



IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

STATE FUNDED SHORT TERM TRAINING PROJECT

September 2025

Prepared By

TABLE OF CONTENT

Sr No.	Topic	Page
01	Setting the context	06
02	About FICSI	07
03	About the Project	08
04	Executive Summary	09
05	Impact at a Glance	11
07	About the Intervention	14
08	Approach and Methodology	16
09	Findings • Relevance • Effectiveness • Efficiency • Impact • Coherence	18-24
10	Success Story	25
11	Conclusion	27



LIST OF FIGURES

Fig.1 OECD framework deployed for the study

Fig.2 Technical approach for the study

Fig.3 Gender Profile

Fig.4 Age Wise Representation

Fig.5 Education Profile

Fig 6: Never attended skill training

ABBREVIATIONS

FICSI - Food Industry Capacity and Skill Initiative

FSSAI - Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

GMP - Good Manufacturing Practices

GHP - Good Hygiene Practices

Gol- Government of India

MSDE- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

NSQF - National Skills Qualifications Framework

MSSDS- Maharashtra State Skill Development Society

NCVET- National Council for Vocational Education and Training

PMKUVA- Pramod Mahajan Kaushalya and Udhyojakta Vikash Abhiyan

MoFPI- Ministry of Food Processing Industries

DVET- Directorate of Vocational Education and Training

DSDE- Department of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

NSDM- National Skill Development Mission

OECD- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

SGS- Société Générale de Surveillance

SDG- Sustainable Developmental Goals



ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Informed consent: The interviews were done after receiving respondent's consent. Even after the interviews were completed, their permission was sought to proceed with their responses.

Confidentiality: The information provided by participants has been kept private. At no point were their data or identities disclosed. The research findings have been quoted in a way that does not expose the respondents' identities.

Comfort: The interviews were performed following the respondents' preferences. In addition, the interview time was chosen in consultation with them. At each level, respondents' convenience and comfort were considered.

Right to reject or withdraw: Respondents were guaranteed safety and allowed to refuse to answer questions or withdraw during the study.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We, SGS, would like to express our gratitude to FICSI for entrusting us with this impact assessment assignment. We are extremely thankful for their assistance during the course of the study.

We thank everyone who supported and facilitated the study and contributed to gathering insights.

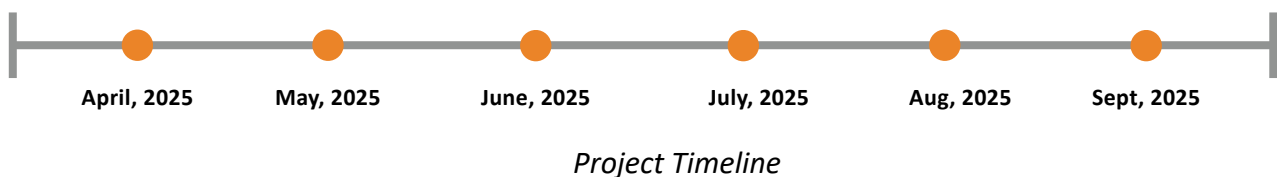
We truly appreciate all the intellectual guidance from the FICSI team throughout the study. Last but not least, we want to express our gratitude to everyone who spent the time answering the extensive survey.

ABOUT SGS

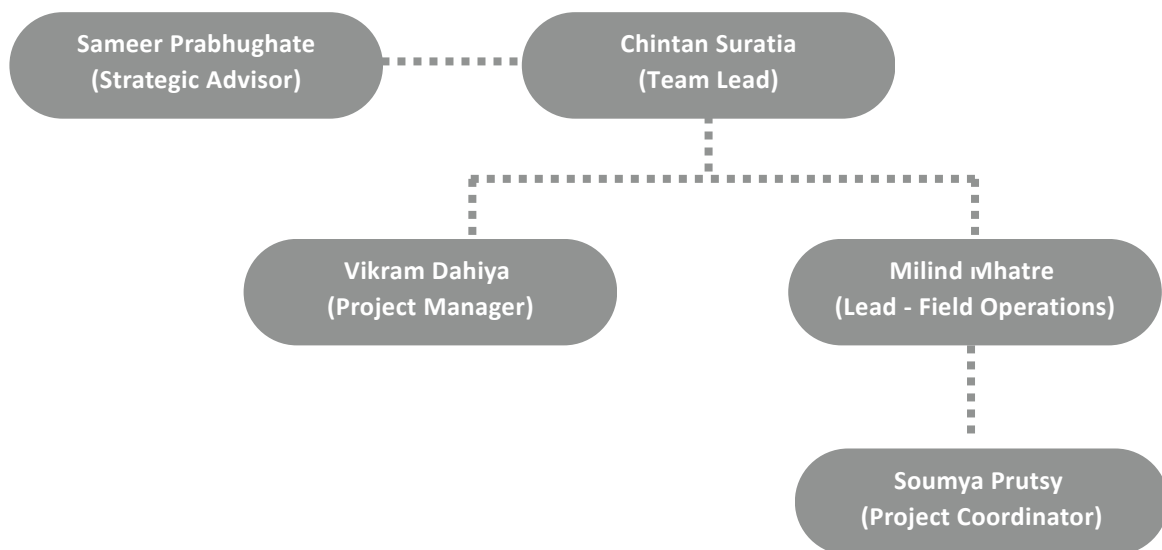
Founded in 1878, SGS is the world's leading company in testing, inspection, verification, and certification services, setting the global benchmark for quality, sustainability, and integrity across industries.

