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FIELD NOTES

A MONTHLY UPDATE BY ANTARANG

APRIL-MAY 2026

1. Building evidence for investing in early career education, Samagam 2026 – Launch of Year 1 Longitudinal Study Findings

The question that we have been asking ourselves (and yes, the one that we get asked the most) is this - How do we know that a high school integrated career education model leads to long-term, sustained employment, wage gains and socio-economic mobility?

We got some early answers to some of those questions through the sector's first-ever longitudinal study that tracked 10 cohorts of young adults who underwent career education - cohorts from 2015 all the way to more recent 2024 cohorts.

Samagam 2026 marked the official launch of the Year 1 findings of this longitudinal study. We brought together government representatives, NGO partners, donors, educators, and young adults to discuss the realities of career readiness and youth employment in India over the course of an evening. The discussions centred around what states can do to integrate career education, who is responsible for school-to-work transitions and what mobility means for young adults.

2 panels highlighted 2 aspects of the same employability conundrum - young adults highlighted how mentorship, exposure and access helped them reach for possibilities that gave them mobility and enabled economic progress; education officials highlighted how schemes and policies had limited uptake because of a lack of awareness. Our role, as non-profits, as bridge builders was evident.

The study will continue for another 4 years, until 2030 and aims to build long-term evidence on how young people transition from education into careers and what support systems are needed along the way. The findings fill a much-needed gap in the evidence base for factors that impact youth employment outcomes that has not existed in India before.

2. When states show up for their youth: Goa Government & GSCERT Partner with Antarang for Career Education

We believe that Education that does not lead to dignified work and socio-economic mobility is work half done. And there are several states that believe the same. The Goa State Council of Educational Research and Training and Antarang Foundation officially extended their partnership to integrate career education into high school curriculum for another three years in the presence of Hon'ble Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.

The roadmap ahead focuses on career readiness training, career awareness and informed career planning, leading to improved enrolment into work-focused higher and vocational education opportunities in alignment with the National Education Policy.

The extension reflects a shared commitment towards preparing students for the changing future of work.

If you are interested in a similar partnership, indrani@antarangfoundation.org would love to hear from you.

3. When Outsiders See What You See: EPIC Foundation's Mumbai School Immersion

Global partners often review reports. EPIC Foundation chose differently—they came to see.

Across seven Mumbai schools, EPIC's leadership spent time in classrooms and conversations with students, parents, teachers, alumni, and school leaders.. This showed them the eeal barriers that we were working to eliminate -imited career awareness,amilies and young adults navigating a critical transition with little guidance.

When EPIC's founding team sat in those classrooms, listened more than spoke, and committed to understanding India's school-to-work challenge on the ground, it made sense why this problem is worth solving at scale.

The conversations will inform EPIC's strategy in India and unlock possibilities for more partnerships. More importantly, it reinforced a truth we know: you can't solve education challenges from a distance. You have to show up, isten andcommit to the long term.

We invite all funders to do the same - get into classrooms and have those conversations that matter. And do it sensitively -

understanding academic cycles and student protection. The way EPIC Foundation did.

4. Partnerships that build together: UNICEF<> Antarang in Udaipur

UNICEF Rajasthan and Antarang Foundation have partnered with the Rajasthan State Council of Education Research and Training to build the awareness of potential career opportunities, build ability and provide access to all of the state's high school students. The Head of Education, UNICEF - Ms. Pia Rebello Britto, Head of Education, UNICEF Rajasthan - Jitendra Sharma, along with Dhawal Kirti Didwania, State Head - Rajasthan, Antarang Foundation along with several UNICEF and Antarang team members were in classrooms to experience the model at work as students! In Grades 9–12 classrooms at Government Senior Secondary School, Badgaon, students confidently led career exploration using career cards. Teachers, trained in structured career education, walked through resources like SAFAR and demonstrated how integration into regular timetables works. The visiting team saw career education as part of the school day in action.

The confidence students displayed was the direct outcome of structured guidance and real exposure. This was proof of concept in practice.

5. Taking careers to young adults: Career Yuva-Utsav 2026–27 in Rural Goa

A year ago, Career Yuva-Utsav was just an idea. This year, it came to life in rural Canacona, Goa. What happened there tells a story about how exposure works.

Fourteen government schools submitted models—all of them showed up on event day. But the real shift was in how students saw the future. At the beginning of the year, the career education classes saw conversations centred on conventional careers—engineering, teaching, and medicine. At the event, students confidently discussed being drone pilots, AR/VR developers, climate analysts, AI specialists, and rural tourism entrepreneurs.

The work was largely student-led. This is what career education does when it goes beyond motivation into exposure: it expands what young people believe is possible. And this is how we change the trajectory of entire communities.

6. Bridging the Readiness Gap: What JPMorgan Chase & Industry Leaders Learned and Shared at the Career & Skills Roundtable

There's a gap no one talks about directly: while students are ready for education, their education isn't ready for employment.

At The Times of India Career & Skills Roundtable, Antarang joined JPMorgan Chase, a leading investor in career readiness in youth and other industry leaders to explicitly name this—the readiness gap between what schools prepare students for and what jobs actually demand. Policymakers, educators, and business leaders centred on a real question: what does it actually take to prepare students for meaningful pathways to income and stability?

Antarang's Founder Director Priya Agrawal and Executive Director, Swati Mohan represented Antarang Foundation, along with one of our alumnus and now Assistant Manager, Research and Learning represented our work at the forum. They spoke to the impact of integrated career education, stronger pathways into informed choices, and the critical role that early career education plays in increasing female labour force participation. Shaheeda Shaikh shared that communication skills and workplace confidence are the difference between aspiration and sustained employment.

The roundtable landed on one insight: bridging readiness isn't a school, government, or industry problem. It requires collaboration across all three, working at scale. No single actor can close this gap alone.

#MyCareerMyChoice

We look forward to an impactful academic year that will see us back in classrooms, ready to...

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