

Project ID and Title


Skill Development and Enterprise Promotion for Inclusive Development - PROMoting Inclusive GRowth through Enhanced Access to Local Livelihood Opportunities, Education to Work Transition and Social Protection Schemes (PROGRESS) - 000128824

Annual Progress Report

January - December 2021

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Date:				
Award ID:	000128824			
Project ID:	000122693			
Project Title:	Skill Development and Enterprise Promotion for Inclusive Development - PROMoting Inclusive GRowth through Enhanced Access to Local Livelihood Opportunities, Education to Work Transition and Social Protection Schemes (PROGRESS)			
Project Start Date:	1 st April 2021			
Project End Date:	31 st December 2024			
Donor:	SAP Labs, Nayara, Marico, LTPCT, LTI, RBAP (YCL), Impact Foundation, KISS, SCCI			
Implementing Partner:	UNDP			
Total Project Budget (all years):	USD 2,385,452			
Project Brief Description and Outputs:				
<p>The project was launched in July 2020 to promote education to work transition for 10,000 underprivileged women and youth by building their skills and knowledge to help them get access to vocational/educational opportunities or secure apprenticeship/employment. The project also sought to train 250 households on entrepreneurship, digital and financial literacy to support their livelihoods and 25 social entrepreneurs to manage, grow and scale their business.</p>				
List of focus States/districts: Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha				
Overall Project Quality Rating (mark on the scale of 1 to 5 as per the following criteria):				
Exemplary (5) *****	High (4) ****	Satisfactory (3) ***	Poor (2) **	Inadequate (1) *
All outputs are rated High or Exemplary	All outputs are rated Satisfactory or higher, and at least two criteria are rated High or Exemplary	One output may be rated Poor, and all other criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher	Two outputs are rated Poor, and all other criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher	One output is rated Inadequate, or more than two criteria are rated Poor
Budget 2021	20,32,292			
Expenditure 2021	12,73,577			
Delivery %	63%			

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1. Executive Summary

For scaling up and replicating the models developed under Disha, a 5-year strategic partnership between UNDP and Ikea Foundation, the Inclusive Growth portfolio launched the “Skill Development and Enterprise Promotion for Inclusive Development” under the PIP modality of implementation to strengthen the skilling, employment, and entrepreneurship ecosystem in India. The project provided Career Guidance and Counselling, 21st Century and basic employability skills training, as well as training on Entrepreneurship Development to 18,805 women youth and people from marginalized communities. The project also benefitted 3966 individuals by conducting livelihoods and entrepreneurship trainings to support farmers, Warli artisans and marginalized women to learn skills to enhance their income generation capabilities. 60 social entrepreneurs were trained to manage, grow, and scale their business through the National Springboard Programme and Incubation Programme. Through policy reports on promoting Education to Work Transition, Impact of COVID-19 on Youth Entrepreneurship and study on Green Jobs and Eco-Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Women in India, the portfolio advocated for improvement in the skilling, and entrepreneurship ecosystem in India. The major challenge faced in 2021 was the operational hurdles emerging from the second and third wave of COVID-19. Digital modalities of engaging with the target groups fostered the digitization of training curriculum. However, the engagement through online mediums were limited to beneficiaries who had digital devices and sound internet connectivity. The critical lessons learnt in the process of implementing this project were three-fold. Financially, it was realized that UNDP will have to realign its internal financial processes to leverage funds from the private sector as per the revised Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) guidelines. Strategically, management of stakeholder relationships (including implementation partners) helps with improved quality of concurrent monitoring of data and on-ground progress as well as achievement of planned delivery of overall outputs. On the operational front, planning of activities based on timely adaption to changing grassroot realities due to COVID-19 helped the project achieve its deliverables with the ongoing government restrictions and lockdowns. During the Project Initiation Plan (PIP) period, UNDP successfully forged partnerships with the private sector (SAP Labs, NAYARA, MARICO, LTI) and designed a four-year programme **Promoting Inclusive Growth through Enhanced Access to Rural Livelihood Opportunities, Education to Work Transition and Social Protection Schemes (PROGRESS)**. UNDP also managed to get the Local Project Appraisal Committee’s (LPAC) approval of Department of External Affairs (DEA) and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) as an anchor partner for the project. PROGRESS has been developed address the multi-pronged challenges created by COVID-19 - especially for the economy and livelihoods. In partnership with the Central and State Governments, PROGRESS will develop innovative approaches for strengthening the education to livelihood continuum for the youth of India.

