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राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण विकास एवं  
पंचायती राज संस्थान  
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ  
Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India



# PRAGATI NEWSLETTER

**Strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions  
for Vikasit Bharat 2047**

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## Strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions for Viksit Bharat 2047

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**T**he Bharat will complete 100 years of independence in 2047, and the nation has resolved to attain the status of 'Viksit Bharat' by then. This vision captures Bharat's ambition, resilience, and commitment to pursuing holistic development across all sectors—economic, social, technological, environmental, and institutional—while ensuring inclusive growth and active citizen engagement. A 'Viksit Bharat 2047' implies high per capita income and GDP growth; universal access to quality education, healthcare, and housing; advanced digital infrastructure and global innovation leadership; and social justice, equity, and environmental sustainability.

According to estimates, approximately 63 per cent of Bharat's population lives in rural areas. However, on most developmental parameters, rural areas remain farbehind urban centres. Rural monthly per capita

consumption is significantly lower than urban consumption, reflecting a sharp income gap. While urban economies thrive on industrialisation and services, rural economies remain reliant on agriculture. Furthermore, the continued migration of skilled youth to cities weakens rural growth. Rural areas often struggle with lower-quality road networks, erratic electricity, and a lack of sanitation. Healthcare is also skewed, with significantly fewer doctors per capita in rural areas compared to cities. Additionally, quality educational institutions are concentrated in urban hubs, and internet access in rural households lags far behind than in urban areas.

Given these facts, the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 can only be achieved if we transform our villages into "Viksit Grams." Such a transformation is possible through vibrant Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), which have the constitutional



mandate to prepare plans and implement schemes for economic development and social justice in rural areas.

Although Panchayats have been an integral part of Indian society for ages, the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act (1992) granted these institutions constitutional status and a uniform framework across the country. The Act came into force on April 24, 1993. As we celebrate Panchayati Raj Diwas, it is timely to examine the achievements and challenges of Panchayats, review governmental and non-governmental initiatives, and suggest ways to strengthen PRIs to achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

### **Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction**

Panchayati Raj Institutions serve as the foundation of rural economic growth by decentralising governance and implementing grassroots development. They are critical to implementing government schemes like Mahatma Gandhi NREGA/VB-G RAM G, which directly increase rural household incomes and create community assets. Many of the 29 subjects listed under the 11<sup>th</sup> Schedule –such as small-scale industries, animal husbandry, fisheries, and agriculture—are directly linked to economic development.

The Government of India has initiated various measures to operationalise this role. The Poverty-Free Panchayat initiative by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj focuses on localising Sustainable Development Goals to eradicate rural poverty by 2030. This programme enables Gram Panchayats to ensure total coverage of social security, stable livelihoods, and basic services. Panchayats are also promoting Self-Help Groups under DAY-NRLM, providing skill

training, and encouraging entrepreneurship. The Ministry utilises a Panchayat Advancement Index to rank progress.

Successful examples include Narada Gram Panchayat in Odisha, which developed a model where women-led SHGs excel in poultry and fisheries, and Nagargao Panchayat in Goa, which implemented dozens of biogas plants to convert waste into green cooking fuel. Luki Gram Panchayat in Assam successfully implemented vocational training in tailoring. At the same time, Varanganoor Gram Panchayat in Tamil Nadu demonstrated high-impact poverty reduction through the convergence of housing and wage employment schemes. Furthermore, under the SWAMITVA Scheme, Panchayats have completed drone surveys of villages, granting legal ownership rights that enable villagers to use the property as a financial asset.

### **Human Development**

Subjects such as primary health care, education, and basic services are listed in the 11th Schedule of the Constitution. The effective functioning of Panchayats significantly improves the quality of life in rural areas. In education, Panchayats ensure infrastructure development, promote enrollment, and monitor teacher attendance. They facilitate access to entitlements like mid-day meals and uniforms while strengthening Village Education Committees. Gangadevipalli Gram Panchayat in Telangana has maintained perfect enrollment and zero dropouts for over a decade through its “School Safeguarding Committee,” while Pindarkon Gram Panchayat in Jharkhand organises Children’s Assemblies to give students a direct voice in local governance. Suakati



Gram Panchayat in Odisha has pioneered digital transformation by providing smart classrooms in remote tribal areas.

In the health sector, Panchayats act as bridges between community needs and public health services. They manage sanitation and clean water while monitoring frontline workers through Village Health Sanitation & Nutrition Committees. Bommasamudram Gram Panchayat in Andhra Pradesh ensured total institutional deliveries and distributed digital health IDs, while Lalmati GP has achieved zero preventable maternal and child mortality since 2024.

### **Inclusive and Equitable Development**

Panchayats promote social justice by prioritising essential services for marginalised populations. They act as catalysts for creating women- and girl-friendly environments and implement livelihood schemes to combat poverty. Gram Panchayat Development Plans are specifically designed to address the needs of vulnerable groups. By enabling representation for women and the Scheduled Castes or Tribes, they challenge entrenched hierarchies. Social Justice Committees within Panchayats are responsible for protecting these groups and promoting welfare at the grassroots level.

Kishorinagar GP in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands developed a “Panchayat for Her” model focusing on Mahila Sabhas and re-enrolling girls in school. Balagad Gram Panchayat in Himachal Pradesh focused on social justice by improving hygiene in agricultural infrastructure and strengthening assets for shepherds. Meanwhile, Mall in Telangana, Hatbadra in Odisha, and Gollapudi in Andhra Pradesh have been recognised for creating accessible infrastructure and livelihood opportunities for disabled persons.

