

West Bengal Skill Development Programme

Introduction

Department of Social Welfare of West Bengal promotes an integrated skill development programme under SCA to SCSP to empower the Below Poverty Line (BPL) Scheduled Caste (SC) families to earn sustainable livelihood. SCA to SCSP faced several issues with regards to poor convergence with other sectoral departments, low outreach under skill development component and poor sustainability of the measures provided to the beneficiaries. During last five years, the state has implemented some of the country's best skill development initiatives such as "ethnic beauty care", "tailoring programme" etc. under the scheme. The programmes are implemented in collaboration with government and non- government agencies and provide support to beneficiaries right from acquiring the skill set to producing the units and selling the products in the market.

Intervention

The Department received an increase in actual release from Rs. 83 crores in 2014-15 to Rs.164.85 crores in 2018-19 under SCA to SCSP. For skill development initiative alone, the average per capita investment increased from Rs. 19,962 in 2014-15 to Rs. 20,315 in 2018-19. The state uses Cluster Development Approach by identifying potential area for intervention followed by a needs assessment to map the skill gap in the community. The state has collaborated with EPC, National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) and Apparel Training & Design Centre (ATDC) to impart the skills among the beneficiaries post which two levels of skill training is conducted. This is followed by product orientation, apprising the beneficiaries with relevant technology for designing the aspired products, facilitating market linkages and providing financial support through National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development (NSFDC) schemes for entrepreneurial ventures.

Impact

Following impacts have been observed following the intervention:

- Around 19,000 SC/ST females out of 28,000 trained (beauty therapist course) are barefoot beauticians earning from Rs. 3000 pm to 15,000 pm. 500 SC females applied for finance for setting-up parlours (branded by Shehnaz Hussain).
- Around 3,500 female master tailors (self-employed tailor course) have been setting-up schools such Usha Selai School Model.
- On an average, 3,500 trainees have been provided with job employment in sectors like plastics engineering and technology (CIPET); automotive (Hyundai Motors); banking and financial (Axis Bank, ICICI Bank), FMCG (Godrej, ITC), LED mechanics (SIMOCO); security

and surveillance (G4S); DTH installation; AC/ refrigerator (Samsung, LG); nursing aid; General Duty Assistant, frontline health worker, etc.

Source: Annual Report 2015-19, Department of Social Welfare, West Bengal