



Women Empowerment through Skill Development

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) is the flagship outcome-based skill-training scheme of the new Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). The objective of this skill certification and reward scheme is to enable and mobilize a large number of Indian youth to take up outcome based skill training and become employable and earns their livelihood. Under the scheme, monetary reward would be provided to trainees who are successfully trained, assessed and certified in skill courses run by affiliated training providers.



PMKVY programme at GRAMA

Under this programme the NGO 'GRAMA' with the help of 'Labour Net' trained women of the SHGs (Self Help Groups) from various villages in and around Chitradurga and Challakere in leather stitching. The training was for duration of one month. Around 200 women have already been trained under this programme as of now.

The following are the benefits of the scheme:

- **Standards:** Training will be done against standards (National Occupational Standards - NOS and Qualification Packs - QPs for specific job roles) formulated by industry-driven bodies, namely the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). Third party assessments for skill training will be done based on national (and often) global standards.
- **Direct Fund Transfer:** It will have complete transparent funding of skill training without any intermediaries with monetary rewards directly transferred to the trainees' bank account. It will ensure financial inclusion with a provision of unique multi-wallet facility linked to debit card and accidental insurance. Aadhaar number will be used for unique identification of each candidate.
- **Variable Monetary Reward:** Monetary reward for various job roles within a sector would also vary. This amount would be arrived at after taking various factors like cost of training, willingness of trainees for pay and other relevant factors into consideration. Higher incentives will be given to training in manufacturing, construction and plumbing sectors.

GRAMA identifies women who already know basic aspects of tailoring. The aim of this training programme is to improve their skill of the women and help them in income generation. After the leather training course under this programme, the women have learnt to stitch bags. The ultimate goal of the NGO is to have a sustainable business model for these bags throughout the year and create income generation for these women.

GRAMA' s Future Plans on this programme

- GRAMA plans to have this training for more women and make them more competent.
- GRAMA wants to assist these women financially through NABARD finance to buy sewing machines and help them in manufacturing these bags.
- It wants to make the villages in and around Chitradurga a manufacturing hub for bags in the long run.

Purpose

- Help the women in income generation.
- Identify various business opportunities under the training scheme and help them in implementation.
- To implement a sustainable business model for the bags stitched by the women of the SHG.



Interacting with the women of SHG

Activities

1. The women who stitched the bags: These are women from SHGs from the villages around Challakere. They are predominantly tailors who stitch blouses. Most of them struggle to meet ends. All of them had to travel for atleast 4 hours everyday to attend the leather stitching training. GRAMA is ready to supply materials required for stitching the bags. GRAMA has two training centers where the leather training is done. There is a trainer who is a part of their payroll. He assists the women in stitching and also inspects the quality. GRAMA has various activities in its periphery like organic Farming, Institution building, Water shed Management. They have created income generation across villages through various initiatives.



Challakere Training Centre, GRAMA



Training - PMKVY

Environment

The Environment around the above mentioned stakeholders were observed. The environment in the rural areas is in contrast with the ones in the urban areas. Bags are usually bought on need

basis and not necessarily at the beginning of a new academic year. Cost is the major factor for most of them here. Quality comes next to this segment. The environment by visiting schools in the rural areas in and around Challakere. They all have done petty businesses before like selling Papads etc. and have failed at most of it as they did not have any time for marketing these products. They could not manage door-to-door marketing. They are highly skillful and are ready to do any work provided it gives them some income.



Enquiring in a school in Challakere

The other major area of focus is the urban area. Most of them buy new bags at the beginning of a new academic year. The prices were competitive but the willingness to pay for the bags was higher and these people expect very good quality.



Bag shops in Bangalore

Interactions

- GRAMA has continuous interactions with the women of SHGs. They usually go there to inspect the progress.
- The women cannot market the bags on their own.
- The interaction with the proposed audiences is very limited from the perspective of both GRAMA and the women of SHG.
- The major concern could be that the interaction of GRAMA with the urban areas is very limited., which needs to be addressed

Here the targets of observation are the bags and its stakeholders. Most schools want to use the bags as a medium of advertising. They expect their name to be printed on the bags. There are wide varieties of variants that are available in the market. It is very hard to be unique. Shown below are the bags stitched by the women of SHG here after referred to as ‘GRAMA bags’ and the bags available in the market.



GRAMA Bag and the bag in a local shop in Bangalore

Users

The various users of the bags as already discussed are from both the rural and urban areas. The usage of a particular bag is for a longer duration in the rural areas than the urban areas. The need, cost and quality of bags are different for different users. These parameters have to be considered based on where we want to target.

