

# Kaushalya Vardhan Kendra (KVK)

*Pioneering a flexible approach of skill development in rural Gujarat*

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## Teaching Note

### Synopsis

The case study for Kaushalya Vardhan Kendras (KVKs) documents the development and implementation of a unique skill development program in Gujarat, targeted towards the rural population. India is still predominantly rural with close to 70% population residing in villages and engaged in the agricultural sector. The levels of literacy and formal education in rural India are very low. Opportunities for vocational training and skill development are also scarce. Women in rural areas are particularly disadvantaged; bound by social norms and customs and have limited time and money to spend on education and skill enhancement.

Recognizing the low participation of women and rural youth in skill development programs, the Government of Gujarat decided to initiate the KVK program. The KVK model adopts a decentralized, cluster base approach to skill development that is responsive to local culture, traditional skills and industry needs. It also offers more flexibility in eligibility criteria, course curriculum and timings making it more accommodating for women and other disadvantaged groups such as school dropouts, minorities and lower income families.

The KVK program is relatively new, but has already received significant attention and several accolades. The KVK program has been widely appreciated by the Planning Commission, Ministry of Labour, Government of India, State Governments and other bodies including the Confederation of Indian Industry, FICCI and The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India. The Planning Commission is considering adopting the KVK model to design PPP architecture for 5000 new skill development centers (SDCs) to be established all across the country. The program has also received the PM's Award for Excellence in Public Administration in 2012 for its innovative approach and successful implementation.

The KVK case can be taught as a best practice example for extending skill development programs in rural areas of the country. Participants should be encouraged to discuss the elements of its success, which include flexible program design, participatory planning, fostering linkages with local industries, mobilizing existing government machinery for prompt and responsive decision making.

### Target Audience

The case study is for students of public administration and policy studies, government officers, educators and vocational studies practitioners. It can be taught in alignment with cases focused on governance, public management, operations management, public-private partnerships and collaborative planning methods. This case may be of value for other states in India seeking to expand access to vocational education and training.

## Case Purpose and Learning Objectives

The purpose of the case is to discuss the need for flexibility and innovation in the vocational training and skill development sector in India. The KVK case presents a best practice example from Gujarat where the Commissionerate of Employment and Training conceived and implemented a new program to extend vocational training in rural areas of Gujarat by utilizing existing institutional arrangements and government infrastructure. The case discussion will focus on the development and rollout of a new program and the potential expansion of a state level practice into a model for new skill development centers (SDCs) to be established all across the country. Specific learning objectives from the case are:

- Examine the challenges and strengthen the skill development sector in India
- Understand various aspects of project planning, policy implementation and operations management in the government sector
- Explore factors affecting scalability and replicability of a local policy or a program

## Recommended teaching strategy

The KVK case should be discussed in the context of existing policies and programs on vocational education and skill development in India. It is suggested that the case be taught as part of a 90 minute class focused on education, training and employability in India. The class should be divided in three segments. The first segment will focus on the existing skill development landscape in India and the importance of vocational training for a country to maintain its competitive edge. The second segment will be the discussion on the KVK case. The third segment will include a group exercise wherein the participants will discuss the modalities and challenges of introducing a similar program in their respective states/ countries. Students are encouraged to come prepared and read the case and other recommended readings before the class. Suggested reading material for each segment is provided.

### 1. Discussion on Skill development landscape in India(20 minutes)

*(Notes: Various studies point out the shortage of skilled manpower in India. India is among the top countries in which employers are facing difficulty in filling up the jobs. According to a summary report on skill development prepared by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce Industry (FICCI), the difficulty to fill up the jobs in for Indian 2012 was at 48%, which is above the global standard of 34%. Most workers in India – employed and looking for work – have not had any vocational training for acquiring skills. Skill development hence is a priority agenda in the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. The plan emphasizes the importance of vocational training and skill development to reap the full potential of the demographic dividend and build a skilled workforce in the near future. )*

### Suggested reading material

- Growth and Structure of Employment In India  
[http://isidev.nic.in/pdf/ICSSR\\_TSP\\_PPS.pdf](http://isidev.nic.in/pdf/ICSSR_TSP_PPS.pdf)
- National Policy on Skill Development Policy, 2009  
<http://labour.nic.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Policies/NationalSkillDevelopmentPolicyMar09.pdf>
- Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012–2017), Economic Sectors  
[http://planningcommission.gov.in/plans/planrel/12thplan/pdf/12fyp\\_vol2.pdf](http://planningcommission.gov.in/plans/planrel/12thplan/pdf/12fyp_vol2.pdf)
- The Skill Development Landscape in India, FICCI, 2010  
<http://www.bibb.de/dokumente/pdf/IMaCS.pdf>

- Skills Development Sector Profile, FICCI, 2012  
[http://www.ficci.com/sector/74/Project\\_docs/SectorProfile.pdf](http://www.ficci.com/sector/74/Project_docs/SectorProfile.pdf)
- Learner first: Knowledge paper on skill development in India, FICCI, September 2012  
[http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/FICCI\\_skill\\_report\\_2012\\_finalversion/\\$FILE/FICCI\\_skill\\_report\\_2012\\_finalversion\\_low\\_resolution.pdf](http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/FICCI_skill_report_2012_finalversion/$FILE/FICCI_skill_report_2012_finalversion_low_resolution.pdf)

### Discussion Questions:

#### 1. Discuss the current employment scenario in the country

Participants will discuss the employment growth in the primary, secondary and tertiary economic sectors. The discussion will also look at workforce participation in organized vs. the unorganized sectors. Quality deficit in employment among women, SC/ST and other social groups will be discussed.

