



IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT
EMPLOYMENT LED & ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING FOR PERSON
WITH DISABILITIES
2024-25



IMPLEMENTED BY
THE ASSOCIATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

PREPARED BY



SOCIAL AUDIT NETWORK

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1. Executive Summary

The Titan –Association of Persons with Disabilities (APD) Livelihood Programme, implemented between April 2024 and March 2025, aimed to enhance employability and economic independence among persons with disabilities (PWDs) through structured skill development, workplace exposure, and employer engagement. The initiative was implemented primarily at APD’s Bengaluru centre with additional outreach in Krishnagiri & Tiruvannamalai (Tamil Nadu), Koppal and Mangalore (Karnataka). The programme targeted PWDs aged 18–35 from marginalized communities and focused on improving their access to employment opportunities in sectors such as retail, horticulture, and technical trades. The programme also demonstrated strong relevance in programme districts where employment opportunities for PWDs were limited prior to the intervention. For many beneficiaries, this training represented their first exposure to structured skill development programmes, addressing a major gap in access to inclusive livelihood pathways.

The programme exceeded several of its operational targets. 664 candidates were enrolled against a planned target of 580 (114.65%), demonstrating strong community outreach and demand for the programme. Training completion was also significantly higher than planned, with 657 candidates completing training against a target of 524 (125%), reflecting strong engagement, supportive training environments, and minimal dropout rates. In terms of livelihood outcomes, 462 candidates were placed against a target of 468 (98.71%), indicating effectiveness in connecting the trainees with employment opportunities.

The training model combined classroom instruction with on-the-job training (OJT), focusing on technical skills, workplace behaviour, communication, digital literacy, and personal confidence. Survey responses and field interactions showed that trainees experienced improvements in self-confidence, communication skills, independence, and motivation to work. Over 90% of respondents reported improvements in communication and independence, highlighting the programme’s role in strengthening social and psychological capabilities alongside employability skills.

Employer feedback was largely positive, with organizations expressing satisfaction with the performance and discipline of APD-trained employees. Employers highlighted the usefulness of OJT in preparing candidates for workplace expectations.

However, the assessment also identified areas requiring further strengthening. While placement numbers were close to targets, long-term employment retention remains a challenge, with many beneficiaries not continuing in jobs due to factors such as relocation challenges, health issues, travel constraints, workplace adjustment difficulties, or mismatch between job roles and expectations. Survey findings also indicated that a significant proportion of alumni were not currently employed at the time of the survey, highlighting the need for stronger post-placement support systems, career counselling, and employer engagement.

The partnership demonstrates a meaningful contribution toward bridging the employment gap faced by persons with disabilities. By combining inclusive training practices, practical exposure, and employer partnerships, the programme has helped many beneficiaries transition from unemployment to livelihoods, while also promoting greater awareness and acceptance of disability inclusion within workplaces.

2. Background

Across India, persons with disabilities (PWDs) face challenges when it comes to finding decent and meaningful jobs. Even though around 1.3 crore disabled people are considered employable, only about 34 lakhs are currently in the workforce. ¹ This is a significant gap, especially when compared with overall workforce participation. This problem is evident in corporate India as well, where it is estimated that companies employ less than 1% PWDs. This alludes to a big gap between what policies promise and the field-level reality.

A major reason for this is the inadequate skills and training opportunities available to PWDs who usually struggle with limited access to inclusive education, poor infrastructure, lack of assistive devices, digital exclusion, and training programs that don't match their skill sets with what industries really need². As a result, most PWDs are pushed into informal work or left unemployed.

This situation is especially concerning in states like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. For instance, Karnataka, despite having relatively progressive policies sees high levels of unemployment among PWDs with 70% being unemployed ³. While there is talk of introducing a 5% quota for PWDs in the private sector and improving workplace accessibility, weak implementation means these ideas haven't made much real impact yet⁴. Tamil Nadu also faces similar challenges. The state has organised job fairs that include PWDs and has helped some people find jobs, but these efforts address only the tip of the iceberg. Many workplaces are still inaccessible, vocational training is inadequate. Also, cultural beliefs, negative attitudes and social stigma continue to limit opportunities.

All this makes it evident that PWDs need focused training and regular upskilling to close existing skill gaps and improve their chances of getting employed. At the same time, real inclusion can't be achieved by the government alone. It needs strong collaboration between the government, private companies, and civil society to create sustainable and large-scale employment opportunities for PWDs.

About Titan

Titan Company Ltd is the organization that brought about a paradigm shift in the Indian watch market when it introduced its futuristic quartz technology, complemented by international styling. With India's two most recognized and loved brands, Titan, and Tanishq, to its credit, Titan Company Ltd is the fifth largest integrated own-brand watch manufacturer in the world. The success story began in 1984 with a joint venture between the Tata Group and the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation. Presenting Titan quartz watches that sported an international look; Titan Company Ltd transformed the Indian watch market. After Sonata, a value brand of functionally styled watches at affordable prices, Titan Company Ltd reached out to the youth segment with Fastrack, its third brand,

¹ <https://www.drishtiiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-editorials/27-02-2025>

² https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2025-05/undp_advancing_workplace_inclusion_for_persons_with_disabilities_multi-city_workshops_to_strengthen_organizational_readiness.pdf

³ <https://ncpedp.org/resources/publications>

⁴ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/karnataka-working-on-5-quota-in-private-sector-jobs-for-persons-with-disabilities/articleshow/125137572.cms?from=mdr>

trendy, and chic. The company has sold 150 million watches all over the world and manufactures over 15 million watches every year. Over the last four decades, Titan has expanded into underpenetrated markets and created lifestyle brands across different product categories, including fragrances (SKINN), accessories and Indian dress wear (Taneira), and thoughtfully designed Women's Bags (IRTH). Backed by over 8,000 employees, two exclusive design studios for watches and Jewellery, 10 manufacturing units, and innumerable admirers the world over, Titan Company Ltd continues to grow and set new standards for innovation and quality. The organization is all geared to repeat the Titan and Tanishq success story with each new offering.

About Association of Persons with Disabilities

The Association of Persons with Disabilities (APD) is a long-standing Indian non-profit organization based in Bengaluru dedicated to advancing the rights, inclusion and empowerment of PwDs. Founded in 1959, APD works extensively across South India, providing services, right from rehabilitation and education to livelihood support and advocacy for rights and access. Its mission is to create an inclusive ecosystem in which PwDs have equitable access to opportunities, dignity, and economic independence, and to ensure that they are active participants in decisions that affect their lives. APD's programmes adopt a life-cycle approach, supporting them through early intervention services, inclusive education initiatives, assistive devices and vocational training. Over the decades, APD has reached more than 10 lakh PwDs, distributed tens of thousands of assistive devices, and sensitized over 15 lakh individuals to disability inclusion. The organization also engages in rights-based advocacy, working with government and civil society to influence policy, improve public infrastructure accessibility, and train other service providers, with the aim of making India more inclusive for all.

Image 1 With an alumni from Koppal



About the CSR project

The Titan-APD partnership proposed to enrol 580 PwDs across various skill development programmes. A minimum of 524 trainees was expected to complete the training, and at least 468 trainees were targeted for placement in wage employment or self-employment. The intended beneficiaries included underprivileged and marginalized PwDs aged 18–

35 years, particularly individuals with locomotor disabilities, speech and hearing impairments, and low vision. The project was implemented primarily at APD's centre in Bengaluru. Additional outreach was planned through partner locations in Krishnagiri (Tamil Nadu), Koppal (Karnataka), and Mangalore (Karnataka). The MOU became effective from 1 April 2024 for the financial Year 2024–2025.

Table 1 Grant Disbursement Schedule (Source: MOU)

Tranche	Amount (₹)
1	75,00,000
2	90,82,987
Total	1,65,82,987

“Through the programme, we prepare trainees for real work life, not just for getting a job. We focus on building confidence, independence, and everyday skills needed at the workplace. Trainees learn how to communicate, work with others, manage time and pressure, and handle interviews and work expectations. Our goal is to help them adjust well and sustain themselves in professional environments.” – Mr Mallikarjuna, APD

What are the interventions?

The Sankalp programme is an inclusive skilling initiative designed to enhance employability and economic independence among PWDs. The key trainings offered is as follows

Table 2 Programme framework (Source: MOU)

Training Programme	Duration & Structure	Key Skills & Focus Areas	Training Location	Placement / Outcomes
Retail Training Program	45 days: 30 days classroom training followed by 15 days of on-the-job training	Customer interaction, inventory handling, punctuality, workplace discipline, retail operations; continuous mentoring and post-placement follow-up	APD training centres and partner retail locations	Trainees were placed in leading retail organizations such as Amazon, Flipkart, Big Basket, Star Bazaar, DMart, Reliance Trends, and Vishal Mega Mart
Horticulture Training Program	3 months: 75 days of classroom and practical exposure, followed by placement or on-site on-the-job training	Nursery management, landscaping, plant maintenance; horticulture used as a therapeutic and rehabilitative intervention, particularly for persons with spinal cord injuries	APD campus	Graduates were placed in large nurseries, residential complexes, schools, colleges, and industrial green spaces
Technical and Industrial Training (ITC)	75 days of foundational training in mechatronics, followed by on-the-job training	Core mechanical and electronic concepts aligned with industry needs; emphasis on practical, job-ready skills	APD campus	Trainees were placed with companies such as Titan, TVS, Tata Electronics, and Koli's Aerospace

“Many PWDs remain unemployed because they do not get the right skills and workplace exposure. With Titan's support, we focus on preparing candidates to be independent, ready for work, and aligned with industry needs. At the same time, we work closely with employers to build understanding and inclusive practices. This approach helps create real livelihood opportunities and long-term self-sufficiency.”- Mr Richi Rungta, Staff, APD



Image 2 One of the alumni trainees at Tiruvannamalai



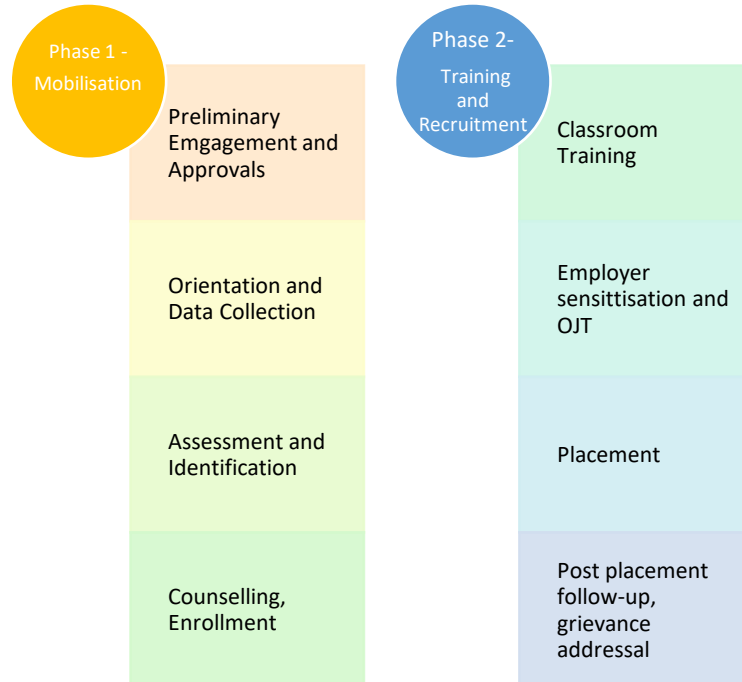
Why is it being done?

To address the high unemployment and long-term dependency faced by PWDs due to limited access to skills, inclusive workplaces, and supportive ecosystems. By focusing on functional independence, work readiness, employer-aligned training and employer sensitization, the Sankalp program works towards creating livelihood opportunities self-sufficiency for the beneficiaries that they work for.

*“High unemployment among this group is due to lack of skills and inclusive work environments. We address this by preparing candidates for independent work.”-
Mr Gunasekharan, Head- Training, APD*

How is it being done?

Figure Process flow of the programme



Phase 1 (Mobilisation)

- **Preliminary engagement and approval:** The process begins with district level coordination with the District Disability Welfare Officer (DDWO) and Multiple Rehabilitation Workers

(MRWs) and introduce APD's programs, shares past achievements, placement outcomes, and beneficiary success stories, and seek permission to conduct activities in the district.

- **Orientation and data collection:** Once approval was received, APD conducted orientation sessions with Village Rehabilitation Workers (VRWs) at the taluk or district level, familiarized them with APD's training programs, eligibility criteria, and employment opportunities. Following this, VRWs shared data on PwDs in their respective Gram Panchayats, who were unemployed and interested in work.
- **Identification:** Based on the information received, APD scheduled assessment camps at the Gram Panchayat or Taluk level. VRWs mobilized potential candidates for the camps where APD staff evaluated candidates' disability type, functional abilities, interest in employment, training readiness, and suitability for specific courses, with priority given to those who capable of working independently.
- **Counselling and empanelment:** After assessment, APD conducted counselling sessions with candidates and their caregivers to explain training options, placement pathways, relocation requirements, and workplace expectations. Eligible candidates were then enrolled at nearby centers or at the Bengaluru center if they were willing to relocate.

Phase 2 (Training and Recruitment)

- **Classroom training:** The classroom training focused on preparing PwDs with knowledge and skills needed for work.
- **On-the-job training:** On-the-job training provided hands-on exposure in real work environments, mainly in sectors such as retail and service roles.
- **Post-placement follow-up and grievance addressal:** After placement, APD continues to support both the employee and the employer to ensure smooth adjustment. Regular follow-ups are conducted to track attendance, performance, and workplace adaptation. Any concerns are addressed through counselling and coordination with employers.
- the basic **Where was it done?**

Table 3 Key Geographies covered by the programme (Source: APD)

Domain	Location(s)
Sankalp	KH Halli, Bangalore
Sankalp	Krishnagiri, Koppal, Mangalore
ITC	KH Halli, Bangalore
Horticulture	KH Halli, Bangalore

When was it done?

