



YuvaKendra – A New Hope for Youth

India enjoys a large “demographic dividend”. The majority of its population is young. 89% of the population find employment in the informal sector including self-employment. Despite its rapid economic growth, India has seen a long period of “jobless growth”. A majority of Indian youth, particularly in the rural areas still have very limited education and the training opportunities. The Skills to Livelihood programme run by Development Alternatives, in partnership with the HCL Foundation, provides training in various skills for a sustainable and dignified livelihood and income generating opportunities to school drop-outs and unemployed women and youth. This would help the communities to become self-reliant. Within a span of 12 months, a total 700 trainees in Noida (Uttar Pradesh) will be reached out through skill development programme. A mix of conventional courses and innovative solution driven courses will be rolled out. The programme is being implemented through Community Training Centre/Vocational Training Centre model approach. DA mobilises people through mobilisers who reaches out to the community and explains about the courses and its impact.

YuvaKendras in urban areas and centres are community hubs that imparts both short-term and long-term skill building training to youth who have not been able to complete mainstream education and are from economically challenged backgrounds. These centres train them in core skills such as computer skills, business process outsourcing, IT skills, retail services, and customer relations. Eligible candidates are supported to secure jobs through special recruitment drives and career fairs. These also target women from vulnerable communities and focus on their career development training, digital literacy, and essential life skills including personality development, assessing strengths and weaknesses, goal setting, effective communication and motivation.

First YuvaKendra (Vocational Training Centre) has been initiated in Khoda (Uttar Pradesh) which offers Assistant Beauty Therapist, Retail and BPO/IT courses. Till date, 53 youth have undertaken trainings. On 22nd May 2019, second YuvaKendra was launched at Salarpur village, Bisrakh Block, Gautam Buddha Nagar (Uttar Pradesh).

Nidhi Pundir (Director- CSR Head– HCL Foundation) graced the occasion by cutting the ribbon along with trainees present in the center. Both HCL Foundation and DA team were present on time at the Salarpur Center. From HCL Foundation Ms. Nidhi Pundhir, Director – CSR, Head – HCL Foundation, Mr. Arpit Asthana, Ms. Anurima and Volunteers grace the occasion. From DA, Mr. Sandeep Khanwalkar, Senior Programme Director, Maj. Gen. Rahul Bhardwaj, Lead Implementation, Mr. Sushant Agrawal (Senior Manager), Ms. Mariyam Majeed (Deputy Manager) were present.

Maj. Gen. Rahul Bhardwaj spoke of working in group which gives more strength and earning opportunities. These courses will make you competent to access opportunities available in the market. He said “If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate a nation.” Mr. Sandeep Khanwalkar spoke more on having positive attitude and being regular in attending classes as this will help them to understand course without any gap. Sandeep also spoke about importance of NSDC certification. Kits were distributed to the trainees who had completed their course successfully. Ms. Nidhi Pundhir suggested that we should include courses like Financial Literacy, Digital Literacy and Spoken English.