



Impact Assessment Report- AWS re/Start Cloud Programme FY 2022-23 supported by Mphasis F1 Foundation

SoStakes
Driving Social Value

SoStakes Services Private Limited

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Executive Summary

Unemployment is a critical issue that continues to challenge India's economic landscape. As one of the world's most populous nations with a diverse workforce, the increase in the unemployment rate has far-reaching implications for the country's growth and development. Employment generation coupled with improving employability is a critical need.

As part of the Corporate Social Responsibility programme, Mphasis F1 Foundation supported Magic Bus India Foundation's (MBIF) Cloud Based Skilling Programme in FY2022-23 with a CSR grant of ₹ 257 lakhs to upskill and train 800 young graduates in the 3 cities (Chennai, Pune, Bangalore) and place them with potential employers.

The Programme prepares individuals for entry-level "Cloud" positions. The training is a 12 week foundational course and the technical elements include an introduction to the Cloud – basic computing and an introduction to Amazon Web Services (AWS) besides building professional skills such as adaptive communication, time management and collaboration through scenario based learning and hands-on labs.

The objective of this Impact Assessment study is to understand the contributions made by the project towards targeted beneficiaries and community and to gain critical insights that could positively benefit future programme implementation. The study used a mixed methods approach, relying on both quantitative and qualitative data from beneficiaries and stakeholders. The study has been analysed and presented using the DAC-OECD criteria of Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Impact.

MBIF commenced the programme in July 2022. 4 Centres were established as per the MOU, and 827 graduate youth were onboarded and trained (vs the target of 800). The programme has been successful in meeting the training deliverables. 497 (60% of those trained) received AWS certification. Placements with employers have been low, and 295 graduates (36% of trained) were placed by mid-January '24, which is the cut-off for our report. The situation appears to have been exacerbated by the sluggishness of the IT Industry, but MBIF is confident that this is a temporary phase that should turn around in the next few months. It is also noteworthy that the male-to-female gender ratio for the programme was maintained at 61%: 39 %, supporting diversity and inclusion.

The average salary for the placed candidates was ₹ 19150, which is higher than the metric of ₹ 15000 target for the programme. Notably, the median salary of ₹ 18000 is also higher than the target of ₹ 15000. 182 (62%) of the placed candidates drew a salary of ₹ 15000 or more. Our survey findings indicate that candidates were satisfied with the training and content and are concerned about the low placements. MBIF is cognisant of the shortfall in placements and is endeavouring to sustain the placement activity till the end of March 2024.

Key Takeaways:

The training curriculum needs to be strengthened by including a larger quotient of soft skills training so that the graduates are better prepared in communication and job application interviews, and the cloud technical section needs to be extended for a longer duration to enhance the skill set beyond the introductory/foundational elements.

MBIF/AWS needs to sustain the intensity of sourcing prospective employers to enable a significantly higher percentage (at least 70%) of placements.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



