SKILLING YOUTH IN INDIA
LEARNING FROM THE FIELD
CASE STORIES OF INTERVENTION WITH YOUTH THROUGH SEDI

SKILL AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

AMBUJA CEMENT FOUNDATION
A write shop organized by SEDI, ACF during April 28th to May 2nd 2013 at Baloda Bazar, Chattisgarh helped the case writers from SEDI, ACF come up with eight cases on interventions done by SEDI in Skill Development at various locations across the country. As part of the knowledge building process these cases are published for others involved in similar efforts elsewhere to take cue from and initiate actions for improving the employability of youths in India. This publication is for wider circulation and dissemination.

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Abbreviation

Foreword

About SEDI

Ravi Nayse

Skilling Youth : The practicing principles

Nabarun Sen Gupta

1. Cementing Hopes : A Case of Training Masons

Krishan Kanth and Chandra Prakash Sahu

2. Guarding the Future : Case on Intervention on Security Guards

Mithun Paliwal and Rajkamal Jain

3. Threads of Hope

Monika Chandel and Vinod Verma

4. Making of the Wire-man : Intervention on Training Youths in Electrical Trade

Narendra Singh Solanki

5. Once a burden, now a significant contributor : Case of Bed-Side Attendants

Mahendra Patel and Ajit Barad

6. ASHA, “Light of Desire” : Intervention on Employability through Retail Management

Prasenjit Swarnakar and Dharmendra Patra

7. Stitching for a Bright Future : The Case of a Tailoring Intervention

Chagan Patel

8. Forging The Bond : Case of Skill Training Programme in Welding Trade

Dipak Kumar Senapati and Gautam Kumar Prasad

Biography

The Facilitating Team
The facilitator would take this opportunity to acknowledge the work that ACF have done since so many years. It was the tiring efforts of many of them that we could capture and appreciate through this exercise. These efforts have helped in bringing smiles on the faces of many households.

This case write-shop which was conceived to document the learning inherent to these efforts was possible because of the tireless efforts of the authors. They made the life of the case writers and facilitators both smooth and comfortable.

Special thanks to Mr. Shreekanth for his imaginative creation and depicting the interventions through sketches which now appears as part of this book.

Acknowledging the support extended by Mr. Sibaji Bose and also by Sajana of ACF. Both of them helped in doing the language editing of these cases.

At the end the team involved in this exercise also expresses its sincere gratitude to Ms. Minakshi Wanode of SEDI without whose support in coordinating the process this workshop would ever have been possible.

Nabarun Sen Gupta
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACF</td>
<td>Ambuja Cement Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATDC</td>
<td>Apparel Training and Design Centre</td>
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<td>CCTV</td>
<td>Close Circuit Television</td>
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<td>CSA</td>
<td>Customer Service Associates</td>
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<td>CSR</td>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
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<td>DDM</td>
<td>District Development Manager</td>
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<td>DIC</td>
<td>District Industries Centre</td>
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<td>EDP</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship Development Program</td>
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<td>ESI</td>
<td>Employees State Insurance</td>
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<td>ISED</td>
<td>Institute for Skill and Entrepreneurship Development</td>
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<td>ITI</td>
<td>Industrial Training Institute</td>
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<td>LAC</td>
<td>Local Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>MES</td>
<td>Modular Employable Skills</td>
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<td>MHRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Human Resource Development</td>
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<td>MIG</td>
<td>Metal Inert Gas</td>
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<td>MILLY</td>
<td>Most Important Lessons Learned Yesterday</td>
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<td>MNREGA</td>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act</td>
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<td>NABARD</td>
<td>National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
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<td>NCVT</td>
<td>National Council for Vocational Training</td>
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<td>NOC</td>
<td>No Objection Certificate</td>
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<td>NTFP</td>
<td>Non Timber Forest Produce</td>
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<td>OJT</td>
<td>On Job Training</td>
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<td>PF</td>
<td>Provident Fund</td>
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<td>PNB</td>
<td>Punjab National Bank</td>
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<td>PT</td>
<td>Physical Training</td>
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<td>RDAT</td>
<td>Regional Director Apprenticeship and Training</td>
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<td>RMoL</td>
<td>Rajasthan Mission on Livelihoods</td>
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<td>SEDI</td>
<td>Skills and Entrepreneurship Development Institute</td>
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<td>SHG</td>
<td>Self Help Group</td>
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<td>TIG</td>
<td>Tungsten Inert Gas</td>
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<td>TIMSR</td>
<td>Thakur Institute of Management Studies &amp; Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
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<td>VTP</td>
<td>Vocational Training Provider</td>
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The 1.21 billion population of India is fast expanding at the rate of 17%. The work force in the age group of 15-59 years is increasing steadily. More than 70% of them would not have finished school. Their ability to be a productive participant in the development of economy is extremely low. Usually most of them drop out of school at an early age rendering them unemployable. They usually end up working in the unorganised sector.

On the other hand, sectors like retail, nursing, garment, automobile are a few industries which have potential for growth in India and there is an increasing demand of relevant skills. However, only 2% of the total workforce in India have undergone skills training. At this rate, there is a shortfall of skills in these sectors often leading to stagnation. India has a great opportunity to meet the future demands of the world and can become the worldwide sourcing hub for skilled workforce if the youth is trained.

The rural youth is mostly unaware of the various career possibilities in these sectors. In India, skills training has still not gained momentum inspite of a high demand of these services. There is lack of knowledge on the kind of jobs they would get or the salary which would be paid. There is a high level of uncertainty involved in getting trained as today most of them are the first generation of getting skill trained in an alternate trade.

At Ambuja, we were prompted to begin the SEDI (Skill and Entrepreneurship Development Institute) in 2006 based on years of experience in rural India. It is a known fact that rural India is dependent on agricultural income for survival. But over years, the land is getting fragmented, people are dependent on age old technologies and agriculture is rain fed. The income from agricultural activities is not sufficient. An alternate skill set in the household ensures that there is a steady flow of income even if there is not much income from the farm.

SEDI over the years has provided a direction to the youth to build their future. Even though a miniscule contribution in the development journey, we are proud to have instituted skill training centres and providing the much necessary skills set in the industry along with development of youth.

Mrs. Pearl Tiwari
(Director)
India is a young country with an urgent need of skills development. There exists a clear dichotomy between industry demands for skilled personnel on the one hand and unemployment or underemployment of youths on the other hand.

Taking into consideration the need to provide employable skills to rural youths, Ambuja Cement Foundation established its first Skills and Entrepreneurship Development Institute (SEDI) at Jaitaran (Rajasthan) in 2006. Over the past seven years we have grown to 16 SEDIIs, with every SEDI having its own unique features. We have trained 12000 youths in 45 different trades and given them proper placements.

We attribute the success of SEDI to the numerous collaborations and partnerships with the government, NGOs and corporates. SEDI has partnered with the Labour Department, DIC, SIDBI, State Rural Livelihood Mission, DRDA, State Minority Commission and various other government departments. We have also teamed up with corporates like Schneider Electric Foundation, Tata Motors, Taj Group of Hotels, ATDC and Godrej for curriculum development, on-the-job training and placements.

These win-win partnerships have helped us to give our students the very best. SEDI courses have transformed previously unskilled and unemployable youths through a holistic blend of skills training along with basic computer, functional English, safety at work place and soft skills training. Since the highest standards are maintained with respect to the curriculum, 6 of our SEDIIs are registered VTPs under the Modular Employable Scheme (MES) of the Central Government and the others are in the process of getting this registration. This has enabled us to get certification by NCVT through MES. We also encourage external assessment of trainees with the help of our industries and corporates. The placement rate at SEDI is 75%.

This book is an endeavour to document the successes and challenges of SEDI in various locations. The SEDI Kodinar, Gujarat, has transformed the lives of young girls who enrolled for the course of bed-side attendant. The SEDI at Darlaghat, Himachal Pradesh, tells the story of women who stepped out of their homes to contribute to their families' income. The welder course at SEDI Roorkee, Uttarakhand, trains students in the latest technology in welding. After taking the electrician's course in Jaitaran, Rajasthan, youths have got jobs in industries or launched their own enterprises. The security guard training in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, has provided placements to youths who had been previously unemployed. The retail course in Sankrail, West Bengal, has provided many young girls with the opportunity to work in Kolkata. In Bhatapara, Chhattisgarh, many youths have been trained in masonry and they now earn handsomely.

SEDI is thus the launching pad for youths – who would otherwise have remained in low-paying, insecure jobs – to build lucrative careers.

Ravi Nayse
DGM (VT)
Skilling Youths
Some Principles and Practices
Nabarun Sen Gupta

Youths have always been the locomotive of the economy. However, the process of harnessing the enormous potential of the youths so as to enable them to contribute to the economic development of the country had always happened more by default than design. Over nearly five decades now our country has been grappling with increasing unemployment of educated youths. Unable to obtain proper employment, those with degrees from educational institutions have resorted to all kinds of odd jobs, often not in harmony with the education they had received. With the onset of economic liberalization about two decades ago, a ray of hope dawned among youths who hoped that new economic processes and the free market would push up employment in the country. Though employment did rise to some extent, it still could not match the pace of population growth. As such unemployment figures continue to swell.

Economic liberalization brought with it large scale mechanization in agriculture, which resulted in the displacement of rural youths and their steady dislodgement from traditional jobs and vocations. Many of these rural youths cannot find suitable employment near their homes. They are also total misfits in possible jobs as they lack the necessary skills. Many industries are now opening units in rural areas because of concessions given to them by the government. It had been hoped that rural youths would find employment in these. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that in the absence of adequate skills required by the industry, rural youths are unable to avail of employment opportunities and if they do manage to get a job it is usually at the very bottom of the ladder. Climbing up this ladder becomes impossible for them as they do not possess the needed skill sets.

China, which has registered a double digit growth in GDP, has made significant investments in skilling its youths. Long ago, India too had initiated its approach to transfer skills to youths. The ITIs and the Polytechnic institutes that came up during the 1950s under the craftsman-training scheme of the Government of India were intended to ensure a steady flow of skilled workers to the industry. The history of this intervention dates back to the 1920s when George Telegraph was established as an institute to provide youths with vocational education. Efforts of the civil society continued thereafter and culminated in the creation of a mission aiming at skilling and up-skilling over 500 million people by 2022. A national corporation was established on a private-public partnership model to spearhead this process. However, the end result of all this was reflected in a World Bank report (2006) which established that only 2% of the youths in the age group 15-29 had received some formal vocational training and another 8 per cent non-formal vocational training.

As part of its social responsibility, Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) initiated efforts in skilling youths in 2006. The Skill and Entrepreneurship Development Institute (SEDI) which came into being in 2006 received support from the Foundation. SEDI targeted rural youths and helped youths hailing from a poor economic background to obtain necessary skills and find suitable
placements with industries. This book captures some of the skill-training interventions initiated by SEDI at different locations. There are some very important sets of learning for those who are engaged in similar initiatives elsewhere and these cases capture some very important principles as well. It is important that those who engage in skilling youths adhere to these principles. Some of these are:

**Agencies involved in skill building need to contemporize the curriculum:** SEDI has proved this through its action. In the beginning, SEDI had borrowed the curriculum from reputed institutions working in skilling youths across the country. However, it soon realized that the inputs offered in the model curriculum did not quite serve the purpose. The team thereafter invested time and also financial resources in understanding the need of the sector and then modified the curriculum further. The best-known effort could be seen in case of the Retail Management Skill programme that was offered to the youths in West Bengal. Various inputs came from industries which provided employment to the youths. These inputs were understood and were included in the curriculum. It was the same with the Security Guards' training. Every batch had something new to learn. The basic structure generally followed the format prescribed to get certification from MES or NCVT, but SEDI offered a little more than what was prescribed. The principle was to make youths employable and for this SEDI did not hesitate to run the extra mile.

**Soft skills training is an important aspect of any skilling process:** Technical training curriculum often sees inputs in soft skills as of little consequence. However, SEDI had a different approach. It gave a good amount of emphasis on soft skills training as it realized that the working environment would require interactions with the community and without soft skills, the technical skill may not make much sense. The nurses were made to understand the pains of relatives, the security guards were given inputs on language and behavioral issues, the electricians trained at Jaitaran were made to speak English and learn communication for business dealings, the retail sales persons were made to understand the art of selling products, and so on. All these required training in soft skills. SEDI realized this as another principle — *employability requires understanding of human relations.*

**Investments are a never-ending proposition for skill training institutions:** Skill training institutes would always have to invest in men and machines if it has to remain contemporary. As SEDI launched its welding training centre, it soon realized that some of the technologies being taught were no more in vogue. It had to invest in new technologies. Similarly, the training of masons in Chhattisgarh gave special emphasis on new masonry skills as demanded by the market. The training of electricians at Jaitaran sought to explore which trade would help the youths start their own businesses and thus provided inputs in house wiring, appliance repairs, decorative lighting, etc. The courses were so designed as to help the youths specialize and make a living out of the specialization. The security guards training provided skills in operating firefighting equipment and walkie-talkie. Since all these innovative aspects required resources, SEDI made these investments. Investments of this kind are likely to reap rich benefits in the longer run. The underlying principle thus is — *make investments to remain contemporary.*
**Making participants pay for the skills – the third partnership:** Nothing should come for free, but nor should the fees pinch. This was the philosophy on the basis of which SEDI charged fees from the trainees. SEDI wanted the youths enrolling for the course to be serious. Paying a fee or getting the parents to organize a fee for their ward’s training would mean that the youths did not bunk classes or drop out mid way through the course and that the parents would also keep an eye on their ward’s seriousness. Since it was often the first time that a rural household ever paid a fee for education, the family made sure that their ward did not let it go to waste. ACF had a simple thumb rule for deciding the fee. The thumb rule was that the fee would be half of what the trainee would otherwise earn as his/her monthly salary after getting employment. The mantra is *make youths pay for skill training.*

**Skill training institutions must work on convincing youths to choose a vocation:** This is a tedious task but one has to do it. Youths are often not sure of the vocation that is best suited to their abilities and aptitude. They have a lot of questions and one must make efforts to answer every one of them. Answering them patiently and correctly is what professionals engaged in skill development must attempt. Before launching a course, SEDI made efforts to convince the youths about a certain specific vocation. They made efforts to discuss with the youths, their parents and other opinion builders the opportunities associated with that vocation. All these efforts paid in the long run. In the case of the nursing training, where the response from the girls had not been encouraging, extra efforts were put in by SEDI to convince the parents. Similarly, in case of tailoring training for women in Surat, the men had to be convinced alongside the women. The principle that comes out is – *invest time in convincing youths to choose the vocation.*

**Innovativeness means having to adopt new processes and methods all the time:** Vocational education has to be done differently if it has to create the desired impact. SEDI made special efforts to get the participants to pay the fees. Different methods were adopted to convince the youths and their families to pay the fees. In some cases, it was arranged that the fees would be paid after placement, while in some cases the fees were paid in small installments. In some cases, SEDI made efforts to obtain sponsorship from the community and other well wishers (tailoring training in Surat and knitting training in Darlaghat) and in some cases fees came from the government (mason training). Similarly, special efforts were made during the post-training phase to keep contacts alive. The efforts to find a rented accommodation for the newly-employed women (nursing case), the efforts to get the industry to send vehicles to pick up and drop women (tailoring case) from home to the workplace and back, the efforts to enable youths to start their own business (electrical training, Jaitaran) and the efforts to ensure that the industry did what it promised (security guards, Chhindwara) are all examples of what it takes to run a skills training programme with adaptability and innovativeness. SEDI played this entire set of roles as it is aware that it has a developmental mandate and not a profiteering one. The principle thus is – *be innovative and find out ways to solve the problems at hand.*
Adherence to these principles is one of the prime reasons why the youths trained by SEDI continue to pursue the vocation in which they have received the skilling. These youths are now successfully employed in the vocation and are also seen to perform better than others. They have created a demand and today in most cases SEDI needs only to announce its course for youths to queue up. In some cases the rush is so huge that there is even a waiting list. Let us now turn our attention to some of the impacts that the skill training has created among youths.

**Youths exude confidence:** Skills have made the youths confident. They can do their work – sometimes as well as and sometimes even better than those who have been in the trade for a few years. They know more than their counterparts in those industries and are hence confident of handling whatever tasks come their way. Their income has enhanced their self-confidence in the family as also the community. They are consulted in major decisions not just within the family but also in the community. Skilling the youths in a particular vocation has created in them multiple skills and self-confidence is a direct outcome of the same.

**Employers seek trainees from SEDI:** When employers keep coming back to an institution after every course to look for recruits, it is the ultimate indicator of a good institution. This has been the case not just in Surat but also in Howrah, Chhindwara, Kodinaar and Roorkee. SEDI alumni have caught the attention of the employers by their performance.

**Youths give back not just to their families but also to others:** The youths have repaid the loans that their parents had taken to sponsor their education. They have released the pawned jewelry and also contributed towards the well-being of their parents. The SEDI-trained youths in Jaitaran have come up to sponsor the education of youths who are not in a position to pay the fees. The soft skills inputs have made them not just skilled workforce but also responsible citizens.

The skilling programme carried out by SEDI has helped youths – both boys and girls – to find a livelihood to support themselves and their families. SEDI polished the crude diamonds during the training sessions and have honed their skills, which today have made them valuable assets within their family and community. However, this conversion process was done with a definitive strategy – a strategy that followed a basic set of principles. These principles, which emerged from SEDI's practice, are the lodestone that will guide others involved in skilling youths in rural India.

Nabarun Sen Gupta
facilitated the writeshop.
Cementing Hopes
A Case of Training Masons
Krishan Kanth and Chandra Prakash Sahu

Introduction
Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) has been working in villages in and around Baloda Bazar and Bhatapara, in Chhattisgarh, since 2007. Its work has been aimed at augmenting the livelihoods of the people and hence it has been involved in a variety of social initiatives. SEDI, a wing of ACF, initiated Self Employment and Employability Training for Youths in various trades. One such trade in which the training has proved a great success is masonry. An account of the Mason Training intervention has been provided here.

