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**KURUKSHETRA – SEPTEMBER - 2017**
1. **SKILL INDIA: CHALLENGES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND THE WAY FORWARD**

- Skills are the driver of the modern economy. Vocational education and training is aimed at enhancing the employability of an individual, by facilitating the individual's transition into the labour market.

- India is at the cusp of reaping its demographic dividend. Its population pyramid is expected to bulge in the category of 15 - 59 years over the next decade.

- The current capacity of Industrial training institutes which still form the backbone of the India’s traditional vocational education system is 25 lakh but the estimated demand is that of 50 lakh.

- On the demand side, skill gap studies commissioned by the National skill development Corporation suggest that 10.9 crore incremental human resources will be required across 24 high growth sectors by 2022.

- India's skill training programs must not only equip youth with marketable skills to make them employable but also to train youth to be self employed or take up entrepreneurship as 90 percent of the workforce is employed in unorganised sector at present.

- Along with issues related to capacity, quality and employability - attitudinal factors about how skills training is perceived by both potential trainees and employers must be addressed.

- The private sector investment in the promotion of skills development is very low when compared to other countries.

- The state skill training sector also fragmented as over 20 ministries operated range of skill development programmes prior to 2014.

**Key policy instruments taken:**

- The national policy for skill development and entrepreneurship 2015, which outlines the overarching vision of Skill India.

- The National skill development Mission 2015, which lays down a framework for implementation of Skill India program.

- The Apprentices Act 1961, was modified with a view to encourage industries to take on apprentices.

- A grading system has been introduced in the short term skill ecosystem to differentiate between performing and non performing ITIs.

- Comprehensive accreditation and affiliation norms have been created and released for the first time.

- 63 curricula have been upgraded through active consultations with the industry. 35 new trades have been introduced with a focus on emerging fields such as renewable energy.

- National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme was launched for incentivizing employers to onboard apprentices.

- The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra initiative aims to create model, aspirational, state of art training centres in every district of
the country, opening up access to high quality training facilities to youth across the country.

- India International skills centre program, seeks to provide skill training at global standards to youth who aspire to work hard.

- The mission also focuses on horizontal and vertical integration between formal and vocational education streams, which will create new career pathways for young people.

- The recent reforms like demonetisation, Aadhar and implementation of Goods and Service Tax (GST) are attempts in transition to change from informal economy to formal economy so that Indian Entrepreneurs can contribute to India's growth trajectory.

- Pradhan Mantri Yuva Yojana seeks to provide active support to budding entrepreneurs in the informal sector and facilitating their transition to formal sector through MSME Entrepreneurship development.

- Massive online open courses are also devised to provide skill training to at least 7 lakh students in 5 years.

- Indian Skill Development Service was constituted as a Group A service, is an attempt to attract young and talented administrators for Skill Development.

2. NATIONAL POLICY ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP - 2015 : AN OVERVIEW

- The national policy has a broader framework in that it covers skill development of the youth for wage employment, entrepreneurship and also acknowledges recognition of prior learning.

- The need for a National Skill Policy arises from the fact that India is almost home to one fifth of the world population.

**An Analysis**

- The national policy on the Skill development and Entrepreneurship proposes to bring about inclusivity by bridging the gender, social and sectoral divide and by ensuring the skilling needs of disadvantaged and disabled.

- On the entrepreneurial front, the policy addresses to foster innovation driven and social entrepreneurship to address the needs of the population at the bottom of the pyramid.

- The adoption of NSQF facilitates multiple pathways to a prospective trainee / youth to move horizontally or vertically both within the vocational framework and training.

- Under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas yojana a total of 30.67 lakh candidates were trained as of now. Out of which 2.9 lakh received placement.

- As per the estimates the total need of skilling the country was estimated around to be 40 crore for 2015 - 2022 of which 30 crore were to be covered by upskilling and reskilling and remaining 10 crore were the fresh entrants to the market.

- The program aimed at improving the skilling landscape such as the PMKVY, SANKALP, STRIVE, craftsman training, Apprenticeship training etc would also facilitate in creating an environment for skilled manpower to meet the demand emerging from the Make In India sectors.
The policy also mentions about setting up of Kaushal Vardhan kendras at panchayat level by state government to impart skill training in local employment/livelihood oppourtunities for school dropouts, adolescent girls, housewives and rural youth.

The national Skill development corporation is also imparting skill training centres across the country including rural areas through private training partners.

To improve the quality of standards in training, ISO 29990 certification standards have been implemented all over the country to maintain uniform standard.

The National Apprenticeship Promotion scheme was launched to incentivise small entrepreneurs to engage apprentices, with the government reimbursing 25 percent of the total cost stipend paid by the employers.

The credit needs of Start ups are addressed by the Indian Aspiration Fund that boosts the start up fund of funds ecosystem.

Atal incubation centres and Atal tinkering labs are started in schools and colleges to promote the innovation under the Atal innovation mission run by NITI AAYOG.

Challenges

- The perception about skill development still remains as skills to be imbibed by school / college dropouts or those who pursuing for blue collar jobs.

