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MODEL ONE

CAREER GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING



IKEA Foundation




what is this model?

This model aims at helping young women make an informed decision about their future.

why is this model important?

As highlighted in the needs and aspirations study realized by E&Y during the inception phase of the Disha project, the crippling information gap is without any doubt one of the main reasons why young women are not grasping the opportunities that lie in front of them in terms of job or skill development.

Most of them are first generation women learners in the family. They rely mostly on the guidance from their parents and family, which, added to the social norms and the perceived value of a girl, drastically limit their prospects and possibilities. They have no clue about their aptitudes, preferences and even less about the job or entrepreneurship opportunities.

It is to be noted that more and more girls in India go for and even finish their secondary education. However, the education system does not prepare them to be part of the workforce (according to the latest Skill India Report, less than half of Indian young people are employable as per industry requirements).

Moreover, for many underprivileged

families, the graduation of a young girl is seen more as a way to increase marriage prospect than to ensure her participation to the workforce.

99%

of young girls in secondary education believe they will pursue for higher studies (colleges).

Unfortunately, we know that the reality is quite different as more than

50%

of them will drop out from the formal education system.

As they do not have received any information about other possibilities (vocational education, apprenticeship, etc) during their schooling years, they tend to fall into the informal sector with little chance to get out of it in the future. Providing them a better and more targeted information during their schooling years should help them avoid fall.

When the Disha project started a few years ago, Career Guidance and Counselling was nowhere to appear in any government skilling schemes. At most, those schemes spoke about mobilization, the needs and aspirations of young people were completely overlooked. It is worth noting that now Career Guidance and Counselling is embedded in several State and Central policies. The Central government is even launching a large-scale campaign to 'counsel' 10 million young people in the next few months. This new emphasis will help young people, and especially girls, receive the relevant information to make an informed decision about their future

how will this model work?

As per Dalberg's recommendation and in order to create a sustainable mechanism, the Disha project has decided to focus its attention to education institutions. The education system should prepare young people for the future and helping them make the right decision by themselves should be part of it.



1. Self-discovery: through proper assessment, we can help girls find out what their aptitudes and preferences are

2. Counselling: the counsellor will provide guidance to the girl, so she can choose the best career path based on her self-discovery and on the opportunities that lie in the job market

3. Soft and employability skills building: to be ready and to be considered employable by the potential employer, the student will have to improve their transferable skills

4. Linkages with private sector: while they are still in school, students can interact with potential employers to understand better what a worklife means. This could happen through guest lectures, immersion within a company, and especially through an internship or apprenticeship opportunities.

what are the results we are expecting from this model?

As part of the ToC of this model, the main expected outcome is:

- Young women can make an informed decision about their future

The main outputs leading to this outcome are the following:

- Career path well defined
- Employability skills increased
- Exposure to private sector increased

what are we testing to create the final blueprint of this model?

While the idea of Career Guidance and Counselling should happen as early as possible, the Disha project has decided to focus on the later part of the education system, where there are clear and direct linkages with the job market. Collaboration with other organizations, like UNICEF and UNFPA, are sought to ensure a continuum is created from upper primary to secondary and tertiary education.

Our work will thus focus on the three specific segments of population and for each segment we will test different methodologies:

1. Girls in school: focus on class 11th and 12th. The main objective will be to provide Career Guidance and Counselling services insisting on a few aspects:
 - Based on Disha learnings, psychometric assessments might not be very useful and could even lead to confusion.
 - Providing more concrete and relevant information on possible career paths, including higher education possibilities and scholarships, will help girls make an informed decision and convince their parents.
 - It should also help identify potential drop-out from the formal education system after 12th and open for them new horizons

(vocational education, apprenticeship) which will prevent them from falling into the informal sector

- Life skills are a critical element at that stage
2. Girls in colleges.
 - Relevant assessment will help in defining more precisely the career path and the job roles they want to apply for
 - Employability skills will give them more confidence and will increase their prospects
 - Linkages with the private sector become critical. The more interactions can happen, the more prepared the girl will be. Mainstreaming the idea of internship will de facto increase the employability of these students
 3. Girls in other networks (NSS - National Social Service)
 - Volunteerism can help in building a set of transferable skills (leadership, teamwork, empathy, critical thinking, etc) that could be very attractive to potential employers
 - The Disha project will demonstrate that a volunteer program as NSS helps young girls in colleges to develop those critical skills and will also help them translate those skills into competences