Context
Baloda Bazar is a small town situated between the two major towns of Raipur and Bilaspur. This small town is also known as the ‘cement city of Chhattisgarh’ as the area has good reserves of limestone and has hence seen the establishment of many cement manufacturing industries. At present two to three cement producing companies have started operations in Baloda Bazaar and a few more are planning to set up their units soon. Recently, Baloda Bazaar received the status of a district town. The state capital of Raipur is adjacent to this district, and with New Raipur being planned as the capital city of the state, construction activities are taking place on a large scale. This has pushed up the demand for masons in the district as well as in neighbouring areas.

Formerly, most inhabitants of the district had been primarily engaged in agriculture and worked as casual daily wage labourers at the mushrooming construction sites. Even after the setting up of large-scale industries, labourers from the district migrated out to the nearby towns in search of work. Migration during certain periods was so intense that barring a few individuals – mostly the old and the infirm – almost the entire population of villages migrated. This large-scale migration had negative impact on the education of children and also affected the health of the people, particularly women. This massive migration had other unsavoury features too. Most of the people migrated to nearby towns to work as unskilled labourers at construction sites. These labourers were often bonded to someone or the other as they worked for repaying sums they had borrowed.

Agriculture in this district is seasonal in nature. Except paddy, which is grown during the kharif months, the land remains fallow for the rest of the year. Productivity of lands is low and since the farmers have small landholdings, agriculture never means big money. In sharp contrast to the bleak agricultural scenario, land prices have escalated in Baloda Bazaar. Industrialisation has sent land prices sky rocketing and many farmers have sold off their land.
to industries and to the cement plants. Limestone reserves under the earth’s surface are also responsible for the spiralling of land prices. Those who sold off their lands spent the money thus obtained in no time and returned to square one. Working as casual labourers seemed to remain the only option for them. Since the youths of the villages had little education, they had scant opportunity of finding a suitable vocation. Most of the youths worked as labourers under the MNREGA programme or as unskilled labourers in the industries, whereas the skilled labour – which is in high demand – came from other states. Skilled labour in construction jobs came from Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Orissa. This was not a happy situation for local contractors as the skilled labourers had to be paid very high rates and, moreover, when they went home to their states for some reason or the other, work had to stop for weeks.

SEDIM was established in Baloda Bazaar in 2010. It immediately grasped the ground situation and deduced that since demand for skilled labourers in the construction trade were high, they should aim at running programmes for village youths to meet this increasing demand. Thus the mason training programme was launched to upgrade the skills of youths who were working as unskilled labourers. The training was expected to equip them with the knowledge and expertise to work as skilled masons in the construction trade. SEDI realised that this would give the youths an opportunity to better their livelihoods.
Intervention

While developing a strategy for employability, SEDI interacted with youths, community members and leaders from the community. These meetings helped in understanding the aspirations and demands of the youths. The youths were indeed interested in doing something to acquire skills but since there were no suitable institutions to help them, they had not much option. Again, most of them had studied only up to the Vth or VIIIth standard and thus were not qualified to receive ITI training.

As part of the interactions with youths, SEDI took them to exposure visits to the available infrastructure and courses offered at SEDI. These visits were useful as it gave the youths some idea of what they could do and what interested them. The survey that SEDI did in the villages also provided it with some idea of the broad areas of interest of the youths and also the kind of engagement many of them had. These inputs enabled SEDI to learn whom to target and for what kind of vocations. The survey gave the insight that male youths generally preferred skill training in the trades of electrician and mason. SEDI had by then also interacted with contractors and others who were involved in the construction business and had realised that demand for skilled workers was high and was being met by bringing in skilled labourers from outside the state.

The survey showed the highest preference for masonry work. Since most of the youths were very little educated, getting any other work was almost impossible for them. However, many of them had their own understanding about the trade. They had seen for themselves that it is through experience and doing small little jobs that one pick up the skills required by a mason. So they felt that classroom training would make little sense.

In the past, ACF had organised a similar training at Dahod in Gujarat. A small film made on this training came to the support of SEDI at Bhatapara. This film was screened in villages at night to drive home the understanding among youths that mason trade can be learnt in a classroom setting as well. The youths thus came to realise that mason training was not just about fixing bricks with cement and mortar, but something more. The film inspired many to come over to SEDI and enquire about the course and related aspects like duration, fees etc. SEDI also prepared posters and distributed the same among youths in different villages to make them aware about the admission processes and fees and other aspects related to the course. During the interactions in villages, and also whenever the youths visited the centre, they would ask questions related to the trade. Some of these questions are shown in the Box 1 below:
Box 1: Questions asked by aspiring youths

- Is SEDI a recognised institution?
- Will others consider SEDI’s certificate?
- What is the basic qualification required to seek admission?
- What are the documents required for admission in the training?
- Will Ambuja Cement plant give them jobs after the training?
- What facilities will SEDI offer to the youths during the training?

SEDI had prepared the answers to these questions beforehand. The youths were explained that anyone between the ages of 18 and 35 years and having some education could apply for the course. The certification would come from MES (NCVT) and hence would be valid. The youths would be given some compensation for attending the course so that they were able to meet household expenses during the training programme. These answers convinced some youths and they approached individually to get enrolled in the course.

Once the youths showed interest, SEDI got into action. First, it had to select a trainer, which was a big challenge as none of the skilled masons showed readiness to leave work for two months and enrol as trainer. After a lot of efforts one mason agreed to do this work.

The selection of the trainees was done on first-come first-serve basis. Those who approached late were kept on the waiting list and called up when one programme ended and another began. Youths from the villages covered by Ambuja Cement were given priority in selection. However, SEDI did a cross-check of the interests of the youths before enrolling them for the course. They were taken only after counselling sessions confirmed that the candidate was serious and was not joining up solely for the honorarium. Also, during the selection, the economic and physical capability and the aptitude of the candidate were taken into account. If the candidate was found to have a different Inclination, SEDI made him understand the fact and often suggested other trades to him.

The first batch was launched in January 2011. Most of the trainees of this batch were from the nearby villages. Since this was a new vocation for SEDI, it was at its evolving stage. A challenge that was faced was sustaining the interest of the youths during the training. Trainees found being confined to a classroom a difficult proposition. Further, sessions on subjects like safety or mathematics, for masons were beyond their comprehension. The youths were a bit casual in their approach and keeping them together and making them understand the inputs came as a challenge. Many a time they would fail to wear the safety
gadgets provided to them on some excuse or the other. However, SEDI and its team were very much focussed on their work and slowly but surely they could convince the youths about the importance of theory and use of safety gadgets. As many had to leave work to join the training, SEDI compensated them with a token wage which initially was Rs 70 but later increased to Rs 180 and now to Rs 192.

The first few programmes in mason trade were organised and funded under the banner of ACF. In 2012, ACF was recognised by the Chhattisgarh government under the Skill Development Initiative Scheme of the government of India as a Vocational Training Centre (Provider). In the same year the state government also launched the Chief Minister’s flagship initiative called Mukhyamantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna for skill training of youths in the state. This was particularly targeted at labourers from the unorganised sector and aimed at providing the unemployed and unskilled youths with skills to better their livelihood. Armed with this recognition from the government, SEDI could generate financial support for its masonry trade training. The flagship programme of the government provided compensatory wages as honorarium to the youths joining the programme.

The initial programme was done as per the Dahod model. But from 2012 the MES (Modular Employability Scheme) curriculum was followed. This curriculum stipulated 300 hours of inputs spread over two months. SEDI followed the inputs so suggested but made efforts to give the youths something beyond what was prescribed. The youths were given special inputs on mathematics, English and health and safety during the training.
Most of the trainees, when they joined the course, were found to have some addiction like chewing tobacco and sometimes even alcoholism. SEDI conducted Yoga classes and other motivational inputs were organised, which led to many giving up chewing tobacco, at least during the training sessions. Some continued with the good practices even after the training.

Apart from training, it was necessary to enhance the soft skills of trainees. These soft skills included time management, responsibility towards work, proper use of safety kits and encouragement to form groups to work together. There were challenges like absenteeism that had to be addressed. SEDI was strict on these issues and made special efforts during the training to engage not just with the trainees but also dialogue with their parents back home. All these actions resulted in success. Many youths were motivated to be regular and rejoin the course.

At the end of the input session, the trainees were made to appear for an examination conducted by the independent assessment agencies from the National Council of Vocational Training, a scheme of the Government of India (under SDIS). All those with successful grades were given certificates of skilled labour. ACF organised the fees for this certification from different govt. departments.

Placements were not done in a formal way. But efforts were made to impress the contractors through linkages with the government machineries. The constructions that go to private contractors from the government have been employing the SEDI alumni. Meetings with officers of various government departments and contractors were done at regular intervals where information on training is shared with them. Contractors were impressed upon to take the trainees as apprentices and to see for themselves their performance. The youths were also sent to contractors for practice during their training. Some of them joined these contractors after completing the training. SEDI also negotiated with contractors and convinced them to pay proper wages. Some of the youths have formed their own groups and have started taking contracts of small construction work; some of them are on subcontract from other contractors.

Since 2010, the expenses on training have undergone an escalation by around 10%. A training of a batch of 25 masons comes to Rs. 1,10,000 today. The increase is due to increase in the rate of consumable items and honorarium of the trainers. Of this cost, the consumable items consume about 40% and another 20% is spent on giving youths the safety kits. Since 2010-11 ACF has been contributing its share to this training. Though a part of the cost gets reimbursed by the government, the stake of ACF is still on the higher side (see table 1 below).
Table 1: Showing cost sharing in various trainings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Expense by ACF</th>
<th>Fees from the trainees</th>
<th>Support from different government departments</th>
<th>Total amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>1771893</td>
<td>34350</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1806243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>3766846</td>
<td>132050</td>
<td>168300</td>
<td>4067196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>2674720</td>
<td>131700</td>
<td>296950</td>
<td>5772370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Records of SEDI, Bhatapara for FY-2011-12)

SEDI has also made efforts to bring women into this trade. Fourteen women who were working as a construction labourers were registered for mason training in June 2012. All of them were above the age of 40. ACF organised transport facilities for these women as many had to travel quite a distance to reach the training centre. These women were also given inputs on reading and writing as per their demand and every day one hour was dedicated for that. Though they continue to work as labourers they are slightly better than the unskilled ones and are often seen to handle some of the mason’s functions. They get slightly higher wages than unskilled labourers, but the industry has not been able to give them independent jobs as masons. Perhaps the time is not yet ripe for that. However, the effort has made a beginning in that direction.

As part of its protocol, SEDI has been supporting and guiding trainee for a period of two years after they complete the course. The employees of SEDI meet the trainees at their work site and also talk to them over the phone to understand their problems and make efforts to resolve them as well. These contacts have given the team an understanding of the issues and problems faced by the youths when they work as masons. SEDI plans to start another module soon with the trained masons. This module will impart skills in fitting of glazed tiles, marbles and other higher-end techniques in practice under civil engineering work. Discussions with the trained masons are going on to decide on the exact nature of this higher-end mason training.

**Outcome**

Training the youths and helping them to become skilled in construction work has had a very positive outcome on them. They are not just able to get better wages than before, but are now also looking out for challenging roles to upgrade themselves in the trade. Some of the outcomes that can be seen are:

*Earlier I was looking for work, now work is looking for me:* This is a saying with most of the youths now. Before the training they would be looking for work and often they could not find jobs for themselves. Being less educated and in the absence of opportunities within their villages, they had no option but to migrate. Waiting to be picked up by some contractor for unskilled work was painful and the feeling of helplessness drove many to alcoholism. The situation has now changed for the SEDI alumni. The work chases them now.
Box 2: Jobs now looking out for trained Masons
Samnath Dhruv from Khairtal village belonged to the family of a marginal farmer. He had few options in the village and could not get employed. The SEDI training has helped him find work as assistant mason in construction sites in the nearby town. He is a smart mason and has picked up many tricks of the trade and today earns Rs. 300 a day for his skills. He has work lined up for him for several months as he is sought after by many not just from his own village but also from the nearby towns.

SEDI has shown us the right path: Most of the trainees had earlier been working as unskilled labourers in Baloda Bazaar and in some nearby villages. However, after the training, they are picked up by contractors and given responsibilities in sites far away. They get better salaries and wages and have established good networks. These networks with contractors have taken a few beyond the borders of Chhattisgarh.

Box 3: Moving far and making a better prospect
Atmaram from Devrahi village had been working as casual labour in a cement company. His work was uncertain and there were days when he did not get work. After receiving the mason training at SEDI he initially started taking up mason work near Baloda Bazaar. His dexterity and his confidence led him to be picked up by a contractor who gave him a long-term assignment at Raipur. It was a great challenge for him and armed with skills he took up this challenge. The high wages that he got helped him save a good amount and get his sister married with the savings. Today he is working in Pune with another contractor and is earning handsomely. He is on the lookout for an assignment outside the borders of India.
Contractors have started giving recognition to the skill sets: This has happened with many but one incident is worthy of special mention. Before the training, Tikam Das Manipuri worked at paltry wages of Rs. 100 a day as an unskilled labourer. On completion of the training, after some intense negotiation, the contractor agreed to pay him Rs. 200 a day. He accepted the wage as it was double of what he was getting two months back. However, to his astonishment, a few days later the same contractor paid him wages at the rate of Rs. 250 a day. Tikam Das went back and told the contractor that there had probably been an error in the payment. However, the contractor told him that he had liked his work and hence had decided to pay him at the rate of Rs. 250 a day.

SEDI also has had its share of the cake: SEDI has trained over 250 youths in the mason trade. These youths have all received labour certification from the Chhattisgarh Construction Labour Welfare Association, Raipur. SEDI has been recognised as one of the agencies in Chhattisgarh and the administration wants SEDI to initiate similar programmes elsewhere. ACS has approved SEDI’s proposal for opening Skill Development Institutions in different districts with the help of the respective district administration. SEDI trained youths have received the first certificate under the Chief Minister’s Skill Development Scheme of the Chhattisgarh Government. SEDI has also been made a member of the Bonded Labour Upliftment Committee at Baloda Bazaar for its work with masons. All these recognitions have come about because of the genuine effort put in by SEDI in helping youths learn skills and earn a respectable livelihood.

Learning

This intervention was initially planned as a part of SEDI’s own initiative as it matched the agenda of Corporate Social Responsibility promoted by Ambuja Cement. However, with a Government agency coming in to support this initiative and seeking support of SEDI to launch similar initiatives on a scale, the picture has changed to a certain extent. The intervention yielded some very specific learnings. These are:

One must be astute and careful when it comes to implementing government schemes: Establishing linkages with different agencies of the state and seeking their suggestions and inputs are necessary conditions to obtain support in the long run. Schemes like these often remain confined to paper as many agencies shy away from such coordination as they find it difficult. However, such schemes are designed for people in need and if one is adept at such coordination the schemes can reach the people for whom they have been designed.

Build habits from day one: Safety kits were given as kits on the first day of the training. It was found that many had not been using on some excuse or the other. The team decided to make the use of safety kits a part of the habit and all the youths attending the training were made to wear the kits throughout the training phase. Thus using safety kits became a part of their natural practice and now they see to it that they have the kit with them whenever they are at work.
Even training can serve the cause of social good and training institutions must examine the scope for that: The practical part of the training was linked with some social responsibility. During the training, consumable materials like bricks and cements were used to construct toilets in villages and later to construct the boundary wall of the local Govt. ITI. The materials were thus put to use and not wasted. The trainees made efforts to use the consumable materials to sharpen their skills and this was used for constructive purposes. The boundary wall that stands at the govt. ITI, Sakri is a testimony to this and has become a site for government officials to visit and say that others must also do similar jobs.

Generating employment means hard work and commitment: SEDI has learned that one must work hard and also have commitment. There is a demand for skilled labour in the market, but creating a skilled labourer is not an automatic process. It requires commitment and a lot of hard work on the part of agencies like SEDI.

One must observe the demand side when it comes to starting any employability skill programme: SEDI realised that unless one understood the market well a programme around employability would not be successful. The market condition must be studied and a relevant intervention must be designed to take advantage of it. Youths will gain from this and they can contribute to the nation’s development through their hard work.

Conclusion

The mason training programme initiated by SEDI at Chhattisgarh has been a remarkable success. With opportunities in the market, youths who have undergone the training have improved their prospects. Many of these youths were earlier unskilled workers. Now they have new skills and are able to get better wages. Many of them have tried doing something beyond what they were given as inputs. These youths are now in demand. They have been cementing not just bricks but also their own livelihoods.

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Guarding the future
Guarding The Future

Case on Intervention on Security Guards

Mithun Paliwal and Rajkamal Jain

Introduction

In Chindwara district in Madhya Pradesh, agriculture is the predominant source of livelihood. However, since most of the agriculture is monsoon-dependent, the income derived from it is often inadequate to make ends meet. With increasing cost of inputs and spiralling cost of living, the people in the district desperately needed an alternative source of income. The youths in the area did not have the skill sets that could get them proper employment. Thus, something new was required and this was provided through an intervention among the youths of Chindwara. The intervention, which gave the youths skill sets that helped them to become employable, is described here.

Context

Chindwara district in Madhya Pradesh comprises 11 Blocks and has 1984 villages.¹ (*www.chhindwara.nic.in) The population mostly belongs to the Scheduled Tribes. In Amarwara block, 70 % of the population belongs to the Scheduled Tribes and for them agriculture has generally been the major source of income. The tribals also depend on the forests and many of them are involved in the collection of NTFP, of which charoli (dry fruit) is a major component. Agriculture in this block is dependent on rainfall, which again is on the lower side (435mm). As such, agriculture does not provide adequate income to the inhabitants. With education having spread to rural areas, youths who have been in school show little interest in doing manual labour and are on the look-out for options beyond agriculture.