The programme was conducted from April 2024- March 2025.

3. Objective & scope of the study

The objective of this assessment is to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and social impact generated through the APD–Titan Livelihood Programme during the period April 2024 to March 2025. The study seeks to examine how APD's interventions in skilling, vocational training, on-the-job training, and employer sensitization have contributed to improved employability, income increase and well-being of PwDs. Field data collection, interviews, and verification visits for

this study were conducted in January 2026 by SAN team. The study spans APD's primary training campus in Bengaluru and centers in Koppal and Tiruvannamalai.

4. Evaluation Methodology

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative data technique to examine how APD's interventions in skilling, vocational training, on-the-job training, and employer sensitization have contributed to improved employability, income increase and well-being of PWDs. The study commenced with an initial virtual planning discussion with APD's implementation teams to understand the framework of the program and introduction to the teams. A desk review was conducted to examine the data shared by APD with Titan's CSR team. SAN India then developed and administered data collection tools aimed at capturing the outcomes and lived experiences of participants.

The quantitative study adopted a cross-sectional design to assess employment outcomes, skill utilisation, and stakeholder satisfaction across programme locations including Koppal, Bengaluru, and Tiruvannamalai. A total of 180 respondents participated in the quantitative component, comprising 173 alumni who responded through an online structured survey and 7 employers who were interviewed using a telephonic structured questionnaire between 3rd and 20th January. Purposive sampling was used, drawing from the programme database to ensure representation of alumni across different years, locations, and employment statuses. The questionnaire consisted primarily of closed-ended questions, including multiple-choice, Likert scale, binary (Yes/No), and numerical response formats to capture measurable indicators such as employment status, income levels, job retention, workplace accessibility, and perceived relevance of training. Data were collected using online survey tools and telephonic interviews, compiled in Excel, and analysed using descriptive statistics, percentage analysis, and cross-tabulations to identify trends and variations across districts and stakeholder categories.

The qualitative study was exploratory in nature and aimed to generate deeper insights into stakeholder experiences, systemic barriers, and programme effectiveness. A total of 64 stakeholders were consulted through in-depth interviews, one focus group discussion, video calls, and telephonic interactions. Participants included APD key staff, field staff across three locations, alumni, trainers, parents, employers, an NGO partner, and 15 trainees who participated in an in-person FGD conducted in Koppal. Purposive sampling ensured representation from different stakeholder categories, employment statuses, and geographic locations. Semi-structured interview guides and thematic discussion frameworks were used to facilitate conversations, and detailed notes were documented for analysis. The qualitative data were analysed using thematic coding to identify recurring patterns related to skill gaps, accessibility challenges, employer perceptions, family support systems, and the adequacy of post-placement support, with findings triangulated across stakeholder groups to strengthen validity.

Field visits were conducted in January by Ms. Neeta N K, Social Auditor, SAN India, under the guidance of Mrs. Latha Suresh, Director, SAN India. The primary campus in Bengaluru was visited. Since the

programme had been discontinued in Koppal and Krishnagiri, beneficiaries from these locations were met in Hosapete and Tiruvannamalai, respectively.

Stakeholders consulted

Table 4 Stakeholders consulted by SAN team

Stakeholder	No consulted	Type of discussion	Date of interaction
APD key staff	4	Online Call, Telephone calls	Multiple
Field staff - Koppal	3	One to One	3rd Jan
Alumni- Koppal	8	One to One	
Alumni- Koppal	4	Video Call	
Trainers- Koppal	2	One to One	
Parent of Alumni- Koppal	1	One to One	
Trainees- Koppal	15	FGD	
Employer- Koppal	1	One to One	
Field staff - Bengaluru	7	One to One	
Alumni- Bengaluru	7	One to One	
Alumni and Trainer - Bengaluru	1	Video Call	
Parent of alumni - Bengaluru	1	Video Call	
Field staff - Tiruvannamalai	2	One to One	6th Jan
Alumni- Tiruvannamalai	3	One to One	
Employer -Tiruvannamalai	2	One to One	
NGO Partner -Tiruvannamalai	1	One to One	
Parents of trainee- Tiruvannamalai	2	One to One	
Alumni	173	Online survey	03rd -20th Jan
Employers	7	Telephone call	03rd -20th Jan
Total		244	

5. Key findings:

Enrolment: Mobilisation and enrolment activities were carried out across Bangalore, Krishnagiri, Koppal, and Mangalore. Overall, 630 candidates were enrolled against a planned target of 560, achieving 112.5% of the enrolment plan as per the MOU.

Table 5 Enrollment – Plan vs Actual with Achievement % (Source: APD)

Domain	Location(s)	Duration	Planned	Achieved	Achievement %
Sankalp	KH Halli, Bangalore	45 Days	160	159	99.38%
Sankalp	Krishnagiri, Koppal, Mangalore	45 Days	250	310	124.00%
ITC	KH Halli, Bangalore	90 Days	100	100	100.00%
Horticulture	KH Halli, Bangalore	90 Days	50	61	122.00%
Total			560	630	112.50%

The data highlights strong community outreach and the relevance of multi-location Sankalp and horticulture-based programmes.

- “Reaching candidates in villages takes time because travel, family concerns, and lack of awareness reduce participation.”-Staff at the training centre.
- “From a large list of names, only a small number finally come for assessment and training.” -Staff at the training centre.
- “Families often hesitate to send candidates outside their locality, especially for long-term training or jobs. We spend a lot of time counselling them”- Staff at the training centre.

Image 3 Trainee from Bengaluru at the training center



Training

The training programme showed strong results from enrolment to placement. More candidates enrolled than originally planned, which shows good community response and effective mobilisation efforts across locations. Almost all enrolled candidates completed their training, with very few dropouts. This indicates that trainees remained engaged and that proper support and follow-

up were provided during the course. The training focused on practical skills, communication, and basic workplace behaviour, which helped candidates become more confident and job ready. Trainers observed visible improvement in how trainees interacted, handled customers, and performed practical tasks. Most candidates were successfully placed in jobs after completing the course. Although placement under Sankalp at KH Halli was slightly lower than expected, strong performance in ITC and Horticulture helped maintain overall placement results close to the planned target. Overall, the programme shows effective planning, good training delivery, and strong efforts to connect candidates with livelihood opportunities.

However, post-placement retention was found to be an area that requires improvement during the surveys. A few candidates did not continue in their jobs for an extended period due to reasons such as poor health, relocation challenges, family responsibilities, salary expectations, or workplace adjustment issues. This indicates the need to strengthen post-placement support, counselling, and regular follow-up with both candidates and employers to improve long-term job continuity.

Training delivery remained strong across all domains, supported by an inclusive training curriculum and strong learner engagement. A total of 623 candidates completed training against a planned target of 499, achieving 124.85% of the training plan. This indicates minimal dropouts and effective learner support mechanisms.

Table 6 Training – Plan vs Actual with Achievement % (Source: APD)

Domain	Training Plan	Training Actual	Achievement %
Sankalp – KH Halli	144	159	110.42%
Sankalp – multi-location	244	304	124.59%
ITC	66	100	151.52%
Horticulture	45	60	133.33%
Total	499	623	124.85%

- “Most trainees complete the course, and dropouts during training are very few.”-Trainer
- “Communication, customer handling, and practical exposure make a visible difference in confidence.”-Trainer
- “Forty-five days of training is sufficient to prepare candidates for entry-level roles.”-Trainer

Placement: Placement outcomes across Sankalp, ITC, and Horticulture demonstrate strong conversion from training to livelihood opportunities. Overall, 442 candidates were placed against a planned target of 448, achieving 98.66% of the placement plan.

Table 7 Placement – Plan vs Actual with Achievement % (Source: APD)

Domain	Placement Plan	Placement Actual	Placement %
Sankalp – KH Halli	128	104	81.25%
Sankalp – multi-location	200	199	99.50%
ITC	80	85	106.25%
Horticulture	40	54	135.00%
Total	448	442	98.66%

While placement at KH Halli under Sankalp was comparatively lower, strong overachievement in ITC and Horticulture balanced overall results. Horticulture training showed high placement efficiency through local livelihood opportunities, while ITC benefitted from sustained employer demand.

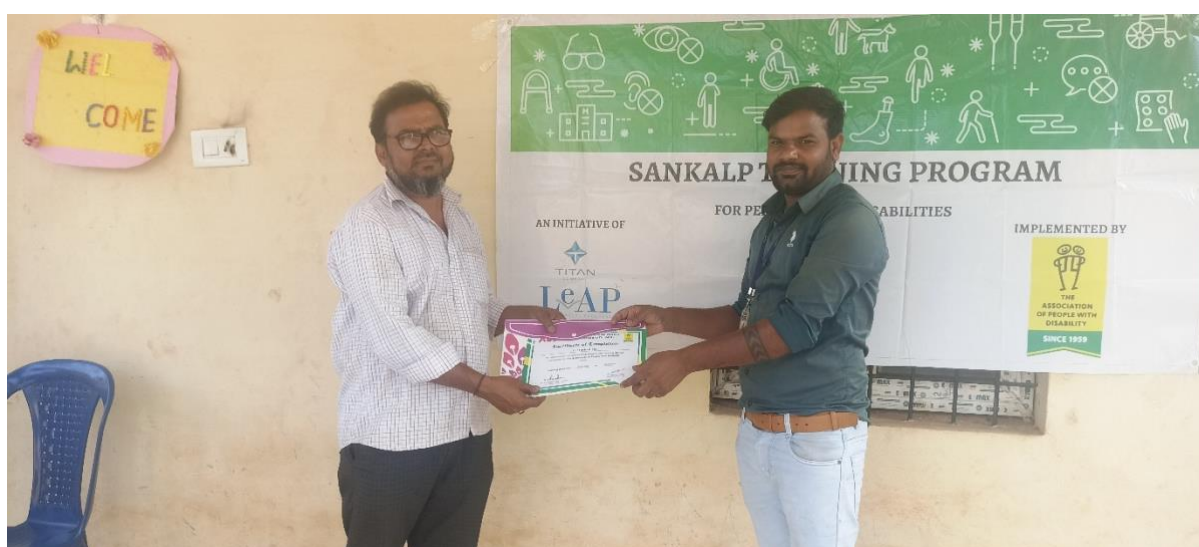


Image With the parent of an Alumni, Koppal

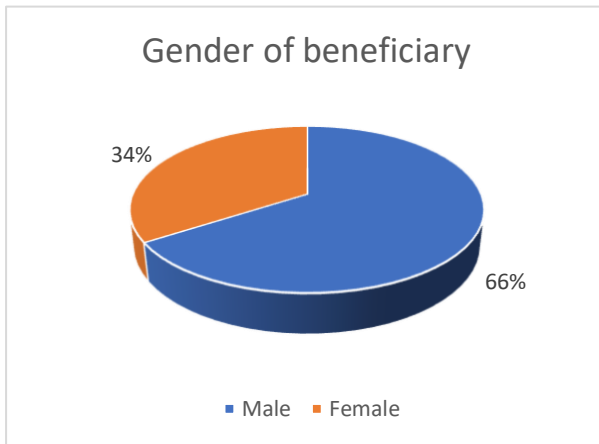


Figure 1 Gender of beneficiaries (Source: APD)

Beneficiary profile

Gender: The beneficiaries are predominantly male, with 415 males compared to 215 females. This indicates that while the program has reached both genders, there is a significant skew toward male participation. This gender distribution may reflect the social and cultural factors influencing limited participation of women PWDs in the program.

Age: Most beneficiaries fall within the 21–35 age bracket (72%), followed by 17–20 age group at 23%. Very few participants are aged 36–45 (5%). This suggests that the program primarily engages individuals who are at the early stages of their professional and personal development, offering maximum potential impact in terms of skills development and employability.

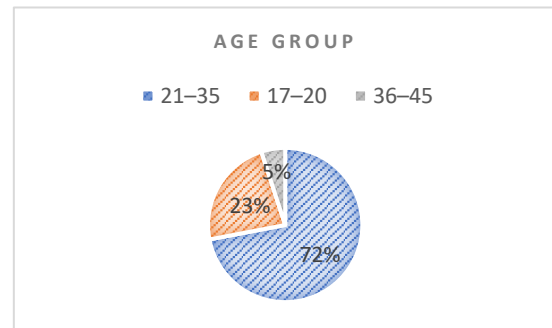


Figure 2 Age group of beneficiaries (Source APD)

Educational levels: A significant portion of beneficiaries hold SSLC certificate (31.59%). Those with post-secondary education make up over 40%, while a smaller group has attained diploma or ITI certifications (10.16%). Those who are illiterate or below SSLC (14.44%). This highlights the need to accommodate both basic and higher education levels to ensure inclusive skill-building opportunities.