867 Youths Mobilised



827 Trained in AWS

103% of target

Chennai: 199
Pune: 217
Bengaluru: 411



497 certified in AWS

330 not certified

60%

Chennai: : 180
Pune : 144
Bengaluru: 173



234 certified in jobs + 61 uncertified in jobs

295 Placements

Chennai: 91
Pune: 61
Bengaluru: 143

36%



Male to Female ratio

61 : 39



Average Salary of ₹19150

Median Salary of ₹18000

62% of placed candidates earned \geq ₹15000

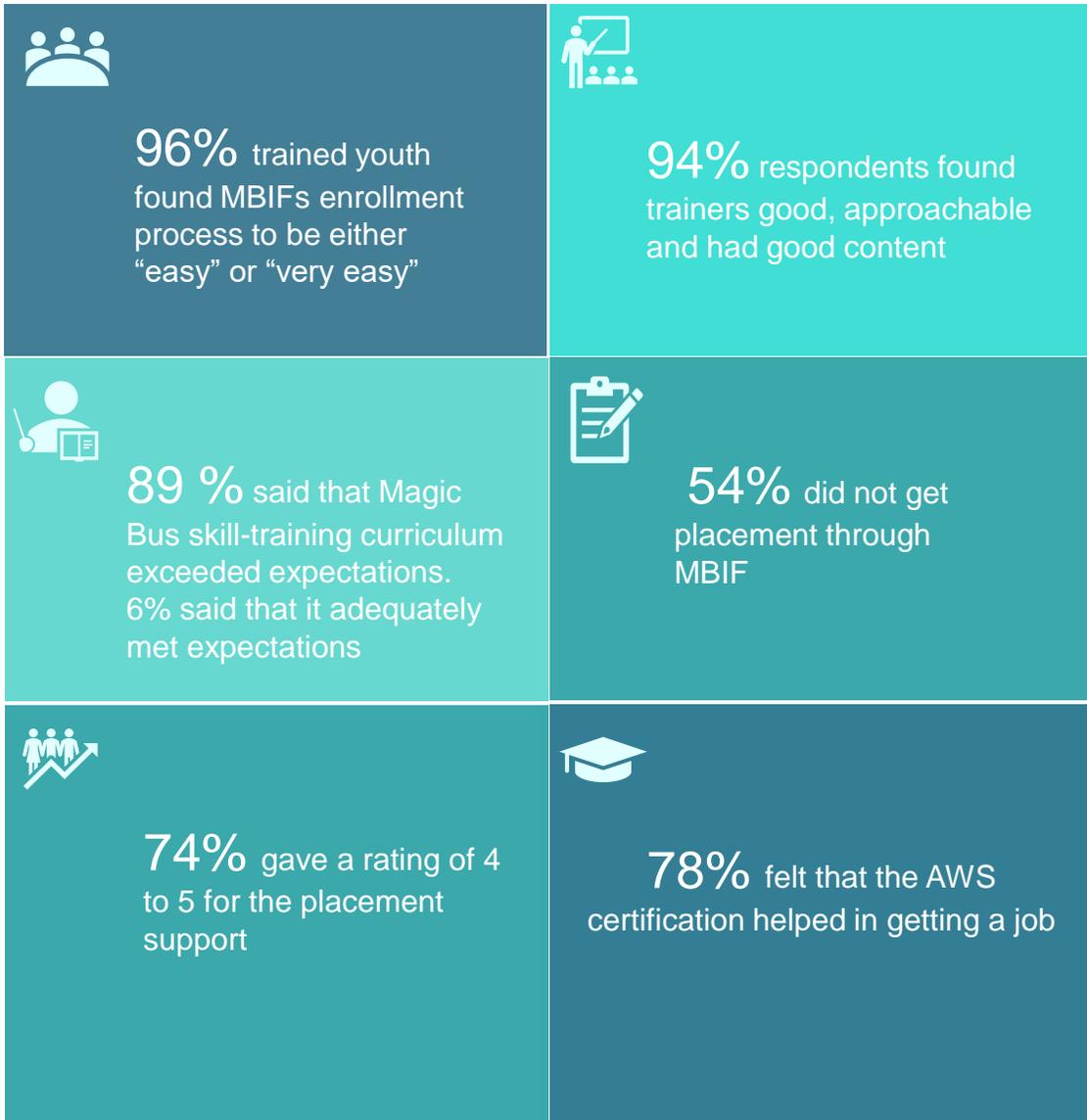


Placements in IT – ITES companies such as Careerlab Technologies, Hudi India, Mahabala Technologies, and Cloudin.

Survey Findings:

Objective of the survey: To collect primary data from sample beneficiaries relating to the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme.

Respondents: 222 trained candidates (Male / Female:61.7%:38.3%) in the 21-25 age group with a statistically significant participation from all centres;





Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Unemployment remains a pressing concern in India, with fluctuations observed across different regions and sectors. According to the [Bloomberg report](#) that references data from the [Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy \(CMIE\)](#) for July, the overall unemployment rate in India is 7.95 percent as of July 2023.

