

doing better life.

uttoron
Skills for better life

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acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BGAPMEA	Bangladesh Garments Accessories & Packaging Manufacturers & Exporters Association
BPI	Bangladesh Partnership Initiative
BUTTC	Bholananda Uttoron Technical Training Center
BV	Bureau Veritas
CS	Competency Standard
DAM	Dhaka Ahsania Mission
DNCC	Dhaka North City Corporation
DSCC	Dhaka South City Corporation
EIM	Electrical Installation and Maintenance
ILO	International Labor Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
KSY	Khulna Shipyard
MPS	Mobile Phone Servicing
NGOAB	NGO Affairs Bureau
NSDA	National Skills Development Authority
PCDOW	Pre-Employment Capacity Development Workshop
PFO	Packaging and Finishing Operation
PPF	Plumbing and Pipe Fitting
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PTO	Pre-training Orientation Workshop
RAC	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
RMA	Rapid Market Assessment
RTISC	RMG and Textile Industry Skills Council
SCC	Sylhet City Corporation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEIP	Skills for Employment Investment Program
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UCEP	Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs





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Chevron Bangladesh is proud of the relationships that we have forged with the Government of Bangladesh, development organizations, and our communities to help improve people's lives.

At Chevron, we believe that we are the community we live in, and our work in economic development, education, and health is a testament to that core value that we live by.

We are especially proud to be a part of Uttoron, which is the skilled workforce development component of our Bangladesh Partnership Initiative – a multi-year, multi-pronged social investment program built on our core commitment to support economic development in our areas of operation in the north-east of the country.

Specifically, Uttoron is focused on addressing Bangladesh's technical skills shortage by delivering high-quality vocational training programs to aspiring community youths, many of whom are women.

But what I find particularly gratifying is that in doing so, Uttoron aligns with United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals for 'Quality Education' and 'Decent Work & Economic Growth.'

We believe that education and job training are of critical importance to help people and communities thrive. The key here is sustainability to ensure that Uttoron leaves a lasting positive imprint on our communities far beyond the project's lifespan.

Uttoron has achieved great things thus far; I look forward to seeing the same level of shared commitment in the days and months ahead.

Eric M Walker

President and Managing Director
Chevron Bangladesh

1

**skilled youth,
can be the
catalyst
of change.**



Bangladesh has one of the highest youth numbers in all of Southeast Asia, with 45.9 million individuals falling within the 15-29 age group.

Roughly 65.6% of the population is of working age. All of whom are the sole inheritors of the country's economic future.

It is second out of 28 countries in 2018 of the Asia-Pacific region for having the highest level of educated unemployment rate.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) reported that the youth unemployment rate doubled between 2010 and 2017.

Unfortunately, the prevalence of such high unemployment among youth implies that Bangladesh is being deprived of the productivity and potential of this large workforce.

From a micro standpoint, reality paints a different picture. In numerous cases, poverty and economic status force the youth to make a choice between a higher education or seeking employment to contribute to their family.

The latter being a much more realistic path to take.

The recurring challenges youth face are multifaceted, starting with lacking appropriate skills to apply for jobs.

Lack of aspiration follows, which creates difficulty in envisioning the path of a successful career in the formal job market.

On the other hand, information about job opportunities is disseminated through informal channels instead of formal ones, which creates a barrier to access to job market opportunities.

Source:
The Business Standard (2022)
The Daily Star (2022)



nutshell
About Chevron

Chevron is one of the world's leading integrated energy companies, involved in virtually every aspect of the energy industry. In Bangladesh, Chevron operates three gas fields in the northeast of the country.

Chevron Bangladesh Block Twelve, Ltd. and Chevron Bangladesh Blocks Thirteen & Fourteen, Ltd. ("Chevron Bangladesh") is the largest producer of natural gas in Bangladesh, accounting for over 60% of total domestic natural gas production and over 80% of the domestic condensate production.

Chevron Bangladesh works with communities across its operations, building long-term partnerships that foster economic development and lasting benefits. Social investments in communities are one of the core values of Chevron's global business practice.

In Bangladesh, Chevron has been managing social investment programs since 2006.



Chevron Bangladesh invests in activities and programs that focus primarily on access to education, entrepreneurship support, livelihood support, primary health care facilities, and skill development.

They carry out most of these projects in partnership with leading non-governmental organizations.