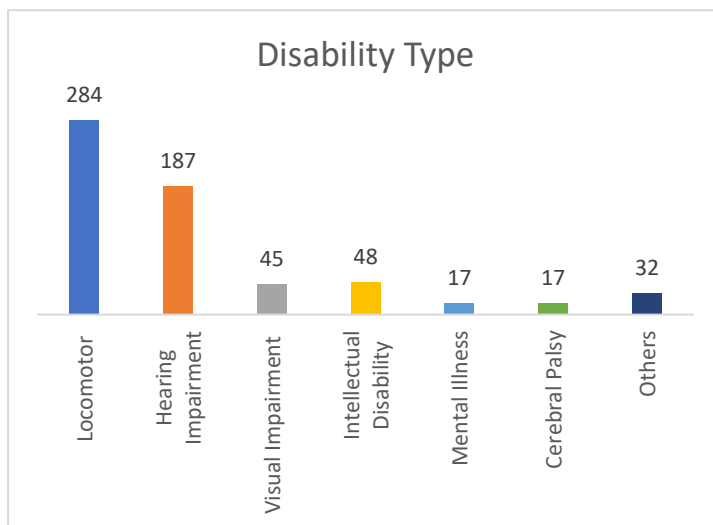


Figure 3 Type of Disability supported by APD and Titan (Source: APD)

Disability type: Locomotor disabilities are the most common (45.08%), followed by hearing impairments (29.68%). Visual impairment affects 7.14%, and cognitive or intellectual disabilities account for about 7.62%. Other disabilities represent 5.08%. This pattern indicates that physical disabilities are the dominant category among beneficiaries, requiring targeted support and infrastructure adaptations to meet mobility and accessibility needs.

Caste / Community: A majority of beneficiaries belong to OBC at 73.02%, followed by Scheduled Castes (SC) at 13.97% and Scheduled Tribes (ST) at 6.19%. Minorities such as Muslims, BC, and MBC represent less than 4% collectively. This suggests that the program effectively reaches socially and economically marginalized communities, which aligns with inclusive development objectives.

Marital status: Most beneficiaries are unmarried (89.05%). The high proportion of unmarried participants reflects the younger age distribution observed earlier and indicates that the program mainly targets individuals who are likely beginning their career paths and independent life choices.

Table 8 Marital status of beneficiaries (Source: APD)

Marital Status	N	%
Unmarried	561	89.05
Married	68	10.79
Divorced	1	0.16
Total	630	100

Survey feedback

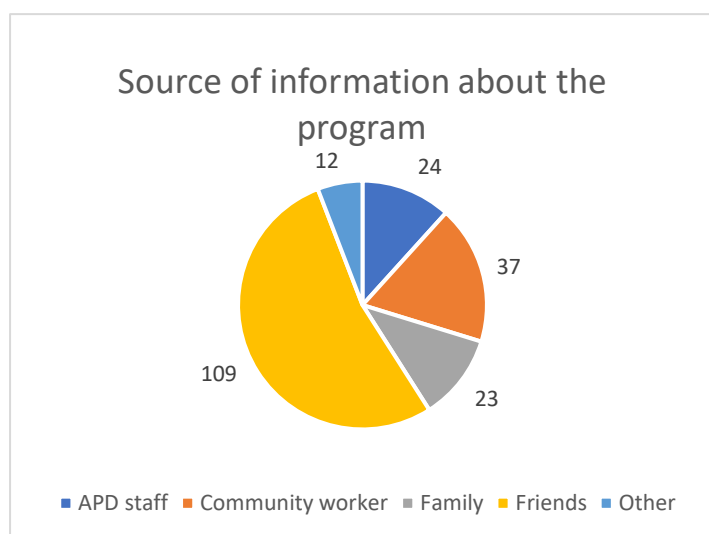


Figure Means of information about the programme (Source: Alumni)

Trainees and Alumni

How did they know about APD: Most beneficiaries learned about the program through their personal networks. 63% mentioned that friends were the primary source of information (109 respondents). 21.39% (37 respondents) mentioned community, followed by APD staff 14% (24 respondents). Overall, word-of-mouth and community-level outreach appeared to be effective for spreading awareness about the program.

- “I first heard about the program from my friend who had already joined. Seeing his experience gave me the confidence to apply.”- Trainee
- “We came to know about this through other PWD parents in our area. Everyone was talking about how helpful the program was, so we decided to enrol our child.” - Trainee

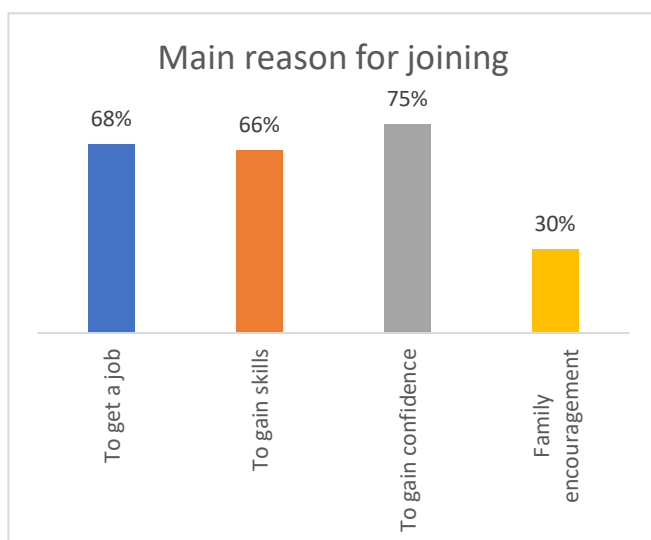


Figure 4 Reason for joining (Source: Alumni Survey)

Reasons for joining the program: The survey findings show that beneficiaries joined the programme for multiple reasons. 75.44% (129 respondents) mentioned gaining confidence as the strongest motivation, indicating a strong need for personal empowerment. The desire to get a job was mentioned by (68.42%, 117 respondents) while gaining new skills (66.08%, 113 respondents) was a core reason. Family encouragement also played a role for 30.41% (52 respondents). This suggests that many participants had supportive families at home. It also shows

that most beneficiaries joined the program by choice, not because they were forced to. They came with clear goals related to learning new skills and improving their chances of getting a job.

Training feedback: Feedback about the training shows very high satisfaction across all areas, with 85–90% of participants rating each training aspect as “High.” Training materials were rated the best (89.5%), followed by trainer quality and accessibility (2.87 weighted average). Course content, teaching clarity, and practical sessions also scored strongly. Very few participants expressed dissatisfaction, showing that the program is well-designed, effective, and meets participants’ expectations.

Trainer Quality:

“The trainers explained everything patiently and answered all our questions.”

“I learned a lot because the trainer made the sessions interactive and engaging.”

Accessibility:

“The training location and timing were convenient, which made attending easy for me.”

“All the sessions were accessible, and the environment was supportive.”

Course Content & Practical Sessions:

“The practical exercises helped me apply what I learned.”

“The course content was very relevant to my work, and I can use these skills at work.”

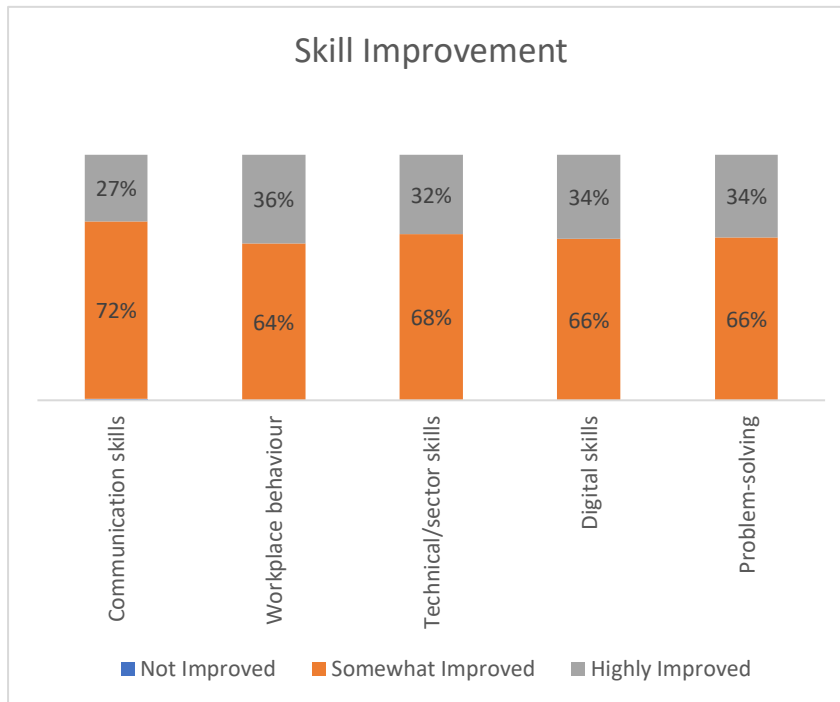


Figure 5 Improvement in skill levels (Source: Alumni Survey)

Skill improvement: Most participants saw improvements in communication. For instance, 27.17% reported high improvement and 72.25% saw some improvement. Workplace behavior saw 36.21% reporting high improvement and 63.79% showing some improvement. For technical/sector-specific skills, 32.18% improved a lot and 67.82% improved somewhat. Digital skills improved for 34.10% (high) and 65.90% (some), while problem-solving skills

improved for 33.72% (high) and 66.28% (some).



Image 4 One of the alumni trainees at Tiruvannamalai

Our batch studied together for about 40 days and became good friends during that time. We had 15 students, with 10 boys and 5 girls. Many of our classmates, like Murali, Krishnamoorthy, and Pachaiyappan, initially joined local shops such as Murugan Chips, but most of them eventually left due to challenges like low pay, difficult working conditions, or personal reasons. We found it difficult to secure suitable employment and often faced frustration with low wages and physically demanding tasks, such as bagging sweets in the heat. During our training, we learned skills like billing, typing, and basic computer, but we realized that these skills didn't always match the opportunities available, which often required formal education or technical qualifications. Despite the challenges, we have stayed in touch with some of our classmates through WhatsApp- Meena-



Image 5 Trainees at Bengaluru Campus

On-the-Job training (OJT) experience:

Feedback on the OJT component reflects a positive experience. 88%, agreed that OJT prepared them for real work, while 12% remained neutral. 88% agreed that the training helped them understand workplace expectations better. Supervisor support had 93.75% agreeing, 5.63% neutral. Confidence was also high, with 92.41% agreeing, 6.96% neutral. Weighted averages ranging from 2.88 to 2.93 indicate that OJT played a critical role in building readiness for real work environments.

Table 9 OJT experience (Source: Alumni Survey)

OJT Support	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
OJT prepared me for real work	0%	12%	88%
I understood workplace expectations	0%	12%	88%
Supervisors were supportive	1%	6%	94%
I felt confident during OJT	1%	7%	92%

Changes after training: Participants reported meaningful personal changes after completing the training. Self-confidence improved for most respondents with 90% reporting improvement. 98.83% reported an improvement in their ability to speak to others. 99.00% reported improved independence. Motivation to work increased for 70.76% to some extent and for 28.65% to a major extent. Likewise, 71.35% reported some change in feeling less worried about the future, while 28.07% reported major change.

GH Madhu, 25 & Gangai Reddy, 20 – Retail Skills Training and Employment

Both Madhu and Gangai are from Anantapur and completed the Sankalpa retail course under APD in August 2024. Before joining, Madhu had attempted jobs but lacked the necessary skills, and Gangai had been mostly at home, waiting for opportunities.

Madhu now works at Godrej in accounting and administration, earning Rs. 25,000 per month, while Gangai is employed at Amazon, handling pick-and-pack operations, earning Rs. 20,000 per month. Both gained practical job skills, computer literacy, CV preparation, and interview techniques during the training.

The training helped them gain confidence, face challenges, and adapt to professional environments, including workplaces with people without disabilities. Their parents are happy with their progress, and both actively recommend the program to others with disabilities. Madhu shared that APD guided him to secure jobs in multiple companies, including Godrej, and emphasizes the role of APD as a key support system in his career journey. Both trainees feel more independent, capable of saving money, and optimistic about future growth.

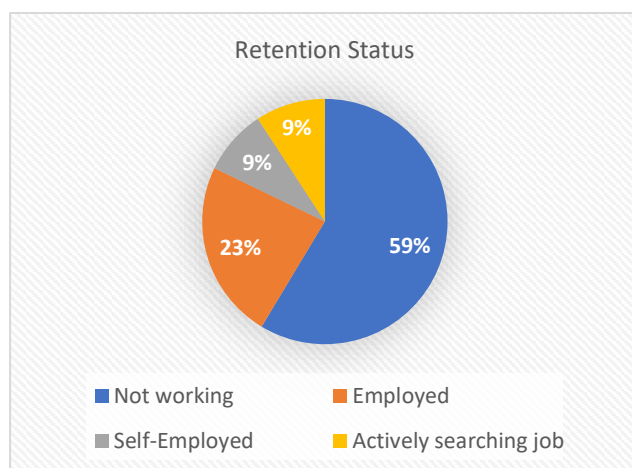


Figure 6 Current occupation status (Source: Alumni Survey)

Employment outcomes: About 21.26% of respondents agreed that the training helped them get a job, reflecting mixed employment outcomes at the time of the survey. Regarding skill alignment, 19.19% agreed that their skills matched their current job, 80.23% were neutral. The ability to manage work responsibilities showed stronger agreement, with 25.43% agreeing, 73.99% neutral.

Table 10 Impact of training (Source: Alumni Survey)

Impact of training	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Training helped me get a job	0%	79%	21%
Skills match my current job	1%	80%	19%
I can manage work responsibilities	1%	74%	25%

Retention Status: The survey responses suggest that 58.62% of the beneficiaries are currently not working (102 respondents). Those who are employed constitute 23.56% (41 respondents), while 8.62% (15 respondents) are self-employed. 9.20% (16 respondents) reported that they are actively searching for a job. The findings highlight the need for greater ongoing employment support to understand why the PWDs do not continue working after being placed.

Workplace challenges: 57.31%, reported facing no workplace challenges, indicating relatively smooth adjustment for many participants. Among those who experienced difficulties, communication challenges were the most common at 28.07%, followed closely by travel-related challenges at 26.90%. These findings suggest that while most participants managed well, targeted support for communication and commuting could further ease workplace integration.

