

Rural Development through Education System: Unnat Bharat Abhiyan 2.0

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Abstract:

Rural development is about improving the quality of life of all rural people. More specifically, inclusive rural development covers three different but interrelated dimensions: Economic dimension, Social dimension and Political dimension. Unnat Bharat Abhiyan is a project of capacity building towards transformational change in rural development processes by leveraging knowledge institutions to help to design and build the architecture and planning of an Inclusive India. The Mission of UBA is to enable higher educational institutions to work with the people of rural India in identifying development challenges and evolving appropriate solutions for accelerating sustainable growth. The goal of UBA is to provide rural India and regional agencies with access to the professional resources of the institutes of higher education, especially those that have acquired academic excellence in the field of science, engineering and technology, and management. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad (MH) is acting as Regional Coordinating Institute (RCI) for UBA Participating Institutes (PI) of 10 Districts of Maharashtra. The main objective of this paper is to introduce Unnat Bharat Abhiyan. It also explained the Structural Network of UBA and Contribution of HEIs to rural development. It explore the work of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad(MH) in UBA.

Keywords:

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan 2.0 (UBA 2.0), Rural development, Regional Coordinator Institute (RCI), Participating Institutes (PIs), Higher Education Institute (HEI)

Introduction:

Rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific

group of people - the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. The group includes small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless. A strategy for rural development must recognize three points: firstly, the rate of transfer of people out of low productivity agriculture and related activities into more rewarding pursuits has been slow; and, given the relative size of the modern sector in most developing countries, it will remain slow. Secondly, the majority of people in the rural areas of developing countries face varying degrees of poverty; their position is likely to get worse if population expands at unprecedented rates while limitations continue to be imposed by available resources, technology and organizations. Thirdly, rural areas have labor, land and at least some capital which, if mobilized, could reduce poverty and improve the quality of life. This implies fuller development of existing resources, construction of infrastructure, introduction of new production technology, and the creation of new types of institutions and organizations. [1]

Presently, 70% of the population in India lives in rural areas engaged in agrarian economy with agriculture and allied sector employing 51% of the total work-force but accounting for only 17% of the country's GDP. There are huge developmental disconnects between the rural and urban sectors such as inequity in health, education, incomes and basic amenities as well as employment opportunities - all causing great discontent and large-scale migration to urban areas. [2]

On August 22, 2014, Prime Minister Modi urged the directors and chairpersons of IITs to develop appropriate technologies to fast-track their progress. On November 11, 2014, the Ministry of

Human Resource Development (MHRD) launched Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA) with a noble aim of connecting institutions of higher education including Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research (IISERs) to support local communities to address their challenges through customised technology development, diffusion, and social interventions.

UBA project aims to link higher education institutions with set of at least five villages, so that they can contribute to economic and social betterment of these village communities using their knowledge base. Under this scheme, higher education institutions will participate in development activities, particularly in rural areas.

The United Nations (UN) envisioned the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs,) in 2015, with respect to social, economic and ecological goals to be met by 2030. As a result, global and national debates focused their attention on ‘important societal institutions’ that can carry out and execute this agenda. It is here that our universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) step in as critical actors. The role of HEIs has been historically recognized as a public good, with unique social responsibilities in producing knowledge for societal development and sustainability. [3] To archive the objectives of socio-economic development of new India, HEIs can play a important role through active community enggmt. This approach will also contribute to improvements in quality of both teaching and research in HEIs in India! [4]

Background:

The dream of our national father Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi Ji in his seminal work, ‘Hind Swaraj’, the western developmental paradigm, based on centralized technologies and urbanization, has given rise to serious problems like increasing inequity (leading to crime and violence), and climate change due to rapid ecological degradation. To ameliorate these problems, it is necessary to promote development of rural areas in tune with Gandhian vision of self-sufficient ‘village republics’, based on local resources and using decentralized, eco-friendly technologies so that the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, sanitation, health care, energy, livelihood, transportation, and education are locally met. This should be the vision of holistic

development of villages. The imperatives of sustainable development which are being felt more and more acutely all over the world also demand eco-friendly development of the villages and creation of appropriate employment opportunities locally. Increasing urbanization is neither sustainable nor desirable. So far, our professional higher education institutions have largely been oriented to cater to the mainstream industrial sector and, barring a few exceptions, have hardly contributed directly to the development of the rural sector. Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA) is a much needed and highly challenging initiative in this direction. The IIT- Delhi has been designated as the national coordinating institution and BAMU was selected as one of the participating institutions in 2017. Now in 2019, BAMU selected as the Regional Coordinating Institution and Under the Guidance of Hon. Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Pramod Yeole, RCI guides, coordinates and monitors the 179 participating institutions and thier 895 adopted villages of the ten districts namely Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Beed, Dhule, Jalgaon, Jalna, Latur, Nandurbar, Nashik, Osmanabad (10 district from Maharashtra) [6].

