



# **Understanding Education, Employment, and Vocational & Skill Training among Youth in Rural India**

**Final report**  
**December 2019**

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## Executive Summary

Major policy milestones and developments in India in the last decade have altered the focus and approach to education in fundamental ways, from learning outcomes being recognised as being a critical measure of school quality to an impetus on skilling and vocational training for youth. Although the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) only guarantees and mandates schooling in the elementary grades, there has been a significant expansion even at higher levels of the system with far more children and adolescents completing secondary school than before. The establishment of a national Ministry for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in 2014 signalled the importance ascribed to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) by the Government of India, with the rollout of a number of major schemes and programs since then, as a mechanism to spur better employability among youth in order to leverage India's "demographic dividend".

This study is an in-depth exploration of the links between education, work, and aspirations of India's youth in the age group 16-25 that builds on ASER Centre's previous research on adolescents and youth. Conducted in one district each of three states in the country (Dhantari in Chhattisgarh, Ahmednagar in Maharashtra and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh), the study focused on the role of education, and specifically vocational education, in shaping youth's work transitions and trajectories. The research was designed as two strands that were implemented in each of these districts. First, a village-level household survey aimed to generate district-level estimates of broad trends in youths' education, learning, work and employment status. Second, a mixed-methods institutional strand examined vocational education options from the perspective of those enrolled in two TVET institutions - a Pratham Institute and a government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) - that have very different characteristics with respect to their objectives and structure.

### Results from the village survey: A profile of rural youth

#### Education

As part of this study, a total of 6,140 youth age 16-25 in 120 villages were surveyed across the three districts. Overall, 60% of these youth are enrolled formal education institutions, in either school, college or vocational education institutes. However, there are major variations by age, gender and socioeconomic background.

- The vast majority of those age 16-18 years are enrolled in formal educational institutions (83.4%), mainly in school.
- In the 19-21 age group the proportion of youth pursuing some form of education reduces by twenty-five percentage points (61%), of whom over 4 in every 10 are enrolled in college.
- Among youth age 22-25 years, less than 3 in every 10 youth are enrolled anywhere, a decrease of fifty-five percentage points compared to the youngest age cohort.
- In each age cohort, higher proportions of girls than boys are not enrolled anywhere or enrolled in government institutions, whereas higher proportions of boys are enrolled in privately managed educational institutions.
- It is heartening to note that only less than 4% of youth age 16-18 and less than 6% of youth age 19-21 had fewer than eight years of schooling; this proportion is 10.5% among the oldest

age cohort (22-25 years). Over a quarter of youth age 19-21 years and over half of those age 22-25 years had completed secondary school or above.

## Work

While the proportion of youth enrolled in educational institutions declines with age, the proportion of working youth (whether working inside or outside the house), as well as those looking for work increases steadily.

- 15% youth age 16-18 years are engaged in some form of work, either inside or outside the house. This proportion increases to 19.1% for youth age 19-21 years and to over a third of all youth age 22-25 years.
- Overall, over a quarter of the working youth were working on their own or family farms (26.8%) while more than a third (36.4%) were engaged in agricultural or non-agricultural work. The proportion of youth who were either in some form of salaried work or self-employment is 16.1% and 20.8% respectively.
- Youths' education and gender are strongly related to the type of work they are doing. More than twice as many youth with less than 10 years of schooling are involved in agricultural or non-agricultural labour compared to those who have studied beyond grade 10. Conversely, youth with at least a grade 11 education are far more likely to be engaged in salaried work or self-employment than those who have completed grade 10 or less.
- In each age cohort, far fewer women than men are engaged in paid work; on the other hand, among youth who report their primary activity as household work, over 90% were women. Among women age 22-25 years, about three-quarters of women are married and half reported being engaged exclusively in household work.

## Ability and learning

Youth in the village survey were administered learning assessment that assessed their foundational ability in simple reading and numeracy as well as their ability to apply arithmetic concepts to every-day tasks like calculating a discount or loan repayment amount based on interest.

- Overall, about 8 in every 10 youth age 16-25 years could read a Std II level text, while over 5 in every 10 could solve a 3- by 1-digit division sum. However, these numbers decline for the tasks requiring application of concepts. A little over half of all youth could correctly calculate a discount, half could correctly solve a unitary method problem, and only 2 in every 10 youth could calculate a loan repayment amount based on a given interest rate.
- These results are especially alarming for the oldest cohort, youth age 22-25 years, the majority of whom are now outside of the education system. There is distressing evidence that once they leave the education system, these youth – and in particular, the women – begin to lose the already poor foundational skills that they had acquired earlier.
- There are major gender differentials in learning and ability, with fewer women than men able to successfully do these tasks, especially the tasks requiring application of concepts. This difference is the greatest among men and women age 22-25 years.
- Similarly, the difference in learning levels of youth who are currently enrolled versus those outside the formal education system is a cause of worry. Among 16-18 year olds, 38 percentage point fewer youth who were not enrolled anywhere could read a simple Std II level text compared to their similarly aged counterparts in an educational institute.

## Aspirations

Youth were asked whether they would like to study further and if so, till what level. Additionally, they were asked about the kind of work they aspired to do in the future as well as if they knew anyone who engaged in the same field.

- Overall, three quarters of youth age 16-25 years aspire to complete at least an undergraduate degree. This proportion is 71% among youth age 16-18 years and 80% for youth age 19-21 years. More women than men reported not wanting to study further than their current level of study.
- Almost without exception, surveyed youth aspire to get away from farm-related work or household work. However, beyond the catch-all “any government job” response which was by far the most common response, there are enormous gender differences in the specific kinds of jobs that young people aim for. Many more women than men mentioned teaching or nursing professions while men aimed to join the army, police, or any private sector job.
- A majority of youth who were ‘only studying’ (34.5%) said they did not know anyone engaged in their selected career field; however, this proportion is lower among ‘only working’ youth (29.3%), suggesting that the network of influencers expands as youth begin working in general.
- Women’s information networks are often limited to the family with many more women than men reporting relatives as the most common set of influencers of career aspirations. Among young men, friends play a major role, possibly because men have fewer restrictions on socialization and therefore wider social networks than young women.

## Vocational education

- 57.6% of youth age 16-25 reported having heard of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) or other skill training programs, indicating limited information percolation and awareness among young people. However, there are important differences in youths’ awareness based on their affluence and gender. 61.6% youth from households in the highest affluence category had ever heard of ITIs compared to 45.4% youth from the poorest households. On the other hand, awareness varies substantially across the sexes, with a 14 percentage point gaps between men and women.
- Only 24.5% of youth age 16-25 years had ever taken skill training or learnt a skill (such as *sewing, beautician, mechanic, computers, electrician*, etc.) The proportion of youth who acquired a vocational skill increases with age – from 17.6% among youth age 16-18 to 32.3% among the oldest cohort of 22-25 -year-olds. A larger proportion of young women than young men reported having learned a skill – the major difference being that many of them had acquired it informally rather than in a formal institution.
- Very few youth consider vocational training as viable routes to gain skills or access to income generation. When asked how they would prepare for their aspired field of work or a “good job”, only 3.6% of all youth (age 16-25) selected vocational or skilling programs as a possible preparing pathway.



## Results from the Institutional study: Pathways of youth in Vocational Training Institutes

Information was collected via a survey of 200 youth enrolled across 7 courses (or trades) in either an ITI or a Pratham Institute located in the three study districts. Additionally, 50 youth were purposively selected and interviewed at length regarding their reasons and motivation to join the respective centre and course as well as their plans for the future.

### Youth profile

- The difference in admission criteria across the two institutes reflect in the differences in youth characteristics in each institution. While majority students in both institutes were 18-23 years old, PI had substantially more older students above age 24 (15.7%). In PI, 4 out of every 10 students had not completed Grade 12, and as many as 9 out of every 10 grew up in a rural setting. ITI students had considerably more years of schooling, with more than 8 out of every 10 students having completed at least Grade 12. ITI students were also on average more urban, with more than a third of students reporting growing up in urban settings.

### Factors influencing decision to take up vocational training

- The study suggests that four key factors interact to shape these decisions: i) availability of financial resources; ii) availability of information about the course and what it has to offer, both during and after the program; iii) the presence or absence of physical, social, or academic barriers to access; and iv) the social networks available to the youth.
  - *Financial Resources:* The availability of financial support, length of the course and the likelihood of subsequent placement are important factors for youth while considering enrolling in vocational education programs. Over 90% students enrolled in ITI reported financial support from their families, while in PI, close to three-quarters of youth received the same from the institution itself. Similarly, availability of hostel facilities, flexible fee payment options, and support with job placement made PI a more feasible option for youth from disadvantaged populations than ITIs.
  - *Availability of information:* The scale of operation of the PI is small compared to ITI. Compared to over 2,000 government ITIs in India, PI runs just under 100 centres in 200+ blocks in 16 states. However, unlike ITIs, PI centres dedicate considerable time and effort to their community outreach work. For women in particular, the fact that recruitment happens via direct village-level contact has a number of additional benefits, convincing their families being the first, crucial part of the process.
  - *Barriers to access:* Physical access to formal TVET institutions remains challenging for many students, particularly those from rural locations and women, with limited public transport. Furthermore, because ITIs have no residential facilities, students need to be able to invest significant amounts of both time and money to attend classes regularly. This is often an issue for young women, who face issues of safety and security both commuting to the institution as well as, on occasion, on campus. Academic barriers relate to the admission criteria for these institutions. While increasingly large numbers of young people are completing the eight mandatory years of elementary education as well as

secondary school (Grade 10), entrance admission to the ITIs is merit-based and therefore highly competitive. In this sense, ITIs do not offer a real alternative to students who have either studied less or performed poorly on the relevant school examinations.

- *Information and information networks:* Respondents in this study obtained information from a variety of sources including family, friends, relatives, teachers, etc. In the case of PI students, almost half learned about these centres from the community outreach activities that are conducted for this purpose. Most ITI students, on the other hand, got information from family and friends, with a sizeable proportion being advised by staff in their school or college. In the case of PI centres, personal contact with the PI outreach teams or alumni is a key element, not only in telling prospective students about the course itself but also about its practical implications in terms of costs, length, and future employment possibilities.

### Short-term goals and long-term aspirations

As part of the survey questionnaire, youth were asked about their immediate goals after course completion, as well as in the longer term. Mapping students' short-term and long-term aspirations against each other reveals very different future trajectories among each group.

- About two thirds of the ITI students (78 out of 115) aspire to a government job in the long-term and view the ITI as part of their preparation towards this end. Of these, almost a third (25 students) identified the specific short-term goal to study further, after the current course, in order to achieve this goal. Just 1 in 10 ITI students described a private sector job as an ambition, in either the short-term or the long-term. On the other hand, more than 60% of PI students view the course as a way to obtain a foothold into the private sector (52 out of 83 students), and about 40% (33 out of 83) aspire to continue there in the long run.
- Interviews with 50 youth generate deep insights into the complex strategizing that goes into their plans for the future. Extensive analysis of these thoughts and plans generated a conceptual map in the form of a set of 3 core pathways that reflect these envisaged future trajectories. We refer to these as: 1) 'Need-based' pathways, 2) 'Opportunistic' pathways and 3) 'Interest-based' pathways. For any individual youth, by far the most important determinant of which pathway she or he takes is the economic status of the household.
- The 'Need-based' pathway is taken by youth from the most economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These young people need a job immediately to cover essential needs for themselves and their families. At the other extreme, the "Interest-based" pathway is taken by youth with a particular interest in a specific area of study and/or field of work and, typically, sufficient financial and home support to enable them to pursue their interest without the pressure of finding a job immediately. The middle category, labelled the "Opportunistic" pathway, contains the largest proportion of youth: those who know that they want to work outside the agricultural sector, but have neither much knowledge about nor a particular passion for a specific job or sector. Because they have a small window of opportunity, in terms of encouragement and support from their family or from

an institution, they enrol in a course that they happen to hear about that sounds like a possible fit. In other words, they take advantage of the circumstances, with the hope that it will lead them to a “good” job and a steady income.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, the study puts forward six major conclusions:

- Youth are staying in the education system longer than ever before, but their foundational skills are both poor and fragile. This seriously constrains what they are able to achieve in the future. Regardless of their path forward, engaging productively with economic activity requires these basic skills.
- At the same time, more years of schooling means that youth aspirations are rising. Most youth see traditional college degree programs and a stable salary-paying job – most often a government job – as the path forward. These aspirations are clearly shaped by the alternatives youth know of and the role models they see around them.
- One reason for this situation is that information about TVET options is not widely available. Youth who do learn about these alternatives do so mainly from family and friends; but this information is often limited and based on hearsay rather than fact. Mechanisms that put together information about TVET options available in different institutions and for different purposes need to be developed. But collecting information is not enough: ways of disseminating this information effectively to rural youth are also required.
- For TVET programs to offer truly alternative options to youth who may be unwilling or unable to follow the traditional academic route, admission criteria need to be thought through carefully.
- For disadvantaged youth in rural communities and for women in particular, provision of information is insufficient. They need mechanisms that scaffold their journey from home to institution. Specific mechanisms to provide this scaffolding will vary across locations and courses, but outreach targeting families and communities as well as the youth themselves is a critical component.
- TVET institutions cannot stop at teaching a skill. Alternative ways in which that skill can be harnessed to generate income need to be envisaged and included as part of the course.

## I Introduction

First implemented in 2010, India's Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, or RTE, guarantees access to free and compulsory elementary education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years (GoI, 2009). Underlying the RTE Act was the rationale that guaranteeing India's young people eight years of schooling would ensure that by the time they became adults, they would have the basic knowledge, abilities, and skills needed to further their own goals as well as those of the country.

In 2017, the first cohort of students covered by the RTE Act entered Grade 8, the final year of elementary education and the last year covered by the Act. At around 22 lakh students, the number of children to reach this far in their educational journey had doubled over the previous 10 years (U-DISE, 2017), reflective of major successes in the country in providing access to education and bringing children into the system .

That same year, the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 'Beyond Basics', a household survey covering more than 30,000 randomly selected young people in the age group 14-18 from 28 districts across the country, revealed that this premise was far from true. It showed, for example, that although 81% of the sampled youth had indeed completed 8 years of elementary education, almost a quarter were unable to read a Grade 2 level text (ASER Centre, 2018). Out of the two thirds of the sampled youth who could solve a two digit by two-digit subtraction sum, fewer than 4 in every 10 could calculate what they would have to pay for a Rs 300 T-shirt that was being sold at a 10% discount. In other words, the survey found that despite the prescribed minimum years of schooling, both basic reading and arithmetic skills and the ability to apply these to everyday tasks were woefully lacking. At the same time, youth aspirations were extremely high: few students wanted to continue in the same line of work that their parents had done. These findings were similar to those emerging from previous research studies conducted by ASER Centre (ASER Centre, 2012). Not surprisingly given this picture, reports of dissatisfaction with the levels of preparation of India's young people for future employment have become commonplace (Bairagya, 2015).

Recent employment statistics confirm that the situation is challenging. As of December 2019, the unemployment rate in India is recorded at 7.4%, with the figure at 8.8% and 6.7% in Urban and Rural areas respectively (CMIE, 2019). However, of the entire working population, only 18.5% are recognised as salaried employees, while 51.4% identify as self-employed and 30.2% fall under casual employment (ILO, 2018a). While India has been able to reduce poverty levels significantly in the past few years, it has the largest population of those living in multidimensional poverty, at a last count of 354 million (University of Oxford, 2018).

In India, it must be noted that the agriculture sector is the largest employer in most states. 81% of India's employed individuals work in the informal sector, of which 64% are engaged in non-agricultural forms of employment (ILO, 2018b). Between 2001 and 2011, in a few clusters the number of non-farm jobs increased, but in most regions these jobs seemed to regress with time. In some of the more populated regions in India, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh, there was a visible decline or stasis of regular jobs during this period (Bhattacharya & Devulapalli, 2018). In this light, one recognises that employment in India is largely concentrated around farming and the informal sector, with limited focus in the manufacturing sector. While the

country has been making strides to make the transition from an agrarian population to an industrial one, this development has been concentrated in urban pockets across the country. The female labour force participation rate in India has been declining since 2005, and currently it is recorded at 23% for women above the age of 15 (World Bank, 2019). The cause behind this decline is one that has been widely deliberated. Women with limited education levels are more likely to be in the labour force, compared to women with secondary education, demonstrating a U-curve relationship (Fletcher, Pande, & Moore, 2018). On average, women in India spend about 297 minutes per day in unpaid care work, as compared to 139 minutes per day for men (ILO, n.d.). According to a report by McKinsey, India could add up to \$770 billion to its GDP- more than 18%, if it simply advances Gender Parity in work and society (Woetzel et al., 2018). The resistance to women entering the workforce is a result of social and individual beliefs which has ramifications when it comes to higher education, skilling, employment, entrepreneurship and any other means of income generation.

It is estimated that India adds roughly 12 million people to the workforce annually, and at least 65% of its population is below the age of 35 (Government of India, 2016). It is apparent that the workforce in India is growing, and simultaneously there seems to be a growing demand for a skilled workforce. Yet, less than 5% of this population is recognised as formally skilled. Furthermore, of this cohort, it is estimated that 75% were trained through non-formal training pathways (Agrawal and Agrawal, 2017). Despite the very apparent need for skilling, the uptake of vocational training in India is poor as vocational training in India has historically been perceived as a non-aspirational pathway (NSDC, 2019). As per the 66<sup>th</sup> NSSO survey, at all India-level, although 44% respondents reported that vocational training had helped in getting them a wage or salaried employment, over a third of individuals (36%) in rural areas reported that the vocational training was not beneficial in getting them a job (ibid.). The discourse around dignity of labour in India, goes hand-in-hand with the perceptions surrounding vocational training.

One major response has been the Government of India's focus in recent years on expanding the vocational education and skill development options available to youth, both as part of existing educational institutions (schools and colleges) as well as independently of them. A new Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship was established in 2014 to coordinate these efforts; and in 2015 the National Skill Development Mission was launched, with the aim to "provide institutional capacity to train a minimum of 300 million skilled people by the year 2022". The draft National Education Policy (dNEP) of 2019 reiterates this policy focus, with the inclusion of vocational and skill education starting in secondary school alongside formal curriculum and extending into higher education pathways.

While the Government of India has taken a number of steps to increase awareness and expand vocational and skilling options available to youth across the country, few studies have analysed the extent to which these plans and programs provide the kinds of opportunities that youth in India are looking for and avail of. This study aims to help fill this gap. In 2018, a research grant from Citibank Foundation to Pratham Institute for Literacy, Education, and Vocational Training (Pratham Institute, PI) enabled this in-depth exploration of the links between education, work, and aspirations with a special focus on the vocational education. The study was designed and implemented by ASER Centre, and was based on Pratham Institute's work in the area of vocational training and ASER Centre's prior research into the abilities and aspirations of older children and youth. It is an attempt to understand the mismatch between aspirations of young

people, the grassroots realities surrounding employment, and the gaps in the available pathways for upward mobility.

The study was conducted in three states of India, selected due to their varying patterns of educational and employment opportunities, namely, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh; more information about these contextual characteristics is provided in Appendix 1. Within each state, one district was purposively chosen for inclusion in the study: Dhamtari in Chhattisgarh, Ahmednagar in Maharashtra, and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. Each of these districts offers a range of vocational education programs including a Pratham Institute vocational training centre as well as a government Industrial Training Institute (ITI). In order to examine vocational education from the perspective of those engaged in these programs as well as youth resident in these districts, the study included both an in-depth examination of these two institutions as well as a comprehensive village survey in each district.

The study was thus designed to achieve both breadth and depth in our understanding of what young people in rural India are doing and aspiring to do. It was situated in three very different states, offering the possibility of comparing youth trajectories across these locations. In each selected district, a household survey covered youth in the 16-25 age group in a large sample of 60 villages and asked detailed questions about their past and present educational, vocational, work background, and future aspirations; as well as the role that vocational courses play in their thinking about next steps. The institutional strand involved an in-depth examination of one ITI and one Pratham vocational training centre, each catering to very different audiences. Thus, the study aims to examine some of the available models for vocational training in the context of the background and aspirations of village youth in these locations. A detailed description of the methodology for each strand is provided in Appendix 2.

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## II Youth in rural India: Findings from the village study

### 1. Sample description: Characteristics of surveyed youth and their households

The three districts included in this study – Ahmednagar in Maharashtra, Dhamtari in Chhattisgarh, and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh – were selected from states that present very different profiles with respect to schooling, work, and migration statistics, and hence different contexts for youth entering the labour force in India. Some key indicators of these contextual characteristics are provided in Appendix 1.

Across the three districts, a total of 6,140 randomly selected youth in the age group 16-25 were surveyed for this study, comprising almost equal proportions of males (49%) and females (51%) (Table 1).<sup>1</sup> Within this age group, more youth resident in sampled villages were of school-going age (16-18 years) (37.8%) than in the older age groups. 95.5% of surveyed youth were Hindu and more than half (52.3%) belonged to the other backward castes (OBC) social category.

These overall proportions hide variations across the three study districts. For example, more young men were found to be resident in villages in Ahmednagar than young women (53% males vs 47% females), while in other two districts the sample had the opposite gender composition. Surveyed youth in Ahmednagar and Varanasi tended to be younger (more than 40% in the 16-18 age group), while a large proportion of those in Dhamtari were older (40% in the 22-25 age group). The caste composition of youth also shows major variations across districts: 26.5% of surveyed youth in Dhamtari belonged to the Scheduled Tribes social category and 45.5% in Ahmednagar belonged to the General category.

