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The Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP): An Evaluation

*¹Dr. MP Singh, ²Dr. KK Agarwal and ³Krishna Singh

¹Professor, Department of Economics, BHU, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.

²Professor, Department of Commerce, MGKVP, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.

³Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, MGKVP, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Abstract

The SANKALP (Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) scheme, part of the Skill India Mission, is intended to address the critical need to improve employability through skill development. This study delves into the major components of SANKALP, highlighting its role in building a demand-driven ecosystem that connects skill development with industry needs. The scheme emphasis on developing institutional procedures, providing access to quality training, and encouraging industry participation is crucial for ensuring sustainable livelihoods. This study examines the influence and effectiveness of SANKALP in developing a competent workforce to meet the dynamic demands of the job market.

Keywords: Skill acquisition, knowledge, livelihood promotion, initiative, skill development

Introduction

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) was set up in November 2014 to promoting the Skill India' agenda to cover existing skill training initiatives and to combine scale and quality of skilling efforts. The MSDE launched the National Skill Development Mission (NSDM) to create an end-to-end implementation framework that provides opportunities for quality short and long-term Skill Development (SD), leading to productive employment and career development that meets the expectations of trainees.

NSDM has identified seven submissions in critical areas which require immediate attention. The identified submissions include

- i). On-site Training,
- ii). Infrastructure,
- iii). Convergence,
- iv). Trainers,
- v). Overseas Employment,
- vi). Sustainable Livelihoods and
- vii). Includes use of Public Infrastructure.

Following the launch of National Skill Development Mission (NSDM), SANKALP was designed to help NSDM in achieving its full potential. SANKALP was designed to implement the Skill India Mission by initiating proposed submission under the NSDM. SANKALP aims to improve the ongoing challenges like decentralization (strengthening district ecosystem), universalization of National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), standardisation of certification and assessments, bringing about convergence, infusing quality in skill development programmes and making them market relevant while ensuring private participation.

SANKALP was launched on 19th January 2018 to strengthen institutional mechanisms for skill development and improve access to quality and market-relevant training for youth across the country. SANKALP has a six-year implementation deadline until March 2023. SANKALP aims to address the ongoing challenges as bring about convergence and improve the quality of skill development programmes, making them relevant and accessible to the market, while ensuring private participation in the context of short-term training.

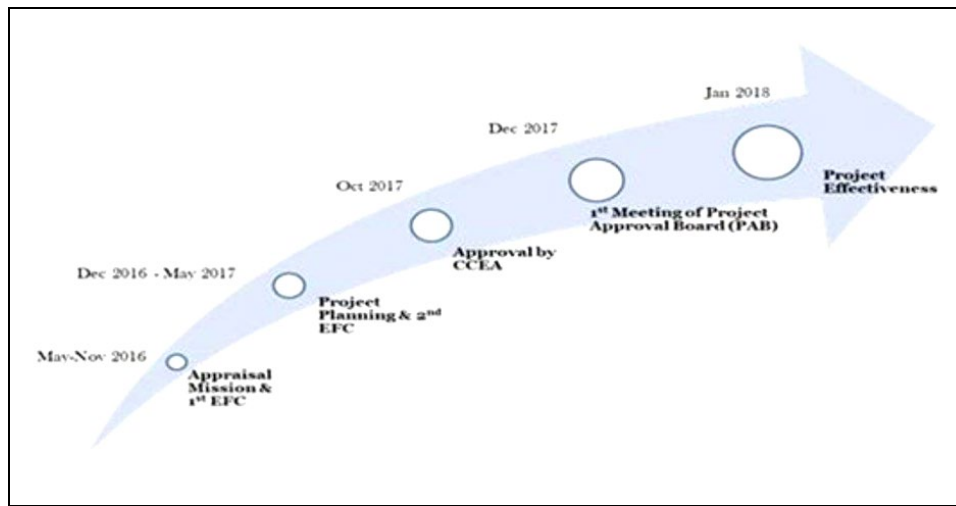


Fig 1: SANKALP major milestones

This figure indicates the periodic evaluation of SANKALP. The SANKALP (Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) programme, launched under the Skill India Mission is an important initiative to address the critical challenge of employability through capacity development. SANKALP was launched to bridge the gap between educational and industrial needs and build a robust, demand-driven ecosystem for skill development. This study reviews objectives of the scheme and emphasizes the importance of strengthening institutional mechanisms, improving the quality of training, and promoting active industry collaboration. By addressing SANKALP core principles, this initiative aims to revolutionize the skill development landscape and provide individuals with the positive capabilities needed for profitable and sustainable livelihood.

Recently the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship asked the SANKALP Scheme to focus on skill ecosystem at district level through convergence and coordination.

