IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Organization Name: HDB Financial Services Limited

Project Name: Empowerment of Unemployed Youth through Skill Development in BFSI sector

Implementing Partner: Friends Union for Energising Lives (FUEL)

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Executive Summary

Category	Project Details
Project title:	Empowerment of Unemployed Youth through Skill Development in BFSI sector
Project Duration:	2021-2023
Major stakeholders:	Youth, Trainers, College Management/Career/ Placement Teams, Employers, NGO Program Team, HDBFS CSR Team
Location:	Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune
Implementation Agency:	Friends Union for Energising Lives (FUEL)
Assessment Agency:	Give Grants

The 'Empowerment of Unemployed Youth through Skill Development in BFSI sector' program, supported by HDB Financial Services Limited and implemented by Friends Union for Energising Lives (FUEL), aimed to enhance the employability of unemployed youth by providing industry-relevant training in the Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) sector.

The program focused on equipping participants with technical skills, soft skills, and industry-recognized certifications, ultimately facilitating job placements and improving financial stability.

The program was implemented across Pune (Maharashtra), Hyderabad (Telangana), and Bangalore (Karnataka), targeting 1,500 youth. As part of the impact assessment, data was gathered from 165 direct beneficiaries (youth), and key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with program trainers, college management/career/placement coordinators, employer representatives, FUEL program team members, and HDBFS CSR team members. The intervention prioritized practical learning, career guidance, and post-placement support, ensuring participants were well-prepared for sustainable employment in the BFSI sector.

Methodology

Sample Size:
- **165 interviews conducted with direct beneficiaries (youth)**
- **16 Key informant interviews conducted with Trainers, College Management/Career/ Placement Teams, Employers, NGO Program Team, and HDBFS CSR Team.**

Program Design

The program, primarily introduced through school and college outreach, attracted beneficiaries seeking employment (70%) and skill enhancement (26%). With 88% finding it relevant to their career aspirations, the training provided industry-aligned knowledge in BFSI, soft skills, and digital tools, enhancing job readiness. Beneficiaries leveraged certification to secure employment, internships, or higher education opportunities.

Only 12% of the youth found it misaligned with their expectations, most of them highlighted that they gained practical insights into financial products, risk management, and customer engagement. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources, which was an integral component of the course were accessed by 55%, thereby supporting digital skill development. Overall, the program effectively bridged the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application, fostering career growth and professional development.

Program Delivery

The beneficiaries reported that the training program was delivered through virtual (54%), in-person (40%), and hybrid (5%) formats, with English as the primary medium of instruction as reported by 71% beneficiaries. A significant 84% used online tools to enhance their understanding of BFSI concepts, financial products, and customer engagement. Hands-on training was integral, with 46% receiving practical exposure in all sessions and 38% in some sessions. Beneficiary engagement was high, with 68% attending 75–90% of sessions and 22% exceeding 90% attendance.

The program's strengths included its practical approach (54%), industry-relevant curriculum (56%), certification opportunities (63%), and exposure to real-world problems (37%). Personalized mentorship benefited 24% of participants. Access to LinkedIn Learning was an important part of the course, with 83% being aware of it and 60% enrolling in various courses. Among those who completed courses, 96% earned certifications, enhancing their employability.

A majority (71%) were aware that HDB Financial Services Limited supported the program. Most beneficiaries (98%) faced no challenges in completing the training, while 2% required additional trainer support.

Impact and Sustainability

The training program significantly improved employment outcomes, with 76% of beneficiaries securing jobs post-training, primarily in banking, financial services, and insurance, while others found opportunities in IT, education, and business development. Income levels showed a positive shift, with 73% of the beneficiaries drawing a monthly salary in the range of Rs.10,000-30,000 and 25% of earning more than Rs.30,000.

Skill application was high, with 51% using their training extensively at work, and 41% reporting improved efficiency. FUEL provided post-placement support to 63%, aiding career transitions. While 67% found job placements mostly aligned with their expectations, 20% saw room for improvement.

Overall, 94% reported skill enhancement, 70% improved job security, and 68% better financial stability, due to their participation in the training programme. With 92% willing to recommend the program and 93% stating it met expectations, the training proved highly effective in fostering career growth and financial independence.

Introduction

The 'Empowerment of Unemployed Youth through Skill Development in BFSI sector' program, implemented by Friends Union for Energising Lives (FUEL) and funded by HDB Financial Services Limited, aims to enhance the employability of unemployed youth through industry-relevant training in the Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) sector. The program is designed to equip participants with both technical expertise and soft skills, enabling them to secure stable employment opportunities.

The program targeted 1,500 unemployed youth across Pune (Maharashtra), Hyderabad (Telangana), and Bangalore (Karnataka), providing them with domain-specific training, industry-recognized certifications, and job placement support.

Key focus areas include:

- **Skill Development** – Training in BFSI sector roles such as Business Correspondent, Customer Care Executive, and Debt Recovery Agent.

- **Soft Skills Training** – Emphasis on communication, business correspondence, and personality development.

- **Career Support** – Job readiness training, networking opportunities, and placement assistance.

- **Industry-Relevant Certifications** – Ensuring participants meet the skill demands of potential employers.

By adopting a structured training and placement model, the program not only enhances participants' technical knowledge but also builds confidence through hands-on experience and networking opportunities. A targeted 85% placement rate ensured that the majority of trained youth secure employment, with an expected minimum monthly income of ₹10,000+. Additionally, the program's sustainability was ensured by engaging graduates as community ambassadors, fostering partnerships with government and CSR initiatives, and continuously aligning training with industry needs.

To assess the program's effectiveness, efficiency, and long-term impact, a monitoring and evaluation framework was established. This includes regular tracking through FUEL's internal MIS system, impact reports for stakeholders, and continuous feedback collection from both trainees and employers. The findings from this impact assessment will provide insights into the program's impact, challenges, and opportunities for future scalability.

Beneficiary interactions and Key Information Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with respondents from Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Pune. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were undertaken with the Trainers, College Management/Career/ Placement Teams, Employers, NGO Program Team, and HDBFS CSR Team.

The program is in alignment with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the United Nations Agenda 2030.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Target 4.4
By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Target 8.6
By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

The program also fulfills the provisions of item (ii) outlined in Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013.