**Table 1.** Sample description, by district

Youth Characteristics	Ahmednagar	Dhamtari	Varanasi	Total
<b>N</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>2,212</b>	<b>2,211</b>	<b>6,140</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	53.4	47.5	47.0	49.0
Female	46.6	52.5	53.0	51.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age group</b>				
16-18	41.2	29.4	43.6	37.8
19-21	28.0	31.1	25.2	28.1
22-25	30.8	39.5	31.2	34.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital status</b>				
Never married	77.5	75.7	78.4	77.2
Ever married*	22.5	24.3	21.6	22.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Religion</b>				
Hindu	91.7	99.4	94.5	95.5
Islam	7.0	0.5	5.1	4.0
Other	1.3	0.1	0.4	0.5

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 2 for details on sampling



<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Social Category</b>				
General	45.5	0.6	9.5	16.4
SC	14.5	7.1	24.4	15.4
ST	11.2	26.8	4.7	14.5
OBC	25.7	65.1	60.1	52.3
Other**	3.1	0.5	1.4	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Includes married and living in marital home, married but living in maternal home, divorced, separated and widowed.

\*\* Includes Don't know and No response

With regard to household economic status, the survey asked whether the sampled youth's family owned any of a set of 13 durable assets.<sup>2</sup> In the sample overall, 57% of sampled youths came from households in the 'very low' or 'low' affluence categories (Table 2). Similar variations are observed with respect to parental education across the study districts. Across the sample overall, for example, 46.1% of sampled youth had mothers who had never been to school, but this proportion was the highest in Varanasi (67.7%) and lowest in Ahmednagar (31.4%). On the other hand, about a quarter of sampled youth's fathers had never been to school; this proportion is again highest in Varanasi (29.5%) and lowest in Ahmednagar (18%). While neither parent had ever attended school in the case of 13.7% of sampled youth in Ahmednagar, this proportion was much higher at 26.2% in Varanasi.

**Table 2.** Household characteristics of sampled youth, by district

<b>Household Characteristics (%)</b>	<b>Ahmednagar</b>	<b>Dhamtari</b>	<b>Varanasi</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Asset index (Quartiles)</b>				
Very low	36.2	29.4	28.8	32.7
Low	18.1	32.6	31.7	24.7
Medium	22.5	16.4	24.5	22.4
High	23.2	21.6	15.1	20.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Parental Education</b>				
% Mothers with no schooling	31.4	46.7	67.7	46.1
% Fathers with no schooling	18.0	21.2	29.5	22.5
% Both parents with no schooling	13.7	16.7	26.2	18.5
% Mothers with 12+ years of schooling	6.4	2.9	6.4	6.0
% Fathers with 12+ years of schooling	21.7	14.1	23.7	21.4

<sup>2</sup> The list of consumer durable items comprised the following: cycle, motorcycle, car, tractor, mobile phone, smartphone, pressure cooker, clock, fan, T.V, sewing machine, refrigerator and cooler. The ownership of each item on this list was assigned a value of 1, generating a scale ranging from 0 to 13. Based on the sample distribution of assets, 4 categories were created, namely - Very Low affluence, Low affluence, Medium affluence and High affluence. These categories were calculated for each district separately in order to account for the variation in asset ownership across the sample districts; thereafter, a composite asset index was constructed. The district-wise sample distribution of households on the asset index scale is presented in Appendix 3.

The youth in our sample had far more exposure to education than their parents. Almost two-thirds had completed lower secondary school (Grade 10), a finding that would have been very different even a decade ago. The highest proportion of these youth are in the age group 19-21 years. As will be discussed in the next section, age-wise analysis indicates that over 80% of the youngest youth (age 16-18) were enrolled in either school or college at the time of the survey. On the other hand higher proportions of older youth (age 22-25) years were not enrolled in any educational institute, and about 1 in 10 such youth had less than 8 years of schooling. Overall as well as in each age group category, fewer females than males had studied beyond Grade 11 (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Completed years of schooling, by age and sex

Population group	Highest level of schooling completed (%)				
	Less than Grade 8*	Grade 8-10	Grade 11-12	Grade 12 or higher**	Total
<b>All youth: 16-18</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>45.4</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	2.4	37.8	46.9	12.9	100
Female	4.8	39.3	43.7	12.2	100
<b>All youth: 19-21</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>47.7</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	4.4	19.3	29.2	47.1	100
Female	6.1	20.1	25.6	48.2	100
<b>All youth: 22-25</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	7.8	25.3	22.3	44.6	100
Female	13.0	28.1	23.0	36.0	100
<b>All youth</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Includes never enrolled

\*\* Includes youth who completed school education, college dropouts, graduates, certificate/diploma holders.

Not surprisingly, sampled youths' exposure to education is strongly related to the affluence of their households, as measured by the asset index. Youth from the least affluent families in this sample were far more likely to have fewer than eight years of schooling, whereas those from the most affluent families were far more likely to have studied beyond the schooling stage (Table 4). Similarly, almost two thirds of youth in Ahmednagar and Dhamtari, the districts with highest levels of affluence, were currently studying; this proportion was far lower in Dhamtari (Appendix 4).

**Table 4.** Completed years of schooling, by household asset index

Completed years of schooling	Asset index (quartiles)			
	Very low	Low	Medium	High
<b>N</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>1517</b>	<b>1377</b>	<b>1236</b>
Less than Grade 8 *	11.4	6.3	3.2	1.5
Grade 8 to 10	35.9	32.0	24.1	22.8
Grade 11 to 12	31.7	34.7	34.7	32.4
Beyond Grade 12 **	21.0	27.0	38.0	43.3
<b>All youth</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Includes never enrolled

\*\* Includes youth who completed school education, college dropouts, graduates, certificate/diploma holders

## 2. What are young people in rural India doing, aspiring to do, and able to do? An overview by age cohorts

The previous chapter presented selected demographic characteristics of the sampled youth separately for each of the three districts. However, analysis of the survey data suggested that while some differences in patterns of youth activity and aspirations are indeed visible across districts, differences in age and gender appeared to be far more important than physical location. Accordingly, the remaining sections of this report presents findings mainly by age and gender; district level estimates are presented in Appendix 4.

Table 5 summarizes the primary occupation of young people in the age group 16-25 in the three sampled districts, broken down by age group and sex. The good news is that across these locations in rural India, the majority of youth are continuing to study – an average of 6 out of every 10 youth. However, this overall proportion comes mainly from the 16-18-year-olds who are still in the school-going age group as well as from the men in the sample. Enrolments are much lower among the older age groups and among women. For example, while 84.4% of all 16-18-year-olds are studying, this proportion drops to 61% among 19-21-year-olds and to 28.5% among 22-25-year-olds. Further, the gender gap in the proportion of youth who are studying grows with age: this gap is about 7 percentage points in the youngest age group and increases to about 16 percentage points among the oldest age group surveyed for this study – with more males and fewer females studying in each case.

**Table 5.** Primary activity of youth, by age and sex

Population group	N	Primary activity of youth (%)				
		Studying *	Working outside the home	Unemployed / Looking for work	Working inside the home	Total
<b>All youth: 16-18</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>84.4</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	1161	87.5	8.6	2.0	1.9	100
Female	1160	80.9	5.3	0.4	13.4	100
<b>All youth: 19-21</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	851	65.4	26.9	4.1	3.6	100
Female	877	56.5	11.1	0.8	31.6	100
<b>All youth: 22-25</b>	<b>2091</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	995	36.6	49.3	10.8	3.3	100
Female	1096	20.9	19.5	3.3	56.3	100
<b>All youth</b>	<b>6140</b>	<b>60.1</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Includes any type of academic or vocational program

Not surprisingly, beyond age 18, there are large increases in the proportion of youth who report their primary occupation as some form of work outside the home. This proportion increases from 7% among the 16-18-year-olds to 19.1% among 19-21-year-olds, and covers more than a third of the 22-25-year-old cohort (34%). These increases are far more pronounced among males than females: by age 22-25, for example, while almost half of the males in the sample are working outside the home (49.3%), just one in five females are doing so (19.5%). On the other hand, in this same age group more than half of the females reported being primarily engaged in domestic work, while just 3.3% of the males did so. One major reason for these very distinct gender-based

trends is the fact that between the youngest cohort and the oldest, the proportion of ever-married women skyrockets from 5.3% (of 16-18-year-old women) to 73.8% (of 22-25-year-old women).

In the following sections we look more closely at the youth in our sample using two different lenses. To begin with, we categorize youth by age to go into more detail about of the 3 subpopulations included as ‘youth’ in this study: those in the age group 16-18, 19-21, and 22-25. We discuss key aspects of each age group in terms of what they are doing, aspiring to do, and able to do, highlighting key differences between the sexes where relevant. Subsequently in Chapter 3, we examine subpopulations of youth based on their primary activity: studying, studying and working, only working (outside the house), or only doing unpaid household work. The distinction is important because given the age of our sample, enrolment status by itself does not provide complete information about youths’ primary activity. In other words, being enrolled in an educational institution does not automatically imply that the youth’s primary activity is *only* studying: as we will see, the proportion of youth who are both working and studying is quite high for certain age groups.

### Age 16-18: Almost Adult

*What are the almost-adults currently doing?*

We saw in Section 2 above that more than 8 out of every 10 youth in the youngest age group in our sample – 16-18-year-olds – reported that their primary activity was some form of education. The highest proportion of these youth were enrolled at a privately managed institution (53.8%) compared to those enrolled in a government institution (29.6%) or not enrolled anywhere (16.6%). These trends are reflective of the relatively low government provision of schooling beyond the elementary stage (Appendix 1).

Interestingly, even among those in this age group who are not currently enrolled in any educational institution, most have completed 8 or more years of schooling, a finding that concurs with the findings from the much larger sample in the ASER 2017 ‘Beyond Basics’ survey which also covered this age group. These findings are important reflections of the success of the country’s drive to increase elementary school enrolments, including the 2009 Right to Education legislation guaranteeing eight years of free and compulsory elementary education to India’s young people. High enrolments are visible among both girls and boys, although with some differences: higher proportions of girls than boys are not currently enrolled or enrolled in government institutions, whereas a larger fraction of boys are enrolled in privately managed educational institutions. Unlike among the older age groups, these gender gaps are relatively small, at 3 to 6 percentage points in each case (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Enrolment status of youth (age 16-18)

% 16-18-year-old youth who were:								
Currently enrolled			Currently not enrolled *					Total
Total	In school	In college	Total	Completed Grade 7 or lower**	Completed Grade 8-9	Completed Grade 10-12	Completed Grade 12 or higher***	
<b>83.4</b>	71.2	12.2	<b>16.6</b>	3.5	6.1	6.6	0.4	<b>100</b>

\* Includes youth who never enrolled, dropped out or completed their studies.

\*\* Includes youth who dropped out or never enrolled in school (0.9%).

\*\*\* Includes youth who completed school education, college dropouts, graduates, certificate/diploma holders.

The value placed on education by youth in this secondary school-going age group is demonstrated not only by their current primary activity but also by the fact that among youth currently enrolled, the vast majority reported that they planned to continue studying in the future (Table 7). Of those who are currently studying, less than 10% said that they wished to discontinue their studies or were unsure whether they wanted to continue while over 70% wished to complete at least an undergraduate level course. It is worth noting that among this age group gender differences are already apparent in youths' interest in further studies, with a far higher proportion of currently enrolled females than males expressing disinterest than their male counterparts.

**Table 7.** Educational aspirations of enrolled youth (age 16-18), by sex

Population group	N	Don't wish to study further	Wish to study till:			Total
			Grade 10-12	Graduation or higher	Don't know	
<b>Enrolled youth: Age 16-18</b>	<b>1857</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>71.6</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	955	2.7	19.6	71.9	5.8	100
Female	902	4.8	18.2	71.3	5.8	100

Underlying this aspiration to study further is the common belief that a high school diploma is not sufficient to ensure a “good job” (Table 8). When asked what they thought the minimum qualification for a good job was, almost two thirds of youth age 16-18 years identified a graduate or postgraduate college degree as the minimum required (64.2%); only one in five thought that high school (Grade 10 or 12) would be sufficient (22.3%). While almost twice the proportion of females as males said that they did not know what the minimum required qualification would be (13% as compared to 7.7%), it is worth noting that very few youth of either sex in this age group mentioned vocational education as a pathway to a good job (3.3%). The subject of vocational education is explored in more detail in Chapter 4 below.

**Table 8.** Perception of minimum qualification required for a “good job” (age 16-18), by gender

Population group	N	Grade 10-12	Graduation or higher	Vocational or other	Don't know	Total
<b>All youth: Age 16-18</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>64.2</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	1161	23.6	65.0	3.8	7.7	100
Female	1160	21.0	63.2	2.8	13.0	100

Turning now to the 16.6% of the 16-18-year-old youth who were not studying at the time of the survey, we see that with the exception of a very small proportion who were unemployed or looking for work, almost all of these youth were working – both males and females. However, there are striking gender differences in the kind of work they were doing: while 8.6% of males in this age group reported working outside the home and 1.9% reported working in the home, just 5.3% of females reported working outside the home but as many as 13.4% were primarily engaged in domestic work (Table 9).

Work was by no means restricted to those young people who were outside the education system. Even at this age, only slightly more than half of the sample reported that their only activity was studying. As is discussed in a subsequent chapter on youth and work, these were youth from generally more affluent families in the sample. Almost all others were either studying as well as working, or else only working (inside or outside the home), while a tiny fraction was unemployed and/or looking for work (1.3%).

**Table 9.** Primary activity of youth (age 16-18), by sex

Population group	N	Engaged in studies (%)		Not engaged in studies (%)			Total
		Only studying	Studying and working	Working outside the home	Unemployed / Looking for work	Household work	
<b>All youth: Age 16-18</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>56.3</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	1161	59.0	28.5	8.6	2.0	1.9	100
Female	1160	53.4	27.5	5.3	0.4	13.4	100

*What is a 'good job'? Aspirations of secondary school-age youth*

The village survey asked sampled youth a set of questions about what they aspired to do in the future (Table 10). Almost without exception, these young people want to get away from farm-related work or household (domestic) work. Beyond the catch-all “any government job” response which was by far the most common, there are enormous gender differences in the kinds of jobs that young people aim for, with females mentioning teaching or nursing and males aiming to join the army, police, or any private sector job. A noteworthy finding is that even among this subset of youth, as young people move from exclusively studying to entering the workforce, they begin to realize that many doors are not, in fact, open to them. For example, small proportions of women who are only studying express interest in a variety of professions – teaching, army, nursing, banking, in addition to “any government job”. But, women who are both studying and working are more likely to limit their future career aspirations to teaching or working on the family farm, with fewer expressing interest in other work options. Seen in this light the expressed ‘aspirations’ are likely not so much true expressions of these young women’s interest, but rather a reflection of the ways in which they frame their preferences within an increasingly constrained set of options as they grow older.

**Table 10.** Future work aspirations of youth (age 16-18), by studying status and sex

Aspirations	Youth only studying (%)		Youth studying and working (%)	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Teacher	5.0	15.8	2.8	22.1
Army/Police	26.0	10.8	22.4	10.6
Doctor/Nurse	4.2	11.9	3.3	9.4
Engineer	7.9	4.6	4.8	2.2
Bank job	6.6	7.5	1.6	4.8
Any government job	21.3	20.9	17.2	8.7
Any private job	10.8	3.9	17.1	4.6
Sports related work	0.6	0.0	0.6	1.0

Work on other farm	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3
Own/family farm	0.3	0.1	4.3	1.5
Own/family business	4.0	2.6	9.2	5.2
Domestic work	0.0	2.3	0.2	2.7
Undecided	10.9	15.7	10.1	17.1
Other	2.5	4.0	6.6	9.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*Do youth have the abilities needed to meet these aspirations?*

The fact that young people in three rural locations in different parts of the country are for the most part continuing to study, even when working alongside; and aspiring to work in jobs that in almost all cases are different from their parents' work, can be seen as the story of successful expansion of educational opportunities to previously underserved areas, bringing with it the promise of a better future. The constraints on their ability to follow the paths they aspire to undoubtedly stem from many different sources: domestic and social expectations, access to appropriate training and to jobs being key among them. But an equally critical constraint that has direct roots in the education system itself is their level of ability in competencies that are fundamental to virtually any employment outside of the farm sector – reading and mathematics.

As part of this study, youth in the village sample were administered a simple test of these important competencies, both foundational and applied. As in the case of the ASER 2017 'Beyond Basics' report, the results are sobering. Even among youth of this secondary school age group, the majority of whom are still in the education system, 2 out of every 10 cannot read at grade 2 level; almost 4 in 10 cannot solve simple three-digit by one-digit division sums; and 6 in 10 cannot read simple English sentences (Table 11). Just half can apply the unitary method or calculate a simple discount. Perhaps most sobering is the fact that 8 out of every 10 youth in this age group cannot calculate the total amount they would have to repay on a loan of 20,000 with an interest rate of 11%, after just one year. The implications of this absolute lack of foundational and applied math ability are enormous for these youths' future lives. Looked at separately by sex, the picture for India's young women looks even more devastatingly bleak.

Furthermore, there are huge differentials in youth's learning levels based on whether they were enrolled in any educational institution or not (Table 12). This is distressing given the fact that even those who were no longer studying, most had completed 8 or more years of schooling – a finding that underlines the fragility of what these young people learn in school.

कलक

बिमला और अजय मेला देखने गए। उन्हें मेले में तरह-तरह की दुकानें दिखीं। मेले में बहुत झुले थे। वहाँ गरम-गरम हलवा और जलेबियाँ भी बिक रही थी। जलेबी देखकर दोनों के मुँह में पानी आने लगा। उन्हें जलेबी खाने का मन करने लगा। बिमला ने जलेबी खरीदी। दोनों ने मिलकर जलेबी खाई। शाम को दोनों घर लौट आए।

भाग

4) 591 (


वाक्य


**What is the time?**

**This is a large house.**

**I like to read.**

**She has many books.**





Rates of Interest offered by Banks

Name of Bank	Interest Rate on loan
Laxmi Bank	11% per year
Lena Bank	12% per year
Rashi Bank	13% per year

Loan Amount = Rs. 20,000

**Table 11.** Foundational and applied abilities of youth (age 16-18), by sex

Population group	Foundational skills: % Youth who can			Applied skills: % Youth who can:		
	Read a Std II level text	Do a 3-by 1-digit division	Read English sentences	Apply unitary method	Calculate amount after discount	Calculate loan repayment amount
<b>All youth: Age 16-18</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>51.5</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>18.8</b>
Male	82.5	63.3	45.9	58.3	56.3	21.1
Female	78.9	51.7	39.1	43.8	43.1	15.6

**Table 12.** Foundational and applied abilities of youth (age 16-18), by enrolment status

Age group	Foundational skills: % Youth who can			Applied skills: % Youth who can:		
	Read a Std II level text	Do a 3-by 1-digit division	Read English sentences	Apply unitary method	Calculate amount after discount	Calculate loan repayment amount
<b>All youth: Age 16-18</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>51.5</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>18.8</b>
Currently enrolled	87.2	65.1	49.1	56.1	50.9	19.6
Not enrolled	48.6	21.1	10.5	28.2	47.6	7.2

### *Age 19-21: Young adults*

#### *Activities of youth in the 19-21 age group*

The 19-21 age group comprises young people who would typically be expected to have completed their school education and gone on either to higher education at college or equivalent, or else to some form of work, or a combination of these. In the previous section, we saw that a large majority of youth age 16-18 (72%) aimed to continue studying, at least through the undergraduate stage. Does this turn out to be a realistic aspiration?

Table 13 shows that these aspirations to study further turn out to be unrealized for many young people. In comparison to the younger cohort, the proportion of young people age 19-21 who are enrolled in an educational institution drops sharply, from 83.4% (the vast majority of whom were in school) to just 58.1%, most of whom are in college. Among those not currently enrolled, virtually all have completed at least 8 years of schooling and about 3 in 10 have completed secondary school or more.



**Table 13.** Enrolment status of youth (age 19-21)

% Youth who were:								
Currently enrolled			Currently not enrolled*					Total
Total	In school	In college	Total	Completed Grade 7 or lower**	Completed Grade 8-9	Completed Grade 10-12	Completed Grade 12 or higher***	
<b>58.1</b>	16.0	42.1	<b>41.9</b>	5.3	8.2	22.9	5.6	<b>100</b>

\*Includes youth who never enrolled, dropped out or completed their studies.

\*\* Includes youth who dropped out or never enrolled in school (1.4%).

\*\*\* Includes youth who completed school education, college dropouts, graduates, certification, and diploma holders.

Looked at from a slightly different lens, the proportion reporting studying as their primary activity drops from 84% among the younger cohort to 61% among this age group; and the proportion working either inside or outside the home increases sharply from 14.4% to 36.6% - more than a third of the sample (Table 14). These changes are even more dramatic among women, a little over half of whom continue to study, while more than 40% are now working inside or outside the home. Gender gaps in the nature of work also increase sharply, with ten times as many women as men engaged in work within the home and more than twice as many men as women working outside the home.

**Table 14.** Primary activity of youth (age 19-21), by sex

Population group	N	Youth's primary activity (%)				
		Studying	Working outside the home	Unemployed/ Looking for work	Working inside the home	Total
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	851	65.4	26.9	4.1	3.6	100
Female	877	56.5	11.1	0.8	31.6	100

The major reason behind this major shift in primary activity can perhaps be attributed to the changing role that these young people play in their families, now that they are adults. About equal proportions of both men and women mention financial and family issues as important reasons for not continuing to study, but a variety of other reasons were also mentioned that look very different across the sexes. Although men's marital status is almost the same for this age group as the younger cohort, the proportion of ever-married women increases six-fold in the space of a few years, from 5.3% of the 16-18-year-old cohort to 31% of the 19-21-year-olds. Domestic responsibilities and family restrictions on continuing to study clearly play an important role in these changes in women's activity status (Table 15). On the other hand, for men, the need to contribute to the family income plays an important part in discontinuing their studies. In addition, men appear to more readily express their personal connection to education as a reason for discontinuing their education. For example, men were far more likely than women to cite "lack of interest" as a reason.