To improve the ecosystem at the district level, the Ministry has taken the following initiatives:

- **Skill India Portal:** A system to collect and converge skill data even at the district level.
- **Grants:** Nine States namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, Manipur, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh were given grants.
- **Aspirational Districts:** In addition to these State, grants have also been released to 117 aspirational districts under Aspirational Skilling Abhiyaan.

Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood (SANKALP) is an outcome-oriented programme of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) with a special focus on decentralised planning and quality enhancement.

It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme which is cooperated with the World Bank.

It aims to implement the mandate of the National Skill Development Mission.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the scheme are:

- i). To reinforce institutional mechanism for skill development.
- ii). To increase access to quality and market relevant training to the youth across the country.

- iii). Creating convergence among all skill training activities both State and Government of India funded at the state level.
- iv). Enhancing the quality of skill development programmes through building a pool of quality trainers, developing curriculum and content, standardizing assessment and certification.
- v). Developing a robust monitoring and evaluation system for skill enhancement programs.
- vi). Providing access to skill enhancement opportunities to the disadvantaged sections across the country.

Scope of the Study

In the establishment of SANKALP (Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion Programme), the government has invested ₹4000 crore another big initiative under the Skill India Mission. Its aims to provide market relevant training to 350 million young Indians.

SANKALP-Governance Structure and Major Interventions

SANKALP has a 3 tier Governance structure. They are as follows:

- a) **Project Governance Board (PGB):** It Constituted under the Chairmanship of Honorable Minister. MSDE at the apex level to review the progress of the project periodically and issue directions. PGB may also issue instructions with regard to changes in the project implementation arrangements if needed. The first PGB meeting was held on 2nd August 2019.
- b) **Project Approval Board (PAB):** Chaired by Secretary MSDE cum member secretary NSDM. PAB provides policy direction, monitors and reviews various projects proposed under SANKALP. Five meetings of PAB have taken place till the date.
- c) **Project Screening Committee (PSC):** Chaired by Additional Secretary of MSDE. PSC screens the proposals before referring it to PAB for approval. Till date five meetings of PSC have taken place.

Major Intervention Programmes

Following are the major interventions of SANKALP scheme:

- **Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship (MGNF):** MGNF has been launched to support the District administration to improve skill development programmes. As a pilot 75 fellows will be deputed in 75 districts across

Gujarat, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand for a span of two years. IIM-Bangalore has been on boarded as the academic partner for the fellowship program. The contract signing with IIM-Bangalore was done on 9th October 2019. Fellow will be awarded a Certificate in Public Policy and Management from IIM Bangalore upon completion of the fellowship program. The application process was held on 14th October 2019 wherein 2,911 applications were received. On 8th December 2019 written exam was held. The final list of the fellows was declared on 30th January 2020 and the offer letters were sent out to the shortlisted candidates the commencement of the programme is expected at IIM-Bangalore on 8th March 2020.

- **Award for Excellence in District Skill Development Planning (DSDP Award):** To promote decentralised planning District Skill Development Plan (DSDP) Award have been constituted by the Ministry under SANKALP. The award was launched in FY 2018-19, wherein districts across all States/UTs were invited to participate. Out of the 700+ districts in the country, 225 districts participated by submitting their DSDPs to MSDE. The DSDPs thus submitted were evaluated and out of these 225 districts, 25 districts were shortlisted through evaluation by designated committees. The Officials from these district were called for presenting their DSDP to the evaluation committee Chaired by Secretary, MSDE in Delhi. Accordingly, 7 districts identified for Award, 6 districts for Certificate of Excellence and 7 districts for Letter of Appreciation.

Budget Allocation

On August 2, 2019 Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey Minister of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship reviewed the Ministry's World Bank loan assisted "Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP)" programme at the first Programmes Governance Board Meeting, which is the apex body for governance of the scheme.

Rs. 95.47 crore released as 1st year grant to 9 States under Skill India's Sankalp scheme Rs. 11.7 crore cumulatively released to 117 Aspirational Districts (10 lakh each district)

The World Bank undertakes periodic implementation support missions to review the progress of the scheme.

As per the aide memoire of the sixth implementation support mission conducted by the World Bank during September 13-16, 2021, the scheme has been rated as "Satisfactory" on the overall implementation progress of the scheme while the progress towards achievement of programme development objectives has been rated as "Highly Satisfactory" which is the highest rating as per the World bank rating criteria.

As per the requirement of the World Bank, the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship has on boarded Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Indore as the Independent Verification Agency (IVA) to verify the DLI wise achievements.

Till date, it has verified the achievements against the targets set for FY 2017-18 to FY 2019-20 and accordingly the World Bank has disbursed an amount of US\$ 166.52 Million (Rs.1099 Crore approx.) to the Government of India under SANKALP.