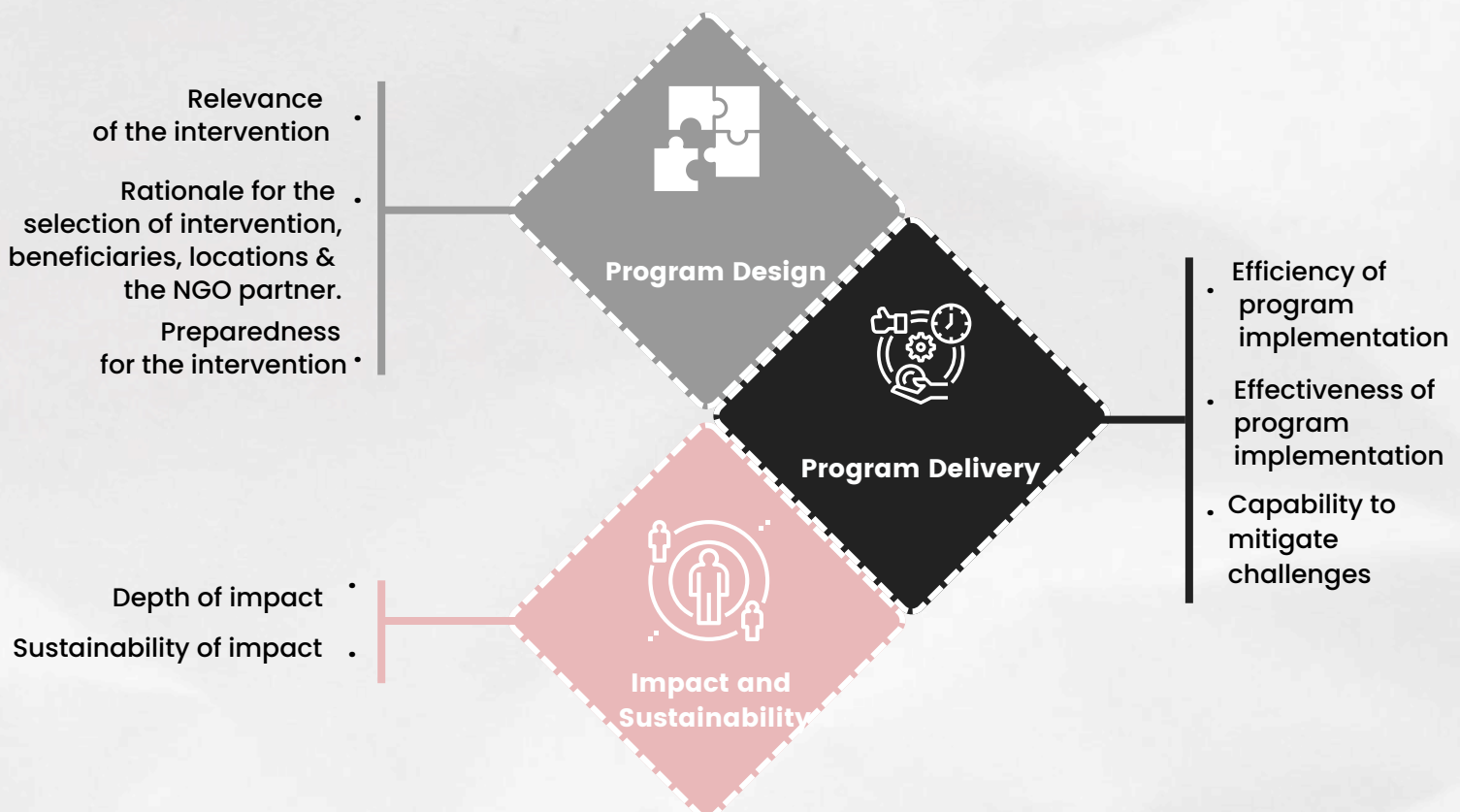*Fig 1: Placement drive conducted for the beneficiaries.*

Scope of study

Objectives

01 Evaluation of the processes employed and the quality of implementation of the project.

03 Assess the project on the goals, activities, outputs, and outcomes for achieving the overall impact.

02 Documenting impact of the project on beneficiaries and other concerned stakeholders.

04 Assess the project on parameters such as relevance, inclusivity, impact, and sustainability on the stakeholders of the programme.

Methodology

The three point assessment framework is used in the assessment is developed by Give Grants based on the OECD-DAC framework for impact assessment. It broadly investigates the following aspects:

- Relevance of the intervention
- Rationale for the selection of intervention, beneficiaries, locations & the NGO partner.
- Preparedness for the intervention

Program Design

Program Delivery

- Efficiency of program implementation
- Effectiveness of program implementation
- Capability to mitigate challenges

- Depth of impact
- Sustainability of impact

Impact and Sustainability

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change Framework (ToC) for the given program is illustrated below:
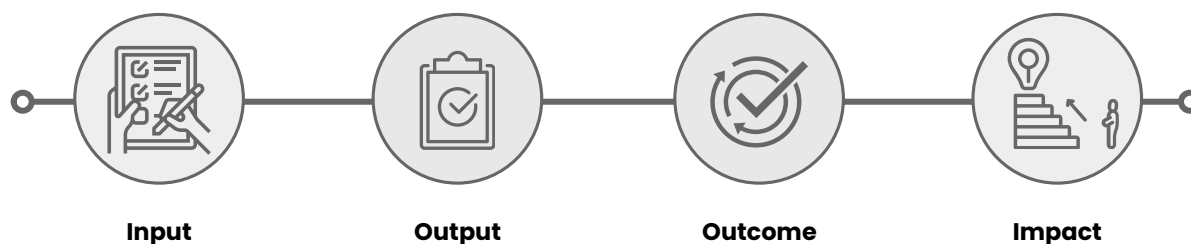
Input	Output	Outcome	Impact
The specific actions or processes that a program undertakes to achieve its goals and objectives.	The direct and immediate results or products of the activities undertaken.	The changes or effects that occur as a result of the outputs and activities.	The ultimate and long-term effect or result that a program or intervention aims to achieve.

Input	Output	Outcome	Impact
• Mobilization & outreach through colleges, local networks, and advertisements.	• Selection and enrollment of unemployed youth into BFSI training programs.	• Increased skill levels among youth in BFSI sector-related domains.	• Decreased youth unemployment and underemployment.
• Skills and aptitude assessments for candidate selection.	• Participants undergo structured classroom and practical training.	• Improved employability due to industry-relevant training and certifications.	• Increased income and job security for beneficiaries.
• BFSI-specific training (Business Correspondent, Debt Recovery, Customer Care).	• Certification upon course completion.	• Higher job placement rates and career stability.	• Strengthened BFSI sector workforce, aligning skills with demand.
• Soft skills and personality development (communication, interview preparation, teamwork).	• Placement support through job fairs, direct employer networks, and referrals.	• Youth make informed career choices and secure sustainable employment.	• Enhanced economic and social well-being for beneficiaries and families.
• Industry-endorsed training for relevance to BFSI sector needs.	• Post-placement tracking and support for job retention.	• Stronger linkages between training providers, employers, and job seekers.	• Community development through sustainable employability and financial stability.
• Employer partnerships for job placement opportunities.	• Regular monitoring and evaluation for program improvements.	• Continued professional growth and career progression for beneficiaries.	• Scalable model for skill development applicable to other sectors and regions.

