

# Making Skills a Currency

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# Enterprise Development

Thomas Paul

In a country like India, vocational training has been perceived as a stepping-stone to wage employment in the past four to five decades. Industrial growth has been high and the opportunities for wage employment were good. Most of the vocational training centres only focused on going through a set syllabus already developed by the government or any other examining agency and assessing the training at the end of the course through an examination scheme. Once the examination is over, they consider their task done. The trainees are really not trained and prepared to face the world of work, except for the skills imparted. Even this is not entirely in line with the needs of the labour market. With the present scenario, where job opportunities for skilled craftsmen are fast depleting, the focus on training for wage employment has to shift to preparing trainees for self-employment. This is a different ball game. Some of the basic questions that come up are:

- ◆ Can every one be an entrepreneur or is it a particular trait that only some people or communities have?
- ◆ Is it necessary to develop the business attitude first or can it follow skill training?
- ◆ Is there a sufficient market for several persons to get involved in business that calls for the same skill?
- ◆ Who does the market analysis, the training centre or the trainee him/herself?
- ◆ Can a trainee coming out of a training centre at an age of around 18 to 20 be able to start his or her business?
- ◆ Can a trainee just coming out of a training centre be expected to meet the quality standards of the market?

These are important questions and a skill provider has to be convinced about these aspects before setting out to impart skills. The objective should be that the training imparted should lead on to the trainees being able to earn a substantial income on a sustainable basis. To answer some of the questions:

1. Experts say that every one has the potential to be an entrepreneur although everyone may not be one. The environment plays a very important role in developing the business attitude. Can our skill training centres that perceive to be educational centres have this role transformation to have a business environment? **Business cannot be Taught but is Caught.** The training centre needs to operate on a business mode.

2. Business first or skill first is a classic question? Ideally the skill training should follow the development of business. Skill training should be provided when a market opportunity related to the particular skill is first identified. At the same time, it may be possible to provide both at the same time in skills, which have a general market demand. However the product on which the training is imparted has to be directly related to market opportunities. Here again the skill training cannot go on endlessly. When the market opportunity goes down, the training should stop.
3. Market opportunities are not within the control of the trainees or even the training centre. Market opportunities also vary from time to time and can change very fast. The market therefore is a very important factor, which controls training for self-employment. The skill imparted and the number of trainees trained in a particular skill has to be related to market opportunities.
4. Since market opportunities change from time to time, it is best for the trainee to be able to identify the market opportunity by him/herself and adapt the business according to the demand. Several training centres still believe that trainees cannot assess the market and that they have to do it for them. The trouble could be that the ex-trainee who becomes the entrepreneur is slow to respond to market fluctuations and variations that could even lead to a failure of business.
5. Is there an age limit for an entrepreneur? The answer is no. However, we still believe that a young person cannot start business. It is not the age per se, but the support structures that matter. If a suitable support structure is created / provided, even a youth or child can do business. Training centres have to take this factor seriously when training youth for self-employment. Moreover, life skills and coping skills become important when one prepares trainees for self-employment, where the support structure is poor.
6. Who decides the quality of the product is an important question? In conventional training, it is the textbook or the examination standard that determines the quality. Quality is related to cost. Therefore, when training for self-employment, it is very important to assess the quality that the market can

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## Annual General Body Meeting

AGM took place on 17 August at Bangalore. The Action plan for 2007 – 08 was presented and reviewed by the Board while transacting other business. Nine new projects were approved for funding assistance.



## Workshop on Monitoring

A two-day workshop on monitoring was conducted on 25-26 July at BISWA, Sambalpur-Orissa. It was organized for building the capacities of FVTRS partners on monitoring aspects especially on Results Based Monitoring (RBM) in FVT projects to enable them to improve monitoring systems in FVT programs. Twenty-six partners attended the workshop from Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Orissa. Mr. D.J. Kennedy and Ms. Rupal Panchal facilitated the workshop.

## Documentation of Curricula

Ms. Rupal Panchal has visited five partners and documented the curricula developed by them for organizing FVT programs.



## Regular Projects

Nine projects were approved in the quarter for funding assistance with an outlay of Rs. 38 lakh. Currently 69 projects are running including those that were approved earlier where more than 12000 youths are undergoing training.

## Tsunami Project Interventions

41 projects are running currently in the tsunami hit states training about 5000 youths.

**Partners' meet:** Held at Chennai on 10 July with selected partners. Discussed crucial issues in project implementation.

