Spoken English Training Program for Rural Youth
2011 - 2013

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2 Background

The Teach India program was launched in the year 2008 by The Times Group to train underprivileged youth in spoken English and to provide them with access to employability in the sectors of retail, hospitality, BPO, healthcare etc. SRF Foundation is working in Mewat district in the thematic areas of Education and Vocational Skills. Despite being a district near the national capital region, Mewat ironically has ample social and economic deprivation. To address the socio-economic issues of this area and to initiate sustainable development is the vision conceived by the SRF Foundation. Accordingly, building capabilities of the disadvantaged communities for sustainable livelihoods and to empower them has been the major thrust of SRF Foundation’s initiatives.

3 Rational for the Initiative

An enormous chunk of youths aged around 18 – 32 years old in Mewat district have left their studies after middle and high school. They are neither able to sustain themselves with their family economic background, nor able to compete with the mainstream in an effort to ensure their way of life. In this situation, training these youths in a functional skill and providing them with access to opportunities will reduce the problems of unemployment and will also cater to the need for skilled manpower in the retail, hospitality and similar sectors.

4 The Training Program

“Teach India”, a program skilling underprivileged youth in spoken English, is the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative of The Times of India Group. The Times Group, together with the British Council as their knowledge partner, has designed a curriculum for youths who have had a basic introduction to English but have not used it in their daily lives. This program is being run in Mumbai and NCR to improve the employability of underprivileged youths there. The Times of India has collaborated with many Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and volunteers to execute this program. The NGO identifies and mobilises indigent youths from their respective areas of operations and organizes them in batches. The volunteers identified by The Times of India and recommended trainers of the NGOs receive prior training from the British Council for some 10 days before imparting training. The trainers go to the respective locations to impart the full-fledged researched and tailor-made curriculum and prepare the youths to get employment in various industries. Successful candidates are felicitated with certificates and a job fair is organized every year to facilitate the job placement for these successful candidates.

4.1 Training Duration

The duration of this training program consists of a period of 100 days, with 2 hours of training everyday for 6 days a week. Over a period of 100 days, the training on 6 modules and a special module on “Face the World” is imparted to the learners. Since 2011, each cycle has seen the training of 3 batches, with each batch consisting of 20 learners.
5 Preparatory Phase

5.1 Partnership

5.1.1 Deliverables of SRF Foundation

- Providing room for running the classes and adequately maintaining all the classroom infrastructure
- Providing a qualified instructor
- Promoting the spoken English classes amongst the target learners
- Conducting 3-4 batches for the course and enrolling 20 eligible learners in a batch
- Holding the spoken English classes for six days a week
- Holding at least 3 batches in a day with the help of the trained teaching staff after discussion with BCCL if volunteer is not provided by The Times Group
- Promoting a relationship of trust and mutual understanding with the volunteers and taking care of their reasonable needs.

5.1.2 Deliverables of The Times of India

- Funding some of the project expenses such as Instructor’s salary, Admin expenses, Community Mobilization expenses, Room Rent as per agreement
- Training of the NGO Teaching Staff
- Providing curriculum and all the course material
- Providing marketing materials such as standees, posters and inserts to create awareness in the community about the program and also to attract learners.
- Certification of the successful candidates

5.2 Target Group

5.2.1 Mobilization of Youth

Focus Group Discussions were held in each of the 19 villages and nearby areas to disseminate information among the youths. The key figures of each village, such as Sarpanch, Teachers, Advocates, Doctors, etc., were briefed about the significance of the program. One-to-one discussions were also done to sensitize the village youth to taking up the training for their skill training and capacity building. It was always kept in mind that the target audience must have the need of this training and they are aspiring to take part in it in order to shape up their lives. Mobilization was carried out through pamphlets, Aavishkar mobile van and monthly newsletter named “Parwaaz” in the villages of Mewat district. The alumni groups also have mobilized the youths in the villages to take part in the training programs.

5.2.2 Eligibility Criteria

The Candidates:

- is between 18 to 32 years of age
- has a monthly family income of under Rs. 8,000
- has had basic introduction to English in school but never used it in daily life
- seeks to improve employability through the course.

### 5.2.3 Selection Process

Focus Group discussions are conducted with the village youths and screening of students is carried out through an assessment sheet based on the eligibility criteria of selection. Youths who have had the basic introduction of English and are able score 60% marks in the assessment test were given the opportunity to participate in the training program.

![First Interaction with the Batch for Selection Confirmation](image)

### 5.3 Trainer

#### 5.3.1 Selection of Trainer

Assessing the potentiality, the trainer was recommended by SRF Foundation to The Times of India. Subsequently, he was then interviewed by a representative of the British Council at The Times of India, New Delhi. The candidature of the trainer was assessed upon the qualification, training capacity, English language cognizance and suitability for the training program and accordingly the trainer was identified.

#### 5.3.2 Training of Trainer

The trainer was trained for 7 days of intensive training at The Times of India, New Delhi by the representatives of the British Council. During the 7-day training program, the trainer was briefed about the 6 modules of training and its process of delivery to the students.

### 5.4 Setting up the Training Centre

![Teach India Banner](image)  
![Faculty with Students in the Training Centre](image)
The Teach India Program has been designed by The Times of India CSR wing to train the youth of Delhi NCR outskirts. However, SRF Foundation collaborated with The Times of India to run this program in Nuh block of Mewat district reflecting the ironical deprivation being closer to the national capital. The centre was set up in an accessible location for the youths at Nuh block of Mewat district in the year 2011.