Economic changes after training: Economic outcomes show gradual progress rather than immediate transformation. An increase in income was reported by 26.95%, Savings improved for 25.00% of respondents. Financial independence increased for 20.12% while 25.00% reported an improved ability to contribute to family income.

Family and social impact: The training had a strong positive influence on family and social relationships. 38.01% agreed that their family is happier, while 61.99% remained neutral. Increased independence at home was agreed upon by 36.42% of respondents, with 63.58% neutral responses. Family pride was reported by 38.51% of respondents, while 61.49% were neutral. Reduced family worry was agreed by 31.79%, and increased community respect was reported by 31.98%. The weighted averages above 2.30 highlight meaningful social acceptance and emotional reassurance

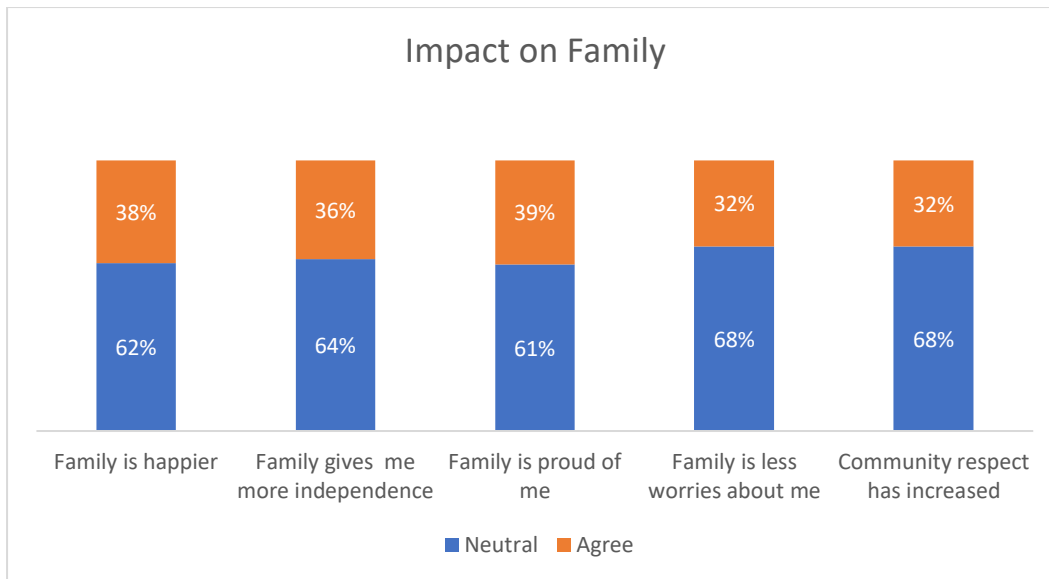


Figure 7 Impact on Family (Source: Alumni Survey)

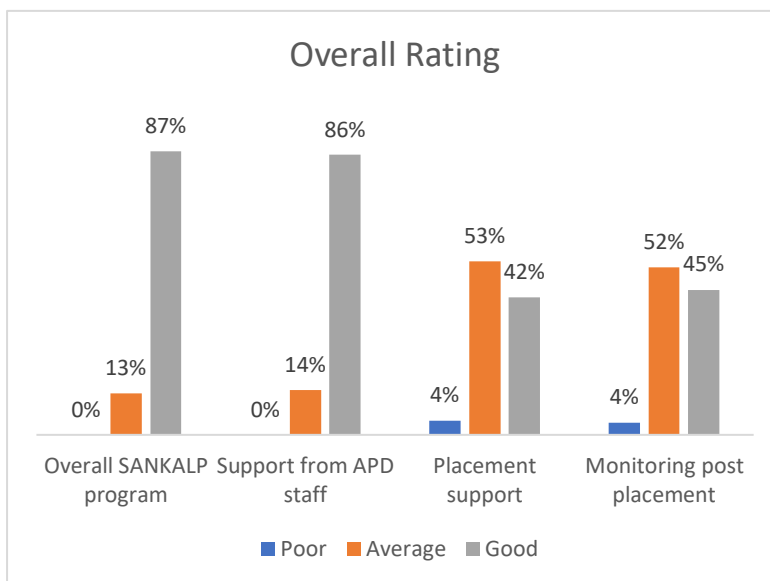


Figure 8 Figure 15 Overall satisfaction levels (Source: Alumni Survey)

Overall feedback:

Overall satisfaction with the programme was very high. 87.28% rated the program as good, while 12.72% rated it as average. Support from APD staff was similarly well received, with 86.13% rating it good and 13.87% average. Placement support received comparatively moderate feedback, with 42.24% rating it good, 53.42% average, and 4.35% poor. Monitoring after placement showed similar trends, with 44.65% rating it good, 51.57% average, and 3.77% poor. These

results indicate excellent program delivery with scope to strengthen placement-related services.

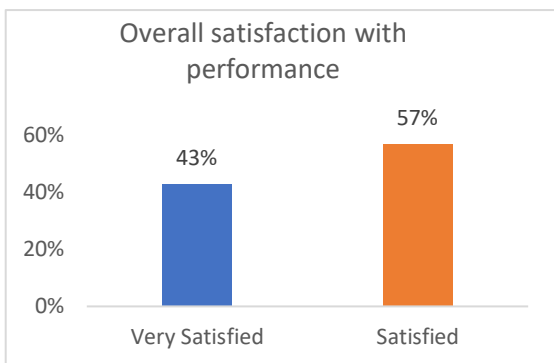


Figure 9 Overall satisfaction with performance (Source: Employer Survey)

Employers

Overall satisfaction with performance: Employers expressed strong satisfaction with the overall performance of APD-trained staff. 43% rated the employees as Very Satisfied and 57% as Satisfied. This shows that the training had a clear impact in preparing candidates to handle responsibilities confidently and contribute effectively to the organization.

Professional behaviour and work ethics: Employers reported strong performance in behaviour and work ethics. On the three-point scale, 36% rated employees as Excellent and 64% as Very Good. They noted that employees consistently displayed reliability and commitment, particularly those who remained in their roles for extended periods.



Figure 10 Competency to handle day to day tasks (Source: Employer Survey)

Handling day-to-day tasks: APD-trained staff were found competent in managing day-to-day tasks and responsibilities. Ratings were 29% Excellent, 50% Very Good, and 21% Good. Employers emphasized that practical on-the-job training during the program helped candidates understand workplace processes and execute their tasks efficiently. Even those initially less confident were able to perform satisfactorily with guidance in the first few weeks.

Job readiness and preparation: Regarding preparation for specific roles, 36% of employers rated employees as Fully Prepared, 43% as Well Prepared, and 21% as Moderately Prepared. Employers acknowledged that the technical skills, workplace knowledge, and practical experience provided by the program allowed employees to meet role expectations effectively.

Image 6 With the owner of a hotel in Tiruvannamalai



Need for additional training: Some employers indicated that additional training was occasionally necessary after candidates joined, particularly for specialized tasks. 57% mentioned the need for extra training, while 43% said no additional training was required.

Table 11 Job readiness Source: Employer Survey

Response	Job readiness and preparation(N)	Percentage of Employers(%)
Fully Prepared	2	36
Well Prepared	3	43
Moderately Prepared	2	21

Relevance of training to job requirements: Employers rated the relevance of APD training as high. 57% rated it as Highly Relevant and 43% as Relevant. Employers observed that the curriculum closely aligned with practical workplace needs, enabling trainees to apply their learning directly to their roles. Most employers agreed that the training effectively covered practical skills needed for the job, with 86% responding Yes. A few suggested minor improvements in specialized technical areas.

Gaps between training and organizational expectations: 71% of employers reported a few targeted improvements between APD training and organizational expectations. Based on discussions with employers, it was understood that the PWDs trained by APD are skilled and were taught concepts that make them capable of performing the expected tasks effectively. Despite their challenges, many candidates demonstrated the ability to problem-solve and continue performing their work efficiently. Practical OJT sessions were repeatedly mentioned as a key factor in helping candidates understand their roles effectively.

Employers also noted that the candidates bring willingness to learn. Many show motivation to improve their skills. Those who stay with the organization for longer periods were described as sincere, focused, and committed to growth. Employers observed that these candidates adapt well to the environment, are reliable, and contribute meaningfully to their organization.

Further observations from employers indicated that with proper guidance and mentorship, PWDs have strong potential to succeed and develop professionally. In general, the employers spoken agreed that APD's training program effectively prepares PWDs with technical skills ready to meet workplace expectations.

Need for the program

- “Typically, PWD candidates that we hire are raw and require a lot of handholding. While we are mandated to hire those with PWDS within the system, the reality is that it is a lot of hard work. Few organizations like APD help us in this effort. This is a much-needed training program”.

What worked?

- “They are good and well-trained, showing strong skills and capability for the work. Even though they face challenges, their skills make them capable of performing assigned tasks well.”
- “Candidates are earnest and motivated, willing to learn and take on new responsibilities.”
- We notice that the candidates who stay for long approach work with sincerity and a desire to improve themselves.
- “Many of them perform tasks well once they understand the process, especially in assembly and practical work.”
- Practical sessions in training clearly help them grasp technical tasks quickly once they get started.
- “APD provides quality training. Their training programs equip candidates with knowledge and basic skills that make onboarding smoother.
- “They are capable and have the potential to succeed if guided properly.” With mentorship or proper guidance, candidates can reach their full potential in professional settings.
- “Some candidates adapt quickly to the work environment and can complete tasks efficiently.”
- Those who adjust well demonstrate focus, commitment, and the ability to meet workplace expectations.
- We have noticed that the candidates who stay are highly reliable and add value to the team.
- “They are disciplined and enthusiastic during training, which reflects in their initial performance at work.”

What could be improved?

- “They struggle to survive in professional settings because they lack punctuality and take too many days off. “Many don't return on time after their days off because they travel back to their hometowns.”.
- “Some face difficulties standing or doing physical work”.
- “Attrition is high because many are too comfortable at APD and not independent enough.”

- “Training should focus more on on-the-job experience and teach them how to manage travel and workplace challenges.”
- “Many candidates struggle to adjust to the demands of a professional workplace because they aren’t prepared for the discipline and expectations outside of training.”
- “Without guidance on handling pressure and independence, many lose motivation and leave early.”

Employers observed that many PWDs trained by APD face challenges in adjusting to professional workplace settings. Inconsistent attendance, frequent absences, and late returns after their travel to their hometowns create difficulties for employers who need a reliable employee. Physical or sensory limitations, such as difficulties standing for long periods or performing assembly tasks, also were cited as reasons that affect performance. Employers noted that while many candidates are motivated initially, their enthusiasm often declines after one to two months, leading to high attrition. Some opined that the supportive training environment, accommodation and food at APD can make it difficult for candidates to work independently and meet the discipline and expectations of a professional workplace. Employers suggested that more on-the-job exposure, guidance on independence, stress management, and practical problem-solving could help mitigate these issues and prepare candidates to navigate workplace challenges, maintain attendance and punctuality, and sustain motivation over the long term.

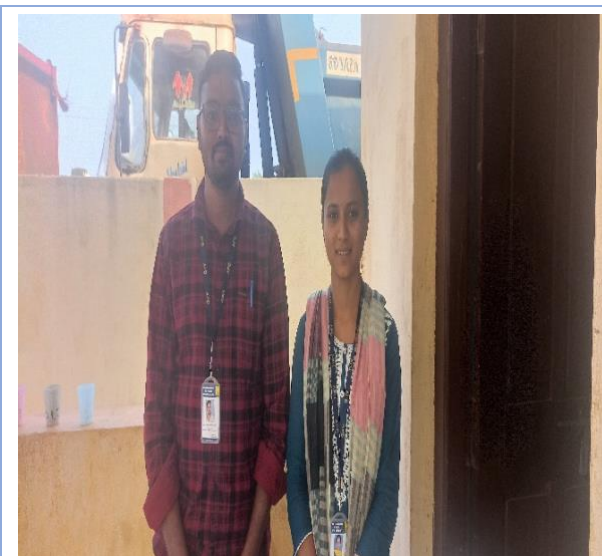
Ashok R, Proprietor, Vidiyal Foundation

I am Ashok Kumar, founder of the Vidiyal Foundation. For the past five years, I have been supporting people with disabilities. Initially, we were doing this informally, but last year we officially registered with the Trust. My journey followed by working as an interpreter at Amazon for five years. During that time, I realized the potential of hiring and supporting people with disabilities, which inspired me to start this foundation.

Through our partnership with APD, we have been able to mobilize and train candidates with disabilities, primarily those with locomotor disabilities. APD’s candidates are well-trained and come prepared for work in roles like picking, packing, and other operational tasks. I have seen first-hand how this training equips them to perform effectively, and I am proud to provide them with opportunities to earn, gain independence, and build their confidence.

Trainers

Trainers at APD highlight a steep but rewarding learning curve. They adapt quickly to teaching students with disabilities, often learning the subject themselves from course materials and internal training. Trainers emphasize using practical exercises, role plays, and hands-on activities to make learning accessible and engaging for all students, regardless of their comprehension or communication needs. Communication is a key focus, with trainers also trying to adjust their methods for students with hearing, speech, or cognitive challenges, sometimes using basic English and learning sign language on the job. Despite their challenges, trainers report a strong sense of satisfaction from witnessing students’ progress, engagement, and skill development, indicating that APD provides both a supportive environment for trainers and meaningful impact for students.