**All project partners' Meet at Bangalore:** Partners implementing tsunami project interventions met at Bangalore on 22 August. Deliberated at length on trainee selection criteria, trainee retention, trainer attributes community participation and EDP issues.

**Projects:** Implementation of eleven projects started during the quarter. Youths are being trained on wood carving, silk weaving, computer basics, masonry, domestic geriatric care, welding, cell phone repair and beautician.

Seven projects were completed with 705 youth trained in various trades.



**FVTRS Website Launched**  
[www.fvtrs.org](http://www.fvtrs.org)

**State Consultation on 14 Nov 2007**  
**All West Bengal partners and stakeholders invited**  
**Venue: Karigari Bhavan, Kolkata**  
**Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

# EU-supported Project



## Capacity Building Exercises

Staff from all three Regional Program Promotion Centres (RPPCs) attended three-day seminar held from 11-13 July on Database Management conducted at Bangalore. The seminar reviewed the work with planning of activities, and other capacity building exercises. The last day was joined by the Directors of RPPCs. Mr. Koshy Mathew facilitated sessions on documentation.



**Associating partners:** Two, one-day orientation programmes were organized for the associating partners from Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand on 20 and 22 August. Twenty-three partners attended. Mr. T.D. Joseph, Manager EU project facilitated these programs with coordination from RPPC, Orissa.



**Resource mobilization and Report writing:** Sixteen participants comprising staff of three RPPCs and EU project staff of FVTRS participated in the above training conducted from 27-29 August at Bangalore. Ms. Lakshmi Raman, consultant facilitated the program. The occasion was used to impart documentation skills using personalized computer services at Sacred Heart Brothers training institute, Gedhlahalli, Bangalore on the last day.



## Field Review

**Implementation:** RPPCs at Meerut and Ahmednagar were visited from 23-28 July for a review. A one-day orientation for associating partners was held on 24 at Ahmednagar. Field review was conducted from 2-4 August to review the implementation of the project at Orissa.

**Video Documentation of GTZ/NVTS Cooperation:** The NVTS cooperation has completed a video documentation of the impact of the strategic partnership. Interviewed FVTRS staff, conveners of the partners' networks. The team visited two completed projects supported by FVTRS for location shooting at Bangalore and Laccharagarh, Jharkhand.





**Networks conveners' meet:** For strengthening the activities of partners' networks, a one-day meeting for conveners was held on 31 July at Bangalore. Six conveners attended the meeting. The meeting took stock of progress made in each network on trainee retention, trainer quality, community participation and placement effected while discussing also irritants in the implementation process. Future course of action was drawn up on the occasion.



## Advanced Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

A three day TNA was held from 25-27 September for the Northern RPPC and associating partners at Meerut. The topic was based on sharing findings of the field study. The

'Skill' is the buzz word heard in all informed circles today. India is described as a skill deficit nation capable not enough to respond to the new emerging opportunities. It is estimated by a new World Bank report that India will face a deficit of five lakh skilled workers by 2010 as it has only 5 per cent of its population possesses a skill.

There are more than 17000 trainees undergoing training currently in various trades in 110 projects in FVTRS supported projects, in addition to the new ones being planned as result of the Training Needs Analysis effort under European Union supported project. 70 per cent of the trainees who are trained in earlier projects are engaged in various trades. The 'National Skill Development Mission' planned by planning Commission will help in a big way to fill the gap. Let's contribute our mite.

**Albert Joseph**  
Executive Director

workshop was facilitated by Mr. Ralf Lange, Ms. Rupal Panchal along and FVTRS staff.

## Senior Experten Service, Bonn

Signed an MOU with SES Bonn to make use of their experts in various fields useful to FVTRS activities. Mr. Manfred Maurer from Bonn will visit FVTRS and partners to organize EDP related training and further transfer of skills to other local partners and prospective players. It will start from end October till mid November.

## National Skill Conference

Preparations are on for the 'National Skill Conference' to be held on 5 and 6 December at Vidyaadeep college, Bangalore in connection with the EU project. The occasion will be used to organize national partners' meet as well. Invited European Commission, and Planning, Rural and Human Resource Development ministry officials. Other logistics are being worked out.



## Monitoring Visits

Under the tsunami category, visits were made to seventeen on-going projects in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, and under regular category to Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar for pre-assessment study.

## Organization Development (OD)

HR consultant Dr. Cherian Joseph has embarked on an OD process for FVTRS. The first sensing session is completed and the process will be on till March 2008.