Logical Framework Analysis

A logical framework model is created against the identified ToC to reflect the identifiable indicators, means of verification, and assumptions, as given below:

	Project Summary	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Impact	The program reduces youth unemployment, enhances income levels, and strengthens the BFSI workforce. It contributes to long-term economic stability for beneficiaries and their families while creating a scalable model for future skill development initiatives.	-Reduction in youth unemployment rates in target locations. -Percentage increase in average income levels post-training. -Number of beneficiaries who become financially independent. -Number of program alumni mentoring or mobilizing others for training.	-Government labor market reports. -Follow-up surveys with beneficiaries and families. -Employer feedback and workforce data	-Trained beneficiaries continue in meaningful employment long-term.
Outcome	Trained youth gain industry-relevant skills, improving their employability and job prospects. Many secure stable employment, make informed career decisions, and establish strong linkages with industry stakeholders. Career progression opportunities also improve.	-Percentage of beneficiaries securing jobs within six months. -Retention rate of placed beneficiaries. -Percentage of beneficiaries applying skills learned in jobs. -Number of career progression cases. (e.g., promotions, salary increments)	-Employer feedback and hiring records. -Beneficiary surveys and testimonials. -Salary and employment tracking reports.	-Job market remains stable with continued demand for BFSI professionals.
Output	Selected youth complete structured BFSI training, including classroom and practical sessions. They receive certifications upon completion and placement support through job fairs, employer networks, and direct referrals. Post-placement tracking ensures job retention, and program effectiveness is monitored.	-Number of youth completing the training. -Number of certifications issued. -Number of beneficiaries receiving placement support. -Number of post-placement tracking activities conducted.	-Training completion certificates. -Placement records and job fair reports. -Post-placement tracking reports.	-Beneficiaries actively engage in training sessions.
Input	The program identifies and enrolls unemployed youth through mobilization efforts in colleges and local networks. Candidates undergo skills and aptitude assessments before receiving BFSI-specific and soft skills training. Industry-endorsed training and employer partnerships ensure relevance to sector needs.	-Number of youth mobilized and enrolled. -Number of training sessions conducted. -Number of industry partnerships established. -Percentage of beneficiaries completing training.	-Enrollment records and attendance sheets. -Training schedules and reports. -Partnership agreements with industry players.	-Youth are willing to participate in skill development programs. -Sufficient industry demand for trained professionals.

Sampling Strategy

181 Total sample covered

16 Key Informant Interviews

165 Beneficiaries Outreached

Key Informant Interviews

Trainers: 2

Employers: 7

NGO Program Team: 2

HDBFS CSR Team: 1

College Management/Career/Placement Teams : 4

Sample Size Rationale

- Purposive sampling
- The beneficiary cohort is representative of the direct interventions and includes individuals from varied socio-economic strata.
- Sample size representative of all stakeholders involved in the program.

Pune

Hyderabad

Bengaluru

Beneficiary Profiling

The beneficiaries of the program are students and young professionals across three major cities: Bengaluru (39%), Hyderabad (30%), and Pune (30%). The majority of the beneficiaries (78%) fall within the 24–25 age group, followed by 17% in the 21–23 age group and 5% between 26–28 years old. Among the beneficiaries who participated in the assessment, female participants (62%) were more as compared to males (38%).



Male
37.6%

Female
62.4%

Female : 62%

Male: 38%
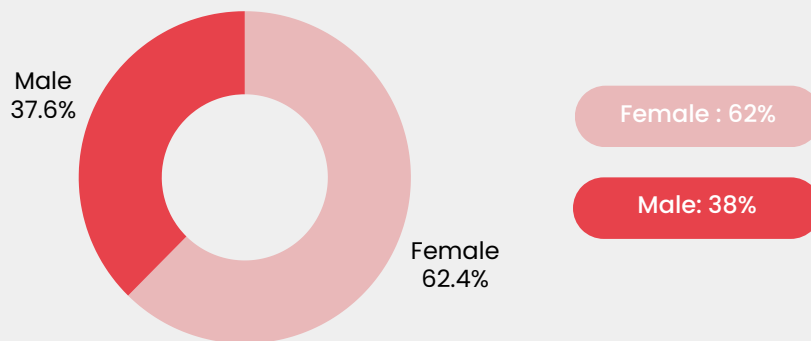
Gender distribution amongst the beneficiaries

In terms of educational background, 84% have completed graduation, while 16% hold postgraduate degrees. A small fraction (0.6%) pursued professional courses such as engineering, medical, or MBA. Most participants (86%) come from a nuclear family with 1–4 members, and 31% are the sole earning members of their households.

Fig 2: HDBFS team visit for beneficiary feedback at Darshan College, Bengaluru.

Post-Graduation
16%
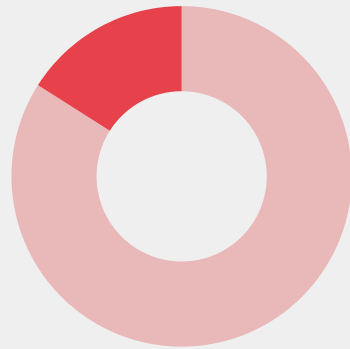
Graduation
84%

Graduation : 87%

Post - Graduation: 16%

Educational Qualification of the beneficiaries

19% of the beneficiaries reported an annual family income of less than ₹50,000, while 20% had an income between ₹50,001 and ₹1,00,000. The largest group, 27%, fell within the ₹1,00,001 to ₹2,00,000 range. Additionally, 16% reported earnings between ₹2,00,000 and ₹5,00,000, and 18% had an income exceeding ₹5,00,001.