However, few employment opportunities were available to the youths within the district and so they migrated out of the district to cities like Nagpur in Maharashtra in search of all kinds of odd jobs. The local employment exchange of the government, which registered youths seeking
employment, proved ineffective in providing opportunities to the youths. A survey carried out by ACF in the initial days found over 3500 youths showing interest in 32 different trades. Many of them were keen to join the armed forces but did not know what they needed to do to go ahead with it. Many of them also did not have the required qualifications and skill sets. Youths in the survey also revealed that they often left the district for jobs, but when things did not work out according to expectation they returned home. Many wanted to join the security services as they had the notion that the task was relatively easy and needed one simply to stand at one’s post.

While ACF was involved in doing this survey, it learnt a few security agencies had been approaching the youths and also giving them placements after putting them through a crash course which was mostly on job orientation. The course did not equip the youths for the job at hand and many of them quit the job shortly after joining and came back home. The youths were honest and hardworking but did not have the mental strength to face the job environment. They needed a solid orientation and skill training inputs to help them stay on the job.

ACF began to dwell on this idea of initiating a skill training course for security agencies. It carried out a market survey with some agencies to understand the skill sets required and came to the realization that the demand for security guards was increasing. One security agency said that it recruited over 500 youths every year as demand from the industry was on the rise. The agency also mentioned that if the guards worked with dexterity for a year they stood a good chance to get promoted as supervisors within a short time. ACF thus concluded that a skill training programme for security agencies in Chindwara would be appropriate and timely.

**Intervention**

For ACF, training youths as security guards was absolutely new territory. It thus decided to hire an agency that had imparted similar training elsewhere. The agency charged ACF Rs.4000 per trainee and this included the cost of faculty, curriculum and infrastructure. The agency also laid down some basic criteria for the selection of youths as per the specification of the industry.
According to the criteria, the youths would have had to appear for the matriculation examination, possess certain physical attributes like bodyweight of 50 kg. or above and minimum height of 5.5". To these, ACF added the criterion that the youths had to be willing to work beyond the district. Those who cleared this minimum benchmark were called to the office of SEDI at Amarwara. The SEDI team also took the support of the village leadership and the government employees stationed at the Panchayat to spread the message about the ongoing training programme.

The youths who came forward to enroll had a lot of questions. They wanted to understand and have a clear idea about the placement scenario after the course, the salary structure and the nature of job. They also wanted to know if they had to pay upfront any amount to undergo the course. These aspects were dealt with during the one-to-one counselling sessions organized by SEDI with the aspirants. The aspirants were told that SEDI would make efforts for their placements and normally they should expect a salary ranging between Rs 6000 and Rs 8000 a month with provision of earning a few hundred more if they did overtime. They were also told that after training the placements could be anywhere beyond Chindwara. Many of the aspirants wanted to know if the job would be permanent or temporary. Since in most cases the industry
did not believe in giving permanent jobs, the youths were told that it was up to them to continue with an agency and in most cases no one was removed from the job unless he behaved unethically.

SEDI had decided that the duration of the training would be 45 days and each aspirant would be charged a fee of Rs.1500. They would also receive training from people who were into similar work. By then, through its contacts with the military welfare officer at Chindwara, SEDI had obtained the consent of an ex-serviceman from the Indian Military to help in giving the training to the youths.

It was not easy for many of the youths to organize the fees for the course. As time passed, many of them revealed the processes that they had adopted to organize the fees. Some of them had borrowed from relatives, some from money lenders and some had even mortgaged their mother’s jewellery. Although this was a hard-hitting fact, at no time did SEDI reduce the amount for the trainees. It wanted to build the culture that one had to pay but must also expect quality services in return.

Training was a very serious affair. The ex-serviceman was too much committed in his work and expected that the trainee youths would always be extremely serious when they were with him. Sometimes the trainees would not come to attend the training on the excuse of local festivals or marriages in their villages. It seemed that nothing could be done about this problem. Then SEDI hit upon the idea of rewarding candidates with full attendance during the 45-day course. Counseling of trainees who showed laxity was also regularly done. Initially, the students would not reach the venue on time on some excuse or the other. Some of them had genuine reasons as they had to travel long distances and use different modes of transportation to reach the venue. However, the trainer, being an ex-serviceman, showed simply no consideration to trainees who arrived late to the training centre. He penalized them and made them take a few rounds of the field to understand the commitment that security guards had to show towards
punctuality. All this paid off and the students gradually came to understand that the training was a serious affair and aimed at instilling a culture in them.

The association with the third-party continued for one batch only. By then SEDI had understood that some more aspects needed to be covered in the course and requested the inclusion of the same from the third-party. However, once that was denied, SEDI decided to go on its own and thereafter developed its own curriculum while it ensured that the trainees were given more inputs so that they were prepared for the services as desired by the recruiting agency.

SEDI wanted to build in a culture of discipline among the youths who hailed from different backgrounds. One of the steps was to provide a set of uniform to the youths. This was done from the third batch. These uniforms were to be maintained by the youths during the training programme and it was mandatory for them to keep the uniform ironed and wash it at regular intervals. Attired in uniform, the youths exuded a different level of confidence altogether. They became a lot more punctual and regular. When other youths from their villages saw them starting for the training centre smartly attired in uniform every morning, they were inspired to join. The uniforms thus helped in marketing the programme in the area.

The trainees were also taught basic computer operations, English and a certain amount of soft skills during the training. All this was intended to help them perform additional functions if required. The soft skills module included inputs on how to deal with people, how to handle different situations, telephone ethics, etc., and aimed at all-round personality development. Trainees were also provided inputs on using firefighting equipment. They were made to handle equipment like CCVT cameras, metal detectors, wheel checking mirrors and different kinds of batons. Earlier, there was 15 days' karate training, but from the seventh batch SEDI introduced full-time karate training to help trainees learn the art for self-defence. In addition to this, SEDI also prepared the youths to become tough in terms of physique. The youths underwent Physical Training (PT) every day and were made to run a few kilometres every day to build stamina. The physical training included drill, running, hurdle running, shot put, disc throw,
skipping, long jump, and using monkey ropes. The ground near to the centre was used for physical training and it was left to the trainees to use the time to man the gate of the training centre, take note of the people entering the centre and check the bags and other items of people coming or leaving the centre. The curriculum gave almost 70% of its time to practical sessions whereas the remaining was devoted to theory.

Employers were much impressed by the multi-faceted training and looked forward to SEDI to place more youths with them. The youths trained here were also paid extra amounts as they could handle many other jobs with dexterity.

SEDI now plans to teach trainees to handle walkie-talkie instruments which are being used extensively in various locations by the security agencies. Talks are on with some agencies to hire out such instruments to SEDI for a specific period as these instruments require a bandwidth and are to be registered with the home department for use. Since these instruments
are specifically used by the police, SEDI being a training institute may not get the license to use these instruments. However, those who have such instruments can offer them on hire for a limited period to be used by SEDI for the training.

Placement is an important part of the entire programme. SEDI does some preliminary negotiations with the security service companies. The expectations of the youths are taken to these agencies. The trainees get to know aspects like cash-in-hand after all deductions, the cost they would incur in meeting requirements of food, if the agency provides residential facilities or the money to compensate for residential facilities, leave-related norms etc. The security agencies clarify the deductions which they do as part of their mandate, for example deduction under PF, ESI, etc. These clarifications help the trainees to take a call on what would be the best agency and the best location to join.

SEDI also provides some follow-up support to all its trainees for a period of two years. This includes contacting the youths over phone, visiting their residence at Chindwara, calling on them when they are back on some leave at Chindwara and also sometimes visiting their job locations elsewhere. These visits have been helpful in sorting out specific issues with the recruiting agencies and also in making some changes in the course curriculum. When the youths are back home, they come and interact with new trainees and this often helps the new trainees to get to know of issues they are likely to confront on the job. SEDI’s telephonic contact with the youths after they have joined service has often proved useful in helping them to tide over homesickness or demoralizing situations.

On the last day of training the trainees are asked to give their feedback regarding the training and also what more they had expected. These feedbacks are important as they often serve as inputs for designing the curriculum.

Security guard training is a costly proposition if done in a way that helps the trainees learn different aspects of the job. The fire-fighting equipment comes at a cost and also requires
running cost of the consumable items which have to be refilled after each session on firefighting. The uniforms also come at a cost and need investments from SEDI. Similarly instruments like baton, metal detector etc. had to be purchased by SEDI. In addition to this, the salaries of the instructor and the karate instructor have to be paid by SEDI. All these work out to around Rs 2800 per trainee in a batch of 20 trainees. SEDI expects the trainees to pay a fee of Rs 1500 which is often paid in installments and in some cases from the first salary the trainee receives after getting a job on completion of the training. The SEDI team has accommodated this provision keeping in mind the methods that many trainees had used to pay the course fees in the past.

According to industry norms, the security agency recruiting the youths pay an amount of Rs 1000 per trainee, which the training institution uses to improve the quality of training and incorporate new aspects as desired by the recruiting agency. SEDI is currently contemplating a week-long refresher training programme to help upgrade the qualities of ex-trainees so that they can get promoted to supervisory levels.

**Outcome**

Since the first training session, SEDI has been able to train 273 youths from rural locations in Amarwara. Of these, 252 youths are employed in some security service agency or the other across the country. Grooming these youths to take up responsible positions has been a very challenging task. Most of them came from simple backgrounds, and many had never been exposed to city life and had never done any responsible duty. However, the training helped them to become changed persons. The outcomes of the intervention are as follows:

*Responsibility in the youths:* As was narrated in the previous section, many of the youths managed to join the skill training course after mortgaging family jewellery. Many of them took high interest loans from money lenders. The good part is that youths have shown that they can be responsible. They have paid back their parents the amount they had borrowed and have in some cases even invested in buying some more jewellery for their parents.
Transformed lifestyle: Many of the youths came from very simple backgrounds. They have been saving the money that they earn and have invested it in buying essential goods for their families. Some have even used the saved amount to rebuild their house.

Case: Rebuilding house

Two brothers, Akhilesh and Mukesh Vishwakarma, working with a security services agency were able to save Rs. 60000 in six months. They gave the amount to their parents who used it to construct a concrete house. They sent home even more money over the next six months to help their parents complete the job. Then they invited the entire SEDI team to the house-warming ceremony.

Many others like Sunil Verma, Basant Inwati, Shyaamal, Dhaniram Manghat, Nalin Sharma and Durgesh Kahar have similar stories to share.
**Fulfillment of desire:** Many youths aspired to travel to their place of work on their own vehicles without ever hoping to see their aspiration fulfilled. Now their jobs have enabled them to save and buy two-wheelers even as their neighbours look on with envy and admiration. Other youths have thus been inspired to seek opportunities to join security services so that their aspirations too are fulfilled.

**Learning**

A training programme aiming to build skills of youths in rural areas is always full of challenges. One has to be innovative in designing the inputs, one has to find out ways to ensure that the fees do not pinch the youth and their families and finally one has to ensure the motivation of the youths when they are placed in an alien environment. These tasks have been well-played by the team and as it played its role it learned many new lessons which are now a part of their working. These important learnings are:

*Curriculum should evolve and should meet the requirement of the industry:* As SEDI went ahead with its module it continued its dialogue with the industry. The initial module has now undergone many changes and all these have come to ensure that the modules are designed as per industry parameters. SEDI invested in buying fire-fighting equipment and hiring of Walkie-talkie equipment. SEDI also gave importance on teaching youths telephone etiquette etc. All these have given SEDI the edge over others. The trainees can bargain a better deal for themselves and also get promoted within the security services hierarchy.

*Counseling is necessary for sustainability:* Many a time during the training programme, the youths have taken the sessions lightly. They have been irregular, dropping out for a day or two without intimation. Many youths could not adjust to the new lifestyle of work and that too beyond their home and caring environment. SEDI thus realized the worth of counseling the youths. This has indeed proved very helpful in setting the youths back on the right track.

*Level of education is never a barrier:* Though many security agencies have kept the level of education at 10th standard, SEDI experimented with youths who had been in school till the
upper primary level, i.e. had only passed the 8th standard. These youths have demonstrated that they are no less competent than those with higher educational qualifications. It has realised that a security guard’s job requires intelligence and good health.

*Follow-up with trainees after their placement is highly critical:* The security agencies often promise good facilities while recruiting trainees for jobs. However, often they do not adhere to these promises. Trainees often complain and sometimes return home. It is important that doors are opened for maintaining dialogue with the agencies and negotiating with them on these issues. This has helped in making the trainees realize that sometimes they too need to adjust to the situation. The follow-up with the youths, which SEDI does on a regular basis, more in the initial days and thereafter once a month and then once every quarter, keeps the contact alive and helps SEDI with new ideas and the trainees with the hope that someone is genuinely interested in them.

**Conclusion**

The SEDI initiative highlighted above shows important directions to others who are willing to start similar initiatives. The team has worked on the issue, not just from the angle of finishing a course, but has always tried to bring in new skill sets which a modern security guard must be equipped with. All this has helped as today the programme sells like hot cakes with a waiting list of over 300 aspirants.

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Threads of Hope
Monika Chandel and Vinod Verma

Introduction

Women in the villages of Himachal Pradesh have traditionally worked in the primary sector and contributed significantly to the household economy. However, with neither agriculture nor animal husbandry practised extensively, women have quite some spare time in their hands. ACF realised the need to work with these women and provide them some skills so that even while being at home they could remain gainfully employed and contribute to the household economy. The training programme on knitting initiated by the Institute for Skill and Entrepreneurship Development (ISED) provided the women a new skill set that was designed to help them earn a living. This intervention has yielded important learning for all interested in doing similar work.

Context

Himachal Pradesh derives its name from the root word Himal, meaning snow. This Indian state is located in the northern part of the country in the lap of the Himalayan Mountains. Cradled in the Himalayas, a major part of the state remains covered with snow and is affected by harsh climatic conditions during winter. Located at a height of over 2000 metres above sea level, such areas experience long winter months extending from the beginning of October to almost the end of March. The temperature remains acutely low over this prolonged period. Naturally, the demand for woollen clothes is high. The cold climatic conditions force families to invest substantially in woollen clothes like sweaters, scarves, coats, socks and gloves.
A survey carried by ISED revealed that women engaged in knitting woollen clothes during their spare time. They did hand knitting and it took around 2 to 3 weeks to knit a woollen sweater. Since woollen garments were required throughout the year, a woman found it difficult to knit all that her family required. Then again, young people often did not take to the hand-knitted stuff and were put off by the designs knitted by their mothers or grandmothers. Thus, almost all families had to buy woollen garments from the market. These woollen garments were expensive, and not of very good quality. Medium range sweaters came for Rs 500 to Rs 600 and were often not as warm as they ought to have been.

Darlaghat, located in Arki block of Solan district, is characterised by climatic conditions similar to most other regions of Himachal. Ambuja Cements established its cement plant in Darlaghat in 1991, causing a spurt in various economic activities in the area. With increase in income generation opportunities, the standard of living in the villages around Darlaghat improved remarkably. The market in Darlaghat is today well-established. The residents from Darla as well as neighbouring villages have established enterprises around small trade and commerce and many youths are self-employed. ISED has been playing an important role in giving an impetus to self-employment activities. Apart from SEDI, several other small time outfits on skill building have cropped up in the area that provide youths with inputs on various kinds of skills.

However, ISED, run by ACF, realised that efforts to provide skills to women, and particularly to women who were homemakers, were almost nonexistent. SEDI, a Trust collectively established by Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) and Punjab National Bank (PNB), had been playing an important role in skills training for employability since 2006. It had introduced over 13 vocations for youths and reached out to 1642 trainees of whom 637 are today employed and another 862 have initiated their own employment. SEDI understood the need to work with women who were homemakers and wanted to introduce to them vocations that would give them sustained incomes even while they were at home.

**Intervention**

ISED embarked upon initiating a training programme around knitting of woollen garments. This required a strategy to be in place and hence ISED first took to spreading awareness about the programme in the villages. It used different media of communication including pamphlets, posters and banners. These were taken to schools and colleges. ISED also put out advertisements on the local television channel.

ISED had earlier carried out a survey to understand if women would be interested in learning the vocation. The survey revealed that women spent two-three hours on an average every day in doing some work related to knitting. This was a part of their daily chores and they did this to meet the demand of woollen clothes in their families. As such, making these women shift from hand knitting to machine knitting was easy. However, they would require inputs and need to learn some specific skills. Thus when ISED went ahead with its advertisement
campaign women came forward to enquire about the programme. The women enquired about the timing of the training, venue and also about the fees. Many of the young ones wanted to know if they would get a certificate on successful completion of the course. These enquiries proved important for ISED. It realised that it would not be a good idea to have the trainings at a fixed venue far away from the village. A fixed time for the training would not attract the women either. Women interested in the programme would keep away if the venue and the time did not suit them. In order to address these two issues, ISED decided to choose a near-by location for the training and keep the training venue open throughout the day, i.e. from nine am to five pm. This flexibility of time attracted women. The training was offered at a small token fee of Rs 150 and all those who successfully attended and completed the programme were also given certificates. The first programme was launched on 27th February, 2012.

ISED purchased 30 knitting machines, at a cost of Rs. 10,500, from Ludhiana. It also identified a trainer who had worked with ISED earlier and she was trained in knitting by an expert trainer. The expert trainer was provided by the machine vendor who was paid on a daily basis. The expert trainer had also organised trainings at the ACF unit in Ropar and was called to ISED-Darlaghat for 1-2 weeks thrice, and paid an amount of Rs 15000 for this. In consultation with the expert, ISED prepared the curriculum.

The Trust bears most of the cost of the course. The fees charged from the participants are meant to ensure and sustain their interest in the course. ACF has taken the training to the door-steps of the participants so that inconvenient distances over hilly terrain may not prove to be a deterrent. Today ISED conducts training at six different locations to ensure greater participation of women.