## Visitors

**ILO:** Ms. Madhusree Banerjee from ILO New Delhi visited FVTRS on its approach, implementation and impact on youth with an aim of selecting organizations involved in skill training where ILO support could count.

**SES Bonn:** Mrs. Sabine Schmitt, Director SES Bonn visited to finalize on the experts' visit to FVTRS.

**Shri Ram Centre for Industrial relations and Human**

## Short Glimpses on Successful Youth

**Premananda Khosla** aged 26, a school dropout dalit youth was working in a tyre retreading shop earning Rs. 750 per month. He joined the vocational training centre at Ankuran, Rayagada, Orissa for electrical training and started his practice in electrical work while learning the trade that fetches him Rs. 2000 per month currently. He looks forward to start his own shop and earn more.

Same is the story of **Soura Naik**, aged 24 years as well. He came to know about vocational training going on at Rayagada, Orissa and joined electrical trade. He stayed with a friend of his as his home was 80 kms away. He has successfully completed the training in the trade and is now needed in his community which was not the case earlier. He was insulted earlier and felt guilty to go home for being not useful but now he feels happy to go home as he has acquired a skill in electrical work. He is now working in a government owned company at Kashipur which is an industrial hub.

**Sunita Ashok Dhruve** hails from a poor family of Mansar village near Nagpur. Her parents are poor agricultural labourers with Sunita being the only girl child. Pitiabile conditions forced her to stop studying beyond 9th class. She was proposed for marriage with a sick, elderly person. The

Counselling Cell of Mansar happen to meet her at the village and briefed about the vocational training courses conducted by Vishwodaya. She was sent to a private hospital away from her village for practical training. She could however not cope up with English language. With sheer determination and confidence, she managed to complete language training at Vishwodaya and simultaneously did the nursing practical training. She could find a new place in the same hospital as a paid employee and is an earning member.

Fifth standard dropout **Rekha Vijay Suryawanshi** is a 32-year-old orphan from the slums of Martin Nagar at Nagpur being brought up by her relatives. Her relatives however, deserted her as she married a person of her choice. The couple with two children were struggling with a meagre sum earned at a hotel. Rekha came to know about the vocational training programs at Vishwodaya. She joined the tailoring course at Vishwodaya but was not able to manage with theory as it required reading and writing skills. She did not give up and joined the school to learn reading and writing and finally completed the tailoring course. With the help of Vishwodaya, she bought a machine on loan and now stitches clothes for her neighbours and earns Rs. 1500-2000 per month.

**Resources, New Delhi:** Dr. K. Raghavan interacted with FVTRS staff on 'vocational training and its impact on women' as part of the centre's research study on the subject.

### Exhibition

An exhibition was organized at Inwent, Feldafing, Germany on 24 September 2007. The exhibition was facilitated by Mrs. Kim Merkel. Inwent is a capacity-building organization and the exhibition was open to the public. FVTRS is looking forward to accessing capacity-building programs of inwent.

### Staff Change

Mr. John Kennedy, Field Executive and Mr. RSN Sharma, Manager - Advocacy and Documentation have left FVTRS during the past quarter. We wish both of them all the best.

Mr. Prashanth Shetty has joined FVTRS as Field Executive, Tsunami projects. Hearty Welcome.

### Some useful information

#### Senior Experten Service, Bonn

It is a bank of specialists who have left their professional lives behind them. It has over 7000 senior experts who could be of assistance in over fifty fields covering from agriculture to wood processing.

Cost for accessing their services: Board and lodge, local travel if any, and Rs. 300/- per day.

Contact address:

SES- Bonn, Buschstrasse 2, 53113,  
Bonn, Germany.

Email: [ses@ses-bonn.de](mailto:ses@ses-bonn.de)

Website: [www.ses-bonn.de](http://www.ses-bonn.de)

### Hearty Congratulations

Our partner Bro. Sushil Toppo has been nominated to the Expert Committee on Concepts and Methodology for Establishment and function of Community Colleges by UGC under the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

# Invitation to partners of FVTRS

## 'National Skill Conference'

### National Meet and Consultation on Skill Building

December 5 and 6, 2007 - Bangalore

Functional Vocational Training and Research Society (FVTRS) is organizing a two-day event on skill building pertaining to the unorganized sector on 5, 6 December at Bangalore. FVTRS is a pioneer national player in building skills through vocational training to the disadvantaged youth who are school dropouts and illiterate. This is done through training projects that are operated in partnership with NGOs. The effort is financially supported by Misereor, Germany and European Union.

