



Centre of Excellence for  
**YOUTH  
TRANSFORMATION**

A Concept Note

December 2022

*...where the mind is  
without fear & the  
head is held high*

Rabindranath Tagore



"Day by day, I am becoming more confident and more responsible in every way. I'm becoming more and more capable every day. I will cross every hurdle and win."

Anusuya, an HHH alumnus

## The way things stand

Throughout history, youth have been catalysts. From driving economic growth to championing human rights, and much in between - when a nation's youth are empowered, the possibilities for growth are infinite.

India's youth story though, has been one of concerning contradictions. India has the largest population of youth in the world; Over 27% of its population is between the ages of 15-29. Yet, they account for over 80% of all unemployed and 34% of the youth were not in education, employment or training (NEET).

India's youth express a keen interest in being active citizens. However, they are inhibited by the inaccessibility of skills, capabilities and opportunities that can enable them to dream and chart their own empowered journeys.

## Where Head Held High steps in

Head Held High Foundation (HHH) stands for the alleviation of poverty in India and around the world. Since our formation in 2011, we have successfully demonstrated solutions that work towards this mission. The augmentation of youth agency, skills and access has been an indispensable pillar of our work.

Since our inception, we have been able to aid the lives of over 2 lakh young people from marginalized communities, with little or no schooling – 67% of whom are girls. We are operating community-based centers across 20 states and 100+ districts across the country, of which 35% are aspirational districts.

Our purpose is driven by the Capability Approach - to build, enable, and enhance skills & capabilities for people & communities that support them in realizing their potential.

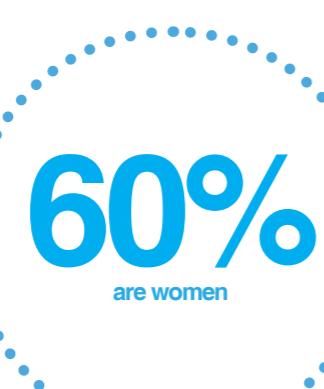


# Our Impact on Youth Transformation



## In focus: Over 2 lakh youth enabled

between the ages of 18-24. 60% of our youth across our interventions have been women, while greater than 75% have come from marginalized communities.



## 100+ Districts

have been reached, of which 35+ are aspirational districts. Majority of youth (over 95%) mobilised are from rural areas.



## Over 3x Increase

in household incomes through our interventions. Most of these households have crossed the poverty threshold index and earning more than USD5.5 per day.



**1,50,000+ Hours**  
of transformational training provided to youth, encompassing life and work skills, 21st century skills, career guidance, counselling and entrepreneurship.



**15,000+ Youth**  
were provided access to economic pathways and connected to livelihoods.

2022/23

# Qualitative Transformations in Youth



## Voice and agency

Improvements in self-esteem and confidence enables trainees to interact within community and markets.



## Rights-based Action

in household incomes through interventions. Average annual increase in household income was over Rs. 95,000.



## Access to Markets

Equipped with ability to aspire and participate in job and education markets, to create fulfilling livelihoods.



## Asset Creation

Increased financial ability, including income creation, savings, assets, and investments in growth.

**“Inspired by a world of abundance, we build capability and resilience in people and communities to hold their heads high.”**