As per the [Periodical Labour Force Survey](#), the unemployment rate in the urban areas for 15-year-olds and above decreased by one percent as compared to last year to 6.6 percent in April-June 2023, versus 7.6 percent earlier.

The estimated total employment in the sectors for period Jan-March 2022 is 3.18 cr. The IT/BPOs sector is estimated at around 12%. As per industry experts, there is an opportunity for careers in entry-level cloud computing roles. Hence, developing a workforce with cloud computing skills would lead to new career opportunities for beginners in customer support, junior operational roles, technical help desks on cloud deployment (configuration, automation, and debugging), and automation on AWS.

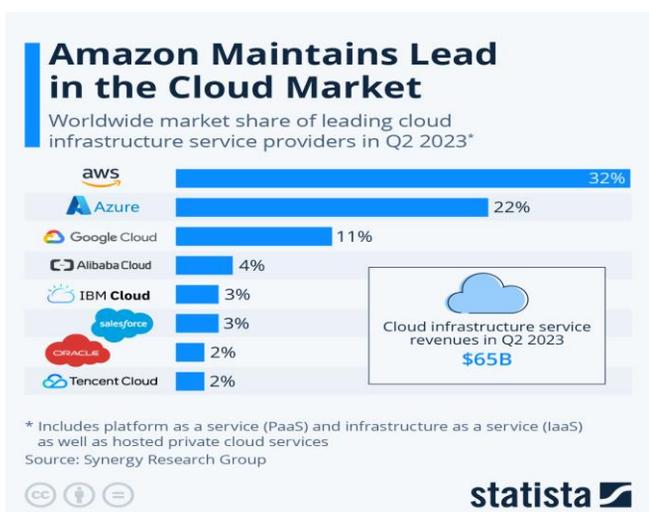
A cloud platform refers to a comprehensive set of tools, services, and infrastructure provided by a cloud service provider over the internet. Many organisations are undergoing digital transformation initiatives to stay competitive. As businesses continue to adopt cloud technologies, the demand for skilled professionals in these roles is expected to grow.

Ongoing learning and certification in cloud computing platforms is likely to enhance career prospects in this field. Having expertise in cloud computing can significantly enhance a person's career prospects and earning potential as organisations seek to hire talent with the skills needed to drive their digital transformation initiatives forward.

Hence, Mphasis F1 Foundation as part of their CSR implementation strategy collaborated with Magic Bus to impart basic cloud training to recent graduates increasing their chances of employability. Magic Bus has partnered with AWS to implement the training.

Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure and Google Cloud Platform are the 3 big cloud service providers at present, globally. They account for 65% of the total cloud spends. Of these, AWS is the largest, as the graph below demonstrates:

Cloud is a high growth area and, as per the Statista website, an estimated USD 10 bn was the growth in spending in Q2 '23 compared to the previous year. Therefore, the selection of a high-growth area in a relatively new technology by leveraging the ecosystem of a global leader in cloud service provisioning has high relevance in the Indian context.



1.2 Corporate Social Responsibility of Mphasis

Mphasis Ltd. carries out its Corporate Social Responsibility through Mphasis F1 Foundation - an independent charitable trust established in 1998 to support innovative programs that work towards the inclusive development of society. The Foundation supports socially excluded and economically disadvantaged groups in areas of education, livelihood creation, inclusion, and sustainability.

Mphasis has a Corporate Social Responsibility (“CSR”) Policy, and its focus areas include, inter alia, technology-led community development and creation of opportunities for the disadvantaged. Therefore, the selection of a technology viz cloud infrastructure/management services is consistent with Mphasis's CSR approach and policy.