**Table 15.** Reasons for discontinuing studies (age 19-21), by sex

Reasons for discontinuing studies*	Male	Female
Marriage	0.6	30.4
Financial constraints	28.1	28.0
Completed the desired level of education	16.4	11.7
Family did not allow to study further	5.8	9.2
Not interested in studying further	24.7	14.9
Family issues (family member's death, domestic responsibilities etc.)	9.5	10.1
Started working	16.2	2.8
Started pursuing a vocational course	11.4	1.1

\* Respondents could select multiple answers; therefore totals do not add to 100%.

Among those in this age group who are continuing to study, about two thirds are in college and the remaining one third still in school (Table 16). The gender gap in the type of institution attended grows sharply for this age group. Although the gender gap for youth not enrolled anywhere increases only slightly, from 6 percentage points among the younger youth to 7 percentage points for this age group, the gender gap in the proportion of youth studying in privately managed institutions jumps from 3 percentage points among the younger cohort to 8 percentage points among these older youth.

**Table 16.** Enrolment status of youth (age 19-21), by sex

Enrolment status	N	% youth:			
		Enrolled in:		Not enrolled	Total
		Government	Private		
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	851	19.2	42.4	38.4	100
Female	877	20.5	34.1	45.5	100

### *Aspirations among young adults*

Among these young adults who continue in the education system, the proportion who state that they do not wish to continue studying almost triples in comparison to the younger cohort. But the proportion of youth who say that they want to complete at least a college undergraduate degree, if not more, also increases by almost 10 percentage points, especially among men. About eight out of every ten youth, men and women, aspire to complete at least an undergraduate level course of studies (Table 17). The proportion of youth believing that vocational or skilling courses provide an alternative path to a “good job” increases only marginally, from 3.3% among the 16-18 year-olds to 3.9% among this older cohort (Table 18).

**Table 17.** Educational aspirations of currently enrolled youth (age 19-21), by gender

Population group	N	% youth who:				
		Don't wish to study further	Wish to study till:			Total
			Grade 10-12	Graduation or higher	Don't know	

<b>Enrolled youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>80.7</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	433	8.0	4.8	82.6	4.7	100
Female	433	12.0	2.6	78.7	6.8	100

**Table 18.** Perception of minimum qualification required for a “good job” (age 19-21), by gender

Population group	N	% youth response:				
		Grade 10-12	Graduation or higher	Vocational or other	Don't know	Total
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	851	19.7	68.2	4.5	7.7	100
Female	877	15.6	69.9	3.2	11.4	100

As mentioned earlier, more than 6 of every 10 youth in the 19-21 year old cohort reported studying as their primary activity; however, even among these, a large proportion of youth were working alongside their studies. The proportion of youth who were able to focus only on studying was higher among males (37.5%) than females (34.5%) (Table 19). While the proportion of youth both studying and working remains broadly similar in comparison to the younger cohort, there is a major drop in the proportion of youth only studying (from 56% to 36%); on the other hand, the proportion of those only working or looking for work more than doubles, from 8.3% among the younger youth to 21.6% among this cohort. Even among these young working adults, risk avoidance seems to dominate their thinking: although more than 8 in 10 expressed the desire to work in jobs other than agricultural or non-agricultural labour (Table 20), almost the same proportion said that they wanted to continue with their current work, especially among women.

**Table 19.** Primary activity of youth (age 19-21), by sex

Population group	N	Youth's primary activity:					Total
		Engaged in studies (%)		Not engaged in studies (%)			
		Only studying	Studying and working	Working outside the home	Unemployed / Looking for work	House hold work	
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	851	37.5	27.9	26.9	4.1	3.6	100
Female	877	34.5	22.1	11.1	0.8	31.6	100

**Table 20.** Future work aspirations of youth (age 19-21) who are studying, by studying status and sex

Aspirations	Only studying		Studying and working	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Teacher	7.8	25.5	5.4	33.1
Army/Police	20.4	5.4	16.4	9.8
Doctor/Nurse	0.7	5.7	1.4	2.7

Engineer	9.8	4.1	3.6	0.2
Bank job	2.8	9.2	5.7	9.8
Any government job	33.9	23.3	19.5	5.5
Any private job	11.4	6.7	21.6	4.4
Sports related work	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Work on other farm	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8
Own/family farm	0.1	1.0	5.1	4.9
Own/family business	2.6	1.0	10.6	12.2
Domestic work	0.5	2.3	0.6	1.0
Undecided	6.6	12.0	3.8	4.6
Other	3.5	3.9	6.3	11.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### Ability

While key pieces of this puzzle surely revolve around access to appropriate employment opportunities as well as family and other constraints on young people's mobility, another important piece centres on their actual level of foundational skill and their ability to apply these to everyday life. Comparing the results of these young adults with the younger cohort, it is evident that if these abilities have not been acquired earlier, there is little likelihood of being able to develop them as young adults (Table 21). Across the six simple indicators of foundational and applied skills, youth in this cohort perform at almost the same level as their younger counterparts. Large proportions have not mastered even foundational skills despite several years of schooling, and even fewer can apply these skills to simple everyday tasks. As in the case of the younger cohort, the difference between those who are currently enrolled and those who are not enrolled in an educational institution is enormous (Table 22).

**कहानी**

विमला और अजय मेला देखने गए। उन्हें मेले में तरह-तरह की दुकानें दिखीं। मेले में बहुत झूल था। वहाँ गरम-गरम हलवा और जलेबियाँ भी विक रही थीं। जलेबी देखकर दोनों के मुँह में पानी आने लगा। उन्हें जलेबी खाने का मन करने लगा। विमला ने जलेबी खरीदी। दोनों ने मिलकर जलेबी खाई। शाम को दोनों घर लौट आए।

**भाग**

4) 591 (

**यारप**

**What is the time?**

**This is a large house.**

**I like to read.**

**She has many books.**

15 Litres

35 Litres

**Sale!!!**

10% Discount

M.R.P. ₹ 300

**Rates of Interest offered by Banks**

Name of Bank	Interest Rate on loan
Laxmi Bank	11% per year
Lena Bank	12% per year
Rashi Bank	13% per year

Loan Amount = Rs. 20,000

**Table 21.** Foundational and applied abilities of youth (age 19-21), by sex

Population group	Foundational skills: % Youth who can			Applied skills: % Youth who can:		
	Read a Std II level text	Do a 3-by 1-digit division	Read English sentences	Apply unitary method	Calculate amount after discount	Calculate loan repayment amount
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>82.8</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>51.8</b>	<b>55.1</b>	<b>19.6</b>
Male	81.6	62.5	47.5	60.3	65.0	24.6
Female	83.9	53.5	42.6	43.1	43.2	13.7

**Table 22.** Foundational and applied abilities of youth (age 19-21), by enrolment status

Population group	Foundational skills: % Youth who can			Applied skills: % Youth who can:		
	Read a Std II level text	Do a 3-by 1-digit division	Read English sentences	Apply unitary method	Calculate amount after discount	Calculate loan repayment amount
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>82.8</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>51.8</b>	<b>55.1</b>	<b>19.6</b>
Currently enrolled	90.5	70.7	61.4	59.8	58.5	21.7
Not enrolled	72.0	40.5	22.4	40.7	46.8	14.7

### *Age 22-25: Approaching the quarter-century mark*

*What is the oldest of our three cohorts doing?*

Examination of youth enrolment status by age cohorts show clearly that the period between 16 and 25 years is a time of major transitions in the lives of young people. Over the course of these 10 years, patterns of enrolment and employment reverse. Whereas among the 16-18 year olds, 84% were enrolled in an educational program, among the 22-25-year-olds just 26% are enrolled in an education institution (Table 23). Among those currently not enrolled, more than half have completed secondary school (grade 10) or more. Among those still enrolled, the majority of both males and females are studying in private institutions, mostly at the college level (Table 24).

**Table 23.** Enrolment status of youth (age 22-25)

% Youth who were:								
Currently enrolled			Currently not enrolled*					Total
Total	In school	In college	Total	Completed Grade 7 or lower**	Completed Grade 8-9	Completed Grade 10-12	Completed Above Grade 12***	
<b>26.0</b>	7.5	18.5	<b>74.0</b>	10.5	12.0	29.8	21.7	

\*Includes youth who never enrolled, dropped out or completed their studies.

\*\* Includes youth who dropped out or never enrolled in school (1.8%).

\*\*\* Includes youth who completed school education, college dropouts, graduates, certificate/diploma holders.

**Table 24.** Enrolment status of youth (age 22-25), by sex

Population group	N	% youth:			
		Enrolled in:		Not enrolled	Total
		Government	Private		
<b>All youth: Age 22-25</b>	<b>2091</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>74.0</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	995	12.8	20.7	66.5	100
Female	1096	7.6	11.3	81.1	100

Meanwhile, the proportion of youth who are working increases significantly among this oldest cohort. Even among those who are studying, the proportion of young people in this age cohort who are only studying diminishes further and is for the first time overtaken by the proportion who are both studying and working, among both males and females (Table 25). Among the close to three quarters of the cohort who are not studying, the gender gap in what youth are doing accentuates further, with more than half of all women working inside the home and about half of all men working outside the home.

Among this oldest cohort in our sample, only a small proportion continued as full-time students, especially among women.

**Table 25.** Primary activity of youth (age 22-25), by sex

Population group	N	Youth's primary activity:					Total
		Engaged in studies (%)		Not engaged in studies (%)			
		Only studying	Studying and working	Working outside the home	Unemployed / Looking for work	Household work	
<b>All youth: Age 22-25</b>	<b>2091</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	995	17.3	19.3	49.3	10.8	3.3	100
Female	1096	8.9	12.0	19.5	3.3	56.3	100

Among youth who worked outside their homes, higher proportions of women than men worked on their own farms or were self-employed, regardless of years of education (Table 26). Among men, while almost half of those with ten or fewer years of education were engaged in some form of agricultural or non-agricultural labour, those with more than ten years of schooling were fairly evenly distributed between working on their own farm, agricultural or non-agricultural labour, salaried work, and self-employment.

**Table 26.** Work activity of youth (age 22-25), by education and sex

Population group	N	Own farming	Agricultural or Non-agricultural labour	Salaried work	Self-employment	Total
<b>Education: Grade 10 or Below</b>						
All youth	527	29.2	43.1	12.8	14.9	100
Male	316	19.9	46.7	19.1	14.3	100
Female	211	47.1	36.1	0.6	16.2	100
<b>Education: Beyond Grade 10</b>						
All youth	387	28.3	18.7	26.1	27.0	100
Male	269	26.1	22.6	27.1	24.2	100
Female	118	34.9	6.6	22.8	35.7	100
<b>All youth: Age 22-25</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>100</b>

### *Aspirations*

As with their younger counterparts, when thinking about future work aspirations, almost no youth in this age group aspired to do any kind of farm labour or domestic work in the future (Table 27). But even more than the younger cohorts, these older youth who are already working express reluctance to change jobs. Among working women, the vast majority of whom are working inside the home, as many as 85% expressed disinterest in changing their work status, perhaps a reflection of family and social expectations. But even among working men in this age group, most of whom are working outside the home, two thirds did not wish to change jobs - perhaps increasingly concerned about income security for themselves and their families.

**Table 27.** Future work aspirations of youth (age 22-25), by studying status and gender

Work aspirations	Only studying		Studying and working	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Teacher	11.2	22.8	11.2	31.9
Army/Police	13.6	1.8	6.6	9.8
Doctor/Nurse	0.5	4.8	2.8	2.3
Engineer	8.4	7.7	1.0	0.0
Bank job	7.1	14.8	3.2	8.0
Any government job	30.7	26.0	25.0	11.7
Any private job	15.3	10.0	17.1	3.8
Sports related work	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0
Work on other farm	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0
Own/family farm	1.7	0.0	3.1	7.8
Own/family business	2.3	0.9	9.2	5.7
Domestic work	0.8	1.9	0.0	0.4
Undecided	5.1	4.9	4.4	8.4
Other	3.4	4.4	14.8	10.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

## Abilities

The previous section described the fact that only about a quarter of youth in the 22-25 age group are still studying; 80% of women and 60% of men in this cohort have left the education system by this age, and possibly did so several years earlier. Whereas an analysis of the foundational abilities of the younger age cohorts drew attention to their poor learning outcomes especially relative to the number of years they had been in school, an examination of this older cohort underlines the extreme fragility of whatever skills they had indeed managed to acquire. With the majority now outside of the education system, there is distressing evidence that these youth – and in particular, the women – begin to lose the already poor foundational skills that they had managed to acquire.

Table 28 below compares the proportion of youth successfully able to complete 6 simple tasks (three testing foundational level reading and arithmetic, and three tasks requiring the application of foundational reading and arithmetic to everyday situations) among the 19-21 and the 22-25 year old cohorts. The percentage point change between the results for these two cohorts is alarming, especially among women: the proportion of women age 22-25 who can read a grade 2 level text is almost 9 percentage points lower than among the 19-21-year-old cohort; the proportion who can do simple arithmetic is almost 12 percentage points lower, and the proportion who can read simple English is 13 percentage points lower. The three tasks requiring application of skills also show a decline or at best stagnation from the previous low levels.

The collage contains the following elements:

- Hindi Text:** विमला और अजय मेला देखने गए। उन्हें मेले में तरह-तरह की दुकानें दिखीं। मेले में बहुत झूले थे। वहाँ गरम-गरम हलवा और जलेबियाँ भी बिक रही थी। जलेबी देखकर दोनों के मुँह में पानी आने लगा। उन्हें जलेबी खाने का मन करने लगा। विमला ने जलेबी खरीदी। दोनों ने मिलकर जलेबी खाई। शाम को दोनों घर लौट आए।
- Math:** भाग (4)591)
- English Text:** What is the time? This is a large house. I like to read. She has many books.
- Pots:** 15 Litres, 35 Litres
- Shopping:** Sale!! 10% Discount, M.R.P. ₹300
- Interest Rates Table:**

Name of Bank	Interest Rate on loan
Laxmi Bank	11% per year
Lena Bank	12% per year
Rashi Bank	13% per year
- Loan Amount:** Rs. 20,000

**Table 28.** Foundational and applied abilities of youth (age 22-25), by sex

Population group	Foundational skills: % Youth who can:			Applied skills: % Youth who can:		
	Read a Std II level text	Do division	Read English sentences	Apply unitary method	Calculate amount after discount	Calculate loan repayment amount
<b>22-25 All youth</b>	<b>77.7</b>	<b>50.9</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>53.8</b>	<b>22.0</b>
<i>Percentage point change in learning over 19-21 year old cohort</i>	<i>-5.1</i>	<i>-7.1</i>	<i>-10.4</i>	<i>-4.2</i>	<i>-1.3</i>	<i>2.4</i>
<b>Male</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>60.5</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>65.1</b>	<b>27.4</b>
<i>Percentage point change in learning over 19-</i>	<i>-1.2</i>	<i>-2</i>	<i>-7.3</i>	<i>-2.3</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>2.8</i>



<i>21 year old cohort</i>						
<b>Female</b>	<b>75.2</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>14.7</b>
<i>Percentage point change in learning over 19-21 year old cohort</i>	-8.7	-11.6	-13.2	-5.3	-4.7	1.0

### *Youth trajectories in rural India: A summary*

Previous sections of this chapter have painted a broad picture of 3 separate cohorts of young people in three very different locations in rural India: those who are of secondary school age, those who have recently reached adulthood, and those who are approaching the quarter century mark. Many aspects of their lives change during these ten years: they go from mainly studying in school or college to mainly working, inside or outside the home. In particular, what women do changes dramatically, a reflection of the fact that the proportion of women who were ever-married shoots up from 5.3% to 73.6% during this 10 year period. Although almost none of these youth aspired to work on a farm or do household work, and despite having more years of education than previous generations, more than 60% of those who left the education system and are working outside the home – a vast majority of whom are young men – are in fact working on their own farm or in some form of agricultural or non-agricultural labour. Meanwhile, the unshakeable ambition across all age cohorts to get “any government job” contrasts with the poor ability of the majority to apply foundational skills to even simple tasks, abilities that ebb to even lower levels as these youth leave the education system to work in areas where opportunities to use these skills are perhaps scarce.

In the following section we move from a focus on age cohorts to a focus on primary activity. That is, across the sample of 16-25 year old youth, we examine in greater detail the subset of youth who are primarily studying; those who are both studying and working; and, finally, those who are exclusively working, looking more closely at how these categories relate to youth sex, affluence, and years of education.

### 3. Primary activity of youth in the 16-25 age group

In Chapter 2 above, we presented profiles of youth in each of our three subpopulations by age cohort: 16-18, 19-21, and 22-25. Table 29 below brings together the information for all three age cohorts with regard to their primary activity across five categories: only studying, both studying and working, working outside the home, doing household work, or unemployed/looking for work.

**Table 29.** Primary activity of youth, by age and sex

Population group	N	Youth's primary activity:					Total
		Engaged in studies (%)		Not engaged in studies (%)			
		Only studying	Studying and working	Working outside the home	Unemployed / Looking for work	Household work	
<b>All youth: Age 16-18</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>56.3</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	1161	59.0	28.5	8.6	2.0	1.9	100
Female	1160	53.4	27.5	5.3	0.4	13.4	100
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	851	37.5	27.9	26.9	4.1	3.6	100
Female	877	34.5	22.1	11.1	0.8	31.6	100
<b>All youth: Age 22-25</b>	<b>2091</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	995	17.3	19.3	49.3	10.8	3.3	100
Female	1096	8.9	12.0	19.5	3.3	56.3	100
<b>All Youth</b>	<b>6140</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>100</b>

We saw in the previous chapter of this report that as youth grow older, their primary activity shifts from mainly studying (although often working alongside), to mainly working, with enormous differences visible across trajectories of young men and young women.

Looking first at the males' trajectories, as we move from the lowest to the highest age cohort, there is an enormous decline of 50.9 percentage points in the proportion of young men engaged in studies. At the same time there is an increase of 40.7 percentage points in the proportion of 'only working' males and of 8.8 percentage points in the proportion of 'searching for work' males. In other words, more than 80% of the males who leave the education system are moving to some form of work, almost always outside the home.

This pattern looks very different among females. As we move from the youngest to the oldest age cohorts, there is an even larger decline, of 60 percentage points, in the proportion of females engaged in studies; an increase of 42.9 percentage points in the proportion of women doing household work; and an increase of just 14.2 percentage points in the proportion of women working outside the home. In other words, between age 16 and 25 about 70% females leave the education system mainly to engage in household work rather than any form of income-generating work. As noted earlier, a key factor behind this shift is the change in marital status, particularly among women (Table 30).

**Table 30.** Marital status of youth, by age and sex

Population group	N	Never married	Ever married*	Total
<b>All youth: Age 16-18</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>96.4</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	1161	98.0	2.0	100
Female	1160	94.7	5.3	100
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>1728</b>	<b>82.8</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	851	96.3	3.7	100
Female	877	69.0	31.0	100
<b>All youth: Age 22-25</b>	<b>2091</b>	<b>49.6</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	995	74.2	25.8	100
Female	1096	26.4	73.6	100
<b>All youth</b>	<b>6140</b>	<b>77.7</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Includes married and living in marital home, married but living in maternal home, divorced, separated and widowed.

Not surprisingly, the shift from studying to working is not only a reflection of age and gender, but also of affluence. Table 31 below presents youths' primary activity across the entire sample by household affluence, measured by a composite asset index<sup>3</sup> categorized into 4 quartiles – very low, low, medium and high.

**Table 31.** Primary activity of youth, by asset index and sex

Asset Index quartiles	N	Engaged in studies (%)		Not engaged in studies (%)			Total
		Only studying	Studying and working	Working outside the home	Unemployed / Looking for work	Household work	
<b>Males</b>							
Very low	925	33.2	28.8	29.3	5.0	3.7	100
Low	899	35.8	28.1	28.4	4.8	2.9	100
Medium	514	48.4	21.2	23.8	5.2	1.5	100
High	669	49.6	21.2	20.2	6.3	2.6	100
<b>All Males</b>	<b>3007</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Females</b>							
Very low	979	30.1	21.2	14.3	1.0	33.4	100
Low	837	29.3	25.3	14.1	0.4	30.9	100
Medium	534	35.9	17.7	9.1	2.8	34.5	100
High	783	39.0	18.6	7.9	2.2	32.4	100
<b>All Females</b>	<b>3133</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>100</b>

Among both males and females, a direct relationship is observable between household affluence and the proportion of youths engaged in studies.

Overall, about two thirds of all males are studying, whether exclusively or alongside some form of work. This proportion increases steadily, from 62% among males in the lowest asset quartile

<sup>3</sup> See footnote x for details on the composition of the asset index

to 70.9% among those in the highest asset quartile. The proportion of males working outside the home shows the exact opposite trend, decreasing in magnitude with each successive asset quartile. In other words, the higher the household is on the asset index, the more likely that young men focus on studying rather than working.