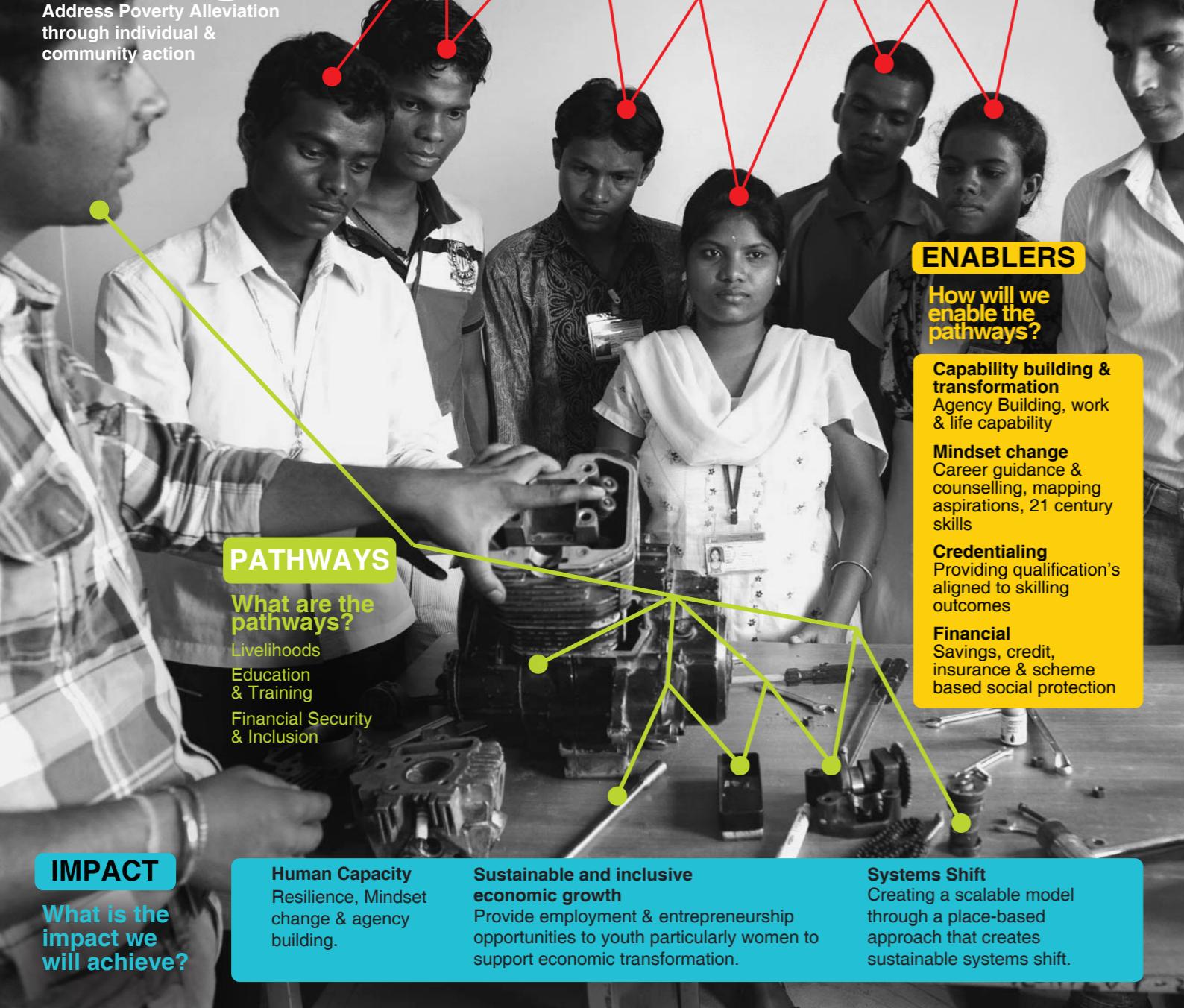
**“ From Poverty , To Dignity ”**



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# Our Theory Of Change



## SDGs we impact



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## The Centre of Excellence for Youth Transformation

The possibilities for growth are infinite.

The Centre of Excellence for Youth Transformation is the nodal taskforce to coordinate and drive our action on enabling youth to lead personally fulfilling, economically flourishing, and socially active lives. The Centre is a culmination of our efforts in transforming the lives of young people for over a decade. It has been instituted to leverage and build on this experience, to create impact at both field and ecosystem level.

The Centre of Excellence is responsible for:

- Conceptualizing and innovating approaches for youth transformation
- Experimenting, designing and developing effective solutions for young people
- Executing, monitoring and evaluating high-impact programmes at scale
- Conducting research, spearheading advocacy and convening stakeholders to collaborate for the benefit of the youth ecosystem

We believe in the limitless potential of every young person, and seek to illuminate this potential through our interventions. Our field tested approach of complementing trainings on skillsets and mindsets, with access to jobs, enterprise creation and social security, serves as a cornerstone for the Centre of Excellence for Youth Transformation.



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# Make India Capable

Our flagship youth transformation programme, Make India Capable, is designed to reach a cross-section of young people - from NEET youth, to youth in formal education - ensuring that no one is left behind.

For NEET youth: Working with youth that have fallen out of the educational system, we bridge capability gaps in foundational and digital literacy, and develop sector-based exposure, life skills, and communication & agency, to make the youth life and work-ready in a span as short as 6 months.

For youth pursuing formal education: Through key partnerships with educational institutions across the country and a blended learning model, this leg of MIC brings together essential elements like contextual career information, employability skills, job-readiness, group & one-on-one counselling, entrepreneurship skills, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, to help prepare the youth for a transition to the workforce.

## Youth Transformation Model

Dr. Amartya Sen's Capability Approach believes that human wellbeing is a measure of the opportunities, or capabilities, that every person has to live the life that they envision and value for themselves. Maximizing these capabilities is the primary function of development. This principle forms the theoretical underpinning of the Make India Capable Transformation Model.

Developed over the years, our model is built to work with a spectrum of youth, from NEET youth to youth in education, through our holistic training programme. This programme is curated to meet unique needs of the group that it works with, but at its core, it addresses three elements - agency, skills, and access. With this, we achieve transformation across three dimensions of personal, social, economic lives, and build individual capability.

## Who we work with

 Youth between ages 18-24 

Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET Youth)

Youth in formal higher education or vocational training institutes

## What we do

NEET youth: Build foundational and digital literacy, logic and numeracy skills, speaking English along with life and work skills

Youth in Education: Build soft skills, 21st century skills, employability and provide career guidance and counselling, to aid in the education to work transition.