● Average Annual Income of Beneficiary Family

Income Range	Value
Less than ₹50,000	19
₹50,001 and ₹1,00,000	20
₹1,00,001 to ₹2,00,000	27
₹2,00,000 and ₹5,00,000	16
More than ₹5,00,001	18
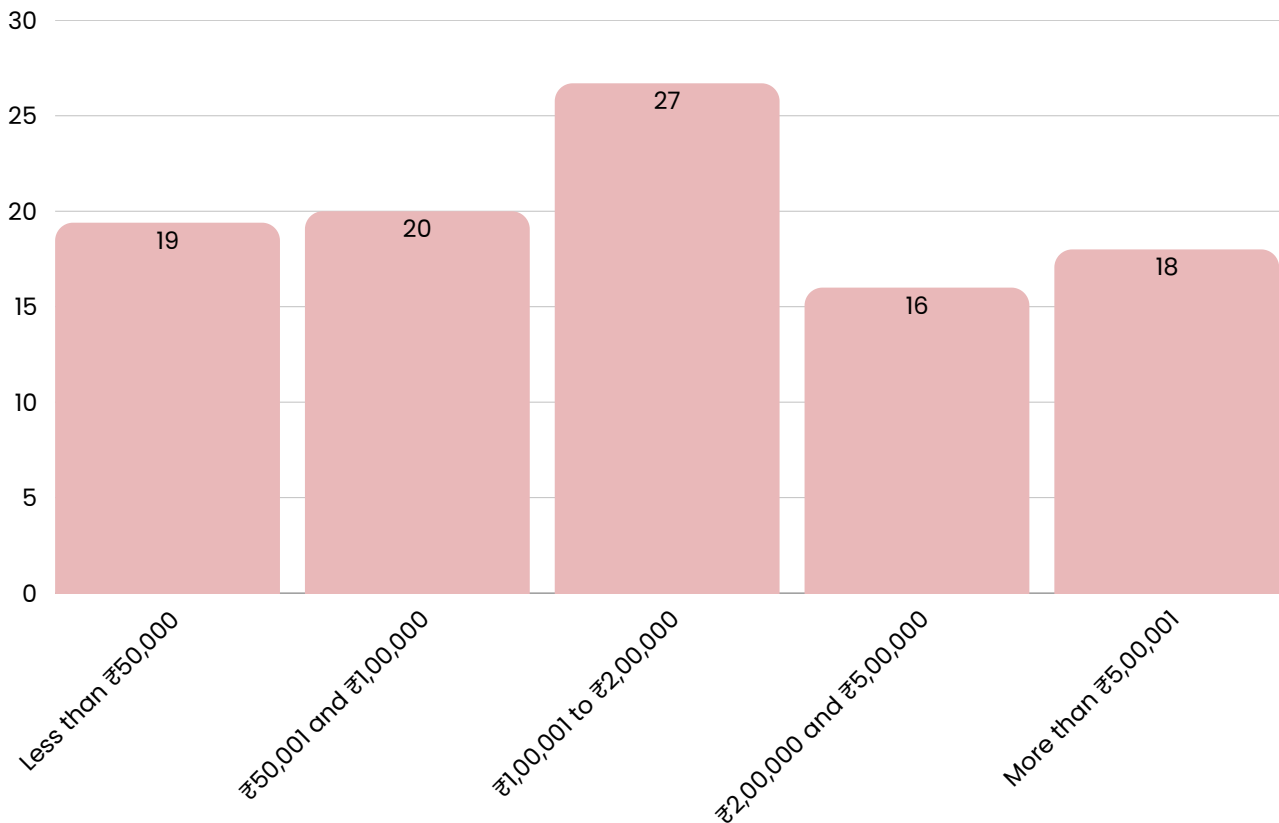
Findings & Analysis

Program Design

The program was primarily introduced through school and college outreach, with 91% of beneficiaries learning about it from their institutions. Other sources included family or friends (5%), websites/social media (2%), and LinkedIn (0.6%). Among the beneficiaries, 35% enrolled in Business Correspondence, 24% chose Debt Recovery, and 41% opted for both courses.

School/College : 91%

Family/Friends : 5%

Social media : 2%

LinkedIn : 0.6%
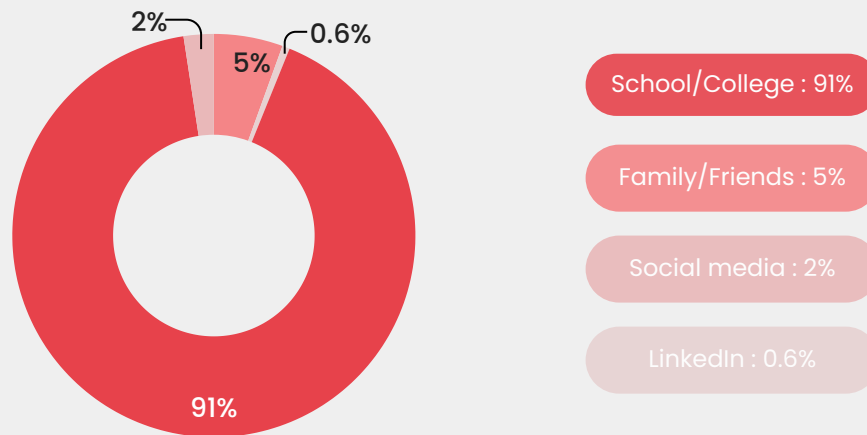
Main Source of Awareness

For 70%, the primary motivation for joining the program was to secure a job or an apprenticeship. This was followed by skill enhancement as a motivator for 26%. Among the beneficiaries, only 2% sought the training to start a business, which shows lack of entrepreneurial aspirations among them prior to joining the program. Another 2% joined based on recommendations from friends, family, or college.

26% **Beneficiaries joined the program to upskill**

70% **Beneficiaries joined the program to get a job/apprenticeship**

2% **Beneficiaries joined the program to start a business**

2% **Beneficiaries joined the program based on recomendations from friends, family, or college**

The program was relevant to the beneficiaries' career goals, with 88% saying it matched their professional aspirations. As B.Com students aspiring for careers in banking, finance, and business, they saw the training as an opportunity to utilize additional time productively while upskilling for the future. The program not only enhanced knowledge of BFSI topics but also improved soft skills such as communication, negotiation, and customer handling, making beneficiaries more competitive in the job market.

The training provided practical insights into financial products, risk management, debt collection, and customer engagement, equipping participants with industry-relevant expertise. Certifications and industry exposure strengthened job readiness, opening doors to internships, apprenticeships, and meaningful career opportunities.

Additionally, the program contributed to personal development by fostering problem-solving abilities, teamwork, and professional writing skills. Beneficiaries effectively applied their newly acquired skills to enhance their CVs, secure employment, and transition within the BFSI sector. Many leveraged the training as a stepping stone for higher education, such as MBA preparation, and for specific roles like Customer Care Executive in the banking sector. By bridging the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application, the program played a pivotal role in helping beneficiaries achieve their long-term career goals.
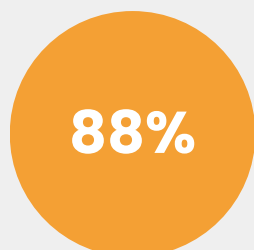
88% Beneficiaries found the program relevant to their career aspirations.

For the 12% of beneficiaries who did not find the program relevant to their career aspirations, the primary reasons included differing career paths and academic goals. Some intended to pursue careers in IT, academia, or other non-BFSI sectors, while others planned to pursue master's degrees in unrelated fields. A few beneficiaries enrolled for general skill-building, as a backup option, or simply because their friends joined. Since the course was specifically designed for BFSI roles, it did not align with their immediate ambitions or long-term career interests.