A much lower proportion of women, almost 11 percentage points lower than men, are studying (54.1%). Nevertheless, as with males, this proportion increases with wealth and is highest for the most affluent quartile (57.6 %), with a 6 percentage point difference between the highest and the lowest asset quartile. Women from poorer families are more likely to be working outside the home; but unlike in the case of men, no relationship is visible between wealth and the proportion of females engaged in household work – across the affluence spectrum roughly a third of young women fall into this category.

We turn now to a closer examination of youth within each of these individual categories of primary activity: those who are only studying, those who are studying and working, those who are working outside the home, and those engaged in household work inside the home.

### *Youth who are only studying*

In the sample as a whole, a little over a third of all youths (36.9%) stated that their primary activity was studying exclusively, without working alongside. We saw in the previous chapter that this proportion decreases over our three age cohorts, with 88.8% of this category comprising youth from the younger two cohorts (age 16-21, roughly the age band for completing high school and undergraduate studies).

#### *Do full-time students want to work alongside their studies?*

We asked students with no additional activity whether they were looking for work alongside continuing their studies. Table 32 below shows that the proportion of youth who wish to work as well as study increases with age: while few of the youngest cohort were searching for work (10.9%), many more in the oldest cohort were doing so (40.2%). In every age cohort, the fraction of young men searching for work is far greater than that of young women.

**Table 32.** Proportion of studying youth who are searching for work, by age and sex

<b>Population group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Searching for work</b>	<b>Not searching for work</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>All youth: Age 16-18</b>	<b>1143</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>89.1</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	590	13.7	86.3	100
Female	553	7.6	92.4	100
<b>All youth: Age 19-21</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	237	30.5	69.5	100
Female	246	19.7	80.3	100
<b>All youth: Age 22-25</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>59.8</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	122	42.8	57.2	100
Female	89	35.5	64.6	100
<b>All Youth</b>	<b>1837</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>81.9</b>	<b>100</b>

#### *Work aspirations and preparation for aspired career*

As described previously, the overarching work aspiration across the sample was for formal salaried employment with a regular income.

Among youth who were still exclusively within the education system, almost a quarter (24.1%) aspired for a “government job”, irrespective of the position or the kind of work it would entail. Some were more specific, mentioning jobs in the army or police or as teachers, with major gender differences in preferences. Other kinds of job aspirations like bank job, doctor, engineer, business were reported by a small percentage of youth. On the other hand, 11.1% youth had not decided what they want to do in the future, and this proportion was higher among females (13.7%) than males (9%).

Asked about how they would go about preparing for their job of choice, more than half of these ‘only studying’ youth said they would do so through further study and/or exam preparation, responses that make sense in the context of their objectives that focus on salaried employment (Table 33). Interestingly, there are few gender differences in these responses. Overall, a small fraction (4.4%) did not know how to prepare for their aspired career, while 22.8% reported that they would take up training or apprenticeship to obtain the desired job.

**Table 33.** Modes of preparing for the chosen field of work among studying youth, by sex

Population group	N	How will you prepare for the chosen field of work? % youth responses:				
		Study further	Prepare for exam	Training or apprenticeship	Don't know	Other
Male	848	63.9	62.3	23.6	3.7	3.2
Female	742	67.4	59.2	21.7	5.2	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1590</b>	<b>65.4</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.2</b>

#### *Career influencers*

To understand who are the influencers of youth aspirations, youth who expressed a preference for a specific career or job were asked whether they knew someone engaged in this area of work – that is, whether they had role models for the selected type of work.

Overall, more than a third of ‘only studying’ youth said they did not know anyone engaged in the selected career, a response that was more common among females (38.3%) than males (31.6%) (Table 34). This difference is likely a reflection of the fact that women’s mobility and social interactions are restricted by familial and societal norms. Notably, parents are not role models, as these youth think about their professional futures: only 2.1% of all the ‘only studying’ youth said that their preferred work in the future was the same as their parents’.

On the other hand, for a quarter of these youth, and many more women than men, relatives emerge as the most common set of influencers of career aspirations. Among young men, friends also played a major role, possibly because they have fewer restrictions on socialization and therefore wider social networks than young women. Finally, it is worth pointing out that among both men and women, only 1 in every 10 such youth knew someone in their educational institution (school or college) or in the village who was in their desired field of work.

**Table 34.** Role models for studying youth in their chosen field of work, by sex

Population group	N	Do you know anyone who is engaged in your chosen sector?						
		No one	Parents	Family members	Other relatives	Friend	Someone else	Other
Male	848	31.6	2.6	13.2	20.6	23.1	13.6	2.2
Female	742	38.3	1.4	15.2	28.4	7.2	13.0	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1590</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>1.9</b>

Note: Respondents could select multiple answers; therefore, totals do not add to 100%.

### Youth who are studying and working

Across the full study sample of 16-25 year olds, almost a quarter of young people are both studying and working (23.2%). Similar to the demographic composition of youth who are only studying, this category has more males (55.9%) than females (44.1%), of whom the vast majority are in the 16-21 age group (78.5%). Not surprisingly, the less affluent among these youth are those who have to work alongside their studies: 63.9% of youths in this category belong to lowest two quartiles as measured by the household asset index.

#### Work profile

Among the youth who are both studying and working (Table 35), the largest single category comprises those who are working on their family farm (41.6%), with more males (46.5%) than females (35.4%) specifying this type of work. Far smaller proportions of youth were engaged in agricultural or non-agricultural labour or salaried work, activities that are likely more difficult to engage in regularly alongside studies.

Almost half of all the 'studying and working' females fall into the "other" category, a proportion that is triple that of men. These young women are mostly doing household work while simultaneously continuing their education.

**Table 35.** Work activity of youth who are studying and working, by sex

Type of work	Male	Female	Total
N	777	689	1466
Family farm	46.5	35.4	41.6
Agricultural/Non-agricultural labour	12.1	4.1	8.5
Salaried work	13.2	2.9*	8.7
Family or own business	14.3	8.6	11.8
Other**	13.9	49.1	29.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Denotes small sample size

\*\* Includes domestic work and professions like driver, nurse, photographer, tailor, welder etc.

The work profiles of youth who are both studying and working vary by affluence, with youth from less affluent households more likely to be engaged in some form of labour (Table 36). While 13.7% of youth from households with the lowest asset ownership engaged in either agricultural or non-agricultural labour alongside their studies, only 2.4% of those in the highest quartile were in this category. Conversely, the proportion of youths engaged in family or own business increases with wealth and was highest among youth in the most affluent quartile (25.4%).

**Table 36.** Work activity of youth who are studying and working, by asset index

Asset Index quartiles	N	Proportion youth studying and working in:					Total
		Family farm	Agricultural or Non-agricultural labour	Salaried work	Family or own business	Other**	
Very low	449	44.4	13.7	9.9	4.5	27.5	100
Low	448	45.1	8.4	7.7	9.6	29.1	100
Medium	303	41.4	4.6*	8.1	16.9	30.3	100
High	266	29.5	2.4*	8.2	25.4	32.4	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1466</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Denotes small sample size

\*\* Includes professions like driver, nurse, photographer, tailor, welder etc.

#### *Work aspirations and preparation for the desired career*

One important difference in the pattern of career aspirations of youths in this category is that the proportion of these youths aspiring for a government job is 10 percentage points lower (14.5%, as compared to 24.1% among those who are only studying). This may reflect the fact that youth who work alongside their studies are more likely to come from less affluent households and are predominantly engaged in some form of labour-intensive work, and thus possibly view coveted government jobs as a less likely future for themselves.

Interestingly, among youth in this category, women are more likely than men to mention further study as a route to their desired future job, possibly because fewer of them have specific work aspirations for the future (Table 37). As evidence from this and other studies show, more years of study among women does not necessarily imply higher participation in the labour market. Young men, on the other hand, are more likely to specify exam preparation, training, and/or apprenticeship as routes to their desired jobs.

**Table 37.** Studying and working youths' intended modes of preparing for their chosen field of work, by sex

Population group	N	How will you prepare for the chosen field of work?				
		Study further	Prepare for exam	Training or apprenticeship	Don't know	Other
Male	512	56.0	51.2	25.6	5.9	7.1
Female	395	65.5	40.6	21.5	7.3	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>59.8</b>	<b>47.0</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>7.0</b>

#### *Career influencers of 'studying and working' youth*

Not surprisingly, youth who are already working have a wider range of influences on their career aspirations than those who are only studying (Table 38). These two categories are similar in that among these youth also, only a tiny fraction aspired to the same type of work that their parents were engaged in (2.5%). Additionally, far fewer proportions of such youth say that they do not know anyone working in their chosen job, and far larger proportions mention knowing someone in their school or village who does the type of work they are interested in. As before, friends are the biggest source of influence with regard to career choices among males while relatives comprise a similar category among females.

**Table 38.** Studying and working youths' contacts in the chosen field of work, by sex

Population group	N	Do you know anyone who is engaged in your chosen sector?						
		No one	Parents	Family member	Other relatives	Friend	Someone else in school or village	Other
Male	512	29.2	2.9	14.8	18.2	23.4	18.4	1.4
Female	395	29.5	1.8	12.8	22.5	6.3	27.8	5.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>3.0</b>

### *Youth working outside the home*

We saw earlier that across the 16-25 age group, close to 1 in 5 of sampled youths were exclusively working outside the home (18.9%), as opposed to both working and studying (Table 29). Almost all are over 18 years old (84.9%) and the majority are males (69.8%). Looked at by completed years of education, about two thirds have completed secondary school (grade 10) or less; whereas about a third have completed grade 11 or higher.

#### *Type of work*

Overall, about a quarter of the 'only working' youths were primarily working on their own or family farms (26.8%), a significantly lower proportion compared to youth who were both studying and working (41.6%). Presumably, working on the family farm is the kind of work that is easier to do alongside studying than salaried or other employment outside the home.

Youths' education and gender strongly relate to the type of work these young people are doing (Table 39). Among youth with less than 10 years of schooling, for example, the proportion doing agricultural or non-agricultural labour is more than twice the proportion of those who have studied beyond grade 10. However, within the subset of youth with grade 10 or less completed, a far higher proportion of women reported working on the family farm (40.8%) than in the case of their male counterparts (17.4%). Conversely, youth with at least a grade 11 education are far more likely to be engaged in salaried work or self-employment than those who have completed grade 10 or less. Among these more educated youth, women are more likely to be self-employed while men are more likely to be in salaried jobs.

**Table 39.** Income generating activity of working youth, by education and sex

Population group	N	Family farm	Agricultural or Non-agricultural labour	Salaried work	Self employed	Total
<b>All youth: Std. 10 or less</b>	<b>1073</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>46.6</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	667	17.4	51.9	15.5	15.2	100
Female	406	40.8	35.9	1.1	22.1	100
<b>All youth: Std. 11 or more</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	377	26.7	24.4	26.4	22.5	100
Female	184	36.4	9.0	18.6	36.0	100



<b>All youth</b>	<b>1634</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>100</b>
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*Do working youth work at more than one job?*

Since work options for young people in rural India often involve less than full time work and/or poor remuneration, the working youth in our sample were asked about their involvement in additional work beyond the primary work they had mentioned.

Across the sample, the majority of youth were neither engaged in nor searching for additional work (55.5%). On the other hand, almost a quarter of the 'only working' youth were engaged in additional work (22.3%) and the same proportion indicated that they were searching for additional work (22.2%). As before, these proportions vary with educational level and gender, suggesting that very different dynamics are at play for different demographic groups (Table 40). For example, close to half of these young working men expressed the need for additional work regardless of how much they have studied. Among females, on the other hand, more years of education is associated with a sharp increase in the proportion who either had or were looking for additional work. It should be noted however, that in the study sample the number of working women who had completed grade 11 or more was quite small so this finding should be treated with caution.

**Table 40.** Additional activity of working youth, by education and sex

<b>Population group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Has additional work</b>	<b>Looking for additional work</b>	<b>Neither has nor looking for additional work</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>All youth: Std. 10 or less</b>	<b>1073</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	667	25.6	22.3	52.1	100
Female	406	18.1	12.8	69.1	100
<b>All youth: Std. 11 or more</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>51.9</b>	<b>100</b>
Male	377	19.8	26.8	53.4	100
Female	184	24.8	27.7	47.5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1634</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>55.5</b>	<b>100</b>

*Do working youth seek continuity or change?*

Youth are often associated with the desire to take risks and explore new options. There is little evidence of this among the young people in this sample who were working, a large majority of whom were reluctant to change jobs and wanted to continue their current work in the future (70.6%), with more females opting for continuity (79.9%) as compared to males (66.5%) (Table 41). However, willingness to continue with their current work in future decreases systematically with highest level of education completed, likely a reflection of increasing aspirations and access to opportunities among more educated youth (Table 42).

**Table 41.** Willingness of working youth to continue in their current work or profession, by sex

<b>Population group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Want to continue current work</b>	<b>Do not want to continue current work</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	1044	66.5	33.5	100
Female	590	79.9	20.1	100

<b>Total</b>	<b>1634</b>	<b>70.6</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>100</b>
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**Table 42.** Willingness of working youth to continue in their current work or profession, by education level

<b>Educational level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Want to continue current work</b>	<b>Do not want to continue current work</b>	<b>Total</b>
Below Grade 8	266	83.1	16.9	100
Grade 8 to 10	807	72.7	27.4	100
Grade 11 to 12	385	65.9	34.1	100
Above Grade 12	176	56.3	43.7	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1634</b>	<b>70.6</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>100</b>

Youth who expressed the desire to change their current work in the future were asked why they wanted to do so. What factors were underlying this desire to do something different? (Table 43). Among the less educated youth in this subset, the reasons related to unhappiness with their current work situation predominated, such as ‘get paid less’, ‘don’t like current work’, and ‘stressful work environment’. While these were also important reasons among the more educated working youth, this group was far more likely to cite ‘want to do government job’ as a reason for changing their work in the future. However, small sample sizes for this question suggest treating these findings with caution.

**Table 43.** Reasons for willingness to change current work or profession, by sex

<b>Educational level</b>	<b>Std. 10 or less</b>	<b>Std. 11 or more</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>428</b>
Get paid less	35.6	37.1	36.4
Don’t like current work	39.6	23.2	31.4
Want to do government job	6.7	38.7	22.7
Want to start own business	17.5	14.7	16.1
Stressful work environment	19.4	9.5	14.4
Current work is part time	5.2	10.1	7.6
Other	9.3	6.1	7.7

### *Youth engaged in household work*

17.5% of all the surveyed youths across all three districts were primarily engaged in domestic work (Table 29) – almost one out of every five of those surveyed. However, 91.8% of youth in this category are females (Table 44). The following section therefore reflects the perspectives and experiences of young women and we only report on the responses of women engaged in household work.

**Table 44.** Youth engaged in household work, by age and sex

<b>Age</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>1019</b>
16-18	14.0	86.0	<b>100</b>
19-21	10.5	89.5	<b>100</b>
22-25	5.2	94.8	<b>100</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>91.8</b>	<b>100</b>

Among the young women engaged in household work, more than two thirds are in the category of 'ever married' – encompassing those who are married, widowed, separated, as well as married but not living with their husband (Table 45). Half of them had 10 years of schooling or less (Table 46).

**Table 45.** Marital status of females primarily engaged in household work, by marital status

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% women engaged in household work</b>
Never Married	321	31.5
Ever Married	607	68.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 46.** Education levels of females primarily doing household work, by marital status

<b>Education level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% women engaged in household work</b>
Below Grade 8	123	14.3
Grade 8 to 10	360	36.4
Grade 11 to 12	271	29.0
Above Grade 12	174	20.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### *Work aspirations*

As with other youth, women doing household work were asked whether they would like to do paid work in the future and if so, the kind of work they wanted to do (Table 47). Overall 46.2% of these young women said they did not want to do paid work in the future, although the proportion who responded affirmatively increased with educational level. The type of work aspired to also varies with education level, with higher proportions of women aspiring for salaried employment among those who have completed Grade 11 or more.

**Table 47.** Work aspirations of youth doing household work, by education level

<b>Educational level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Don't want to work in the future</b>	<b>Labour work</b>	<b>Salaried work</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>
Grade 10 or less	483	53.2	9.2	9.2	14.8	7.4	6.2	100
Grade 11 or more	445	42.2	6.5	25.0	16.8	5.6	3.9	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>100</b>

### *Youth age 16-25 in rural India: A summary*

In Chapter 2 we explored trajectories of sampled youth by age cohorts, looking separately at the primary activity, aspirations, and abilities of the almost-adults, the young adults, and those approaching the quarter-century mark. In this chapter, we used a different lens to examine characteristics of these young people based on their primary activity, and presented information about those who were only studying, those who were both studying and working, those who were

working outside the home, and those engaged in household work. In each case, we looked at trends across the sexes as well as across different levels of education and affluence.

Based on these two views, some preliminary conclusions can be drawn with regard to youth in rural India. First, our young people are studying further than ever before and aspire to continue studying, viewing additional years of school or college as the next steps towards desired jobs. However, as they grow older, many are unable to continue studying and shift partially or wholly into income generating activities, particularly among older males and those from relatively less affluent families.

Second, young people's vision of what a good future looks like firmly centres around a government job. Although almost none express interest in pursuing agricultural or other labour-intensive work, only small proportions can even name specific alternatives, and those that they do name are usually the ones they most often see around them, such as teacher, army or police officer.

Third, achievement of more and better paper credentials does not guarantee even minimum levels of foundational skills needed to engage successfully with jobs outside the agricultural sector. More youth are indeed completing secondary, higher secondary, undergraduate and postgraduate programs, but both their foundational reading and arithmetic abilities as well as their ability to apply these to real-life contexts are woefully limited. Perhaps this contributes to the fact that even though half of the working men in the oldest cohort have completed at least grade 10, the majority continue to be engaged in farm work, agricultural or non-agricultural labour.

Fourth, the trajectory of young rural women in particular is cause for serious alarm. Although they, too, are spending more years in school and many in the youngest, secondary school-going age cohort appear to aspire to income-generating work, by age 22-25 most are married, have stopped studying and no longer aspire to move beyond household work. Even more worrying, the limited foundational skills they had acquired while in school have been lost over time, rendering any future change in this situation even more difficult to accomplish.

Last, and perhaps fundamental to any hope for changing the alternatives available to our rural youth, there are few sources of information or guidance available to these young people. They clearly do not want to follow in their parents' footsteps and most end up relying on their relatives to identify alternatives – particularly in the case of women. Although men turn to friends in the village, very few youth appear to find help in the institutions that exist around them, that is, schools and colleges, to help them gain knowledge, skills or information about the future.

#### 4. Vocational education and skilling programs: A way forward?

We saw in Chapters 2 and 3 that few youth expressed an interest in vocational and skilling programs as potential avenues to good jobs. As discussed earlier, one reason for low interest in vocational courses may be simple optimism that continuing in the traditional academic pathways will be sufficient for the kinds of jobs they aspire to.

When we examine responses by respondents' years of education completed (rather than age or current enrolment status), it is evident that the longer the period spent within the formal education system, the greater the understanding that years of schooling alone is not sufficient for a good job, and consequently, higher the proportion of respondents who thought that some form of vocational training would be a good pathway to get one (Table 48). However, even at its highest, less than 6% of all youth in this study thought that vocational education and training was important to their future prospects of a good job.

**Table 48.** Proportion youth who think vocational or skilling programs are pathways to a “good job”, by education level

Years of education	N	% youth who selected vocational or skilling programs as a preparatory pathway for a “good job”
Below Grade 8*	413	0.1
Grade 8 to 10	2043	2.3
Grade 11 to 12	1972	3.4
Above Grade 12**	1712	5.6
<b>All youth</b>	<b>6140</b>	<b>3.6</b>

\* Includes youth who dropped out or never enrolled in school.

\*\* Includes youth who completed school education, college dropouts, graduates, certificate/diploma holders.

Another reason for the low proportion of youth who mentioned vocational courses as a future pathway may simply be the lack of awareness regarding these options, even though the new framework developed by the Government of India includes making courses available for those who have completed elementary school.<sup>4</sup>

As part of this study, surveyed youth were asked whether they had heard about ITI or any other skill-training program and about half of all youth had heard of the same, suggesting some amount of information percolation and awareness among young people. However, there are important differences in youths' awareness based on their affluence and gender. The more affluent the household, the more likely the youth has heard of these types of options, meaning that the demographic most in need of this information is largely failing to get it. Additionally, as suggested by previous chapters, within each affluence quartile and age cohort, women's access to this information is far more limited than men's (Table 49 and Table 50). We saw earlier that while women rely mostly on family for information relevant to their future study and work, men in addition to the former, also have access to friends as sources of information. Exposure to

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<sup>4</sup> As discussed in later sections of this report, Industrial Training Institutes or ITIs, one of India's leading institutions for vocational education and training offer a number of courses for students with a minimum qualification of Std VIII. More recently, the Draft New Education Policy, 2019 recommends offering vocational education and skill training to students in secondary school.

information about ITI/skill courses follows the same pattern with more females receiving information about ITI/skill courses through someone in the family or neighbourhood pursuing it, while males gained access to information through a wider network of family or friends.

**Table 49.** Proportion youth who have ever heard about an ITI or skill-training courses, by household asset index and sex

<b>Asset Index quartiles</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Very low	52.1	38.4	45.4
Low	69.5	55.6	63.1
Medium	67.8	55.6	61.9
High	74.2	57.2	65.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>64.6</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>57.6</b>

**Table 50.** Proportion youth who have ever heard about an ITI or skill-training course, by age group and sex

<b>Age</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
16-18	61.7	48.1	55.3
19-21	63.5	54.3	59.0
22-25	69.4	49.8	59.3
<b>All youth</b>	<b>64.6</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>57.6</b>

We also asked sampled youth whether they had ever learned any skills (for example sewing, beauty parlor, mechanic, computer, electrician, etc.) Not surprisingly, the proportion of youth who have acquired any sort of vocational skill increases with age, reaching a third of youth in the oldest cohort of 22-25 -year-olds (Table 51). Interestingly, a larger proportion of young women than young men reported having learned a skill – the major difference being that many of them had acquired it informally rather than by taking a course (Table 52).