Structural network of UBA:

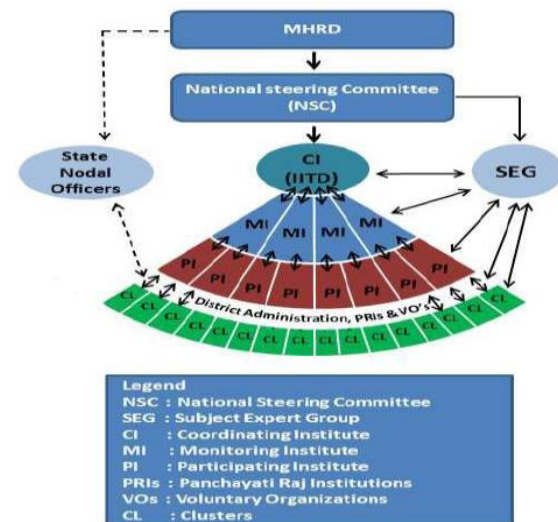


Figure 1 Structural network of UBA

National Steering Committee (NSC)

An empowered Steering Committee has been constituted by the Ministry of HRD for actual implementation, continuous guidance and monitoring of the programme at the national level. Dr. Vijay P. Bhatkar, an eminent scientist and rural development enthusiast has been designated as the Chairperson of the National Steering Committee (NSC)

National Coordinating Institute

As already indicated, IIT Delhi has been designated to be the Coordinating Institute (NCI) for the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA). In this capacity, IIT Delhi has been taking initiative to convene various consultative workshops and meetings. The main task of the coordinating institute will be to facilitate mutual interaction, consultation, responsibility allocation and an active liaison among the mentoring institutions, the subject expert groups as well as the Ministry of HRD. It will also closely interact with the NSC in connection with the allocation of funds and other facilitating measures for effective and smooth running as well as the nation-wide proliferation of the UBA program.

Regional Coordinating Institutes (RCIs)

The Regional Coordinating Institutions (RCIs) are identified on the basis of their earlier experience and infrastructural competence etc. These institutions will act as nodal centers for promoting & facilitate UBA network in their region. These will be responsible for grooming the other participating institutions in their region in addition to carrying out their own village cluster activities.

Participating Institutions (PIs)

All participating institutions (PIs) are expected to establish a UBA Cell which will be responsible for carrying out the activities of the UBA. This will involve the development of an active working group consisting of motivated faculty members drawn from various disciplines. To guide and monitor the activities of the UBA Cell in each institution, there will be an Executive Committee and a local advisory committee (which will be chaired by the Head of the Institution).

Subject Expert Groups

In order to develop the necessary resource material including the vision, methodology of intervention, prospective technologies and success stories in the specific areas of interventions, it was proposed by the apex committee that nationwide subject expert groups (SEGs) be developed in these specialized areas.

Build institutional capacity in institutes of Higher Education in research and training relevant to national needs, specially those of rural India, which includes inter alia the following objectives:

- Encourage Indian higher education Institutions to engage with problems of rural India and to provide solutions for them.

- Develop an academic framework for working on societal problems, their solution, delivery, reporting and assessment.
- Re-visit where necessary the curriculum in technical education in educational and research institutions to incorporate inclusive technologies for rural India.
- Promote inter-disciplinary approach in higher education guided by live contexts. Develop over time, research areas which have developmental significance, such as drinking water, education, health, agricultural practices, electrification, agricultural and rural industries cooking energy, watershed analysis.
- Develop collaborations of academic institutions with key government flagship programs and develop formal course-ware for supporting the knowledge needs for the same.
- Promote networking and coordination among various science and technology based voluntary organizations and developmental agencies. Foster collaborations between governance, knowledge institutions and local communities.
- Provide rural India with professional resource support from institutes of higher education, especially those that have acquired academic excellence in the field of science, engineering and technology, and management.
- To identify the basic developmental and productive needs of a village and find ways and means to meet these needs.
- Strengthen the technical design of interventions in key sectoral areas of natural resource management such as water and soil, economic activities such as agriculture and related production, or related to crafts and artisans, infrastructure such as housing, roads, energy.
- Identify efficient, cost effective and sustainable development practices in the field.
- Help grassroots organizations in innovating new products, and support rural entrepreneurs to develop neighbourhood solutions.

