



Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship (MGNF) Programme



“Knowledge gained through experience is far more superior than bookish knowledge”

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Jointly designed by IIM Bangalore and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in the Government of India, the Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship (MGNF) pilot program was initiated in March 2020 to create a cadre of individuals who will assist the district administrative structure in supporting the delivery of skill development programs while receiving education and training at a leading management institution. The pilot phase of the 2-year Fellowship program is currently active with 69 Fellows posted at 69 districts of India across 6 states (i.e., Gujarat, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand). Based on the success of pilot phase, the program has been extended to another 661 districts across the country. In phase-2, IIM Bangalore is managing 79 Fellows posted in 79 districts across 6 states (i.e., Odisha, Karnataka, Goa, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Tripura)

Implemented in collaboration with the State Skill Development Mission (SSDM), Fellows are assigned to a district during the two years where they assist the Department of Skill Development and work toward energizing the functioning of the District Skill Committee (DSC) to support the districts skill ecosystem and ensure better growth and development.



"I would like to congratulate the 14 fellows deployed in various districts of Gujarat for their efforts towards strengthening the district skill ecosystem. The fellowship is an excellent platform for the young minds to gain on-ground experience and create an impact in the niche area of Skill Development at the district level.

The dedication and perseverance exhibited by the fellows towards their work, especially during the pandemic is commendable and I wish them all the best for their future endeavours."

Alok Kumar Pandey (IAS)

Mission Director, Gujarat Skill Development Mission

"The fellows have completed a significant portion of the program. Over this period, they have shown tremendous enthusiasm, perseverance, adaptability, and capacity to excel in various situations. An essential aspect of this journey is their interactions with panels of faculty and experts who provided them with academic connections during their district immersion. The fellows successfully utilized this opportunity to improve their skills and understanding that would help them improve the district skill development ecosystem. I am confident that each of the fellows will write and submit a highly effective dissertation on the district skill and growth plan at the end of the program."

Prof. Trithatanmoy Das

Faculty Panel Mentor-Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship
IIM Bangalore



Launch of Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship Phase-2

The launch of the Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship (MGNF) Program for Phase-II was held on the 25th of October 2021. The second cohort of MGNE, i.e., the 2021-2023 cohort, were welcomed and an orientation ceremony that took place in online mode was attended by the Fellows from the program venues of Academic Module in various locations i.e., Bangalore for Goa and Karnataka fellows, Bhubaneswar for Odisha fellows, Agartala for Tripura fellows, Chandigarh for Uttarakhand, and Haryana Fellows.



Interaction of the Odisha Fellows with Hon'ble Union Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Hon'ble Union Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan visited Odisha and met all 30 MGN Fellows at Bhubaneswar. The hon'ble minister discussed on upgradation of skilling ecosystem at the grassroot level and motivated the Fellows to engage in improving the district skilling ecosystem.

SANKALP workshop by DSC in Uttarakhand

One-day Capacity building workshop cum Districts Skill Committee meeting are being organized in each district of Uttarakhand by UNDP team, Uttarakhand Skill Development Mission under SANKALP. The purpose of these workshops is to better sensitize the District Skill Committees as a part of SANKALP Project and provide information and insight regarding important aspects of SANKALP focusing on developing annual and quarterly plans and subsequently deploying strategies to address various components of SANKALP. These workshops are already completed in Rudraprayag, Udham Singh Nagar, Tehri Garhwal, Pauri Garhwal and Uttarkashi and will be carried out in all other districts in next 2-3 months. Fellows from Phase 1 and Phase 2 are involved in organisation of these workshops along with the SANKALP team.



Livelihood Workshop at IIM Bangalore

As part of the MGNF curriculum, the Livelihood workshop has been conducted from 17-22 December 2021 at IIM Bangalore campus. All the 69 Fellows from Phase-1 have presented the kinds and nature of livelihoods, both individual and group, in context to the goods and services selected for their respective districts and further share plans for bridging the identified gaps & challenges and scale up those activities to generate employment opportunities through strengthening the skill ecosystem of the district.



Fellow's interaction with the SANKALP team

The Fellows have presented the success stories from the field to the SANKALP team. The SANKALP team gave their valuable feedback and inputs for better impact of those projects at grass root level. The SANKALP team also discussed about the post-fellowship options with the Fellows.

Quote from the Fellows

"MGNF to me is a unique opportunity to work under the mentorship of an IAS Officer and contribute to improving the skill ecosystem of the district. It gives you an experience like no other where you work to directly impact the lives of youth living in rural parts of the country."

Akhil Kumar,
Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh



"Reimagining Skilling and Entrepreneurship at the district level while accounting for the aspirations of the Community, augmenting the potential of the district economy and functioning within the existing technological ecosystem."