In May 2022, Mphasis entered an MOU with Magic Bus to support the AWS Cloud Skilling Project as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

1.3 Magic Bus India Foundation (MBIF)

Magic Bus is a non-governmental organisation based in Mumbai, India. It was founded in 1999 by Matthew Spacie with a vision to provide sustainable livelihood opportunities to children and adolescents. They work with underprivileged youth (12 to 18 years) and youth (18 to 25 years) with the aim of helping them get employed and contribute to their communities.

Their work, across programmes, is based on the following approach:

- i. Life Skills education – problem-solving, self-management and communications to help build resilience against adversities;
- ii. Education Enhancement- improvement on basic literacy, numeracy and overall grades;
- iii. Employability skills education – financial literacy, digital literacy, spoken English and career awareness to help young people get a job of their choice;
- iv. Livelihood connect – sector-specific training in retail, BFSI, e-commerce, placement and post-placement support to help young people get into and retain jobs;

MBIF is tied up with Amazon Web Services (AWS), one of the leading global cloud service providers, to train youth in foundational skills to support simple infrastructure and core AWS services. The cloud practitioner’s certification programme prepares youth for entry-level cloud positions.

AWS is a knowledge partner, and in this programme supports, MBIF with the learning management systems, curriculum and content, qualified instructors and connect with potential employers. MBIF is responsible for the infrastructure set-up, mobilisation, training, placement and post-placement support.

1.4. AWS Cloud Skilling Project - Snapshot

- Training of underserved graduates in AWS Cloud elements/architecture - AWS re/Start programme
- MBIF is listed on the AWS site as a collaborating partner to provide AWS re/Start training.

The Cloud Practitioner's Certification Programme prepares individuals with-

- ✓ Working knowledge of the Linux operating system, scripting, and automation.
- ✓ Knowledge of security fundamentals such as authentication and authorisation.
- ✓ Understanding networking concepts, protocols and security best practices, particularly related to cloud deployment.

Apart from the technical elements of basic cloud computing, it also focuses on building professional skills such as adaptive communication, time management, project management and Project reporting skills.



Beneficiaries:
800 youth



Grant: ₹ 257 lakhs



Centres - 4
1-Chennai,1- Pune &
2- Bengaluru,



April 2022 – March 2023
Extended to Dec 2023



Employability



Programme objective: to develop a talent pool with experience in cloud management.

- AWS re/Start Foundation is a 12-week curriculum
- It is a virtual / instructor-led programme
- Eligibility: Graduates/Post graduates
- Get maximum candidates AWS-certified



Curriculum:

- Cloud foundation, Linux, networking and security fundamentals and python programming (5 weeks) ,
- AWS jump start (3.5 weeks)
- As this is a employability program they also impart professional skills such as communication, resume writing & prepare them for interviews . (2 weeks)



Support with job placement and employment opportunities



Approach and Methodology

2. Approach and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

The IA is being undertaken to meet the following objectives:

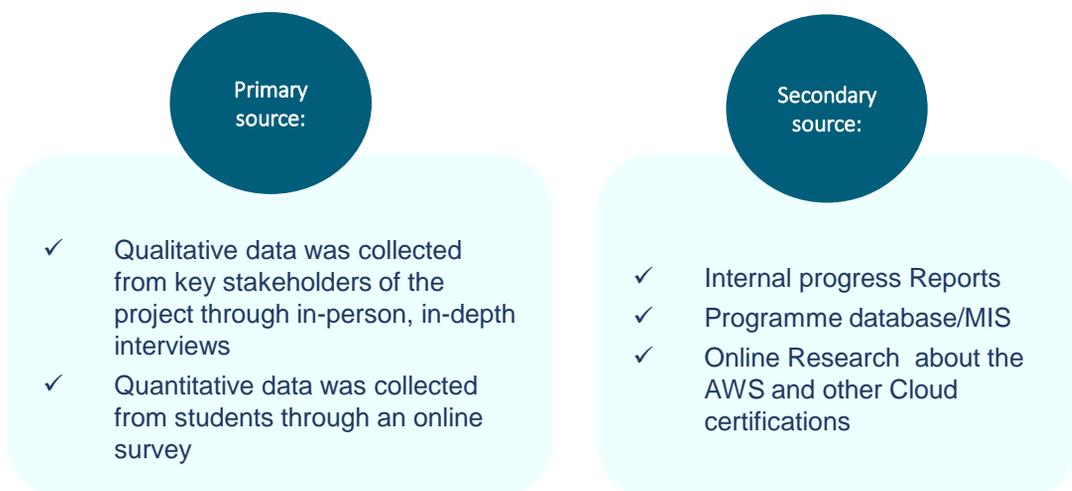
- To assess the project outcomes basis the targets articulated in the MOU;
- To assess the contribution of the project towards targeted beneficiaries and community;
- To provide critical insights and learnings that can support future programme implementation.