Renuka - APD trainer

I recently joined APD as a trainer. This is my first job, and I had no prior teaching experience. I learned my subject through the materials provided, and my college connection at NGIPR helped me join APD. Working with those with disabilities has been a new experience for me. I communicate using basic English and adapt my teaching methods to their needs. I use practical exercises and role plays to help them understand concepts better. Their comprehension and IQ levels are very good, which makes teaching enjoyable and effective.

Despite the initial challenges, I feel happy and satisfied seeing their progress and engagement in learning.

Shivkumar – APD Trainer (Retail marketing & Placement):

I recently joined APD to teach Retail marketing and coordinate placements. This is also my first job, and I learned the subject from the course book and training at APD. On my first day, it was difficult to adjust, but I gradually understood my role. I focus on practical activities like packing, billing, and role play, which makes learning easier for the students. I have also started visiting hospitals, malls, and hotels to explore placement opportunities and plan to map employers in different districts.

6. Evaluation of Program Objectives based on REESS Framework

Relevance

Prevalence

In the programme areas, the prevalence of persons with disabilities (PWDs) reflects broader state and district-level patterns in southern India. According to **Census 2011**, **Karnataka** reported a disability prevalence of about **2.05%** of the total population. Within the programme districts, the share of persons with disabilities is comparable or slightly higher in some areas. For example, **Bengaluru Urban district** reported around **2.85%** of its population as persons with disabilities, while **Koppal district** reported about **2.49%**. These figures indicate that persons with disabilities are present across both **urban and rural contexts** within the state, highlighting the need for inclusive employment and training initiatives in programme regions.

According to the Census 2011, around 1.6% of the population in Tamil Nadu lives with a disability. In Krishnagiri district, the disability prevalence was approximately 1.8%, while in Tiruvannamalai district it was about 1.7%, both slightly above the state average. These figures highlight the presence of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the programme regions and emphasize the importance of targeted inclusion efforts to address employment and training gaps among these populations.

Lack of employment opportunities for PWD prior to the intervention:

In Koppal, Mangalore and Tiruvannamalai where the program was conducted, employment options for PWDs were nil, minimal or largely confined to informal, low-paid activities with no job security. Even Bengaluru which has a significant PWD population struggles to provide adequate opportunities for them. Stakeholder interactions during the field visit reflect this trend, with 100% of the beneficiaries spoken to reporting prolonged unemployment or engagement in irregular work before the programme. The partnership between APD and Titan helped address regional constraints by enabling access to a structured skilling program. Through decentralised training centres and district-level employer linkages, the programme expanded the employment landscape available to PWDs, allowing them to participate in formal and semi-formal sectors despite local market limitations.

Alumni Answers

- “In Koppal, there are very few jobs for people with disabilities.”
- “Most work here is daily wage work, which I could not manage.”
- “Earlier, I used to roll beedis at home as there were very few options for me. This programme showed me options outside my village.”

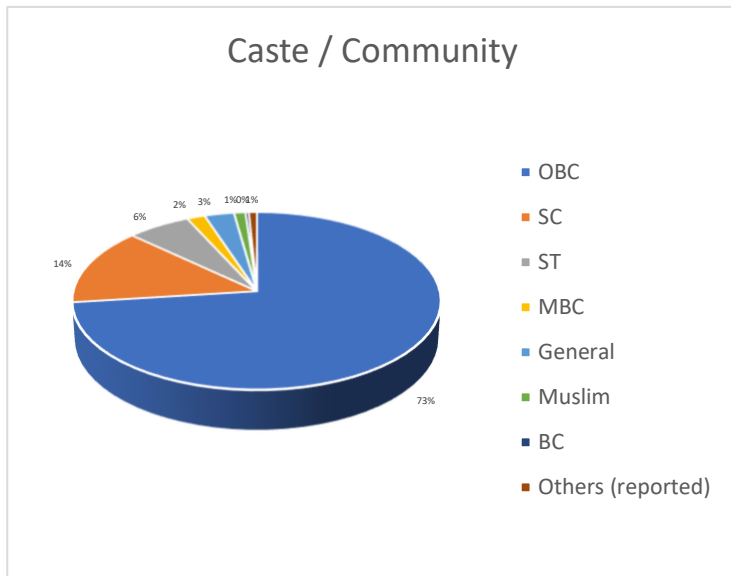
Hope in their eyes- Sankar and Selvi, Parents of Jayakumar – Locomotor disability

We, Sankar and Selvi, are the parents of Jayakumar. We come from Vellumadu village and have two sons, our elder son is 23 and lives in Coimbatore, while Jayakumar has mostly stayed at home for nearly ten years and travels locally to Noonagari. We found out about this programme after writing letters to the MLA’s office and the police station, and then we were contacted. I have worked in various roles, including in a government-linked office and other jobs, and even traveled to Bangalore to support our family.

My wife Selvi works as a cook, and together we manage our household without external financial support. We make sure that Jayakumar does not remain idle and encourage him to work or learn

new skills. We often feel anxious about our son’s future, as he sometimes speaks emotionally about wanting to work for a fixed period or expresses distress when things do not go as planned. We are determined to see him settled in stable employment and continue to support him in every way we can. This programme is our hope for a better future.

Demographic reach- reaching the unreached:



The programme served significant SC/ST and minority populations. National data shows that PWDs from SC/ST communities experience lower workforce participation than the general PWD population, particularly women. Survey responses indicate most beneficiaries belonging to OBC community (73.02%). During the field visits, women beneficiaries reported increased mobility and family acceptance after programme enrolment, demonstrating the partnership’s role in improving access across intersecting vulnerabilities. This

Figure 11 Caste/Community of Beneficiaries (Source: APD)

indicates that the programme was successful in breaking national trends.

- Women from our area rarely attend such programmes.”
- “My family allowed me to travel for training because of the good reviews they heard about this project from other parents. Earlier, they were worried to send me”.

Ramifications of not being skilled and receptivity of beneficiaries



Image 7 Female Alumni - Bengaluru

If suitable job-related skills are not identified and aligned with local market demand, the consequences can be significant for persons with disabilities. Without relevant skills, trainees may complete courses but struggle to secure meaningful employment, leading to frustration, reduced confidence, and possible withdrawal from future opportunities. This can reinforce existing patterns of dependency within families and limit economic mobility.

At the same time, field interactions indicate strong receptivity among both

beneficiaries and caregivers toward the programme. All the trainees met with demonstrated willingness to learn and explore career pathways when the training is seen as practical and employment oriented. Caregivers, who often play a key decision-making role, showed openness when they understand the safety, structure, and livelihood potential of the programme.

Training courses designed around local market demand and employability potential.

Training content was developed after assessing service, retail, and small manufacturing sectors that demonstrate steady hiring demand. NSDC skill gap studies indicate that regional service roles continue to grow faster than formal manufacturing in semi-urban geographies, making them suitable entry points for inclusive employment. 100% of the beneficiaries met with felt that the program was designed to enhance their potential to find jobs.

- “The skills taught are useful in nearby towns.”
- “I could see jobs that match what we learned.”
- “This training was not theoretical.”

Skill domains aligned with disability-inclusive employability and livelihoods.

Skill domains were selected to support economic independence for PWDs across varied geographies, focusing on roles that require moderate physical mobility and can be adapted locally. This aligns with national disability employment trends, where service-oriented roles show higher inclusion potential. Field level findings show that beneficiaries viewed the skills gained as useful for sustained income, not just short-term engagement.

- “This training helps me earn regularly. Now I have a steady job. This is not something I dreamed of earlier”.

Limited skilling opportunities in the program areas

Across implementation districts, access to formal skilling programmes for PWDs remained low before the intervention. Survey results indicate that 96% beneficiaries were first-time trainees. All of them mentioned that they were unaware of similar skilling programs and that the programme helped them understand the skilling programmes available in the sector.

Table 12 Previous experience with trainings (Source: Trainee Survey)

Statement	Percentage (%)
This is my first formal skilling/training programme	96
I was previously unaware of structured skilling pathways	100
The programme helped me understand skilling opportunities available to me	100

Beneficiaries speak

My name is Rajesh, I am 20 years old, and I have a locomotor disability. I studied up to the 9th standard but had to stop school due to family problems. My parents are farmers, and we grow ground nuts on our own land. Before joining the APD horticulture training program, I had no clear career plan and was mostly helping with farm work. Few months ago, I joined the horticulture

course through APD in partnership with RDD. I learned vegetable and fruit cultivation, ornamental horticulture, and how to manage a nursery. The training taught me practical skills I can apply both in my family farm and in starting my own nursery someday. Now, I am working nearby and earning Rs. 9,000–10,000 per month. I am saving money and feel more confident about my future. My family is very happy to see me independent, and I have a clear plan to establish my own nursery. I would recommend this program to other young people with disabilities as it gives knowledge, confidence, and opportunities to earn.

Curriculum designed around the potential of PWDs.

The training program was designed to suit people with different abilities and learning needs across districts. Trainers used a flexible pace, hands-on practice, and personal support so that participants from different educational backgrounds could learn comfortably. The program focused on important 21st-century skills needed in daily life and work, such as thinking clearly, being creative, communicating well, working with others, and using digital tools. It also helped participants understand emotions, handle change, stay motivated, manage time and money, respect different cultures, and build good relationships, making them more confident and better prepared for future opportunities.

- “I had never touched a computer before this training. Now I know how to use it for basic work, and it gives me confidence.”
- “I learned how to talk to people better, listen, and express myself clearly. This helped me feel more comfortable when meeting others.”
- “Before, I did not understand computers. Now I know how data can be entered.”

The retail curriculum helps learners understand how to work successfully in today’s retail industry. It starts by explaining the basics of retail and good customer service, showing how treating customers well helps increase sales. Learners are taught how to arrange products, plan store layouts, and manage stock properly to avoid shortages and losses. The course also covers simple sales skills, promotions, and marketing to improve performance. In addition, it introduces the use of data, staff training, workplace safety, and store security.



Image 8 Horticulture Training - Saplings planted

The horticulture training curriculum helps learners gain basic skills to work in gardening and plant-related jobs. It begins with an introduction to plants, soil, gardening tools, and teaches how to care for plants. Learners are trained in nursery work, watering methods, composting, and pest control using safe practices. The program also covers landscaping basics, seasonal planting, and proper handling of

plants for sale or maintenance work. Through hands-on training and guidance, participants build practical skills, confidence, and readiness for employment or self-work in the horticulture sector.

“As trainers, we have seen that this horticulture curriculum really helps learners. The training is easy to understand and mostly practical. Participants learn how to care for plants, work in nurseries, and do basic gardening tasks. Many learners who had never worked with plants before are now working in nurseries, gardens, and landscaping jobs. Some have also started small gardening work on their own. This training has given them skills, confidence, and job opportunities.”

Alignment of PWD aspirations with industry demand across regions

The OJT and career guidance sessions helped beneficiaries find viable job roles in some districts. Field survey responses in Bengaluru and Koppal show improved clarity around career pathways and reduced mismatch between expectations and market realities, however the visit to Tiruvannamalai where previous participants indicated that they were unhappy with the jobs they were matched with.

- “The on-the-job training helped me understand retail work clearly. I am working in a retail store now, and the work feels familiar because it is like our training.”
- “I was placed in a sweet shop where I had to roll hot laddus all day. My hands got blisters, the work is very hard, and the pay is low. This job did not match my training, and I am not very happy.”

Effectiveness

Inclusive curriculum integrating growing market demands.

The curriculum was aligned with current job market needs, as shown by high trainee satisfaction with both the course content and training materials. About 85.63% of trainees felt the course content was highly relevant, showing that what they learned matched employer’s needs. 89.53% rated the training materials as high quality, helping them learn skills that could be used directly at work. 88.02% said they felt more prepared to understand workplace expectations.

Chennaiyan – Trainee with Spinal Muscular Atrophy

I completed my training last year at Krishnagiri, staying in the hostel for about 40 days. Before this, I studied Mechanical Engineering and ITI, and I had no experience with computers. During the course, I learned how to use a computer, which has been very useful for checking bills and managing work tasks. The trainers were very supportive, and the training itself was comfortable and accessible, with ramps and other facilities that made it easier for me to move around. I found the training very practical and helpful. I was able to apply what I learned directly in my work. Although I had some initial difficulties, the program helped me gain confidence and skills I didn’t have before. I am satisfied with my studies here and feel prepared for employment. I am grateful for the experience and the support I received during my time at the training center.

Image 9 Alumni with Locomotor disability from Krishnagiri



Duration and timeliness of course

The course were delivered on schedule, with all classroom sessions and on-the-job training components completed as planned. Structured planning of theory and OJT ensured smooth learning progression, and participants were able to complete the programme within the expected timeframe. Trainees reported that the pacing and duration of the course suited their learning needs, allowing them to absorb concepts fully without feeling rushed.

Trainee Says

- “The training was well-paced and just the right length.”
- “Each session happened on time, so we could focus on learning.”
- “I had enough time to practice everything before *moving to OJT.*”

Trainer quality and pedagogy

Trainer quality was one of the strongest parts of the program. About 87.86% of participants rated the trainers as very good, and 85.55% felt the teaching was clear and easy to understand. Trainers explained concepts well and were able to support different types of learners, including persons with disabilities. Because of this, learning outcomes were strong. All trainees reported improvement in their skills, including technical skills, digital skills, workplace behaviour, and problem-solving. Many participants also said they saw a high level of improvement, showing that good trainers and simple teaching methods helped learners gain real

Trainee quotes

- “The trainer explained everything slowly and clearly. Even when I did not understand at first, they repeated and helped me until I learned the skill.”
- “Because of the trainer’s support, I improved many skills like using tools, basic digital work, and behaving confidently at the workplace. I feel more capable now.”

OJT preparing for job readiness.