### **Sustainable Environmental Practices**

Panchayats play a pivotal role in environmental conservation by acting

environmental conservation by acting as primary implementers of green initiatives. They drive sustainability through community-managed forests, waste-to-compost projects, and localised renewable energy installations. Vasambe Panchayat in Maharashtra significantly increased its own revenue to lead community-led solar lighting and digital school projects.

The rejuvenation of over 68,843 ponds under Mission Amrit Sarovar has enhanced water resources and supported agricultural productivity. Pimpri Gawali GP in Maharashtra achieved water security by banning tube wells to stop groundwater exploitation, and Bela Gram Panchayat has achieved carbon neutrality by planting nearly 100,000 trees. Meenangadi Gram Panchayat in Kerala is internationally acclaimed for its goal of becoming India’s first carbon-neutral Gram Panchayat.

### **Improved Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity**

Panchayats are critical for planning and executing rural infrastructure projects. Under the VB-G RAM G Act, they prepare a Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan aligned with the 2047 vision, including roads, Panchayat Bhawans, and waste management assets. In terms of digital connectivity, Panchayats implement infrastructure projects under the Digital India and Atmanirbhar Bharat visions. Under the PM-WANI scheme, they establish public Wi-Fi hotspots and facilitate digital literacy through PMGDISHA. Panchayats now use Gram Manchitra, a GIS application, to map assets and plan projects scientifically.

Belle Gram Panchayat in Karnataka achieved total digital tax collection, while Veeyapuram Gram Panchayat in Kerala achieved zero homelessness and rebuilt flood-damaged infrastructure. Keeranatham Gram Panchayat in Tamil Nadu integrated IT with traditional services, featuring smart waste management. Rohini Gram Panchayat in Maharashtra, a model tribal village, won a 2025 National e-Governance Award for its WhatsApp-based document delivery system. Additionally, the AI-powered



tool SabhaSaar is now used by over 92,000 Gram Panchayats to record and summarise meetings in various regional languages, thereby greatly increasing transparency. Panchayats are uniquely positioned as catalysts for rural transformation, bridging the gap between policy formulation and grassroots implementation.

### **Challenges and the Way Forward**

Although PRIs hold significant potential, they face systemic challenges. A primary issue is the inadequate devolution of powers, as many states have failed to transfer functions, funds, and functionaries fully. Financial constraints leave PRIs heavily dependent on higher tiers of government. Furthermore, capacity-building issues and political interference often undermine their autonomy. Deep-seated social barriers, including caste dynamics and gender biases, also influence decision-making.

To achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, strengthening PRIs requires a multi-dimensional approach focused on strengthening devolution and ensuring

genuine local decision-making authority. This must be coupled with financial empowerment to enhance the revenue-generating capacities of PRIs. Capacity building is also essential to equip representatives with leadership skills, particularly for women leaders. Digital transformation must continue to expand e-governance into remote areas, while transparency and accountability are bolstered through strengthened social audit mechanisms.

### **Conclusion**

The vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 represents a transformative journey toward a developed and inclusive India. Achieving this requires a strong foundation of rural development, which depends on the effectiveness of Panchayati Raj Institutions. While the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment provided the institutional framework, realising its full potential requires addressing existing challenges through greater autonomy and capacity building. As India moves toward 2047, PRIs must evolve into dynamic, accountable, and innovative institutions capable of driving the nation's rural transformation and ensuring a prosperous, equitable future for all.

## Jai Jawan Kisan Programme on Rural Livelihood Technologies



*Participants of the Jai Jawan Kisan Programme on Orientation and Exposure to Rural Livelihood Technologies with Dr C. Kathiresan, Associate Professor & Head, CIAT&SJ; Mr Mohammed Khan, Senior Consultant, RTP-CIAT at the Rural Technology Park*

**T**he National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad, through its Centre for Innovations and Appropriate Technologies for Skills and Jobs (CIAT&SJ), organised the Jai Jawan Kisan Programme on “Orientation and Exposure to Rural Livelihood Technologies” from 13 to 24 April 2026 at the Rural Technology Park (RTP).

The programme aimed to provide participants with practical exposure to innovative rural livelihood technologies and sustainable development practices that can support income generation and rural entrepreneurship. It brought together personnel from different services and institutions for experiential learning on technology-based rural livelihood interventions.

The orientation covered a range of rural technologies and skill-based activities related to sustainable livelihoods, appropriate technologies, rural enterprises, natural resource management, and community-based development initiatives. Participants were exposed to demonstrations and field-based learning modules showcasing low-cost, eco-friendly, and locally adaptable technologies developed and promoted at the Rural Technology Park.

Sessions also highlighted the importance of technology transfer, skill development, and entrepreneurship promotion in strengthening rural economies and improving livelihood opportunities. Interactive discussions enabled participants to understand how rural technologies can contribute to self-reliance, sustainability, and inclusive rural transformation.

## ToT on Model Youth Gram Sabha Module for District Youth Officers of MoYAS



*Shri. Vipul Ujjwal, IAS, Director, Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), with Staff of NIRDPR and participants from Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS)*

### Introduction

India's democratic system is one of the most extensive and diverse in the world, spanning from national governance to grassroots institutions. At the heart of this system lies the Panchayati Raj framework, where citizens directly participate in decision-making through Gram Sabhas. However, despite being taught about democracy in classrooms, many young people in India lack opportunities to practice it in real life. This gap has resulted in limited civic engagement among youth and reduced participation in grassroots governance.