2. Project Background

In 2015, UNDP launched the highly ambitious Disha Programme or “Creating employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women in India” in a proof-of-concept phase in partnership the India Development Foundation (IDF) and supported by the IKEA Foundation and. The goal of this programme rolled out across 5 states (Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Telangana) was to explore the paradox of very low and declining Female Labour Force Participation (FLFPR) even while India’s growing business sector reported of shortages in the availability of skilled personnel, and skill development programmes expanded rapidly. Accordingly, four programming models, each corresponding to a large stakeholder group were developed. The independent end-term evaluation of the Disha Programme by Dalberg Consulting concluded that at key stages in the skilling value chain, Disha created and tested scalable solutions which directly enabled women to secure marketable skills, connect to jobs and/or start their own enterprises. Though scale up phase was originally planned to be supported by the IKEA foundation but with COVID outbreak and changed focus IKEA foundation decided otherwise. Therefore, UNDP India started the process of forging new partnership to build on the experience and lessons learned from Disha, including established networks, partnerships, and intellectual assets. The key activities identified based on requests from national and local counterparts and recommendations in external evaluations conducted by Dalberg Consulting were identified with a view to expand, scale up, and strengthen UNDP’s Inclusive Growth portfolio in India. The Project Implementation Plan (Skill Development and Enterprise Promotion for Inclusive Development) aimed to continue to strengthen capacities of key stakeholders, structures, and networks, previously supported by Disha project, to build on the foundation for a robust skilling and entrepreneurship ecosystem across the country. These individuals, institutions, and networks were also called-upon to support other UNDP programme initiatives, specially emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic response, and enhance UNDP’s efforts to promote skill development, employability, and enterprise promotion.

3. Project Performance and Results

3.1. Contribution towards Country Programme Outcome

CPD Outcome 2: By 2022, institutions are strengthened to progressively deliver universal access to basic services, employment, and sustainable livelihoods to the poor and excluded, in rural and urban areas.

CPD Outputs

2.1 Models with large-scale replicability, integrating employability, skilling, employment, and entrepreneurship targeting women and poor people are developed.

2.2 Poor and vulnerable have the capacity, options, and opportunities to move out of deprivation.

2.3 Partnerships for skill development and integrated housing solution forged between government, private sector, multilateral and bilateral agencies, vertical funds, CSR, and foundations.			
Indicator	Baseline:	Target(s):	Achievement(s):
Number of states providing career counselling in state-run educational and vocational establishments targeting women and poor.	2	5	5
Number of collectives of poor producers initiating and continuing access to capital and risk management through new modes of financing.	1	10	10
Number of new partnerships with private sector facilitated by UNDP in skill development and integrated housing solutions.	5	15	17
Description of output level/outcome level <u>results achieved</u> in 2021:			
<p>The scalability and replication capability of models on school to work transition, micro enterprise development, and value chain strengthening with a focus on underserved areas, to promote the establishment of jobs and livelihoods were proven by the external evaluation under Disha project and the Country Programme Document – Mid Term Review. Training of trainers, process improvement, strengthening of industry interaction cells, and making available standardized training curricula on 21st century/ employability skills & entrepreneurship with content in regional languages, boosted the capacity of district level skilling, enterprise promotion, & other institutions. The interventions successfully piloted under the Disha project were scaled up to two new states – Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh with the partnership with Nayara Foundation and Marico in the respective states. UNDP also entered a formal partnership with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship as an anchor partner for interventions in skilling, employment, and entrepreneurship across India.</p>			
Means of Verification: Project Documents			

3.2. Progress towards Project Results/Outputs

Project Output I: Provide women, girls and youth with the skills and knowledge that will help them get improved access to further vocational and educational opportunity or secure apprenticeship /employment			
Indicator(s)	Baseline	Target(s)	Achievement(s)
Number of Women, Youths, and people from the marginalised communities provided with employability /	N.A.	10,000	18,805