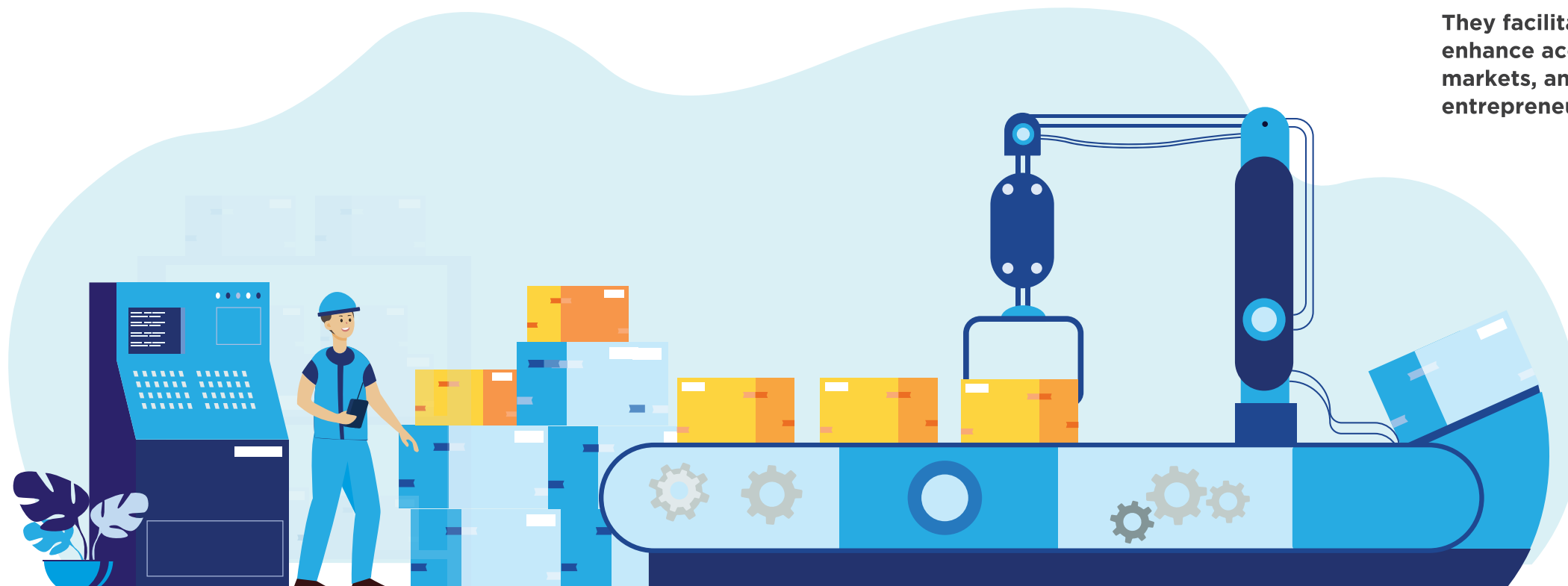
nutshell
About Swisscontact

Swisscontact is an INGO founded in 1959. They work exclusively on development projects through international cooperation.

Swisscontact promotes inclusive economic, social and ecological development to effectively contribute towards sustainable and widespread prosperity in developing and emerging economies.

With this purpose in mind, they offer the chance to economically and socially disadvantaged people to improve their lives on their own initiative.

They facilitate projects which enhance access to information, markets, and skills by creating entrepreneurial ecosystems.



A photograph of two welders in a workshop. They are wearing blue protective helmets and gloves. One welder is holding a torch, and the other is holding a piece of metal. They are working on a metal frame. The background is slightly blurred, showing a workshop environment.

2

**phases of Uttoron,
empowering youth
for a better life.**

Chevron was swift to identify the immense potential of youth in Bangladesh and address the matter.

Alongside Swisscontact, they initiated “Uttoron” in 2016, a multi-year skills development project spanning rural communities that housed the most disenfranchised youth.

The philosophy was to provide relevant skills training to allow youth to become self-sufficient and maximize their potential to prosper in life.

phase 1

Phase 1 of the Uttoron project aimed to train 1,400 youth in three districts of the Sylhet division of Bangladesh.

13% of the Bangladeshi youth with tertiary education and 28% with secondary-level education were unemployed at the time. And these were the main target populations Uttoron was aiming for.

Far exceeding the preliminary expectations of trainees and graduate members, the project's first phase ended successfully in 2019.



phase 2

Chevron and Swisscontact both realized, considering the potential of the youth population, the impact was not enough. More needed to be done.

As a result, the second phase of Uttoron came into existence from 2019 to 2022, and this time, Uttoron took a more holistic approach to tackle the challenges of the skills development domain.

Essentially, it was noted that access to quality training would prepare the youth for the changing market. And to ensure easy access to training, the precondition is making such services available to those who need it most.

That realization eventuated into a sustainable training center, which can create a positive ripple effect in the lives of youth for decades, even beyond the project period.

