

SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN WOMEN

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“There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women” – KofiAnnan

“Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world; When women participate in the economy, everyone benefits” – Hillary Clinton

ABSTRACT

Recently “skill sakhi” titled programme is a part of the government’s mission to undertake skill development training as a big step towards empowerment of women in diverse fields. Today, skill development holds the key for everybody’s future success. Today, specialisation with skill development has immense opportunities all over the world.

STEP scheme aims to provide competencies and skill that enabled women to make self-employed entrepreneur. Vocational training for girls is being conducted by Advanced Training Institute. Women need different trainings than men. As they are likely to work as contributing family workers, home based micro entrepreneurs or low paid seasonal workers in addition to handling their domestic work, care and responsibilities. Skill development is a key to improve their productivity, employability and income earning opportunities. Women must learn machine designs and also practise in mechanical workshops. They can themselves put up household industries like handicrafts, artistic and design products. Women can practise law and can become lawyers and judges in higher courts. In commerce field they may become entrepreneurs and take job in MNCs. They may also participate in sports and can represent country at international platforms. Women must learn fashion and product designs which have a huge international as well as national market. They must learn coding and web designing which has a scope in IT industry. In preschool curriculum we can encourage both girls and boys too. Identify their strengths, weakness and interest through play based and project based learning.

I ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The aim of skill development, particularly in case of women, is not only prepare them for jobs, but also to improve the performance of women workers by improving the quality of work in which they are engaged. The NSDC has identified a few of the major challenges, which need to be addressed for building a conducive ecosystem, of skill development for the womenworkforce. These are :

- The largenumber of women who need to be trained sincecurrently only 2% of the female workforce is formallytrained
- Inadequacies in the quality and relevance of TVET (technical and vocational employmenttraining in India)
- Inadequate Infrastructure, acute shortage of trained women workers, poor quality of training
- Lack of mechanisms to judge and certify quality
- Inequity in access to TVET for women
- Low level of education of potential women trainees that limits training of women in the formal sector
- Lack of recognition of prior learning of potential women trainees
- Relatively high opportunity cost of learning involved for training women.

The major challenges noted here are that a focus on gender would imply an emphasis on strategic needs such as leadership and advocacy, rather than a simple focus on basic needs. The concept of gender will also, encourage an understanding and an analysis of power relations, and enforces the idea of developing capabilities rather than simply skills.

India has to act now and get the training and skill development right to benefit from demographic dividend, to create a global pool of skilled persons. However, if the demographic dividend is not turned into an opportunity now, and if India fails to deliver, this demographic dividend in about 25 years may actually become a handicap. Besides the demographic dividend, another factor that adds to the urgency for improved skill development is the increasing number of newly educated youth, especially women, who would like to seek employment in the service sector.

The education and skill development sector has not adequately responded to this emerging need, making it imperative to provide skill development and training in marketable skills and services. It is therefore clear, that there is a urgent need for a paradigm shift in the skill development sector, in favour of innovations, improvements and high quality training.

It is also observed, that the concept of training and skill development needs to move beyond the conventional goal of imparting technical and managerial competencies, to playing a broader role of basic literacy, numeracy, critical social and political awareness, awareness about gender, and enhancing life skills. Such interventions by their nature will encourage higher self esteem among women and overall personality development. It is urged that for skill development to be more effective, training needs to bend towards developing the kind of skills women and men already know. In other words, the need is to enhance or adapt traditional skills to aspirational skills.

II SOME OF THE MAIN SUGGESTIONS

Gender sensitive policy

There is a need to further develop HRD and training policy from a gender perspective, with an understanding of local customs and traditions. It also implies focus on improvements in access to education and training for girls, including the provision of services, such as transport, hostels, scholarships, and other incentives to encourage women to enroll for education and training. Women are seriously under-represented in many occupations, thus, policies are needed to fight exclusions in the labour market by reducing the incidence of discriminatory practices.

The Apprenticeship Act

The government enacted the Apprenticeship Act in 1961 to connect job seekers and industrial units. Its main aim to provide both basic skills and job training according to a certain set of prescribed standards. There is a pressing need for radical improvements in the 1961 Act according to the changed times. The circumstances and challenges faced by youth, particularly women, are very different from what existed in India at the time of formulation of the act. There have been dramatic changes in the employment scenario and the skills required to meet the industrial demand for skilled labour.

Up gradation of the craftsmen training scheme:

The main institutions under the craftsmen training scheme in India are public Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and private Industrial Training Centers (ITCs). The aim of the ITIs and the ITCs is to provide skilled workers

Expansion of training institutes and provision of basic infrastructure

There has been a steady expansion of ITIs in the country is needed mainly in the 'backward' regions of the country. Besides the expansion, it is equally crucial to build basic infrastructure especially in remote areas, making ITIs more accessible, particularly for women.

Provision of vocational training in schools

It is recommended that vocational education be introduced at the level of secondary education, or from 9th standard onwards, to attract students who may drop out, to skill them and as a result provide them with better livelihood opportunities. The National Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF), currently being developed, will encourage integration of vocational and general education.

Identifying and making efforts to change basic and socio-cultural values with a view to eliminate existing biases that women in the country face when seeking employment

Greater efforts are needed in the form of awareness programmes, counseling of families to assuage their fears with regards to training of women, and investment in personality development of women to be able to analyze

and challenge discriminatory practices. It is equally important to recognize the structural changes in the Indian economy and changing gender norms of our society indicating slowly but steadily changing life-style aspirations of youth, both men and women.