21st century skills and apprenticeship/ job connect				
Description of project output level <u>results achieved</u> in 2021:				
<p>UNDP's Career Guidance and Counselling curriculum was translated in Hindi, Kannada, Gujarati, and Odia and was used to provide career counselling sessions to 10680 youth to help them make informed career choices. 5,747 youth were trained on 21st Century Skills and basic employability skills that enabled them to access local employment opportunities with 1266 youth being placed in entry-level jobs with an average salary of INR 10,600 per month. To ensure continuity of sessions, faculty members and NSS Nodal Officers were oriented about the relevance of Career Guidance and Counselling sessions and 21st Century Skills. The project also trained 2278 youth on entrepreneurial skills and facilitated registration of 258 students and 15 employers on the National Apprenticeship Portal. A Youth Ideation Challenge was launched in December and the process of identification of jury members was also initiated to identify youth who can be trained on entrepreneurial skills to take their business ideas into action. The report on Market and Value Chain Study for products produced by Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences students was finalized. Proposals on Art and Applique, Candle Making and Entrepreneurship, Building Resilient Livelihoods for Returning Migrants, Solar-run Literacy Centres training were also developed as a part of the initiative with Kalinga Institute. UNDP onboarded a technical partner to implement Phase 2 of the Gender and BI experiment to be conducted in Karnataka. The beta-version of DiCRA (Data in Climate Resilient Agriculture is a collaborative digital public good which provides open access to key geospatial datasets pertinent to climate resilient agriculture) platform was developed in 2021.</p>				
Overall Output Status (mark the output on the scale of 1 to 5 as per the following criteria):				
Exemplary (5) *****	High (4) ****	Satisfactory (3) ***	Poor (2) **	Inadequate (1) *
The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality, and there is evidence that outputs are contributing to targeted outcomes	The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or expected levels of quality	The project is expected to achieve targeted outputs with expected levels of quality	The project is expected to partially achieve targeted outputs, with less than expected levels of quality	Project outputs will likely not be achieved and/or are not likely to be effective in supporting the achievement of targeted outcomes
Means of Verification: Project MIS				

Project Output II: Households benefitting from livelihoods and entrepreneurship opportunities increased

Indicator(s):	Baseline:	Target(s):	Achievement(s):	
Number of households benefit from livelihoods and entrepreneurship trainings	0	250	2637	
Number of social entrepreneurs trained to manage, grow, and scale business	0	25	60	
Description of project output level <u>results achieved</u> in 2021:				
<p>Preparatory work (scooping study, roadmap for incubation centre, stakeholder consultations, 21st century curriculum, Biz Sakhi curriculum, Women Sourcing Manager curriculum were all translated in Gujarati, list of social security schemes prepared, on-ground team hired and oriented) was completed to launch the initiatives in Gujarat. 2637 women and artisans were trained on entrepreneurial skills which helped them to understand the basics of business operations, marketing, and importance of collectivization. In Maharashtra, a society for the producer groups named 'Warli Shaili' was registered to ensure sustainability of the interventions. 318 products made by women entrepreneurs (both individual and by SHG groups) were identified for support with market linkages through digital platforms. A digitally equipped Common Facility Centre (CFC) was established in Padgha, Thane. 211 women from local communities were identified, oriented, and selected for intensive training as Unnati Sakhis, and Village-Level Entrepreneurs as an exit strategy for the project. FSSAI Food Safety and Regulations orientation, registration and certification were completed for 90 women entrepreneurs. 1329 farmers were provided agri-extension services in Maharashtra. 125 tonnes of agri-commodities were supplied by 330 farmers connected to the procurement centres. 12,349 families were made aware about government schemes for social protection, and 10,816 families were supported to access at least one government scheme. Out of the 398 applications received in response to the Call for Applications for Youth Innovation and Climate, 40 enterprises were finally selected for the National Springboard Programme. Managed by UNDP, an incubation programme for 20 youth-led social innovation for LGBTI+ livelihood was completed by Ashoka University. 3849 young people were trained and certified on Sustainable Development Goals and 21st Century Skills across 41 Movers Workshops. Evidence-based policy research on a report on "Strategies for Promoting Education to Work Transition Landscape in India", "Impact of COVID-19 & Industry 4.0 on Future of Work for Women", "Impact of COVID-19 on Youth Social Entrepreneurship", "Socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on women migrant workers", "Scoping Study and Policy Imperatives on Green Jobs and Eco-Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Women in Select States in India" helped in strengthening UNDP as a thought leader in Women Economic Empowerment and social protection in 2021.</p>				
Overall Output Status (mark the output on the scale of 1 to 5 as per the following criteria):				
Exemplary (5) *****	High (4) ****	Satisfactory (3) ***	Poor (2) **	Inadequate (1) *
The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or	The project is expected to over-achieve targeted outputs and/or	The project is expected to achieve targeted outputs with	The project is expected to partially achieve targeted outputs,	Project outputs will likely not be achieved and/or are not likely to be

expected levels of quality, and there is evidence that outputs are contributing to targeted outcomes	expected levels of quality	expected levels of quality	with less than expected levels of quality	effective in supporting the achievement of targeted outcomes
Means of Verification: Project Documents				

4. Project Risks and Issues

The key challenge faced by the project in 2021 was the disruption of on-ground programmatic activities due to the second and third wave of COVID-19. This led to utilization of digital modalities of engagement with the beneficiaries, resulting in sub-optimal outreach to targeted beneficiaries due to their limited access to digital devices and internet connectivity.