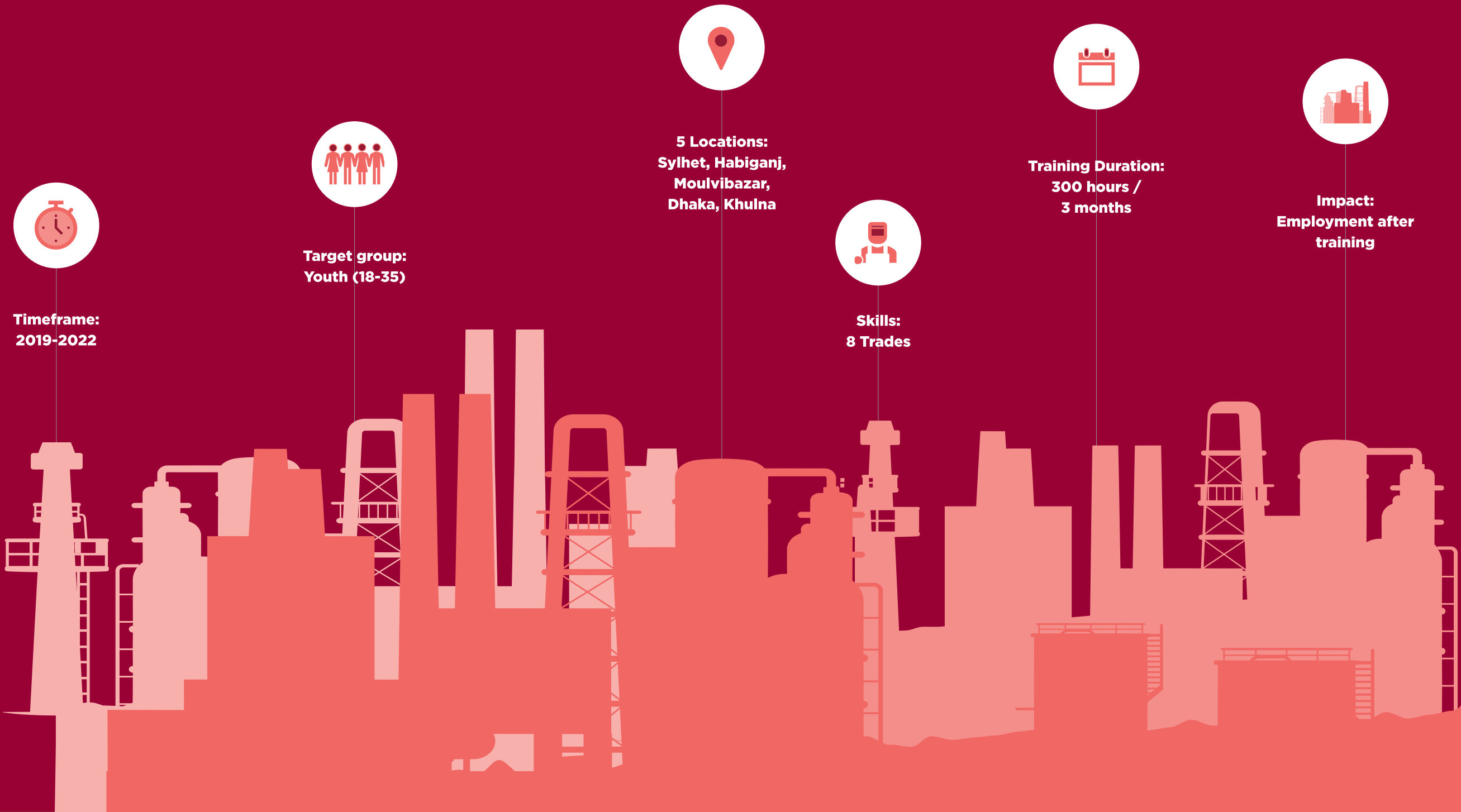


Two (2) new components were integrated into the project, which ushered in fresh dimensions to tackle the multitude of challenges faced by youth.

Briefly put, to equip local youth with the right skills, create greater access to training, and capacitate the government so the impact can be magnified.

phase 2

Uttoron at a glance





The Uttoron program is a key part of Chevron's success story.

As the Bangladesh economy continues to diversify and expand, the need for a technically skilled workforce is becoming all the more pressing, which is where Uttoron will be a significant value addition for the country at large.

However, private sector entities cannot possibly work alone to make the fundamental changes that are needed at a systemic level. Rather, market actors must work in tandem with government stakeholders to ensure a lasting impact.

On that regard, Uttoron is an excellent example of public-private collaboration for the greater good and will set a benchmark for such working relationships for years to come.

Chevron and Swisscontact's value systems are perfectly aligned; providing youths with access to financial instruments, market knowledge, and tools they need to lift themselves out of poverty.

I am confident that in creating an enabling environment for sustained empowerment, Uttoron will pave the way for a prosperous future for thousands of youths seeking to make their mark in a competitive world."

Muhammad Imrul Kabir
Director, Corporate Affairs
Chevron Bangladesh



3

components
which weld
Uttoron's approach.



“

Swisscontact firmly believes in harnessing the power of partnerships between the private and public sectors to make sustainable impacts on people's lives. 'Uttoron – skills for better life' is a shining example of such partnerships.

Uttoron achieved remarkable success in the skills development field of Bangladesh. Despite challenges by the COVID-19 pandemic for much of its duration, the project remained steadfast, innovative, and agile to adapt through uncertain times.

Uttoron consistently thrived and kept on creating opportunities for Bangladeshi youth, especially women, by catalyzing sustainable empowerment in the face of livelihood challenges.

Founded through strong collaborations with both private and public sector partners, the infrastructure implemented by Uttoron will continue to impart sustainable benefits long after the project ends.