2.2 Approach & Methodology:

SoStakes has adopted a descriptive study design to capture the project's implementation, outcomes and impact from key stakeholders and beneficiaries.



2.3 Sources of data and stakeholders:



2.4. Data collection and sampling:

We used a mixed-methods approach to collect quantitative and qualitative data from beneficiaries and key stakeholders.

Quantitative data was collected from 222 students – using a questionnaire survey (QS) method. The QS was administered through Google survey and feedback was collected on the curriculum, quality of training, and their overall experience.

Qualitative data was collected from key respondents through In-depth interviews.

Sl. No.	Beneficiaries/Stakeholders	Nos.	Mode of collection
1	Students	222	Google Survey
2	Trainers	4	In-depth Interview
3	Centre coordinator / Project Mgr	2	In-depth Interview
4	Centre manager	3	In-depth Interview
5	AWS team member	1	In-depth Interview
6	National Placement Head	1	In-depth interview

Our sample size of 209 was determined based on a population size of 887 at a 90% Confidence Interval and a 5% Margin of Error. Our survey was closed with a higher sample size of 222 participants. Sample respondents included beneficiaries from all 4 centres and included both male and female students- 62%:38% in the age group 21-25 years.

Centres	Respondents	%
Chennai	56	25.2
Pune	63	28.4
Bangalore _ Kalyan Nagar	45	20.3
Bangalore _ Electronic City	58	26.1
Total	222	100

2.5. Framework

Relying on the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) DAC (Development Assistance Committee) Network on Development Evaluation {EvalNet}, 6 criteria have, inter alia, been listed as providing a normative framework to determine the merit or worth of an intervention (policy, strategy, programme or activity). Using these, we summarise the position vis a vis the Cloud Based Skilling Programme :

2.5 Framework

OECD DAC criteria	Application	Indicators
Relevance	The extent to which the programme objectives and design of the intervention are sensitive to the economic, social, environmental, equity, political economy and capacity conditions in which it is undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Programme model - Curriculum design (ii) Tap new career opportunity. Creating a talent pool is required for future cloud-related jobs.
Coherence	Synergistic “Fit” of the intervention (programme) with other interventions made by Mphasis as well as consistency of the intervention with requirements norms and standards	(i) Employment generation coupled with improving employability is a key national priority.
Effectiveness	Achievement of objectives of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Training of targeted youth; (ii) AWS certification; (iii) Job placement; (iv) Salary of placed youth
Efficiency	Examines cost effective utilisation of resources and timely completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Setting up of centres; (ii) Process followed for mobilisation, training, placement. (iii) Monitoring and reporting structures, (iv) collaborating with employers;
Impact	This addresses the ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects of the programme over a longer term than that captured under “Effectiveness”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Enhanced earning leading better economic conditions. (ii) Ensuring inclusion and diversity



Findings

3. Findings

3.1 Relevance

Relevance is a measure of the extent to which the intervention has supported the needs and priorities of the target beneficiaries. To assess the programme's relevance, we have looked at the indicators such as programme model - curriculum design (technical component /soft skill training for employability), and new career opportunities opening up after the AWS certification. The AWS re/Start programme provides technical training i.e. hands-on