OJT was one of the most effective components of the program. A strong 87.57% of respondents agreed that OJT prepared them for real work, while 88.02% agreed that it helped them understand workplace expectations. Support from supervisors during OJT was rated particularly high, with 93.75% agreement, indicating a positive learning environment. Confidence outcomes reinforce job readiness. As many as 92.41% of trainees reported feeling confident during OJT, which aligns with post-training improvements in independence (30% major change) and motivation to work (28.65% major change). These results demonstrate that OJT effectively bridged the gap between training and employment.

- “OJT showed me how real work happens every day.”
- “I learned discipline and teamwork during OJT.”
- “After OJT, I was not scared of going to work.”

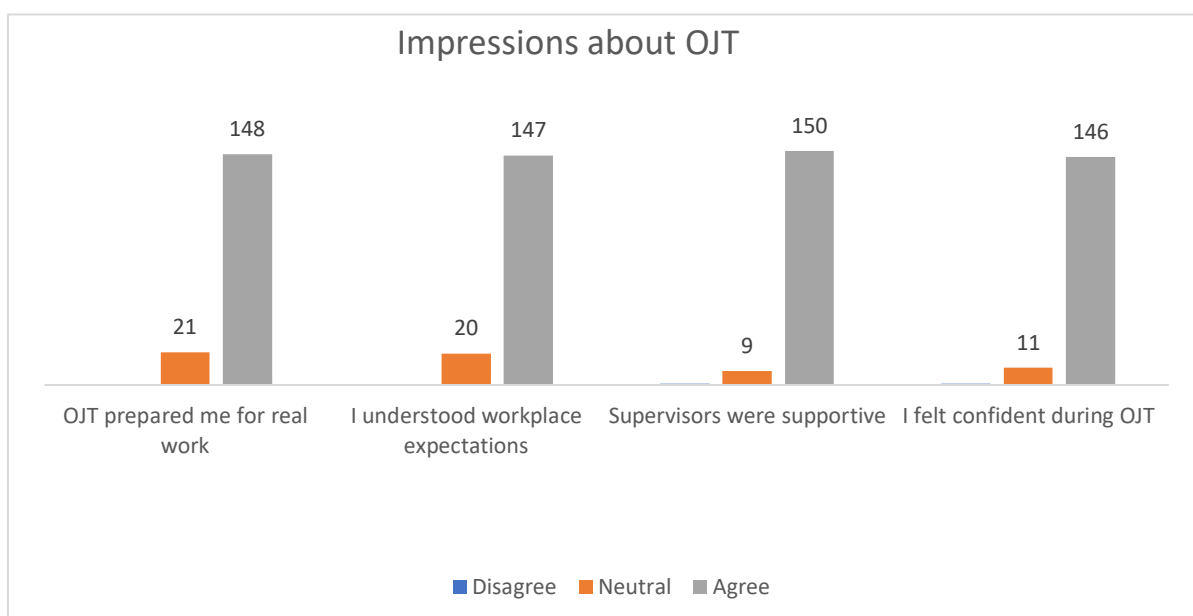


Figure 11 Impressions about OJT (Source: Alumni Survey)

Placement of trainees

Placement outcomes indicate partial but meaningful success. While only 21.26% directly agreed that training helped them get a job, neutral responses were high, reflecting that some trainees may still be in transition or seeking suitable opportunities. Importantly, disagreement levels were negligible, suggesting that the training itself was not seen as a barrier to employment. Placement support received mixed feedback, with 42.24% rating it as good and 53.42% as average. This indicates that while placements were achieved, there is scope to strengthen employer linkages and follow-up to improve placement rates.

Table 13 Placement support impressions (Source: Alumni Survey)

Aspect	Good (%)	Average (%)	Poor (%)
Placement support	42.24	53.42	4.35
Monitoring post placement	44.65	51.57	3.77

Trainee Tells

- “I joined because my friend told me about it.”
- “I felt comfortable enrolling through someone I knew.”



Image 10 With an alumni from Koppal

Cariappah Honnappa, Locomotor Disability, Koppal

My name is Cariappah Honnappa. Before joining this training program, I used to do small jobs like working in shops and doing field work. I earned very little (around Rs. 7,000–8,000 per month) and I didn’t have much stability. My family and I were struggling, and I wanted to change that.

After attending the training, my life has changed completely. I learned computer skills, communication, and how to handle work more effectively. Now I

work with VAW, where I can help people with disabilities, and my salary has improved to Rs. 10,000 per month under a government contract. I feel respected, more confident, and my family is happy to see me supporting myself. The training was thorough, the staff were polite, and I learned a lot. I would recommend this program to anyone who wants to improve their skills and find meaningful work.

Inclusive mobilisation strategies in place

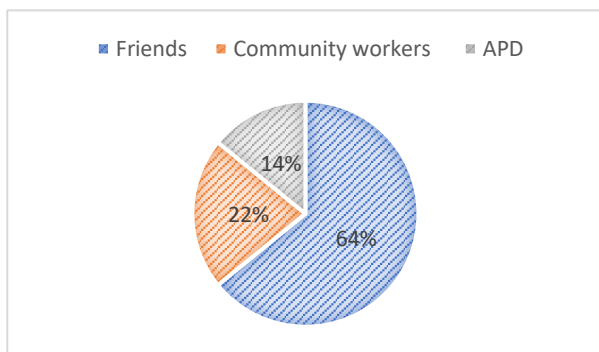


Figure 12 Awareness about program (Source: Alumni Survey)

Mobilisation strategies relied heavily on community networks, making outreach inclusive and accessible. Friends were the primary source of information for 63.01% of trainees, followed by community workers at 21.39% and APD staff at 13.87%. This indicates effective use of trusted local channels. Such approaches helped reach persons with disabilities who may otherwise remain excluded from formal skilling systems.

Motivation to start micro-enterprises or enterprises

Motivation indicators suggest growing readiness for self-employment. Improved confidence, problem-solving skills (33.72% high improvement), and digital skills (34.10% high improvement) create a foundation for entrepreneurial activity. 8.62% of respondents were already self-employed at the time of the survey, indicating that the program supports diverse livelihood pathways beyond wage employment.

Trainee Talks

- “I am thinking of starting something small.”
- “The training gave me ideas for self-work.”
- “I feel capable of managing my own work.”

Increase in employability skills

Employability skills improved consistently across all measured areas. Workplace behaviour showed the highest high-improvement rate at 36.21%, followed by digital skills at 34.10% and problem-solving at 33.72%. No respondent reported no improvement in these areas.

These improvements directly support workplace adjustment, as reflected in high agreement levels on managing work responsibilities (25.43%) and low disagreement across employment-related statements.

Awareness of government schemes for PWD

The program contributed to improving awareness of government schemes for persons with disabilities through structured community engagement and staff interaction. With 100% of the current beneficiaries reporting an improvement in independence, participants are better equipped to approach institutions, inquire about schemes, and navigate application processes, strengthening their access to public support mechanisms.

Trainee Thoughts

- “I came to know about schemes through discussions during training.”
- “Earlier I didn’t know what support was available.”
- “Now I am confident to ask about government benefits.”

Participants continuing in employment or self-employment post-training.

Post-training employment data shows mixed outcomes. At the time of the survey, 23.56% of respondents were employed and 8.62% were self-employed, while 9.20% were actively searching for jobs. Discussions with employers and insights from field visits revealed that job retention remains a significant challenge. Those interviewed reported being unable to continue in their jobs, citing reasons such as long commuting distances, physical fatigue, difficulty managing work demands, challenges with social interaction, and being misunderstood by colleagues.

Reshma's journey: From trainee to trainer

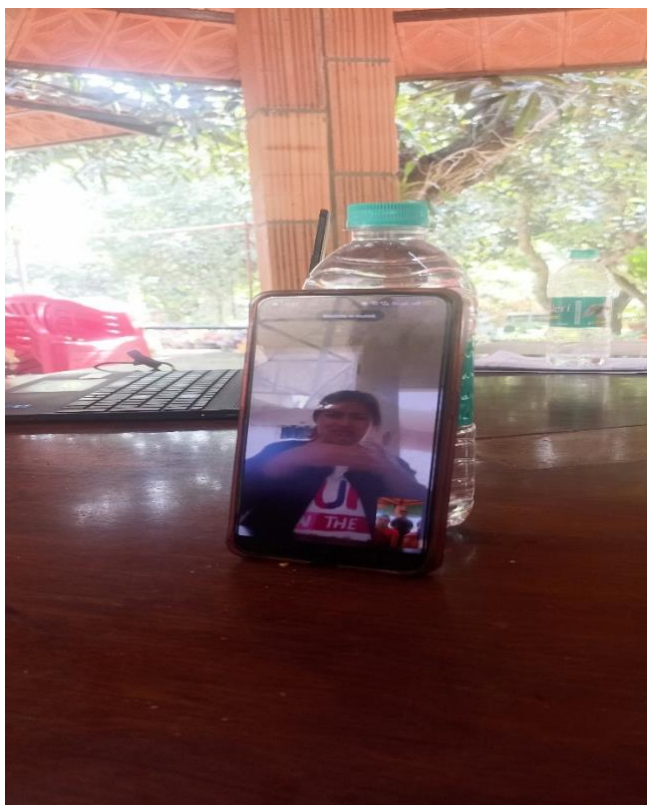


Image 11 Online call with Trainer and Alumni Reshma

Reshma, from Northeast India, was born with hearing and speech impairments. Her sister, brother, and husband are also hearing and speech impaired, and communication within the family has always been through sign language. Growing up, Reshma had no clear vision of a career pathway. Like many others in similar situations, she was dependent on her husband and family, with limited exposure to opportunities outside her home.

In 2021, Reshma and her sister enrolled in the APD training programme together. It was their first structured learning experience. The supportive environment, practical sessions, and patient guidance from trainers helped both of them build confidence and improve their skills. The programme not only strengthened Reshma's

technical abilities but also improved her communication and professional skills. Learning and using sign language in a structured setting further strengthened her ability to engage with others.

After completing the training, Reshma's sister secured employment at a hotel, gaining financial independence and workplace exposure. Reshma, too, progressed steadily. With dedication and continued engagement, she took on greater responsibilities and eventually became a trainer at APD. Today, she teaches and mentors other trainees, including persons with disabilities, using her own journey as an example.

From having no clear future to becoming a professional trainer, Reshma's journey reflects transformation through opportunity and support. Her story demonstrates how inclusive training can create not just employment, but leadership and role models within the disability community.

Efficiency

Affordability

The programme was offered entirely free of cost to all participants. From the initial identification and enrolment process to training, accommodation, meals, and OJT, every aspect was fully supported without any financial burden on the learners. Discussions with trainees from the current batches highlighted that affordability was a crucial factor enabling them to join and complete the programme. Many shared that without such support, they would not have been able to pursue the training. In fact, all participants indicated that the free nature of the programme played a key role in their decision to pursue it, allowing them to focus entirely on learning and skill development without worrying about expenses.

Trainees

- "I could join the training because everything was free. I would not have been able to do it otherwise."
- "Since there was no fee, I could focus completely on learning."
- "The free training made it possible for me to access this course as my parents would not have been able to afford it otherwise."

Alumni

- "Without the free training, I would not have had the chance to learn these skills. It changed my future."
- "The programme being free made it possible for me to complete the training and start working, which I never thought I could."



Figure 13 Overall Satisfaction (Source: Alumni Survey)

Trainee satisfaction

Trainee satisfaction with the programme is notably high, reflecting positive perceptions of training quality, support systems, and overall delivery. 87.28% of respondents rated the overall program as *good*. Support from APD staff was similarly well received, with 86.13% rating it as good. Quality of trainers was rated high by 87.86% of respondents, relevance of course content by 85.63%, and training materials by 89.53%. Together, these

figures suggest that trainees valued both what was taught and how it was delivered, contributing to sustained engagement and positive perceptions of the program.

Alumni Accounts

- “The trainer explained everything in a simple way.”
- “They understood our difficulties and supported us.”
- “Learning was easy because of how the trainer taught.”

APD Staff Says

- "Our training is designed to be hands-on and inclusive. When I notice learners gaining confidence, it automatically reflects the teaching and by default, the careful selection and training of our trainers."

Trainer Talks

- "Working with learners with diverse needs requires adapting my teaching methods. Seeing participants improve shows that our approach is effective."

Efficient mobilisation and inclusion:

Mobilisation for the programme was efficient with the team relying strongly on community-based networks that ensured wider reach among persons with disabilities. APD leveraged trusted, low-cost, and high-impact mobilisation channels, reducing dependency on intensive outreach campaigns while ensuring credibility and acceptance.

Trainee Talks

- “The information reached me at the right time.”
- “It was easy to understand and enrol.”
- I didn’t have to wait for very long after I was selected.