**Table 51.** Proportion youth who have taken a skill training, by age group

<b>Age group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Ever learnt a skill</b>	<b>Never learnt a skill</b>	<b>Total</b>
16-18	2321	17.6	82.4	100
19-21	1728	25.7	74.3	100
22-25	2091	32.3	67.7	100
<b>All youth</b>	<b>6140</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>75.5</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 52.** Proportion youth and institutions where they took a skill training, by sex

<b>Population group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Formal sources</b>	<b>Informal sources</b>	<b>Never learnt</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	2983	16.1	3.8	80.1	100
Female	3091	15.8	12.2	72.1	100
<b>All youth</b>	<b>6074</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>100</b>

What kinds of skills are these young people acquiring? A closer look exactly what skills they mention acquiring reveals major differences in what young men and women learn and the sources from which they are acquired (Table 53 and Table 54). So, for example, two thirds of the women learned sewing, a skill that was most often acquired through informal mechanisms. Men

on the other hand, most often acquired some type of computer/information technology related skill, largely through formal coursework.

**Table 53.** Proportion youth and type of skill learnt, by sex

Skill	Male	Female
<b>N</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>939</b>
Sewing and Tailoring	2.2	66.5
Computer/Information Technology	55.1	20.5
Electrician	18.3	0.6
Beautician and Parlour	0.1	10.0

**Table 54.** Proportion youth, type of skill learnt and sources

Skill	Formal sources	Informal sources
<b>N</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>609</b>
Sewing and Tailoring	24.8	69.5
Computer/Information Technology	48.2	7.5
Electrician	9.9	5.3
Beautician and Parlour	5.4	6.3

Finally, as part of this study we explored the question of whether these skills had proved to be useful in linking youth to alternative work options – the major rationale underlying attempts to make them more widely available across the country. What did youth do after acquiring these skills? These data suggest that even among the limited number of youth who had actually heard of and availed of skilling options, few had gone on to use these for income-generating work (Table 55). Among those acquiring skills through informal means, most of whom were women, about a third were doing household work and another third were still studying. The majority of those who acquired these skills through a formal program were still in an educational institution at the time of the survey (61.5%). Among the small number of youth who were working, the vast majority were doing household work, regardless of where they had learned the skill (Table 57). Perhaps a ray of hope can be seen in the fact that the proportion of youth who were self-employed is substantially higher among youth who had acquired a skill from either formal or informal sources than among those youth who had never done so.

**Table 55.** Primary activity of youth who had undertaken a skill training

Primary activity	Formal sources	Informal sources	Never learnt skills
<b>N</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>4490</b>
Studying	61.5	34.8	62.5
Working	16.4	25.2	18.8
Searching for work	4.9	3.7	3.1
Household work	17.2	36.4	15.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 56.** Primary activity of youth who had undertaken a skill training

<b>Work type</b>	<b>Formal sources</b>	<b>Informal sources</b>	<b>Never learnt skills</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>2001</b>
Own or Family farm	9.8	6.9	14.4
Agricultural or Non-agricultural labour	6.7	8.1	21.3
Salaried worker	11.9	5.6	7.1
Self-employed	14.3	17.9	7.3
Unemployed or looking for work	12.8	5.6	8.2
Domestic work	44.6	55.8	41.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In summary, these data suggest that the proliferation of vocational and skilling programs notwithstanding, there is a very long way to go in terms of providing information, skills, and access to skill-based employment options to youth in rural India. Moreover, given that the landscape looks very different across genders, distinct strategies are needed to address the needs and contexts of young women and those of young men. With this background in mind, the next section of this report examines two very different models for provision of vocational skills in these locations.



### **III Youth in technical and vocational education programs**

#### **1. Introduction**

Earlier chapters of this report examined the trajectories of rural youth in the 16-25-year age group in several different ways, focusing on their education, current activity, and aspirations as well as their foundational and functional literacy and numeracy skills. Previous chapters also discussed the extent to which vocational and skilling programs are available to and accessed by these youth, especially at the age when they are likely to transition from education into income-generating work. These data show clearly that the contours of these trajectories are shaped by youths' age, sex, and socioeconomic status among other factors.

In the village survey, although more males than females had heard about an ITI or other vocational training course, higher proportions of women (28%) reported having learnt some type of skill than men (19%). But across each of the three sample districts, very few youth had ever taken a formal vocational education course – just 16% of both males and females, despite the fact that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) forms an important arm of the government's strategy to improve 'employability' and catalyse inclusive economic growth.

Who are the young people who take these kinds of courses, and how do they end up being part of the small minority of rural youth who opt for formal skill-based training? What motivates them, and how do these courses fit into their future plans? To explore these questions, this chapter takes a deep dive into a subset of youth currently engaged in vocational education courses in each of the three districts covered in this study, presenting findings from 200 youth surveys and 50 in-depth interviews.

#### **2. Background: Selection of vocational institutions, courses, and students**

In the last several years, there has been substantial increase in investment in TVET by both private and government actors, encouraged by the Government of India's campaigns and programs like Skill India and the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY); today a variety of different programs and institutions exist, aimed at a range of target groups.

While it was not possible to cover all of these options, this study covers two very distinct institutional models for offering TVET, both of which operate centres in each of the three districts covered in this study. These are, first, central government run Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) – among the oldest, most established and best known choice for TVET in the country; and second, Pratham Institute for Literacy, Education, and Vocational Training skilling centres (PI centres), run by the non-government organization Pratham Education Foundation. These two TVET models differ in fundamental ways, enabling us to explore commonalities and differences in the profiles, trajectories, and aspirations of youth enrolling in each (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Key features of ITIs and PI Centres

Category	ITI	Pratham Institute
<b>Objective</b>	To provide technical manpower to industries	To empower youth with hands on skills to enable attainment of livelihoods and a way out of poverty
<b>Course Duration</b>	Long term courses of 1-2 years duration	Short term courses of 2-3 months
<b>Qualification</b>	Minimum 8 <sup>th</sup> pass, higher for some courses	Minimum 8 <sup>th</sup> pass, lower for some courses
<b>Age</b>	16 years and above	18 years and above
<b>Fees</b>	Varies by state and course (Rs. 1000-9000 per year); some scholarships are available	Scholarships provided by institute, or fees between Rs. 500-5000 payable under 'Learn now pay later' model

Each district included in this study had one government ITI and one PI Centre. In each of these 6 institutions, one course was purposively selected for inclusion in this study, such that across the 3 ITIs and 3 PI Centres covered, the courses encompassed as much variety as possible. The final selection of 7 courses<sup>5</sup> includes a mix of technical and non-technical courses; as well as courses with more male students, those with more women enrolled, and others that had more gender-balanced enrolments (Table 57). All students enrolled in these courses at the time of fieldwork (March-May 2019) were asked to fill out a survey with questions about their home background, educational and work experience, motivation for and experiences in the specific course they were studying, and future aspirations. Subsequently, a purposively selected subset of these students was chosen based on their responses to the quantitative survey to represent as much variation as possible in terms of prior education, work experience, and socioeconomic background. These students were interviewed at length to gain a deeper understanding of their past experiences and future aspirations.

**Table 57.** Selected courses and sample size for survey and in-depth interviews

Institution type	Course	No. of students surveyed *		
		Ahmednagar	Dhamtari	Varanasi
ITI	Electrical		33 (10)	
	Stenographer	28 (5)		
	Computer operator/Programmer			56 (6)
Pratham Institute	Electrical		28 (10)	
	Mason		8 (3)	
	Healthcare	21 (10)		
	Hospitality			26 (6)
<b>Total</b>		49 (15)	69 (23)	82 (12)

<sup>5</sup> The seventh course, Mason at PI Dhamtari centre, was added while fieldwork was in progress, because with a total of just 8 students enrolled it was logistically possible to do so.

*\* All students enrolled in a selected course were surveyed. Numbers in brackets show the subset of surveyed students who were interviewed.*

### **3. Admission criteria and procedures**

As Figure 1 indicates, ITIs and PI Centres have broadly similar base requirements for admission. Pratham Institute normally enrolls students who are above 18 years old and have completed at least Grade 8, while ITIs admit students from age 16 onwards<sup>6</sup> who have completed at least Grade 8.<sup>7</sup> However, despite being targeted at similar age groups, these institutions have completely different criteria and procedures for obtaining admission. ITIs follow established Government of India procedures: students meeting the prescribed minimum criteria fill out and submit an application for admission, where they can specify multiple options for the courses they wish to join, in order of preference. Applicants are selected on “merit”, determined exclusively by the minimum educational qualification and pass percentage required for the course, with seat quotas reserved for specific categories of students as per Government of India norms. Thus, while the students with the best school exam results may get their first choice in terms of course, others may get their second or third option which may well have nothing to do with their original choice. However, because of its reputation as an established government institution whose certification is in some instances required in order to obtain a government job, gaining admission into an ITI is often seen as worth the investment of time and financial resources required, regardless of whether the course is a student’s first or last preference. Specifying course preferences is usually a calculation of which course the youth’s exam results are likely to enable him or her to get admission into rather than an expression of interest in the skill being taught.

At PI, on the other hand, the admissions criteria and process are completely different, given the objective of these centres to provide vocational skills and job placement services to rural youth who, for a variety of reasons, are not easily able to access these more established pathways to skilling and employment. Because the admission procedures are easier than in ITI, the pool of potential students is much larger. PI outreach teams travel to villages and spend time explaining the program to community members as well as to youth themselves. This is particularly important in the case of young women, given that family permission is often a prerequisite to young women’s ability to take what is often a very large step out of the relatively close confines of the community. The availability of hostel facilities, fee payment options, and support both during the course as well as with subsequent job placement are key elements that attract students.

Table 58 presents students’ gender profiles for each course covered by this strand of the study. Overall, across the 7 courses covered, the ratio of men to women enrolled in ITIs and PI centres was exactly the same, at 2:1. Looked at by the individual courses, women were in a majority in

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<sup>6</sup> During the drafting of this report, the admission criteria for ITIs for 2020 was revised and set to 14-40 years. For more information, see: <https://www.exams88.in/iti-admission-2020/>

<sup>7</sup> The minimum educational qualification required for enrolling into ITIs varies depending on the trade. Trades like Wireman Engineering and Plumber Engineering have a minimum requirement of Grade 8, others like Electrical Engineering, Mechanic Electronics Engineering, and Fitter Engineering require students to have completed Grade 10 while courses like Computer Operator & Programming Assistant (COPA) and Stenography require a Std 12 pass certification. For more information, see: <https://www.exams88.in/iti-admission-2020/>

only one course (Healthcare in PI-Ahmednagar), even though courses such as Stenographer and Computer Operator and Programming Assistant (COPA) are also widely considered to be “suitable for women”. On the other hand, courses such as the Electrician course, often viewed as appropriate for males, had 21% and 7% women enrolled in ITI and PI respectively, suggesting that young women and their families may be more willing to make non-traditional choices with regard to fields of study and work than before. PI’s Masonry course was the only one with only men enrolled, and their Hospitality course was the only one of the 7 with balanced enrolment rates between the sexes.

**Table 58.** Gender profile of students, by institution and course

Institution	Course	Total enrolment	% youth:		
			Male	Female	Total
ITI	Electrician	33	78.8	21.2	100
	Stenographer	28	60.7	39.3	100
	COPA	56	60.7	39.3	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>65.8</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>100</b>
PI	Electrician	28	92.9	7.1	100
	Masonry	8	100	0.0	100
	Healthcare	21	33.3	66.7	100
	Hospitality	26	50.0	50.0	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>65.1</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>All students</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4. Profiles of enrolled youth

Not surprisingly, the very different sets of admissions criteria and procedures described above reflect in the profiles of the students enrolled. Table 59 provide descriptive statistics on some key socioeconomic and individual characteristics of the youth who were included in this study, aggregated separately for ITI and PI students.

These data show that although most PI students surveyed for this study were 18-23 years old, a fairly large proportion (15.7%) were older (there is no age limit for admission); 4 out of every 10 students had not completed Grade 12, although about a third had studied beyond this level; and as many as 9 out of every 10 students grew up in a rural setting. Although the surveyed students in ITI were also mostly in the 18-23-year age group, unlike in PI, very few were over 23 years old. These students also had considerably more years of schooling, with more than 8 out of every 10 students having completed at least Grade 12 and many reporting college level studies as well. ITI students were also on average more urban, with more than a third of students reporting growing up in urban settings.

**Table 59.** Select characteristics of youth, by institution type

Characteristics	ITI	Pratham Institute	Total
	(N=117)	(N=83)	(N=200)
<b>Urban-Rural</b>			
Urban	35.0	10.8	25.0
Rural	65.0	89.2	75.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age</b>			
Below Age 18	8.6	7.2	8.0
Age 18 - 20	69.8	54.2	63.3
Age 21-23	17.2	22.9	19.6
Age 24 or above	4.3	15.7	9.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational level completed</b>			
Less than 12 years of schooling	8.6	39.8	21.5
Completed 12 years of schooling	44.4	26.5	37.0
More than 12 years of schooling	39.3	32.5	36.5
Information not available	7.7	1.2	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The contrast between the ITI and PI cohorts is also visible in their respective parental education levels (Table 60). Students in ITI reported having better educated parents than students in PI. For example, while 2 out of every 10 ITI students had mothers who had never been to school, among the PI cohorts half of all students reported that their mothers had never been to school. Similarly, 2 of every 10 ITI students versus 4 of every 10 PI students reported having fathers who had studied up to Grade 5 or less.

**Table 60.** Parental education of youth enrolled in technical and vocational programs, by institution

Characteristics	Govt. ITI	Pratham Institute	Total
	(N=117)	(N=83)	(N=200)
<b>Mother's Education</b>			
Never enrolled	21.4	50.6	33.5
Grade 1-5	17.1	16.9	17.0
Grade 6-10	36.8	25.3	32.0
More than Grade 10	16.2	0.0	9.5
Information not available	8.6	7.2	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Father's Education</b>			
Never enrolled	3.4	19.3	10.0
Grade 1-5	17.1	20.5	18.5
Grade 6-10	32.5	36.1	34.0
More than Grade 10	38.5	18.1	30.0
Information not available	8.6	6.0	7.5

Total	100	100	100
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To recap, despite being broadly similar in terms of age, students in these two institutions have very different background characteristics. Students in the ITIs tend to be more educated themselves and with more educated parents, and are more likely to come from urban backgrounds than their counterparts in PI. These characteristics are likely to make the former more aware of the different options available to them beyond secondary school and better placed to do well in a competitive admissions process. On the other hand, PI centres typically have residential facilities for students whereas ITIs do not – which makes access to ITI courses significantly harder for rural youth to access, particularly for women.

## 5. Key factors influencing the decision to enrol

The 200 youth surveyed and, in many cases, interviewed for this study were among those who had opted to learn a vocational skill, and had applied for, been admitted to, and enrolled in a vocational training institution and course. Estimates from the village survey reported earlier make it clear that these youth are members of a small minority across rural communities: although over 55% youth in the 16-25 age group had heard about an ITI or the Pradhan Mantri Kushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) in the village survey, only 16% had actually taken a vocational course of any kind in a formal institution.

An analysis of how students came to these institutions and where the course fits into their future aspirations is a useful way of teasing out key lessons for both policy and practice with respect to vocational education and training for rural youth. What factors prompted these students to take up vocational education? What were the considerations that influenced the specific decision on where to enrol? What were some key barriers that had to be overcome?

Not surprisingly, when asked to identify reasons for enrolling in their current course, the survey options most often selected were that youth were interested in the course and that it had good employment opportunities. However, in-depth interviews showed clearly that “interest in the course” is a catch-all response that reflects several dimensions, only a few of which have to do with the content of the course itself. Decisions about what and where to study are not simple: care, thought, consultations, and considerable strategizing goes into them. To the extent possible, youth and their families choose from among the available options to identify the institution and course that best serves the youth’s and/or their family’s interests going forward – when a choice is seen as available, which for a variety of reasons is not always the case.

An analysis of interview transcripts of these 50 ITI and PI students suggests that four key factors interact to shape these decisions and, in many cases, act as limits to the options realistically available to youth. These are: i) availability of financial resources; ii) availability of information about the course and what it has to offer, both during and after the program; iii) the presence or absence of physical, social, or academic barriers to access; and iv) the social networks available to the youth and their relative weight in terms of influencing the final decision. These are discussed individually below.

### ***Financial resources***

Vocational and technical courses cost money. In addition to tuition fees which vary by state and course (ranging from Rs 1,000 to Rs 9,000 at ITIs and Rs 500 to Rs 5,000 at PI centres), there are

other direct costs as well as opportunity costs involved. But because PI courses offer youth a variety of payment options including paying fees in instalments and after the youth has been placed with an employer, PI students are not required to pay money up front or pay a very nominal amount to enrol in a course. On the other hand, most ITI students need to find the necessary source of financial support themselves.

Not surprisingly, these characteristics make a big difference to who enrolls in each type of institution. For E from Dhamtari,<sup>8</sup> this was the reason for selecting PI instead of ITI: *“I got to know that this course is free, no one needs to pay any money here. I thought if I do ITI, my parents [will have to] bear the expenses. I didn’t want to add any expenses for my parents so I joined here.”*

As part of the survey, all youth in the study were asked about their sources of support while taking the course (Table 61). More than 90% students in ITI reported being supported financially by their families, while in PI, close to three-quarters of youth received some form of financial support from the institution itself. Likewise, while three-quarters of youth in ITIs reported living with family and about 20% were living in rented or shared accommodations, close to 80% in PI reported living in the residential facilities of the institution.

**Table 61.** Financial support and place of residence, by institution

Institution	N	Financial support (%)				Place of residence during course (%)				
		Self	Family	Institution	Total	Hostel	With family	With relatives	On rent or sharing	Total
ITI	117	5.1	93.2	1.7	100	4.3	75.2	6.0	14.5	100
PI	82	8.6	18.5	72.8	100	79.3	18.3	2.4	0.0	100

The length of the course and the probability of subsequent placement are also factors that youth consider while taking this decision. ITI courses take between 1 and 2 years to complete, while PI runs short-term courses of about 3 months’ duration. Students see finding a job as a likely outcome in either case, but both the direct and opportunity costs vary. How much time the youth can invest in this training before seeing a return in the form of an income-generating job is a consideration for many, with youth from more affluent backgrounds in a better position to pay for their training as well as defer the income from subsequent employment. An additional attraction, particularly at PI, is the short course duration that can be combined with an academic degree, making it possible to work towards two credentials in the same time frame. For A in Maharashtra, this was an important consideration: *“My older sister told me not to come here and [instead] to do MSCIT in the village itself, but I told her I want to do this course and I find it interesting. It is just a 3-month course and I get to learn something new. Anyway it is summer vacation now, it is good to come here and learn new things.”*

### **Information about the institution and its benefits**

In any given district, the scale of operation of the PI centre is small. The numbers fluctuate but on average, depending on the course, 60 to 100 students are enrolled at any given time. These

<sup>8</sup> All respondents quoted in this report will be identified by an initial in order to protect their identities.

centres have been set up in approximately 200+ blocks in 16 states, but being non- government institutions, are not widely known in the way that government-run institutions and programs are. As mentioned earlier, PI centres dedicate considerable time and effort to their community outreach work, talking to youth and their families about what is on offer and what they can expect both during the course as well as afterwards. Most information that youth have about PI comes from this type of direct contact, as well as from the growing network of PI alumni. These are important referents for prospective students.

For women in particular, the fact that recruitment happens via direct village-level contact has a number of additional benefits. Learning a skill in order to get a job in an unknown location is perhaps a new idea for many of these women, and convincing their families is the first, crucial step in the process. Moreover, the fact that several women can enrol together makes it easier for both the students as well as their families. Take for example the case of J, a young woman studying at a PI centre:

*I: How did you get to know about this course?<sup>9</sup>*

*R: Manish Sir came from here. He came to the village and told us everything about the course. So we came here one day. We liked it here and took the admission.*

*I: We? Who all came?*

*R: Me, Neha, Ravina di and Chandni. We all come from the same village.*

If a key factor behind enrolment in PI is a sense of security and confidence in the *process* of skill acquisition, the recollections of ITI students suggest that what they have heard about the *outcome* of the course – acquiring the certification - is uppermost in their minds. A common account is that when thinking about what to do next, word gets around that “someone” they have heard of has studied in an ITI and subsequently done well for themselves. So this step feels less like a shot in the dark than a fairly secure path forward, as can be seen in the explanation of T:

*I: Who took the decision of your taking admission in ITI?*

*R: This was taken by my brother. Earlier when I was in 10<sup>th</sup> in 2015, my uncle (mama) told me that I should get enrolled in ITI. I said no, I want to complete my schooling first and then do a course from ITI. (...) After I completed 12<sup>th</sup>, my uncle again said that I should now apply for ITI. Not uncle, actually my brother said that. I told him okay, fill my form. (...)*

*I: But why did you choose ITI?*

*R: My uncle (fufa) has done an electrician course from ITI. He earns a lot and goes to many places. He doesn't even have time to eat. My uncle (mama) used to work in a garage and then when he completed the motor mechanic course from ITI he started getting more job offers. Both of them were getting jobs of 20000-25000 but they didn't go. They said this was enough just for them not for their families and they didn't have to stay here as well. They earn more than that here.*

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<sup>9</sup> Throughout this report, where content is reproduced from interview transcripts, I: and R: denote Interviewer and Respondent, respectively.



