

## Centum Foundation launches Centum GRO to skill deaf youth in India

*Partners with US-based Global Reach Out (GRO) which has already trained over 1,000 youth across emerging markets*

*Aims to provide leadership and entrepreneurial skills to the deaf*

**New Delhi, February 23, 2017:** Centum Foundation, the CSR arm of Centum Learning, an ISO 9001:2015-certified skilling MNC, today announced the launch of Centum GRO to train deaf youth in India. The initiative is in collaboration with US-based Global Reach Out (GRO) a non-profit organization run by Deaf individuals, which has already imparted leadership skills and entrepreneurial training to over 1,000 deaf youth across India, Kenya, Guatemala, Honduras, and Thailand.

**Dr. Madan M. Vasishta**, former Chief Advisor to the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre, New Delhi and **Sanjeev Duggal**, CEO and MD, Centum Learning inaugurated the first center. Aarti Chandna, Vice President, Centum Foundation, Dr. Alim Chandani, Associate VP, Centum GRO and senior management from prospective employers such as Lemon Tree, Concentrix, etc. were also present on the occasion. Incidentally, Dr. Alim Chandani will head the first center located at Hauz khas. Dr. Chandani has dedicated himself to working towards empowering deaf people for over a decade now.

The pilot batch has already commenced with training underway of nearly 40 students who are graduates from various streams. Besides skills training to the Deaf candidates, the program will also include 'workplace sensitivity' training sessions to potential employers to help companies assimilate people with disabilities more effectively at their workplaces. In the second year of operation, Centum GRO plans to develop and create the first entrepreneurial training program for the deaf community to nurture future entrepreneurs.

Speaking at the launch, **Sanjeev Duggal, CEO and MD, Centum Learning** said, "*Centum Learning has been working for over a decade creating a skilled and empowered India. With Centum GRO we will drive sustainable transformation for the Deaf in the country. There are approximately 12 million deaf people in India, 80% of who have no access to any formal education. But for those who receive formal education, there is a lull after that. We are aiming to provide that last mile connect through soft skills training and entrepreneurship skills empowering young deaf adults. It is indeed a memorable day for us.*"

At the launch, **Dr. Madan M. Vasishta**, said, "*I feel honored to be a part of such a heartwarming initiative. Centum GRO is a remarkable effort of Centum Learning to train and empower the deaf. This initiative will not only help them to access jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities but will also boost their morale and confidence. This will also strengthen the social fabric of our society as a whole.*"

**Dr. Alim Chandani, AVP, Centum GRO**, added, "*I am delighted to be a part of Centum GRO. This initiative is a great stepping stone towards encouraging deaf youth in India to be innovative and self-reliant. Our long-term plan is to make them future entrepreneurs by providing them high-quality leadership, management and entrepreneurship skills training in a focused empowering environment which will collectively equip them to become 'Changemakers'.*"

Besides providing much-needed leadership and management skills to deaf youth through this initiative, Centum Foundation will also facilitate jobs and encourage self-entrepreneurship. The training, which will vary from one to three months, is being offered under four segments: Multimedia, Accounting, BPO/DEO, and IT. The minimum eligibility criterion is a Bachelor's degree (B.A., BFA, B.Com, etc).

Centum GRO's proprietary training program is being designed and implemented by deaf experts from the United States. The experts partnering with peers identified in India will share best practices in leadership and management skills and start-up enterprise management with participants of the program. The training model has four components – Educating, Preparing, Training, and Sustaining – where visual aids and multimedia resources are used to enhance visual learning for participants. The program is being funded by Bharti Airtel.

**About Centum Learning:** Centum Learning is a leading organization in the global skills development and vocational training landscape. An ISO 9001:2015 certified company, it's mission is to improve business productivity and enhance youth employability. Centum Learning, with over 1400 learning and development specialists and their domain expertise in 21 industry verticals, has skilled more than 1.2 million people. It operates out of over 100 centres and close to 1000 schools in rural and urban locations across 17 countries including India, Nepal and 15 countries in Africa.

Centum Learning has successfully partnered Central and State Ministries, Central Board of Secondary Education-CBSE, Public Sector Enterprises and more than 350 corporates such as Delhi Airport, Bharti Airtel, Genpact, National Bank of Kenya, Lafarge Cement and Maruti Suzuki. In India, Centum Learning has set up Centum WorkSkills India, in partnership with NSDC to enhance the skills of 12 million youth across the country.

**About Centum Foundation:** Centum Foundation, the CSR arm of Centum Learning, is engaged in carrying on social and charitable activities of national importance including vocational training across India. The society has conducted programs impacting national issues in the field of environment protection, women welfare and empowerment, vocational training and health awareness. Centum Foundation implements skilling programs using the technical guidance and expertise of Centum WorkSkills India Limited (CWSI- a subsidiary of Centum Learning) which holds huge experience in the field of vocational skilling, livelihood creation, education and women empowerment.

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