The meet on 5 and 6 December will deliberate on the following aspects that are relevant to vocational training with a special focus on building skills based on the newly emerging opportunities in a globalized scenario.

The audience/participants are primarily 200 associating partners of European Union supported projects and regular project partners of FVTRS from across all the states in India. Other civil society stakeholders will also participate.

#### The topics for deliberation are

1. Unorganized sector - its meaning, depth and magnitude
2. The contribution of unorganized sector to Indian economy
3. The relevance of vocational training to disadvantaged youth
4. Entrepreneurship and Micro-enterprise development
5. Laws governing unorganized sector, and reforms needed
6. Educational scenario in the country
7. Role of Right to Information Act
8. Corporate Social Responsibility and its role in building skills
9. Relevance of R&D in vocational training
10. Role of European Union in skill building in the unorganized sector

On both days there will be an exhibition on products and services, organized by partners.

#### Some facts pertaining to unorganized sector:

- ❖ 93 per cent workforce belongs to unorganized sector
- ❖ 80 per cent percent students drop out before they reach 10th standard
- ❖ Drop-out rate (kindergarten to 10+2) is 94 per cent
- ❖ 600 million are not literate
- ❖ Only 4 per cent is covered under vocational training in India
- ❖ 300 million unemployed: Age 18 to 50
- ❖ 46 million registered with employment offices
- ❖ 71 per cent below the age of 35 years
- ❖ 290 million below poverty line @ Rs. 10/day
- ❖ 70 per cent of all graduates belong to Arts stream

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afford. Here again it is good for the trainee to develop this sense rather than the training centre to do it for them. The carpentry section in a training centre in a small town struggles to sell 20 good quality chairs produced by the trainees in a year on a “no loss” basis. Two carpentry shops nearby sell on an average 50 chairs a month at half the cost. The training centre would consider the quality of their chairs very poor. However, that is what the local market wants. Quality is therefore not dictated by the book but by the market and the trainees need to learn to assess this.

Considering these factors, training for self-employment has to be different from training for wage employment. Some of the main differences are:

### Training for Wage Employment

A rigid training curriculum is followed based on imparting skills to a preset standard with the final test/examination determining the quality of training.

Main concentration is on skill training. Market opportunities are generally not a consideration.

An attempt is sometimes made to “teach” entrepreneurial skills through classroom sessions. The logic being – some trainees may start their own business.

Life skills, if at all imparted, is considered an add-on component. Normally a couple of sessions are included in the curriculum. It is not mainstreamed with training.

Once training is imparted and a certificate issued, the centre considers their job done. Follow-up on trainees is generally not considered their task and no provision is made for this.

### Training for Self-employment

Training is very flexible and related to market opportunities. Both trainees and the training centre relate to the market on a day-to-day basis.

The main focus of training is to help the trainee focus on utilizing opportunities to make a profit. Making money is the name of the game.

The entire training is built around job orders. No orders, no training is the philosophy of training. Trainees share the profit and are encouraged to focus on maximizing profit.

Developing right attitudes and imparting life skills is an important part of training. This is integrated within the curriculum and is not taught as one of the subjects. The entire training methodology in the centre is around developing the person.

Linking the trainee with an appropriate support structure is a very important task of the training centre. This is best done as a process and starts from the pre-training stage.

## Forthcoming events

**GTZ- NVTs partnership:** Final review and documentation with Ralf Lange – first week of October.

**Website:** Launch on 18 October of [www.fvtrs.org](http://www.fvtrs.org)

Workshop on sharing of field findings on 24-26 October for RPPC Orissa.

Regional interface with various stakeholders on 27 October at Bhubaneswar.

Workshop on sharing of field findings on 1-3 November for RPPC Maharashtra.

**SES Bonn** facilitated training workshops at Trivandrum on 1 and 2 November, and at Bangalore on 5-7 November.

**Promotional consultation:** On 14 November 2007 at Calcutta in collaboration with Director, Technical Education and Vocational Training, Government of West Bengal.

**OD process:** On 21-23 November at Bangalore.

**FVTRS Board** meets on 30 November at Bangalore.

**National Skill Conference:** December 5 and 6 at Bangalore.

**NVTs Cooperation** closing evaluation on 10-11 December 2007 at Delhi.



## Functional Vocational Training and Research Society

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