#### 2. How important is vocational training to the economic growth of India?

Participants will discuss the importance of vocational training in the context of current employment scenario in the country. Skills and knowledge are key factors contributing to economic growth and social development. The employment rate in the primary sector (agriculture) in India has been on a consistent decline. As India urbanizes further, most new jobs that will be created will not be in agriculture, but in secondary and tertiary sectors. However, the skill sets that are required in the manufacturing and service sectors are very different from those in the agriculture sector. There is a large skill gap, especially among the rural population. The levels of literacy and formal education in rural India are very low. Women in rural areas are particularly disadvantaged; bound by social norms and customs and have limited time and money to spend on education and skill enhancement. This scenario necessitates a boost in the vocational training and skill development sector.

#### 3. Discuss existing institutional frameworks for imparting vocational and skill training in India

The discussion will focus on:

- Ministry of Labor and Employment's policies and approach towards skill training
- Institutional arrangements and modalities Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in the country
- Other skill upgrading programs and self-employment schemes implemented by various ministries

#### 4. What are the limitations of the existing vocational training framework? What kinds of improvements are needed to make skill training more flexible and industry responsive?

Participants will discuss the main concerns with the ITI system including limited reach in rural areas, low enrollment of women, fixed curriculums and strict eligibility criteria, centralized decision making etc. This question will lead to the case discussion about KVK

## 2. Discussion on best practices (40 minutes)

In this segment, participants will discuss the KVK case and other best practices in the vocational training and skill development sector from India as well as other countries.

### Suggested reading material

- Kaushalya Vardhan Kendras - Pioneering a flexible approach to skill development in rural Gujarat (Case study and additional material), 2013
- (Other cases as recommended by instructor)

## Discussion Questions:

### 1. What were the key changes in the skill development scenario that the KVK program was able to bring about? What factors contributed to the success of the KVK initiative?

The instructor can focus on key aspects of the KVK program and also discuss the positive outcomes of the program in terms of improving employment and self employment potential of rural youth and increase in enrollment of women in vocational training. As part of this discussion, the following points can be emphasized:

- A decentralized, cluster based approach
- Promoting industry linkages and 'need-based' training
- Flexibility in course structure, curriculum and timing
- Formal certification for short term courses

### 2. How was the State Government able to mobilize resources for this new program,? Discuss from an operations management perspective.

Participants will discuss the roles and responsibilities of government, industry, community and private stakeholders. The State Government decided to utilize existing institutional arrangements and government infrastructure for the program. All decisions regarding operations and management of KVK were taken by CET and conveyed to stakeholders through issuance of government resolutions (GRs) which allowed for prompt action on ground. The CET also empowered the community to participate in program planning and design and monitor the quality of training. Participants will discuss the pros and cons of this approach.

### 3. What aspects of the KVK program make it a model for a public-private partnership?

NSDC states that public-private partnerships can help India overcome two of the largest challenges to vocational education training: an inadequate infrastructure and a shortage of job offers. One of the action item cited to achieve this is to attract people from rural, low-income geographically dispersed locations at a young age. The KVK program has been very successful in doing just that. Participants will discuss the unique aspects of the KVK program in promoting industry linkages and inviting private players to design and implement courses as per their need. The example of KVK, Godhavi can be specifically discussed where TATA offered a 5 day course in wire harness manufacturing and directly employed 324 people at the TATA Nano plant in Sanand on course completion. This model of industry responsive skill development works in favor of both the trainees and the industry, especially in urban and suburban areas. The industry is provided a pool of skilled manpower to select from and the local youth are guaranteed employment.

## 3. Group Discussion (30 minutes)

This segment will be designed as an interactive session. The participants will be split into groups of approximately 5-6 people per group. Each group should include a balanced mix of participants from different types of backgrounds, government agencies and geographical locations in order to reflect their different perspectives and experiences. The participants will share with their group the aspects of skill training in their state/country such as opportunities for vocational training in urban and rural areas, quality of training, enrollment of women and other disadvantaged groups, industry linked training etc. The participants will also discuss the opportunities, challenges and modalities of making the skill training system more accommodating and flexible in their own states. Each group will prepare an action plan and report back to the main group summarizing their main ideas, findings and conclusions in a presentation format.