*I: Both of them have done courses from ITI?*

*R: Yes. Both of them I have done it from Chauka ghat.*

Unlike among the PI students, most ITIs students knew very little about the actual courses they were applying for: the course did not matter, the seat in the ITI did. What they heard about beforehand, usually from someone in the family or social network, was how to go about applying. Take for example the case of A, a young woman enrolled in the COPA course at ITI:

*I: I see you have completed your studies till 12<sup>th</sup> - who has supported you till now, and to come here?*

*R: My mother heard something about this place where she works. One of my uncles, a very distant relation- he told me about the form and that it has come out and I should fill it.*

*I: Who is this person?*

*R: He is not very closely related; he is my mother's aunt's (mausi) son.*

*I: This course that you are doing right now, how did you get to know about this?*

*R: Many people had told me about ITI, and the forms are out and things like that. But I had no idea about the trades offered. I had gone to a Cyber Café, there we had to fill up 4-5 options. The first option was COPA, they said that this is a good option and is very good for girls.*

*I: Then your uncle suggested the trade?*

*R: Yes, he asked me to fill COPA, IT, Electrician, Fitter and all. Then I got through for COPA. I didn't know of any other trade, so when my name came in the list for COPA- I took admission in this trade only. Because of its name, I got to understand that I will get computer knowledge from this course, they will teach about computer- I understood that much.*

Similarly, A, a young man taking the same course recalls:

*R: Some older boys from the neighbourhood told me about ITI and motivated me to enter my details in the forms. Through that I got the COPA course. That's how I got in.*

*I: What all options did you fill in the form that you submit to the ITI?*

*R: I opted for Electrician, Fitter but I didn't get that. Because those course require 85% or more and my percentage in 12<sup>th</sup> was 68%.*

*I: So was COPA your last choice?*

*R: Yes.*

*I: Did you know what all you would be studying in COPA?*

*R: No not really. I didn't know anything about COPA – there was no one to tell me.*

### **Barriers to access**

It is important to underline at the outset that this discussion of barriers to access is based on conversations with students who were able to find a way to surmount them – they were, at the time of fieldwork, studying in a formal TVET institution; whereas large proportions of potential students undoubtedly fail to get this far.

The barriers described by these students fall into two major categories – physical and academic. With respect to physical barriers, there are well over 2,000 government-run ITIs spread across

the country while Pratham Institute operates centres in 200+ blocks in 16 states. Even so, access to formal TVET institutions remains challenging for many students, particularly those from rural locations where public transport is limited. As discussed in the previous section, because ITIs have no residential facilities, ITI students in particular need to be able to invest significant amounts of both time and money to attend classes regularly. An additional issue for young women is that of safety and security both while commuting to the institution as well as, on occasion, on campus. Societal customs on appropriate roles for women also play a role, with families who are often already uncomfortable with the idea of women learning a trade then having to face the thought of these young women coping with difficult commutes and institutional environments where they would be in a clear minority.

Academic barriers relate to the admission criteria for these institutions. While it is true that increasingly large numbers of young people are completing the eight mandatory years of elementary education, enrolment in secondary and higher secondary levels fall sharply.<sup>10</sup> Entrance admission to the ITIs is merit-based and therefore highly competitive. In this sense, ITIs do not offer a real alternative to students who have either completed fewer years of schooling or performed poorly on the relevant school examinations. Only those with relatively high marks in their school examinations are selected – although often having to settle for their second or third choice of course. The ability to score well on these examinations is in itself often a reflection of a relatively advantaged home background. While this study did not look at higher level learning outcomes, analyses from the village survey discussed earlier in this report show clearly that acquisition of foundational and applied reading and arithmetic abilities are strongly related to household affluence.

### ***Information and information networks***

Before joining the institution, where did these young people get their information regarding possible course options from, and what aspects of the institution and course did that information address? Respondents in this study obtained information from a variety of sources including family, friends, relatives, teachers, etc. In the case of PI students, almost half learned about these centres from the community outreach activities that are conducted for this purpose (Table 62). Most ITI students, on the other hand, got information from family and friends, with a sizeable proportion being advised by staff in their school or college.

**Table 62.** Source of information about the course, by institution

<b>Where did you come to know of this course?</b>	<b>ITI (N= 117)</b>	<b>PI (N=83)</b>
PI community outreach and mobilisation camp	0.9	49.4
School or college	37.6	1.2
Information from family or friends	53.8	24.1
Someone in the village who is pursuing/pursued the course	26.5	22.9
Someone in the family who is pursuing/pursued the course	12.0	12.0
Print advertisement	20.5	7.2

<sup>10</sup> Unified District Information System for Education (2011-2012, 2015-2016)

Others	10.3	4.8
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As examples of students cited in preceding sections show, because ITIs are well-known and greatly sought after in the TVET space, prospective students are advised less about specific courses, and more about how, when, and for which courses to apply. Their sources of information are varied, as R's explanation demonstrates:

*I: Who told you this? That Electrical has more scope?*

*R: Teachers here have told and I had asked around so they also told. People at the choice centre also said.*

*I: What is that?*

*R: Computer centre where we fill our forms .*

In the case of PI centres, personal contact with the PI outreach teams or alumni is a key element, not only in telling prospective students about the course itself but also about its practical implications in terms of costs, length, and future employment possibilities. For N in the Hospitality course in PI, for example, several of his friends who had done the course had received placements: *"They all got placements and they told me that if you are looking for something, come here."*

Role models in the form of family or friends who have been through the course earlier are particularly important sources of information for women, since these recommendations speak to the safety, security, and general comfort levels of these young women as well as other aspects of the course. N in the PI healthcare program explains: *"My aunty told me about this course; she took her training from this centre and is now [working as] a Nurse. [She] told me about this course and when I told my friends about it, they also wanted to join. So we all came here together."*

Whether in the ITIs or the PI centres, in almost every case, the family's opinion is key to the final decisions. For young women in particular, their own interests and preferences do not necessarily matter. The decision about what to do next is taken by the family, based on their assessment of the available options, which involves balancing the woman's potential economic contribution to the family with finding a socially acceptable option for her to enrol in. The decision-making authority is clear in the explanation given by D, a young woman in Ahmednagar taking the ITI Steno course:

*[The family] told me to come here, and they are ready to send me out for a job. Actually, my brother-in-law [worked] here and [so] I wanted to do ITI, I wanted to do Mechanical trade but then he told me that this [Steno] is a good course for girls. He told me there is a lot of scope here, so I am doing Steno. ... Frankly speaking, I didn't have any interest in this course, I joined because my brother-in-law told me to.*

Similarly, G, an ITI student in Ahmednagar, was able to join the course only once the family agreed, thanks to the intervention of a faculty member:

*See it has been 14 years since our store opened, they say my husband has learned the work [after we got married] but what do you call it, license, he didn't have and [now] he has crossed the age [limit]. Sir said that enrol your Mrs. only. So he said that family is not allowing. Sir said so what, let her study! So Sir also supported in this, he still does (smiles). So I am studying.*

As will be discussed in detail in the next section, perceptions of the appropriateness of technical or vocational courses and jobs do shift in situations of acute economic distress. When they feel they have no option but to find a source of income, conforming to social customs often becomes less important. E, a young woman in Dhamtari, explains part of her journey to the PI Electrician course:

*In the end I came back to Raipur and started working in a shop. I had to live alone. I got Rs 4000 out of which 1000 was spent on food, 2000 on room rent. I was hardly left with any money. Then I came to know about this place. There was this boy, he was also attached to the same company [that I used to work in]. He told me about this place, I told him about my problems that 4000 is not enough for me. So he told me to do this course, if you take training from this course and then find work, you will get more money.*

## **6. Short term goals and long term aspirations**

The previous section examined what emerged from quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews as key factors influencing youths' decision to join their current TVET course. While the previous section explored past influences, in this section we explore how these youth are thinking about their future. Where and how, according to these youth, does the current TVET course fit into their future life trajectories? What are they aiming and hoping for?

As part of the survey questionnaire, we asked youth separate questions about their immediate goals after course completion, as well as in the longer term. Table 63 maps their short-term and long-term aspirations against each other, separately for ITI and PI students, revealing very different envisaged future trajectories among each group.

These responses indicate, for example, that about two thirds of the ITI students (78 out of 115) aspire to a government job in the long-term and view the ITI as part of their preparation towards this end. Of these, almost a third (25 students) identified the specific short-term goal of further study, after the current course, in order to achieve this long-term goal. Just 1 in 10 ITI students described a private sector job as an ambition, in either the short-term or the long-term. In contrast, more than 60% of PI students view the course as a way to obtain a foothold into the private sector (52 out of 83 students), and about 40% (33 out of 83) aspire to continue there in the long run. For many students in both institutions, however, what stands out is an apparent lack of connection between their expressed short-term goals and long-term aspirations.

**Table 63.** Short-term goals and long-term aspirations of youth enrolled in technical and vocational programs, by Institution

Short term goal	N	%	For each selected short-term goal, number of students aspiring in the long term to:			
			Pvt. job	Govt. job	Self-employment	Total
<b>Youth in ITIs</b>						
Private sector job	12	10.4	3	5	4	12
Prepare for Govt. job	58	50.4	4	47	7	58
Self-employment	9	7.9	0	1	8	9
Study further	36	31.3	6	25	5	36
Total	115	100	13	78	24	115
<b>Youth in PI</b>						
Private sector job	52	62.7	30	14	8	52
Prep for Govt. job	13	15.6	2	10	1	13
Self-employment	6	7.2	0	1	5	6
Study further	5	6.1	1	2	2	5
Others	7	8.4	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total	83	100	33	27	16	76

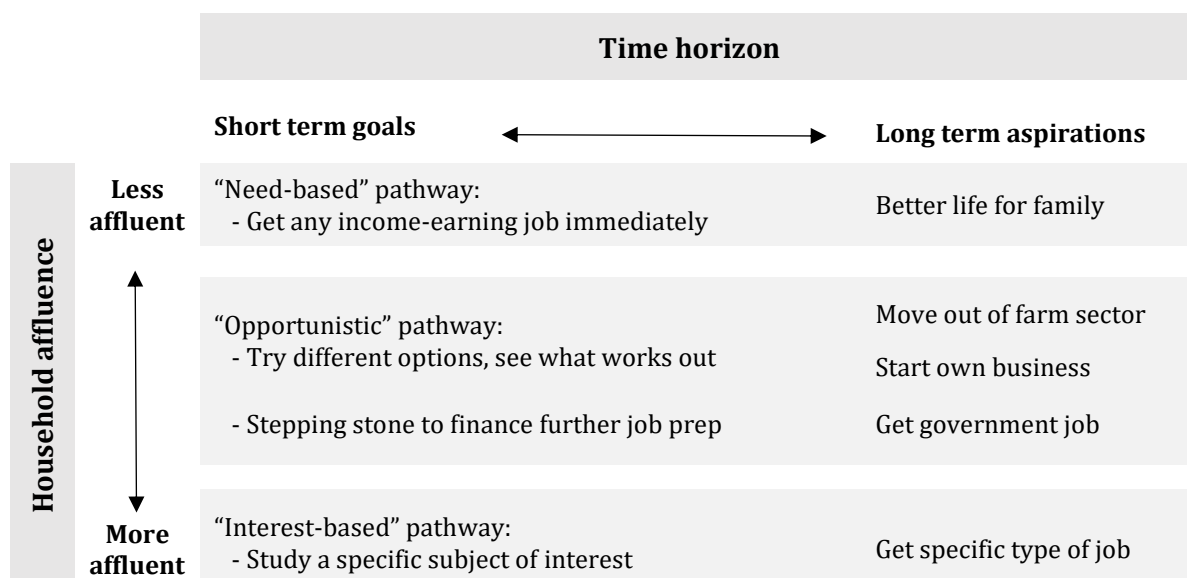
How do these goals and aspirations make sense for individual students? How does wanting a private sector job after completing the current course fit with a long-term desire for a government job? In what ways do youth think that studying further helps to prepare for self-employment?

Interviews with 50 youth generate deep insights into the complex strategizing that goes into these plans for the future. Extensive analysis of these thoughts and plans generated a conceptual map in the form of a set of 3 core pathways that reflect these envisaged future trajectories. We refer to these as the ‘Need-based’, ‘Opportunistic’, and ‘Interest-based’ pathways. For any individual youth, by far the most important determinant of which pathway she or he takes is the economic status of the household.

Figure 2 shows these envisaged pathways with time along the horizontal axis (from short-term goal to long-term aspiration), and youth’s economic level along the vertical axis (from less to more affluent). At the top, the “Need-based” pathway is taken by youth from the most economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These young people need a job immediately to cover essential needs for themselves and their families. At the other extreme, the “Interest-based” pathway is taken by youth with a particular interest in a specific area of study and/or field of work and, typically, sufficient financial and home support to enable them to pursue their interest without the pressure of finding a job immediately. The middle category, which we have labelled the “Opportunistic” pathway, contains the largest proportion of youth: those who know that they want to work outside the agricultural sector, but have neither much knowledge about nor a particular passion for a specific job or sector. Because they have a small window of opportunity, in terms of encouragement and support from their family or from an institution, they enrol in a course that

they happen to hear about that sounds like a possible fit. In other words, they take advantage of the circumstances, with the hope that it will lead them to a “good” job and a steady income.

**Figure 2.** Pathways from short-term goals to long-term aspirations



These pathways are not set in stone: they meander and overlap periodically, but they do reflect the major ways in which these youth envisage TVET as contributing to their and their families’ future. Before going into the details of each individual pathway, it is important to bear in mind that this discussion is based on interviews with youth who have heard about, applied to, been admitted into, and enrolled in a TVET course. As we saw in preceding sections, these youth are a tiny minority: most don’t get this far because of one or another of the factors discussed above – lack of resources, lack of information, social family barriers, or inability to meet admission criteria.

### ***The ‘Need-based’ pathway***

Of the 50 youth interviewed, almost a quarter explained their choice of vocational program in ways that correspond to the ‘Need-based’ pathway: the family’s dire economic situation directly shaped their decision to enrol in a vocational program, aiming to gain a skill and consequently, a steady source of income as soon as possible. The idea that a vocational program can lead to these outcomes in a short period of time can make it a desirable option for youth in this situation.

For the most part, these youth are driven by their assessment of what the family needs. They express deep awareness of their familial responsibilities, which create the urgent need for a job, and self-select into these courses precisely because of that deep sense of responsibility. Once a steady source of income is obtained, they believe that their longer-term aspirations - almost always focused on improving the family’s situation in terms of social mobility and economic stability rather than the youth’s own future – can be worked towards. The precise nature of these long-term aspirations varies from youth to youth, but often involves support and education of younger siblings (for example, “.....*In future I should get a job. There should be good vibes in house.*

*No one should feel deficiency of anything. I have a younger brother who needs my support. I want to support him for higher education. He should get higher education and get a good job, that's it.")*

Not surprisingly, versions of this pathway are described primarily by PI students, for whom the short time frame and absence of financial burden makes the course a feasible way forward as compared to an ITI course or a regular academic program of study. Not many such options are available to prospective students like these.

*I got to know that they give 3 meals a day. There's a good facility for accommodation. They told me about different departments like F&B [Food & Beverage] and Housekeeping. I decided then and there to get enrolled.*

Because getting a job and supporting the family is usually thought of as a typically male activity, it may on first glance be surprising to note that 9 out of the 13 respondents who described themselves in ways that fit the 'Need-based' pathway are women. But even in the village survey, although fewer women than men were aware of ITIs or skilling courses, more women than men had in fact learnt a skill; not surprisingly, higher proportions of women did so informally. The fact that so many women in this sub-sample are in the 'Need-based' category speaks to situations of acute financial distress and the urgent need to contribute financially to the household.

In this context vocational and skilling institutes like Pratham Institute and others like it that conduct community mobilisation drives, not just for potential students but also their families; and that also address some key contextual factors that are fundamental to their ability to enrol in these courses (such as flexible fee payment schemes, residential facilities, mechanisms to connect students with alumni, and post placement support) can go a long way in empowering students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds and women, and offer them a possible route out of poverty.

### ***The 'Opportunistic' pathway***

If the 'Need-based' pathway is taken by youth whose only objective is to get a job right away, youth whose stories fit what we term the 'Opportunistic' pathway strategize deeply about their futures. These youth – a large number at 32 out of the 50 we interviewed - have at least some amount of time, resources, and support that enable them to invest in acquiring new skills and/or new credentials. Since their long-term aspiration is usually quite vaguely defined, for example "government job", "anything other than farm work", or quite simply "*achhi naukri*" (good job), it is impossible to know what might work out. However, they already know which pathways are dead ends - what they *can't* do, either because they have already tried and failed; or else because for one reason or another their first preference is not within reach. Says M, for example: "*...because of lower percentage (in 12<sup>th</sup>) I couldn't get into pharmacy, so I stopped thinking about it. Now, I am trying to get into Police Force [and also taking this Stenography course].*"

M's way of thinking exhibits a fundamental characteristic of the 'Opportunistic' pathway, which is that these youths' current TVET course has no apparent link to their envisaged ultimate aspiration. In this case, the Steno course bears no relationship to M's ambition to join the police. How then do these youth imagine they will reach their long-term aspirations, however these are defined? Two strands of thought are visible in the thinking of youth following the 'Opportunistic' pathway. For some youth, such as M, the course is a stepping-stone that will give them a job and

a salary in the short term, which will in turn ensure that they have the time and resources that they need to work towards the long-term aspiration. The content of their TVET course is almost irrelevant; all that matters is that it will quickly lead to a source of income. As F, a young woman says, *I plan to join [the police] academy but because of financial issues I am unable to join it. So, I came here and took an admission as it is for 3 months only, I will get a job after this. With the help of my salary, I will study further.* Similarly, P, a young man studying Healthcare in the PI centre in Ahmednagar explains,

*I have completed my 12<sup>th</sup> standard, I have enrolled myself in GNM [General Nursing and Midwifery] and I [also] took admission here so that I understand what is the work in a hospital. My uncle told me to do it. My father called my uncle and then my uncle told me to take admission here and take the training for 2-3 months. Then, I will get a job in a good hospital, then I will work in Operation Theatre post. ... He told me about this course and told me to take admission here. [He said] Then, I will get you a good job. With [a] job, your fees for GNM will be taken care of by your salary. So, you can work and also do your GNM.*

A second strand of thought among those on the 'Opportunistic' pathway involves trying many things and keeping as many options open as possible. The current TVET course is just one of many balls that these youth are trying to keep up in the air at the same time, hoping that one of them will eventually land them a 'good job'. Take the case of B, a young woman who is studying for a BA degree and also enrolled in the Electrician course in ITI:

*I: Okay, so after that you got into BA and then ITI in Electrical. This is an altogether different line, how did you get into this?*

*R: (laughs) [my friend] has done ITI in database, I think for 1 year. So, she only said that let's do ITI together. ... I thought that I am doing BA from private, I keep sitting at home only. So if I do this then I will be able to do both. So I gave a form and got through Electrical. So I joined.*

*I: So why did you choose this ITI?*

*R: Ma'am this one is closest, rest all are very far away. Nari, Kareli, Megha all are very far.*

*I: Okay, and why did you choose this course? This is very different from your interest as well?*

*R: It is different but, it has more scope?*

*I: Did you apply for any other courses as well?*

*R: Yes, 4-5 courses: COPA, data base, electrician. There were few more hardware based [courses], but I don't remember their names now. But I got selected for Electrician only so I took it.*

In both strands of thought – the 'stepping-stone' strand and the 'keep many balls in the air' strand - youth aspirations are shaped by their awareness of opportunities and barriers, and therefore they tend to grab any available opportunity. H, a young PI student, explains:

*In the beginning, I thought about going for police job but due to my low height I couldn't join there. So because of this I decided to not pursue it any further. Now I want to pursue this field as my career. In this sector GNM, GDA [General Duty Assistant] are options now but I wanted to pursue BAMS [Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery], MBBS [Bachelor of Medicine & Bachelor of Surgery] like degrees but due to weak financial condition I could not go there.*



H's explanation articulates the ways in which the spectrum of opportunities and barriers, rather than a clear vision of the starting and ending point of any given pathway, underlies decision making, and TVET courses are envisaged as an alternative pathway towards the aspiration of a better life in the future. The explanations of C, a young man in Ahmednagar, illustrate this clearly:

*It was a very quick decision; I came here because I got less percentage. One of my distant cousins did tractor trade from here, I spoke to him and he suggested me to take Steno trade and I applied for it. I got selected in the very first list. ... This was closer to travel and the other ITI didn't have this trade. ... [I picked it because] I had heard good things about this trade and there is a good opportunity of government jobs from Steno.*

Obviously critical to those on this pathway is the question of where these young people get their information from. As discussed earlier, most respondents in the study were advised by a variety of sources including family, friends, relatives, teachers, etc. Although information and guidance networks vary in size and type, they play a pivotal role in whether and what to choose as well as what to avoid given the specific profile and needs of each youth. However, in the case of ITIs in particular, the final decision making can appear to be quite random, focused as it is on simply getting admission.