## Transformation

**Increased capability through holistic transformation of youth across three levels**

### Personal

Future outlook, self-impression, grit, motivation

### Social

Equality, social status, independence

### Economic

Career aspirations, financial ability, employability



# Make India Capable

"I lost hope for the future, but today I'm a self-assured and liberated, independent woman." Sonmoni, Jharkhand

"I was a school dropout without a clear pathway, the training enabled me to figure out my identity." Sanjeev, Bihar

"I finally understood the importance of independence, which motivated me to be an entrepreneur." Pawan, Maharashtra

"A stepping stone for me to not only aid my family but also to continue with my self-sufficiency career." Mrunal, MP

## Capability Building Philosophy

Make India Capable's core training philosophy is a combination of first, an outcome-oriented approach to training, and second, an enabling curricular methodology grounded in learning theory.

Our outcome-oriented approach aims to build the innate capability of every individual, by holistically targeting three core determinants, as follows:

**Training that is career relevant and context specific, focusing on three core elements**

### Agency

Building personal traits like confidence, self-efficacy and voice

### Skills

Building career focused technical, soft skills and 21st century skills

### Access

Making linkages to placement, seed capital and/or social security

## What is the key to build capability?

### Relevance

A razor sharp focus on what's relevant for the youth to be capable for life and work.

### Transformation

Focus on bringing a transformative difference and is based on transformational methods of training.

### Contextual Learning

Delivered through a series of contexts and conversations around these contexts.



### Experiential Learning

Uses activities like simulations and games, followed by moderated reflection and real world application to ensure information 'sticks'



### Accelerated Learning

Creates an atmosphere for trainees to learn in a multi-sensory way, within a safe but challenging space, and through combination of content forms, with 24/7 assistance



### Multiple Intelligence

Acknowledges the different forms of intelligence posited by Gardner, builds our five Smarts - Body Smart, People Smart, Word Smart, Self Smart and Logic Smart



### Ontological Rigour

Employs ontological principles and a step-by-step approach to enable individuals to introspect, question, and grow from a mindset of "I cannot do it" to "I'm doing it"

## Approach for NEET Youth

### PERSONAL $\longleftrightarrow$ SOCIAL $\longleftrightarrow$ ECONOMIC

#### DURATION

3-6 months of capability building modules depending on the youth demographics

#### ACTIVITIES

- Mobilising young people, mapping aspirations.
- Building life & work capabilities.
- Contextual training modules to align with their experience.

#### OUTCOMES

- Access to economic pathways
- Career readiness
- Agency and Capability Development
- Avenues for entrepreneurship and market access
- Social security schemes - reduced inequalities and vulnerability
- Opportunities for higher education

This arm of our flagship, Make India Capable programme, focusses on NEET youth between the ages of 18-29 - who have dropped out of school and been left behind by the education system. At its heart is the belief in young people and their limitless potential even in the most difficult contexts, if provided with the right tools. Therefore, this arm works with NEET youth to build agency and life & work capability.

The fundamental reason for this program's success is that it pays attention to the way these youth learn. Starting from foundational skills like literacy, numeracy and digital skills, the program builds up to delivering life-skills, career-specific training, sector-based exposure, communication & agency. It enables transformation at social, personal, and economic levels, through self-directed learning, showing results in as little as 3-6 months.

This learning program works with batches of 30 people. They last for a period of 120-180 days in rural contexts and between 45-90 days in urban contexts. Beginning with community level research that helps inform training needs, it delivers relevant training to candidates, links them to placement & entrepreneurship opportunities, and conducts regular follow-up sessions with trained alums. Circling back with regular check-ins enables us to follow through on each candidate's transformative journey.

## Approach for Youth pursuing formal education

### KNOWLEDGE $\longleftrightarrow$ SKILLSET $\longleftrightarrow$ MINDSET

#### DURATION

Contextual session plans ranging from 50 to 300 hours of career guidance, counselling and 21st Century skills, spread over the course of a semester

#### ACTIVITIES

- Building entrepreneurship, 21st century, soft skills and employability - in person & online
- Group & one-on-one career guidance & counselling
- Sessions with industry experts & mentorship
- Building capacities of institution and academic counsellors

#### OUTCOMES

- Awareness on structured career paths for counsellors and students
- Internship & apprenticeship opportunities
- Campus interviews & referrals
- Access to mobile friendly DIY worksheets - builds sense of ownership & self accountability

In an India with rising youth unemployment, reduced female workforce participation and increasing questions about employability of youth, this arm of Make India Capable is our endeavour to facilitate youth into becoming informed decision makers, in charge of forging their own paths in life. We do this by providing young people enrolled in institutions of higher education, career guidance and employability skills to facilitate a seamless transition from education to the workforce.

By partnering with educational institutions like Pre-University Colleges, Technical Training Institutes and Universities, this tier works with batches of their students to equip them with skills that they need to enter and succeed within the workforce. Here, we work with young people between the ages of 15-24 years, toward these primary goals:

 Enabling access to relevant career guidance & counselling

 Equipping them with employability & 21st Century skills

 Connecting them with apprenticeships/internships that help them put these skills to use - leading to personal, social, and economic growth



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