Our mission is to create a better, safer, and more interconnected world by helping businesses manage risk, improve efficiency, and drive sustainable growth. With tailored solutions spanning agriculture, automotive, consumer goods, energy, healthcare, and more, we support organizations in meeting regulatory requirements and achieving higher performance standards.

As a trusted global partner, SGS combines its impact-led approach, expertise, and extensive presence to deliver measurable results. We collaborate with corporations, philanthropic organizations, foundations, and social organizations to design and implement CSR programs, ensuring compliance while maximizing social impact. Our integrated platform enables corporates and institutions to meet CSR mandates effectively and sustainably.



Core Project Team



SETTING THE CONTEXT

Maharashtra, India's second-most populous state, has a youth population of over 2.5 crore (15–29 years), accounting for nearly 22% of its total population. Despite having a diversified industrial base, the state continues to grapple with persistent challenges of youth unemployment and underemployment. As per the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2022–23, India's youth unemployment rate in this age group stands at 12.4%, with rural and semi-urban youth disproportionately affected due to skill mismatches and limited access to industry-aligned training.

At the same time, Maharashtra is a leading agricultural producer and a major hub for food processing, contributing around 13% of India's total food processing output. The sector, employing a significant workforce, is home to over 2,700 registered units alongside numerous small-scale processors, primarily in **fruits, vegetables, dairy, and grains**. It also plays a vital role in national agro-food exports, accounting for nearly 18%, with major contributions from grapes, mangoes, onions, processed snacks, and wine from the Nashik region. While the sector contributes substantially to Gross Value Added (GVA) and rural employment, it faces a shortage of trained manpower in critical areas such as processing operations, quality control, packaging, and cold-chain management. This skill gap constrains both productivity and the sector's ability to generate inclusive employment.

To address these gaps, key state bodies like the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET) and the Department of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (DSDE), supported by central initiatives under Skill India, are driving large-scale skilling efforts. Flagship programs such as Mahaswayam, Yuva Karya Prashikshan Yojana, and the Pramod Mahajan Skill Campaign focus on equipping youth with job-ready skills and entrepreneurial capabilities to enhance employability.

Despite strong agricultural linkages, port connectivity, and proactive policy support, the sector continues to face challenges including low levels of value addition, inadequate post-harvest infrastructure, and limited adoption of advanced technology among small-scale processors. However, with rising exports, growing investor interest, and targeted government interventions, the food processing sector in Maharashtra holds immense potential to drive inclusive rural growth, reduce post-harvest losses, and strengthen the state's economic development trajectory.

- https://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/AR_PLFS_2022_23N.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- https://www.mofpi.gov.in/sites/default/files/detailed_skill_study_report_-final.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370658647_BRIDGING_THE_SKILL_GAP_IN_THE_INDIAN_FOOD_PROCESSING_SECTOR_A_REVIEW?utm_source=chatgpt.com

ABOUT FICSI

The Food Industry Capacity & Skill Initiative (FICSI), also recognized as the Food Processing Sector Skill Council, is a nonprofit organization registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. This initiative has garnered support from the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI). The organization's headquarters is situated at the third floor of the Shriram Bhartiya Kala Kendra Building, Copernicus Marg, New Delhi 110001.