1. The bags cannot be sold without any brand. A brand in the name of GRAMA needs to be created.
2. GRAMA cannot become a commercial entity. A separate entity has to be created to sell these bags.

Marketing Mix: Study of Rural and Urban areas

The process of marketing and distribution of goods requires a thorough study of potential markets to identify the price points and product variations that can be offered. Marketing mix is the process of designing and integrating various elements of marketing in such a way to ensure achievement of objectives.

To understand the market in Chitradurga and nearby areas, the team met with the heads of over 10 schools in the Chitradurga and Challakere areas. It helped to understand the demands of the schools and of the parents, and to identify the nature of demand for the various types of bags. The visit results have been discussed in field implementations.

In Bangalore, the team visited various wholesalers to understand their price point and margins to optimally price our bags. Interacted with CSR heads of multiple companies to draw out the women empowerment angle. Similarly, meetings with The Lion's Club, Bangalore to identify any potential markets through these channels was useful.

Product

Rural: Interacted with various school principals, head mistress and teachers to understand the size, look and other features of the bags expected. Also understood that most teachers and heads of institutions believed that premium quality material is overrated, and that we could afford to use one grade lower quality of material if it reflected in the cost of the product.

Urban: From our interactions with various schools in Bangalore, CSR of various MNCs and potential customers in Lion's Club, it's clear that quality is the most important parameter and price comes second. The market here is extremely competitive and it's hard to be a stand out. The expectation of the quality here is very high. Also its recommend extending the product line to travel bags as the target audience for this is massive and also these bags can be sold throughout the year.

Price

Rural: Although we were trying to sell the bags as a means to support women empowerment, we realized that in general, the people of Chitradurga and Challakere were not willing to pay premium neither for the quality nor to support this cause. They demanded competitive prices, and they agreed to orders only if they were guaranteed a price lower than market rates. This again led us to revisit the quality of materials used to identify any scope for cost cutting.

Urban: The challenge here was to price the bags. We did a primary research by visiting shops in various areas of Bangalore to understand the pricing as we already had the data of costing. The people we met expected competitive pricing at the best quality. Although the willingness to pay is not very high, the target audience in the city was ready to pay a lot more than the rural areas. Major sales can be targeted here.

Promotion

Rural: We used the techniques of schools advertising through the bags. We offered bulk discount to the schools here. It was hard to get advance from schools here. Hence we had to promote it such a way that the advance paid would suffice

Bangalore: The best way to promote the product is through the story behind the bags. This has been successfully showcased through the movie and the brochure. The target audience in the urban areas will buy it for the story mainly and not for the quality or the brand initially.

Trademarking of GRAMA Logo

As we were planning to build a brand for the bags, we planned to launch a brand in the name of the NGO GRAMA having the following trademark:



Logo of GRAMA that will be trademarked

If an NGO becomes a commercial entity, then it will not enjoy the tax rebates. Hence the GRAMA statutory auditors advised to start a separate entity in the name of DMS enterprises which given the rights to use the trademarked logo of GRAMA. Accordingly GRAMA logo has obtained Trade Mark registration and the final registration is awaited.

Digital Marketing Campaign

In order to increase the awareness and accessibility, we recommended a digital campaign for GRAMA, the NGO. We initiated a Facebook page the link for which is given below.



Screenshot of the Facebook Page of GRAMA

- Product Diversification

GRAMA provides training in stitching of bags through the PMKVY program. Currently, with the help of a few experts they have become proficient in stitching school bags, laptop bags and lunch bags. In future there will be shift to the cuboidal shaped Travel Bags and general-purpose cloth bags. This would be helpful in the following ways.

1. Larger target audiences.
2. Demand all throughout the year from all age groups.
3. Simple design and lesser cost. Materials can be procured in bulk, as the orders will be huge.
4. More employment for women with sustainable income generation.
5. Skill development. Each SHG can be skilled in making one kind of a bag. This will ensure that every SHG is benefitted.

Story for Marketing

This is the story of Kamamma, from Challakere, a hamlet in Karnataka. Kamamma, 36 years old, is married to a farmer from whom she has 2 sons who aspire to be engineers. She is an illustrious woman, having tried her hand at a number of different businesses, from papads to agarbattis. A tailor by profession, she made the most of GRAMA's leather stitching training (as part of PMKVY) to get herself an additional source of income. Kamamma knows that she can go to big cities like Bangalore or Tumkur and definitely get a job, because of her certified training. But she says her family comes first. She is determined to stitch fine quality bags in her home, with the help of other women in her SHG (Self Help Groups) to earn a secured living. We urge you to join us to support women like Kamamma, who want to push their boundaries, play a bigger role in society, and lead better lives.

Link to the movie used for marketing

<https://youtu.be/LDWszcUAuH0>