I would like to thank Chevron for entrusting Swisscontact with the Uttoron project, for it shows that we can reach greater heights with this kind of cooperation.

Philippe Schneuwly
Chairman
Swisscontact North America Inc.
&
CEO and Executive Director
Swisscontact
Swiss Foundation for Technical
Cooperation

By the year 2031, Bangladesh aspires to be an upper-middle-income country promising social development, sustainable economic growth, and technological innovation.

With nearly a million workers entering the labor force each year, the government, alongside private sector partners, has put an emphasis on increasing human capital via technical and vocational initiatives.

To not only create jobs for the youth today but also to empower them to fill those roles effectively and efficiently for the nation’s sustainable growth.

nutshell
Who are youth?

According to the Government of Bangladesh, the population falling within the age group of 18-35 is considered youth.

They are the primary economic drivers of a nation.

**keeping the vision in mind,
Uttoron revised their efforts by:**



**capacitating
the youth**
as Component 1

Capacitating, educating, and empowering youth by providing highly demanded skills training and helping them to become economically self-dependent.



**creating access to
training for youth**
as Component 2

By establishing a sustainable training center in collaboration with Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) that will continue to train aspiring workers far beyond the project’s timeframe.



**facilitating
government
capacity
development**
as Component 3

Upgradation of a government training institute and providing advanced welding training that is accepted in the global market.

armouring youth with the right skills

component 1:
**providing training
to 2,000 youth**



Within a period
of just 3 years



Across four
4 districts



177,100 community
members were reached




Partnered with
4 training service
providers




Training skills of
8 trades,
300 hours / 3 months
training



2014 youth
enrolled




74% graduates
employed



From which, 1931
participants
successfully graduated



Only 4%
drop out rate



24% female
graduate

shortlisting relevant trades

Uttoron's primary focus was employing youth; to equip them through vocational training on industry demanded skills (or trades) which they may apply sustainably today, and tomorrow.

The trades for the training were selected through Rapid Market Assessment (RMA), which included a detailed survey of nearly 90 employers, community leaders, potential trainees, sector experts, and training service providers.

The purpose of the RMA was to understand the right balance between the demand and supply of skills in today's contemporary job sectors.

Based on this assessment, Uttoron shortlisted eight (8) relevant trades, including electrical installation and maintenance (EIM), housekeeping, machinist, mobile phone servicing (MPS), packaging and finishing operations (PFO), plumbing and pipe fitting (PPF), refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC), and welding.

screening applications

Uttoron used a robust three (3) phase screening process which began through grassroot level campaigns. It was then followed by a registration process for the pre-selection of trainees.

The final screening and selection were made after the candidates attended a day-long workshop and interviews.

The result of this strict screening was a phenomenally low four (4) % dropout rate.





nutshell

What are Hard Skills?

Objective, measurable skills acquired through education, professional experiences, or training.

nutshell

What are Soft Skills?

Non-technical skills that describe how you interact with others and carry out daily tasks.

soft skill development

Rapid industrialization requires a workforce with the basic skills necessary to qualify for a position on any factory floor.

However, beyond hard skills, their capacity for adapting and learning is the greatest skill they can possess. In other words, soft skills matter.