FICSI operates as an autonomous entity within the industry, with the primary objective of cultivating a skilled workforce tailored for the Food Processing Industries. Its role extends to fostering a culture of food-related knowledge and enhancing the skills of individuals engaged in the food processing sector. Notably, FICSI is registered under the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) as an Awarding Body.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Pramod Mahajan Kaushalya and Udhyojakta Vikash Abhiyan (Pramod Mahajan Skill and Entrepreneurship Development Campaign) (PMKUVA) managed by Maharashtra State Skill Development Society (MSSDS) aims to expand the reach of short-term skill training programs under the Skill India Mission, with a focus on enhancing employability and entrepreneurship opportunities for youth, school dropouts, women, and marginalized communities. By aligning with the state's demand in sectors such as food processing, construction, retail, healthcare, and IT-enabled services, the program equips participants with industry-relevant, practical skills needed for sustainable livelihoods. With free training, NSQF-compliant assessment and certification, and placement-linked opportunities, PMKUVA has emerged as an inclusive initiative that bridges the skill gap while enabling both rural and urban aspirants to participate in the state's economic growth.

The Food Industry Capacity & Skill Initiative (FICSI), the Sector Skill Council for Food Processing, plays a central role in implementing the program in Maharashtra. The initiative focuses on the NCVET-approved job role "Multi Skill Technician – Food Processing" (870 hours). A professional in this role is trained to handle a wide range of activities such as sorting, grading, cleaning, processing, and canning fruits and vegetables to produce pickles, jams, jellies, squashes, ketchups, and juices. They are also equipped to prepare spice-based products and baked goods like cookies, while carrying out basic maintenance of tools and equipment.

To ensure effective delivery, FICSI develops participant handbooks in regional languages, affiliates with training partners, and aligns training with NSQF standards. It further strengthens institutional capacity through Training of Trainers and Assessors and facilitates placement opportunities by collaborating with industries. With a strong focus on food safety, hygiene, and entrepreneurship, FICSI enables youth, women, and micro-enterprise workers to build sustainable livelihoods. In doing so, it not only contributes to Maharashtra's growth priorities but also supports the broader objectives of the Skill India Mission.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project, implemented under the Pramod Mahajan Kaushalya Udyojakta Vikas Abhiyan, has played a pivotal role in addressing the employability gap in Maharashtra by providing short-term, demand-driven skilling in the food processing sector. With a total outreach of 11,979 trainees across 12 districts, the program specifically targeted rural youth, women, and first-time workers. Training was delivered in the NCVET approved job role of Multi-Skill Technician-Food Processing (FIC/Q9007), which combined hands-on expertise in Sorting, Grading, Cleaning, Processing and Canning of various types of fruits and vegetables to produce **pickle, jam, jelly, squash, ketchup and juices, produce spice products and baked products like cookies** with essential compliance knowledge such as Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Good Hygiene Practices (GHP), and Food Safety & Licensing requirements.

The intervention yielded tangible livelihood outcomes. Out of the total trained, 9,658 candidates were placed in either wage or self-employment, reflecting an overall 81% placement conversion rate. Districts such as Nagpur (2,680 trained, 2,634 placed), Pune (5,170 trained, 5,066 placed), and Gondia (1,090 trained, 1,072 placed) recorded exceptionally strong placement outcomes, showcasing robust industry linkages and market relevance. In other districts like Latur and Solapur, placements also reached above 70%, highlighting the effectiveness of the training-delivery and employer connect model.

The project's inclusivity is particularly noteworthy: 92% of participants were female students, many of whom had never accessed formal training opportunities before. In fact, 80% of respondents reported no prior employment history, underscoring the program's role in creating first-time workforce entrants. Beyond employability, the intervention also fostered entrepreneurial confidence—participants were guided on branding, digital payments, and online food platforms, enabling some to start home-based enterprises and micro-businesses.

By bridging the skill gap in one of Maharashtra's fastest-growing sectors, the initiative has contributed to economic empowerment, women's participation in the workforce, and the strengthening of the state's food processing value chain. The high placement conversion and the integration of compliance, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship make this project a strong example of how skilling interventions can create sustainable livelihoods while contributing to the achievement of SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth), and SDG 12 (Responsible Production & Consumption).



IMPACT AT GLANCE

Total outreach
(trained) **11,979**

Placement achieved: **9,658**

Job role: **Food Processing Multi-Skill Technician**

OUTPUT

100%

Training completion
among surveyed
respondents

100%

Affirmed gaining
knowledge on GHP
and GMP

92%

Respondents have shown
strong interest in the
project.