To address this issue, the Model Youth Gram Sabha (MYGS) initiative was launched in 2025 by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The program aims to provide young people with practical exposure to democratic processes at the village level. By simulating Gram Sabha proceedings, MYGS equips youth with the knowledge, confidence, and skills required to actively participate in governance and contribute to local development.

The initiative has already been successfully implemented in hundreds of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) and Eklavya Model Residential Schools

(EMRS) across India through the Senior Consultants and Consultants of School of Excellence in Panchayati Raj (SoEPR) of NIRDPR. Building on this progress, a Training of Trainers (ToT) program was organized on 6-7 April 2026 by MoPR at NIRDPR, Hyderabad. This program brought together Deputy Directors and District Youth Officers of Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS) from across the country to strengthen the implementation of MYGS at the grassroots level.

### Significance of Youth Participation in Governance

The importance of youth participation in governance cannot be overstated. With nearly 60% of India's population comprising young people, their involvement is crucial for the sustainability and effectiveness of democratic institutions. However, low attendance in Gram Sabhas and limited awareness about their significance have weakened local governance structures.

Experts from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) at the training program highlighted that youth must be educated about village governance so they can understand how their participation can influence development outcomes. Active engagement in Gram Sabhas allows young citizens to voice their concerns, propose solutions, and contribute to the preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDs).

The MYGS initiative seeks to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience by creating a platform where youth can simulate real-life governance scenarios. Through this experiential learning approach, participants gain insights into the functioning of Gram Sabhas, decision-making processes, and the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

### Training of Trainers (ToT) Program Highlights

The two-day ToT program organised by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj at NIRDPR, Hyderabad, was designed to equip District Youth Officers with the necessary tools and understanding to implement MYGS effectively in their respective districts. The program began with an inaugural session emphasizing the need for improving participation in Gram Sabhas and enhancing the quality of GPDP preparation.



One of the key discussions during the program focused on the lack of orientation toward local governance among youth. While mock parliaments are commonly conducted in educational institutions, similar initiatives for Panchayati Raj institutions are rare. MYGS aims to fill this gap by introducing youth to grassroots democracy in a structured and engaging manner.

Participants were encouraged to organize mock MYGS sessions in their

districts, particularly on 24 April 2026 which is observed as National Panchayati Raj Diwas to promote widespread participation. Additionally, youth involved in mock MYGS will be encouraged to attend actual Gram Sabhas on significant national occasions such as Independence Day (15 August), Gandhi Jayanti (2 October), and Republic Day (26 January). This continuous engagement ensures that learning extends beyond simulations into real-world practice.



### Interactive Learning and Role-Play Activities

A major highlight of the training program was the use of interactive and participatory learning methods. Facilitators from Piramal Foundation conducted group activities, discussions, and role-play exercises to help participants understand the dynamics of Gram Sabhas.





Participants were divided into groups and asked to enact Gram Sabha sessions, taking on roles such as village leaders, citizens, and officials. This hands-on approach allowed them to experience the challenges and opportunities associated with local governance. Observers provided constructive feedback, helping participants refine their understanding and improve their facilitation skills.

These activities not only enhanced learning but also fostered teamwork, communication, and critical thinking among participants. By simulating real-life scenarios, the program ensured that trainees were well-prepared to conduct MYGS sessions effectively in their communities.

### **Impact and Future Vision**

The MYGS initiative represents a significant step toward strengthening grassroots democracy in India. By empowering youth with practical knowledge and encouraging their active participation, the program aims to address the democratic deficit at the village level.

Participants of the ToT program expressed strong commitment to implementing MYGS in their districts and engaging young people in governance processes. The initiative is expected to create a ripple effect, inspiring more youth to participate in Gram Sabhas and contribute to local development planning.

In the long term, MYGS aligns with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, which emphasizes harnessing the potential of India's youth to drive inclusive growth and sustainable development. By fostering a sense of responsibility, leadership, and civic engagement among young citizens, the initiative contributes to building a more participatory and vibrant democracy.

### **Conclusion**

The Model Youth Gram Sabha initiative is a transformative effort to bridge the gap between theoretical education and practical governance. By providing youth with hands-on experience in democratic processes, it empowers them to become active participants in shaping their communities.

The success of the Training of Trainers program highlights the growing recognition of youth as key stakeholders in governance. As MYGS continues to expand across the country, it holds the potential to revitalize Gram Sabhas, strengthen Panchayati Raj institutions, and nurture a generation of informed, responsible, and engaged citizens.

Ultimately, the true impact of MYGS will be realized over time, as today's youth evolve into tomorrow's leaders, driving India toward a more inclusive, participatory, and developed future.

## International Training Programme on Geo-Informatics Applications Launched at NIRDPR



*Delegates with Dr P. Chandra Shekara, DG, CIRDAP, and Dr P. Kesava Rao, Associate Professor & Head, CGARD & CRTCN, NIRDPR, during the International Training Programme on Geo-Informatics Applications in Rural Development*

The DAY-NRLM Resource Cell, National Institute of Rural Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad, in collaboration with CIRDAP, launched the International Training Programme on “Geo-Informatics Applications in Rural Development” on 30 March 2026 at its campus, with support from the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India.

The programme was formally inaugurated by H.E. Dr P. Chandra Shekara, Director General, CIRDAP, who welcomed the participants and underscored the growing relevance of geo-informatics in strengthening rural development planning and implementation. The programme brought together 17 participants from CIRDAP member countries, including Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam, facilitating a vibrant platform for international knowledge exchange.