In the initial days of the training, women trainees faced difficulty in handling the machines. They were not able to run the machines smoothly and thus often did small damages to the
needles and the press. This would disturb the training in the middle as the machines would need to be repaired. The mechanic would have to come from across long distances to carry out the repair work and this was a costly affair. These were all teething problems that had to be addressed and in course of time the curriculum provided inputs on repair and maintenance to the women, apart from inputs on designs of the woollens and methods of knitting. Today the women can completely dis-assemble a machine and thereafter re-assemble it without any difficulty. This input has proved very handy for the women. Since they are equipped with skills to repair the machines, they no longer have to depend on mechanics from outside and thus can save both time and money. The women who attended the training also brought with them the required woollen threads and used the time of the training to knit woollen garments for their family members and sometimes also for themselves.

Women who have attended the training are now capable of running their own knitting units. However, since these machines are not available in the area and often the raw materials too have to be ordered well in advance, the women do face problems. The machines have to be purchased from Ludhiana. ISED provides the women the required support and places orders directly with the machine manufacturers and obtained the machines from them. The Institute also coordinates with the retailers of wool for bulk purchase of raw material. These two support have been of great help to the women. They get the goods delivered at home and that too at a much discounted price. ISED spends around Rs 1500 per trainee on an average, which includes several kinds of costs. These are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. N</th>
<th>Expense Head</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Raw Material</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Exposure Visit to Woollen Units</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Honorarium to the trainer</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Exposure Camps</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Costs</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Records of ISED, Darlaghat for FY-2011-12)

This cost has been increasing at around 5-10% (each year) since the time the programme was initiated. Today the trainees are also expected to put in a larger share of the costs. This amount – a total of Rs 550 – is collected during the admission of the trainee. The break-up is shown in the box below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fees paid by Trainees</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Rs. 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly fees</td>
<td>Rs. 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure tour</td>
<td>Rs. 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure camp</td>
<td>Rs. 150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, often women who cannot pay the required fees also come and attend the course. The employees of the institute and sometimes support from well meaning persons from the locality help those who have the desire to attend the training but not the means to pay the necessary fees for the course. With the passage of time, many of the alumni have also expressed their interest to sponsor trainings of women who are not in a position to pay the fees. ISED does a good amount of follow-up after the completion of the training phase to understand the issues the women face once they complete the training. Such follow-up has resulted in understanding the kind of support required and the changes necessary in the curriculum. The follow-up measures include telephonic calls and sometimes home visits. Such follow-up has resulted in women applying for bank loans to get their own machines and establish their own units to run their own enterprise. ISED has also realised the need to conduct the MES examination. It has registered itself as a Vocational Training Provider (VTP) in 10 different sectors, of which textile knitting is one. Under this scheme any trained woman who applies for MES certification will have to clear one examination. The fees that she pays for the same, which is currently Rs. 2300, is refunded by the state government once she successfully clears the examination. However, she has to pay upfront the fees to attend the examination. ISED is also contemplating of initiating a process to help women form their own collectives at the regional level where they can take bulk orders and distribute the orders among themselves. ISED also has plans to start training in machines that weave delicate woollen threads. There is a good demand for woollen garments knitted with delicate threads and plans to provide training to women who have mastered the art of knitting so that they can upgrade their skills are on the anvil. ISED has made provisions for purchasing such machines and plans to start the training during 2013-14.

Outcome

The training in the knitting of woollen garments has been of great help to the 423 women who have taken the course. It has given them a new skill set with which they can expand their scope of making money. Some of the outcomes that are visible are as follows:

Women are now self employed: Women work from home and earn money. They take two to three days to knit a sweater. The amount which they now earn has given them some cash in hand, which otherwise they would have to obtain from their families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self Pride</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anita's life took an ugly turn when her husband divorced her. She had to go back to her parents' house with four small daughters. It was a difficult life for her. However, with the newly learnt skills she now has a brisk business and earns Rs 2500 to Rs 3000 a month. She contributes money to her parents’ household and lives a life of dignity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women are now employing women: Many of those who had taken the training in the initial days started getting good orders. Meeting those orders alone was difficult for them. They
have started employing the newly trained women and have invested their own resources to expand their knitting business. Some of them have also purchased a few more machines which they use to employ women from their neighbourhood. The 423 women who had received training from ISED have purchased 460 machines. These machines are used to provide employment to other women who did not take the course but were trained by the trainees.

**The transformation from Employee to Employment-generator**

Vanita, one of the trainees, has purchased one simple and one advanced machine with readymade design card. She has started giving training to women of her own village. These women have also started helping her in meeting the orders. Today she earns Rs 6000 to 7000 per month on an average and also provided employment to two other women. They also earn a decent sum every month.

Many are giving training to others: A few women have upgraded themselves from trainee to trainer. Women like Ramyari, Sharmila, Sarita, Dimple and Vimala today earn Rs. 5000 a month as honorarium. They are associated with ISED and are responsible for managing the regional centres of ISED in six village locations.
Women exhibit confidence and have a new identity: Earlier women could not go out alone. Many of them did not have the confidence to make their own decisions. Today they have become self-reliant and have developed a positive attitude. Their confidence has also seen an increase. They are no longer recognised as someone's daughter, mother or wife. They have their own identity. This identity will help them go further ahead in future.

Local economy has seen an increment in gross income: The interactions with women which are part of ISED's follow-up have yielded information and data on how the local economy has benefitted from this intervention. Machines which were purchased from Ludhiana and the wools that came from outside have enriched other locations. However, the local economy too has benefitted. The women together have contributed over Rs 1,26,90,000 to the local economy. Had the women not learnt the skills, a part of this amount would have gone out to other distant markets. With the money now in the local economy the purchasing power of the inhabitants will surely improve from what it had been before the intervention.

Learning

Although the intervention has been going on for only a year, it has given some very concrete sets of learning to the practising community. These are:

There are people in the community who are supportive. We should be able to identify them: When people within the community heard about the course and came to know that some women could not get admitted because of monetary constraints they came forward with support. Identifying such people and seeking support from them is good way to involve the community. It has helped built the ownership of the community.

Building the curriculum based on the issues confronted helps one to address concerns. In the initial phase of the programme difficulties were experienced when machines got damaged. A lot of money was spent in getting the mechanic and this delayed the inputs as well. However, once the trainees were given inputs on the repair of machines they were able to fix the problem without difficulty. The curriculum thus got modified. This is a good practice to include inputs based on the problems encountered. It helps the trainees get the best of the learning.

The venue of the course must be within accessible distance: That a distance of 10-15 km can be a barrier was understood when women did not register for the course stating distance as the reason. The barrier is not just economic but also gendered. Women are expected to manage the household and thereafter take out time to come and attend the course. Thus even small distances can come in the way due to constraint of time. The idea of having regional level centres to impart the training to women has helped women to access the course.

One needs to provide economic support to those who start business: This is particularly true when it comes to women. Taking out money from the household and investing in the
business may not be so easy when it comes to women. ISED realised this early on and roped in support from the Punjab National Bank to help women obtain loans under a government scheme.

No free goodies: ISED gave inputs on skills and made the women invest their own resources to buy their own machines. Free goodies, which often come as incentive to trainings, are a common feature of many skill building trainings sponsored by the government. They remain less utilised. Here the goodies were in terms of inputs; however women still had to bear a part of the burden as well.

Conclusion

The intervention is still in its nascent stage. Though over 400 women have received inputs and many of them have invested their families’ resources to initiate self employment ventures, the outputs are few. Probably in future more outputs will evolve. The initiative has challenged the common perception of many similar programmes where machines are given free of cost to the trainees or sometimes at a subsidized cost. The women armed with the skills have been able to buy their own machines and have been making use of the same to generate income. This investment is something that has happened as the inputs given earlier had made the women confident of their skills and confident that they would be able to employ their skills to earn a living. Skill training programmes must take cognizance of this aspect.

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Making of the Wire-Man
Making of the Wire-Man
Intervention on Training Youths in Electrical Trade
Narendra Singh Solanki

Introduction

Youths constitute a significant percentage of the population in India and Jaitaran block in Pali District in Rajasthan is no exception. Here youths comprise almost 60% of the population of 2,40,000. With employment shrinking in the primary sector – mostly due to large scale mechanisation in agriculture and also because returns from agriculture do not compensate the efforts and investments put in – youths without formal education are finding themselves in dire straits. Married at a young age and with the economic responsibility of a family to shoulder, these youths have little choice but to join the unskilled labour force which often takes them far away from home. Migration is a major phenomenon among these youths. The following case describes an intervention initiated by SEDI, Jaitaran, around the electric trade.

Context

Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) set up SEDI in Jaitaran Block in the year 2006 to work with unemployed youths and develop in them the necessary skills to make them employable. The purpose was also to make some of them initiate their own enterprise and be self-employed. Rajasthan, famous for the Thar Desert, has few options of agri-based livelihoods. With only the tourism industry making some contribution to the economy, the chances are otherwise much limited. Pali district, situated in the heart of the state, has high reserves of limestone and, over the years, cement industries have come up in the district. These industries have been employing youths, but the mechanised operation has limited the number of employment opportunities. Although there are a few cement plants, cable manufacturing factories and some textile units in Jaitaran Block, employment among youths has not seen much of a rise.

In spite of the situation described above, agriculture remains the largest employer. However, with dry land agriculture being in vogue, families can hardly engage in agriculture all the year round. Since drought is a common phenomenon, farming is never risk-free. Of the last 25 years, 13 were affected by drought.

All these are reasons for youths to migrate out to safer havens and find for themselves some livelihood to make ends meet. Youths migrate to Jaipur, Ahmedabad and Surat in Gujarat and sometimes as far as to Bengaluru where they work mostly as unskilled labourers and sometimes as helpers in manufacturing units. Some of them also try their hands in the diamond polishing industry. Many have taken to doing odd jobs like cooking and cleaning of houses and work as domestic help.
ACF had set up SEDI in partnership with the State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBJI). Since 2006, SBJI has been contributing 49% of the total expenditure incurred by SEDI, while the rest came from ACF. In the formative years of its intervention, a need assessment survey conducted by SEDI helped ACF realise that trades like computer training, cutting and tailoring, beauty parlour work, mobile phone repairs, two-wheeler repairing, electrician and driving were of interest to youths. From the responses of 2000 youths participating in the survey, electrician’s trade and security guards’ vocation emerged as the most preferred. Consequently, SEDI took the initiative to start a programme to train youths in the electrician’s trade as these skill sets would enable the youths to get employed in the industries both within, as well as the adjoining districts. SEDI also had the understanding that some of the youths, equipped with these skills, could start their own shops for repair and sale of electrical goods.

**Intervention**

The electrical trade being an industrial vocation requires a basic minimum level of educational attainment. The Modular Employable Skills (MES) certification for this trade stipulates the minimum educational eligibility criterion as having passed the 8th standard. In order to inform aspiring candidates, SEDI organised meetings in villages, meetings with the Sarpanch and addressed meetings of SHG members. In these meetings SEDI provided information about itself and elaborated on the various trades it offered. It also provided some idea about the possibilities under each of the courses. By then SEDI had also undertaken the industrial need-assessment survey which provided it with inputs on
developing the curriculum. The industrial survey provided insights into the possible jobs that were available in the market. The industrial units in the vicinity had been on the lookout for people with some certification in the electrical trade. The findings of the survey (shown in table 1) proved important to SEDI by revealing that training in electrical trade had a good demand in the industry. The need assessment also gave inputs on the curriculum. These inputs were incorporated in the module as skill sets on house wiring, motor operation and power house related technical matters. When it came to taking the sessions, SEDI invited practitioners to provide inputs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Industry</th>
<th>Vacancies</th>
<th>Number of Posts</th>
<th>Wages offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PG Foils Ltd</td>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>ELE-15</td>
<td>4500/- per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharaja Shree Umaid Mills Ltd</td>
<td>Spinning M/c Operator</td>
<td>SMO-60</td>
<td>5000/-per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naresh Textiles</td>
<td>Electricians</td>
<td>ELE-15</td>
<td>3500/- per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savatri Con-cast Ltd</td>
<td>Electricians</td>
<td>ELE-12</td>
<td>5000/- per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic Cable Pvt. Ltd</td>
<td>Fitter, Machine operator</td>
<td>FR-15,MO-16</td>
<td>4500/- per month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: - MIS, SEDI Jaitaran for FY 2011-12)

Youths were approached and motivated to join SEDI. They were informed about the programmes offered through advertisements, pamphlets and brochures. Youths responded in large numbers as they came over to SEDI and plied the team with questions about fees for the course, duration, food and accommodation facilities for those who came from distant places, validity of the certificates provided on completion of the training, the possibility of getting jobs with government and private firms and also on the salary they could expect in such jobs. The youths who showed some willingness to join the course were taken through a counselling session, which included a need assessment of these youths as well. They were provided information on opportunities available for self-employment and wage employment under various trades offered by SEDI. Those who showed willingness and subscribed to the general criteria were enrolled.

As indicated, the need assessment with industries provided important directions and SEDI used these as inputs for developing its curriculum. It took the support of experts and trainers of MES as well as from ACL to develop the course outline. The curriculum also included sessions on basic computer skills and English-speaking, compulsory for all trainees. English-speaking inputs were given to all students at SEDI in order to prepare them to face those situations at work wherein language could become a barrier in understanding technical concepts.

In addition to the above, SEDI focussed on many other inputs. The trainees were expected to wake up early, do Yoga and other physical training exercises, attend prayers and read the newspaper. The classes always began with a recap session called MILLY (Most Important Lessons Learnt Yesterday). Almost every week, the students would take tests so that their weaknesses could be identified and worked upon. All this worked very well and the intensity of engagement of the trainers during the process resulted in the trainees learning very well indeed. During weekly meetings, the trainees with low attendance rates would be asked to
put in extra hours and the weekly action plans with trainers would help them to resolve the gaps resulting from their absence.

The admission fees, inclusive of inputs on English-speaking and Computers, charged for the electrical training course were Rs 500. In addition, another Rs 500 was charged for tool kits. The training lasted for two months and classes were held on all days except holidays. Students hailing from very interior villages and those coming from far off places beyond the district were lodged in a hostel. SEDI took on itself the cost of food and lodging as per the prevailing rates. SEDI invested Rs 6000 per student as its contribution. Today, the training programme receives financial support from NABARD and RMoL (Rajasthan Mission on Livelihoods). At the end of the course, the trainees are expected to clear a separate certification examination conducted by the National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT). SEDI prepares each trainee in advance so that he is able to clear the examination without difficulty. Campus interview for job placements is also a regular feature.

The course inputs have evolved over the years. In the initial days the course would help the students learn the nuances of repair and maintenance of domestic electrical goods and electrical layouts. With every new batch, a few more dimensions were added. These included A/C and D/C motor and its mechanics, motor winding among others. All these were incorporated so as to prepare the youths towards self-employment as well. Since the electrical trade has in it the inbuilt opportunity for employment as well as self-employment, the classroom sessions include inputs on entrepreneurship development. The youths are informed about various aspects of preparing a business proposal and also about the many schemes that received financial support under District Industries Centre (DIC) and others. Under EDP, the students are given inputs on various loans and schemes available and helped to prepare their loan project files; bank accounts of the prospective candidates are also opened. Sessions are organised by bank managers. Similarly, inputs on entrepreneurial thinking, negotiation, business related strategies, etc. are discussed. Sometimes the students are also informed about aspects like shop locations and markets from where goods and materials used in a shop dealing in electrical goods and services can be procured. There are sessions on legalities to be adhered to when one opens a business firm; how and where one should apply for obtaining NOCs from various local bodies and how to register one's electrical goods shop. Inputs on the Shops and Establishment Act are also provided to the youths.

An important feature of this intervention is that support from SEDI continues even after the training is over. There are situations when even after approval from the DIC, a bank does not sanction the loan of a candidate. Sometimes the bank provides only a part of the loan, which is insufficient. In such cases, SEDI intervenes to impress upon the bank officials the need for helping budding entrepreneurs to establish and run their business without having to worry about cash constraints. Many a time, such a dialogue between SEDI and bank officials has resulted in resolving an impasse. SEDI also follows up with the entrepreneurs to help them maintain business relationship with banks and impresses upon them the need to be regular in repayment of loans. SEDI has also involved the Local Advisory Committee (LAC), which includes the Chief Officer of the district, the Area Programme Manager from ACF, lead bank officers from banks, the DDM from NABARD; the Manager of the Marwar Gramin Bank and
the DIC officer, in the process. The loan status and the repayment status are discussed in these LAC meetings.

Before the completion of the training programme, SEDI officials invite the human resources officers of the industrial units. SEDI also organises and attends employment fairs, carries out industrial visits and checks up opportunities advertised in the newspapers. SEDI invites these industries to its campus and helps them in the recruitment process. SEDI officials also follow-up with the students after they are placed with industries and visit their homes to have an understanding of their job experience. Many a time it has been seen that ex-students placed with industries are not reporting for work on some excuse or the other. Many of them get homesick, while others are not used to the hard work and being on duty on a regular basis. SEDI follows up such cases and makes efforts to work with the youths and their families so that industries get back their employees in a fit mental state to work. SEDI officials also negotiate with industries coming from other districts for recruitment. The areas of negotiation include facilities like accommodation and food arrangements, leave and increment etc. If salaries offered are found to be low, SEDI officials work with the industries to ensure that the salary increases in due course of time and incentives are provided to sustain the interest of the youths.