98%

Respondents were aware of the Multi Skills
Technician course, which included training in
bakery products, pickles, jams, jellies, squashes,
ketchups, juices, and spice products.



OUTCOME

81%

Secured employment after
completing the training.

69%

Respondents are fully satisfied
with the training and want to
enroll in more skill programs



Among respondents, 29% of those currently employed/self-employed
ensure cleanliness and hygiene practices, while 28%—previously
unexposed to digital payment systems—have now improved their
understanding of digital transactions.

ABOUT THE INTERVENTION

The State Funded Short-Term Training (STT) program is a livelihood enhancement initiative aimed at skilling youth across Maharashtra, with a strong focus on empowering unemployed youth. Targeting the food processing sector, the program equips beneficiaries with practical knowledge in traditional food, snacks, spices, and bakery products, while promoting the preservation of local culinary heritage. Training modules cover Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Good Hygiene Practices (GHP), and Food Safety & Licensing requirements, ensuring participants can meet industry standards.

The intervention not only intends to prepare candidates for wage employment but also supports entrepreneurship by guiding them in branding, marketing, and leveraging digital platforms such as Swiggy and Zomato. By creating market-ready skills, fostering entrepreneurship, and encouraging women's participation, the program enhances both individual livelihoods and the competitiveness of Maharashtra's food processing industry.

District	Trained	Placed
Amravati	290	0
Beed	670	185
Buldana	689	175
Chandrapur	150	0
Gondia	1,090	1,072



District	Trained	Placed
Latur	240	174
Jalna	240	0
Nagpur	2,680	2,634
Prabhani	240	0
Pune	5,170	5,066
Solapur	360	352
Wardha	160	0
Total	11,979	9,658

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the approach adopted to assess the impact of the intervention, including the study design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, and analytical framework used to derive key insights.

A mixed-methods approach was employed to ensure a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the intervention's outcomes. The study combined both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, enabling triangulation of findings and capturing diverse stakeholder perspectives. Participatory assessment techniques were integrated to actively involve beneficiaries and local stakeholders in the evaluation process, thereby enhancing the reliability and contextual relevance of the results.

The impact assessment was guided by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) framework, providing a structured evaluation across key dimensions such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. This framework enabled a systematic review of the intervention's design and implementation, and helped identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for scaling and improvement. The methodology was tailored to support FICSI in measuring progress against intended objectives and informing evidence-based decision-making for future interventions.



Fig 1: OECD framework deployed for the study

Phase I: Planning

In the initial planning phase, the SGS team worked closely with FICSI to develop a thorough understanding of the project's scope, objectives, and expected outcomes. Based on these consultations, tailored qualitative and quantitative data collection tools were designed to capture relevant information from key stakeholders. Field enumerators underwent structured training and orientation sessions led by SGS to ensure consistent and accurate data collection. A detailed fieldwork plan was developed in coordination with FICSI and its implementation partners, outlining logistics, timelines, and stakeholder engagement strategies.

Phase II: Implementation

During the implementation phase, the data collection tools were customized to suit the unique needs of different stakeholder groups, including beneficiaries, trainers, and program administrators. A pilot test was conducted to validate the tools for clarity, relevance, and reliability. Based on feedback, minor refinements were made before full-scale data collection commenced.

Phase III: Assessment and Dissemination

Following data collection, all datasets were rigorously cleaned, coded, and subjected to systematic analysis using both descriptive and thematic techniques. The findings were synthesized into a comprehensive impact assessment report, highlighting key insights, outcomes, and recommendations. The report serves as an evidence base for FICSI to assess program effectiveness and inform strategic planning for future interventions.