The training features sessions on innovative applications of geo-informatics in agriculture, natural



*Delegates with Venkatamallu Thadaboinathe, Programme Officer (Learning), CIRDAP, during their visit to the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad.*

resource management, and rural development across the Asia-Pacific region. Participants also presented country experiences, fostering cross-learning and regional knowledge exchange.

During the programme, participants engaged in thematic sessions on geo-informatics applications in water resources, forestry, ecology, and fisheries. Interactive group work enabled delegates to collaboratively explore the use of geospatial tools for natural resource management and sustainable development planning.

As part of the exposure component, delegates visited the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad, where they gained practical insights into geo-informatics applications in disaster preparedness, early warning systems, and coastal resource management. A special session on disaster management in the Asia-Pacific context further enriched their understanding of technology-driven resilience strategies.

## ToT on Gender and FNHW Concepts and Institutional Mechanisms under DAY-NRLM



*Dr T. Vijaya Kumar, Associate Professor & Head, Centre for Equity & Social Development, with participants during the ToT Programme on Gender and FNHW Concepts and Institutional Mechanisms under DAY-NRLM*

The Centre for Equity and Social Development (CESD) at National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj successfully conducted a three-day Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on Gender and Food, Nutrition, Health, and WASH (FNHW) Concepts and Institutional Mechanisms under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission from 22 to 24 April 2026 at NIRDPR, Hyderabad, with the support of Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty, Telangana State and the National Rural Livelihoods Mission Resource Cell of NIRDPR. The programme brought together 37 participants from 11 districts of Telangana, including Block Mission Managers, Cluster Coordinators, Community Resource Persons, and Gender CRPs, with a significant representation of women participants. The training aimed to strengthen the capacity of frontline functionaries to integrate gender perspectives with health, nutrition, and WASH interventions within the DAY-NRLM framework, recognizing that sustainable rural development is closely linked with gender equity and

improved well-being of communities. Dr. T. Vijaya Kumar, Head CESD while delivering the inaugural session highlighted the importance of ToT on Gender, Equity and mainstreaming the focus areas of social development in rural areas.

The programme focused on building conceptual clarity on gender as a social construct, addressing issues such as gender roles, power relations, patriarchy, and gender-based violence, while also highlighting the critical linkages between gender and FNHW outcomes, particularly for women, children, and adolescent girls. Through a participatory and experiential learning approach involving group discussions, role plays, case studies, and action planning exercises, participants were equipped with facilitation skills and practical tools for field-level application. Key sessions covered themes such as understanding cycles of poverty, gender socialization, Telangana Inclusive Livelihood Programme interventions, Institutional mechanisms for gender integration, maternal and child health, sanitation and hygiene practices, mental health resilience practices and life skills and

role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) as platforms for social change with 14 Sessions in total. The content of the training was delivering mixed training methods such as lecture cum discussion, exposure visit, group exercise and presentation by

participants through role play and group discussion. Further participants were exposed to Rural Technology Park (RTP) of NIRDPR to provide theme hands on experience on grassroots technology and livelihood development practices through live demonstrations.



Ms A. Sharada and Ms P.A. Devi, National Resource Persons, delivered most of the sessions along with Ms Jyotsna Raju, Mr T. Ravinder Rao, K.V, Mr Jayaram Killi of SERP Telangana and K. Venkateshwara Rao of NRLM&RC, and Dr Satya Ranjan Mahakul facilitated the practical sessions, such as Group Discussions and Role plays, organising the Pre and Post Test of the Training programme.

The training enhanced understanding of gender and FNHW concepts, strengthened the pool of master trainers for knowledge cascading, and enabled participants to develop context-specific action

plans for implementation at the block and community levels. Participants appreciated the programme's interactive design and practical relevance, noting its direct applicability to their fieldwork. The initiative is expected to contribute significantly to strengthening SHG-led interventions, promoting behavioural change, and advancing inclusive and sustainable rural development outcomes. The ToT programme was coordinated by Dr T. Vijaya Kumar, Head, Centre for Equity and Social Development; Dr Satya Ranjan Mahakul, Assistant Professor; Mr K. Venkateshwara Rao of NRLM; and Mr Ch. Saidi Reddy, Training Manager.

## CIRDAP–NIRDPR International Training Programme on Sustainable Rural Livelihoods



*Participants of the CIRDAP–NIRDPR International Training Programme on “Community Driven Approaches to Sustainable Rural Livelihoods with NIRDPR Faculties*

The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP), in collaboration with the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad, organised the International Training Programme on “Community Driven Approaches to Sustainable Rural Livelihoods” from 13–18 April 2026 at NIRDPR, Hyderabad, India.

Supported by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India, the programme brought together 20 participants from CIRDAP Member Countries, including Bangladesh, India, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam, along with representatives from CIRDAP and NIRDPR. The programme served as a platform for regional collaboration, cross-country learning, and exchange of experiences on sustainable rural livelihood practices.

The training featured technical sessions on emerging challenges and opportunities in rural development across the Asia-Pacific region, principles and practices of Community-Driven Development (CDD), the role of local governance in strengthening rural livelihoods in India,



and climate change challenges and strategies for promoting sustainable livelihood systems.

Participants engaged in interactive discussions, knowledge-sharing sessions, and thematic deliberations focusing on participatory approaches, institutional strengthening, and community-led rural development initiatives. The programme highlighted the importance of local institutions, inclusive governance, and climate resilience in achieving sustainable rural transformation.