*I: How did you get the idea that you should apply for ITI or this course?*

*R: My friend is doing COPA in ITI, from her I got to know about it. Actually, that day I went to apply for force line only, but the applications for ITI was open so I applied for this [instead]. I had no interest.*

*I: And how did you decide which course to select?*

*R: When I went to choice centre, the shopkeeper only told that apply for all this. So I asked about the course, he told that it is about electronics and he told about COPA and all.*

*I: But then you could have selected any course? Why did you choose this?*

*R: I got selected for this, I also got through hardware but for this I got scholarship. So I took this one.*

### **The 'Interest-based' pathway**

The completely distinct 'interest-based' pathway was the least populated in the sample of 50 youth whom we interviewed. This route was taken by those few youth whose educational and/or professional ambitions were clearly defined and whose current TVET course and short term goals were geared towards achieving them. For example R, studying Healthcare at PI, told us: "..... *It was my dream to become a Nurse and I like to work as a Nurse. When I came here I was very happy. (...) I had to choose something to do and from childhood I wanted to become a Nurse.*"

Like R, most youth on the 'Interest-based' pathway are young men (we found no women in this category) who have a long-standing interest in acquiring a skill that enables them to connect their past to their present. Several youth pursuing the Electrical course, both in ITI and in PI spoke of their interest and exposure in working with electronic gadgets, which they eventually took forward through vocational training. For example, P explains: "*Since my childhood, I used to do something or the other with electronic equipment.... So I thought that I will do this [course].*" A number of others similarly articulated the ways in which these trades enable them to frame a future aspiration in terms of their memories and past experiences:

*I: Was doing electrician [course] your own choice or did someone ask you to take it up?*

*R: No one told me about it, I was interested in it from the beginning. When I was small I used to go to the market with my Nani and sit near the shop nearby and look at the work and then when I was in 9<sup>th</sup> class the shop opened in our village too so I used to sit there and watch the television also.*

S makes a similar connection, although to his recent past rather than his childhood memories:

*I: Why did you want to do the Electrician course?*

*R: Because at home if anything needed fixing - like we have machines or even for the smallest thing - we would have to call an electrician. At that time, I used to wish I could repair it, so I also questioned [if I] should learn to do it (laughing). When I heard about [this course], I felt there is benefit, so I came and studied here. I had interest in it and my father also told me that there are many job openings in this field. In the Railways also there are job openings.*

## **7. Summing up**

The objective of this chapter was to explore the decision making process of a spectrum of youth who, at the time of fieldwork, were enrolled in a TVET course in one of the three districts covered in this study – either at a large, well-established, government institution, or at a smaller, more recent, NGO-run centre. In order to capture both scale and depth, all students enrolled in any one of 7 courses across these institutions were asked to respond to a survey questionnaire, and subsequently one out of every four was purposively selected for a semi-structured interview that explored their survey responses in more detail.

Several aspects emerging from this exploration stand out. The first is that in every case, the stories these youth shared with us reflect the significant amounts of time, thought and effort that they and their family put into thinking about their options and striving to achieve a better future. Clearly, as we have repeated on a number of occasions throughout this chapter, these youth are a minority: they have made it into a TVET course. But the stories of how they did so reflect the many challenges facing those who might consider this option, ranging from resource constraints to social norms to lack of information about the options available to them.

Second, the problem of insufficient information only begins with details about TVET options; it continues with young people's largely unfounded faith that the course will by itself enable them to reach their ambition of obtaining a stable source of income – preferably by way of a government job. Alternative ways of harnessing the skills that they learn during the course require significant additional scaffolding that is, by and large, not available. While PI centres, for example, have active placement programs, ITIs do not. Similarly, if entrepreneurship is the goal, then support in learning how to start and manage a business are critical skills.

Finally, contact with course alumni can be an important mechanism for shaping unrealistic expectations into more realistic ones. Developing alumni networks and creating regular channels of communication with them may be a key mechanism to enable students to understand that there are work options available that go beyond government jobs. Unless significant efforts are put into expanding this understanding, simply making more TVET options available to youth is unlikely to produce the desired outcomes for those who do not have the time or resources to keep trying different things to see what works out.

## **IV The way forward: Six key conclusions and recommendations**

This study aimed to examine TVET options for youth from two different lenses. First, we looked at youth in the age group 16-25 years who live in villages in three districts of the country, and asked them about their awareness of and interest in TVET as options for the future. Second, we looked at youth studying in two very differently structured TVET institutions in these same locations, in order to explore these students' trajectories prior to enrolling in a vocational course as well as the ways in which the course fits into their plans and aspirations for the future.

Given the centrality of TVET in the Government of India's plans to promote access to skills, livelihoods and thereby stimulate workforce participation and economic growth across the country, the study provides important insights into the kinds of actions that are urgently needed if this plan is to be effective. In this final chapter, we group these insights into six key conclusions that build on each other, and include recommendations for policy and practice.

### **1. Youth are staying in the education system longer than ever before, but their foundational skills are both poor and fragile. This seriously constrains what they are able to achieve in the future.**

As part of the village survey, we tested youths' foundational reading and arithmetic skills as well as their ability to do simple tasks requiring application of these skills. As the ASER 2017 'Beyond Basics' survey showed for a much larger sample, although virtually all youth had completed at least 8 years of elementary education and many had studied beyond this level, many fared poorly at these primary school-level tasks. Further, those who had left the education system had lost some part of the skills they had acquired, particularly in the case of women.

Regardless of their path forward, engaging productively with economic activity requires these basic skills. The right to education is entirely meaningless if even these fundamentals are not in place.

### **2. At the same time, more years of schooling means that youth aspirations are rising. Most youth see traditional college degree programs and a stable salary-paying job – most often a government job – as a path forward that is both desirable and achievable.**

When asked about their future aspirations, the most frequent response was obtaining a government job, with further study as a way to achieve it. Although some youth were able to specify a profession they were interested in, these rarely went beyond teacher, army/police officer, or doctor/nurse, and were strongly gender-segregated.

These aspirations are clearly shaped by the alternatives youth know of and the role models they see around them. Imagining alternative futures requires some exposure to what alternative options might look like.

### **3. One reason for this situation is that information about TVET options is not widely available. Youth who do learn about these alternatives do so mainly from family and friends; but this information is often limited and based on hearsay rather than fact.**

The stories of youth currently enrolled in TVET courses, whether ITIs or PI centres, describe the many ways in which they learn about these options. Most often, relatives are the source of information; but the type of information conveyed is often based either on success stories (a

particular case of someone who “made it”), or else gender-appropriateness (courses that are suitable for men or for women).

Mechanisms that put together information about TVET options available in different institutions and for different purposes need to be developed. But collecting information is not enough: ways of disseminating this information effectively to rural youth are also required.

**4. For TVET programs to offer truly alternative options to youth who may be unwilling or unable to follow the traditional academic route, admission criteria need to be thought through carefully.**

The evidence presented in this report shows that the “high-end” TVET options, such as ITIs, admit students based on predetermined cut-offs in school leaving examinations and require a substantial investment of both time and money on the part of students. These options do not therefore look very different from the requirements for enrolling in an academic program at a college or university.

In order for TVET to offer real alternatives for youth, in particular those who most stand to benefit from these courses, criteria and procedures for admission need to be rethought.

**5. For disadvantaged youth in rural communities and for women in particular, provision of information is insufficient. They need mechanisms that scaffold their journey from home to institution.**

Many youth in rural India are poorly connected to contexts outside their village, whether physically (when public transport options are limited), or in terms of knowledge. These issues affect women disproportionately. In order for TVET to be a real option for these potential students, both the women themselves as well as their families need assurance and reassurance that these options are viable and secure.

Specific mechanisms to provide this scaffolding will vary across locations and courses, but outreach targeting families and communities as well as the youth themselves is a critical component. Creating a network of alumni may be a useful mechanism to do so.

**6. TVET institutions cannot stop at teaching a skill. Alternative ways in which that skill can be harnessed to generate income need to be envisaged and included as part of the course.**

The short-term goals and long-term aspirations of students enrolled in TVET courses demonstrate extensive thought and planning, but possibly limited awareness of ground realities. While it was beyond the scope of this study to track these students forward and assess the extent to which their plans came to fruition, even a quick review of their thoughts and hopes shows that their present course is not necessarily connected to their ultimate goal; and further, that their long-term aspirations may be unlikely to materialize.

Helping these students imagine a different future, plan more realistically, and acquire the knowledge and abilities that will enable them use the specific skill they are taught in the TVET course are critical to changing this scenario – at first for these cohorts of students, but eventually for young people across the country.

## Appendix 1: State and district profile of research sites

S. No.	Indicators	Chhattisgarh	Dhamtari	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Uttar Pradesh	Varanasi
<b>1</b>	<b>Overall Demographic [Source: Census 2011]</b>						
1.1	Total Population (N)	2,55,40,196	7,99,781	11,23,72,972	45,43,159	19,98,12,341	36,76,841
1.2	Total Urban Population (%)	23.2	18.7	45.2	20.1	22.3	43.4
1.3	Total Rural Population (%)	76.8	81.3	54.8	79.9	77.7	56.6
1.4	Total Population of Youth age 15-24 (%)	19.5	20.3	19.3	19.2	20.3	21.1
<b>2</b>	<b>Rural Demographic [Source: Census 2011]</b>						
2.1	Total Rural Population (N)	1,96,07,961	6,50,586	6,15,56,074	36,30,542	15,53,17,278	20,79,790
2.2	Male (%)	50	49.7	51.2	51.6	52.1	51.8
2.3	Female (%)	50	50.3	48.8	48.4	47.9	48.2
2.4	SC Population (%)	12.8	7	12.2	12.2	23	17.2
2.5	ST Population (%)	36.9	29.3	14.6	9.8	0.7	0.9
<b>3</b>	<b>Rural Education Status: All persons [Source: Census 2011]</b>						
3.1	Males with secondary education (%)	3.2	3.8	6.3	6.7	4.6	5.9
3.2	Females with secondary education (%)	1.8	2.4	4.1	4.4	2.3	3.4
3.3	Males with higher-secondary education (%)	2.4	3	4.1	4.2	3.1	4.9
3.4	Females with higher-secondary education (%)	1	1.4	2.2	2.1	1.6	2.7
3.5	Males with graduation and above (%)	1.3	1.6	2.3	3.1	2.2	3.7
3.6	Females with graduation and above (%)	0.4	0.5	0.9	1.1	0.8	1.6
<b>4</b>	<b>Work Status: Rural Youth, Age 15-24 [Source: Census 2011]</b>						
4.1	Total Youth Rural (N)	37,71,980	1,31,591	1,17,44,509	6,90,529	3,07,68,128	4,20,007
4.2	Total Youth Rural (%)	19.2	20.2	19.1	19	19.8	20.2
4.3	Total Youth Rural Main Worker (%)	29.9	40.5	37.5	41.7	17.8	16.5
4.4	Total Male Youth Rural Main Worker (%)	18.4	23.1	22.6	22.9	14.9	13.2
4.5	Total Female Youth Rural Main Worker (%)	11.4	17.5	14.8	18.8	2.9	3.3

<b>5</b>	<b>Number of Secondary and Above Schools (Rural) [Source U DISE : 2016-17]</b>								
5.1	No. of schools (All Management, N)	4783	166		16206	949		21891	325
5.2	No. of schools (Government, %)	81.5	83.7		6.4	2.7		9.3	10.5
5.3	No. of schools (Government aided, %)	1.0	0.0		67.2	68.6		18.2	33.2
5.4	No. of schools (Private unaided & Others, %)	17.5	16.3		26.4	28.7		72.5	56.3
<b>6</b>	<b>School Enrolment: Secondary and Above ( Rural) [Source: U DISE 2016-17]</b>								
6.1	Enrolment (All Management, N)	1045595	40134		3290129	199396		9586623	189374
6.2	Enrolment (Government, %)	85.5	91.7		4.7	1.6		3.6	3.0
6.3	Enrolment (Government aided, %)	1.8	0.0		80.9	85.3		25.3	34.5
6.4	Enrolment (Private unaided & Others, %)	12.7	8.3		14.3	13.2		71.1	62.5
<b>7</b>	<b>Foundational learning levels: Rural Youth, Age 14-18 years [Source: ASER 2017]</b>								
7.1	ASER Reading 14-18 (2017)	NA	85.5		NA	86		NA	76.4
7.2	ASER Math 14-18 (2017)	NA	36.6		NA	34		NA	37.4
<b>8</b>	<b>Vocational Training Institutes (Government &amp; Private) [Source: Ministry of Skill Development And Entrepreneurship]<sup>11</sup></b>								
8.1	Number of Industrial Training Centres	228	7		976	45		3,261	102
8.2	Number of trades (courses) offered	45	12		101	46		99	31
8.3	Total number of seats available	40,420	1,040		3,04,024	13,568		7,72,412	25,120
<b>9</b>	<b>Gross State Domestic Product at Factor Cost Base 2011-2012 [Source: Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India]<sup>12</sup></b>								
9.1	GSDP at Factor cost (2017-18) (₹ Lakh)	2,27,86,631	NA		19,59,92,033	NA		10,36,14,854	NA

<sup>11</sup> <https://ncvtmis.gov.in/Pages/ITI/Count.aspx>

<sup>12</sup> <https://m.rbi.org.in/Scripts/PublicationsView.aspx?id=18814>

## **Appendix 2: Methodology**

### **Sampling**

#### ***Village strand***

The village level survey used a two-stage sample design. In the first stage, 60 villages were sampled in each district from the Census 2011 village list, using the probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling method.

In the second stage, in each sampled village, 24 households with at least one resident youth in the age group of 16-25 years were selected for survey. To sample households, volunteers walk around the village and map its layout, divide the village into four parts, and then sample 6 households in each part using the 'fifth household rule'<sup>13</sup> to obtain a total of 24 households in the village. In each sampled household, all resident youth in the 16-25 age group were surveyed. Households with no youth in the target age group were also recorded as part of the sample so as to get a representative picture of the household distribution. The final sample for the village survey comprised 6,140 youth across the three sampled districts.

#### ***Institutional strand***

In order to capture variations in the different types of institutions offering skilling and vocational training, one government-run Industrial Training Institute (ITI) and one vocational centre run by Pratham Institute were purposively selected in each district of this study. Because these institutions offer multiple courses that vary greatly with respect to the characteristics of the students they enrol, one course was selected in each institution, aiming for an overall mix of technical and non-technical courses as well as courses that have a majority of female students and others that have mainly male students. The final selection of courses included Masonry and Electrical in Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh; Healthcare and Stenography in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra; and Hospitality and Computer Operator and Programming Assistant in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. In each selected course, all enrolled students filled out a survey.

Thereafter, a subset of 50 of these students – one out of four overall – was purposively selected to participate in interviews and/or focus group discussions. Students were selected from each course on the basis of their responses to the survey questionnaire, and were picked to reflect variation along a range of parameters such as caste, gender, educational background, family background, and work experience. This was done so as to provide the research team with as complete a picture as possible of the background motivations, and aspirations of the students enrolled in the course.

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<sup>13</sup> The field team begins from the centre of the hamlet or section of the village that they are surveying and selects the first household on their left. If the household has no youth in the age group of interest or if it is a locked or no-response household, they proceed to the next household to their left. If the selected household has resident youth in the 16-25 age group, they survey the household and then skip the next four households to their left and select the fifth one. This process is repeated until they have surveyed six households in the hamlet or section with at least one resident youth in the target age group. Four hamlets or sections in the village are surveyed in this way.

## Data collection: Methods and tools

Whereas the larger village study involved only quantitative survey instruments, the smaller institutional study included both quantitative and qualitative components. The village study collected information on youth education and work trajectories, skills, and future aspirations among other domains from a random sample of youth in the 16-25 age group in each district. In the institutional strand, a separate survey instrument collected similar information from the youth who were studying in the selected vocational training courses. Appendix Table 1 summarizes the information collected in the village and institutional youth questionnaires. Furthermore, detailed interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with a subset of 50 purposively selected youth across all sites in order to generate a nuanced understanding of where the course fit into the youths' aspirations for the future.

**Appendix Table 1** Domains covered by the youth questionnaire

S No	Domain	Sub-domain	Village	Institute
1	Demographic information	Age	✓	✓
		Sex	✓	✓
		Marital status	✓	✓
		Religion	✓	✓
		Caste	✓	✓
		Parents' educational background	✓	✓
2	Youth's educational background	Current enrolment status	✓	✓
		Highest level of education completed	✓	✓
		School/college type	✓	✓
		Level of education aspired to	✓	✓
		Reasons for not continuing education, if applicable	✓	✓
3	Vocational training	Current/past vocational training information	✓	✓
		Knowledge about vocational training options	✓	✓
		Opinion about vocational training	✓	✓
4	Youth's work information	Current and past work information	✓	✓
		Income expectations	✓	✓
		Work aspirations	✓	✓
		Willingness to relocate for work	✓	✓
5	Youth's awareness	Exposure to digital media (TV/mobile/computer/internet)	✓	✓
		Reading material other than course content	✓	✓
		Financial literacy	✓	✓
		Community involvement	✓	✓
6	Youth's skills	Foundational reading & arithmetic ability	✓	X
7	Household information	Type of house	✓	X
		Household assets	✓	X

### *Qualitative data*



- **Semi-structured interviews:** An interview schedule for semi-structured interviews was developed and piloted extensively to probe more deeply into students' family background, education and work trajectory, motivation, current institute experience and aspirations. Interviews were conducted with a total of 50 youth across the 6 courses and 10 students from each course were selected. Interviews were also conducted with the trainers in PI centres for insights into their motivation, batch overview and institutional processes. All interviews were taped and later translated and transcribed.
- **Focus Group Discussions:** A total of 10 Focus Group Discussions were held (6 in all PACE Institutions covered in 3 districts and 4 in the ITIs in 2 districts) to discuss the same domains of inquiry with different demographic groups. For example, separate FGDs held with male and female students enabled groups of student to talk more freely about their lives, perceptions, ambitions and constraints. These discussions were also taped, translated, and transcribed.
- **Other data sources:** Other qualitative data sources for this study varied across the institutions studied, and included participant observation (for example during an Industrial Visit, interviews/counselling sessions for the new batch, on-job training etc); observations of individual students; review of institutional case files etc.

## **Fieldwork procedures**

### ***Village strand***

For the village survey, 60 surveyors were recruited in each district and trained for five days on the requisite instruments and procedures, as well as on the use of tablets which were used for data collection. All training workshops included two field practice days. Surveyors worked in teams of two, with each team responsible for surveying two villages. In addition, a district coordinating team was put in place to ensure data quality, overseen by one or more ASER Centre staff members. Members of the lead team from ASER Centre led and supervised each training workshop and were in the field for part of data collection as well.

### ***Institutional strand***

For the institutional components of the fieldwork, a team of two qualitative researchers was recruited for each sampled district. A week-long training workshop for this team of six researchers was conducted in March 2019, during which interview guides were developed, piloted, and reviewed. Each pair of researchers was responsible for administering the institutional survey to students in the two institutions in their district; for analyzing survey results to purposively identify a subset of students to interview; and for conducting, translating, and transcribing the interviews and FGDs.

This study was in the field from April to early June 2019. Fieldwork calendars varied across districts in order to adjust for the national election schedule, specifically in order to comply with the Moral Code of Conduct that made training workshops for surveyors potentially unworkable. Since in some cases staff from the vocational training institutions were engaged in election related duties, fieldwork was also planned to ensure availability of both staff and students.

## **Ensuring data quality: Field monitoring and recheck**

Desk recheck and field recheck procedures were implemented in all three districts in order to ensure data quality.

**Field Monitoring:** It took approximately 5-6 days to finish surveying each village. ASER state teams and district coordinators for the project ensured that every village was monitored at least once while the survey was in process. During these visits, the mapping and sampling processes were rechecked.

**Desk Recheck:** Data was digitally collected on tablets and was checked for errors at the end of each survey day. After the data collection was completed in a village, information filled on hard copies was cross checked with the data entered on the tabs.

**Field Recheck:** The collected data was rechecked by ASER state teams by visiting randomly selected villages. At least 15 villages (25%) were rechecked by the state teams in the states of Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. In Varanasi extensive monitoring was carried out and each village was visited 2-3 times during the survey, so field recheck was not conducted.