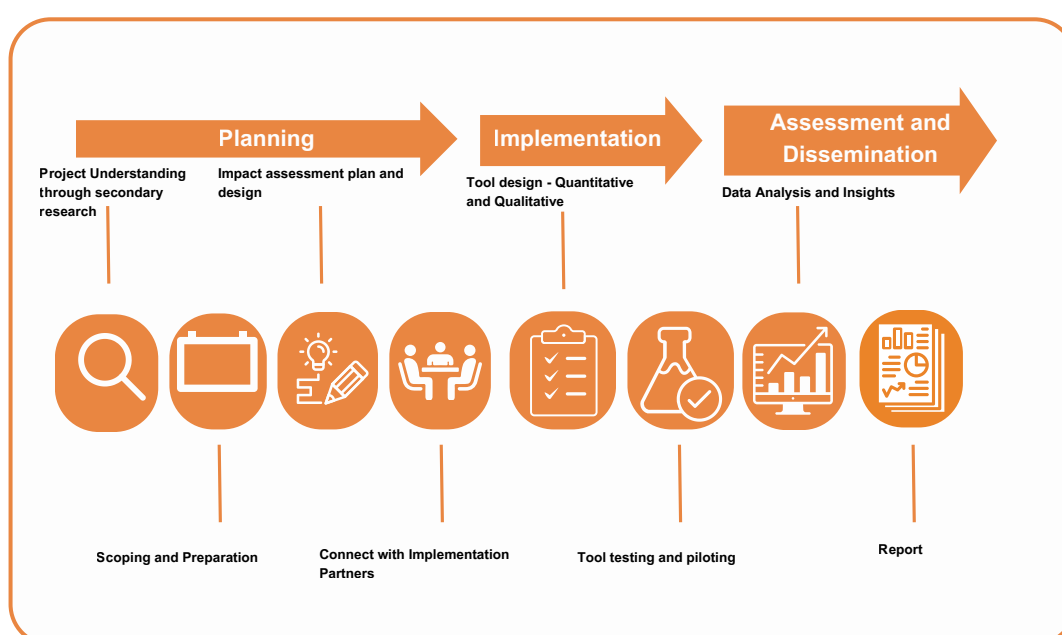


Fig 2: Technical Approach for the Impact Assessment Study

KEY FINDINGS



RELEVANCE

Consultations were carried out with respondents from three districts—Latur, Nagpur, and Pune—each representing distinct socio-economic realities and offering varied potential for skill development. Latur, in the Marathwada region, is primarily agrarian and faces recurring economic vulnerability due to erratic rainfall and a limited industrial base. In such a setting, skill development serves not only as an economic intervention but also as a means of social upliftment, particularly for rural youth. Nagpur, an emerging urban hub in the Vidarbha region, has a growing demand for skilled workers in small and medium enterprises, especially within food processing, packaging, and logistics. Pune, a leading industrial and educational centre in Western Maharashtra, offers a more developed market ecosystem with strong opportunities for advanced skilling, industry partnerships, and entrepreneurship. A total of 275 beneficiaries were consulted from Latur (155), Nagpur (110) and Pune (10), out of which 92% were women and 8% were men. This strong female participation reflects the program’s role in empowering women to pursue economic independence and contribute to household incomes. Our team also interacted with a few beneficiaries from Pune. However, as they had only recently enrolled in the programme at the time of the assessment, their feedback has not been included in the analysis.