55%
Received

40%
Not received

5%
Not sure/Don't remember
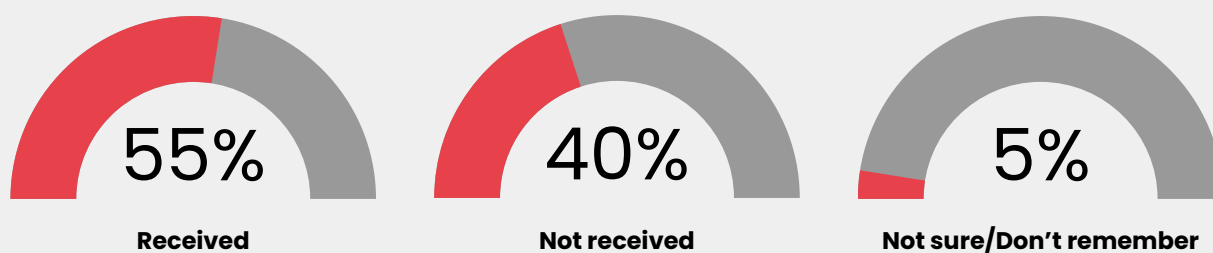
Distribution of ICT Materials among Beneficiaries

More than half of the beneficiaries (55%) received Information and Communication Technology (ICT) materials as part of the program, while 40% did not, and 5% were unsure. The materials included e-learning modules, financial software training, and digital banking tools, which helped in enhancing digital skills, provided clarity, and improved learning efficiency. Access to online learning platforms, study guides, and practical exercises further enriched the learning experience. These resources provided practical knowledge relevant to BFSI, financial concepts, and job applications, with some beneficiaries finding them valuable for skill enhancement and career growth. ICT tools also improved engagement with the program's technology-driven initiatives, though their usage and relevance varied based on individual goals and career alignment.

Program Delivery

The training was conducted in multiple formats, with 54% attending virtual classes, 40% in-person sessions, and 5% participating in a hybrid model. The medium of instruction was predominantly English as reported by 71% of the beneficiaries, while 24% reported that the sessions were conducted in a mix of English and vernacular languages.

A significant portion, 84%, utilized online tools to supplement their learning, enhancing their grasp of BFSI topics, financial products, and customer engagement.
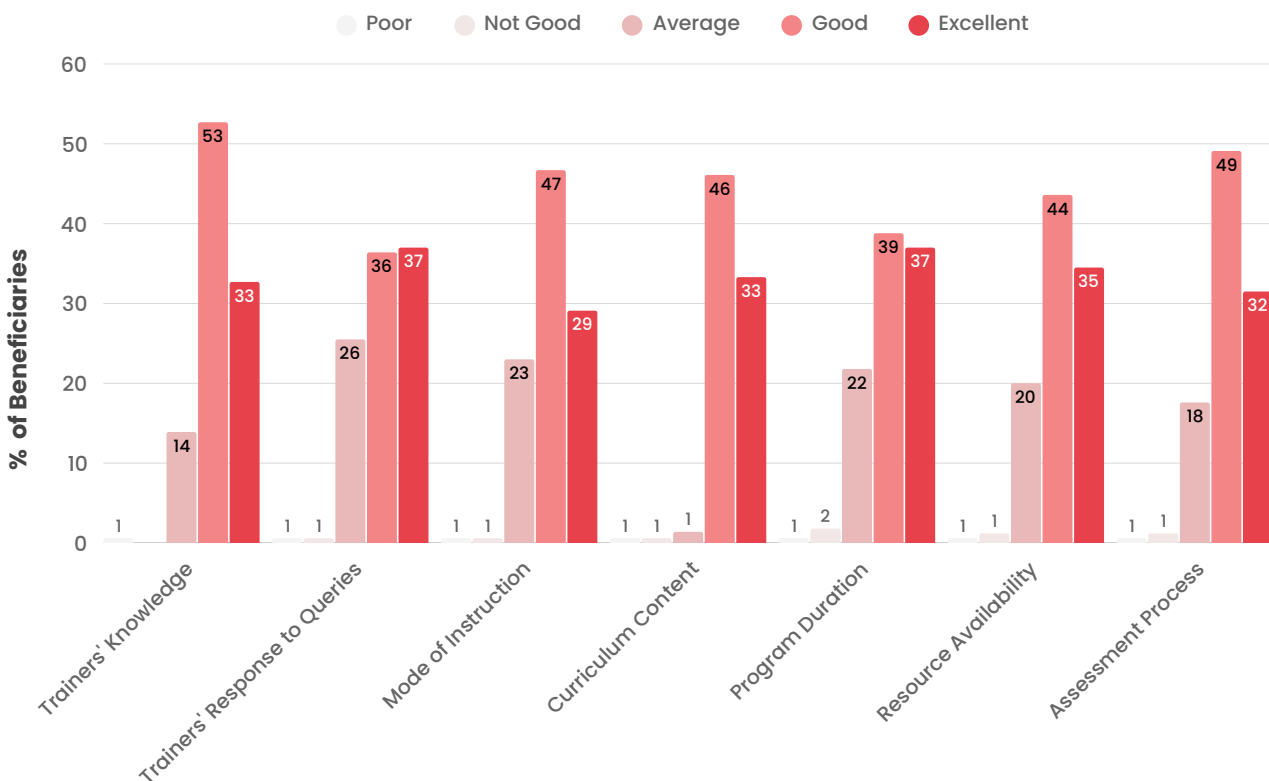
54%
Beneficiaries attended virtual classes

84%
Beneficiaries utilized online tools to supplement their learning

Hands-on training was provided throughout the course, with 46% receiving practical exposure in all sessions, 38% in few sessions, and 16% in none. With respect to attendance, beneficiaries engaged actively, with 68% attending 75–90% of the sessions, 22% exceeding 90%, and only 2% attending less than half.

The program emphasized practical learning, with 54% of the beneficiaries highlighting the hands-on approach, while 56% valued its industry-relevant curriculum. Certification opportunities by 63% of the beneficiaries and direct exposure to real-world problems by 37% of the beneficiaries were also recognized as key strengths. Personalized mentorship was a feature for 24% of the beneficiaries, further enriching the learning experience.