Updated Project Risks and Actions

Project Risk 1:

With the second wave of COVID-19 in April 2021 and third wave in December 2021:

- Facilitating market linkages for artisans was impacted.
- Field activities were stalled due to the foreclosure of educational institutions and lockdown.

Actions taken:

Project activities were planned such that:

- The project explored digital modes of market linkages for the artisanal products to enable sales and economic growth of the artisans.
- The team adapted to conducting expert sessions online to promote the project, mobilize, and register women and youth for project activities.

Project Issue 1:

Participation rate of youth in the online Career Guidance and Counselling Sessions were declining due to lack of internet connectivity.

Actions taken:

The team shared the recorded sessions and self-study material to the students through NSS Nodal Officers of each institution and followed up with the faculty and students during the subsequent sessions.

Project Issue 2:

Conducting 5-day entrepreneurial training programme for women from remote areas was challenging due to lack of transportation.

Actions taken:

The team reached out to the local Gram Panchayat to facilitate the mobilization of different clusters from remote areas to a much convenient location.

5. Lessons Learned

Creating and advertising Request for Proposals (RFPs) in advance vis-à-vis the planned deliverables helps in managing project deliverables as per set milestones. By proactively engaging with the Implementation Partners monthly, the quality of implementation and data collection can be monitored closely, and capacity building sessions can be planned for the implementation teams accordingly. It was also realized that critical project stakeholders (Government and Private Sector) should be engaged in on-ground activities such as the inauguration of training batch, certification distribution, guest lectures etc. and should also be provided periodic project updates to keep them abreast of the success, challenges, and overall progress of the programmatic interventions. For the operational success of the project, adapting to the changing grassroots realities is a must. Due to the pandemic, use of blended learning materials and processes was accordingly strengthened for effective delivery of training programmes. The UNDP team also found value in networking with grassroots level organizations and sectoral organizations which made the process of reaching out to the underprivileged communities a lot easier. To commence programmatic activities on time, it is critical that the Project Management Unit and office is set on time along with prior approvals for timely initiation of project activities. Although UNDP India is leveraging CTSI to receive the CSR budget, UNDP's internal financial management processes need to be aligned as per the new CSR guidelines such as Utilization Certificate to be provided within 2 weeks of Financial Year closer, returning unspent budget etc. These internal process changes shall help to mobilize the CSR budget of different private sector partners.

6. The Way Forward/ Key Priorities for 2022

To leverage the scalability and replicability of the interventions of the PIP project, which ended in December 2021, the Inclusive Growth portfolio developed a new programme, **Promoting Inclusive Growth through Enhanced Access to Rural Livelihood Opportunities, Education to Work Transition and Social Protection Schemes (PROGRESS)**. This programme has received the approval from the Department of External Affairs and MSDE has agreed to be the anchor partner for PROGRESS. Along with regular programmatic activities, PROGRESS will aim to address the multi-pronged challenges created by COVID-19 - especially for the economy and livelihoods – building back with a focus on resilience, sustainability, and skill development for a 21st century green economy provides a unique opportunity for inclusive skill development. A key focus of the programme is on developing alternate approaches and intervention design for education to work transition responding to the swift changes on account of the pandemic. The programme is being rolled out in close partnership with the Central and State Governments and will leverage partnerships with private sector actors, financial institutions, educational and vocational institutes, training partners, and the community to fill the gaps through innovative approaches and practices. The private sector will be a key stakeholder in all aspects of this

programme through their core mandate and competencies in fostering links with the market, and financial and technological platforms. It is presumed that close cooperation with the private sector will allow for the sustenance and scale of prototypes that can reach out to a large beneficiary base. While on-ground outputs will be demonstrated through convergent action in 25 Accelerated Programming Districts across 11 partner states, a solid component of policy, knowledge management and evidence-based advocacy will work towards robust replication and upscaling strategy. Pathways of engagement shall include mobilization and creation of a cadre of managers/mentors at community level, leveraging career guidance & counselling (secondary schools and colleges/universities) networks based on aspirations of young people, strengthening producer-based 'value/supply' chains; micro-enterprise promotion and apprenticeship promotion with industry associations and private sector actors; and strengthening the government's social protection architecture. The programme also aims to extend support to state and central government on outreach and implementation of flagship schemes and programmes, wherever required. Apart from providing policy and research inputs, UNDP intends to provide a platform for discussion, and sharing of good practices in the spirit of south-south collaboration.