Fig 3: Gender Profile

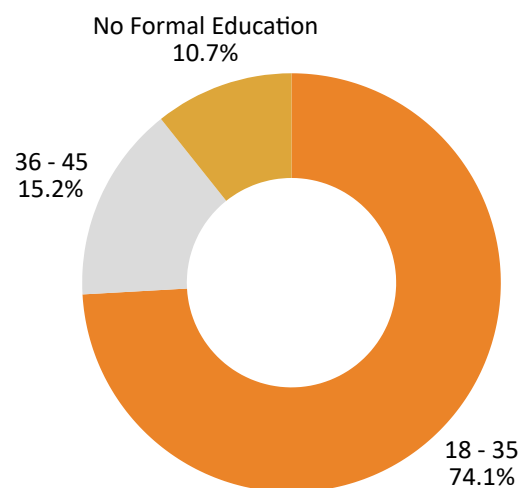


Fig 4: Age wise representation

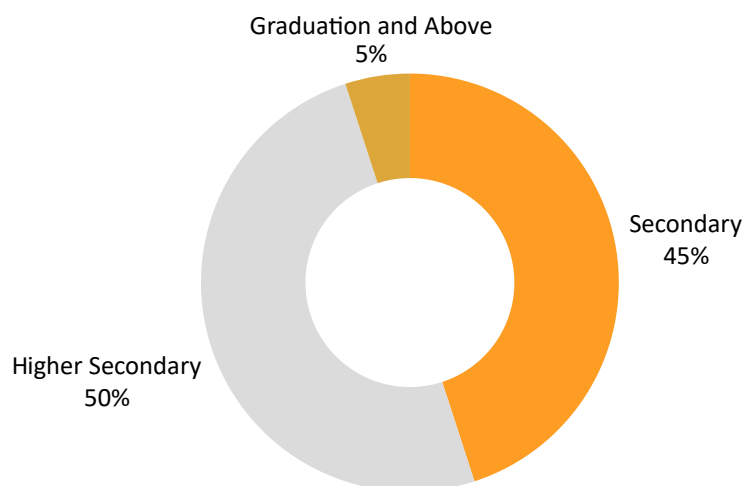


Fig 5: Education Profile

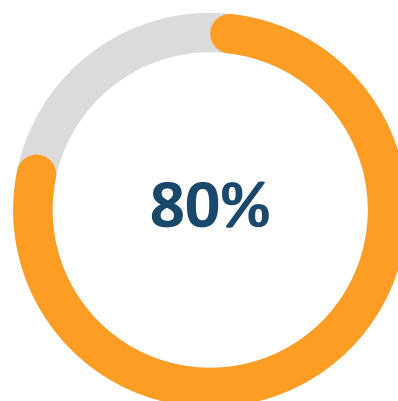


Fig 6: Never attended skill training

A significant majority (83%) of respondents belonged to the 18–35 age group, which is a critical segment of the working-age population. By focusing on the 18–35 age group, the initiative taps into a workforce that is adaptable, capable of upskilling, and positioned to benefit from both wage employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

The educational profile of the beneficiaries shows that 50% have completed higher secondary education, 45% have completed secondary education, and only 5% are graduates or above, while none have education limited to the primary level. This indicates that the majority of participants possess basic to intermediate formal education, but relatively few have advanced qualifications.

With limited representation of higher education, many beneficiaries are less likely to access formal sector jobs without targeted skilling interventions. The project's focus on practical, hands-on training in the food processing sector is therefore highly relevant, as it provides these youth with the competencies needed for immediate employment, self-employment, or entrepreneurship, regardless of their academic background. Out of the total respondents, 80% of them have never been a part of skill training.

EFFECTIVENESS

The programme has been effective in building critical knowledge about various activities related to food processing, such as baking sorting, grading, cleaning, canning of various types of fruits and produce **pickle, jam, jelly, squash, ketchup, juices, and spices**. Trainees also were aware about awareness of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and Good Hygiene Practices (GHP), indicating that the training clearly communicated the importance of maintaining food safety and quality standards. This knowledge will help beneficiaries perform their roles more effectively in the food industry and supports their readiness to comply with regulatory requirements.

An overwhelming 98% of beneficiaries reported being aware of multi-skill course including Food Safety and Licensing requirements for food businesses. Many participants who expressed an interest in starting their own enterprises highlighted that this knowledge, gained through the training, would be valuable in applying for the necessary regulatory license i.e FSSAI.

A significant 75% of beneficiaries expressed confidence in securing a job or starting their own business after completing the training. This reflects the programme's effectiveness in enhancing employability and entrepreneurial readiness. Notably, participants shared that the training not only improved their technical skills but also boosted their self-confidence, empowering them to explore income-generating opportunities and contribute to their household's financial stability.



**Aware about practical knowledge
such as Baking, and produce pickle,
jam, jelly, squash, ketchup, juices,
and spices**



**Aware on Food Safety
and Licensing
Requirement**

“ Before this training, I had no idea about regulatory requirements like the FSSAI license. Thanks to the program, I now have the knowledge and confidence to ensure my future food business meets all necessary compliance standards. ”

-Arti Shahu, Nagpur

EFFICIENCY

All participants (100%) successfully completed the 6 months training program, which comprised of theory as well as hands-on practice and learning. All trainers are ToT-certified and received positive feedback from participants, reflecting their strong professional qualifications. Feedback indicates that 69% of trainees are satisfied with both the quality of training and the support provided by trainers, suggesting effective teaching and guidance. In addition, the presence of functional labs, well-maintained classrooms, and clean facilities—including washrooms and drinking water—creates a supportive and comfortable learning environment.



**All participants
completed their
training**



**Respondents fully
Satisfied with training**

“The training centre in Nagpur is very well maintained. The classrooms and labs are spacious and clean, and having proper washrooms and drinking water made learning here comfortable and enjoyable.”

-Sarita Kerma, Nagpur

The training centers during the visit in Nagpur and Latur were observed to be adequately equipped to support effective learning. With well-maintained classrooms and functional laboratories, it provides sufficient space for both theoretical and practical sessions. The availability of clean washrooms and safe drinking water further ensures a comfortable and hygienic environment, contributing to a positive training experience for participants.