DAY	Morning				Afternoon			
	Assembly	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7
1	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Orientation	Orientation	Orientation	Orientation	Lunch	Induction	Induction
2	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Communication skill	Health & hygiene	Games	Art & Craft	Lunch	Emotional Intelligence	Intro to computers
3	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Retail Stores & Types	Sales Techniques	Sales Techniques	Art & Craft	Lunch	Product knowledge	Spoken English
4	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Intro -Basic Computers	Computer lab	Brain storm games	Art & Craft	Lunch	Life skills	Basic Math
5	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Pre Test	Pre Test	Health & hygiene	Art & Craft	Lunch	Foreign Product & Stores	General Knowledge
6	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Retail Planning & Presentation	Product Demonstration	Retail terminologies	Art & Craft	Lunch	Time Management	Indoor Games
7	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Computer lab	College Experience & Diversity	Life skills	Art & Craft	Lunch	Sales Techniques	Music - Singing
8	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Exposure Visit - Retail Store	Exposure Visit - Retail Store	Exposure Visit - Retail Store	Art & Craft	Lunch	Exposure Visit - Retail Store	Sign Language
9	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Future Trends in Retail	Bar code & labelling	Computer - Intro Basic	Art & Craft	Lunch	Exposure Visit - Retail Store	Exposure Visit - Retail Store
10	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Customer Service	Store Sign - Handing Customer	Handing Customer Complaints	Art & Craft	Lunch	Computer Lab	Basic Math
11	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Financial Literacy	Visual Merchandising	Activity - Inventory Mgmt	Art & Craft	Lunch	Self Introduction	Resume Building
12	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Health check up	Health check up	Health check up	Art & Craft	Lunch	E-Commerce & Retail	Resume Building
13	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Visual Merchandising and Store Layout	Visual Merchandising and Store Layout	Visual Merchandising and Store Layout	Art & Craft	Lunch	Cultural Activities	Brain Storm Games
14	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Exposure Visit - Bank	Exposure Visit - Bank	Exposure Visit - Bank	Art & Craft	Lunch	Cultural Activities	Cultural Activities
15	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Exposure Visit - Bank	Exposure Visit - Bank	Exposure Visit - Bank	Art & Craft	Lunch	Basic Rules of Telephone Etiquette	Attitude in Work Place
16	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Interview skills	Digital Literacy	Practical - Digital Literacy	Art & Craft	Lunch	Attitude in Work Place	Attitude in Work Place
17	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Computer Excel	Basic Math	Art & Craft	Art & Craft	Lunch	PTM	PTM
18	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Mock Interview	Interview skills	Letter writing	Art & Craft	Lunch	Group Discussion - General Topics	Sign Language
19	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Group Reading - Digital Literacy	Activity - Tobey & Bostet Management	Cyber security	Art & Craft	Lunch	Brand Awareness - Retail	Art & Craft
20	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Basic Spoken English Test	Basic Spoken English Test	Sign Language Test	Sign Language Test	Lunch	Ongrizing Stores	Spoken English
21	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Employer Engagement	Employer Engagement	Employer Engagement	Art & Craft	Lunch	Life Skills	Role play
22	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Post test	Post Test Evaluation	Post test evaluation	Art & Craft	Lunch	Integration with Company Representative	Out Door Games
23	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Employer Engagement	Employer Engagement	Employer Engagement	Art & Craft	Lunch	Integration with Company Representative	Integration with Company Representative
24	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Resume Building	Resume writing	Activity - Group Discussion	Art & Craft	Lunch	Placement Orientation	Placement Orientation
25	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Revision - Computers	Computer lab - Revision	Computer lab - Revision	Art & Craft	Lunch	Life skills	Brain storm games
26	Assembly & News Paper Reading	Connect to Interview	Mock Interview	Interview skills	Art & Craft	Lunch	Motivational Movie Show	Motivational Movie Show
31 to 46	OJT	OJT	OJT	OJT	OJT	OJT	Spoken English	Role play
							Revision - Retail - Sales	Revision - Retail - Sales
							Interview Skills	Interview Skills

Image : Curriculum

Retention

Course completion, including OJT, reflects strong participant retention and program execution efficiency. High satisfaction with training delivery with 87.28% rating the overall program as good. This indicates sustained engagement throughout the course duration. Additionally, skill improvement data shows near-universal participation through to completion, with almost no respondents reporting no improvement across skill areas. OJT completion is also particularly strong.

Certification and assessment systems

The program's assessment and certification processes appear robust, as reflected in high satisfaction with clarity of teaching methods (85.55% high rating) and training materials (89.53% high rating).

Optimum use of existing infrastructure

The program demonstrates efficient utilisation of existing training infrastructure rather than dependence on new or parallel systems. High ratings for accessibility (86.63% rated high) and training materials (89.53% rated high) suggest that existing facilities were adequate, inclusive, and well-organised to meet trainee needs. Efficient infrastructure use is also reflected in smooth training delivery outcomes.

- "The training centre had everything we needed."- Trainee
- "All the materials were adequate".- Trainee
- "Facilities were comfortable and accessible."- Trainee
- "There were no issues during sessions."- Trainee

Adequacy of placement partners

While placement outcomes show scope for strengthening, existing data indicates need for gradual expansion and engagement with employers. Placement support was rated as good by 42.24% and average by 53.42%, suggesting that employer linkages are in place and functioning, though not yet fully optimised.

Programme completion

- "The training followed a clear plan."
- "Each stage happened on time."
- "There were no major delays."

About placement

- "The employer was supportive during OJT."
- "Workplace staff were cooperative."
- "More companies would help future batches."

Staff adequacy

The programme maintained an effective trainer-to-trainee ratio, with one trainer handling a batch of 18–25 participants. This allowed for personalized attention, close monitoring of progress, and timely clarification of doubts. Staff and trainers worked together to ensure smooth delivery of sessions, manage logistics, and provide hands-on support during practical exercises and OJT. Trainees consistently reported that this level of attention helped them learn efficiently and feel supported throughout the programme. However, there is a need for more skilled staff to handle those with hearing impairments.

Monitoring mechanisms in place

APD has embedded monitoring across the entire skilling and livelihood journey, ensuring that participant progress is tracked beyond classroom completion. Multiple follow-up calls and visits are conducted by the team. Through continuous engagement, mentoring, and follow-ups, APD identifies challenges early and provides corrective support. This ensures that participants are not only trained but supported until they are confident and stable in work environments.

- "We track each participant beyond the classroom through regular follow-up calls and visits. This helps us identify any challenges early and provide the support they need to succeed in the workplace."- APD staff
- "Continuous engagement allows us to ensure that learners are not just trained, but also confident and stable when transitioning to jobs."- APD staff
- "Even after the training ended, the APD team stayed in touch, guiding me whenever I faced difficulties at work. This made me feel supported and confident."- Alumni
- "The regular follow-ups from APD helped me stay motivated, which made it easier to adapt to my new job."- Alumni

Sustainability



Figure 14 Recommendation about training to others (Source: Alumni Survey)

Alumni networks promoting role models

APD’s alumni play a small role in motivating current trainees by demonstrating long-term employment success. Over 26% of alumni indicated that they had recommended APD to their friends. Seeing peers with similar disabilities sustain jobs builds confidence and aspiration among new participants. Alumni also influence families and employers by challenging assumptions around productivity and reliability. These lived examples strengthen belief in inclusive employment and encourage

persistence through training and early job phases.

Parent Professes

"At first, I wasn't sure if my daughter could manage training or work, but I saw two other young people with disabilities succeed, and that gave me hope. I encouraged her to join the programme, and now she has a job and is earning. Seeing her confidence, independent, and able to contribute to the family makes me very proud and happy."

Alignment with government skill ecosystems and regional implementation

The programme followed national skill standards like NSDC and matched government training systems. This helped keep the training the same across all areas. Because of this, participants from small towns and rural areas were accepted in many places. Field level discussion revealed that the training helped learners feel more confident and improved their chances of getting jobs, even outside their own districts.

"The programme follows national skill standards like NSDC and aligns with government training systems, which helps keep the training consistent across locations. This makes it easier for participants from smaller towns and rural areas to access opportunities beyond their districts."

Linkages with local markets and supplier networks established

APD has established strong linkages with local employers and market networks by directly aligning training with industry needs. Participants benefit from exposure to real work environments, employer interactions, and role-specific preparation. This reduces anxiety during job transitions and improves acceptance at workplaces. Employer sensitization further ensures that trainees enter environments that understand disability inclusion.

Institutional sustainability as a livelihood hub

APD's strength lies in its integrated institutional structure, combining skilling, rehabilitation, counselling, assistive technology, and advocacy. This holistic ecosystem allows APD to address barriers beyond employment, such as mobility, communication, and confidence. As a livelihood hub, APD continuously adapts its programmes while remaining grounded in its core mission of functional and economic independence for persons with disabilities.

APD leadership

- *"Our core thing is to make the person functionally independent and economically independent."*
- *"Life skills and work readiness are common for all domains."*

Alumni:

- *"They helped me become independent, not just employed."*

Programme continuity without Titan support

The organization has multiple donors but APD's livelihood initiatives are designed to continue independently of individual funding cycles. Systems for training, placement, employer engagement, and follow-up are institutionally embedded. This ensures that even after specific donor-supported programmes conclude, participants continue to access skilling and placement opportunities through APD's broader ecosystem.

APD leadership

- *"They have been supporting us for four programs."*
- *"Our approach has always remained the same."*

Alumni

- *"Even after the program ended, APD helped me look for work."*
- *"Support did not stop after the training finished."*

Scalability and replication potential

APD's skilling model is structured to allow expansion across sectors and regions. Core components such as life skills, functional independence, and work readiness remain constant, while domain-specific training adapts to market demand. This approach enables APD to replicate the model across retail, horticulture, and technical sectors without diluting programme quality.

Collaboration with government bodies / NSDC

APD actively collaborates with government bodies and policy platforms to strengthen disability inclusion in skilling and employment. Participation in advisory boards enables APD to influence inclusive workforce policies while aligning programmes with national priorities. These collaborations strengthen long-term sustainability and open pathways for scaling inclusive employment practices.

APD leadership

- “Our team members are part of many boards at state and center level.”
- “We are working on both supply and demand sides.”

Social Impact

Increase in self-reliance and self-confidence among PWD.

Self-reliance emerged as a central outcome, reflected in independence, confidence, and decision-making. Participants reported managing work, travel, and personal goals with minimal support, reinforcing dignity and autonomy. Self-confidence emerged as a strong motivation and outcome of the program. As many as 76.44% joined the program to gain confidence, and post-training, 22.67% reported major change while 76.74% reported some change in self-confidence. These gains were reinforced through OJT and supportive learning environments. Increased confidence also translated into better communication and independence, strengthening overall social participation, according to the trainees who were present during the time of the audit. These findings were further reinforced by the Alumni surveyed,

Trainee Testifies

- “I now speak without fear.”
- “Earlier I doubted myself; now I try.”
- “I feel equal to others at work.”

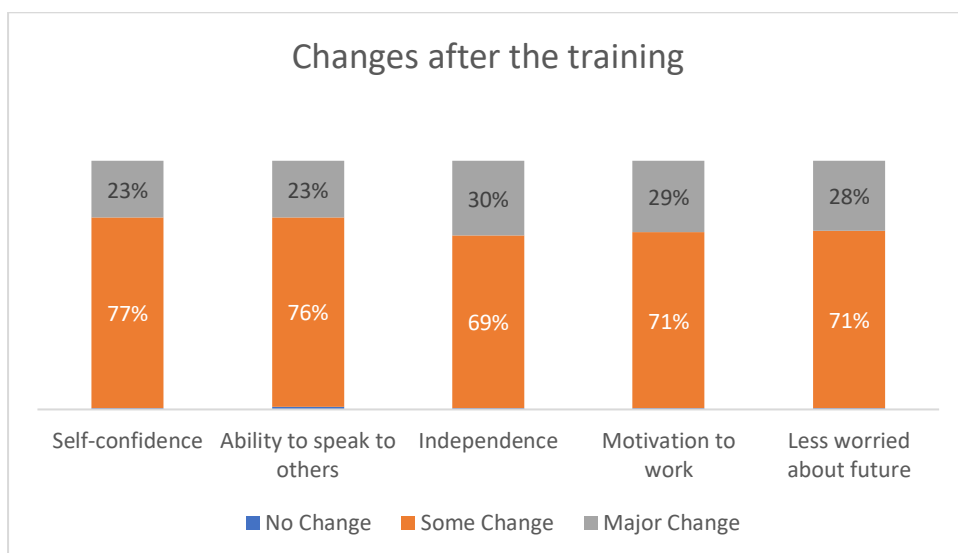
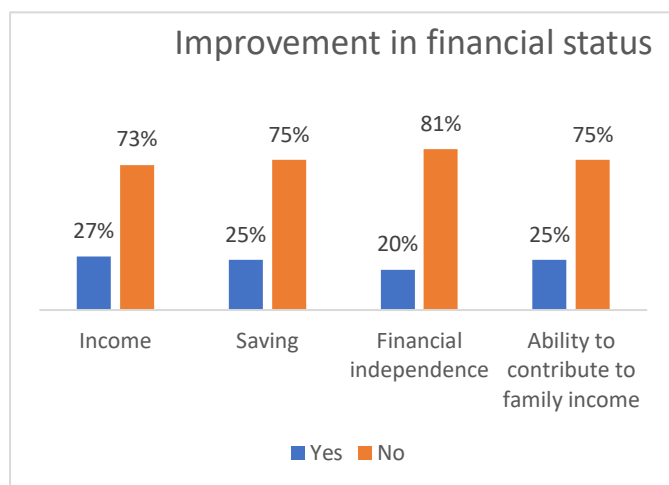


Figure 15 Changes observed after the training

Increase in household income



An increase in their household income was reported by 26.95% of trainees, while 25% reported improved savings and ability to contribute to family income. Financial independence increased for 20.12% of respondents, indicating early-stage economic gains following training. The relatively lower percentages suggest that income effects may take longer to stabilise, particularly for first-time workers. However, the presence of gains within a short post-training period points to positive longer-term potential.

Figure 16 Income status post training (Source: Alumni Survey)

Trainee quotes

My name is Veeresh; I am 28 years old. I completed a 40–45-day training program with APD in January–February. Before this, I had no work and was fully dependent on my parents. I learned basic computer skills, 21st-century skills, and practical workplace skills during the training, which I had never used before. After the training, I started working in Bangalore at Mithra, in the pick-and-pack and transport department for an online shopping company. Later, I moved back closer to home to work in a jewelry shop, Gajendra Gada, earning Rs. 10,000 per month. The skills I learned during the training, such as managing work, using computers, and general professional skills, helped me adapt quickly to these jobs. The training also gave me confidence, independence, and a sense of self-reliance. My parents are happy with my progress. I am now saving money and planning for my future. I stay in touch with APD for guidance and support, and I encourage other people with disabilities to join this program, as it truly helps in gaining skills, employment, and confidence.