Beneficiaries' Rating on Various Aspects of the Program

Legend: ○ Poor ○ Not Good ○ Average ● Good ● Excellent

Bar chart — % of Beneficiaries (y-axis) by program aspect:

Aspect	Poor	Not Good	Average	Good	Excellent
Trainers' Knowledge	1		14	53	33
Trainers' Response to Queries	1	1	26	36	37
Mode of Instruction	1	1	23	47	29
Curriculum Content	1	1	1	46	33
Program Duration	1	2	22	39	37
Resource Availability	1	1	20	44	35
Assessment Process	1	1	18	49	32

Additionally, the program provided LinkedIn Learning access, with 83% of the beneficiaries aware of it and 60% out of them enrolling in courses. Among those who completed courses, 96% received certifications, further strengthening their employability.

83%   **Beneficiaries were aware of the LinkedIn Learning platform provided by FUEL.**

A majority of the beneficiaries, 71%, were aware that the program was supported by HDB Financial Services Limited, while 19% were unsure, and 9% were unaware.

71%   **Beneficiaries recognized HDBFS's support for the initiative.**

Regarding challenges in attending or completing the training sessions, 98% of the beneficiaries reported no difficulties, while a small fraction of 2% required additional support from trainers to complete the program successfully.

98%   **Beneficiaries reported no challenges in attending the training sessions.**
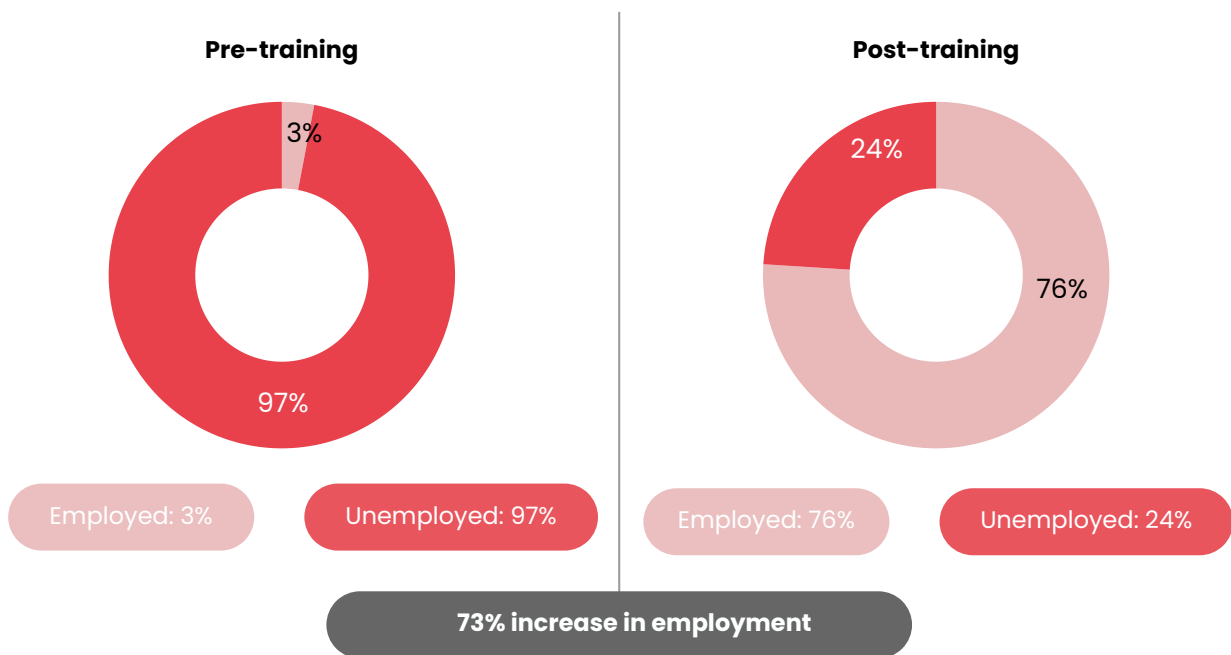
Impact and Sustainability

Among 165 beneficiaries, who participated in the assessment, 97% were unemployed before the training, indicating a high reliance on the program for job opportunities. Only 3% had prior work experience in BFSI, IT, and business, with three beneficiaries reporting a monthly income between ₹10,000–₹30,000 before enrollment. This highlights the program's role in providing both first-time employment and career advancement opportunities.

Post training, 76% secured employment, while 24% were not able to gain employment. Of those employed, 18% entered banking, 25% financial services, and 6% insurance. Nearly half, 48%, found jobs in other sectors, including IT and customer care, and various fields such as education, business development, digital marketing, and data analytics. A small percentage (2%) pursued self-employment, engaging in consultancy, family businesses, and entrepreneurial ventures.

Among the beneficiaries who secured jobs, 6% were placed in less than a month, while 15% found employment after one month, and another 15% after two months. Around 14% secured jobs after three months, whereas 42% took more than three months. 7% of the beneficiaries did not specify their placement timeline.

Pre-training

3%

97%

Employed: 3%   Unemployed: 97%

Post-training

24%

76%

Employed: 76%   Unemployed: 24%

73% increase in employment

In terms of skill application, 51% reported applying their training to a great extent in their jobs or businesses, while 41% applied it to a certain extent. Only 8% stated they did not apply the training at all. Regarding efficiency, 41% found that the training significantly reduced their turnaround time for tasks, 39% experienced a moderate impact, and 20% saw no improvement.
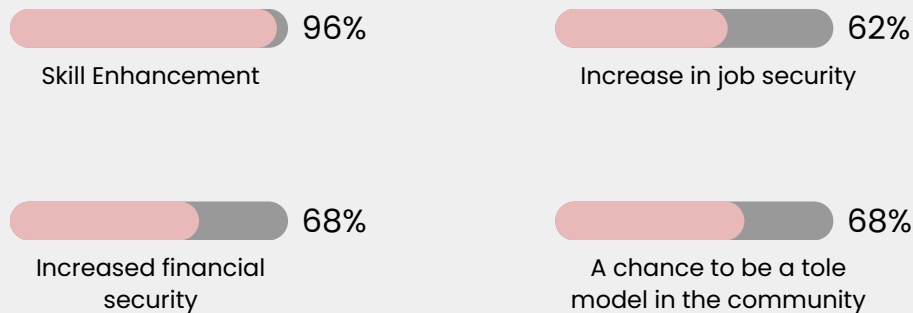
Post-training income levels varied, with 38% earning between ₹10,001–₹20,000, while 35% reported salaries in the ₹20,001–₹30,000 range. Around 22% earned ₹30,001–₹40,000, with a small percentage receiving ₹40,001–₹50,000 (1%) or more than ₹50,000 (2%). Only 2% had earnings below ₹10,000, indicating a positive income shift for most participants.