**Appendix 3: Sample distribution of surveyed households on the asset index, by district**

<b>Asset Index Quartiles</b>	<b>% household</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	
Very low (0-5 items)	28.7
Low (6-7 items)	31.7
Medium (8 items)	13.8
High (9-13 items)	25.8
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	
Very low (0-6 items)	36.2
Low (7 items)	18.1
Medium (8 items)	22.5
High (9-13 items)	23.2
<b>Dhamtari</b>	
Very low (1-6 items)	29.4
Low (7-8 items)	32.6
Medium (9 items)	16.4
High (10-13 items)	21.6

## Appendix 4: District level estimates

### 1. Education

Table 1.1: Completed years of schooling by age

District	Population group	N	Less than Grade 8*	Grade 8 to 10	Grade 11 to 12	Beyond Grade 12**	Total
Ahmednagar	16-18	707	2.0	31.2	50.3	16.5	100
	19-21	481	3.6	14.8	27.5	54.1	100
	22-25	529	11.4	24.2	21.7	42.7	100
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	16-18	650	2.4	48.7	44.5	4.4	100
	19-21	689	5.0	36.8	26.2	32.0	100
	22-25	873	12.1	36.1	25.2	26.6	100
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	16-18	964	6.0	46.3	38.7	9.0	100
	19-21	558	8.2	20.3	27.7	43.8	100
	22-25	689	8.4	26.2	22.8	42.6	100
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1.2: Completed years of schooling by gender

District	Population group	N	Less than Grade 8*	Grade 8 to 10	Grade 11 to 12	Beyond Grade 12**	Total
Ahmednagar	Male	917	3.1	23.1	36.8	37.0	100
	Female	800	8.0	26.1	33.2	32.8	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	Male	1051	7.0	41.6	29.9	21.5	100
	Female	1161	7.1	38.6	32.3	22.0	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	Male	1039	6.3	34.4	32.4	26.9	100
	Female	1172	8.2	32.7	29.7	29.4	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1.3: Completed years of schooling by asset index

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Less than Grade 8*	Grade 8 to 10	Grade 11 to 12	Beyond Grade 12**	Total
Ahmednagar	Very low	630	10.4	29.1	34.1	26.5	100
	Low	313	3.7	23.4	38.9	34.1	100
	Medium	381	2.5	21.4	36.6	39.6	100
	High	393	1.5	21.1	32.7	44.8	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	Very low	645	12.1	50.5	28.1	9.3	100

	Low	732	7.7	40.5	31.4	20.5	<b>100</b>
	Medium	363	3.4	33.2	32.7	30.7	<b>100</b>
	High	472	1.9	30.2	33.9	34.0	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	Very low	629	13.0	43.2	28.8	15.0	<b>100</b>
	Low	691	8.0	36.3	32.4	23.3	<b>100</b>
	Medium	304	4.9	26.7	31.1	37.4	<b>100</b>
	High	587	1.3	23.0	31.6	44.1	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 1.4: Enrolment/institution type status, by age**

District	Population group	N	Currently enrolled in school or college		Not enrolled	Total
			Government	Private		
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	16-18	707	23.3	64.8	11.9	<b>100</b>
	19-21	481	17.1	51.5	31.4	<b>100</b>
	22-25	529	9.4	20.6	70.0	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	16-18	650	64.6	7.3	28.1	<b>100</b>
	19-21	689	33.0	4.8	62.2	<b>100</b>
	22-25	873	12.9	2.3	84.9	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	16-18	964	30.0	49.6	20.4	<b>100</b>
	19-21	558	18.4	31.3	50.3	<b>100</b>
	22-25	689	9.9	15.2	75.0	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 1.5: Enrolment/institution type status, by gender**

District	Population group	N	Currently enrolled		Not enrolled	Total
			Government	Private		
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	Male	917	20.0	52.9	27.1	<b>100</b>
	Female	800	14.1	41.2	44.7	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	Male	1051	33.3	4.6	62.1	<b>100</b>
	Female	1161	35.3	4.4	60.3	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	Male	1039	22.2	34.5	43.3	<b>100</b>
	Female	1172	19.6	34.0	46.4	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 1.6: Enrolment status by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Currently enrolled		Not enrolled	Total
			Government	Private		
Ahmednagar	Very low	630	18.9	44.9	36.3	100
	Low	313	18.4	51.1	30.5	100
	Medium	381	17.2	46.7	36.1	100
	High	393	14.1	49.8	36.1	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	Very low	645	28.9	1.9	69.3	100
	Low	732	33.0	4.5	62.5	100
	Medium	363	42.0	3.1	54.9	100
	High	472	37.8	9.3	52.9	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	Very low	629	18.3	29.7	52.1	100
	Low	691	22.6	32.6	44.9	100
	Medium	304	22.1	31.9	45.9	100
	High	587	20.9	42.6	36.6	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>100</b>

## 2. Activity status of sampled youth

**Table 2.1: Primary activity of youth by age**

District	Population group	N	Only studying	Studying and working	Working outside the home	Unemployed / Looking for work	Household work	Total
Ahmednagar	16-18	707	70.7	18.4	3.7	1.4	5.9	100
	19-21	481	46.3	24.2	11.9	2.1	15.6	100
	22-25	529	16.1	16.2	28.0	8.4	31.2	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	16-18	650	39.5	32.7	20.1	1.5	6.2	100
	19-21	689	16.1	23.8	45.3	1.5	13.4	100
	22-25	873	5.5	10.5	64.4	3.6	16.0	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	16-18	964	40.2	40.4	8.7	1.0	9.7	100
	19-21	558	27.8	26.9	19.4	3.6	22.3	100
	22-25	689	11.7	16.9	28.8	6.3	36.2	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2.2: Primary activity by gender**

District	Population group	N	Only studying	Studying and working	Working outside the home	Unemployed / Looking for work	Household work	Total
Ahmednagar	Male	917	50.5	24.2	18.9	4.9	1.5	100
	Female	800	43.2	13.6	7.0	2.3	34.0	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	Male	1051	15.3	23.8	55.2	3.6	2.1	100
	Female	1161	21.8	18.8	36.7	1.2	21.5	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	Male	1039	32.2	28.3	27.8	6.5	5.3	100
	Female	1172	24.7	30.8	8.7	0.6	35.2	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2.3: Primary activity by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Only studying	Studying and working	Working outside the home	Unempl oyed / Looking for work	Household work	Total
Ahmednagar	Very low	630	40.8	24.8	15.7	3.3	15.5	100
	Low	313	49.9	21.5	14.3	2.6	11.7	100
	Medium	381	51.8	14.3	11.4	4.7	17.9	100
	High	393	50.5	14.1	11.3	4.3	19.9	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	Very low	645	14.1	17.2	57.1	2.2	9.4	100
	Low	732	18.3	20.0	47.9	2.4	11.4	100
	Medium	363	19.9	26.6	39.3	2.8	11.4	100
	High	472	24.9	24.2	30.6	2.0	18.3	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	Very low	629	21.2	28.5	20.6	2.8	26.9	100
	Low	691	23.7	33.8	18.6	3.1	20.8	100
	Medium	304	29.1	29.0	19.9	2.8	19.3	100
	High	587	41.1	26.2	12.0	4.5	16.2	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2.4: Work status by age**

District	Population group	N	Working youth	Others*	Total
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<b>Ahmednagar</b>	16-18	707	27.9	72.1	100
	19-21	481	51.6	48.4	100
	22-25	529	75.5	24.5	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>50.9</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	16-18	650	59.0	41.0	100
	19-21	689	82.5	17.5	100
	22-25	873	90.9	9.1	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	16-18	964	58.7	41.3	100
	19-21	558	68.6	31.4	100
	22-25	689	81.9	18.1	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>68.4</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>100</b>

Note: \*includes only studying youth and those who are searching for work/unemployed

**Table 2.5: Work status by gender**

District	Population group	N	Working youth	Others*	Total
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	Male	917	44.6	55.4	100
	Female	800	54.5	45.5	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>50.9</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	Male	1051	81.1	19.0	100
	Female	1161	77.0	23.0	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	Male	1039	61.4	38.6	100
	Female	1172	74.7	25.3	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>68.4</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>100</b>

\*includes only studying youth and those who are searching for work/unemployed

**Table 2.6: Work status by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Working youth	Others*	Total
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	Very low	630	55.9	44.1	100
	Low	313	47.5	52.5	100
	Medium	381	43.5	56.5	100
	High	393	45.2	54.8	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>50.9</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	Very low	645	83.7	16.3	100
	Low	732	79.3	20.7	100
	Medium	363	77.3	22.7	100



	High	472	73.1	26.9	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	Very low	629	76.0	24.0	100
	Low	691	73.2	26.8	100
	Medium	304	68.2	31.8	100
	High	587	54.3	45.7	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>68.4</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>100</b>

*\*includes only studying youth and those who are searching for work/unemployed*

### 3. Educational Aspirations

**Table 3.1: Educational aspirations by age**

District	Population group	N	Don't wish to study further	Grade 10-12	Graduation or higher	Don't know	Total
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	16-18	622	5.0	18.0	72.9	4.0	<b>100</b>
	19-21	327	10.3	3.6	83.6	2.4	<b>100</b>
	22-25	163	25.7	2.6	64.3	7.4	<b>100</b>
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>1112</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	16-18	470	0.9	20.0	71.0	8.2	<b>100</b>
	19-21	259	2.0	5.9	86.8	5.4	<b>100</b>
	22-25	133	4.2	1.3	91.5	3.1	<b>100</b>
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	16-18	765	2.1	20.1	69.9	7.9	<b>100</b>
	19-21	280	11.4	3.4	72.1	13.2	<b>100</b>
	22-25	170	22.2	8.6	59.1	10.1	<b>100</b>
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>1215</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3.2: Educational aspirations by gender**

District	Population group	N	Don't wish to study further	Grade 10-12	Graduation or higher	Don't know	Total
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	Male	666	8.2	12.1	75.9	3.8	100
	Female	446	11.6	10.9	73.1	4.4	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1112</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	Male	401	1.5	12.1	80.0	6.4	100
	Female	461	2.0	13.5	78.0	6.6	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	Male	589	6.9	16.2	67.8	9.1	100
	Female	626	7.2	13.3	69.8	9.8	100

	<b>Total</b>	<b>1215</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>100</b>
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**Table 3.3: Educational aspirations by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Don't wish to study further	Grade 10-12	Graduation or higher	Don't know	Total
Ahmednagar	Very low	395	12.8	16.6	65.5	5.1	100
	Low	217	8.4	14.1	73.7	3.7	100
	Medium	248	6.4	7.6	82.7	3.3	100
	High	252	8.4	5.4	82.8	3.4	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1112</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	Very low	200	2.7	23.1	69.8	4.4	100
	Low	277	2.1	10.5	78.6	8.8	100
	Medium	161	1.2	11.4	80.7	6.6	100
	High	224	0.8	7.5	86.1	5.6	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	Very low	301	5.6	22.2	61.3	10.9	100
	Low	376	8.9	17.0	64.2	9.9	100
	Medium	165	4.4	12.2	74.2	9.2	100
	High	373	7.5	7.1	77.6	7.8	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1215</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3.4: Role models for studying youth in their chosen field of work, by age**

District	Population group	N	No one	Parents	Family member	Other relatives	Friend	Some one else	Other
Ahmednagar	16-18	425	38.0	1.9	12.3	27.9	14.7	8.0	0.9
	19-21	189	36.3	0.0	14.5	21.2	25.4	6.4	1.3
	22-25	67	29.3	2.9	17.2	23.9	33.1	2.6	1.0
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>
Dhamtari	16-18	224	25.4	4.1	12.6	27.7	7.9	23.9	3.3
	19-21	98	23.7	3.3	13.5	33.3	16.4	15.1	5.2
	22-25	41	17.9	2.1	17.4	17.3	31.7	33.9	0.0
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>3.5</b>
Varanasi	16-18	339	34.0	3.1	15.7	17.6	4.7	30.9	3.6
	19-21	135	25.4	4.0	14.4	21.0	17.7	23.1	2.1
	22-25	72	32.5	1.6	19.5	21.8	11.0	13.2	6.0
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>3.6</b>

**Table 3.5: Role models for studying youth in their chosen field of work, by gender**

District	Population group	N	No one	Parents	Family member	Other relatives	Friend	Someone else	Other
Ahmednagar	Male	393	33.3	2.3	12.1	21.7	27.7	7.3	1.5
	Female	288	41.4	0.3	15.2	31.2	8.0	6.7	0.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>
Dhamtari	Male	151	22.0	5.3	12.8	26.2	18.9	18.8	3.0
	Female	212	25.6	2.5	13.8	29.4	8.6	25.4	3.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>3.5</b>
Varanasi	Male	304	29.1	2.8	16.2	16.7	11.7	29.2	4.0
	Female	242	35.1	3.5	15.5	21.8	4.9	23.5	3.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>3.6</b>

Table 3.6: Role models for studying youth in their chosen field of work, by asset index

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	No one	Parents	Family member	Other relatives	Friend	Someone else	Other
Ahmednagar	Very low	201	44.4	1.1	16.4	19.2	14.0	7.2	1.3
	Low	136	29.3	2.0	13.0	32.9	20.4	7.9	0.7
	Medium	173	33.9	0.9	8.8	31.5	24.4	5.8	0.0
	High	171	35.9	2.1	14.8	21.5	20.8	7.3	1.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>
Dhamtari	Very low	79	23.7	6.7	6.9	25.3	9.4	27.6	4.8
	Low	115	28.5	0.0	14.8	21.3	13.2	26.1	3.7
	Medium	64	23.6	2.8	7.5	41.9	17.0	17.9	1.4
	High	105	19.9	5.8	20.2	29.0	12.7	18.2	3.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>3.5</b>
Varanasi	Very low	106	32.5	1.1	8.1	25.2	4.0	38.3	1.1
	Low	137	34.4	0.0	11.0	15.9	10.3	35.2	1.6
	Medium	80	31.0	3.1	16.7	13.8	4.6	29.1	6.9
	High	223	29.9	6.1	22.6	19.8	11.6	14.5	4.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>3.6</b>

## 4. Ability

Table 4.1A: Foundational learning levels by age

District	Population group	N	Read a Std II level text	Do division	Read English sentences	Apply unitary method
Ahmednagar	16-18	707	82.9	36.1	61.0	55.5
	19-21	481	85.5	32.4	63.2	56.5
	22-25	529	77.6	23.1	54.1	48.1
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>59.5</b>	<b>53.5</b>
Dhamtari	16-18	650	84.5	33.7	61.2	42.1

	19-21	689	85.2	27.2	61.3	45.4
	22-25	873	83.5	23.9	51.4	42.2
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>84.3</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>57.4</b>	<b>43.2</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	16-18	964	77.0	40.5	44.5	48.0
	19-21	558	77.1	40.2	46.0	46.8
	22-25	689	75.3	31.4	39.7	49.4
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>43.4</b>	<b>48.2</b>

**Table 4.1B: Applied skills by age**

District	Population group	N	Calculate amount after discount	Calculate loan repayment amount
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	16-18	394	58.7	18.6
	19-21	273	61.8	20.4
	22-25	248	57.6	23.4
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>20.5</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	16-18	379	28.4	12.3
	19-21	372	33.0	11.2
	22-25	491	36.2	12.8
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>1242</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>12.2</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	16-18	571	45.2	20.6
	19-21	339	53.1	21.8
	22-25	356	57.3	24.7
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>22.1</b>

**Table 4.2A: Foundational learning levels by gender**

District	Population group	N	Read a Std II level text	Do division	Read and comprehend english sentences	Apply unitary method
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	Male	917	81.3	32.4	48.0	59.3
	Female	800	82.8	29.5	46.9	46.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>47.5</b>	<b>53.5</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	Male	1,051	84.3	30.5	37.9	53.3
	Female	1,161	84.3	25.4	34.5	34.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,212</b>	<b>84.3</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>36.1</b>	<b>43.2</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	Male	1,039	81.2	50.8	41.1	59.8
	Female	1,172	72.3	25.8	24.7	37.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,211</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>48.2</b>

**Table 4.2B: Applied skills by gender**

District	Population group	N	Calculate amount after discount	Calculate loan repayment amount
Ahmednagar	Male	510	64.0	23.6
	Female	405	53.1	16.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>20.5</b>
Dhamtari	Male	624	48.6	16.6
	Female	618	17.3	7.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>12.2</b>
Varanasi	Male	741	61.4	26.6
	Female	525	35.6	15.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,266</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>22.1</b>

**Table 4.3A: Foundational skills by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Read a Std II level text	Do division	Read and comprehend english sentences	Apply unitary method
Ahmednagar	Very low	630	74.3	22.7	33.4	44.9
	Low	313	83.2	31.8	52.4	56.7
	Medium	381	88.1	39.6	55.9	59.5
	High	393	87.3	35.5	57.7	58.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>47.5</b>	<b>53.5</b>
Dhamtari	Very low	645	76.5	15.8	27.3	31.2
	Low	732	84.8	28.6	34.3	44.8
	Medium	363	90.4	32.2	41.8	52.6
	High	472	89.5	39.7	46.5	49.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,212</b>	<b>84.3</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>36.1</b>	<b>43.2</b>
Varanasi	Very low	629	64.4	25.6	18.2	38.9
	Low	691	73.2	35.2	26.4	44.8
	Medium	304	83.3	39.3	40.0	54.8
	High	587	90.5	52.9	51.8	59.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,211</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>48.2</b>

**Table 4.3B: Applied skills by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Calculate amount after discount	Calculate loan repayment amount
Ahmednagar	Very low	271	52.8	11.6

	Low	166	60.1	20.4
	Medium	239	65.5	24.7
	High	239	60.1	26.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>20.5</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	Very low	269	24.7	8.7
	Low	426	32.3	11.1
	Medium	232	38.5	15.7
	High	315	36.5	13.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>12.2</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	Very low	274	39.0	15.2
	Low	367	52.4	22.0
	Medium	192	55.3	27.2
	High	433	54.7	24.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,266</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>22.1</b>

## 5. Skilling and vocational education

Table 5.1: Ever heard or ever learnt a skill, by age

District	Population group	N	% Ever heard about a skill course	% Ever learnt a skill
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	16-18	707	38.9	16.0
	19-21	481	42.1	18.6
	22-25	529	42.3	25.3
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>19.6</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	16-18	650	78.4	17.6
	19-21	689	84.1	34.6
	22-25	873	77.2	34.9
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>79.7</b>	<b>29.8</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	16-18	964	72.8	19.7
	19-21	558	75.8	33.5
	22-25	689	75.9	41.3
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>29.9</b>

Table 5.2: Ever heard or ever learnt a skill, by gender

District	Population group	N	Ever heard about skill course	Ever learnt a skill
<b>Ahmednagar</b>	Male	<b>917</b>	50.4	16.0
	Female	<b>800</b>	29.4	23.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>19.6</b>

Dhamtari	Male	1051	84.2	30.4
	Female	1161	75.7	29.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>79.7</b>	<b>29.8</b>
Varanasi	Male	1039	81.8	24.0
	Female	1172	68.1	35.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>29.9</b>

**Table 5.3: Ever heard of a skilling course or ever learnt a skill, by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Ever heard about skill course	Ever learnt a skill
Ahmednagar	Very low	630	30.8	13.7
	Low	313	45.6	18.2
	Medium	381	48.6	25.8
	High	393	45.3	23.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>19.6</b>
Dhamtari	Very low	645	69.2	18.3
	Low	732	81.3	27.7
	Medium	363	84.2	40.1
	High	472	88.2	40.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,212</b>	<b>79.7</b>	<b>29.8</b>
Varanasi	Very low	629	64.0	22.2
	Low	691	71.3	29.5
	Medium	304	84.5	34.8
	High	587	84.9	36.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,211</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>29.9</b>

**Table 5.4: Vocational as a pathway by age**

District	Population group	N	% youth who selected vocational or skilling programs as a preparatory pathway for a good job
Ahmednagar	16-18	707	2.0
	19-21	481	1.7
	22-25	529	1.6
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>1.8</b>
Dhamtari	16-18	650	2.0
	19-21	689	3.2

	22-25	873	3.7
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Varanasi	16-18	964	5.5
	19-21	558	7.8
	22-25	689	6.5
	<b>All youth</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>6.4</b>

**Table 5.5: Vocational as a pathway by gender**

District	Population group	N	% youth who selected vocational or skilling programs as a preparatory pathway for a good job
Ahmednagar	Male	917	2.2
	Female	800	1.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>1.8</b>
Dhamtari	Male	1051	2.4
	Female	1161	3.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Varanasi	Male	1039	7.6
	Female	1172	5.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>	<b>6.4</b>

**Table 5.6: Vocational as a pathway by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	% youth who selected vocational or skilling programs as a preparatory pathway for a good job
Ahmednagar	Very low	630	1.4
	Low	313	1.5
	Medium	381	2.9
	High	393	1.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>1.8</b>
Dhamtari	Very low	645	1.3
	Low	732	1.8



	Medium	363	4.7
	High	472	5.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,212</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Varanasi	Very low	629	5.6
	Low	691	6.9
	Medium	304	7.5
	High	587	6.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,211</b>	<b>6.4</b>

**Table 5.7: Source of vocational training by age**

District	Population group	N	Formal sources	Informal sources	Never learnt	Total
Ahmednagar	16-18	703	13.1	2.6	84.3	100
	19-21	479	12.3	6.1	81.6	100
	22-25	526	16.1	9.0	75.0	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1708</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>80.7</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	16-18	647	5.4	11.8	82.8	100
	19-21	683	18.6	15.4	66.0	100
	22-25	859	17.6	16.4	66.1	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2189</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>71.0</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	16-18	955	11.8	7.1	81.1	100
	19-21	551	24.9	7.7	67.4	100
	22-25	671	26.9	12.7	60.4	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2177</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5.8: Source of vocational training by gender**

District	Population group	N	Formal sources	Informal sources	Never learnt	Total
Ahmednagar	Male	916	15.1	0.8	84.1	100
	Female	792	12.2	11.1	76.7	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1708</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>80.7</b>	<b>100</b>
Dhamtari	Male	1038	14.7	14.9	70.4	100
	Female	1151	14.0	14.6	71.5	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2189</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>71.0</b>	<b>100</b>
Varanasi	Male	1029	18.4	4.9	76.8	100
	Female	1148	21.0	12.7	66.3	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2177</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5.9: Source of vocational training by asset index**

District	Asset Index (quartiles)	N	Formal sources	Informal sources	Never learnt	Total
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<b>Ahmednagar</b>	Very low	630	9.9	3.8	86.3	100
	Low	311	15.6	2.3	82.2	100
	Medium	378	17.4	8.0	74.6	100
	High	389	15.1	8.3	76.7	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1708</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>80.7</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dhamtari</b>	Very low	639	7.6	10.0	82.4	100
	Low	720	12.7	13.9	73.4	100
	Medium	361	22.9	16.9	60.2	100
	High	469	19.4	20.7	59.9	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2189</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>71.0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Varanasi</b>	Very low	622	12.6	8.7	78.7	100
	Low	684	18.4	10.4	71.3	100
	Medium	295	24.2	8.5	67.3	100
	High	576	27.2	7.9	65.0	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2177</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>100</b>