Sustainable income

The programme acted as the first step for PWDs to transition from irregular, informal, or no income into more stable and predictable earning pathways. While only 26.95% reported an immediate increase in income, this figure alone does not capture the full shift. Many participants moved from complete economic inactivity to structured employment, apprenticeships, or roles that provided wage assurance. Further, 25% mentioned that they could contribute to their family income while 20% mentioned that they felt financially independent.

Table 14 Income difference post training (Source: Alumni Survey)

Indicator	Yes	No
Income increased	26.95%	73.05%
Contribution to family income	25.00%	75.00%
Financial independence improved	20.12%	79.88%

PWD participation in household decision-making

Survey findings show that over one-third of participants experienced increased independence within their families, reflecting a shift from protection-based decision-making to shared responsibility. For many participants, being consulted rather than instructed marked a profound shift in dignity and agency.

Alumni

- Now my family asks for my opinion also on decisions at home. I feel respected and more confident."
- "Earlier, my parents made all choices for me. After the training, they include me in discussions, and I feel like I belong."
- "I can now contribute to family decisions. It makes me feel proud and independent."

Better aspiration levels among PWD

The programme helped increase the aspirations of the participants. Most joined to gain confidence and learn new skills, showing they wanted to change their lives. Through training, seeing role models, and visiting workplaces, participants began to imagine futures with career growth, new skills, and independence. Many shared that they now want to start their own nurseries, computer labs, or even hire other PWDs in the future. They said that small achievements, like clearing interviews, completing OJT, or receiving praise from supervisors, gave them hope and the belief that bigger goals are possible.

Alumni

"Completing OJT and getting praise from my supervisor made me believe I can achieve bigger goals."

"I want to start a computer lab and maybe even hire other PWDs like me. The training showed me it is possible."

Empowered PWD

Empowerment emerged through increased independence, social recognition, and workplace participation. 30% reported major improvement in independence, while community respect increased by nearly one-third of respondents. Participants described feeling valued not only for earning but for their reliability and contribution. This sense of empowerment extended beyond work into daily life like traveling independently, interacting confidently in public spaces, and asserting personal choices. The programme has taken steps to address both internal barriers (fear, self-doubt) and external barriers (employer hesitation, family overprotection).

Alumni

I am 26 years old and have severe locomotor disability due to cerebral palsy. For many years, my life felt very bleak. I did not have a job and was completely dependent on my family for everything. This made me feel helpless and distressed about my future. I often worried that I would never be able to support myself, and I feared that no one would ever want to marry me because of my disability. These thoughts made me feel very low and uncertain about what lay ahead.

When I joined the training programme, things slowly began to change. The trainers treated me with respect and encouraged me to believe in my abilities. I learned new skills, improved my communication, and gained practical knowledge that made me feel capable. For the first time, I felt that I could stand on my own feet and build a life for myself. The training did not just prepare me for a job; it changed the way I saw myself.

Today, I feel much more confident about my future. I believe I can find work, earn my own income, and reduce the burden on my parents. I also feel more hopeful about marriage and relationships. Earlier, I was filled with fear and sadness, but now I feel stronger and more positive. My parents, who were once very worried about my future, are now happier and more relaxed. This training has given me not only skills but also self-belief and dignity.

Interest among PWD to pursue higher skills

Participants who once doubted their learning ability expressed motivation to pursue additional training, certifications, or domain shifts. This interest was linked to increased confidence and understanding of career pathways. Many suggested that up-skilling was needed as they wanted to refine their skills further.

Social equity and reduced inequality

The programme reduced disparities in access to work, respect, and opportunity. Increased family pride, community acceptance, and workplace inclusion demonstrate movement toward equitable participation. By enabling PWD to participate, the programme challenged stereotypes and reduced exclusion based on disability.

Success Story, 21, Koppale

Before the training, I used to stay at home most of the time and didn't interact much with people. After attending the training at Koppal, I learned new skills and gained confidence in speaking and working with others. Now, I am working in Bengaluru, where I meet new people every day, make friends, and feel more respected. This job has also given me the opportunity to contribute to my family. I can save money, support my household, and feel proud of what I am achieving. The training really helped me step out of my comfort zone and become more independent.

Boost in local economy

Through employment and spending, participants contributed to local markets, retail operations, and service delivery. Their participation strengthened local supply chains and service quality.

Spandana, APD Team

- "When PWDs earn, communities grow."

REESS Scorecard*Table 15 REESS Rating Indicator*

REESS INDICATORS		RATING
RELEVANCE	Prevalence of persons with disabilities in the program areas	10
	Inability to pursue employment and training opportunities	10
	Ramifications of not finding suitable job-related skills	10
	Lack of organizations in the program area doing similar work	10
	Receptivity of beneficiaries to the program offering	10
	Receptivity of caregivers to the program offerings	10
	Alignment of training programs with current industry requirements	9
	Socio economic background of beneficiaries	9
	AVG RELEVANCE	9.8
EFFECTIVENESS	Duration and structure of course	9
	Availability of suitable environment that meets the needs of differently abled	8.5
	Quality of trainers	9
	Adequate blend of theory and practical exposure	10
	Completion status of the course	10
	Ability to find suitable jobs	9
	Increased communication skills	9
	Increased earning capacity	8.5
	Enhanced clarity about job industry requirements	8
	AVG EFFECTIVENESS	9.4
	EFFICIENCY	Timeliness and completion of MOU deliverables
Availability of adequate trainers		8
Affordability of course		10
Satisfaction levels of caregivers		10
Satisfaction levels of beneficiaries		10
Monitoring, reporting and documentation of trainings		10
Frequency of assessments and feedback		9
AVG EFFICIENCY		9.6
SUSTAINABILITY	Hands on mentoring and handholding post training	9
	Upskilling and capacity building of trainers	8
	Funding sustainability of APD	10
	Grassroots level presence of APD	10
	Ability of APD to continue the program even after Titan's exit	10
	Environmental sustainability	9
	AVG SUSTAINABILITY	9.3
SOCIAL IMPACT	Improved access for those with disabilities	9
	Improved confidence and sense of self-worth	9
	Reduced inequalities	9

Reduced gender disparity	9
Increased happiness levels	9
Increase income levels	8.5
Increase in saving capacity	8.5
Ability to lead life independently	9
Reduced dependence on caregivers	9
Improved Quality of life	9
Increased hope for future	9
Increased career and economic aspirations	8
AVG SOCIAL IMPACT	8.8

Overall REESS Rating

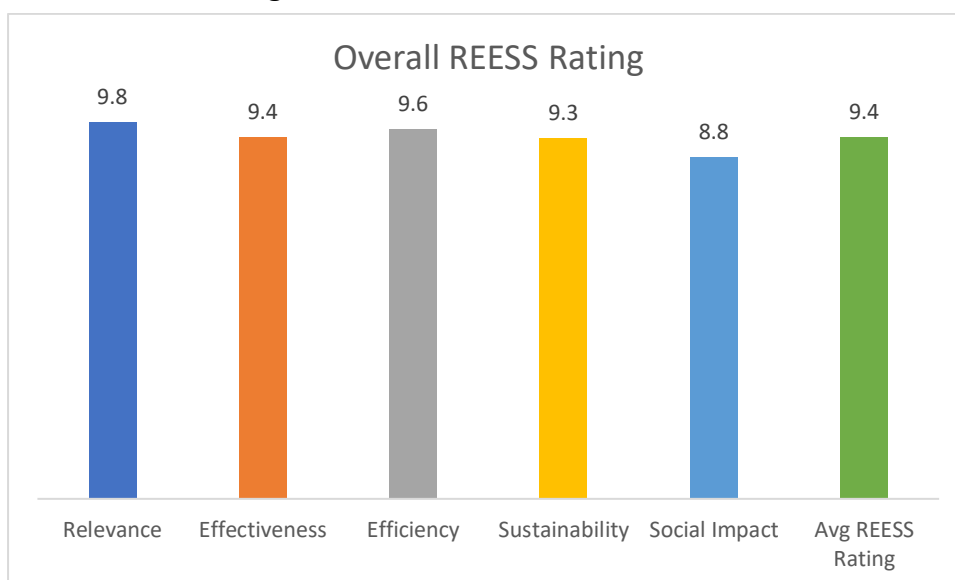


Figure 17 Overall REESS Rating

7. Alignment with SDGs

The APD–Titan Livelihoods Programme aligns with each relevant UN SDG:

- SDG 1 No Poverty:** The programme equips persons with disabilities with skills, training, and on-the-job experience to secure stable employment or start their own businesses. By enabling sustainable income and financial independence, it helps participants and their families move out of poverty and reduces the long-term impact of economic exclusion.
- SDG 4 – Quality Education:** In addition to vocational skills, the programme provides holistic learning in life skills, work readiness, functional independence, and 21st-century competencies such as communication, time management, and problem-solving. This comprehensive education prepares participants to succeed in both professional and personal life.
- SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth:** Through employer-aligned training, industry-relevant curricula, and post-placement support, participants gain access to meaningful

employment opportunities. Entrepreneurship development programs offer a pathway to self-employment, contributing to productive engagement and local economic growth.

- **SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure:** The programme builds technical capacities in areas like mechatronics, electronics, horticulture, and renewable energy-based livelihoods. Participants learn practical skills and are supported to develop small-scale enterprises, while the training infrastructure ensures effective skill transfer and workplace readiness.
- **SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities:** Persons with disabilities often face systemic barriers to work and social inclusion. The programme addresses these challenges through employer sensitization, advocacy for accessible workplaces, and targeted skill-building, promoting equal opportunity and reducing social and economic disparities.
- **SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production:** Through horticulture and other livelihood initiatives, participants are trained in environmentally sustainable practices. They learn to implement resource-efficient methods in agriculture and enterprise operations, linking economic empowerment with responsible use of resources.

8. Recommendations and way forward

- **Strengthen sign language training capacity:** There is a need to increase the number of qualified sign language trainers to better support participants with hearing and speech impairments. Expanding this capacity will improve communication in classrooms, enhance learning outcomes, and enable smoother workplace integration.
- **Enhance employer sensitisation and inclusion efforts:** Focused engagement with employers and corporates is essential to build inclusive workplaces. Regular sensitisation workshops, exposure visits, and practical guidance on disability inclusion can help organisations better understand the strengths of PWDs and reduce hesitation in hiring.
- **Promote group-based placements:** Where feasible, placing trainees in small groups of 2–3 within the same organisation may improve retention. Peer support in the initial months of employment can increase confidence, reduce isolation, and help manage workplace adjustments more effectively.
- **Introduce AI- and STEM-based training modules:** To remain aligned with evolving job markets, the programme can integrate basic AI tools, digital literacy enhancements, and STEM-oriented skill modules. Exposure to emerging technologies will prepare trainees for future-ready roles and expand employment pathways.
- **Review and rationalise redundant training areas:** Periodic review of course offerings are recommended to identify areas where training may overlap with existing government programmes, such as Polytechnic courses. Streamlining domains will ensure relevance, efficiency, and better resource utilisation.
- **Collaborate with government training systems:** Since the government provides Polytechnic and technical training, APD can complement these efforts by offering value-added modules in soft skills, workplace readiness, 21st-century skills, communication, and the practical use of AI tools. This will enhance employability outcomes without duplication.
- **Encourage entrepreneurship pathways:** Participants who show interest in self-employment should receive structured mentoring support. This may include business planning guidance,

financial literacy, market linkage support, and follow-up mentoring to help them establish and sustain small enterprises.

- **Provide refresher and upskilling opportunities:** post-placement refresher courses and advanced skill modules can help alumni upgrade their competencies and progress in their careers. Continuous learning opportunities will strengthen long-term employability and income stability.
- **Undertake focused research on hiring trends among persons with speech and hearing impairments:** Survey feedback indicated that there was a strong preference for hiring persons with speech and hearing impairments, describing them as focused, disciplined, and consistent in their work. This trend presents an opportunity for structured research to document productivity patterns, retention rates, and workplace performance outcomes. Evidence-based case studies and data analysis can strengthen advocacy efforts, challenge stereotypes, and encourage broader inclusive hiring practices across industries.

9. Conclusion

The impact assessment indicates that the programme is a relevant and effective initiative addressing the critical employment gap faced by PWDs. The programme successfully expanded access to skill development for marginalized PWDs across multiple districts and demonstrated strong performance in enrolment, training completion, and placement outcomes. The structured curriculum, accessible training environment, and emphasis on on-the-job learning played a key role in building confidence, practical skills, and workplace readiness among trainees.

Beyond employment outcomes, the programme contributed to important social changes, including improved self-confidence, greater independence, increased family acceptance, and enhanced community respect for persons with disabilities. For many beneficiaries, the programme represented their first step toward economic participation and self-reliance.

Employment sustainability remains the next critical challenge. While the programme effectively prepares trainees for entry-level jobs, long-term retention requires stronger ecosystem support, including closer alignment between training and local labour market opportunities, improved counselling on workplace realities, enhanced travel and relocation support, and continued engagement with employers to create disability-inclusive work environments.

Going forward, strengthening post-placement monitoring, career progression support, and employer partnerships will be essential to translate training outcomes into stable and sustained livelihoods. With these improvements, partnership has the potential to serve as a replicable model for inclusive skill development and employment generation for PWDs in India.