with the enthusiasm for sports in the state, the Rural Olympics is organized to promote sports and encourage rural youth. This regular event involves the participation of selected young athletes from various villages in the state. The Rural Olympics features a wide range of sports competitions such as kabaddi, kho-kho, lathrop, gilli-danda, archery, wrestling, and more. These events take place on village grounds, highlighting the skills of the players. The Rural Olympics is organized in collaboration with the local government and sports associations.

Rural Olympics fosters a sense of healthy competition among participants and creates a vibrant community of sports enthusiasts within rural regions. It facilitates the formation of new friendships among players, teaching them valuable lessons in cooperation, teamwork, and mutual respect. This event symbolizes social and cultural unity in villages while providing a platform to recognize the talents of rural youth. The Rajasthan government is committed to supporting athletes through the Rural Olympics by providing necessary facilities and training. Efforts are also being made to increase the number of sports coaches in rural areas to guide athletes in various sports. Additionally, the Rural Olympics in Rajasthan fosters a sense of competitiveness and creates a community of sports enthusiasts among people in rural areas. It encourages the formation of new friendships among players and teaches them cooperation and teamwork. In conclusion, the Rural Olympics in Rajasthan showcases the government's commitment to sports and athletes, establishing sports opportunities for rural youth and motivating them to progress. This event not only benefits sports and athletes but also contributes to the overall development of the state of Rajasthan. To read out the full article, refer to this [document](#).

~ By Jahid Makrani
STEP Academy, Aajeevika Bureau

Glimpses from the field



The meeting under the chairmanship of the District Collector was organized in collaboration with voluntary organizations operating in the district, along with representatives from Aajeevika Bureau and the administration, to discuss the issue of distress migration and review the current activities being undertaken by all organizations.



STEP - Sagwara has organized motor rewinding skill training exclusively for young stone carving workers battling silicosis. Not older than 25 years, these youths are compelled to work in this sector to earn livelihoods. However, they have chosen to dedicate their evenings to acquiring new skills and STEP has tailored its training schedule to accommodate the needs of these motivated individuals.



The Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) successfully concluded in Gogunda, with 13 youths. These rural entrepreneurs, who underwent skill training with STEP, have now established their own enterprises at the local level.

The session was made even more impactful with the presence of our sister organization, Shram Sarathi, dedicated to financial inclusion. Their team conducted informative sessions on financial literacy, guiding the entrepreneurs on accessing genuine sources of credit and equipping them with knowledge to identify and prevent fraud.

Glimpses from the field



Excited to announce the inauguration of our new STEP center in Dungarpur, Rajasthan. With a focus on empowering rural tribal youths, this center is set to make a lasting impact. Grateful to Ms. Shefali from AngelOne CSR for joining us on this journey of transformation



A group of young women undergoing retail and sales training from STEP Academy Banswara were taken to Udaipur for exposure visit. They were interviewed by multiple companies for job vacancies in their outlets. All of them cracked the interviews and were offered jobs from these companies. With very little or no experience in this sector, these youth were confident after undergoing one month training from STEP Academy.



Family Empowerment Program (FEP) team facilitated a session on gender sensitization for trainees of ongoing motor winding training batch at our satellite centre in Barwara.



Youth Outreach program was organised in Salumber, where we established contact with contractors and laborers involved in the construction industry. During this event, guidance was provided in various types of training organised by STEP Academy.