Gender sensitive training

Women face complex ground realities, including low levels of literacy, discriminatory social customs and traditions, limited hours available for training and work, and limited exposure and unfamiliarity with new technology. The training may have to incorporate teaching of basic skills such as numeracy, problem solving, communication, learning to learn, and team work and, other deeply impacting skill such as behavioural skills, including building self-esteem, self-organizational and negotiating capacity for employment purpose. Issues of identity, autonomy, leadership, rights and responsibilities, entrepreneurial and business management skills, increasing awareness on gender are to be relevant issues not only for women but also for men.

Global Women Project

Yet too many women are prevented from enjoying their full human rights because of poverty, discrimination, violence and inequality. That's why they support grassroots women's organisations in developing and disadvantaged communities to provide education, livelihood and leadership opportunities for women.

Role of Cairn India

“Rural women are main agents for achieving the transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development. Cairn India is committed to enhance the social status of rural women in its operational areas. The company has been consistently working towards initiating programs for regular mentoring and creating opportunities for their overall socio-economic enhancement.”

Sudhir Mathur, Acting CEO of Cairn India Ltd To develop and modernize anganwadis in the country, the Ministry of Women and Child Development and Vedanta signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to build 4000 next generation anganwadis – NandGhar, a first of its kind public private partnership.

The NandGhars are in line with Prime Minister of India's vision of social development through initiatives such as Digital India, Swachh Bharat and Skilling India. Cairn India is committed to this path breaking initiative. The project NandGhar will help uplift the communities on a national scale by educating children, eradicating malnutrition and developing vocational skills among women in India.

In alignment with the government's Skill India initiative The Cairn Enterprise Centre (CEC) provided skill training, career counselling and linkage to employment opportunities to over 12,000 youth including women since 2007. Through the Cairn Enterprise Centre (CEC), various income generation activities have also been introduced to empower women. CEC also provides financial support to help these women start their own businesses.

From the usual vocational training courses for women such as sewing or craft-making, Cairn India has empowered 50 women to be trained masons.

Masonry training

As a value addition all the women participants of the masonry training are also being made literate through a special provisional literacy program specifically designed for them. This ensures that after completion of the training, the women are not only financially independent but are also empowered to face new challenges.

Cairn India has also initiated the Dairy Development Program in Barmer where women are an integral important part. This Dairy Development Program is run through a model of a cooperative and women self help groups. The program helps women sustain their socio-economic status in the community. The program has been expanded to 2,398 households and milk production has increased from 7,500 to 9,500 liters per day.

EXAMPLE

Under this project, Dhapu, a village woman was introduced to Oyster mushroom cultivation. She sold 45 kg packed mushroom under the brand 'BarmerUnnati' to local hotels and restaurants and Barmer market. She has trained women in her village Self Help Group (SHG) and now manages a booming mushroom crop. The initiative has not just made her an earning member of her family, but it has also empowered all the women associated with this program.

Surasaniyanam is a remote village in East Godavari district in coastal Andhra Pradesh. Absence of requisite education and skills resulted in unavailability of sustainable livelihoods, increased migration and socio – economic challenges. The Ravva JV onshore terminal, operated by Cairn India, is the village's first and only tryst with industrialization. Here a unique initiative has been started called The Suraksha Project. Under this project, micro units of women self – help groups produce various articles of daily use.

Techno serve

Techno Serve is helping enterprising women in developing countries build competitive farms and businesses to break the cycle of poverty.

There Typical approaches include:

- Supporting women-dominated income sources to grow both household income and increase women's income control
- Jointly training both husband and wife on agricultural best practices and business skills to increase adoption rates and joint household decision-making which reduces conflict and empowers women
- Developing and driving the business case for employing, sourcing from and servicing women
- Improving women's access to financial services and other productive inputs
- Promoting both male and female gender role models

Gender equality means recognizing that men and women often have different needs and constraints and therefore often have differing value to contribute to social and economic development. TechnoServe draws upon gender aware research and hands on field experience to design projects which understand and takes into account these differences. These projects seek to enable the full and unencumbered participation of both women and men to drive inclusive economic growth.

III.EXAMPLE

Corporate partners like The Coca-Cola Company and Nespresso and institutional partners like USAID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, TechnoServe increased the revenue and wages of 110,000 women in 2015. By 2017, TechnoServe aims to ensure that at least 40 percent of our beneficiaries will be women, in line with women's participation in agriculture and in small-medium enterprises

IV.CONCLUSION

There are 18 Learning Facilitators like Rekha in 11 villages of Haliyal, Uttara Kannada district, Karnataka. By March 2017, 25 such facilitators will change the way children learn after-school in 25 CherYshShikshas in 15 villages with 1000 children covered. She is the one woman who is changing lives through learning in her village.

One example is broom making unit, started in December 2014 with 6 women as direct beneficiaries. Today, about 120 poor households from the project area are tied-up with this brooms unit as raw sticks suppliers. The Suraksha brooms and SurakshaAgarbatti making unit is touching the lives of community members in villages around Cairn India's operational areas in Ravva. The project has helped women, who are the driving force of this business, to save money, live a better life and help educate their children.

Cairn India, through various unique initiatives, aims to encourage more women to cross social barriers and chart out a new future for them and their families.

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