

Vocational training and entrepreneurial perspectives for marginalized youths

(Meghalaya and Assam, Northeast India, Childaid Network project progress report and outlook, February 2020)



Vocational training opens up new perspectives for him. (Photo: Umsning, Meghalaya, 2019)



She has what many dream of - her own small company.

New perspectives are needed to help people break out of poverty: In Northeast India most people still live from agriculture. But: the land is no longer sufficient to feed the growing population, in particular when harvests fail due to the climate change. There still is a lack of other opportunities to earn money. Therefore, more and more young people migrate to the cities in the South or abroad. The rural exodus not only deprives the villages of young leaders. Torn from their cultural groups, the young people often end up in misery, because unqualified people they do not find good employment. Low paid day labor jobs are often the only way out.



Access to qualified professions: We try to make a difference. Since 2011, over 18,000 unemployed young people have been trained in more than 20 professions in the programs of Childaid Network. Almost all of them are now placed in good jobs or run their own business. Together with our strong local partners (Don Bosco, Aide et Action, Quest Alliance, Bosco Institute), we have developed cost-effective concepts for vocational training and adapted them to regional demand. Until now, however, this

Already very early in the training practical exercises are practiced.



Full concentration is required when handling needle and thread.



The prospective beauticians are curious to learn more.



She supports new trainees in her salon.

has often required a longer stay of the young people in central training centers, especially in technical professions that require equipment and premises.

A new local and cost effective project approach

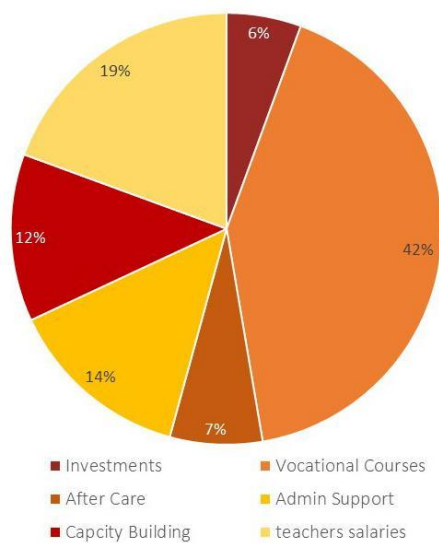
Decentralized training centers in rural areas: In a pilot project with our partner Aide et Action we began training 720 young people in July 2019 in the East Khasi Hills and Ri-Bhoi districts of Meghalaya in two local centers. The young people come from extremely poor families in rural areas and often have not completed class five, almost all have not passed class 10. The training as electricians, fashion designers and beauticians takes place locally in the immediate vicinity of the villages from which the young people come. A long stay far away from home is not necessary.

Intensive support and local job placement: During their training, the young people learn their profession not only in theory but also in practice. Especially the one-month work in local companies allows for important experience connected with potential future employment options. The project focuses on local opportunities for job placement, so that the young people can stay with their families and the economy in the villages receives the urgently needed boost. The young people who want to set up their own business receive training in basic business matters and have access to a revolving micro credit fund provided by our project partner. Placement so far has been achieved for all.

A successful pilot project: By the end of January 2020, 339 young people (101 men and 238 women) have already been trained. The cost-effectiveness of the new approach is particularly noteworthy. The complete training and aftercare of a young person only costs 31 € - little money for a new perspective. Furthermore, during several visits of our project coordinators on site we have convinced ourselves of the high quality of the curriculum, the practical training and the capacity building for entrepreneurship.

Outlook: In order to meet the demand in more rural areas, the project will be scaled up from July 2020. Together with our partner Aide et Action, we are following the already proven decentralized project approach. In order to ensure the long-term success of the project, additional activities in the area of follow-up support and capacity building have been planned. Members of Self-Help Groups will also be included to help them succeed with business ideas. We have asked for funds from the German government.

The plan: A total of 10,800 young men and women in four districts of the states of Meghalaya and Assam will be helped on their way to a self-determined future. A special focus is placed on young people who have not completed school and on young women who, without our help, will have great difficulty in finding their way out of financial dependence.



The project is scheduled to run for four years and BMZ has agreed to fund 75%.

Please support us in enabling marginalized young people in Meghalaya and Assam, Northeast India, to receive vocational training and find their way to a self-determined life.

February 2020, Silke Geissert, project coordination

Total Costs 2020-2023: 630,464 €