A Pearson Case Study

Pearson IndiaCan Vocational
Transforming Lives in Rural India

In partnership with
Ministry of Rural Development,
Government of India
Contents

1. Transforming Rural India: Agents of Change
2. Vocational Education: The India Opportunity
3. The Solution: Focus on Vocational Education
4. Projects in Focus
   4a. Challenges
   4b. Projects in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal (Completed)
   4c. The Jammu & Kashmir project: Part of Himayat Project
   4d. The Gujarat project: Part of Mission Mangalam
5. Awards and Acknowledgements
6. Pearson IndiaCan Vocational Advantage
7. A Win-Win Partnership: Employers’ Perspective
The transformation of rural India is a continuing saga of steady progress. The investments in social development sector are paying rich dividends. Education, health and social welfare are priority agendas where the private sector is being encouraged to join hands as agents of social change.

Pearson IndiaCan Vocational is playing a pivotal role in planning, designing, and implementing vocational skill development courses, in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India, as part of the Aajeevika Skills program under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM).

This endeavour, underway since 2011-12, through several IndiaCan centres, has transformed thousands of lives in Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal.

Young Indians, mostly from disadvantaged and underprivileged backgrounds, have been motivated to undertake skills training and education post which they are provided employment in various companies. The training programs have not only helped boost their self-esteem and confidence but also transformed these youngsters into agents of change, and aided in breaking the vicious cycle of poverty for their families.

Kabita, resident of Chakradharpur, Mayurbhanj in Odisha

"No one in my village and family ever thought I had the potential of earning a salary and supporting my family through a financial crisis. Today I am a role model in my village and all local girls come and consult with me."

Mamraj, resident of Sikar in Jaipur, Rajasthan

"I am not lucky like many children who have the privilege of parent’s financial support for their studies. But I didn’t give up the hope. IndiaCan mobilization drive came as a blessing to my life and today I am supporting the family with my income."

About Pearson IndiaCan Vocational

Pearson IndiaCan Vocational operates several vocational training centres for youth in rural areas to train them on basic skills, enhance their knowledge base and provide relevant employment opportunities. The organisation is on track to become the largest provider of vocational education & training with a mission to:

- Provide talent for India’s economic growth engine
- Be the leading vocational and skill development organisation in India
2. Vocational Education: The India Opportunity

India is a young nation with 430 million people in the age group 15-34 years, constituting 35% of the population*. In fact this age group is projected to increase to 464 million by 2021. Global economists, industry analysts and policy framers are convinced that India needs to optimize the opportunity of this ‘demographic dividend’. But, the question is: How and when will India develop the capabilities of its youth?

When National Skill Development Mission was constituted to guide the Skill Development Policy for Indian economy, it was conscious of the fact that high-growth industries such as automobiles, auto components, logistics, warehousing, packaging, travel and tourism, media & entertainment and healthcare services would create new job opportunities, year after year. 75% of these jobs would require sector and skill-specific trained human capital.

Over the years, IMF, World Bank and several other reports have highlighted that only around 6 to 10 per cent of the Indian workforce has received any form of vocational training. There is, thus, an urgent and immediate need to redress the imbalance between the increasing demand for skilled workers and the current lack of skilled manpower. Sector skill studies indicate that by 2015, approximately 2.25 million skilled workers will be required in the auto sector, around 4.5-5 million in the banking and finance services sector, around 4-5 million in retail and around 13-15 million in the construction sector**.

National Rural Livelihood Mission & Aajeevika Skills, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India

National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) is an initiative launched by Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India in June 2011.

In 2011, the Ministry of Rural Development decided to re-design and re-structure the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) into National Livelihood Mission (NRLM) to take the agenda forward with a focused approach towards rural poverty alleviation. With a major thrust on skill development programs, these projects are awarded under Aajeevika Skills of National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM).

The Aajeevika Skills is a sub-mission under NRLM. Ajeevika Skills’ core agenda is to cater to the occupational aspirations of the rural youth who are poor, and help diversify incomes in their families. Ajeevika Skills’ target is to provide skills-training and placement to around 5 million rural youth in the formal sector by 2017.

Aajeevika Skills believes creating one job per poor household, in the organized sector, is the surest way to bring the whole family out of poverty in a short span of time. Formal sector employment brings in stable and higher levels of income. With a view to ensure inclusion of the rural poor in India's growth process, the NRLM will scale up the existing skill and placement projects through partnership mode as one of the best investments in youth, and provide impetus to livelihoods opportunities in emerging markets. For strengthening this, various models of partnerships with public, private, non-government and community organizations are being developed.

Sources: *Census 2011, It has also been highlighted in the Aajeevika Skills report accessible at http://rural.nic.in/sites/downloads/Aajeevika/aajeevika_skills_guidelines_2013.pdf.
More information can be found at http://aajeevika.gov.in/keyFeatures.html
It is a unique opportunity to serve the nation by creating employable workforce and Pearson IndiaCan Vocational is privileged to partner with such projects that gear rural India’s growth story by training the youth and creating sustainable livelihoods at the grass-roots.