Low drop out rate of 4.6% (40 out of 867)

experience in AWS cloud training which is 80% of the course time coupled with 20% of the training in communication, resume writing and coaching for the interview which are considered essential to improve beneficiary employability. AWS has provided MBIF with the curriculum content and access to the learning management system. Given their experience in the cloud computing field, AWS is well positioned as a knowledge partner for this programme. Our survey respondents have rated the training as good. However, during the survey, one of the findings was that the soft skill training was inadequate. As per industry experts, career opportunities for beginners are available as Data centre technical support personnel, cloud engineers, cloud administrators, cloud security specialists, customer support roles, roles for automation of simple tasks through Python scripting, basic network configurations and debugging roles. As businesses continue to adopt cloud technologies, demand for skilled professionals is expected to grow.

Out of the total 827 candidates trained, 497, i.e. 60 % secured AWS certification, out of which 234 secured jobs. In other words, 47% of those who got certified secured jobs. However, 61 candidates(i.e. 18% of 330 candidates who were not certified but went through training also secured jobs).

295 who secured jobs - 234 (79% were AWS certified; 61 candidates (21% were not AWS certified). We can surmise that AWS certification has been relevant in getting jobs. Further, the attractiveness of the programme is evident from the fact that (only) 4.6%, i.e. 40 candidates, dropped out of 867 candidates mobilised.

3.2 Coherence

Businesses across various sectors, including IT, finance, healthcare, e-commerce, and manufacturing, are increasingly adopting cloud services to streamline operations, improve efficiency, and drive innovation.

The Indian government has been promoting the adoption of cloud computing through initiatives such as the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) and the National Informatics Centre (NIC) cloud services. The startup ecosystem is also launching new products and services on the cloud. The global outsourcing hub for IT and business process outsourcing (BPO) services is also moving to the cloud architecture. All these initiatives are creating a demand for professionals with cloud computing backgrounds. As stated earlier, Mphasis has a defined Corporate Social Responsibility (“CSR”) Policy. The focus areas of CSR of Mphasis, as per its Policy, include, inter alia, technology-led community development and the creation of

3.3. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a measure of whether the intervention achieved its target outputs and to what extent. To assess the programme's effectiveness, we have looked at number of youth - trained, received AWS certification, placed in jobs and salary fitment of the youth placed.

3.3.a. Youth Trained:

867 youth were mobilised from underserved backgrounds with household incomes less than INR 10k pm. The selection process involved giving a test and interview, basis which a final selection was made. MBIF began the programme in July 2022 and training was completed in all centres by July 2023. They achieved 103% of the targets. Against a targeted number of 800 youth, 827 completed the training

- 199 candidate in Chennai centre
- 217 candidates in Pune centre
- 411 graduates in Bangalore (2 centres)



3.3.b. AWS Certification:

After 12 weeks of training, candidates appeared for an online exam to get themselves certified. 497 {60% of 827 candidates} obtained certification.

Out of 497 certified candidates (234 i.e 47% secured jobs and balance 53% did not get placed).

79% (234 of 295) of candidates placed were AWS certified as compared to 18% of candidates that did not complete the AWS certification, which underscores the importance of the AWS certification.

- 180 candidates in Chennai (92% of enrolled)
- 144 candidates in Pune. (69% of enrolled)
- 173 candidates in Bangalore (49% of enrolled)

3.3.c Placed in Jobs:

Across 4 centres 295 candidates were placed {36% of enrolled candidates.}

- 91 candidates in Chennai (46 % of enrolled)
- 61 candidates in Pune (28% of enrolled)
- 143 candidates in Bangalore (35 % of enrolled)

For the current programme, placement was across a multitude of companies predominantly in the IT – ITES space - Career Labs

Technologies, Cloudin, Vinitech Electronic Systems, Mahabala Tech.