The expenses towards running a course on electrician trade have increased manifold over the years. When SEDI had started the course in 2007-08, the cost came to Rs 4000 per student for a batch of 20 students. Expenses today stand between Rs 6000 to 7000 per student. The reason for this cost escalation is mainly the incorporation of new inputs and the increased cost of consumable items. The various cost heads of this programme are shown in table 2 below:
Table 2: Expenses in Running a Household Wiring and Repair of Domestic Electrical Appliances Training Session (Batch of 20-25 Students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inauguration and Closing</td>
<td>25 Nos.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Training Aid (Tools and Raw Materials)</td>
<td>25 Nos.</td>
<td>1000/- per trainee</td>
<td></td>
<td>25000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Handouts and Stationery</td>
<td>25 Nos.</td>
<td>100/- per trainee</td>
<td></td>
<td>2500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Fees for Master Trainer</td>
<td>1 No.</td>
<td>500/- per day</td>
<td>45 days</td>
<td>22500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fees for Resource Person for EDP</td>
<td>10 Nos.</td>
<td>300/- per person</td>
<td></td>
<td>3000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Board and Lodging</td>
<td>25 Nos.</td>
<td>90/- per trainee</td>
<td>45 days</td>
<td>101250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Administrative Expenses (Room Rent, Water, Electricity, Telephone etc. Exp)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Exp (Unforeseen Exp)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 167250.00

(Source: MIS Account, SEDI Jaitaranfor FY-2011-12)

SEDI has also been working with others to ensure that in the course of the training the trainees can get to work with some established electricians. This would help them to get practice and also reduce the cost of consumable raw materials. SEDI has plans to increase the fees to Rs 2000 per student from 2013-14.

Follow-up of the trainees for a two-year period is an important protocol with SEDI. The students are given three postcards during the certificate distribution and asked to write about their experience at work. Those students who are regular in sending the postcards are called during the annual function and given the opportunity to share the dais and brief the current batch about their experience.
SEDI has also initiated a group from among the alumni. This group is called ‘Sahyog Manch’. The Manch collects Rs 100 from each member and deposits it in the bank. The deposit is to help needy students undergo the course and get the fees advanced from the Manch. Later on the students would repay the amount and the fund would continue to be available for others. In some cases, the deposit that SEDI collects from each student at the time of admission is also pooled back into this account and used for similar purpose.

SEDI has opened centres with some village Panchayats where prospective trainees are given information about SEDI’s work and the courses it offers. This centre works as a link between SEDI and villages.

SEDI now has a few interesting plans up its sleeve. In order to make the course more effective, it plans to have in its curriculum inputs on MCB box fixing, installation of 3 phase meter, installation of telephone cables, installation of dish television, transformer repair and installations and industrial earthing. It also wants students to get hands-on practical training in various domestic home appliances repairing like induction ovens, AC repairing and maintenance, solar panels and solar gadget repairing and inverter repairing. May be some of these inputs will require youths to attend short duration courses on specific aspects.

Outcome

Youths armed with a new set of skills are playing an important role today. Many have made use of the skills to start their own enterprise, while others have been employed in industrial units. In addition to this success achieved by way of employment, some of the other positive outcomes of this intervention are:

Youths are confident now: The youths who had once been extremely low in confidence because neither had decent jobs nor the skills to get any are now easily able to get employment. Their greatest worry at one time – their financial dependence on their family – has now disappeared. The training offered by SEDI has enabled them to bear the financial responsibility of their families. Their families depend on them not just financially but also in other ways as they embody a new confidence and expertise.

Saddam Husain of village Amaliya in Pali district hailed from a BPL family. Due to their poor economic conditions, he could not study beyond the 8th standard. He supported the family economically by working as a labour in agriculture and in construction. However, his income was not enough to meet the needs of his family. Today he works as an electrician at the Binani Cement Factory near his village. He earns Rs 6500 a month and has a fixed job. He is thus able to take care of his family in a proper manner.
Youths have been faring well after training: SEDI has conducted ten programmes and trained over 220 youths in the electrical trade. These youths have either found a job or gone on their own. Those who have started their own enterprise have also employed a few more. From being workers they have now become employers. The table below shows the status of those trained by SEDI.

### Table 1: Data on Employment and Self Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trade:</th>
<th>No. of Trainees</th>
<th>Self employed</th>
<th>Employed on Wages</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>House-wiring</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>Repairing and Rewinding of Motor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>House-wiring</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Repair of Home Appliances</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Rewinding of AC and DC Motors</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>220</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Record of SEDI Jaitaran for FY-2011-12)
The youths are now established: The two-month course has helped many to establish themselves. They are valued not just in their family but the entire community also looks up to them.

Tulsaram hailing from Aakeli village today owns a shop. After completing his training at SEDI, he underwent the EDP input session and prepared a business proposal. SEDI provided handholding support and his loan file was approved under the MMS scheme. He obtained a loan which was approved by DIC. With a sanction of Rs 30,000 from Kushalpura branch of MGM bank, he opened his own shop. He is into home wiring and takes contracts. He has also provided a job to another trainee in his enterprise and both today earn a good amount. He has been very regular in repaying his loan installments as he knows that once he clears the same, he can get a fresh loan to expand his business.

Not just the alumni, SEDI too has won accolades: In 2006 SEDI was given recognition by the Sub Divisional Magistrate. This ‘Sanman Patra’ opened the floodgates for SEDI. In 2007-08 the district administration rewarded SEDI for its exemplary work. Today SEDI is an institute which has won the 3rd Prize at the National Level for its work on Employability and Entrepreneurship.

Learning

SEDI’s intervention of training the youths of Jaitaran in the electrical trade has been of great value for youths. They have secured employment while many are also self-employed. However, SEDI as an agency has also picked up a few important learnings in the process. Many of these learnings were later incorporated by it to develop effectiveness in delivering the programme. These learnings are:

Only practice can make one achieve perfection: The minimum educational eligibility for the electrical trade is the 8th standard. The training devotes 70% of its time to practical inputs and the remaining 30% to theoretical inputs. Due to the large amount of practical work the trainees gain confidence and are subsequently able to put the knowledge so gained into practice. The upswing in their confidence makes them work well at their jobs.

Light one lamp with another: Today one trainee sets the example for another to get trained. Once a trainee gets a job or becomes self-employed, it inspires many others to see a future in this vocation and enrol for the course. Every time SEDI goes to interact with youths in villages, they provide the aspiring youths with names of those who have undergone the course and succeeded in life. This helps in mobilising more students for courses offered by SEDI.

Training at the institute must necessarily have on-job training components: SEDI uses its contacts to place trainees for On-Job Training at PRICE AUTOMATION, Sigma Minerals, Secure Meter Limited and many other companies. This on-job training helps students to perfect their practice. Many of them, while on job training, are handpicked by the companies who get to closely see and appreciate the attitude and aptitude of these youths.
Not all seek jobs, some choose to become self-employed: Youths today have the inclination to take risks. With their confidence getting a boost through the counselling sessions and inputs on soft skills acquired during the training, trainees are better able to judge their area of interest. Many understand the charm of being self-employed. With SEDI behind them and helping them link up with banks, they are doubly sure to realise their dreams.

Skill sets being given during training must include the basic ones and also something additional: SEDI has been innovative in designing the course inputs. In the year 2007—08 the electrician training provided special inputs on domestic wiring. Later on it focused on motor winding. This year it is focusing on decoration lighting and so on. Such additional inputs, which are based on market demand, have made the youths capable of making the best out of the market. Today, of the 220 rural youths trained, 179 are employed by others and the rest are self-employed.

Conclusion

Those youths who were once unemployable due to low-level of educational attainment and lack of necessary skills now present a different picture. Previously, they had no option but to take up odd jobs for a pittance. When they were out of employment, they worked as unskilled labourers. Today, at least for 220 youths, this is not the case anymore. They are now equipped with skills that help them to bargain for the best rates. Many have taken to self-employment as they realised that they can be on their own, and with the backing of some financial support from banks some of them have started their own repair units. Many, however, continue to work in the safe havens of established industries. They find the job interesting and are able to get good salaries. These youths have been able to meaningfully develop their livelihoods.

*****
Once a Burden
Now a Significant Contributor
Once a Burden, Now a Significant Contributor
Case of Bed-Side Attendants
Mahendra Patel and Ajit Barad

Introduction
Agriculture and animal husbandry continue to remain the major occupations in the rural areas of Junagadh district in Gujarat. The agriculture census of 2006 – 2007 points out that the majority of the agriculturists (about 88.5%) in the district belong to the small and marginal farmer category. The average size of land holding in the district ranges between 0.5 Ha and 3.00 Ha. Employment in other sectors is limited in this district, more so for girls. The district has seen an increase in female literacy rates during the last decade. With options in the primary sector being limited and uneconomical, the educated youths, particularly girls, were in search of livelihood options. SEDI, promoted by ACF, embarked upon some skill training to help these educated girls acquire the skill sets to work in the medical profession as bed-side attendants. The case describes the efforts made by SEDI in this regard.

Context
Doctors can diagnose the disease and prescribe medicines for its cure. However, the long process of recovery of a patient requires the care and support of the nursing team. There are institutes that provide training to nurses, but many trained nurses often do not play the role expected of them. They are not sufficiently prepared to do the job of silently and smilingly serving a sick person. With hospitals and nursing homes coming up in large numbers and with more and more households requiring hired attendants to take care of the elderly, the demand for nurses and bed-side attendants has seen a marked increase. The data from the Rural Health Statistics Bulletin 2007 reveal that 46.88% of nursing staff positions are lying vacant in the hospitals of Gujarat.

SEDI, Kodinar, which was established in March 2011, conducted a survey to identify the choice of trades among young men and women. The survey revealed that of the 36 trades offered, the nursing trade appeared the least popular. Of the 1046 girls surveyed, only 37 showed interest in joining the nursing profession. Most girls showed interest in trades involving traditional skills like beautician, sewing and embroidery. This was chiefly because of conventional mindsets and social mores which preferred girls to work from home. In fact, in most cases, the girl’s parents or spouse would not allow her to step outside the house to earn a living.

Nursing training provided by private institutions is generally a costly affair. Such training is offered to those who have passed their matriculation examination and the fees charged come to around Rs 2.25 lakhs. The course usually lasts for two years. The high fees make it quite impossible for girls from poor economic background to opt for nursing training.

Interactions with the doctors of Junagadh, Bhavnagar and Rajkot cities provided important insights to the SEDI team, which realised that there was a growing demand for trained human resources. The doctors also emphasised that what was required was not medical
skills, but competence in skills such as verbal communication, computer, interpersonal relationship and sensitivity.

These insights were important to SEDI to develop a course curriculum and also a strategy to attract youths, especially girls, to the trade. The strategy to attract youths proved somewhat difficult in the initial days.

**Intervention**

SEDI had to take care that the curriculum it developed would make the youths taking the course employable in future. SEDI had to work on three constraints. The courses being offered by the government were costly and of long duration and hence beyond the scope of girls hailing from rural locations. Moreover, the survey had revealed that girls were not very keen to go for a nursing course. The third dimension, which was more rooted in social traditions, also had to be broken. The community wanted the girls to work from home. SEDI wanted its course to have some uniqueness so that its trainees could compete with those wielding a two-year certificate or diploma.

First and foremost, SEDI approached the girls who had shown interest in doing a nursing course and their families. The SEDI team was aware of the community’s mode of thinking and knew for sure that when it came to education, the families would always invest first in the boy’s education and then the girl’s. The community also never wanted the girls to go out of the house to work. The course which SEDI wanted to offer was to be run at Kodinar and thus would not be close to home for all. The course would last for a period of six months. The SEDI team thus had to convince the parents of the girls’ safety and security and also of the fact that they would get placements upon completion of the course.
The SEDI team had on its side the goodwill of ACF work in the area. The people by and large reposed a lot of trust in ACF and it was time for SEDI to make use of this trust to make a breakthrough. SEDI started discussing (see Box 1 below for points for discussion) with the parents about the future of their wards, specifically of their daughters. The entire approach was to make them realise that the times have changed and a daughter would have better prospects if she had some employable skills. Gradually, the parents were convinced and the ice was broken.

**Box 1: Points of discussion with parents of prospective trainees**

- The monthly and yearly expenses of a middle-class family
- What kind of families would they like their daughters to get married to?
- What would help their daughter to earn respect in her in-laws’ family?
- What kind of work would they want their daughter to do after marriage? For example, would they like their daughters to do labour work or remain busy only in household work?

There was a good degree of consensus among the parents on most of the issues. They wanted their wards to have jobs. They felt that this would give their daughters a special status in the in-laws’ house. They also agreed that a stable job would help bring economic support and they could use the same to invest in the education of their other children. None of the parents wanted their daughters to do hard labour work or remain engrossed only in household chores. It was only when these understandings evolved that SEDI broached the topic of nursing training. The parents were convinced by then and therefore agreed to the suggestions but wanted SEDI to ensure the safety and security of their wards during the training course. SEDI gave its commitment on this issue and adhered to it.
The second most important area that SEDI thereafter gave its attention to was the development of curriculum. The team involved in developing the curriculum took to studying and understanding the curriculum certified by the Nursing Council of India. Thereafter, the team interacted with doctors from 12 hospitals and met four gynaecologists, three paediatricians and five general and multi-specialist doctors. The points of discussion focused on the traits these doctors from recognised hospitals wanted to see in the nurses. The skill sets that were in demand required inputs on anatomy, physiology, vaccination, dressing of wounds, some skills related to midwifery, skills in managing the operation theatre and being the bed-side assistant for patients requiring support. The six-month curriculum had 1200 hours of inputs and also included elements of soft skills (see box 2 below).

**Box 2: Distribution of the Curriculum for the Bed Side Attendant Course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anatomy and Physiology</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre technician</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressing and vaccination</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bed-side assistant</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwifery or Paediatrics</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft skills</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The curriculum gave special emphasis on soft skills, which included computing skills, language skills in English, team work, inter-personal communication and inputs on attitude and behaviour expected in such a profession. Most of the girls who came for the course had never worked on computers earlier. This special input gave them the edge. In the nursing profession most of the skills are acquired by practice. Soft skills like communication, computer, team work, inter personal relationship, punctuality and sensitivity are important and the nursing institutes often do not provide inputs on these. In order to enhance their confidence, the trainees were made to do class presentations on a regular basis. SEDI also used media like video, animation films, and audio and visual aids to help trainees learn the skills.

Once the curriculum was ready, SEDI initiated the process of selection of the instructor and the trainer. It was not an easy task to get a full-time instructor for the nursing course. Experienced and trained persons were working as nurses somewhere or the other. To resolve this issue it was decided to appoint two instructors. One lady doctor was appointed for theory classes for four hours and another instructor was appointed for the practical classes. The second instructor had been a nurse with an experience of over 35 years. Since neither had done any training in their past job, they were helped through discussions prior to their taking of sessions. The SEDI team ensured the process of working on the methodology with both the instructors. Weekly plans were designed to maintain the necessary tuning between theory and practical inputs. Daily tasks were also planned to make the curriculum run smoothly.

The other hurdle that had to be crossed was regarding the certification of the course. Since the curriculum was designed based on some interactions and reading of the existing
curriculum, the course did not have the certification. An interaction with the Director General Employment and Training (DGET) at Gandhinagar, Gujarat, gave insights into the possibility of the course being recognised under the Modular Employable Skills (MES). However, no certification agencies existed in Gujarat to provide this certification. SEDI approached the Regional Director Apprenticeship and Training (RDAT) at Mumbai and got a visit organised to the six-bed hospital of Ambuja Cements. The trainers interacted with the officials for the necessary compliance for the modular course of Bed-Side Assistant. Although the norms stipulated the existence of a 20-bed hospital, the RDAT gave recognition to the six-bed hospital to conduct the assessment for the medical and nursing trade. The SEDI course could now provide certification under the MES module and the certificate would be recognised under the National Council of Vocational Training. Thus the course went on with two instructors, strictly adhering to the statutory parameters of inputs.

The students taking the course gained good knowledge of theory and practice. They were slowly getting ready to hit the market. SEDI had to gear up to make this happen. SEDI knew
that once the placements started falling in place, the course would begin to sell like hot cakes. SEDI organised an interview with a panel of doctors who were once involved in helping in designing the curriculum. These doctors were also in need of nurses. They interviewed the students and also went on to recommend doctors in their own network to appoint the trained nurses. Another round of interviews was conducted with some hospitals. Interviews were organised with 6 different hospitals, which resulted in 20 of the 24 aspirants getting placements. SEDI also worked on ensuring facilities and respectable salaries for its trainees at these hospitals. In order to maintain the uniqueness of the course, the hospitals were informed that SEDI would be interested in knowing about the pass outs and their performance for a period of two to three years. This made the hospitals feel that SEDI meant business.

As most of the girls hailed from labourers’ families, for them getting a job was like getting the moon. However, inspiring the girls to leave the village and the comfort and care of home was not easy. Since the girls got placements in far-off cities, their parents and family members were apprehensive. During the training period, SEDI had remained in regular touch with the parents. The parents knew that SEDI would be interested in the well-being of their wards, but were still worried. In order to build the confidence of the parents, SEDI made several visits to hospitals and took feedback from outsiders about the culture and working style of these hospitals before agreeing to place the girls as nurses in these hospitals. They also kept the parents in loop as they carried out the exploration. The parents were given information on the hospitals and along with the parents SEDI helped in charting out a career path for these girls.

SEDI embarked upon a strategy to find group accommodation for these girls. This idea of renting a house where 10-12 girls from the same location would stay together was a welcome suggestion. The parents were happy with this idea as they knew that safety would be ensured if the girls stayed together. Secondly, this idea was also economical as the rent cost per head would be much reduced. The cost came to Rs 500 to Rs 700 per person and they could manage the same with their own salaries. SEDI also stood as representative on behalf of the girls while the rent agreement was signed. Staying in groups reduced the food expenses and also ensured security.

The parents of these girls had never in the past paid fees for their daughters’ education. In the beginning the fees were Rs. 3200, which increased to Rs. 4000 the second year, and is now Rs. 4800. In the beginning the fees were kept less as otherwise it could have been a disincentive for many to join. However, even the increased fees were quite paltry when compared to what the local nursing school charged – Rs 1.25 lakhs per annum! SEDI evolved a thumb rule to estimate the fees. It should be equivalent to a month’s salary of a trainee who had passed out.

