

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO PROGRAM SOUNDESS ASSESSMENT

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

1. The Additional Skill Acquisition Program (ASAP) has been designed on the basis of intensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders—students, principals and teachers of higher secondary schools and undergraduate colleges, parents, industry associations, and sector skills councils (SSCs).

- (i) The ASAP secretariat has been holding consultations with the government and government-aided higher secondary schools and arts and science colleges about the importance of vocationalizing their curriculum. Focus group discussions have been held with school and college management, teachers, and more importantly, the target student cohort. Issues such as the scheduling of foundation courses and vocational courses, location of vocational training, provision of scholarships, youth aspirations, etc. are discussed. As a result of this consultative approach, nearly 440 schools and colleges have already signed a memorandum of understanding with ASAP as of 1 May 2014.
- (ii) A mass outreach program was undertaken by the ASAP secretariat in June and July 2013 to recruit skill development executives who would help in improving English communication, basic information technology (IT), and soft skills of ASAP students. The campaign titled, "Thousand Splendid Star", covered 190 arts and science colleges. The ASAP secretariat collaborated with the National Service Scheme and FM radio stations of Kerala to enhance outreach. Radio jockeys from different FM radio stations visited all colleges. Recruitment cafés were set up in the colleges to select skill development executives and to spread awareness about the importance of vocational education.
- (iii) Before and during the launch of new vocational courses, the ASAP secretariat issues advertisements in the local press and FM radio channels. Its staff tours the state and holds outreach camps in select schools and colleges in order to spread awareness and enhance participation. The ASAP secretariat will continue with the above outreach efforts during project implementation.
- (iv) A 2-day summit, Skill Enterprise Engagement for Empowering Kerala (SEEK'13 Summit), was organized by ASAP on 5 and 6 November 2013 in collaboration with the National Skill Development Corporation. It provided a platform for all the training service providers of the country, industries, assessment service providers, SSCs, and public sector enterprises to come together for strengthening Kerala's skills ecosystem. Its aims were the following:
 - a. **Program/course identification and development of related curriculum:** To promote discussions around the core area of identifying skills gaps in various verticals of the industry and developing curriculum suitable for the industry.
 - b. **Networking:** To facilitate interaction among the training and assessment service providers, industries, and SSCs so that a network of key representatives from the demand and supply sides can be created.

- c. **Forging relationships:** To identify, engage, and link with new training providers and industry players who are interested in partnering with ASAP.
 - d. **Knowledge sharing:** To disseminate innovative and best practices in skills development.
- (v) SSCs and industry associations representing IT and IT-enabled services; telecommunication, electronics, and robotics; banking and finance; media and entertainment; automobile; construction; plumbing; gems and jewelry; hospitality; tourism; retail; and agriculture attended the 2-day summit. In all, there were more than 250 participants which reaffirmed the interest of SSCs and skills providers in ASAP. There was also international participation from the Government of Queensland, Australia; New Zealand High Commission; British Council; iMove, Germany; Australian High Commission; Association of Colleges, UK; and the Commonwealth Association for Infrastructure to share best practices and offer support.