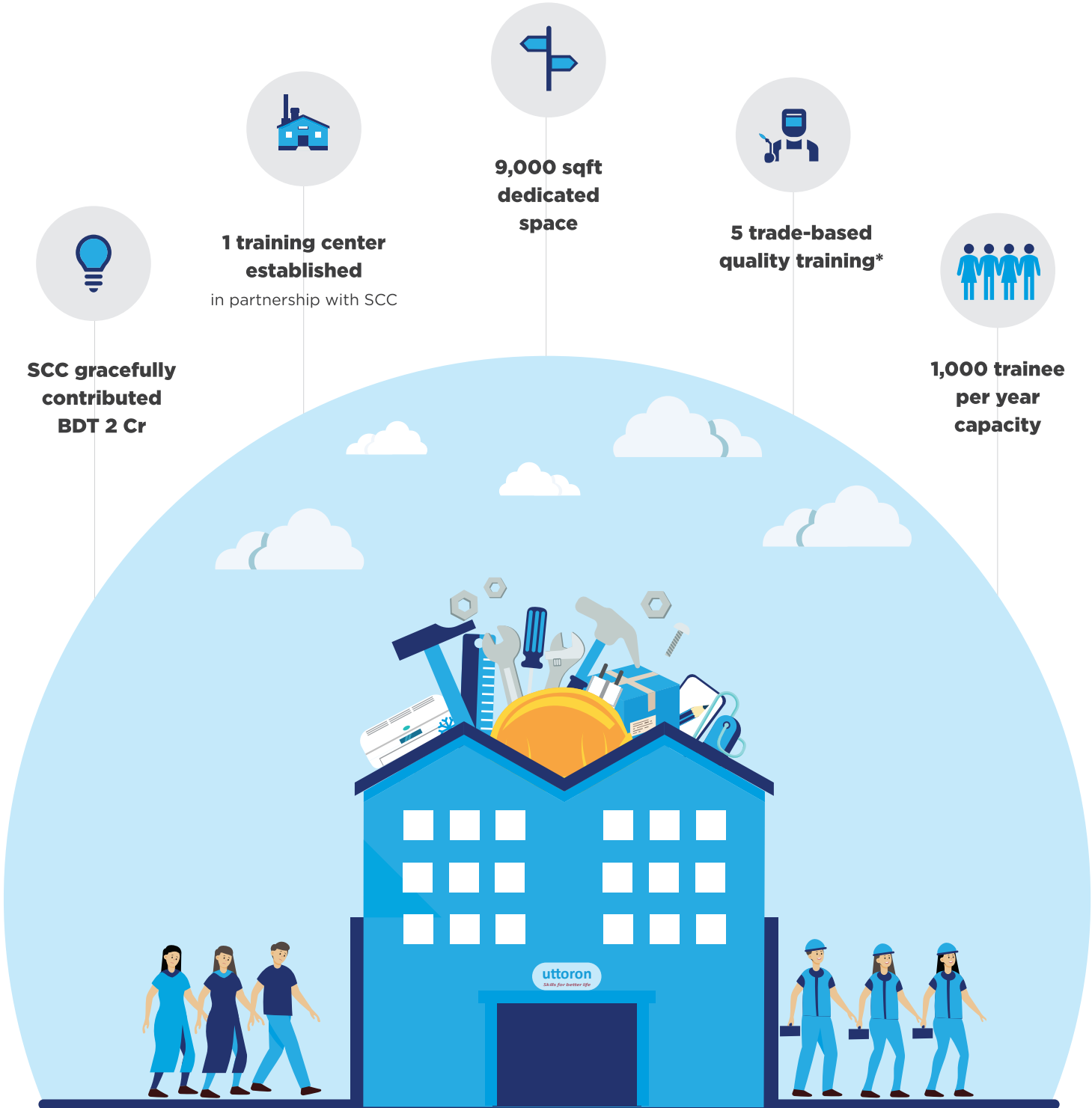
Therefore, Uttoron also focused on developing the professional soft skills of trainees.

Each trainee needed to participate in a workshop before graduation, which equipped them for their professional placement.

allowing access to training

component 2: establishing a permanent training center

* Trades are electrical installation and maintenance, housekeeping, information and communications technology, plumbing, pipe fitting and welding.



encouraging participation

Lasting impact can only be achieved when all stakeholders are engaged in the process of attaining a common goal, and Uttoron realized it from the very beginning when it started its journey. A sustainable impact needs a sustainable solution. This was where access to training was reflected as the issue. Easy access to training is an imperative element for ensuring the readiness of the youth to take on the challenges of their professional life.

World Bank surveys report women's participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Bangladesh reaches a maximum of 13% in public institutions and 33% in private institutions. Female participation in the workforce remains less than 50% of male participation rates across primary working ages. Of those females joining work, over 80% are engaged in low-skill, low-productivity jobs in the informal sector with little opportunity for career progression.

Uttoron operated with the strong belief that TVET is one of the most important mediums to equip women with employable skills and improve their job market participation.

Source: World Bank Blogs



nutshell

One Building, Two Purposes?

The four (4)-story building provided by SCC was designed to function as BUTTC during the day and as Bholananda Night School during the night, on separate floors.

nutshell

Who provided the training?

SCC partnered with E-Learning & Earning Ltd, a private information and technology training provider, to operate this facility profitably beyond the project conclusion.

passing the torch

Every development project has a start and an end. And Uttoron realized that.