- Empower communities to dialogue with knowledge institutions in order to evolve technically sound and locally feasible development strategies that promote self-reliance.
- Facilitate convergence of development schemes, resources, various planning and implementation initiatives, and coordination of agencies for successful interventions and measurable outcomes

Major Areas of Interventions

In order to move towards the holistic development of the villages, there are two major domains namely, human development and material (economic) development which need to be developed in an integrated way. The major components of these two domains are given below:

a) Human Development

- I. Health
- II. Education and Culture
- III. Values
- IV. Skills and Entrepreneurship

b) Material (Economic) Development

- i. Organic Agriculture
- ii. Water Management and Conservation
- iii. Renewable Energy Sources
- iv. Artisans and Rural Industries
- v. Development and Harnessing of Local Natural Resources
- vi. Basic Amenities
- vii. E-Support (IT-Enabling)

As a Regional Coordinating Institute (RCI) Of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

BAMU RCI has motivated other institutes to participate in Unnat Bharat Abhiyan. The result is 44 institutes have registered at participating institutes of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan under BAMU RCI. So till date total 163 participating institutes under BAMU RCI.

- Two PIs from RCI BAMU are being awarded with the Perennial Assistance (Rs. 1.75 Lakhs Each), which was announced on 15th Aug 2020. Independence Day
- 15 PIs selected technologies from shorted listed top 4 CSIR rural technologies of 1st phase.
- Mapped villages under PMAGY. 3 villages adopted by PIs. 2 villages requested for adoption. 4 villages in phase two received gap filling fund Rs. 2000000/- for each

village (Daithana Radi (Beed), Bori (Osmananbad), Dhaktewadi (Osmananbad), Bharadwadi (Osmananbad)). Gharegaon-Ektuni (Aurangabad) in First phase.

Successful examples of Participating Institute - Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University Aurangabad:

National Service Scheme Department of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad (MS) has adopted the following 05 villages for the development under the UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN in 2017 namely Georai Kuber, Karodi (Sajapur), Chandapur Mavsala and Chincholi Budruk. Georai Kuber Village is very important cluster where Georai Kuber Villagers, Gram Panchayat Members students of Seven affiliated Colleges made CCT at 1 Beldara lake. Gram panchayat Members and other women of villagers contributed their time and worked with NSS Volunteers to make CCT Bhandara. Also Water reservoir widening work done in Georai Kuber. Removed slit from Beldara (1400 M³), Aamkhorli (4270 M³), Pandari (5656 M³), Forest area lake (3430 M³) and Khoryacha Mala (1613 M³) these five water reservoir. Slit used to make soil fertile, 22 hector land has been benefited for agriculture purpose as Georai Kuber is surrounded by hills the has benefited the barren land of farmers for next three years. Beldara nalla, Pattikhora, Khora Nalla and Kodulmen Nalla widening also done. Groundwater level will increase by 15,10,19000 liters for 123 wells. Also donated Biogas Plant for the Government School worth. Awareness program organized Health and Hygiene awareness, Water Management skills, Women Empowerment, Voter Awareness also for addiction.

Conclusion:

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan aims to create a vibrant relationship between the society and the higher educational institutes, with the latter providing the knowledge and technology support to improve the livelihoods in rural areas and to upgrade the capabilities of both the public and private organisations in the society. Institutes through their faculty and students, will carry out studies of living conditions in the adopted villages, assess the local problems and needs, workout the possibilities of leveraging the technological interventions and the need to improve the processes in implementation of various government schemes,

prepare workable action plans for the selected villages. In this process, faculty and students of such institutes would be re-oriented and connected to the rural realities so that their learning and research work also becomes more relevant to the society. UBA Cell of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad is participating actively targets to use the expertise available in the institute to improve the quality of rural life through innovative and affordable technological interventions. Some of the issues to be addressed are improvement in skill development for unemployed youth, quality of school education, agriculture, sanitation, health care, awareness towards digital India, renewable energy use, basic infrastructure, plantation and self-reliance.

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