- While convergence of skill development schemes to common norms is achieved, issues still persist on convergence of generic skill programmes across central ministries.

- Shortage of skilled / experience trainers to train or impart the necessary skills in the emerging sectors like renewable energy, mechatronics, etc.,

- Mismatch exists between the aspirations of the skilled trainees and the requirement of the Industry.

- Apprenticeship training is yet to catch up the way with the industry especially with the MSME sector.

- In rural areas, where the shift towards non formal employment, skill training is more in the form of on job training.

- In the fading handicrafts and handloom sectors the skills of rural weavers and artisans needs to be upgraded and their skills need to be certified for up-skilling.

- Skill training in entrepreneurship in rural areas is abysmal and insufficient.

- Information dissemination on placement of skilled trainees across the skill ecosystem is lacking.

3. SKILL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN

- The women in India lives in a common milieu, she owns nothing, not even herself. Without any income or possession of property, they are more marginalised and oppressed than any other sections.

- The challenges for a women in rural India are more severe than their urban counterparts.

- In rural societies, gender discrimination reduces the economic opportunities for girls and young women.
• Deprivation and bias, cultural norms force many girls from poor families into early marriages and child bearing, where they are extremely vulnerable to HIV, sexual violence and physical exploitation.

• The burden of physical tasks such as caring for siblings or elderly, tending to livestock and collecting water and firewood restricts girls’ access to education and employment opportunities.

**KEY POLICY INITIATIVES TAKEN**

**National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015**

- The Policy acknowledges the need for an effective roadmap for promotion of entrepreneurship as the key to a successful skills strategy.

- It addresses key obstacles to skilling, including low aspirational value, lack of integration with formal education, lack of focus on outcomes, low quality of training infrastructure and trainers, etc.

- The Policy seeks to align supply and demand for skills by bridging existing skill gaps, promoting industry engagement, operationalising a quality assurance framework, leverage technology and promoting greater opportunities for apprenticeship training.

**Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)**

- DDU-GKY is a part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), tasked with the dual objectives of adding diversity to the incomes of rural poor families and cater to the career aspirations of rural youth.

- Over 2.7 Lakh candidates have been trained and over 1.34 Lakh candidates have been placed in jobs so in the course of the last financial year. From 2012, DDU-GKY has so far committed an investment of more than INR 5,600 Crores, impacting rural youth pan-India.

- DDU-GKY as part of its management process and MIS requirements ensures that all Training partners invest in IT infrastructure and is working on a nation-wide network for sharing real-time performance data, meaningful graduate and financial information and creating a strong independent Placement Initiative.

**Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) Scheme**

- The STEP Scheme aims to provide skills that give employability to women and to provide competencies and skill that enable women to become self-employed/ entrepreneurs.

- The Scheme is intended to benefit women who are in the age group of 16 years and above across the country.

- The assistance under STEP Scheme will be available in any sector for imparting skills related to employability and entrepreneurship, including but not limited to the Agriculture, Horticulture, Food Processing, Handlooms, Tailoring, Stitching, Embroidery, Zari etc.

**Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD) Scheme**

- The scheme envisages economic empowerment exclusively of women through trade related training, information and counseling extension activities related to trades, products, services etc.
• Under the Scheme financial loans are provided by Nationalized Banks and grants by Government of India at the rate of 30% of the loan subject to maximum limit of Rs.30.00 lakh through NGOs for capacity building and for undertaking self-employment ventures by women in non-farm activities.

**Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)**

- It was launched with the objective of ‘Funding the unfunded’ through institutional finance by providing loans up to 10 lakh for manufacturing, processing, trading, services and activities allied to agriculture.

- The Government has taken various steps towards effective implementation of the scheme. These, inter alia, include intensive publicity campaigns, simplification of application form, Credit Guarantee Scheme, nomination of Mudra Nodal Officer etc.

**Stand up India Scheme**

- The “Stand up India Scheme” is being launched to promote entrepreneurship among Scheduled Caste/Schedule Tribe and Women for loans in the range of Rs. 10 Lakhs to Rs. 100 Lakhs.

- The Scheme is expected to benefit large number of such entrepreneurs, as it is intended to facilitate at least two such projects per bank branch (Scheduled Commercial Bank) on an average one for each category of entrepreneur.

- The process would be led by SIDBI with involvement of Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICCI) and various sector – specific institutions all over the country.

- The offices of SIDBI and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) shall be designated Stand Up Connect Centres (SUCC) to promote this implementation of this scheme.

**National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM):**

- To reduce poverty by enabling the poor households to access gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities resulting in appreciable improvement in their livelihoods on a sustainable basis, through building strong and sustainable grassroots institutions of the poor.

- The interested rural BPL youth would be offered skill development after counselling and matching the aptitude with the job requirements, and placed in jobs that are remunerative

- Self-employed and entrepreneurial oriented poor would be provided skills and financial linkages and nurtured to establish and grow with micro-enterprises for products and services in demand.

- These platforms also offer space for convergence and partnerships with a variety of stakeholders, by building an enabling environment for poor to access their rights and entitlements, public services and innovations.

