IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Executive Summary

May 2013

Lend-A-Hand-India jointly implemented, with Vigyan Ashram, the PLAN 100 project wherein IBT module is introduced in high-schools across rural areas.

This impact assessment was supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT), Mumbai as part of the “Tracking and Assessing Impact on Employability of participants in the IBT” project.

Mr. Kaustubh Devale was the Consultant to this study.

This report is a summary of in-depth impact assessment report prepared. For the full report, please contact: lahi@lend-a-hand-india.org

Putting Education to Work

Many young people around the world — especially the disadvantaged — are leaving school without the skills they need to thrive in society and find decent jobs.

As well as thwarting young people’s hopes, these education failures are jeopardizing equitable economic growth and social cohesion, and preventing many countries from reaping the potential benefits of their growing youth populations.

- 2012 Education for All Global Report, UNESCO.
Background

Lend-A-Hand India (LAHI) is a leading multi-state NGO with presence in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa working at the intersection of education and livelihood for last eight years. LAHI collaborates with dynamic grassroots non-profit organizations to scale up successful models and interventions and implements them. One such synergic association is the ‘Introduction to Basic Technology ’ programme (IBT) successfully designed and developed by Vigyan Ashram, a unique model of enhancing job and life skills based on the education principle of “learning by doing”.

Project PLAN 100 was initiated in June 2005 with an aim to introduce IBT in 100 high schools across rural by integrating it with the government system of high-school education. In the course of past seven years (2005-12), IBT has been introduced in sixty-one high schools across Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka wherein more than 8,000 rural girls and boys have directly benefitted till date. At present, 51 schools in Maharashtra, 6 schools in Karnataka and 4 schools in Goa are being actively supported for IBT programme under PLAN 100 project.

The Study

To systematically track and assess the outcome and impact of participation in IBT on the students' lives during and more importantly after the course was vital to robustly establish enhancement of employability due to participation. The assessment would also institute an outcome-impact tracking system as an integral part of the PLAN 100 project. Sir Dorabji Tata Trust Mumbai supported the impact assessment process as a one-year project. The PLAN 100 team along with development facilitator (Mr. Kaustubh Devale) conducted this impact assessment at all stages right from designing and communication to interpretation. Additionally, services of 'Team of Research Investigators and Process Services', a Mumbai-based social research support service organization, was hired for the research design.

A sample of 25 schools (50% of total) was selected for the overall impact assessment. The sampling strategy included ensuring geographic distribution and coverage of as many batches of IBT pass-out students. Convenience, availability and snowballing techniques were used for ensuring coverage of the control group sample.

613 Girls & 838 Boys 10th Standard pass-out students from 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 batches and 4,212 (1,669 Girls &2,543 Boys) 8th, 9th and 10th Grades students from the present batch formed the sample group. While 600 (175 Girls &425 Boys) 10th Grade pass-outs from 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 batches and 724 (368 Girls &356 Boys) 8th, 9th and 10th Grades’ from the present batch formed the control group. Apart from this, 87 instructors, 23 Coordinators, 25 Headmasters, 150 parents, 98 village elders and 22 faculty from institutions where IBT alumni enrolled were selected. The population was assessed over a range of short, medium and long term impact indicators; in 360-degree methodology.
Key Findings

To develop a holistic view of the varied impacts of the IBT programme on students, it would help to categorize the assessment indicators under four broad headings:

Livelihood:

Compelling evidence supporting the enhancement of employability surfaced with the study. The graduates of 2008-09 batch of IBT program were three times more likely to self-employed or manage family business as compared to non-IBT Students. Likewise, unemployment ratio in the IBT students of the same batch was only 6% while compared to 20% in the non-IBT students.

Also notable is the large percentage of IBT students (56%) choosing higher technical education as against the non-IBT students (20%). Vocational Education, by nature of the IBT program itself, deepened in its range and acceptance as many schools undertook projects relating to disciplines such as electric wiring, fabrication, agriculture, etc. As co-curricular development, these projects were also used as enterprise centers earning on an average of Rs. 8,000 to 10,000 to each school. The skills were also seen to be used to address school, household and community needs ranging from farming to carpentry and household chores; as demonstrated by the study.

Education:

A marked difference in attendance (of 95% as compared to 75-80% normally) and reduction in drop-out rate was seen across the IBT schools. Specifically, drop-out rates amidst female students halved when compared to the non-IBT schools.

Student engagement in school building activities was significantly higher, as reported in the surveys. The range of activities included basic electrical and furniture repairs to developing holistic solutions to water scarcity through innovative methods such as harvesting, soak pits, etc.

Environment:

Understanding and usage of green renewable energy sources was seen to be increasing in the students of IBT schools. Over 80% students have been using water harvesting techniques in the form of soak pits, soil and water harvesting micro structures (like: different types of bunds, check dams, contour-bunding / terracing and farm ponds) and tree plantation. 8% of the students (199) have been using renewable energy in the form of solar energy, LED, bio-gas and organic manure based gas.
Qualitative:

Women Empowerment and reduction in Gender stereotyping were seen as a consequence of the nature and structure of the IBT-program in schools. The inclusion of technical education greatly enhanced their access to employment and higher education. Their acceptance to the program was demonstrated by the higher ratio of girls among fee paying students when compared to boys. A number of IBT instructors too (22%), mentioned the access to wider opportunities for girls as one of the significant benefits of the program.

Reduction in gender stereotyping was seen when 147 parents (99% of the total 148 surveyed) shared that they had seen / experienced changes pertaining to gender stereotyping and roles amongst their children while 135 parents (91% of the total 148 surveyed) shared that they have seen their boys participate more in domestic / household tasks on a regular basis. 91% of the students responded that they are able to work with the opposite sex easily, 92% being able to talk freely and 100% facing no difficulty in dealing with each other (boys and girls).

Conclusion

It is evident from this impact assessment that IBT has made significant positive contributions in the lives of 6,128 students (currently studying: 4,677 total of which 1,936 girls & 2,741 boys and SSC pass-out: 1,451 total of which 613 girls & 838 boys) participating in the IBT course in 25 schools across Maharashtra. Key positive contributions due to IBT in the lives of these students are learning of various technical skills, safety measures, value of labour and various technologies (like water harvesting and renewable energy) as well as possible learning (academic) impacts due to application of the ‘learning while doing principle’, development of an entrepreneurial spirit and reduction in gender roles related stereotyping. This impact assessment concludes that there are clear positive outcomes in the short and medium term emanating from implementation of the IBT course across 25 schools. It also concludes that there is tangible evidence suggesting positive influence on enhancing the employability of the participants of the three-year IBT course implemented in 51 schools across Maharashtra.

Sanket Says:

I realized the utility of IBT when I obtained admission in the Bio-Technology course after my 12th Standard exam. ...when I joined this Bio-Technology course, I remembered the various practical and projects we had done in the three years of IBT especially the projects on doing various types of grafts on different plants, various compost and vermin-compost plots and blood-group testing... In fact, I also help my younger brother with engineering drawing that he is learning in his Diploma course - SSC student (2009-10) IBT student of Loni Khurd in Rahta Taluka of