The initiative aims to strengthen capacities, foster regional cooperation, and promote innovative community-driven approaches for improving livelihoods and enhancing resilience across rural communities in participating countries.

## Training Programmes on Business Diversification Opportunities for PACCSs and LAMPCSs



**Participants of the Training Programme on Good Governance Practices and Strategy for Business Diversification Opportunities and Best Practices in PACCSs and LAMPCSs with Dr Jyothis Sathyapalan, Professor & Head, CPGS & DE; Dr Aryashree Debapriya, Associate Professor, CPGS & DE; and A. Parasuramudu, Library and Information Assistant, NIRDPR**

The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad, through its Centre for PG Studies and Distance Education (CPGS & DE), organised two specialised training programmes on Business Diversification Opportunities and Best Practices for PACCSs and LAMPCSs during April–May 2026. Both programmes were sponsored by the Department of Cooperation, Government of Odisha, with the objective of strengthening the managerial, operational, and governance capacities of cooperative leaders and functionaries.

The first programme, titled “Training Programme on Good Governance Practices and Strategy for Business Diversification Opportunities and Best Practices in PACCSs for the Presidents/Board of Directors & CEOs of PACCSs & LAMPCSs,” was conducted from 20–24 April 2026. The second programme on “Business Diversification Opportunities and Best Practices of PACCSs for Presidents/ BODs and CEOs of PACCSs and LAMPCSs” was organised from 27 April to 01 May 2026 at the Institute campus.

The programmes focused on the evolving role of Primary Agricultural Credit Cooperative Societies (PACCSs) and Large Area Multi-Purpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPCSs) in promoting sustainable rural economic development. Sessions highlighted diversification into agri-business services, input supply, storage, processing, value addition, and marketing activities to improve institutional sustainability and member services.

Resource persons shared successful cooperative models, governance practices, and strategies for strengthening financial management, institutional efficiency, accountability, and market linkages. Interactive discussions and experience-sharing sessions enabled participants to deliberate on field-level challenges and explore innovative approaches for improving cooperative performance and long-term viability.

The programmes provided a valuable platform for cooperative leaders to enhance their understanding of business diversification strategies and governance mechanisms, contributing towards stronger and more sustainable cooperative institutions in Odisha.

## International Training Programme on Climate-Resilient Rural Communities Held at NIRDPR



**Dr P. Chandra Shekara, Director General, CIRDAP; Dr T. Vijaya Kumar, Associate Professor & Head, CESD; Dr Ravindra Gavali, Professor & Head, CNRM, CC&DM; Shri.Bhagaiah Ji and Venkatamallu Thadaboina, Programme Officer (Learning), CIRDAP, during the International Training Programme on Building Resilient Rural Communities in a Changing Climate at NIRDPR**

**T**he National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad, in collaboration with CIRDAP, organised an International Training Programme on “Building Resilient Rural Communities in a Changing Climate” from 27 April to 02 May 2026 at the Institute campus. The programme was conducted by the Centre for Natural Resource Management, Climate Change and Disaster Mitigation (CNRM, CC&DM).

The programme aimed to strengthen the capacities of participants in addressing climate change challenges affecting rural communities through sustainable, inclusive, and technology-driven approaches. It brought together international delegates, experts, and practitioners to exchange experiences and explore innovative solutions for enhancing climate resilience in rural development programmes.



**Hon'ble Chief Guest Shri.Bhagaiah Ji addressing the keynote to the participants**

Technical sessions focused on climate variability, climate-resilient agriculture, adaptation and mitigation strategies, geo-informatics applications, natural resource management, sustainable livelihood planning, and disaster preparedness. Resource persons from institutions including MANAGE, CRIDA, and NIRDPR shared insights on emerging challenges, policy responses, and field-level innovations aimed at strengthening resilience in vulnerable rural communities.



**Dr. Ravindra S Gavali explaining foundational understanding of global climate shifts**

Technical sessions focused on climate variability, climate-resilient agriculture, adaptation and mitigation strategies, geo-informatics applications, natural resource management, sustainable livelihood planning, and disaster preparedness. Resource persons from institutions, including MANAGE, CRIDA, and NIRDPR, shared insights on emerging challenges, policy responses,

and field-level innovations aimed at strengthening resilience in vulnerable rural communities.



**Dr K Krishna Reddy, Director (ICT), MANAGE taking his session on Climate change adaptation initiatives in building climate-resilient agriculture**

An important component of the programme was the exposure visits organised to premier institutions such as the Indian Institute of Rice Research (IIRR), Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), ICRISAT, INCOIS, and the Rural Technology Park (RTP). These visits provided participants with practical exposure to climate-smart agricultural technologies, remote sensing applications, early warning systems, resilient crop practices, and sustainable rural technologies designed to support climate adaptation and resource conservation.



**Participants visiting the Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), where Ravi Kumar is explaining the different types of millets found in India.**



**Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Dr. Milap Punia evaluating the course.**

The programme also included interactive discussions, country presentations, and experience-sharing sessions, enabling participants to learn from regional experiences and best practices in climate resilience and rural livelihood promotion. Delegates discussed community-based adaptation models, institutional mechanisms, and collaborative approaches for strengthening resilience among vulnerable populations.

The programme concluded with participants preparing "Back at Work Plans," outlining strategies for applying the knowledge, tools, and approaches gained during the training in their respective countries and organisations.



