

## **STTP on Rural Development: Opportunities, Challenges and Role of HEIs (Online)**

The STTP program has explored the important subject of Rural Development which covered right from the dynamic approaches and interventions of rural development to various opportunities and challenges of the sector. The program was precisely divided into topics such as farming and agriculture, appropriate technologies, rural governance and management, rural entrepreneurship, rural help, rural education, Role of HEI's and challenges for them. The program got a good response from the participants who were mostly from the teaching fraternity. 240 Participants completed the program. The STTP was divided into three phases. Namely Phase 1: 24 May 2021 to 29 May 2021, Phase 2 : 31 May 2021 to 5 June 2021, Phase 3: 7 June 2021 to 12 June 2021 and was conducted in an online mode.

The participants were provided with the study material to prepare in the form of recorded online lectures of the experts. The experts were selected on the basis of their background in the field. The eminent expert helped participants in not only understanding the integrities of the rural sector but also in the opportunities to do something for rural development. Various case studies and videos shown by the experts build the sense of responsibility amongst the participants. Mr. Milind Joshi who is currently the Project Coordinator for Gosikhurd Rehabilitation project is also a member of an NGO named as Janakalyan Kari Samiti. He discussed various issues related to Development in Rural Transformation. He also showcased his works carried out in the Rural Areas. Dr. Dilip Peshwe, Professor in Department of Materials and Metallurgical Engineering of Visveswaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT), delivered two lectures: first on Opportunities for HEIs in Rural Development and Biogas Technology for Rural Households. He also showcased his extensive work carried out by his team in VNIT on the aforementioned topics. The mandatory NEP Program session was conducted in all the three phases. This expert talk was delivered by Dr. Rajesh Pande, Principal RCOEM. Dr. Rahul Ralegaonkar, Professor in Department of Civil Engineering in VNIT highlighted the works carried out by his team in the area of Low cost housing. His topic in the STTP was Low Cost Sustainable Housing for Rural Areas. Mr. Kandasamy A. Ravikumar, Deputy Director, Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Rural Industrialization (MGIRI) delivered lectures on two topics in which he is currently undertaking research namely, Use of Solar Energy for Energy needs of Villages and Appropriate Technologies. He showcased various Solar energy systems which are low cost as well as a few low cost mechanisms, that have improved the lives of the villagers. Dr. Rajesh Vaidya, Assistant Professor, Shri Ramdeobaba College of Engineering and Management, Nagpur, delivered a lecture on Capacity Building for Village Governance (GPIs) and Role of HEIs. He also discussed specific case studies related to the topic with the participants. A topic on State Rural Livelihood Mission and Other Government Schemes and Agencies was taken up by Mr. Amit Asnikar, Development Professional – Rural Livelihoods. In his lecture, he talked about how HEIs can help in the Livelihood building of the villagers.

The STTP also had a lecture on Women Empowerment and Self Help Groups, which was delivered by the Director of yet another NGO "Shape Foundation", Mr. Prasad Kulkarni, who has closely worked with Prof. Chetan Singh Solanki from IIT Bombay. Dr. Abhijeet Agashe, Associate Professor in the Department of Management Technology of Shri Ramdeobaba College of Engineering and Management, Nagpur

delivered a lecture on Rural Marketing and Supply Chain. He discussed some successful case studies related to FabIndia, ITC, etc. The STTP also covered the topic of Rural Education, which was effectively covered by Dr. Nilesh Ugemuge, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics, Anand Niketan College, Warora. Coming from a Rural background and getting education from a rural setup, he aptly described the challenges and opportunities for HEIs, which can be applied. Dr. Archana Shrivastava from Jaypee Business School, NOIDA covered the topic on Role of HEIs on Rural Skill Development. Her topic showcased the opportunities that can be created through proper training. Rural Innovation was another lecture that was delivered by Dr. Rupesh Pais, who talked about Frugal Innovation or Jugaad, that villagers use for their day to day activities and which can be replicated at other places, where similar problems exist. Dr. Nishant Shende, Professor of Economics at Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth engaged the audience on Role of HEIs on Farming and Agriculture. He discussed at length the reason for low farm produce and how it can be boosted through technological interventions. Dr. Jeetendra Bhakne, Director of Swanand Govigyan, discussed the topic of Govigyan or the Science of Cows. He showcased some of his products that were developed using Cow Dung or Cow Urine. He also spoke about the importance of conserving the Cow even after her productive life and how it can help in health sciences. Professor Virendra K. Vijay, Professor Chair IREDA and Coordinator of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, IIT Delhi gave a detailed information on Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, its objectives and the outcomes expected. He also shared the success stories of how HEIs have helped some villages achieve solution to various problems. In another lecture on Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, Prof. Vivek Kumar from IIT Delhi conducted a workshop on "How to conduct Baseline Surveys and Develop a Village Development Plan". He also explained the PRA tool and how it can be used to Develop a Village Development Plan. Dr. Urmila Kshirsagar from the Vivekananda Mission Hospital, Khapri, Nagpur spoke on Rural Healthcare and Role of HEIs. She also suggested the technical institutions to develop portable products related to orthopedics and Blood testing equipment. She also emphasized the criticality of health in the context of distances from the city and how portable equipment and its miniaturization can help in saving lives of villagers. Dr. Sachin Mandavgane, Associate Professor with Department of Architecture, Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology, engaged a session on Engagement through Unnat Bharat Abhiyan. He showcased all the work carried out by VNIT under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan. The STTP ended with a small test on the sessions and the certificates were given to all participants who passed the test.

Many participants shared their willingness to take concrete steps towards Rural Development during the feedback sessions. The institution itself has identified the need of rural development and therefore is working to get the most out of it. The management department of the institution has started the course rural engagement in its curriculum for the students. The STTP program has taught about various innovative practices in the rural sector. It also talked about the quality of work done and the work which is supposed to be carried out in future in this field. The STTP was aimed at enhancing the knowledge and showcasing various avenues which can be taken over in future by aspirants. With the help of the initiatives in the sector, one can think of starting Rural entrepreneurship.