Approximately 80 organisations absorbed the 295 candidates placed as of mid-January 2024 (cut off for the purpose of this report). MBIF explained that there has been sluggishness in the offtake by IT companies due to business reasons. However, there is optimism that the situation will improve in the next few months. MBIF has also informed us that they are continuing with the placement focus up to March 2024 to reach out to potential employers and participate in hiring drives. Therefore, selection of AWS cloud skilling programme for the youth is capitalising on the market trends and preparing the youth for future jobs.



3.3.d. Salary of youth placed :

The programme has an average salary target of at least @ ₹ 15000 per month.

In **Chennai**, the average salary across 91 placements was @ ₹ 16559. Of these, 51 candidates (56% of placed candidates) were employed by 8 organisations. 52% of the candidates drew compensation > ₹ 15000.

In **Pune** the average salary across 61 placements is @ ₹ 21835 and median salary @ ₹ 19500 are significantly higher than the targeted metric (of ₹ 15000). Correspondingly, a high 49 candidates (80% of the placed candidates) drew compensation > ₹ 15000.

In **Bangalore**, the average salary across 141 placements is @₹ 19653 and a median salary of ₹ 20000, with 86 candidates (out of 141 placed candidates) or 60% drawing compensation more than ₹ 15000.

Of the placements, 13 employers accounted for 196 candidates (66.4% of placed candidates). Career Labs Technologies Pvt Ltd, an approved training partner of the National Skill Development Corporation, was the single largest employer with 99 placements (33.6% of total placements), all in Bengaluru.

Some of the companies which paid salaries of > ₹20,000 are Cloudin, Vinitech Electronic Systems, Mahabala Tech, and Career Lab Technologies Pvt Ltd.

182 (62%) of the placed candidates drew a salary of INR 15000 or more.

3.4. Efficiency

Efficiency has been measured by considering the approach and effort of the MBIF team, which has contributed to the efficient management of the programme. Below are the factors that have positively contributed to the programme.

- (i) Setting up of centres
- (ii) Accredited trainers
- (iii) Monitoring and reporting structure;

3.4.i Setting up of centres.

The centres were set up close to colleges where the youth were mainly mobilised. Experience suggests that some 'dropouts' take place due to the need to commute to distant locations, hence the need to be proximate to candidates. The dropout rate for the program has been low. The objectives of the training programme are presented to the colleges from where potential youth are mobilised. The database from colleges includes both current-year graduates as well as those who have graduated up to 3 years ago.

3.3.ii Accredited trainers

The programme ensured that the trainers were accredited trainer counsellors with professional-level certification. AWS was responsible for ensuring good trainers were hired. Survey respondents confirmed that the trainers were good, and candidates had access to the trainers after the classes for any clarifications.



Average salary
across 4 centres
₹19150 per
month



89% gave a rating of
4 or 5 for the program
(on a scale of 1 to 5, 5
being excellent)

3.3.iii Instructor-led training in batches

The programme was implemented as a in person/class room training. During COVID, all training was online, which was considered to be less effective than in-person training. We received good feedback on the content of the training from the survey.

6 Training Batches were held in Chennai and 2 Bangalore centres from Sept '22 to June '23. 8 training batches were held in Pune. Batch size varied between 20-40 candidates, except in Bengaluru, where there were outlier cases of 50 -75 candidates. This bunching up was in an effort to ensure adherence to timelines. Training timelines, due to the commencement of the programme in July'22, extended into the next fiscal and ended in July'23.

The Bangalore centre at Kalyanagar faced a challenge due to a change in teaching faculty. This resulted in delay and also resulted in a bunching up of batches towards end Mar'23 and into the next fiscal.

3.3.iv Monitoring and reporting structures

Programme monitoring and reporting were undertaken and discussions were held periodically between Mphasis and MBIF to enable interventions as appropriate for course correction, as may have been necessary.

MBIF maintains all student data and ensured quarterly reporting to Mphasis.

