

THINK LABOR

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Vocational Training in Action: Kolhapur Field Visit



As the train made its way to Kolhapur, I felt a mix of anticipation and curiosity. As a new joinee, this trip was my chance to see firsthand how Pratham Skilling's programs are implemented and making a difference. I was eager to meet the students and hear their stories. With each mile, I was getting closer to understanding how our vocational training is helping young people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.



Pratham Skilling focuses on equipping youth from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (ages 18-25) with employable skills and access to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. We deliver these vocational training programs through two main methods: Center-based Residential Training and Community-based Non-Residential Training, also known as

community camps.

In the classrooms, a mix of theory lectures and hands-on practical training unfolds. Students are deeply engaged, whether they're learning the intricacies of healthcare, wiring circuits in electrical training, or honing their skills as Sewing Machine Operators. This hybrid approach, blending virtual remote sessions with in-person practice, as depicted in the images below, showing students absorbed in their classes and collaborating on practical tasks. Additionally, various engaging activities are incorporated to help students better understand the content.



Sewing Machine Operator



Electrical

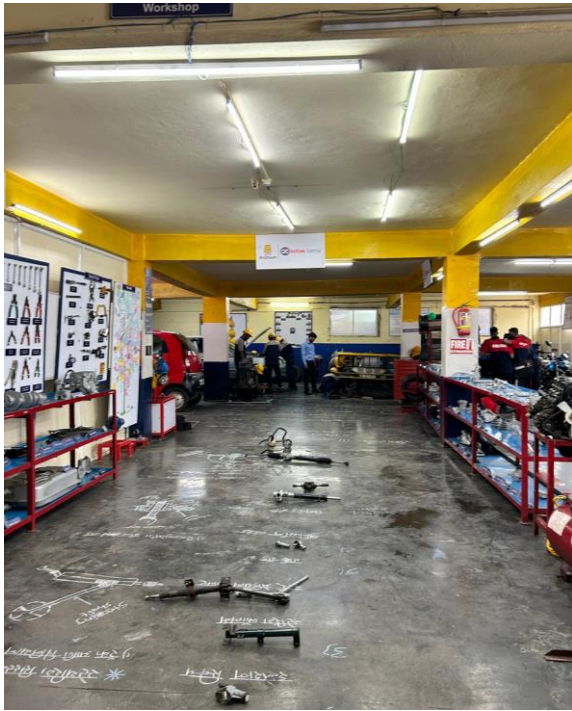


Plumbing



Healthcare

The practical training is a crucial part of the vocational program. These images highlight the real-world applications of their skills, underlining the program's alignment with industry needs.



Interactive Activities Making Content Revision Engaging and Fun

The community camps, on the other hand, are designed to be more accessible and sustainable. These non-residential training programs allow students to return home at the end of the day. Despite this difference, the quality of education remains consistent, with the same theory and practical content being delivered. These camps are hubs of learning and opportunity, reaching into multiple nearby villages.



Community Camp of Sewing Machine Operator - Wathar, Kolhapur

Evening brings a quieter scene. Small groups of students gather for self-study, revising the day's lessons and preparing for tomorrow. A photo of them huddled together, books open and pens in hand, illustrates their dedication. As the day winds down, students enjoy leisure activities, simply relaxing and having fun, bringing a sense of balance to their schedule.

I could see how our community mentors, heads, and trainers play a crucial role in the success of our programs. Their dedication was evident in every aspect of the training centers and community camps. Photos captured moments of them engaging with students, providing guidance, and offering support. They managed everything seamlessly, from organizing daily schedules to ensuring each student received personalized attention. Their commitment to bringing out the best in every student was palpable, as they worked tirelessly to implement the programs effectively and help students reach their full potential.



Through this well-rounded approach, Pratham Skilling not only imparts valuable vocational skills but also ensures that students are well-prepared for employment. After completing their training, students are offered placements through Pratham's network of industry partners. Their progress is then tracked for 12 months through remote tele-calling, ensuring ongoing support and success in their new careers.

The Story of a Woman and Many Others

During my visit, what truly stayed with me were the stories of the women I spoke to. Seeing firsthand how the programs I had read about were unfolding on the ground and making a real impact was profound. One of the trainee shared her experience with a mix of pride and emotion: "Before this, I used to do nothing but look after my family. I had nothing for myself. But with this opportunity, I can work and contribute to my family. It makes me genuinely happy to be independent in some sense. I now have something I can do long term, and I'm very willing to go further, learn more, and excel in this trade."



Her words reflected the essence of Pratham Skilling's mission. It wasn't just about imparting skills; it was about transforming lives. The training provided her with a chance to work, to support her family, and to carve out a new path for herself. Her story, along with many others, is a testament to the life-changing opportunities that Pratham's programs offer, empowering individuals and fostering a sense of independence and self-worth.

The training also has a profound ripple effect on the community. The skills and opportunities provided through Pratham Skilling not only benefit the individual students but also uplift their families and the broader community. During my visit, I met many ambitious students who are striving to learn, excel, and earn a livelihood. Their determination and newfound skills are driving positive change, creating a more empowered and self-sufficient community.

Pratham's ongoing commitment to skilling youth continues to expand, reaching more individuals each day. The impact is evident not only in the success stories of the students but also in the strengthened communities they return to. By equipping youth with practical skills and opportunities, Pratham Skilling is building a foundation for sustainable growth and development. This journey reinforced my belief in the transformative power of education and skills training, and I am proud to be part of this mission.

Author: Nikita Gawli, Pratham