Charging a fee was, for SEDI, a symbol of quality. By charging fees, SEDI was ensuring that it would never compromise on the quality of the training. The second aspect was that students who paid fees would be serious about the course and would make all efforts to complete the course as well.
Since the trainees mostly came from poor or lower middle-class backgrounds, it was difficult for many of them to pay Rs. 4800 for the course. SEDI employed different methods. Some students fees were taken care by some sponsors. A few students were allowed to pay the fees from their monthly salary after three to four months of starting on their job.

The fees covered only a small part of the training cost (see Table 1 below), which worked out to Rs.6983 per trainee for a batch size of 25. The costs have undergone some changes as the salaries of the instructors have undergone some escalation. However, these costs do not include the costs of management of a training centre and the costs related to placements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Cost Heads</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Instructor Salary (practical) 6000X6 Months (four hours daily)</td>
<td>36000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Instructor Salary (theory) 6000X6 Months (four hours daily)</td>
<td>36000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tool kits Rs. 1000 X 25</td>
<td>25000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Raw Material cost</td>
<td>12000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Training equipment (LS and Depreciation)</td>
<td>10000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Stationary cost</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Uniform and Apron (500 X 25 = 12500) ACF (200 X 25 = 5000 trainers)</td>
<td>17500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nursing books 200 X 25</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>MES Certificate fees 800 X 25</td>
<td>20000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Contingencies (5%)</td>
<td>8325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total cost</td>
<td>174825</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Record of SEDI Kodinar for FY-2011-12)

As part of its protocol, SEDI does a very serious follow up with the trainees to ensure that they are settled in the job and are performing well. On the first day of their placement, one of SEDI’s representatives accompanies the trainees. Telephonic calls are made at regular intervals, more in the initial weeks and later at periodic intervals. In addition, regular follow-up is also done with the hospital where the trainees are placed. This helps in obtaining inputs on curriculum and plugging of gaps in the contents.

The valedictory ceremony is an important protocol that SEDI follows. However, it is done differently and with a purpose as well. After the completion of training, the trainees are made to do a presentation in front of the staff of SEDI, their instructors and their parents. The trainee prepares the presentation during the last week of the training. This presentation is on the skill that they acquire, on information and knowledge on the subject, on the change in attitude and behaviour that they have undergone and also on life-saving knowledge. The parents are shown pictures taken during the training, which helps them to appreciate the skill and ability that their wards have developed after taking the course. The certificates are distributed on that day and the students are also asked to give their feedback (see Box 3 below) on the course. The feedback sought touches on various aspects and seeks suggestion of the trainees on what they think are areas of improvement for SEDI.
Box 3: Areas on which feedback is obtained

- Curriculum
- Training methods used
- Skills and behaviour of trainer
- Environment at SEDI
- Reading materials

The feedback is submitted to the SEDI principal in a sealed envelope. This feedback is taken seriously as it helps in improving the quality of the course.

Outcome

Once a programme that did not interest many in the villages of Kodinar, today SEDI's nursing training is one of the most sought after courses. The course today has a waiting list of 150 girls aspiring to become a nurse in some hospital in the state. Two batches of 50 students are currently undergoing the training at SEDI and of the 87 girls who have completed the course 75 are employed in hospitals. There are many other aspects which can be understood as outcomes. These are:

*Daughters are actively supporting the families on all fronts:* Ilashri, the daughter of an agricultural labourer, is one of eight siblings. Earlier, her family had to struggle to make ends meet. Today, with Ilashri working at NICE hospital in Bhavnagar, the picture is much brighter. She has sponsored another sister of hers to take the course. She understands that her job and the job that her sister will surely get on completion of the course, will enable the family to see happier days.

*Daughters today also contribute to the family income:* With most agricultural labourer families in the coastal belts earning between Rs. 40 to 50 thousand every year, their daughters' contributions have been most helpful. These daughters earn around Rs. 72 to 80 thousand a year and are able to save around 50% of what they earn. The remittances from the 75 daughters today amount to Rs. 24, 75,000 a year. This amount has stabilised many households in many of the villages of the districts.

*Doctors have been asking for trained human resources from SEDI:* A well known paediatrician from Rajkot had employed trained nurses from SEDI. He was so happy with their performance that now he wants more to join him. He is happy with the good behaviour, regularity, communication skills and commitment demonstrated by these nurses trained at SEDI. His new hospital will require 50 nurses and he wants all of them to come from SEDI. He has also suggested some more inputs on paediatric care, saying that if these inputs are provided by SEDI, it would serve him and his hospital well.
Doctors have decided to invest in the trained resources: One of the trained nurses placed with Meru Nursing Home in Bhavnagar has attracted the attention of the doctor. She has been good at her work and her commitment and behaviour have led the doctor to sponsor her for a diploma programme in Naturopathy and Yoga. Once she completes the course she will be elevated to the status of Dr. Manisha.

Learning

The experimentation that the SEDI team did to convert a vocation that never was seen anyone’s choice into the most popular vocation today has given many learnings. These are important lessons for others involved in skill building issues elsewhere.

Counselling helps youths make their own choice: Choosing a vocation becomes easy for youths once they undergo a counselling session. It helps as they understand what they want to do in life and can match their wants with their capabilities. This helps them to choose and thereafter remain focussed during the training sessions as well. They put in their best to learn what is given to them in the skill building inputs.

When a trainee is given tasks to practice, it helps them to change the attitude of the community towards themselves: During the training each trainee is given an assignment of improving the health-related habits of five families. Thus they initiate positive changes in health-related habits of the families in their neighbourhood. They work with their family and thereafter include others. This helps in increased acceptance of the course by the community and also brings about improved behavioural changes in the community. The assignment also helps in marketing the course to others. The students have helped to transfer knowledge on cleanliness like cleaning of nails, use of soap after toilet, vaccination of children and balanced diet. These practices also help in increasing the skills of the trainees as they get a chance to interact with others and are able to convince some of them to follow healthy habits.

Helping girls to find group accommodation helps in increasing retention: The system of group accommodation has been responsible for increasing retention of the girls in the jobs. They do not feel alone and homesick. They have their friends with whom they can share their joys and sorrows. Even the family members back home do not pressurise their girls with phone calls and visits. With expenses under control, these young girls are able to save more money to send back home.

Data from survey may not always give the right direction: The survey conducted at the beginning of the course suggested that only a few girls were interested in the nursing course. But when the team saw the demand in the market and made efforts to convince parents to send their children for the course, the results showed up. The girls were interested in having a career but had other reasons for not choosing nursing as a career. One therefore needs to understand the ‘other’ reasons and make efforts to work on them.
**Conclusion**

The nursing intervention has had a very positive impact at three levels. First, the programmes have been a step towards empowering the girls and giving them a new identity. Secondly, as these girls have been supporting the family back home with hard earned money, it has helped many families to overcome penury. And finally these girls have acquired a new skills set, by virtue of which their career can really soar. SEDI has made this all happen. Those who are involved with skill development initiatives must take cognisance of the strategies that have been followed in this intervention. The efforts and the strategies are worth emulating.

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ASHA, “Light of Desire”
ASHA, “Light of Desire”

Intervention on Employability through Retail Management

Prasenjit Swarnakar and Dharmendra Patra

Introduction

SEDI, Sankrail, was established to train unemployed youths in different vocations and enable them to make a living. SEDI realized the need and career potential inherent in the Retail Management sector and thus provided relevant inputs to the unemployed youths. These youths are today working in retail malls in Howrah and in Kolkata. The case described here captures the processes that were initiated in selecting the trainees, giving them the inputs through a structured curriculum and thereafter ensuring that they were placed with retail outlets. SEDI is also involved in regular follow-up with the trainees so as to identify future capacity building needs and develop the curriculum further. In addition to the Retail Management training, at Sankrail SEDI is involved in a host of other skill trades.

Context

Howrah is the second most densely populated district in West Bengal with a population density of around 3300 persons per sq. km. Howrah is adjacent to Kolkata, and known for its heavy and small-scale industries. In the 70s, the jute industry was flourishing and provided employment to many. However, most of these jute mills have now closed down due to the advent of alternatives and policy shifts. Hence, large-scale unemployment is today a common feature in the district.

The youths here are generally educated and thus have a preference for white-collar jobs. However, they do not always have the necessary qualification to work in industry. An MBA degree or an engineering degree is what industry requires and the youths are not always equipped with these.

Of late, the service sector has been playing a key role in the economy and Howrah is no exception. Organized retail business, hospitality, security services and financial services have emerged as key employment generating sectors. Howrah is an emerging urban location as it is adjacent to the state capital of West Bengal. Many of the retail giants like Avani Riverside Mall, RD Mall and Big Bazaar have established their units in the district.

A detailed survey carried out by SEDI revealed that there is a huge requirement of human resources in the service industry. Although the overall retail sector in West Bengal is still largely dominated by un-organized players, the share of the organized sector has seen a growth in
some segments like national and international branded retail shops, jewellery shops, clothes lines, food joints, furniture, glass products etc. in the recent past. The major players dominating the segment are Pantaloons, Westside, Reliance Trends, ITC Lifestyle and McDonald etc.

In the recent past Kolkata has attained the status of IT hub of the east. With high spending capacity of the IT personnel, the retail sector has got a tremendous boost. The middle class also prefers to buy from the organized markets and hence many retail outlets have come up in the city. They all require human resources. But though a large number of educated urban youths flock to these jobs, the rate of job retention is low. This feature has led the retail units to look for human resources from the sub-urban locations and their target comprises those who have passed the 12th standard. A report prepared by NSDC indicated that by 2022, Howrah district alone would require approximately 1.56 hundred thousand skilled human resources.¹ All these data made SEDI focus its attention on building appropriate skills among the less educated segment. SEDI wanted this segment of youths to become employable.

**Intervention**

After SEDI was established in 2010, the first exercise it carried out was to understand the need of the local people. A baseline survey was done to get some idea about what the youths aspired for in terms of vocation. It was seen that youths were looking for secure jobs and something that did not demand much physical work. They also wanted jobs that would give them a good future. The retail sector was found to incorporate both these aspects – an in-house job that was also lucrative and with good future prospects. The industry too wanted skilled human resources, but not highly qualified, and wanted motivated youths to join. The industry was also looking for youths having the desire to make their career in the retail industry and continue to work for a prolonged period.

Initially, SEDI started its retail course in association with India Skills. It borrowed the course materials and also took support of its trained trainers and their teaching aids. SEDI invested its own resources to create a simulation retail lab for providing practical training to the trainees. The overall training cost including license fees, curriculum cost and certification cost came to INR one lakh. This was paid by SEDI. Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) invested in creating the necessary infrastructure and the establishment cost. The certification cost, which came to Rs 3300, was obtained from the students as fees for the course.

Once SEDI got the programme ready to be delivered, it contacted unemployed youths from nearby villages and motivated them to join the course. The youths had many questions for SEDI. They wanted to know about placements, approximate remuneration, duty timings, fees and duration of the course and the like. They also wanted to know if they would be transferred out of Kolkata. Girls staying in villages around the Ambuja Cement plant were under the impression
that jobs in the retail sector meant long and late working hours and hence were concerned about their safety while returning home from work.

SEDI carried out awareness campaigns about the programme in nearby villages. These included street campaign, coaching centre visits, youth club visits, panchayat level meetings and follow-up survey on cold calls that were received. The youths were invited to the centre for a career counseling session to get an understanding of the motivation of these youths towards the retail trade. Most of the questions that these youths had about the programme were resolved during this session.

The associations with the Certification Partner for providing the trainer and the curriculum lasted for first three batch. By then SEDI had developed some understanding of the nuances of the skills and the methodology it must adopt to cultivate the same amongst the youths. There were challenges in doing things on one’s own. An uncharted path is often a difficult one, but SEDI decided to go on its own.

There were many areas and gaps that had to be plugged. Expectations from the industry had to be addressed in the curriculum. There were different kinds of expectations from the youths and their parents. Students taking the course were not highly educated and hailed from rural and mostly from lower middle class and poor economic backgrounds. There were psychological barriers as well. For youths, the psychological stress of coping with a metro lifestyle was immense. The trainees faced barriers in communication. The industry faced the issue of
retention of those who joined. All this had to be worked upon and SEDI had to invest time to understand the issues and thereafter find means and methods to resolve them. SEDI addressed many of these issues through counseling sessions and also through discussions with parents during home visits to make them see the future of their child in the trade. Slowly they were convinced and motivated.

The first few batches had a lot of theoretical inputs but little practical. Only a few classes in the practical laboratory gave them some idea of the nature of the work, but getting the trainees to face a real life situation was not attempted. However, this was extremely necessary and SEDI took the support of the industry to incorporate this in the curriculum. The one-day store visit which was done in the first day’s batches was changed to a mandatory 15-20 days on-job training (OJT) with some leading stores. This was initiated for part fulfillment and towards certification. Everyday various activities like role plays and various operational issues were discussed and handled as part of the course module. The module included different aspects of retail management, which can be seen in the box below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Management Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topics covered</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- VAK (Video, Audio and Kinesthetic) training inputs that gave trainees understanding about the industry and worked on getting them attracted to the glamour aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Visual merchandising and Category Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Store operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sales and service process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Customer handling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Risk and Store safety management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Handling cash and machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Basic computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Special class on safety and HIV awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Grooming for Retail Industry on Office etiquette, telephone and email etiquette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Communication process etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Methodology</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Role plays and amenities on customer activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Daily practical training in a Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- OJT for fulfillment of their curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Assessment and refresher training by experienced faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Industry need specific course curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Guest lectures by industry expert.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students do not always pay the entire fees at the beginning of the course. SEDI has evolved a simplified system of installment and many of the students pay in installments while they take the course. In some cases, the students are also given the option to pay the fees from the stipend money they receive from OJT and sometimes in some specific cases the students pay the fees after the placement. These methods of payment have been adopted keeping in mind the economic background of the trainees. In many cases, students join the course after a payment of a token fee of Rs.100 to Rs.500 and the rest is paid in four to five installments.

As has been mentioned, the first programme had certification from India Skills. The cost of that programme including the certification was Rs.3300 per trainee. This amount was charged from the aspiring trainees. Today the programme has certification from NCVT (National Council of Vocational Training) and the certification cost is Rs.500. However, the students continue to pay the amount of Rs.3300 to take care of some other costs. For SEDI, the per trainee cost for a retail programme works out to Rs.4366. However, this does not include the expenses on programme management and overheads of the team involved in managing the course. The fee charged is much lower than what the market charges a student taking the course. There are similar institutes in Kolkata which charge amounts ranging between Rs.12000 and Rs.15000 per trainee.
Table 1: Costing of a batch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Head of Expenses</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>No. of Units / No. of Trainees</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
<th>Unit cost per trainee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Honorarium of Faculty</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MES Fees</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Exposure Visit</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Study Materials</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Misc. Expenses</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>65500</td>
<td>4366.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Cost analysis, SEDI Sankreil for FY-2011-12)

The cost of training in a retail management course is an area of concern. Higher the cost, higher the burden on the students – unless the institute bears the cost. SEDI tried its best to find out ways to reduce the cost. In this it took support from the retail industry. For example, Color Plus donated 20 mannequins for the retail lab. Students in OJT now get a stipend, whereas in the past SEDI would invest in conducting exposure visits. The purchases which were made in the retail lab were sold to staff members and only the empty boxes were kept back. This helped in recovering some costs of the investments made. SEDI also negotiated with placement agencies. Contrary to common practice, SEDI pays no fees to these placement agencies, which, on their part, have realized that they can get such money from others and not from SEDI.

With SEDI, every placement is the beginning of a new relationship. SEDI views the post placement follow-up and interaction as very important as the follow-up gives a student the feeling that he always has a well-wisher by his side. In the course of the follow-up, trainees who are now on the job share their difficulties and also their learnings and experiences with the trainers. They help in motivating their friends and relatives in joining the course and also provide motivation to those who are confused about choosing a career.

The aspect of glamour in this sector has both its pros as well as cons and SEDI has to address it adroitly. The glamour part is highlighted when, during the course of the training, the inputs are given to the youths. But with most students coming from poor and rural backgrounds, the retail trade can have a psychological impact on them. There could be problems and emergence of delinquent behaviour patterns. That is why, special Life skill sessions are provided to the trainees to enable them to adjust with the life style and behaviour such a job entails. They are made mentally strong so that they can work in this new and different environment and still have their feet on the ground.
A skill upgradation programme for the youths is on the anvil. SEDI alumni initially joined the retail industry as Customer Service Associates (CSA). With experience they get promoted to “supervisor”, which is a managerial position. SEDI is planning a course that shall make this transformation possible without glitches. Similarly, the industry also wants retail training to provide skill inputs to youths in cashiering. SEDI plans to buy a barcode scanner machine and the relevant computer hardware and software to give training in this skill as well. In addition, efforts are being made to incorporate inputs on the following areas as well:

**Areas on which new inputs are being contemplated**

- Commitment and drive
- Motivation and enthusiasm
- Team work
- Oral communication & smiling face
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Customer focus
- Problem solving
- Managing own learning and career
- Commercial awareness
- Planning and organizing
- Understanding marketing and how it relates to retail practice
- Critical thinking
- Risk taking
- Stress tolerance
- Hard work.

**Outcome**

The work being done on training the students comes to an end when the student is placed in an Industry. The placement records show that 86% of the students who have received inputs and certification are working today. Some other outcomes are:

*Asha’ or Hope in the life of youths:* The retail management trade has lit the lamp of hope in the life of many youths. It has given many timid girls a new lease of life. They are now able to earn a living and contribute to the family income.

*They are our brand ambassadars:* These are the words of the SEDI in-charge. Seeing the success of a shy girl in the neighbourhood, there are many others who are inspired to join the course. Girls in the villages of Sankrail seek advice from one another and come over to the centre and
express their interest in joining the course. Telephonic enquiry about the course takes place almost every day. Parents and young boys and girls visit the centre. They have all heard about the success and want to be a part of it with their own efforts.