During our interactions, trainees also highlighted the value of exposure visits in their learning journey. They shared that seeing real-world operations firsthand helped them connect classroom concepts with actual industry practices. According to the participants, these experiences strengthened their understanding of processes and boosted their confidence to work in a professional setting.



“Visiting Ganesh Bakery in MIDC, Latur, was a highlight of our training. Seeing each section of the bakery in action and learning the step-by-step bread dough preparation process made everything we studied in class feel real. It boosted our confidence and made us more eager to work in the food industry.

-Shila Gaikwad, Latur

“The course was completely free, and the training facility was very good. The teachers provided great support and guidance throughout. I am confident that the skills I have learned will help me earn a livelihood for my family.

-Smita Navalkadkare, Pune

At the time of the assessment, the certification distribution ceremony was still pending. As a result, 58% of respondents reported having received their certificates, while the remaining beneficiaries were expected to receive them shortly.

“I never imagined I could use my skills to earn online. After the training, I listed my products on a delivery app, and my customer base has grown beyond my village. This programme truly opened new doors for me.

- Rekha Shete, Nagpur

“The session on digital payments changed the way I run my business. I no longer have to rely only on cash; now customers pay me instantly through UPI, which makes transactions easier and safer.

-Dipika Baware, Nagpur

“Learning about FSSAI licensing gave me the confidence to expand. I have now applied for the license so I can supply my homemade snacks to nearby shops legally and without worry.

-Sneha Gavhane, Latur

IMPACT

The programme has delivered measurable impact in multiple areas. Nearly 40% of participants are into self-employment or wage employment, reflecting short-term success in economic integration. Additionally, 30% of trainees reported feeling empowered and economically independent as a result of the training, with few initiating micro-enterprises or engaging in informal employment. These outcomes indicate a clear pathway toward self-sufficiency, and the proportion of economically active beneficiaries is expected to grow as the programme continues.

Trainees also showed strong recall and practical application of hygiene, safety, and quality control protocols, which reflects the program's impact on behavior change. Notably, 29% of trainees now maintain cleanliness in their production or storage areas. In terms of digital literacy, 28% of trainees adopted UPI for sales, such as Gpay or Phonepay, showcasing enhanced digital financial inclusion and practical application of new skills. The programme has also created a strong social impact, with 81% of trainees expressing confidence in their ability to mentor more youths. This is helping to build a supportive network and inspire greater participation from the wider community.



Respondents reported being into self employed, wage employed or initiating micro enterprises and earning satisfactorily after completing the training

“The training taught me skills I now use every day in my work. I am especially confident about following Good Hygiene Practices, something I never paid much attention to before. This has improved the quality of my products and my confidence as a food entrepreneur.”

-Naziya Shaikh, Latur

“Before joining the training, I didn't know how to use Google Pay. With the help of my trainers and peers, I learned to use it confidently. Now, digital payments have made my business transactions easier and faster.”

-Sonali Chikate, Latur

“Working in a group during practical sessions helped me learn teamwork. Now, along with two friends from the batch, I've started a small catering service for local events. It's the first time I'm earning on my own.”

-Pawar sonu Raju, Latur

COHERENCE

The project aligns strongly with the needs and priorities of the target population, particularly youth and women from multiple districts in Maharashtra, who face limited access to industry-relevant skills and sustainable livelihood opportunities. The focus on the food processing sector addresses both local economic strengths and market demand, making the intervention context-specific and demand-driven.

By integrating technical training, entrepreneurship development, and awareness of food safety and regulatory requirements, the project directly responds to existing skill gaps while enabling beneficiaries to access wage employment or start their own enterprises. The inclusion of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) ensures participants are equipped to meet industry and compliance standards, further enhancing employability.

The programme also directly supports national priorities, including the Government of India's Skill India Mission, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), and the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PMFME) under Aatmanirbhar Bharat. By promoting women's participation, it contributes to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), while aligning with National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship goals of increasing employability and fostering entrepreneurship.

In this way, the project demonstrates high relevance not only to the immediate needs of the community but also to broader state, national, and global development objectives.

“Post this training, I feel confident to start my own food business. I now have the skills to prepare quality products and the knowledge to sell them online, reaching more customers than ever before.”

-Vedant Ghote, Nagpur

“Before joining this training, I only cooked for my family. Now, I have started preparing and selling bakery items in my locality. The exposure visits showed me how professional kitchens maintain hygiene, and I'm applying the same practices at home.”