3.5. Impact

Centres	Candidates Trained	AWS Certified	% Certification to trained	Placement with AWS certification	% placement with AWS	Overall placed	% of overall placement to trained
Chennai	199	180	90	87	48	91	46
Pune	217	144	66	58	40	61	28
Bangalore	411	173	42	89	51	143	35
Total	827	497		234		295	

Individual centre wise performance of the programme vary in the 3 states. AWS certifications (90% to enrolled) and overall placements have been highest in Chennai. Job placements with AWS certifications have been highest in Bangalore followed by Chennai. Pune has lagged behind in placements with AWS certification and overall placements. But it is noteworthy to say that the average salary has been highest in Pune at ₹ 21835, and the median salary is at ₹19500.

The candidates earned an average monthly salary of ₹19150 across 4 centres.182 (62%) of the placed candidates drew a salary of ₹15000 or more. Increased earning capacity plays a crucial role in improving individual prosperity, promoting economic growth, and fostering social mobility. It enables individuals to achieve their full potential and contribute meaningfully to their communities and the economy.

While the key measure of the programme is employability, the programme has successfully trained and created a workforce with cloud computing talent which will hold them in good stead for future employment.

Overall, higher employment rates contribute to a more prosperous, equitable, and cohesive society, benefiting individuals and communities.

Additionally, the programme has ensured inclusion and diversity. Within this, the trained gender ratio male:female @ 61:39, demonstrating that the young underserved female graduates have had the opportunity to skill themselves in cloud skilling. Of note is the fact that the percentage of female placements @ 32% is close to that of male placements @ 38%. There is no 'skew' from an employability perspective.



Gender ratio is
maintained at
61:39

Conclusion:

For the continued success of this employability programme, the building of underserved graduate databases, selection management and dissemination of technical training such as cloud skilling requires considerable sponsorship by all stakeholders– funding institutions such as Mphasis, training coordinators such as MBIF, technical trainers from AWS / Azure / GCP and candidates themselves who have to continue to demonstrate the need and aptitude to internalise the training inputs. Most importantly, the employer ecosystem needs to sustain its effort to absorb such candidates.



Takeaways

4. Takeaways:

- ✓ The twin actions of cloud skilling and placements with relatively higher remuneration (than before the skilling) have been concluded.
- ✓ 60% secured AWS certification.
- ✓ The overall placements @36% (295 out of 827) have been low and could well be attributed to market trends and not a reflection of the programme.
- ✓ Out of the 295 who secured jobs - 234 (79%% were AWS certified; 61 candidates (21% were not AWS certified)
- ✓ 103% of target achieved in training. (827 against a target of 800) Within this, the trained gender ratio (Male: Female) has been 61:39, demonstrating that the young underserved female graduates have a high interest in cloud skilling.
- ✓ Of note is the fact that the percentage of female placements @ 32% is close to that of male placements @ 38%. There is no 'skew' from an employability perspective.
- ✓ Further, the 295 placements were distributed across 80 employers, which demonstrates high receptiveness from the employers.
- ✓ Chennai has had the highest AWS certifications & also highest in ratio of employment to program completion. AWS certification has been lowest in both the Bangalore centres. The conversion to employment is lowest in Pune however the average salary @ ₹ 21835 and median salary @ ₹ 19500 are significantly higher than other centres and the targeted metric (of ₹ 15000).
- ✓ Overall, 182 (62%) of the placed candidates drew a salary of INR. 15000 or more.

Recommendations :

Some of the areas which could potentially increase the placements are-

- ✓ Employability skills (soft skills) training form 2 weeks out of the 12 week training programme. It was felt that the curriculum could be strengthened by including a larger quotient of soft skills training so that the graduates are better prepared in communication and job application interviews.
- ✓ The cloud technical section could be extended for a longer duration to enhance the skill set beyond the introductory/foundational elements.
- ✓ Partner AWS outreach to a larger number of potential employers could lead to a significantly higher percentage (at least 70%) of placements.