## Training of Trainers on Individual Loan Application (IELA) under DAY-NRLM



*Dr Ravindra S. Gavali, Professor & Head, CNRM, with participants of the Training of Trainers on Individual Loan Application (IELA) under DAY-NRLM*

The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad, through the DAY-NRLM Resource Cell, organised a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on Individual Loan Application (IELA) under DAY-NRLM from 29 April to 02 May 2026 at the Institute campus.

The programme aimed to strengthen the capacities of trainers and field-level functionaries in facilitating the Individual Loan Application process under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). It focused on improving participants' understanding of credit linkage processes, financial inclusion strategies, and effective implementation mechanisms for supporting Self-Help Group (SHG) members.

Sessions covered key aspects such as loan application procedures, appraisal mechanisms,

documentation processes, digital platforms, bank linkage systems, and monitoring frameworks. Emphasis was laid on ensuring timely access to institutional credit, improving financial literacy, and strengthening livelihood opportunities for rural women and SHG members.

The training included interactive discussions, practical exercises, and experience-sharing sessions that enabled participants to gain hands-on understanding of the IELA process and field-level implementation challenges. Participants also discussed strategies for improving coordination between community institutions, banks, and implementing agencies to ensure efficient credit delivery.

The programme concluded with participants reaffirming their commitment to strengthening financial inclusion and supporting sustainable livelihood initiatives under DAY-NRLM.

## SoEPR Organises Faculty Development Programme



***Dr Anjan Kumar Bhanja, Associate Professor & Head, CPRDP & SSD, with participants of Faculty Development Programme (FDP) – Batch V.***

**T**he National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad, through the School of Excellence in Panchayati Raj (SoEPR), organised a Faculty Development Programme (FDP) – Batch V from 27 April to 01 May 2026 at the Institute campus.

The programme was designed to strengthen the academic, training, research, and facilitation capacities of faculty members and professionals associated with Panchayati Raj Institutions, training centres, and rural development organisations. It aimed to enhance participants' understanding of decentralised governance, participatory planning processes, and innovative approaches to capacity building in rural development.

The sessions focused on key themes such as Panchayati Raj governance, Gram Panchayat Development Planning (GPDP), localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), participatory training methodologies, leadership development, and institutional strengthening. Resource persons highlighted emerging policy perspectives, field-level experiences,

and best practices related to grassroots governance and rural transformation.

Special emphasis was placed on strengthening facilitation and communication skills, designing learner-centric training programmes, and integrating experiential learning approaches into capacity-building initiatives. Discussions also explored the role of trainers and faculty members in improving governance outcomes through effective knowledge dissemination and community engagement.

The FDP included interactive sessions, group discussions, practical exercises, case studies, and experience-sharing activities that enabled participants to exchange ideas and learn from diverse institutional experiences. These activities helped participants better understand the practical dimensions of training design, facilitation techniques, and participatory learning processes.

Towards the end of the programme, participants engaged in discussions on applying the learnings in their academic, training, and field-level activities. They highlighted the usefulness of the sessions in enhancing their facilitation skills, understanding of decentralised governance, and capacity-building approaches.

## Workshop-cum-Writeshop on VB-G RAM G



*Participants with faculty members of NIRDPR during the Workshop-cum-Writeshop on Orientation of Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) [VB-G RAM G] organised by CWEL, NIRDPR, Hyderabad.*

**A** Workshop-cum-Writeshop on Orientation of Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) [VB-G RAM G] was organised from 27 to 29 April 2026 at the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad, by the Centre for Wage Employment and Livelihoods (CWEL).

The programme aimed to orient participants on the objectives, framework, and implementation strategies of the Viksit Bharat Guarantee initiative with a focus on rural employment and livelihood promotion. It brought together officials, practitioners, and experts engaged in wage employment and rural livelihood programmes to deliberate on strategies for strengthening rural development interventions.

Sessions focused on employment generation, sustainable livelihood promotion, convergence of rural

development schemes, community participation, and institutional mechanisms for effective implementation. Discussions also highlighted the importance of strengthening grassroots institutions, enhancing livelihood opportunities, and ensuring inclusive rural transformation.

The write shop component enabled participants to collaboratively develop and refine training and reference materials for the mission. Interactive discussions, group exercises, and experience-sharing sessions facilitated the exchange of field-level insights and practical approaches for improving programme delivery and outreach.

Participants deliberated on challenges related to implementation, convergence, and monitoring, while also exploring innovative approaches for strengthening wage employment and livelihood initiatives in rural areas. The programme served as a platform for knowledge exchange and collaborative learning among stakeholders from different regions and sectors.

## Adoption, Viability, and Gender Outcomes in Drone-Based Agriculture: Insights from the Namu Didi Drone Scheme

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In the heart of Madhya Pradesh's Sagar district, a quiet revolution took flight in 2025. At its centre was Sakshi Pandey, a young village woman whose determination and courage transformed not only her own life but also inspired hundreds of women across rural India.

Sakshi's remarkable journey began in 2023, when she enrolled in a 15-day drone training programme organised by IFFCO, during which she mastered drone operations, including aerial crop spraying. Determined to ensure that other women could benefit from the same opportunity, she visited Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh and Mansar in Haryana, where she trained more than 200 women. Recognising her talent and dedication, IFFCO gave Sakshi an agricultural drone free of cost. Sakshi's transformation was made possible under an initiative: the 'Namu Didi Drone Scheme,' aimed at empowering women through advanced agricultural technology and skill development.