## 6 Program Execution

### 6.1 Course Curriculum

The course curriculum is divided in 6 modules, with every module consisting of 10 units each. The British Council designs this course curriculum, which is the knowledge partner of The Times of India. The modules focus on the functional training of spoken English over a period of 100 days with the following calendar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Name</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Training Hours (From – To)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I – Introduce Yourself</td>
<td>1st to 10th day</td>
<td>1-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II – Retail and Sales</td>
<td>11th to 20th day</td>
<td>21-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III – Tourism and Hospitality</td>
<td>21st to 30th day</td>
<td>41-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV – Customer Services</td>
<td>31st to 40th day</td>
<td>61-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V – Financial Services</td>
<td>41st to 50th day</td>
<td>81-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI – Finding and applying a Job</td>
<td>51st to 60th day</td>
<td>101 – 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face the World</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.2 Fees and Support

The youths of Mewat are trained free of cost for 100 days in each of the batches. This training is imparted free of cost considering the poor socio-economic condition of the area.

### 6.3 Typical Day of Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Batch</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batch I</td>
<td>10.00 am – 12.00 pm</td>
<td>Module, Theory, Practical, Class room activities, Extempore, soft skills, games, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batch II</td>
<td>12.30 pm – 2.30 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batch III</td>
<td>3.00 pm – 5.00 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the batches attends the training for 2 hours in a day. Other than the theory, they are taught various soft skills for learning more functional English.
6.4 Classroom Delivery

Group Discussion

One to one recitation exercise

Learners Taking Note of Modules

Learners Practices are held in Separate Groups

Ice-breaking Games to get Students Familiarized with Each Other

Students Practicing Public Speaking Through a Self-introduction Activity

Every day the training is imparted for 2 hours. The learners are taught the functionally required theory in the 1st hour and then they practice to speak the learnt theory among the group. Many of the class room exercises such as speech delivery, elocution, extempore, ice breaking games, etc are done during the training.

6.5 Disciplinary Compliance

- Minimum 80% attendance is mandatory for certification
- Absenteeism for 3 continuous days without information is not permitted
• Coming late for classes more than 5 minute

6.6 Assessment of Learners
After the completion of each of the modules, an assessment test is organized by the trainer and the track is recorded in a database. Accordingly, after completion of all modules, the candidates’ functional ability of spoken English was tested. Those who are able to get through were declared successful and recommended for certification to The Times of India.

6.7 Batch Details
The first batch started in the year 2011. The following are the details of successful candidates till date:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Batch Name</th>
<th>Number of Sub-Batches</th>
<th>No of Candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Post Training Facilitation

7.1 Felicitation & Certification
The Times of India organizes a grand event for each of the felicitation program. The attendance of the learners is duly facilitated by all NGOs participating in the event. Dignitaries will award certificates to the successful learners. The last felicitation program was organized in Sri Fort Auditorium, New Delhi. In the razzmatazz event, acts were performed by the learners. The learners were awarded certificates by a British Council representative and the event ended with a group lunch party. The youths of Mewat felt very energetic and enjoyed the entire event thoroughly.

Successful Learners during their Graduation Ceremony at Siri Fort, Delhi
7.2 Job Fair

After each batch completes the training program, The Times of India organizes a job fair in New Delhi. Many prominent companies from the hospitality, BPO and marketing sectors such as Pizza Hut, KFC, Costa Coffee, Devani International, Big Bazar, Aegis, Spanco etc. participate in the job fair to recruit successful learners, offering them entry-level jobs in the National Capital Region. 20 aspiring learners from Mewat have been offered jobs in these Job Fairs.

8 Impact

8.1 Quantitative
- 293 youths of Mewat have learnt to speak English.
- 20 youths have been offered jobs for their functional English ability.
- More than 100 youths have received exposure to face interviews of the companies.
8.2 Qualitative

- Ability of speaking English has given a lot of confidence to these youth because they are able to find their livelihood in national capital region and sustain as well.
- The trained youth have acquired skills and hence are able to compete in the mainstream.
- This training program is teaching them essential skills such as discipline, decency and punctuality.
- They are able to communicate in a better way.
- This program is taking these youths ahead from the typical feeling of homesickness; they are getting mobile now and able to work outside Mewat region.
- The youth segment is getting aware about this kind of training programs in Mewat and they want to take it up for shaping their lives.
- Mainstreaming and employability is ensuring improved standard of living of the targeted audience.

9 Challenges

The following challenges were faced by SRF Foundation in running this training program:

- Non-regularity of the students in first few batches
- Lack of seriousness of the students
- Difficulty in finding local trainer and sustainability of the trainer for longer period of time
- Commute of students
- Mobility of students for taking up jobs in NCR.

10 Way Forward

Learning English in a country where English is not a native language opens a number of opportunities for an individual. In today’s corporate world, the need for effective communication has been recognized and accepted more than technical knowledge. The language of the corporate world is English. In the last few years, thanks to jobs becoming global, the importance of the English Language has increased manifold. It has over the years become an important medium of communication, both at the international and intra-national levels.

Being an underdeveloped area, Mewat needs such types of training programs and a large portion of youths have yet to be trained under this training program. Accordingly, this initiative should be continued till the target audiences get a way and trend to take it up as their way of life. Although, we are able to reach to a pocket of Mewat and youth are able to find their livelihoods through this program however, the youth of Mewat will be facilitate after the training for getting jobs in various sub sectors in the coming days as well as an effort to shape lives.