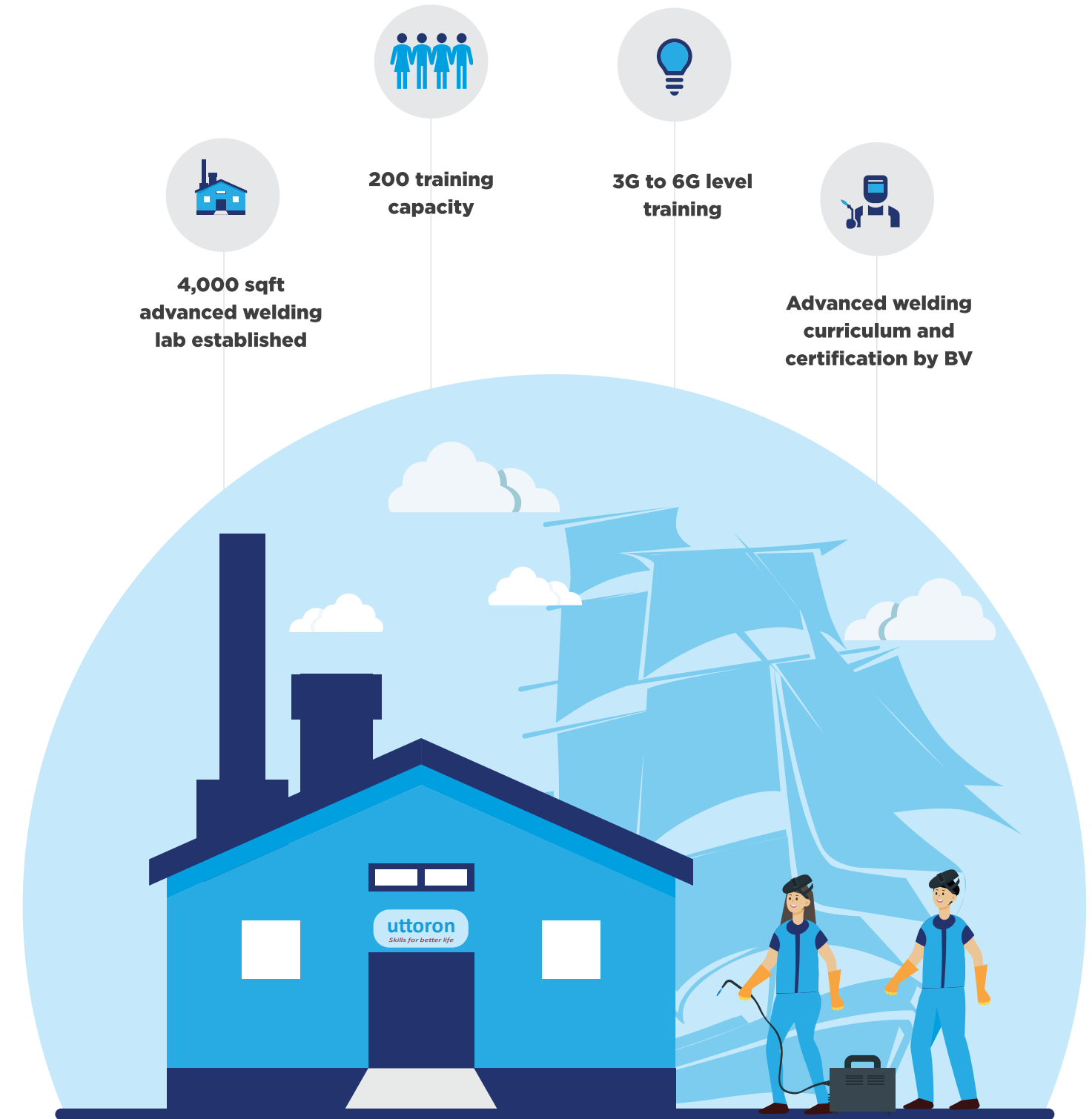
Unless the task is handed over to the proper authorities to continue to create further impact, all the hard work would go in vain. The flaming torch lit by Uttoron needed to be passed on to someone, so it would keep on giving light in the future.

Forecasting this, Uttoron identified and prudently selected SCC as the rightful partner who can carry the cause forward after the project finishes its journey. SCC was fully onboarded and became engaged in providing youth in the city with better access to training.

As a partner, they contributed a four (4) story building at the heart of Sylhet, which was later converted into a modern training center. Uttoron transformed the infrastructure with the required equipment and the necessary technical facilities.

training youth to compete globally

component 3:
**upgrading government
training center for
advanced welding
training**



on global acceptance

Substantial investment is made in the skills development sector by government and development partners. Unfortunately, the training provided by most programs from aforementioned investments often fails to meet international standards. As a result, despite getting certificates from our institutes, the youth do not gain access to global markets as these certifications are not globally accepted.

Hence, to address this particular issue, Uttoron led the introduction of training standards of global acceptance. Advanced welding training was a result of this realization.

In order to impart this training, the first requirement was selecting a training partner who had the capacity to provide training on global standards.



powerful partnerships

After a careful and meticulous assessment of multiple state training institutions, Khulna Shipyard (KSY) was chosen as the rightful partner for the cause. As the premier shipbuilding organization in the country, the institute hosted high-quality trainers and training facilities. But that was not enough.

KSY needed an internationally standardized curriculum which led the project to partner with the French welding certification authority, Bureau Veritas (BV).

In collaboration with BV, Uttoron developed a course curriculum on advanced welding, which assured that the youth shall avail themselves to advanced welding training. These vital partnerships enabled Uttoron to develop the first-ever internationally accepted welding certification program in Bangladesh.

A four (4) month-long residential training was provided by KSY, and at the end of the training, BV conducted an assessment to provide the certification. All to ensure the sustainability of the training beyond the project phase.



challenges unseen, for women



Many of the roadblocks discovered during the course of the project revolve directly around societal attitudes and cultural norms.

Women unsurprisingly bore the brunt of the worst of these effects, as they are generally discouraged from taking jobs that do not have a large number of women already working in that industry.

scarcity of trades

Women in the country are oftentimes relegated to specific jobs because of their gender.

societal attitudes

By and large, most rural families prefer not to have their daughters join the workforce.

geographical immobility

Long-distant workplaces show reluctance among employees to come to work.

fear of personal security

Women's personal security becomes a great issue during movement to and from work.

lack of residential facilities

Most industrial jobs are far away from housing and, as such, need to provide safe living quarters.