"Those doing jobs in the private sector can earn an average monthly income of ₹10,000-₹15,000. But I'm

earning up to ₹25,000 per month using drone technology from my village," Sakshi says.

### Namu Didi Drone Scheme

Empowering women is essential to building a strong, developed nation. When women achieve economic independence, they contribute significantly to rural development. The launch of the Drone Didi initiative under the Namu Drone Didi Yojana has given fresh wings to the rural women's empowerment journey.

The scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi via video conferencing on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023, with the opening of the first-ever Mahila Kisan Drone Kendra. This central sector scheme aims to empower women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by training them in drone technology to provide agricultural services. Under the scheme with an outlay of Rs 1,261 crore, drones will be provided to 15,000 women self-help groups through Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) from 2024-25 to 2025-2026. This ambitious scheme aims to train and equip women in SHGs with agricultural drones, transforming

them into tech-savvy entrepreneurs and modern-day farm champions. This initiative is expected to generate an additional income of at least Rs. 1 lakh per year for each SHG, thereby contributing to economic empowerment and sustainable livelihood generation.

The Namu Drone Didi Portal is a one-stop solution for all stakeholders to access all information and tools to implement the scheme successfully. Effective monitoring will be implemented through an IT-based Management Information System (MIS) that will serve as a comprehensive software platform for service delivery and monitoring. This portal will manage fund flow, track each drone's operations, and provide live updates on drone usage. Additionally, it will be integrated with the AIF portal and embedded with the DAY-NRLM MIS to ensure seamless functionality and data sharing.

### **High Subsidy and Low-Interest Loans**

The most attractive feature of the Namu Drone Didi scheme is the 80 per cent subsidy on drone expenses up to Rs. 8 lakh, which simultaneously eases the economic burden on SHGs and enhances access to drone technology. Apart from this, the scheme provides a loan from the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) to cover the balance payment at a very low interest rate of 3 per cent. The Namu Drone Didi scheme also offers income-generating opportunities for women-led SHGs. Scaling up of the Namu Drone Didi programme will be phased, with drones distributed to up to 15,000 high-priority women SHGs in 2024-2026.

### **Successful Convergence of Institutions Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW)**

- This nodal ministry for the scheme provides budget and coordinates with all stakeholders.

- Oversee and monitor the activities under the scheme, including identifying training organisations, designing & approving the training and drone specifications, and devising the terms and conditions for the procurement of drones.
- Responsible for budgetary provisions for the scheme and releasing and fund for the Central Nodal Agency (CNA).
- Preparation of Scheme Framework and Operational Guidelines.

### **Department of Rural Development (DoRD)**

- Responsible for the rightful selection of SHGs in consultation with SLCs, monitor the progress of SHGs, hand hold them.
- Implement & monitor the scheme on the ground with the help of DAY-NRLM and SRLM Network.

### **Department of Fertilisers (DoF)**

- Nominate the LFCs for the States for the implementation of the scheme at the state level.
- Monitor the LFCs; ensure sufficient business for the SHGs through the LFCs.
- Routing funds from CNA for the implementation of the scheme in collaboration with LFCs.
- Monitor drone procurement by drone manufacturing units through LFCs.
- Ensuring business for SHGs through fertiliser & pesticides companies.

### **Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)**

- Advice on a conducive drone policy ecosystem for implementing the scheme.
- Advice on drone rules, technical specifications of drones, testing & type certification of drones and training of drone pilots.
- DigiSky is MoCA's official platform that keeps drone flying safe and legal in India by managing drone registrations, pilot certifications, and flight permissions.

- DigiSky helps the Ministry of Civil Aviation track and regulate all drones in India, making sure only approved drones and trained pilots are allowed to fly.
- DigiSky also provides details on trained drone assistants and the official training syllabus, ensuring consistent standards in skills and safety practices across all drone operations.

### Ministry of Women and Child Development (DoW&CD)

- Advice on promoting the social and economic empowerment of women SHGs through cross-cutting policies and programmes, and creating awareness of their rights.

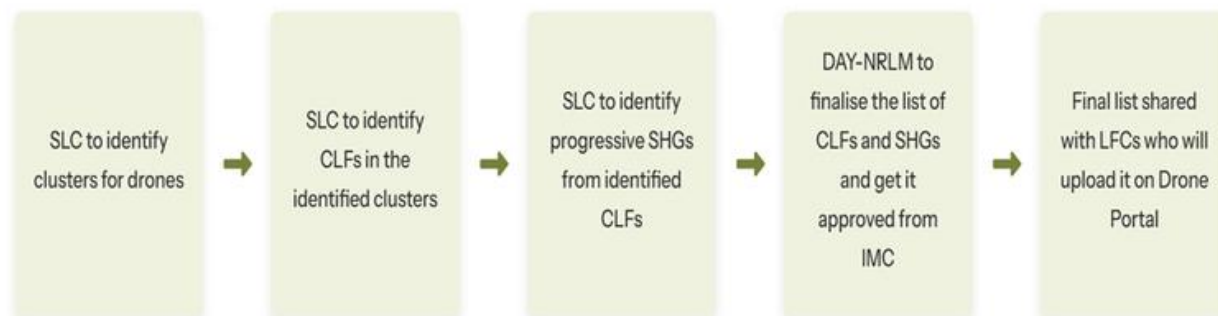
### Private Institutions

Lead Fertiliser Companies (LFCs) distributed 1094 drones to Drone Didis in 2023-24 using their internal resources, of which 500 were

distributed under the Namu Drone Didi Scheme. They have been trained as drone pilots at various Remote Pilot Training Organisations (RPTOs) authorised by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The allocation of the remaining 14,500 drones has been informed to the state governments.