-Dimple Nirma, Latur

SUCCESS STORY



Hailing from Latur, Maharashtra, Sonu Pawar grew up in a farming household where opportunities for skill development and formal employment—especially for women—were scarce. With her family dependent on seasonal agriculture, Sonu always dreamed of supplementing the household income. Her interest in cooking and food preparation was strong, but she lacked professional training and guidance to turn this passion into a viable livelihood.

Sonu's turning point came when she enrolled in the course at the Shanti Devi Skill Center under the Pramod Mahajan Kaushalya Yojana. The hands-on training introduced her to fruit juice preparation, jam making, cake and pastry baking, food safety standards, and small business management.

The supportive trainers and practical workshops boosted her confidence, and soon after completing the course, she began baking and preparing jams from home, selling them within her neighborhood. Positive feedback and growing orders quickly transformed her into a budding entrepreneur.

Today, Sonu sees herself not just as a homemaker, but as an aspiring businesswoman with a vision to expand her home bakery into a commercial shop. The income she now earns helps support her family, and she hopes to inspire and train other women in her community to become self-reliant. Her story is a testament to how targeted skill development can unlock potential, foster entrepreneurship, and create ripples of empowerment in rural Maharashtra.

SUCCESS STORY



Sheikh Nageenali Banar from Latur grew up where women had limited employment opportunities.

Though she enjoyed cooking, she never saw it as a livelihood. Learning about the Food Processing course under the Pramod Mahajan Kaushalya Yojana, she joined and gained practical skills in baking, juice preparation, safe packaging, hygiene, and basic business management —training that was simple, hands-on, and relevant to rural livelihoods.

"Roz ghar par khana banati thi, par kabhi nahi socha tha ki is se main aage bhi badh skti hu or rozgar bhi kama skti hu ."

With renewed confidence and a clear plan, Sheikh now aspires to prepare cakes, fresh juices, and snacks for sale during local events, generating additional income for her household. She hopes for modest support in the form of basic tools, ingredients, or small financial assistance to launch her venture. Her journey reflects how accessible, government-supported skill training can empower rural women to move beyond traditional roles, gain financial independence, and inspire others in their community to pursue economic opportunities.

"Mujhe is course ke baare mein meri gaon ki ek saheli ne bataya. Usne kaha ki yeh course khaas kar mahilaon ke liye bahut accha hai, aur sab kuch bade aasaan tareeke se, haathon se karke sikhaya jaata hai. Sabse badi baat, yeh training hamare hi gaon ke center mein hoti hai. Maine socha, ek baar koshish karke dekhte hain.

CONCLUSION

The skilling and livelihood enhancement project in the food processing sector has shown clear benefits for youth and women in different districts of Maharashtra. By providing practical training, guidance on entrepreneurship, and knowledge of industry standards like GMP and GHP, the programme has helped participants become more employable and confident to start their own businesses.

Early results are promising—many trainees have already found jobs or begun small enterprises, while others feel more prepared to take these steps soon. The project has also created a positive social impact, with many women saying they are ready to guide and mentor others, helping skills spread within their communities.

Because it matches local needs, supports state and national skill development goals, and contributes to global Sustainable Development Goals, this project is both relevant and valuable. With continued support, mentoring, and stronger market connections, it can grow its impact and help more people improve their livelihoods, strengthening the economy and communities of Maharashtra.

Adopting few measures can transform the programme from a skill training initiative into a comprehensive rural enterprise development model, aligned with national/state skilling priorities and contributing to SDG targets on decent work, gender equality, poverty reduction, and responsible production. Few of the recommendations are as below.

Integrate Industry Exposure Visits: Regular visits to food processing units, packaging facilities, and small-scale enterprises should be organized to connect classroom learning with real-world practices, enhance understanding of production workflows and compliance, and inspire trainees toward employment or entrepreneurship.

Establish Post-Training Follow-Up: Develop an alumni engagement system with digital peer groups, periodic mentoring, and quarterly check-ins to provide continued guidance, track progress, and address challenges during early employment or business stages.

Strengthen Entrepreneurial Support: Offer assistance with branding, FSSAI registration, financial planning, and product listing on online delivery platforms to help trainees access wider markets and formal business networks.

Leverage Guest Speakers & Case Studies: Invite local entrepreneurs and industry professionals to share practical experiences, demonstrate impact, and motivate trainees through relatable success stories.



www.sgs.com

4B, Adi Shankaracharya Marg, Vikhroli
(West), Mumbai, Maharashtra 400083