### 4. ROLE OF NGOS AND PRIVATE SECTOR IN SKILLING

- The half a billion strong and growing labour force of our country is poised to play a decisive role in the global skilling ecosystem.

- According to the economic survey though 63 percent of the population is economically active only 2 percent of the country's population make up to the skilled workforce.
• For enjoying the fruits of demographic dividend, it is important to raise investment in human capital to promote the productivity of the population.

• For about last three decades, the Government has been endeavouring at creation of self employment by providing credit in subsidised form in programmes like IRDP, SJSRY, NRLM, etc.,

• NRLM Mission is launched to reduce poverty by enabling the poor households to access gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities resulting in appreciable improvement in their livelihoods on a sustainable basis, through building strong and sustainable grassroots institutions of the poor.

• The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) aims at providing self-employment to the rural poor through acquisition of productive assets or appropriate skills which would generate additional income on a sustained basis to enable them to cross the poverty line.

• Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), was launched as a holistic credit-cum-subsidy programme, covering all aspects of self-employment.

• National rural employment program was launched to generate additional employment opportunities in the rural areas with the help of surplus food grains.

• Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was notified to provide minimum of 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

ROLE OF OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

NGOs

• Non Governmental organizations are voluntary, autonomous nonprofit units set up to address the various problems and needs in the society.

• The Government have formed many institutions to provide the funding to the NGOs like Cooperatives, Khadi and Village Industries Board, Central social welfare board and CAPART.

• These organizations induct the youth to learning programs in the areas of data science, business analytics, digital marketing, entrepreneurship and project management as well as training in retail, telecom, electronics and health sectors.

Corporate Social Responsibility

• It is also referred as corporate citizenship. It may simply incur some short term losses to the company and that may not be financially beneficial to the company, but instead it will promote positive social and environmental change.

• It has been able to reach many rural areas enabling the youngsters to get an opportunity of skill development.

• It is a great tool make for the industries to make an potential impact as they can align the training courses according to the needs.
Private Partners

- They provide support in setting up institutes for training of trainers to ensure quality across all training programs to train the rural youth.

- They help in promotion of skill development in setting up of large, quality, professional & vocational institutions.

- Social Workers:

  - Social workers are the agents of social change. They build capacity of rural folks by providing suitable skills and by making the rural community sustainable of its own.

  - They also plan to develop skill courses on farm techniques to cater to the unprivileged rural youth.

  - Their role includes monitoring and assisting in the proper implementation of government’s social scheme in rural areas.

Self help Groups

- A SHG is an informal association of people, usually composed of 10 - 20 local individuals with its base in villages.

- Voluntary membership, participatory planning, education and training, resource mobilisation, self management, empowering the members, building linkages, ensuring monitoring and sustainability are some of the features of SHG.

- SGSY is an important scheme for eradication of poverty. This is done by bank credit and Government subsidy. The SHGs are the core component of this scheme.

Diaspora

- UN report says that India now has the largest Diaspora in the world and plays an important role in the development of the country.

- A sustained partnership between the Diaspora and the Indian Government in providing skill development to rural people will empower the rural community and also add to the development of the country.

5. REVAMPING THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

- India has a national literacy average of 74.2 percent, but a rough estimate suggests that only 2.5 percent population has any vocational education.

- To ensure skill development and vocational training for our youth and to equip them with skills for the new market a separate ministry is formed.

Various schemes

- DDU-GKY provides funding support for placement linked skilling projects that address the market demand with funding support ranging from Rs. 25,696 to over Rs. 1 lakh per person, depending on the duration of the project and whether the project is residential or non-residential.

- The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) will cover 24 lakh persons. Skill training would be done based on the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) and industry led standards. Under the scheme, a monetary reward is given to trainees on assessment and certification by third party assessment bodies. The average monetary reward would be around Rs.8000 per trainee.
Challenges

- The perspective of the general public is that of skill being a secondary education and people doubt the capability of the person undergoing education.

- The important stakeholder industry, neither recognizes the skill certificates issued post completion of short term skill courses nor provides pay for them.

- The quality of the curricula and non-uniformity of syllabi between the states is also a major concern.

- The quality and standards of the training institutes are not up to the international standards. In countries like South Korea, Finland vocational education is on par with professional education using the modern tools and skills for providing education.

- The availability of the staff in these ITIs are also a worrying cause as they are poorly skilled to teach the education to the students.

Revamping ITIs

- Government for the first time notified the common syllabi for the vocational courses for the entire country.

- It launched the online portal called indianskillonline.com to provide free online courses to aspirants registered for skill training schemes that can also be downloaded as mobile applications.

- The ITIs spend on staff training and development, which is a significant area in any educational institution.

- The non-state actors like NGOs and civil society organizations must be enroled into the skill providing education system to seek special expertise.

- The industry members should be present in framing the syllabi as this will provide need-based training and ensures the quick placement.

- Awareness must be created by the Government and other organizations to remove the negative thoughts about the vocational education system as it will promote the better functioning of ITIs and necessary skilled workforce in making India as Skill Capital.