The Agricultural Development and Rural Transformation Centre (ADRTC), Bangalore, has carried out a study on the economic and business viability of drone operations for the 500 drones distributed by LFCs under the Namu Drone Didi scheme. The findings indicate that kisan drones cover an area of one acre in 7-8 minutes. The flight time on a single battery charge for Kisan drones by various manufacturers ranged from 5 to 20 minutes. The drone package under the Namu Drone Didi scheme includes one standard battery set and four additional battery sets.

### Drone Selection Process



### The Road to Empowerment

Under the scheme, each SHG will receive financial assistance to purchase drones, along with hands-on training. Women will be taught how to operate, maintain, and use drones efficiently, thereby equipping them to handle agricultural services in their communities. This opens up new income opportunities and strengthens women’s financial independence. In addition to subsidies and low-interest

loans, participants receive comprehensive drone-pilot training. The scheme also offers women a unique opportunity to generate additional income, with the potential to earn up to Rs.1 lakh per year by renting drone spray services to local farmers. This support, combined with financial training and income-generating opportunities, helps women become key players in modernising agricultural practices within their communities.

## Karnataka – The Pioneer State

Karnataka has emerged as the national leader in the Namu Drone Didi Yojana, by successfully training 145 women SHG members as certified drone pilots for precision agriculture services. Karnataka's success stems from coordinated implementation across 31 districts, leveraging existing SHG networks under the Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Mission. The state identified 145 high-potential SHGs based on agricultural demand, financial readiness, and leadership capacity, achieving the highest national training completion rate. The state's agri-tech ecosystem, including established drone service providers and progressive farming clusters, created natural market demand. The trained Drone Didis are already servicing 2,500+ hectares monthly, demonstrating immediate economic viability and creating demonstration effects for neighbouring states. In Karnataka, Koppal district topped the list, with 13 SHG members, followed by Kalaburagi (12) and Mandya (11).

### Breaking the Stereotype

The programme's success challenges the stereotype that SHGs are mostly engaged in the production of home-based products such as papads and pickles.

Asha Rani C.S., from Churchugundi village in Shikaripur taluk of Shivamogga district, is among those who underwent this training in Mysuru in January, 2024. For the last two years, she has been operating a drone to spray pesticides in maize and paddy farms.

“The training is helping me financially. Under the scheme, I also received a

drone as well. In a year, I get work spraying medicine in the farm fields for about 4 to 5 months. Sometimes, my earnings go up to ₹1 lakh a month,” she said.

### Conclusion

The Namu Drone Didi initiative stands as a strong testament to progress in both the technology and aviation sectors, highlighting India's commitment to empowering women in fields traditionally dominated by men. By offering specialised training in drone technology, this programme equips women with the skills needed to thrive in an industry that is rapidly evolving and plays a critical role in modern-day logistics, surveillance, and beyond. What makes this initiative even more impactful is that it contributes to India's larger vision of gender equality and the breaking of societal barriers.

Moreover, India's leadership in the aviation sector is undeniable, as it proudly ranks first globally in the number of women commercial pilots. This achievement not only reflects the country's dedication to creating opportunities for women in high-skill professions but also emphasises the importance of nurturing an environment where women can excel and help shape the future of technology and aviation. This initiative is a game-changer, combining women's empowerment with technological progress and offering multiple avenues for economic growth. It ensures that women are not just participants but leaders in the rural economy. With drones in their hands and determination in their hearts, India's Drone Didis are proving that the sky is not the limit; it's just the beginning.

# NIRDPR Commemorates 135<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar



The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR) commemorated the 135th Birth Anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr B. R. Ambedkar on 15 April 2026 on its campus. The programme was held at the Library Building (Ambedkar Block) with the participation of faculty, officers, and staff.

On the occasion, Shri Ravindra S. Gavali, Professor & Head, CNRM, CC&DM; Shri Manoj Kumar, Registrar & Director (Admin I /c); Dr. Pranab Kumar Ghosh, Assistant Registrar (E) & (T); Dr R. Ramesh, Associate Professor & Head, Centre for Rural Infrastructure; and Dr C. Kathiresan, Associate Professor

& Head, Centre for Innovations and Appropriate Technology for Skills and Jobs, paid floral tributes at the bust and portrait of Dr B. R. Ambedkar. They were joined by other senior faculty members and staff as they paid their respects.

The programme provided an opportunity to reflect on Dr Ambedkar's profound contributions to the Constitution of India and his unwavering commitment to social justice, equality, and empowerment of marginalised communities. His ideals continue to guide efforts towards inclusive development and democratic governance.

*The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), an autonomous organisation under the Union Ministry of Rural Development, is a premier national centre of excellence in rural development and Panchayati Raj. Recognised internationally as one of the UN-ESCAP Centres of Excellence, it builds capacities of rural development functionaries, elected representatives of PRIs, bankers, NGOs and other stakeholders through inter-related activities of training, research and consultancy. The Institute is located in the historic city of Hyderabad in Telangana state. The NIRDPR celebrated its Golden Jubilee Year of establishment in 2008. In addition to the main campus in Hyderabad, this Institute has a North-Eastern Regional Centre at Guwahati, Assam, a branch at New Delhi and a Career Guidance Centre at Vaishali, Bihar.*

राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण विकास एवं  
पंचायती राज संस्थान



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