Post-training income levels of the beneficiaries
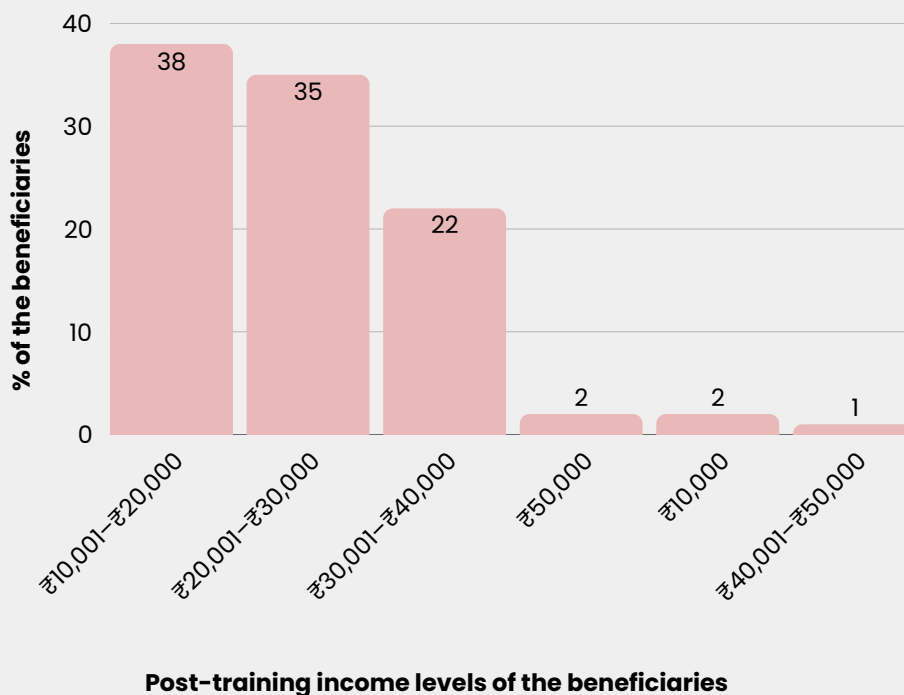
Among those who got placed, 61% continued working with the organization where they were initially placed, while 39% moved on to new employment opportunities. The primary reasons for leaving were better opportunities (61%), followed by relocation (10%), workplace challenges (10%), and job role vs. skill mismatch (4%). An additional 14% cited other reasons like family obligations, difference in interests, etc. for leaving.

Out of the total beneficiaries who participated in the assessment, 63% reported receiving post-placement support from FUEL, helping them navigate their early career stages. Among those who received support, 67% reported that their job placement mostly met their expectations set during the training, while 13% found it completely aligned. However, 20% felt it only somewhat met their expectations, highlighting areas for potential improvement in bridging training outcomes with actual job roles.

The training program had a significant impact on multiple aspects of the beneficiaries' professional growth. Beneficiaries could select multiple responses, reflecting the program's diverse benefits. 94% of participants reported skill enhancement, highlighting the program's effectiveness in equipping them with industry-relevant knowledge. 70% felt it contributed to their job security, while 68% acknowledged improved financial security. Additionally, 68% of beneficiaries viewed themselves as role models within their communities, demonstrating the broader social influence of the program.

96% Skill Enhancement

62% Increase in job security

68% Increased financial security

68% A chance to be a tole model in the community

The Influence of the Training Program on Beneficiaries' Professional Development

includes multiple responses per beneficiary

An overwhelming 92% of beneficiaries expressed willingness to recommend the program to others, reflecting its perceived value and impact. Additionally, 93% stated that the training met their expectations, reinforcing the program's effectiveness in delivering relevant skills and career opportunities.

92%

93%
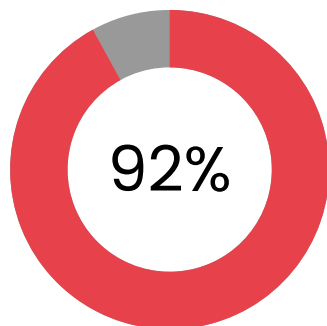
Beneficiaries would recommend the program to others.
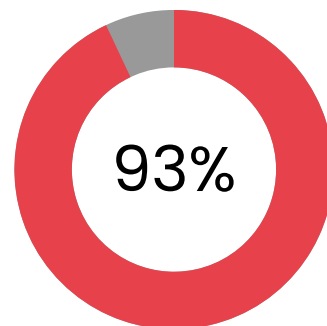
Beneficiaries reported that the training met their expectations.

Insights Gained from the Key Informant Interviews

Trainers

Trainers reported that the program effectively integrated theoretical and practical learning, covering Business Correspondence and Debt Recovery courses. The curriculum was well-structured and aligned with the program's vision, with training conducted using a mix of manuals, online resources, videos, and role-plays. Sessions were delivered in a blend of English and vernacular languages to ensure accessibility for diverse participants. While training resources were readily available, the virtual mode of instruction presented challenges, particularly with internet connectivity. Trainers also noted that student dropouts, though minimal (1-2% per batch), were influenced by factors such as student lack of willingness to continue and technical difficulties during the COVID-19 period. They suggested extending the program duration and incorporating Artificial Intelligence (AI) courses to further enhance the learning experience.

Trainers highlighted a significant increase in employability among youth, with over 90% of beneficiaries securing jobs post-training. Placement assistance was provided by the administration team, and some trainers actively encouraged students through assessments and placement drives. The program's impact was particularly evident in improving job readiness, although trainers recommended strengthening placement counseling for more comprehensive support. Additionally, they acknowledged the visibility of HDBFS branding across program materials and training sessions, reinforcing the program's credibility. To enhance long-term sustainability, trainers suggested continued curriculum updates, including emerging industry-relevant skills, and improved digital infrastructure to support virtual training.

College Management/ Career/Placement Teams

The college management and career placement teams, including faculty members, placement officers, and career counselors, reported that institutions primarily became aware of the program through referrals from other colleges and direct outreach from the program team. The selection process for student enrollment varied across institutions, with most targeting final-year students from commerce, management, and science backgrounds. The program's objectives were noted to be well-aligned with students' career aspirations, particularly in enhancing employability skills. Stakeholders observed high levels of student engagement throughout the program, with participants demonstrating keen interest in the curriculum. They recommended extending the program duration and incorporating more industry-relevant certifications and technical training to further enhance student preparedness.

Stakeholders highlighted the tangible impact of the program on students' career trajectories, with placement teams noting improvements in communication skills, confidence, and job readiness. Many students successfully secured internships or job placements, while others pursued higher education. Institutions reported an increase in placement rates, ranging from 15% to 30%, attributing this growth to the program's effectiveness. Faculty members and placement officers expressed strong interest in continued collaboration, suggesting the expansion of program offerings to include more students and specialized courses tailored for MBA and technical streams. Overall, the program was seen as a valuable initiative that significantly contributed to student career development and institutional placement outcomes.