Shampa's father, a retired jute mill worker, had been earning a livelihood by selling small birds. Today he is a proud father whose only daughter helps him run his family. Shampa's father has gone and convinced others girls by talking to their parents. He has referred five girls to join the retail management course.

The retail chains can see the worth of the programme: Recently, one retail company approached SEDI to help it do a training of its existing staff. Though there are many training institutions in Howrah and Kolkata, SEDI was approached. The retail chain has seen some of their CSAs who have been trained by SEDI. The professional approach that these young girls exhibited in the job made the retail chain approach SEDI.

Retail chains are also exhibiting shades of CSR: This has happened in case of one retail chain. It has been much impressed by one of the SEDI students and has helped her by giving her leave with pay when she wanted to appear for her graduation examination. They wanted to be a partner in her success and hence allowed her the paid leave.
The ‘I Can’ spirit is now there in all trainees: The work of SEDI has been able to cultivate the mission statement of the company, i.e. “Energize, Involve and Enable to realize their potential”. The students today are energized and show motivation. They are involved in the life making process. SEDI has been able to create the “I Can” spirit among many.

Learning

The learning from the action can be summed up in the lines of the poem by Robert Frost, “......The woods are lovely, dark, and deep/ But I have promises to keep/ And miles to go before I sleep...” Some important learnings for practitioners are:

Designing the content is an important aspect: The content for the training has to be contemporary. It must address issues that will help the students get the best of the understanding and thereby enable them to work effectively in the work setting. SEDI understood the importance of the practice aspects and gave importance to designing the practical part of the course. More practical and motivational training was made available through the simulation retail laboratory and OJT at the retail outlets. The students could see the linkage between the theories taught in the classroom and the practice and sharpen their understanding. The team realized the importance of the design and gave time to evolve the same.

Students show higher retention if they are placed closer to home: In the retail industry candidates are expected to be flexible and adjust to long duty hours and shifting duties. Therefore asking them to work far from home would mean additional burden on their time. SEDI tried to negotiate with industries to place youths near to their homes so that they had to spend less time in travel. This has been one of the most important reasons why students passing out of SEDI continue to work with the industry where they are placed.

“A lamp cannot light another lamp until it is itself lit” : These words of Tagore make very good sense for SEDI. Investments are necessary to make the trainers deliver the best. Training of trainers has been an area of investment for SEDI. Trainers are made to go through trainings organized in soft as well as hard skills which thereafter get translated in better delivery to the students.

Beauty charms: The retail world wants people with a charming personality. They give preference to candidates who are presentable and smart. Retail management has not been able to come out of this mindset and therefore as suppliers of human resources SEDI has no choice but to adhere to this dubious mindset.

One must be associated with students even after they are placed with the industry: SEDI has been following up with the students after their placement. This has given inputs on the areas
that require more inputs. Even the industry has realized the seriousness of the process and has been suggesting what more SEDI can do with regards to making the course robust. SEDI is planning refresher training and upgradation training, as a result of these interactions.

Learning is a continuous and never ending process: This has been the understanding with which the team has been working. Knowledge is unending and efforts must be made to synthesize it at regular intervals. Churning will help obtain new insights into ways of delivery and also in giving new insights and tools to the students. SEDI had made all efforts to make this happen in letter and spirit.

Conclusion

The intervention around retail management has provided valuable help to the families of rural unemployed youth, particularly the girls. Many of them have actually found not just a means to make a living but also a career. Girls who have undergone the training have become confident and have been contributing handsomely to the family income. They have made their parents proud. The retail sector which is expanding today will remember the efforts made by SEDI in enabling the rural youths to find a vocation.

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Notes

1. Skill Gap Analysis Report by NSDC, West Bengal
Stitching for a Bright Future
Stitching for a Bright Future
The Case of a Tailoring Intervention
Chhagan Patel

Introduction

The people living along the 1600 km coastline of Gujarat are primarily engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry and fishing. However, those who had once engaged in fishing as a livelihood have recently seen a sudden dip in their prospects. This is due to the large scale industrialisation that has taken place along the coastal industrial corridor of Gujarat, including Surat. With increased industrialisation and unabated discharge of chemical effluents directly into the sea, the pollution level of sea water has increased sharply. This has driven away the fishes far from the coast, affecting the livelihoods of fishing families. Many of them have been compelled to give up fishing and seek other means of earning a living.

Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) has been working in eleven villages of Magdalla, an industrial hub near Surat, since 2009. Since this is a coastal area, its inhabitants had once depended on fishing for a livelihood. Since most of these people had no land, they could not take up agriculture instead. Nor did they possess any other skills. Thus, they were compelled to take to brewing as a good source of income. With Industrialisation, the demand for alcohol has spiralled and so those who ventured into local brewing made good money. But this was an illegal activity as Gujarat is a dry state where sale of alcohol is prohibited. Although the brewers had patrons from some quarters, they suffered constant harassment from law enforcers. Women wanted to quit this unlawful activity, but with no other options available, they chose to suffer in silence.
Context

Exercises conducted to understand the livelihood pattern of the villagers in the working area of the Foundation revealed that the majority of the women were engaged in brewing alcohol. They did so not out of choice but out of compulsion. ACF’s search for alternative livelihoods beyond agriculture took them to an Apparel Park located at a distance of 7-10 km. from these villages. This Park produced trousers and shirts for export, and hence required skilled human resources. Surat had a training institute which provided training to those who wished to work in the apparel industry. But the women of Gabheni village had no such skills. Nor were they exposed to the fact that they could be trained and thereafter seek employment. For them, moving out of the village to receive training and then work in an industry was something beyond contemplation.

Intervention

Women from the villages around Magdala area of Surat were on the look-out for some vocation. They wanted to give up brewing alcohol as they knew it was illegal. The ACF team learnt that the garment industry in the Apparel Park near Sachin needed skilled labourers. Interactions with those who managed these garment units revealed to the ACF team that they obtained trained human resources from the Apparel Training and Design Centre (ATDC) in Surat. ACF decided to broach the issue of training village women at ATDC. Just as the Principal of ATDC was not aware about village women interested in tailoring, so also did the women themselves have no idea about the Apparel Training and Design Centre at Surat.

ATDC offered training courses of various durations, ranging from 45 days to 180 days, and some very advanced courses lasting for a year. Course fees ranged from Rs 1200 to Rs 35000. ACF discussed the possibility of the women being trained for the shortest module of 45 days, which came at a cost of Rs 4800. Of this, the government paid Rs 3600 while the remaining Rs 1200 had to be paid by the woman undergoing the training. ACF took this information to the village women to see if they were interested in paying the required fee and taking the course. ACF had decided that it would foot 50 % of the trainee’s contribution, thus lowering the amount that a trainee had to pay to Rs 600.

As expected, the women raised the issue of fees saying that it would be difficult for some of them to pay the amount. They also stated that it would be difficult for them to go to ATDC for the training as it was 15 km away from their village. They wanted the training to take place near their village and, if possible, within the village. The ACF team talked this over with ATDC and the latter agreed, provided they were given space and had to incur no extra costs. ACF then began to search for such a space and realised that a temple located 1 Km from the village, which had a big hall, could be used as the venue. A meeting was organised with the village representatives and the trustees of the temple and the latter agreed to give the space as it was directly for the benefit of women of their own village.
A lot of other decisions had to be taken. The women wanted to know how they could make the payment of Rs 600. Some asked if the amount could be paid after the training. They raised questions about the validity of the training and whether the industry would recognise their skills and accept them after the training. There were also questions on the training timings as many of these women had to be involved in household chores and had to complete them all before going out for classes. The ACF team answered all these questions patiently, confident that once these women were employed in the industry the questions would never recur with subsequent batches of trainees.

ACF was aware of the industries broad set of criteria as necessary qualification. The industry wanted that the women should be able to read and write and understand simple instructions in verbal and written form. Thus ACF set forth some criteria for the trainees – the women should have passed the 5th standard and be in the age group 18-35. The training would last for four hours each day and be in two shifts. The first batch would start at 9.00 am and the second batch at 1:30 pm. ACF wanted the women to decide amongst themselves who would attend the morning session and who would take the afternoon session and left it to the group to ensure that at least 12 trainees attended each session.

The date was also decided and the first training started on June 1, 2010. Some of the women could not arrange to make the payment. However, that did not deter them from attending the programme. While these interactions were taking place, ACF team member came across a person from the village who had been taking keen interest in the programme. He was also keen to stop women from drinking alcohol. When he was approached with the issue of some women not being able to pay the fees, he decided to sponsor as many women interested in taking the course with a contribution of Rs 300 per trainee. This reduced the share of each woman to Rs 300 and eased the burden to a large extent. The fee structure of the training is depicted in table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: The fee structure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total fees</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The training programme continued for the next 45 days. During the training, the women were taken to the Apparel Park for a visit to a garment factory. This visit gave them an idea of the work they would be doing soon. They were mentally prepared to go for work. However, their families were not. Many family members asserted that it was not what they wanted their women to do. They were concerned about who would be doing the household chores. ACF realised that the issue would have to be dealt and started counselling the household heads. The result of the counselling was positive and the women were given the go-ahead to work outside, but with some conditions attached.
As the training programme neared completion, ACF consulted the manager of an apparel unit to find out if there was need for trained human resources. The companies in the Apparel Park were looking out for skilled labour. Hence, the ACF team approached all the units in the Park and realised that they offered a salary ranging from Rs 3600 to Rs 4500 a month. The managers were called on the day the women were to complete the course and asked to give away the certificates. This was the first time the women had a chance to interact with representatives of the garment units. They found out that one of the units offered a better deal and after some more negotiations with the unit, the women could bargain out a salary of Rs 5000 a month. This salary was exclusive of PF and ESI and hence was a good amount for the women to start with. The women expressed their wish to go in a group and they accepted the offer to join the unit three days after the completion of their training on 23rd July, 2010.

Heeding to the request of ACF, the manager of the company agreed to take up the issue of providing transport support to the women with the management. After some dialogue between ACF and the company, they agreed to bear 50% of the total expenses on hiring this facility. The women were to bear the remaining amount and they willingly agreed to do so. On 23rd July, 2010, the women started for their first day at work. They were all hesitant. It was the first time they were leaving their home to work somewhere else. ACF staff made special efforts on the day to be with the women at the unit. The day was, however, differently planned by the production manager. Since these women had not handled the
machines, they were all made to do some practical work. They willingly accepted the proposal, but none could clear the minimum standard that was set for doing the work. This was a big disappointment to all. However, the ACF team suggested that the women were all nervous because of the environment. They had not handled such machines in the past but if they could practise a few times they would probably be able to pick up the nuances and perform as per the quality standards. The production manager was requested to get the women to do the practical work at the training centre and see how they fared. It was an utter surprise when all the women qualified well. They were made to do the same work with the machines they were exposed to and all of them could do the work with the dexterity that was required. Thereafter, the production manager decided that these women would have to be taken for a few days and trained to handle the new machines and only after they met the required standards, would they be made to sit in the production line.

In a unit involved in producing a large number of garments, there was a broad division of labour. Stitching a shirt meant a production line of 64 different operations and a pair of trousers some 62 operations. Each of these operations was handled by one person and so all of them together stitched one shirt or one pair of trousers. This division of work was done to make the production happen on a large scale. However, none of them could claim to have manufactured one shirt all by herself. Each in the production line handled some 250 to 300 units of shirts or trousers a day. So after two days of training, the women were given some simple operations and slowly they picked up the complex operations as well.

Now all the women have mastered the machines and work well. They all leave their village in the car hired by them and are back home after six in the evening. ACF has continued doing the needed follow-up with the women and is trying to understand how they are faring at work and how they are also managing the home front. Many of the women have been fast learners and have got promoted in the line. The factory managers have been quite satisfied and have been asking ACF for organising more training courses. Seeing the success of these women, many other women have approached ACF for trainings. Some of the women who have understood the nature of the work now work on piece rate basis where they are paid according to the quantity of work they do and some earn above Rs 7000 per month. Taking note of the success of the first batch, ACF organised a few more rounds of training in the village and has been able to train more women from the village and also from some neighbouring villages as well. Till date over 206 women have undergone trainings and out of them 148 are placed in the industry and another 33 of them are on piece rate basis with these industries and also engaged in doing tailoring work for others in the village. They work from their own home.
Outcome

The training of women from the villages has been a great success story. It has helped them to acquire an entirely new set of skills. Armed with these skills they have started going to work and earn a living for their households. Some of the outcomes of this training intervention are:

*Trained women are now economically active:* Women have started going out for work. With a regular income now coming to the household, the family’s situation has improved. The enrolment of the women in the ESI scheme has helped in insuring the households against medical emergencies and their PF will become their old age security. In many households, the men who had been in the alcohol business have given it up and are contributing to the family income by doing odd jobs.

*Women are being seen differently:* Women had once been regarded as a liability, now they are seen as an asset. They have started contributing to the household income. Men are seeking women’s opinion on various social issues. All this has improved the status of women in their own families as well as in larger society. Their self-confidence has also shot up.

**Case 1: Cementing relations**

Jayshreeben, a mother of two children, had left her husband due to ill treatment by her in-laws. She was staying with her parents when ACF came to the village. She took the training and now earns Rs 8000 a month. Seeing this, her in-laws have approached her parents to sort out the issues. They have agreed not to ill treat her and to ask their son to stop drinking. All these conditions were put forth by Jayashreeben as she is now confident that she can survive on her own.

*The life of many has undergone a metamorphosis:* The women’s income has brought about this situation. Many households have given up the illegal business of brewing and trading in alcohol. They wish to live in dignity and do not want to be harassed by policemen anymore.

**Case 2: Living with head held high**

Ramilaben of Budiya village was once involved in the business of making alcohol. She was not respected in the village and also lived in constant fear of harassment by the police. The training and consequent employment has now assured the family of a new source of income that has brought dignity in its wake. She has been able to motivate her husband to stop the business. They now live with head held high.
There are numerous examples of many other women. Bhumikaben of Gabheni village had dreams of pursuing her studies beyond matriculation. But the economic condition of her family could not allow her to do so. The qualification that she had acquired was not enough to get her a job. She was unhappy and discontented. However, the training changed her life. She soon proved at her workplace that she has tremendous grasping power and now she is a production supervisor at the plant.

Many have moved from being nonentities to being heroes: Many of the women who were once merely homemakers and confined to household chores have now become heroes within the community. They are not just active workforce at the production unit but are also respected at the home front. Women who were not confident of going out can now manage a lot more. They participate in social events with confidence. The new set of skills has made this possible.

Case 3: On her own feet

Taraben of Gabheni village had lost her husband early in life. She returned to stay with her mother and her daughter. They were in dire straits and depended on the meagre earnings her mother brought home by vending vegetables. The training changed her life. She now earns enough to make ends meet and is able to send her child to school.
The training has shown many a new way of living life: This is so true. Brewing alcohol for a living has almost come to a stop. The families now live in dignity and are able to visualise for themselves a different way of living. The social recognition that the women gained by virtue of their new employment has inspired countless families to quit their unlawful and disrespectful vocations.

Learning

This ACF intervention has yielded immense learning for the practising community. It has established the fact that if one is determined to change one’s current status, then it is possible for her to learn a new skill set and make a living out of it. Some of the learnings from this intervention are:

The garment industry is in need of quality human resources: The garment industry is always in need of quality HR who can contribute to its profitability. Training is a means to develop the potential of human resources engaged or likely to be engaged in the industry. The company expects its finished goods to be of good quality. The industry wants HR who adhere to the stringent quality parameters and can increase output. These women have proved they can do both. They handle over 395 shirts a day when they are expected to handle around 375 shirts. Similarly, the industry also wants human resources who are aware of time commitments and those who do not take leave too frequently. Seeing all these qualities in the women trained by ACF, some units have been asking ACF to send across more such trained human resources to them.

The society understands good intentions and is always helpful: During the training the issue of fees which the women could not pay was discussed with some persons who hailed from the village. Seeing the good intention of ACF to help women stand on their own feet inspired one of the villagers to provide support for the cause. His support reduced the burden on the women. The generosity exhibited by the temple trust in the village also needs mention. The trustees provided the space for conducting the training when ACF approached them. There are good people in the community who if made to understand the expected positive outcomes are always proactive and supportive of such causes.

People can make decisions if asked to do so: ACF realised this quite early. They facilitated with sharing information. The women were told to decide on their own a suitable timing for the training. ACF never got into deciding that. Similarly, ACF brought the major players to discuss the remuneration issue with the women. It left the women to decide for themselves where they wanted to work. ACF did some negotiation with the industry only after the women trainees expressed the need for it. All this ensured lesser dropout rates and higher attendance during the training.

Skill training institutions must keep contact alive for a longer duration after the training: After the training, it is necessary to remain in contact with the trainees. ACF did that and this
ensured that many other women from the village approached ACF for similar support. It also helped ACF to sort out some bottlenecks with the employers at different times. All this added to the output - higher remuneration and higher motivation to work.

**Conclusion**

The intervention has shown that skills can be cultivated. The women who were once involved in brewing liquor have quit the business and are making a living out of the skills they have acquired. This has made a significant impact on their livelihoods and today they are happy with the contribution they are making to their families.

*****
Forging the Bond
Forging The Bond

Case of Skill Training Programme in Welding Trade

Dipak Kumar Senapati and Gautam Kumar Prasad

Introduction

Over 100 youths from villages in and around Bhagwanpur in Roorkee have undergone training in welding. They are today working in industries around the Bhagwanpur industrial area of Roorkee in Uttrakhand. These youths mostly hail from villages around the Ambuja Cement Plant. Many, however, have also come from far off locations from within the district. SEDI of ACF has prepared the curriculum in consultation with the industries and has also made large investments in purchasing the machines required for giving the youths hands-on inputs on welding. Placements are a regular feature and youths receiving the training get placed in industries as soon as they complete the skill training programme. The youths, armed with theory and some amount of practice, prove to be an asset for the industries. Many of them have started moving up the industry ladder by their own efforts. The case describes this intervention of SEDI.