Varsha,
East Garo Hills, Meghalaya

"Cooking healthy Bakery products- Women of Belagavi are the first in the state to be trained in Baking Technician job role under the Chief Minister's Koushalya Karnataka Yojana"

Pavan B,
Belgavi, Karnataka



Snapshot from the field

Gayatri Shejwal,
Nainital, Uttarakhand



Nainital, Uttarakhand: Training on making of fish pickle in Saladi village, Nainital

Gayatri has been integrally involved with the district administration in the development and promotion of the fisheries sector in Nainital district, which lies unexplored. The fisheries sector in Nainital is at a nascent stage and the farmers are distributed across various blocks and face various kinds of issues. However, there is potential to develop the sector in the district, which the district administration is now exploring through a cluster-based approach. Fisheries clusters have been set up in Saladi and very recently in Sarna, and there is a focus on rapidly increasing the number of ponds in the district.

Baniengskhem D,
Nongrum - West Jaintia Hills,
Meghalaya



West Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya: Inside the Clay pottery unit with the members.

Baniengskhem has been engaged in providing sustainable livelihoods to the people of Larnai Village which is known for its clay pottery. A shift in demand from pottery to modern utensils has pushed the artisans to resort to Agriculture which itself is not sustainable to sustain the livelihood of the families of the artisans. The income distribution of the people in and around that village is poor with a major proportion of the village population being under the Poverty line. Supporting Human Capital Development in Meghalaya through its initiative aims at reviving this ancient trade and its artisans through introduction of modern techniques to manufacture the products but also maintaining the timeless value of the ancient inherited designs, providing market linkages and financial linkages to the artisans.

Hiralchandra Maru,
Rajkot, Gujarat



Rajkot, Gujarat: LGBT_Inauguration Ceremony in presence of Hon. Collector-Rajkot, Shri Manvendra Singh Gohil (Prince of Rajpipla)

Hiralchandra has been engaged in the project leading to inclusiveness of the LGBT community towards providing a respectable livelihood through different training programs. Despite the gains made in recent years by the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) movement, there is a long way to go in terms of their inclusion in the mainstream society. Realizing this fact and while deliberating to engage with LGBT community, the fellow was also aware of the reality that the disapproval for LGBT community in Rajkot district is a challenge in planning an initiative. Initiative of giving free meals & free ration to families including LGBT community suffering from Coronavirus disease during second wave of Covid-19 helped him to gain their trust and build rapport. This enabled mobilization of trainees for training program which was key to the success of this project. Social Justice and Empowerment Department, Government of Gujarat recognized this as a model to replicate across districts.

Chandramani Singh,
Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh



Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh: Cow Dung Log making Machine

Aligarh cow shelters have approximately 10,000 cows. Chandramani tried to explore an opportunity for livelihood generation here and produced a plan for manufacturing of Cow Dung Logs. After preliminary research he drafted a proposal for the same which was approved by Chief Development Officer of Aligarh. Women of SHGs will be the beneficiary from the project. The logs produced here would be used in cremation grounds and as bonfire in winters by municipal corporation. A pilot will be carried out for their use at brick kilns. Although the original project was proposed in October, but the completion timelines shifted to January due to Green Tribunal's Clearance delay. If

successful, the project aims to substitute fossil fuel and wood fuel used in brick kilns with these cow dung logs. Also, mass procurement will be done with the help of District Administration. If pilot is implemented successfully, it is expected to generate employment for 200 women.

*Pavan B.,
Belagavi, Karnataka*



Belagavi, Karnataka: Women Entrepreneurs involved In bakery

The fellow has been working on strengthening the livelihoods of the local women through skill provision on the baking technician job role in Food Processing sector specially focusing on the livelihood of women entrepreneurs which helped them earn their living during COVID-19 lockdown. The training was provided under Chief Minister's Kaushalya Karnataka Yojana implemented at Belagavi District, Karnataka. A cohort of 25 women were trained from this training centre under Chief Minister's Kaushal Karnataka Yojana. These women have completed training under the baking technician job role where in the candidates are trained to prepare Bakery items such as Bread, Rusk, Biscuits, Cookies, Cakes, Pan cakes, Pizzas, Puffs etc. The training has been completed and two of the candidates are waiting for the approval of the loan under PMEGP scheme to start a bakery. Two of them have been selling cookies from their home using the social media platform amongst their contacts.

*Rajeev Kumar,
Kota, Rajasthan*



Kota, Rajasthan: Weaving machine for Kota dorian handloom.

Rajeev Kumar has been working with the Kota Dorian Handloom cluster since mid-2020 to understand the cluster, its challenges and possible ways to uplift the cluster; during the socio-economic survey of the cluster done in 2021, it was revealed that the cluster's biggest challenge is lack of awareness about the GI tagged saree and a non-GI Tagged one and the marketing of the product. The fellow talked to more than 50 members of KWWO (Kota Women Weavers Organization), understood that the weavers do not have the financial means to market and do not possess the acumen to use social media and government means to their benefit, and hence their product lacks visibility in the market, since the interventions needed to solve this issue required low investment, the fellow stepped out to meet the local industrial bodies and private NGOs to find possible solutions. The initiatives helped the fellow secure a small fund from the local industrial body to make a print and digital catalogue for the product, which will help with creating awareness and better advertisement, and it also resulted in the fellow getting the nod from local training providers to provide digital and financial workshop resources for the weavers. These small steps resulted in an exhibition being organized in Kota by the Ministry of Textiles, which will showcase the products made by local and national weavers in the city.

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