Analysis of the SANKALP

The budgetary allocation and expenditure under SANKALP scheme over the past 5 years are given in the table below:

Table 1: Budget Allocation

Year	Budget Allocated (Rs. in crore)	Actual Expenditure (Rs. in crore)
2018-19	75.00	70.80
2019-20	215.00	201.36
2020-21	185.00	151.95
2021-2022	193.47	132.73
2022-23	186.89	173.00

Source: Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (Government of India)

The World Bank undertakes periodic Implementation Support Missions (ISM) to review the progress of the scheme. As per the Implementation Status & Results Report of the ISM conducted by the World Bank during 1st-10th May, 2023, the scheme has been rated as "Satisfactory" on the overall implementation progress while on progress towards achievement of Program Development Objective (PDO), the scheme has been rated as "Highly Satisfactory".

The performance monitoring indicators for SANKALP adopted for the implementation of this scheme are as under:

PDO Indicator 1: Trainees who have successfully completed the market relevant short-term Skill Development (SD) programmes and were certified (disaggregated by women)

PDO Indicator 2: Percentage of graduates who are wage employed or self-employed within six months of completion of short-term SD Programmes.

PDO Indicator 3: Improved performance of states on institutional strengthening, market relevance of SD programmes, and access to and completion of the training by marginalized populations.

PDO Indicator 4: National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) aligned Qualification Packs (QPs) translated into teaching learning materials.

Intermediate Result Indicator 1: A system in place to undertake the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of SD programmes at the national and state level

Intermediate Result Indicator 2: Number of trainers and assessors trained/retrained

Intermediate Result Indicator 3: Number of Completed pilot projects by MSDE and states targeting socially excluded groups to improve access to skills training programmes.

Intermediate Result Indicator 4: Strengthened capacity of the District Skill Committee to implement short term skill programmes.

Intermediate Result Indicator 5: Improved Service delivery at the Gram Panchayat level for linking unemployed youth to local markets.

Evaluation & Results

Positive Aspects

- Targeted Skill Development:** SANKALP focuses on specific skills required by industries, ensuring participants receive training that directly aligns with market demands.
- Industry Collaboration:** The scheme supports cooperation between training institutions and industries fostering a closer connection between education and employment needs.
- Entrepreneurial Support:** SANKALP not only prepares individuals for jobs but also motivate entrepreneurship by equipping them with the skills needed to develop and sustain their own businesses.

- iv). **Inclusive Opportunities:** By reaching out to marginalized groups, SANKALP provide opportunities for skill development and extended to those who may face barriers and promoting inclusivity and social equity.
- v). **Measurable Impact:** The scheme integrate mechanisms to measure the impact of its interventions and allowing for data driven improvements and demonstrating tangible benefits of the skill development programmes.

Negative Aspects

- i). **Implementation Challenges:** SANKALP may face many challenges in the establishment of its programmes, including issues related to infrastructure, resource allocation and coordination among stakeholders.
- ii). **Limited Reach:** There might be limitations in reaching remote or economically disadvantaged areas leading to uneven access to skill development opportunities.
- iii). **Employer Engagement:** The success of skill development programmes often relies on strong cooperation with employers. If there is a lack of engagement from industries it can hinder the placement and relevance of the skills acquired.
- iv). **Mismatch with Market Needs:** There could be instances where the skills imparted through SANKALP do not precisely match the evolving needs of the job market resulting in participants facing challenges in securing employment.
- v). **Sustainability Concerns:** Ensuring the long term impact of the skills acquired is important. If there are inadequacies in post-training support or ongoing skill updates individuals may struggle to sustain their employability over time.

Conclusion

SANKALP scheme under Skill India demonstrates an appreciable commitment to improve the employability of the youth across the country. With a focus on targeted skill development, industry collaboration, and enhancement for entrepreneurship. The scheme aims to bridge the gap between education and employment. While facing problems in implementation reaching remote areas, and ensuring a perfect match with market requirements, SANKALP has the potential to significantly contribute to economic development and social empowerment. Continuous monitoring, adaptability, and addressing the identified shortcomings will be important in maximizing the positive impact of the scheme and ensuring a sustainable and inclusive skill development ecosystem across the country.

Suggestions

To enhance the effectiveness of the SANKALP scheme under Skill India, several key suggestions can be considered. There should be a concerted effort to expand outreach programmes, ensuring that the benefits of skill development reach remote and economically backward areas. Regular connections with industries are crucial to align the skills being imparted with the dynamic needs of the job market, fostering better employment opportunities for participants. It is mandatory to strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track programmes effectiveness, allowing for informed decision making and continuous amendment. Embracing technology for skill delivery can develop accessibility, enabling individuals to adapt new technological changes in their respective industries. Comprehensive post-training support systems, including career counseling, promotion and job

placement assistance, should be implemented to facilitate a smoother transition into sustainable employment. Regional customization of training programmes, flexible learning models, and fostering public-private partnerships (PPP) can further enrich the SANKALP impact. Therefore promoting a culture of lifelong learning and establishing a structured feedback mechanism involving participants and employers will contribute to the overall success of the scheme.

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