Multi-Skill Vocational Training and Entrepreneurship Development as Part of Secondary Education

Pune, India
lendahandindia
Organization type:
nonprofit/ngo/citizen sector
Project Stage:
Scaling
Website:
http://www.lend-a-hand-india.org

- Education
- Education reform
- Girls' development
**Youth development**
**Youth leadership**

---

### About Project

**Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?**

The significant disconnect between the education imparted and livelihood / real life skills needed resulting in lack of livelihood opportunities in rural India is a major contributor to youth unemployment and urban migration. Most teachers follow the rote method of learning which results in a lack of comprehension and active engagement of the students. Further, educational curriculum followed focuses more towards the needs of the urban population. Knowledge and skills sets relevant to the life of the rural population on subjects such as agriculture, animal husbandry, health and basic engineering are not addressed in the educational curriculum in rural India. In the absence of adequate opportunities to find gainful employment locally, many also discover that do not have the skill sets or confidence to set up their own venture. This results in waves of unskilled workers moving to urban areas in search of work. Over time, this has also resulted in the rural youth increasingly feeling disconnected from the local environment. They aspire for the variety and quality of educational and livelihood opportunities available in urban India which results in a drain of local resources.

**Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!**

Our solution complements existing educational curriculum to make content more relevant to the rural environment and provide students with a more hands on experience. Subjects such as basic engineering, energy, environment, agriculture, animal husbandry and home and health science are introduced. The program complements existing theory taught in school in subjects like mathematics and science. We believe entrepreneurial qualities and values are more likely to develop if explored and nurtured at a young age. Hence the course targets high school student age 14-18 years. Instead of recruiting instructors from outside the village, we saw the potential of the local community in acting as instructors. We work with the school management to identify and train instructors, who are typically local micro-entrepreneurs in the identified fields. In addition to monetary incentives, these micro-entrepreneurs also receive opportunity to undertake additional work orders received by the school from the community, appear for open school diploma examinations and access to networks to expand their business. To follow a sustainable grassroots model that will capitalize on existing infrastructure and resources to achieve scale and sustainability we partner with Government-aided schools, pervasive in rural India, to implement this approach. We contribute to approximately 80% of the initial costs and the schools are required to invest the remaining 20%. Pursuant to such commitment, the school management makes arrangements for space and infrastructure necessary to launch the program.

---

### Impact: How does it Work

**Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.**

The course includes a mix of traditional academic work and hands on projects. On the academic side, students learn the theory behind the subject in question and on the experimental side, they learn by doing. Students get the benefit of a real life working experience by doing most of their practical work by serving the needs of the community around them. They undertake various activities such as learning to test their blood, fabrication, repairing equipment and growing produce under the guidance of the instructors. Students also acquire practical business skills such as timeliness, calculating costs, marketing and selling their products locally and ascertaining profits. We maintain a gender-neutral approach in imparting the education. By doing so, we have empowered girls with skills such as electrical wiring, fabrication and carpentry. On account of active participation of the local community, students also retain a strong connect with the community. Since the introduction of the course, schools have become a focal point for the community — a space where work orders are carried out, flowers and produce are sold. Revenues generated through these activities go back to the school. It has resulted in the formal recognition of the program as a full credit course Government of Maharashtra. In schools attendance is 100% due to this program and drop out rates have gone down. So called "back benchers" show increased interest and performance. In a recent survey conducted with 1,200 students who graduated, over 250 of the students planned to start their own business.

---

### Sustainability

**Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?**
Several organizations are providing vocational training to the youth. However, they have been limited in their reach and scope typically providing training in a single trade over short period without aiming to develop scientific temper and problem solving abilities. Very few organizations encourage entrepreneurship and creation of opportunities and instead focus on building skills towards jobs in the urban market. Also, existing initiatives target students after they graduate from high schools resulting in them making choices of skill without any background. Further, most such training centers operate outside of schools or universities implying limited access to the community.

About You

Organization:
Lend-A-Hand India

First Name
Raj

Last Name
Gilda

Email
raj.gilda@lend-a-hand-india.org

Your role in education
Resource Officer.

About Your Organization

Organization Name
Lend-A-Hand India

Organization Country
, MM, Pune

How long has your organization been operating?
1-5 years

References - Please provide two references with a two-sentence biography, email address, and phone number for each

Reference 1:
Name: Venky Raghavendra
Email: venky04@gmail.com
Phone: +1 804.418.6246
Formerly Managing Director - "Ashoka: Innovators for the Public", Washington DC and the Chief Philanthropy Officer of the American India Foundation

Reference 2:
Name: Nithin Umapathi
Email: numapathi@worldbank.org
Phone:+1.202.375.1302
Sector expert with World Bank in the field of Youth employment.

The information you provide here will be used to fill in any parts of your profile that have been left blank, such as interests, organization information, and website. No contact information will be made public. Please uncheck here if you do not want this to happen.

Innovation

How long have you been in operation?
Operating for 1-5 years

Source URL: https://www.changemakers.com/isese/entries/multi-skill-vocational-training-part-secondary-education#comment-0