3. The Solution: Focus on Vocational Education

‘Skills for employability’ for rural youth is the focus of the vocational skills development programme that is being run by the Pearson IndiaCan Vocational centres, in partnership with the MoRD. So far, multiple skills training programmes have been launched across the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal, Gujarat and Jammu & Kashmir.

The vocational education courses are being offered in the following key domains:

1. Hospitality - With a focus on tourism
2. Retail – Meeting the skilled manpower requirement for the growing number of malls and retail outlets
3. Business Process Outsourcing
4. Office Assistance – Primarily for data entry operations
5. Sales – Mainly for direct selling assignments

With its clear focus on training and enhancing the employable skills of the youth in rural India, Pearson IndiaCan Vocational has opened its centres in the most needy districts with maximum population of marginalized and below the poverty line families.

Depending on the local needs, eligibility criteria of students is made flexible to ensure maximum participation. In few states, while the minimum age for course enrolment is 18 years, the maximum age is extended to 35 years to ensure more participation. Allowing the minimum educational qualification as Class 8th or 10th pass encourages participation from school drop-outs.

The programs are designed keeping in mind the specific requirements of the students coming from economically weaker sections. It entails:

- Working with local community to understand the challenges of youth
- Career counselling for students to make the best choices
- Customized residential and non-residential training programmes
- Training encompassing modules on trade-specific skills, IT and soft skills
- Stay and travel support to students during training
- 75% assured placement above minimum wages
- Post-placement support and counselling.
4. Projects in focus

4a. Challenges

1. Launching the projects in remote and difficult areas
Like the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, the journey of training and providing livelihoods to thousands of young people, in several parts of rural India, begins with sourcing and starting work in new and completely unknown locations. The challenges include identifying the accessible yet affordable centre locations and recruiting the right domain trainers from close by localities.

Pearson IndiaCan Vocational team conducts in-depth social research locally to identify centre locations that could be common for several districts. This involves taking inputs from the local population, conducting site visits and finalising the centre locations.

2. Finding the right trainers: A major challenge is to identify and select appropriate trainers from the local community. As trainers, these members are required to contribute at every stage of the project and not restrict themselves to just classroom teaching. Key responsibilities of the trainers involve:

- Conducting the mobilisation drive to enrol students
- Teaching students as per their specialized domain
- Maintaining the IndiaCan centre and classroom equipment/requirements
- Conducting regular parent-teacher meetings, before and after the placement
- Monitoring the student’s performance on the job through monthly visits

Surveys and market research studies are conducted to understand the requirements of the teaching community in a particular region. Then, teachers from local institutes and colleges are attracted by placing recruitment ads in local newspapers and by word of mouth publicity.

3. Student mobilisation: The next big challenge is to mobilize the student population by going from village to village. It is difficult as most of these communities are poor & marginalised and are not aware of the value education can create for them.
Pearson IndiaCan Vocational organizes ‘community mobilization drives’ for the youth populations in remote areas and locations. Local influencers, NGOs, senior citizens and Panchayat members are made aware of the benefits of the vocational courses. Special pamphlets and promotional literature, in regional languages with prominent visuals, are prepared and distributed through the best possible local channels.

**As per a Pearson IndiaCan Vocational team member,** “It is always tough to start the first centre and organize the first batch. Once that’s done and community starts to see the benefits extended to students, the faith and involvement level increases significantly. Even when we face challenges, we continue to work tenaciously with regular meetings, follow ups and various other ways to ensure greater participation from communities.”

During the mobilisation drive, students are required to come to the centre where career and skill diagnostic tests are conducted, followed by counselling sessions. Learners are then registered into their choice of training programs. Classes begin at the earliest and students are encouraged to ensure daily attendance, participate in all student activities at the centre and immerse themselves in projects.

### 4. Building placement linkages

Pearson IndiaCan Vocational team has built several placement linkages with leading corporate houses and local companies in each state. Café Coffee Day, Dominos Pizza, Eureka Forbes, Shivshakti, Navbharat Fertilizers Pvt. Ltd., Teleperformance, Vishal Megamart, V-Mart, Vertex Services Pvt. Ltd, etc are some of the companies that have recruited actively so far. Building employment linkages is a regular exercise and efforts are directed towards widening the basket of corporate and business houses.

While it has been a challenge to draw companies to recruit students from such remote areas it was also not easy to convince the students and their families to leave their villages and towns and migrate to the cities and metros for accessing the job opportunities. Ensuring safe transition and transformation of these students into working professionals is a challenge for all stakeholders.
How Pearson IndiaCan Vocational makes a difference?

There is a regular monitoring of timelines. Better learning environment has been created at the centres with Pearson’s learning solutions including deploying audio-visual aids, practical learning, and team building exercises.

As per a Pearson IndiaCan Vocational trainer, “We are focused on making learning interesting and ensuring a higher degree of student participation in classes.”

Students completing the courses are provided jobs with good companies with a post-placement support. Trainers are consistently in touch with each student after their placements for an year, which is an average time period for them to settle down at the workplace. With this begins the trainees’ new phase in life, of being financially independent and a source of strength and support for their families.