4

**successes,
worth
mentioning.**



**Soft skill app
development**



**Introducing PFO trade in
Bangladesh, adopted by
the government**



**Internationally
standardized advanced
welding training**



**Developed national
competency standard on
welding inspection, for the
welding inspector occupation
with government**



soft skill app development

The launch of Uttoron App is a noteworthy achievement for the project. With an intuitively approachable user interface, the app is one of a kind. It focuses on soft skill development for the trainees, who can download the app on Android-based smartphones.

The android based static app is the first app in the Bengali Language available on the google play store. It orients the users on the concept of soft skills, which is often misunderstood. Lessons covered include communication, conflict resolution, teamwork, and time management. Including guidelines on general financial planning, management, rules of employment, and many more.

Source: Swisscontact.org



introducing PFO trade in Bangladesh, adopted by the government

When it comes to market research, Uttoron has always delivered with holistic deliberation. They assessed the demands of the private sector and the market by introducing valuable training programs like Packaging and Finishing Operations (PFO).

The PFO trade was a unique initiative, which was collaboratively materialized through a tripartite partnership with private sector parties and the Government of Bangladesh.

Uttoron formed a partnership with RMG and Textile Industry Skills Council (RTISC) and the Bangladesh Garments Accessories & Packaging Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BGAPMEA), to develop the curriculum for this trade, which was later adopted and approved by the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA), under the Prime Minister's Office.

Given the success of the packaging sector, the PFO trade has a stronger chance of giving female employees entry to the formal job market.





nutshell
growth of the PFO industry

By 2030, the value of the PFO industry is anticipated to reach approximately BDT One (1) Lac 43 Thousand Cr.

nutshell
One of a kind training?

Uttoron is the only project in Bangladesh that offers Advanced Welding Training in internationally accepted 3G to 6G Level Welding.



internationally standardized advanced welding training

Through a hand-in-hand partnership with KSY, Uttoron laid the foundation for advanced welding training that would create better access for the youth in the global job market.

The demand for expert welders globally is higher than ever. Not just in the global marketplace but also for the megaprojects the government of Bangladesh is currently undertaking, certified welders are in high demand. Unfortunately, local resources fail to meet these standards. They have a limited scope of entering the international job market as their certificates are not of accepted standards.

This advanced welding training will create the opportunity to avail internationally accepted 3G to 6G level welding certification to Bangladeshi youth.



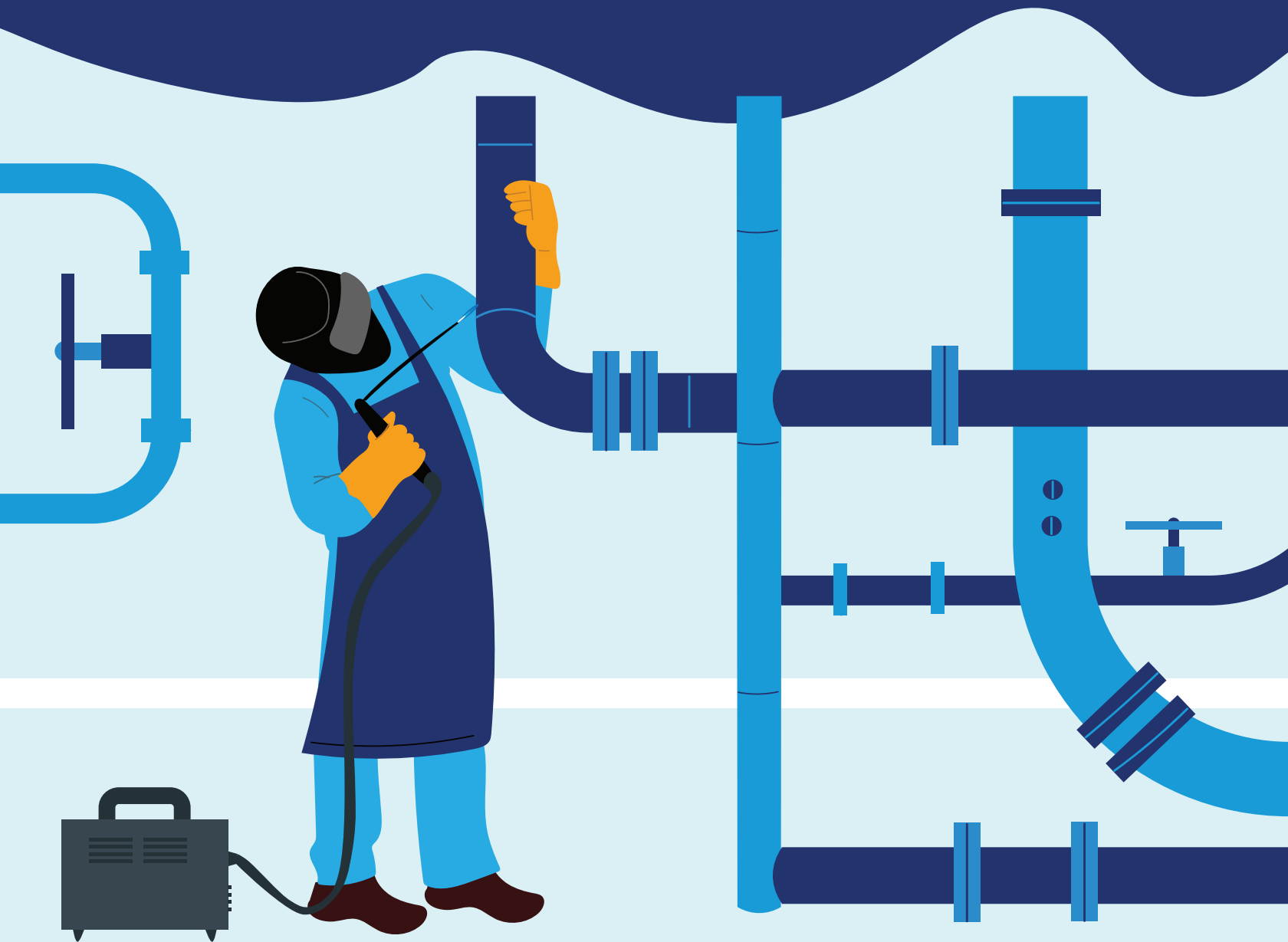
national competency standard for welding inspection for welding inspector trade