Context

Haridwar, one of the favourite destinations for religious tourism in India, has witnessed rapid industrialization in recent times. The location of the district is one of the prime reasons for this growth. It is close to Noida, Delhi, Gurgaon, Chandigarh and Dehradun and it has also being given certain tax concessions by the new state of Uttarakhand, thus triggering industrialization at a good pace.

Bhagwanpur, which is among the most densely populated blocks of Haridwar district, has seen large scale influx of people from other districts of the state as well as from other parts of the country, chiefly due to brisk industrialization. However, in spite of industrial growth, the socio-economic condition of the villages is not good and many of the inhabitants cannot afford higher education for their children. Agriculture is still the chief livelihood option for most people in this block. The nature of employment in agriculture is often disguised and unemployment among youths is rampant. This is an antipathy to the situation in the block which has witnessed rapid growth of industries in recent times.
With local youths not capable of getting employed due to their low literacy levels and lack of skills, the skilled jobs created in the industries are filled up by labourers coming from outside. The local youths, if at all employed, have unskilled jobs where the wages are not sufficient to take care of their families.

Industries too have been at the receiving end because of this situation. They face the challenge of obtaining skilled human resources because of which they are not able to adhere to the quality parameters demanded today. In the engineering industries, the problem of quality is more pronounced.

SEDI grasped this situation as it interacted with the industries in the Bhagwanpur Industrial area. It realized that if it initiated a skill building programme with youths around the welding trade it could meet the demand of skilled workers in many of the fabrication units which exist in good numbers in the industrial area. Since many more units are destined to move over to Bhagwanpur due to the favourable tax policies of the state government, SEDI started a training programme on Welding Trade in 2011. This programme was to provide skill building support to youths who were involved as daily waged labourers in these industries and also to the large number of youths hailing from the villages around the industrial area.
Intervention

In this context, one of the earliest activities that SEDI carried out was a survey to assess the trades needed by the industries around the Bhagwanpur industrial area. It was seen that the major players in the industrial area included engineering units of Godrej Interio, Birla Aircon, Everest Industries, Unitech Machines and Avanti Buda. Other smaller units also existed and 36% of all the industries at Bhagwanpur Industrial Area were engineering units. Most of these industries required higher end and sophisticated skills related to welding, which included MIG and TIG welding. The local people who were involved in these industries were mostly engaged in all kinds of odd jobs as are normally delegated to unskilled labourers. They were employed on paltry wages and on contractual terms and many had no other source of income.

Alongside this assessment of industries, the SEDI team, with the support of a research fellow from TIMSR, Mumbai, conducted an assessment of potential training requirements. The community survey of the needs of the local people revealed that most trainees showed interest in the welding trade. The survey also yielded information on the background of these potential trainees and found that most had studied till the 5th or 8th standard.

The two assessments helped SEDI to firm up its mandate and thereafter initiate skill building around the welding trade. Various methods were adopted to spread the message. SEDI distributed pamphlets in the local language and also used other communication aids like canopy standees, posters, wall paintings the local cable channels. SEDI extensively used its mobile vans in villages and also carried out mobilization efforts in colleges to attract trainees. All these efforts paid off.

The youths approached SEDI with queries. They wanted to know if SEDI would offer them jobs with the Cement Plant. They also wanted to know about the fee structure, time and duration of the training and aspects like salaries that they might get once they were placed with industries. All those who approached SEDI were taken through two rounds of counselling sessions and their doubts were clarified. The parents of the youths were also called in the second phase of counselling so that they too became aware of the prospects after the training and supported their children by investing their hard-earned resources for the skill improvement of their wards. The fees, though kept low and within the reach of the villagers, were charged to make the youths responsible and motivated to complete the course. The fee of Rs 1000 which was taken at the beginning of the course was given back in kind to the youths. This included a bag, pen, exercise book and books. SEDI also assured the parents that it would work towards helping the youths to get placed in industries once they completed the course to the satisfaction of the certification.
Selecting the trainees was the next important aspect. SEDI looked at parameters like age, attitude and behaviour, education, financial condition and working capacity of the trainees. Parameters prescribed by the industries included good behaviour, honesty, loyalty to the industry, keenness in learning, capacity to work hard, good eye vision and height. The physical standards varied from one industry to another. For example, Mahindra Motors Ltd wanted its welders to have a minimum height of 5 feet 6 inches.

The most challenging task that SEDI faced was hiring a trainer. SEDI had laid down some broad criteria for this and wanted the trainer to have a degree or diploma certificate in welding. It also required the trainer to be someone who had handled welding machines and especially advanced ones. In addition, the person had to have a positive approach towards mobilising the community and also have skills in handling placements. It was rather a long search and finally SEDI was able to identify a trainer who possessed shades of the criteria so earmarked.

Welding Training

The curriculum for the welding course evolved with time. The first curriculum which was followed was obtained from secondary sources and modified after some discussion with the trainer. It included hands-on practical training on arc and gas welding. After the first batch had completed the course, SEDI faced problems in placing the trainees in industries. Since most of the industries had graduated from the arc and gas welding technology to MIG and TIG welding
technology, the youths had difficulties in finding placement. A quick examination of existing curriculum around these two technologies led SEDI to realise that even the ITI syllabus did not include these two technologies. SEDI thus decided to modify its course design and include MIG and TIG welding technologies. The trainees were also given specific inputs on industrial safety, soft skills and computer literacy. The curriculum that thus emerged was a commendable blend of practical inputs and theoretical aspects, with 70% weightage being given to hands-on practice.

Thus students who pass out from SEDI are well-equipped with practical knowledge as per the need of industries. The industries are invited during the training sessions to see how the trainees are trained. They also help in organizing industrial exposure visits which give the youths a flair of the working conditions in advance. These industrial visits and the guest lecturer from personnel working in the industry help students as well as SEDI to understand the environment and also the technology in practice. As a result of these interactions, some industries are now showing interest in some kind of technical training-related collaboration of their existing workforce. A TOR is being designed in consultation with the industry so that both the parties – industry and the skilled workers – are in a win-win situation.

Placements are not an easy affair. Intense negotiations take place with the industries and the youths selected by them for placement. Industries often ask for recognition and certification of the course which is currently not in practice. The youths take into consideration factors like distance of the factory from their residence, the salary and other working conditions. There are issues of retention which industries bring in to the discussion table as youths once having had some exposure to an industry move to another. Since poaching of good human resource is common among the industries, the latter often bring forward the issue during placement interviews with SEDI.

SEDI has been obtaining financial support from NABARD and MHRD for conducting some batches of this trade. The cost per trainee works out to Rs. 8000 (see table 1 below). This, however, does not include the cost of administration, infrastructure and SEDI’s investments in establishing the training centre.
Table: - 1
Estimated budget for one welding training batch
(assumed 20 trainees per batch)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Total cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publicity, Inauguration and Valediction</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary – Bag, Pen, Pad etc.</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorarium of Welding Trainers + Soft skill trainer + Security Guard</td>
<td>60000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumable materials and tools for trainees, Reading materials and books for trainees</td>
<td>60000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery and equipment</td>
<td>10000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure visit</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Cost</td>
<td>20000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Training Budget</strong></td>
<td><strong>160,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source : Record of SEDI Roorkee for FY-2011-12)

The training centre initially had arc and gas welding machines, which are the basic machines for any fabrication unit. These, along with other tools and equipment and raw materials, came at a cost of Rs 2 lakh. After facing initial difficulties in placing the trainees, SEDI invested another Rs 7.0 lakh in procuring advance versions of MIG, TIG, ARC welding machines, bench drill machines and electric grinding machines. The training in advanced MIG and TIG welding machines has also increased the cost of consumable items like, MIG wires, gases, iron and stainless steel. However, SEDI sees these investments as necessary aspects so that the youths receiving the training are in a good bargaining position for their starting salaries.

The handling of high-end technology has necessitated the need for hiring two trainers. The training unit today has a master trainer and an assistant trainer. Both are experts and capable of handling the practical sessions during the training phase. The master trainer receives an honorarium of Rs 12,000 and the assistant trainer Rs 8,000. SEDI has embarked upon this policy as to ascertain continuity of the training and ensuring that at least one of trainer is available during the training sessions. The presence of two trainers has also helped the trainees get individual attention and clarify doubts during the practice session.
SEDI also takes small orders for simple fabrication work from the villages around. This on one hand gives hands-on practice to the trainees and, on the other, also helps in recovering some of the costs of the consumable items. SEDI has recently obtained scrap materials from the unit of Ambuja. This was obtained free of cost. It has subsidized the cost of the training.

Paying the fees is not easy for all who come from the villages to attend the course. Many of them hail from financial weak backgrounds. As such, to help the youths to pay the stipulated fees, SEDI has given them the option of doing it in installments and also doing some odd jobs to pay the amount. SEDI has facilitated some of them (see case 1 below) to do part-time jobs and earn some money for paying the fees.

**Case - 1 : Part-time job helped Ashok to pay his training cost**

Ashok Kumar had been looking for a job along with his friends. Unfortunately, he did not get any. During this search, he came across the community mobilizer who advised him to take the SEDI course. However, for him paying the fees was a difficult prospect. SEDI understood his condition and gave him the option of paying the fees in installments. He still found it difficult to pay the fees and so he was placed with Unitech Machine Ltd. during the training. He earned money from this part-time job and paid his fees. He continued working with Unitech thereafter.

Follow-up with all past trainees is an important activity for SEDI. The follow-up is done to learn about the issues they confront in the course of their jobs. The inputs provided by the ex-trainees in the course of the follow-up help in upgrading and developing the module, thus making it contemporary. At the same time, such contacts provides an understanding of the technology and job openings available with the units and helps place youths with the industries. One of the fallouts of this contact is the opening of a training centre for youths to practice after working hours so that they can hone their skills and improve career prospects.

Since the welding technology is undergoing rapid change, SEDI is contemplating installing infrastructure to cope with the demand of the sector. It also plans to start short duration refresher courses for its alumni. In addition, SEDI has introduced knowledge on Kaizen training and Six Sigma as demanded from trainees by industries. This will soon become part of the input for other programmes as well.
Outcome

Till March 2013, SEDI has trained 118 trainees of whom 109 are today working as welders in various industries. The training offered by SEDI to village youths has improved their employability and given a new meaning to their life. The youths are not just employed but meaningfully engaged in a trade and are growing in competence as they handle higher levels of responsibilities. Some of the outcomes that have been seen are:

Youths have moved up the industry ladder: The distribution of youths across different income bands in these industries (See table 2 below) is an indication of this growth. Youths who have been focused and diligent in their work have risen up the ladder.

Table 2: Salary wise Placement Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Band</th>
<th>No. of Placed Trainees</th>
<th>Major Industries absorbing these trainees are: BHEL, Godrej Ltd., Mahindra Motors, UNITECH Machine Ltd., Birla Aircon, Everest Ltd.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5K-8K</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8K-10K</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10K-Above</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source : MIS, SEDI Roorkee for FY-2011-12)

Youths are confident now: Once a burden and liability to their families, these youths are now seen as assets. This has given them enormous confidence. They have become self-dependent and also started taking family responsibilities. They have been able to change their lifestyle and are living a better life today. Trainees have been able to create a unique social identity for themselves in their villages.

Case - 2

Ashok Kumar from Gagalhedi once worked as a helper in Trading Engineers. He wanted his sister to get married in a good family but his job did not give him enough money to arrange a handsome wedding for his sister. He then decided to take the SEDI course and worked hard after his job hours to attend the evening course. Today the training has enabled him to get promoted as welder in the same company and he is now on the company’s payroll. His salary has increased to almost double and he is today the main contributor in his family. His dream now looks likely to be successful.
Students have given SEDI a name: SEDI has gained popularity in the Bhagwanpur area. Two shifts in the morning and evening run continuously at SEDI. Youths come from long distances to attend the course. The youths have realized that distance is no big deal if there is hope at the end of the road. SEDI has given the youths this hope.

Once an odd jobber, now a professional welder: This has happened with quite a few and will certainly happen with many others in future. The industry understands that SEDI trainees are better equipped with concepts and are able to grasp ideas faster than others who have not undergone such training.

Transformation of Labor to Welder

Trainees have become useful in their family: The youths, who were once unemployed, had little say in any major decisions in their households. However, their employability skills have now enhanced their prestige in the family manifold and no decision is made without their consent. Their opinions are valued at home as they contribute not just with resources but also with understanding.
Case - 3
Vikas Kumar hailed from a farmer’s family in Sharbatpur. His welding training in 2012 provided him with resources with which he could get his father medically treated. He took his father to a hospital in Chandigarh for treatment. Vikas managed to borrow money based on the credibility he had and that was due to his job at Birla Aircon. He could soon return the borrowed amount and his father too also recovered from his illness.

Industries have understood their responsibility and are gearing up to share the burden with SEDI: SEDI has been able to make some industries realize their corporate responsibilities. Some industries have come forward to provide SEDI access to their machines and allow some time slots for trainees from SEDI to practice on them. Since many of these machines are costly and SEDI would not have been able to obtain them easily, this arrangement has been of great help. However, industries are aware that they can attract human resources through this window and hence it is a win-win situation for all three - industry, SEDI and the trainees.

Learning

The running of a training programme where SEDI indulged in seeking support from the industry has been a great success. The work has given inputs on what needs to be done in not just designing a programme but also in ensuring that the design suits the industry that will absorb the trainees as employees. The insights for the practising community from this intervention are:

Level of education is not a great barrier when it comes to training human resources in any technical trade: Many of the trainees who enrolled were educated only up to the primary level. They were as good as those who had undergone similar trade training after completing matriculation. The less educated youths could manage to do almost the same work and grow up the industry ladder.

Updating curriculum must be done based on the change that happens around: Technology changes with time and with innovations. Earlier SEDI had focused only on arc and gas welding. However, these two technologies became had obsolete and were replaced by MIG and TIG welding technology. Developing the curriculum in association with the industry must be done by agencies involved in skill building. The trainees armed with skills in handling contemporary technology will always have better prospects.
Once you do placement in known institutions, future trainees approach you on their own: It was difficult initially to convince parents to send their wards for the training and pay the necessary fees. A lot of mobilization efforts, and therefore expenses, had to be put in. However, once these students were placed in good industry settings, the news spread to others. Now parents approach SEDI for training their wards.

Counseling, if done in the right way, helps in bettering the interest of trainees and hence their attendance: Not just the students but also the parents of the prospective students are called for counseling. They are explained about the curriculum and also told about the importance of attendance. This brings in discipline among the students and the parents also see to it that their wards attend the course every day.

Employers value behaviour: The soft skills and the inputs on language have had a huge impact on trainees’ behaviour and mannerism and have helped in building positive attitude among them while they are at work. These traits are valued by the employer. They see the presence of these qualities as contributing to the industry’s environment.

**Skill building institutes must continue to remain in touch with their alumni:** SEDI remained in touch differently. It provided opportunity to one of its alumni to brush his hands with the latest technology. When Sudhir underwent the training, the technology he was taught was arc welding. He got a job and was doing arc welding and making a living out of it. When he got information regarding TIG and MIG Welding at SEDI he expressed his interest in upgrading his knowledge. SEDI allowed him to attend classes and come for practice sessions in the evening hours. This was provided to him free of cost. His employer has given him a different role now and he earns Rs 7500 a month, whereas earlier he had been earning Rs 5000. Many other trainees have followed in Sudhir’s steps. Vikas, Mangi Ram, Azim, Danish, Ajit, Amit, Narendra, Sompal and Gyas all have come back to SEDI and have learnt the new technology. They have all been rewarded in their respective companies.

**Conclusion**

The establishment of SEDI has resulted in youths ensuring for themselves a better life. As the trainees are placed in fabrication departments of industries and earn a good living out of it, they are today a happy lot. They have created for themselves an identity - not just in their family but also in the community. The intervention has demonstrated the need for skill building agencies to move with technology. SEDI invested its resources to give its trainees the best skills in the latest of the available technologies. Interface with industries has helped it to know what is in practice and this has been of great help.

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Notes -

1- Survey carried out by SEDI
2- Kaizen
3- Six sigma
Biographies

Ajit Barad works as English instructor at SEDI Ambujanagar at Kodinar since last two years.

Chaggan Patel works as team leaders at Surat. He has been with ACF since last 13 years.

Chandraprakash Sahu is with SEDI at Baloda Bazar, Chattisgarh since 2010. He works as project assistant.

Dharmendra Patra works as SEDI Incharge at Sankrail since 2010.

Dipak Kumar Senapati work as Principal at SEDI Roorkee since last two years.

Gautam Kumar Prasad work as Placement Officer SEDI with Ambuja Cement Foundation, Roorkee since 1 year.

Krishan Kanth works as Principal of SEDI Baloda Bazaar, Chattisgarh since 2010.

Mahendra Patel works as SEDI principal at Ambujanagar, Kodinar Gujarat since last 2.5 years.

Mithun Paliwal works as SEDI In charge at Chhindwara, MP since 2010.

Monika Chandel work as Computer software Trainer with Institute for Skill and Entrepreneurship Development (ISED), Darlaghat (HP) since three and half years.

Narendra Singh Solanki works as Project officer, SEDI Jaitaran, Rajasthan since last years.

Prasenjit Swarnakar works as placement coordinator since 2013. He has been associated with retail programme of Sankrail SEDI since 2011.

Rajkamal Jain works as Field Officer at SEDI Amarwara in Chhindwara, MP.

Vinod Verma work as Computer Hardware Trainer with Institute for Skill and Entrepreneurship Development (ISED), Darlaghat (HP) since six years.

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