Course details:
- Course fee – Sponsored by Government and free for students
- Duration- 3 months per batch
- Ideal batch size – 30 students
- Centre capacity for every day training: 120 students (4 classes each day)
- Teaching cycle
  - 60 days of classroom training
  - 30 days of on the job training
- Eligibility criteria:
  - Hospitality: 8-10 pass
  - Retail sales: 10+2
  - BPO: 10+2
  - Office assistance: All undergraduate students

Centre details:
- Infrastructure – Minimum 4 training rooms, 1 computer lab, 1 office room
- 4 domain trainers per centre
- 1 personality development trainer
- 1 computer skills (IT) trainer
4b. Projects in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal (Completed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT DETAILS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training mandate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement mandate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Districts covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouquet of trades</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Success Story

“If it was not for IndiaCan I would never have been able to get vocational training”, said Kalavatee Thakur, a 24 year-old from Awaranbhata in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh. “I got trained in BPO operations at the Dantewada centre and placed at Mphasis in Raipur where I am earning Rs 60,000 per annum. The free-of-cost skill training at the IndiaCan centre made all the difference to my life. I could have never managed paying for a course like this.” she said, acknowledging the contribution that IndiaCan has made in shaping her life.
Success Story

Said Nahida Shafi, a 21 year-old resident of Shutat, Kulgam, “I was trained in the BPO course and placed with Competent Synergies at Mohali. With all the post-placement support given to me, today I am able to live and work so comfortably away from my home. It was a dream that turned into reality for me.” Nahida is drawing an annual salary of Rs 66,000.

Maira Jan, a 20 year-old from Rangrazpora, Kulgam, said, “I am today a floor supporter at Serco Intelnet Global Services in Mohali, because of the extensive BPO training I received at the IndiaCan centre. My trainers and counsellors have helped me at every stage. I am so grateful for their support and understanding.”

PROJECT DETAILS

State Jammu & Kashmir
Project Himayat
Period 3 years
Training mandate 7,860 youth
Placement mandate 5,895 youth
Districts covered 12

Districts Kulgam, Shopian, Bandipora, Ganderbal, Srinagar, Jammu, Rajouri, Doda, Udhampur, Kathua, Samba and Baramulla

Training centres running 12
Mode Non-residential
Bouquet of trades Sales, Retail, DEO cum OA, Hospitality, Domestic BPO, Electrician, Automobile, 2-wheeler repair and IT first job

4c. The Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) project: Part of Himayat project

Pearson IndiaCan Vocational project in J&K commenced in February 2012 and is operational across the 12 districts of the state.
4d. The Gujarat project: Part of Mission Mangalam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT DETAILS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training mandate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Placement mandate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Districts covered</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Districts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training centres running</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bouquet of trades</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Awards and Acknowledgements

Best ‘Train the Trainer’ award

Best UK-India Partnership award in vocational education

ITI-Industry Partnership award

Sanjay Shivnani, VP & Business Head, Vocational, Pearson India receiving the Indian Education Award 2014 for ‘Best Vocational Training Institute of the Year’
The Pearson IndiaCan Vocational strategy is to optimize the existing infrastructure in the states identified by the Government of India, thus successfully establishing the centres and implementing the courses as outlined in the Aajeevika Skills.

Being a Pearson company, we have the advantage of drawing from some the best learning practices used across the globe. Working closely with local communities helps us understand their needs and customise the programs better.

The 200-strong Pearson IndiaCan Vocational team works together seamlessly with the local community leaders, influencers and panchayats to ensure the successful implementation of the courses.

According to Mr. Sanjay Shivnani, Business Head & Vice President, Vocational, Pearson India, "It has been a tremendous learning experience for all of us. We are working at the grassroot level in several states. Our efforts have resulted in thousands of families pursing a life of dignity in a sustainable manner. Youth once trained are skilled enough to find employment and remain employed for the rest of their lives and hence progress in their lives through learning. At Pearson we ensure whatever we do is focussed on outcomes and makes a lasting difference."

The Pearson IndiaCan Advantage
7. A Win-Win Partnership: Employers’ perspective

Sandeep Verma, HR Team, Café Coffee Day
We conducted a job fair for the Pearson IndiaCan Vocational students. Most of the students lived up to our requirements and we ended up selecting 25 candidates for our different outlets. We are thankful to Pearson IndiaCan Vocational for giving us proper support with appropriate manpower.

HR Team, Eureka Forbes
We organised a job fair at for Pearson Vocational Education students. We had a very good experience with the candidates and we selected around 25 of them for different locations. Pearson IndiaCan Vocational team supported us in a great manner and we are proud to be associated with the project.

Ankita, HR Team, Janlakshmi Financial Services
We are glad that IndiaCan invited us for their job fair at........ Initially we were a bit sceptical about the entire program but after conducting the interviews we actually found some good candidates, particularly freshers. We shortlisted more than 20 students for our various offices. Hopefully, this will contribute towards the growth of our business. In future too, we will seek such support from IndiaCan.