Investing in existing welding experts can be a way of directly contributing to national growth.

Local industries have a significant need for skilled welders who have the expertise and are able to operate as inspectors or supervisors. No national competency level existed at the time for qualified welders to apply for certification as welding inspectors.

Realizing this, Uttoron moved quickly to seize the opportunity to form a partnership with NSDA in order to develop the CS for the welding inspection certification.

what was unique about Uttoron?



Uttoron wanted to empower youth with sustainable skills and employment funnels to change their lives forever.

But were the youth...interested?

Pre-training Orientation Workshop (PTO)

Uttoron put together a robust three (3) step selection process for the aspiring participants, including a day-long workshop.

This unique selection process helped the project to match the right trainees for the right trades. And because of the robust filtration, Uttoron's dropout rate resulted at merely four (4)%.

Pre-Employment Capacity Development Workshop (PCDOW)

Adapting to any new work environment has always been difficult. Given their level of experience, newly trained trainees would be subjected to tougher conditions.

Uttoron took this into account and devised a one-day PCDOW workshop with the trainees to orient them on workplace behavior, etiquette, regulations, and rules.



5

notes,
for the future.

The skills that the youth have internalized through their program, and shall as time flows, will serve them for a lifetime. Reflecting the purest meaning of sustainable practices.

The in-demand skills of the market provided a confidence boost for the youth, encouraging them to nurture their newfound powers to become future entrepreneurs.

This purpose was at the heart of Uttoron from the very beginning, to provide the skills necessary for a better life.

Uttoron might be ending its journey but it made sure that it keeps on giving back to the future generation. The entire program was strategized to be Impactful, resilient, and self-sustainable beyond the project's tenure.

The end, as you read it, may have just been the beginning of a prosperous, impactful, and long future for Bangladesh, and all stakeholders involved.

Fahim's dream of becoming self-reliant



22-year-old Fahim Abrar's life took an unexpected turn with the shocking accident of his father, who was the only breadwinner of a family of seven (7). His father was laid off, leaving the entire family destitute.

To find his fortune, Fahim had to move to Dhaka and look for opportunities. He was fascinated to learn about Uttorn and its job placement opportunities and got himself enrolled in a training program at DAM.

Fahim completed the Mobile Phone Servicing (MPS) operation training successfully at Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM). Before attending the training, he had no expertise in mobile servicing work, but now he can fix all types of mobiles. After finishing the training, he was offered a job at a store named Linnex Mobile.

Fahim now aspires to set up a mobile business of his own.

”

I will have a big shop one day, and there will be all sorts of mobile and equipment in that shop.



ambitious Shahana and how she inspires her community

“Being a local female worker with skills training, I have the full potential to reach my career goal. It never occurred to me that I couldn’t do this, and I know I will achieve it with my deliberation and the prayers of my well-wishers.”

Previously, Shahana was a schoolteacher, which earned her respect in the community, but it did not pay enough to cover her family’s living costs. She was in need of extra money to support her family.

This led her to take a leap of faith and join Uttoron’s training program, hoping this would materialize as a respectable job with a higher income.

Uttoron did not disappoint.

”

I aspire to be the trendsetter of ‘women can do it too’ in my community.

Shahana Begum
Asst. Operator, PRAN-RFL
Industrial Park, Habiganj

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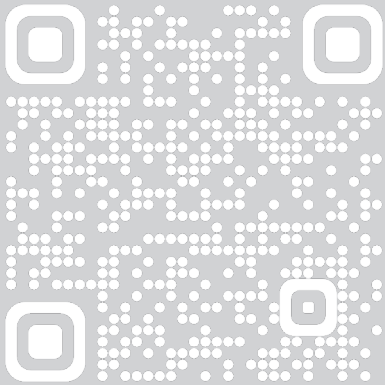
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