

Study Area 2: Mapping Women's Skilling-to-Employment Pathways in Karnataka

About Mobile Creches

Mobile Creches is a pioneering organization working to advance the rights, care and development of young children, particularly those from vulnerable and marginalized communities. Its work includes strengthening childcare services, building the capacities of childcare workers, generating knowledge and advocating quality childcare as essential social and economic infrastructure.

Background and Overall Initiative

Women's workforce participation is influenced not only by access to skills but also by suitable employment opportunities, care responsibilities, social norms, mobility, and working conditions. Skilling does not necessarily lead to sustained employment, improved earnings or career progression unless it is connected to labour-market demand.

Childcare presents a dual opportunity: access to quality childcare can enable women to participate in paid work, while the childcare sector itself can create skilled employment, livelihood and enterprise opportunities. However, evidence on women's skilling-to-employment pathways, childcare workforce demand, employment conditions and opportunities for professionalizing childcare work remains fragmented.

Mobile Creches is therefore undertaking a broader scoping initiative comprising three complementary studies in Karnataka:

1 Evidence and gaps	Review evidence on women's workforce participation in Karnataka; the role of skilling in access to work, earnings and retention; and the influence of unpaid care, social norms, mobility and other constraints. The review will distinguish established findings from major unanswered questions.
2 Skilling to employment	Map existing childcare-related skilling pathways, job roles and institutions across Karnataka, including, government institutions, private institutions, public-private partnership model, other relevant child care occupations - assess the full pathway from outreach and enrolment to certification, placement, employment, retention and progression. The study will examine which opportunities show credible employment outcomes, for whom, and under what conditions.
3 Childcare opportunity and women's demand	Map existing and potential childcare/ECD job roles, training and certification routes, service providers, employers, enterprise models, wages and working conditions. It will assess employer and service demand alongside women's willingness to train for and take up such roles—their motivations, expectations, perceived status of care work, constraints and conditions for participation.

Each study will be undertaken independently, and the findings will subsequently be brought together to inform future research, policy engagement and potential initiatives related to women's economic participation and childcare workforce professionalization in Karnataka.

Through these three connected studies, the aim is to establish what is currently known, identify critical evidence gaps and assess whether childcare-related skilling represents a viable pathway to employment and women's economic participation in Karnataka. It will generate a practical basis for deciding whether, where and how a deeper research or pilot initiative should proceed.

Scope of Work

The selected consultant or agency will:

- **Map existing childcare-related skilling pathways, job roles and institutions across Karnataka**, including, government, private, public-private partnership model, other relevant childcare institutions;
- **Examine training providers, curricula, job roles, certification, target groups, financing, geographic coverage** and, existing pathway from training to placement, employment and career progression;
- **Examine employment outcomes after training**, including job retention, earnings, working conditions and career progression;
- **Identify where and why women leave or are unable to progress along the skilling-to-employment pathway**, including barriers related to childcare and care responsibilities, family support, mobility, safety, wages and working conditions;
- **Assess programme and ecosystem factors that enable successful transitions**, including training relevance and quality, certification, placement support, employer linkages and post-placement support;
- **Review the relevance and applicability of NSDC/HSSC-aligned childcare job roles**, competency standards and certification pathways for Karnataka.

Suggested methodology

Desk review and mapping of existing childcare skilling schemes, programs and institutions; analysis of available program and administrative data; and consultations with government representatives, skilling institutions, sector bodies, training providers, employers and other relevant actors. Selected program or pathway case studies may be undertaken. Applicants should propose an approach for examining transitions and drop-offs at different stages of the skilling-to-employment pathway.

Expected deliverables

1. Inception note with methodology, mapping framework and work plan;
2. Database and map of relevant skilling program, institutions and pathways;
3. Skilling-to-employment pathway analysis covering key transition points and drop-offs;
4. Selected program or pathway case studies;
5. Analysis of enabling conditions and barriers to employment, retention and progression;
6. Recommendations for strengthening employment linkages and identifying promising sectors, approaches and geographies; and
7. Final report and presentation.

Duration of the Assignment

The assignment will be completed within three months from the date of commencement. Applicants should propose a detailed work plan, including activities, milestones, and deliverable timelines, within this period.

Role of the Advisory Board

A common Advisory Board will provide strategic and technical guidance and oversee the three studies. The selected consultant or agency will engage with the Advisory Board at key stages of the assignment and incorporate its consolidated feedback into the final outputs.

Who Can Apply

Individual consultants, teams of consultants and agencies with relevant experience may apply. Applicants should demonstrate the expertise and capacity required to complete the assignment within the stipulated three-month period.

Skill development, vocational training, labour-market research, programme assessment and women's employment.

Submission Guidelines

Applicants should submit:

- A brief understanding of the assignment;
- Proposed approach and methodology;
- A three-month work plan with key activities and milestones;
- Proposed team composition, roles and relevant CVs;
- Relevant experience and examples of similar assignments; and
- A detailed financial proposal covering professional fees and all assignment-related expenses.

Proposals must be submitted to chaitra.g@mobilecreches.org and meal@mobilecreches.org by **5th October 2026**, with the subject line **"Study Area 2: Skilling to Employment Pathways"**. **Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis; therefore, early submission is encouraged.**

For any questions or clarifications regarding the assignment or submission process, please connect on the same email id.