



Jiva: Project Background and Rationale

Who are we?

We are a group of psychologists, social workers and teachers working for youth under the banner of The Promise Foundation (TPF). We have come together to develop research driven applications to build capacity for career counselling and livelihood planning services in India and the developing world.

Project Rationale

The post industrial labour market, characterised by the forces of globalisation and the free market, requires the ability to make skilful educational and occupational choices. This is an essential life skill that could help the person maximise personal potentials and simultaneously optimise his or her contribution to society. It is within this context that *Jiva* was designed.

An obvious corollary to economic development is a widening of the array of occupational possibilities. *Jiva* has been designed to address the livelihood planning needs of Indian young people through relevant and culturally grounded career counselling services that in the long run would contribute to true social and economic progress.

Livelihood, Career and *Jiva*

The term 'career counselling' is an oft heard one today. It is a concept that is relevant perhaps to the urban context. But what of the ancient traditions that underlie the practice of livelihoods? Is a 'career' without meaningless migration to 'city jobs' possible for the rural young person? And conversely, would a city slicker consider careers in the rural sector?

Jiva interprets career into the Indian cultural context, drawing from the roots of our culture to address career development and livelihood planning for all contemporary Indian young people.

The word *Jiva* means 'life' in most of the Indian languages. The *Jiva* programme is based on the premise that a healthy career is integrally connected to one's life.

How did the Jiva Project evolve?

Work Awareness and You (WAY):

India has one of the largest manpower pools in the world. Yet, hardly any effort has gone into developing a model for career counselling suited to the needs of our young people. Career Psychology remains an infant science in India.

One of The Promise Foundation's important objectives is to provide systematic career counselling to high school students in their final year of school, in order to help them prepare for fruitful employment. Work Awareness and You (WAY) is the earliest



career guidance intervention developed by TPF. The WAY programme is conducted directly in schools and helps young people discover their talents and interests, obtain information about career opportunities and then set clear career development targets. Our approach helps the young person plan for systematic career development, keeping in mind, the various economic and social hardships that he or she faces. WAY has informed the development of the *Jiva* project.

Our earliest project was to be implemented in four phases, with the intention of bringing livelihood planning and career counselling into the national mainstream. Two of these phases have already been completed.

Phase 1 (completed 2005 - 2006): [WORCC-IRS: An Indian Regional Survey](#)

In Phase 1 (2005 - 2006), The Promise Foundation (TPF) completed a national survey called *Work Orientations and Responses to Career Choices: Indian Regional Survey* (WORCC-IRS), in 12 different parts of India, in 8 different languages, covering a sample of close to 10,000 Indian young people. This survey generated a robust data base pertaining to young people's orientations to work and livelihoods, and provided deep insights into the career choice process in India.

Phase 2 (completed January 2006): [The National Consultation on Career Psychology – NCCP](#)

In January 2006, the findings from the WORCC-IRS were discussed, by leading social scientists, educators, psychologists, youth workers and policy makers at a National Consultation on Career Psychology (NCCP), organised by The Promise Foundation. NCCP comprised 9 sessions during which papers were presented based on the themes emerging from the WORCC-IRS.

The group was unanimous in its agreement that career counselling is an urgently felt need. Four critical action points were identified by WORCC-IRS and vetted by the NCCP. The following recommendations were made by the members of the NCCP:

Recommendation 1: Use the WORCC-IRS findings to develop culturally validated teaching-learning material for careers education suitable for the Indian context.

Recommendation 2: Develop a skilled workforce to deliver career counselling services around the country by developing curricula and courses to equip personnel at various skill levels.

Recommendation 3: Develop model Career Resource Centres where different approaches to career guidance and livelihood planning could be show cased.

Recommendation 4: Draw the attention of policy makers to the importance of career counselling and work toward mainstreaming career counselling services for Indian students and youth.



Phase 3 (presently ongoing): Developing career counselling services for the Indian context

The *Jiva* Project emerged from Phases 1 and 2 described above. The objectives of this project are three fold:

- Build high quality resources in the form of a Master Trainers Group, a curriculum for training career counsellors at the diploma level and standardise teaching-learning material for career counselling services.
- Disseminate the resources developed through the Project to the grassroots level by training the relevant personnel to deliver career counselling services as careers facilitators.
- Build awareness and stimulate interest in career counselling at multiple levels including policy makers, government departments, voluntary organisations, counsellor training institutions, boards of education and other organisations that are responsible for adolescents and youth.