NGO Program Team

The NGO program team reported that the initiative aims to equip economically weaker students with the necessary skills and opportunities for upskilling and employment particularly in the banking sector. They stated that the program prioritizes final-year commerce students, primarily from BBA and B.Com. backgrounds, while occasionally considering BA students. HDBFS's interest in supporting the program stemmed from

FUEL's 18-year track record in career counseling and training across 13 states in India. The program team shared that students typically come from lower-middle-income backgrounds and that approximately 1,500 students were trained across Pune, Bangalore, and Hyderabad in 2022-23, with an 85% placement rate. Additionally, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) materials provided by HDBFS have been instrumental in improving student understanding, and the branding is prominently featured in training sessions, placement drives, and on certificates.

The team reported that trainers are onboarded based on experience, with a minimum requirement of three years in the relevant domain. They confirmed that onboarding and refresher training are provided to trainers, and student progress is tracked through pre-, post-, and intermediate assessments. Placement drives have evolved from single-campus events to multi-college recruitment processes, with the majority of students securing jobs in debt recovery roles due to attractive incentive structures. The minimum salary received by at the time of placement is ₹11,000 per month, and around 10-15% of students have received internship or apprenticeship opportunities. The NGO program team emphasized that success is primarily measured through placement rates and students' ability to clear interviews, with feedback collected every three to six months. They highlighted that the program has significantly improved students' financial and social status, fostering increased confidence and employability. Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as disruptions in training schedules and difficulties in connecting with colleges, the program team successfully adapted, ensuring continued student engagement and placement support.

HDBFS CSR Team

The HDBFS CSR Team highlighted that the Youth Skill Development Program aligns with their focus on livelihood and skill development, partnering with FUEL for BFSI sector training to equip youth with industry-relevant skills. The program aimed to train 1,500 youth with 85% placement, ensuring 0% dropout and high training quality. Budget allocation covered teaching costs, branding, LinkedIn Learning, training materials, and

monitoring. While HDBFS validated IEC materials instead of providing ICT tools, these materials aided mobilization efforts. Branding was integrated into standees, certification materials, and outreach efforts. Monitoring included college discussions, site visits, and direct student feedback, supported by quarterly reports from FUEL. Challenges included FUEL's limited presence in Hyderabad and Bangalore and college scheduling conflicts in Pune. Delays in placement updates led to FUEL's central team taking charge of student follow-ups.

With 72% of the 1,500 trained youth placed, HDBFS emphasized the need for stronger communication between FUEL and beneficiaries for smoother execution. They recommended evaluation sessions after each batch and regular NGO updates for transparency. To ensure sustainability, they proposed expanding training duration and integrating AI courses to enhance job readiness.

Employers

Employers who partnered with FUEL reported that the program successfully addressed the industry's demand for job-ready youth by providing candidates equipped with essential professional skills. The hiring organizations, spanning sectors like IT, healthcare, finance, and customer support, became aware of FUEL through various channels including job fairs, conclaves, and direct outreach from FUEL. What motivated these employers to partner with FUEL was the program's commitment to upskilling underprivileged students, providing quality training aligned with industry needs, and proposing candidates who required minimal additional onboarding.

Employers noted that the candidates were generally well-prepared for roles in customer support, marketing, medical billing, account representation, and tele-calling. Key competencies included communication, typing, confidence, and problem-solving skills. While aptitude and domain knowledge were rated as average to good, English communication and computer operations were rated as excellent. The availability of well-trained, adaptable candidates significantly reduced training costs and time for employers, with many organizations offering only a short onboarding or

role-specific training period ranging from 10 days to 2 months.

While most employers did not face any major challenges, a few mentioned regional language barriers and varying levels of fluency in English. These were addressed through internal quality teams and tailored support. Employers appreciated FUEL's pre-placement engagement, which helped align expectations and streamline hiring.

The impact of hiring FUEL beneficiaries extended beyond individual roles, positively influencing team dynamics and work culture. Employers highlighted the candidates' adaptability, motivation, and preparedness as key assets. The program's unique value was seen in its ability to produce candidates who understood job expectations beforehand, reducing employers' burden of foundational training.

Retention rates were reported to be strong, with many candidates continuing in their roles for 1.5 to 2.5 years on average. Employers expressed a high level of satisfaction with FUEL's placement support and rated their likelihood of recommending the program to others at an average of 4.7 out of 5. They also shared their desire for FUEL to scale up its training efforts to reach even more youth.

To ensure continued success, employers suggested FUEL could further strengthen training in English fluency and incorporate advanced technical knowledge relevant to evolving industry needs. Nonetheless, the program was widely acknowledged as a valuable initiative, enabling employment for underprivileged youth while fulfilling hiring needs of the employers efficiently and effectively.

Employer Organisations:

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

S

- Strong placement record, improving students' financial and social status.

- Well-structured training modules covering essential banking and financial skills.

- Industry-backed curriculum with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) materials and branding support from HDBFS.

- Dedicated trainers with a minimum of three years of experience, ensuring quality instruction.

- Placement drives evolving to multi-college recruitment, increasing hiring opportunities.

WEAKNESSES

W

- Limited curriculum coverage of emerging technologies like AI, Machine Learning (ML), and Cloud Computing.

- Short program duration, restricting in-depth learning and practical exposure.

- Some students felt the need for more practical training, industry exposure, and hands-on experience.

- Low awareness of the program in tier-2 and tier-3 colleges, limiting outreach.

OPPORTUNITIES

O

- Expansion to tier-2 and tier-3 colleges to increase accessibility.

- Integration of advanced technologies and digital tools to enhance learning outcomes.

THREATS

T

- No perceived threat.

Recommendations

Enhanced Curriculum and Technology Integration

Expanding the curriculum to include emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, Cloud Computing, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and the Internet of Things (IoT) would increase its relevance and industry alignment. Integrating advanced financial software training, interactive digital tools, and real-time financial simulations can enhance practical learning. Regular updates to the syllabus are essential to keep pace with market trends and ensure students gain skills that are in high demand.

Improved Learning Methodologies and Practical Training

Incorporating more hands-on learning experiences through real-world case studies, industry projects, and financial simulations can improve practical skill development. Breaking down complex concepts into smaller, modular sessions and introducing expert-led training can enhance comprehension. Extending the program duration to 3–6 months would provide deeper engagement, allowing for more effective learning and skill application.

Better Accessibility and Student Support

Expanding the program to reach tier-2 and tier-3 colleges can improve accessibility for a broader range of students. Offering offline classes, personalized mentorship, and structured placement support would strengthen career pathways. Increased awareness initiatives, better access to study materials, and internship opportunities can ensure continued learning and smoother transitions into the workforce.