CHAHAL
ACADEMY

SUMMARY OF

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Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

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TOPIC 1: SKILLING INDIA, EMPOWERING THE WORKFORCE

1. Introduction

India is progressing towards becoming the global skill capital, leveraging its demographic advantage as one of the youngest populations in the world. With an emphasis on employable skills, India has seen notable progress, with the percentage of employable final-year and pre-final-year students rising from 33.9% in 2014 to 51.3% in 2024.

2. Prime Minister's Internship Scheme 2024

(i) Overview

- Announced in Budget 2024-25, this scheme aims to provide **1 crore internship opportunities** over five years in India's top 500 companies.
- It offers **12-month internships**, focusing on practical exposure and bridging academic learning with industry needs.
- **Pilot Phase (October 2024):**
  - 1.25 lakh internships targeted for FY 2024-25.
  - Companies selected based on **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** contributions.
- Operates independently of other skill development initiatives.

(ii) Eligibility:-

(a) Age:

- Applicants aged 21-24 years, Indian nationals, not employed f'ull-time, and not engaged in full-time education (online/ distance learners eligible).

(b) Educational Qualifications:

- Open to high school graduates, ITI-certified individuals, diploma holders, or undergraduates (BA, B. Sc., B. Com, etc.).

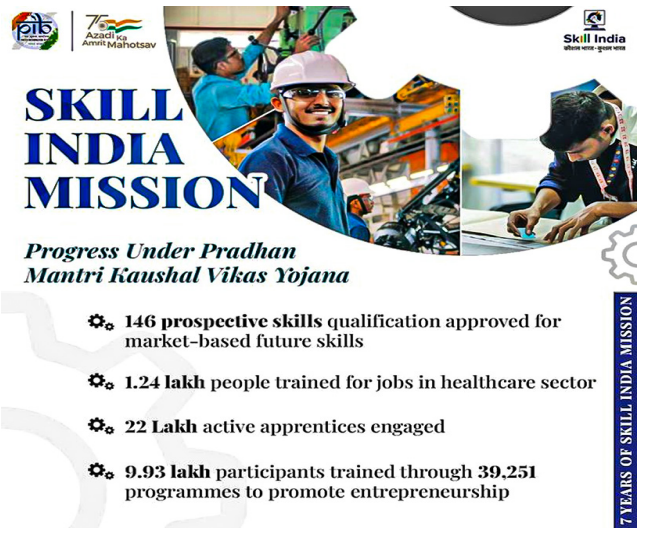
(iii) Benefits and Support (DBT Model)

- Monthly Assistance:
  - Interns receive ₹5,000 per month:
    - ₹500 via CSR funds from companies.
    - ₹4,500 transferred by the government to interns' Aadhaar-linked accounts.
- Incidentals Grant:
  - A **one-time grant of ₹6,000** upon joining through DBT.
- Training Costs:
  - Covered by companies through CSR funds.
- Insurance Coverage:
  - **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)** and **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)** premiums paid by the government.
  - Companies may offer additional accidental coverage.

3. Recent Initiatives by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)

- **'Swiggy Skills' Initiative:**
  - Collaboration with Swiggy to provide skilling and employment for **2.4 lakh delivery partners**.
- **STRIVE Project:**
  - Focuses on entrepreneurship and mentoring in ITIs and NSTIs.
- **PM-JANMAN Initiative:**
  - Targets skilling and uplifting vulnerable tribal groups.
- **Capacity Building:**
  - Programs for fair price shop owners under SANKALP: 3,000 participants trained in entrepreneurship.
- **Marginalized Community Support:**
  - Entrepreneurship programs for marginalized groups, jail inmates, and rural communities.
- **Rashtriya Udhyamita Vikas Pariyojana:**
  - Supports PM Swanidhi beneficiaries with training and mentoring.
- **Women Empowerment:**
  - Skilling in aspirational districts.
  - MoUs signed to upskill **20,000 youth in tourism**.
- **Skill India Centre at Rashtrapati Bhavan:**
  - Focused on skilling in-house staff.

4. Key Initiatives under the Skill India Mission-



- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):**
  - Short-term skill training programs.
- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (PMKK):**
  - Standardized quality training nationwide.
- **Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS):**
  - Targets non-literate and rural populations.
- **Pradhan Mantri YUVA Yojana:**
  - Focuses on entrepreneurship development.
- **Skill India Digital (SID):**
  - AI-driven job-matching tools for continuous learning.
- **PM Vishwakarma Yojana:**
  - Supports traditional artisans with modern skills, integrating them into global markets.

5. Latest Achievements

- **Revised Skill Loan Scheme (2024):**
  - Loan cap raised from **₹1.5 lakh to ₹7.5 lakh** for advanced skill courses.
- **World Youth Skills Day (July 2024):**
  - Celebrated the **10th anniversary of the Skill India Mission**.
- **Apprenticeship Training (2024-25):**
  - **2.77 lakh apprentices engaged**, with **7.46 lakh** undergoing training as of July 2024.
  - **₹122.36 crore** stipend disbursed via DBT.
- **Indian Institute of Skills (IIS):**
  - **Mumbai IIS inaugurated**, offering training in:
    - Factory automation, AI, robotics, EVs, and culinary arts.
  - Partnerships with companies like Fanuc India and Taj Skyline.

6. Global Standards in Skilling

- **Skill India International Centres (SIIC):**
  - 30 centres are planned, with **Varanasi and SDI Bhubaneswar operational**.
  - MOUs with **Australia, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, UAE, UK**, etc., for standard-setting and mutual recognition of qualifications.

7. Industry Collaboration

- **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC):**
  - 131 projects benefiting **3.1 lakh people** across **42 aspirational districts**.
  - **Skill Impact Bond:** Targets **50,000 youth** training, ensuring 60% female participation.
- **Directorate General of Training (DGT):**
  - Collaborations with industry leaders (Maruti Suzuki, IBM, Microsoft).
  - **21.5 lakh trainees** prepared for Industry 4.0.
- **NSTI Collaborations:**
  - Training with ISRO, ONGC, BHEL, Indian Railways, etc., covering **1,400 participants (FY24)**.

8. Conclusion

India's skill development efforts signify a transformative journey toward becoming a global skill leader. Initiatives like the **Prime Minister's Internship Scheme**, **Indian Institute of Skills**, and **Skill India Digital** showcase the country's resolve to align with Industry 4.0, foster entrepreneurship, and enhance employability. By synergizing government programs, private partnerships, and global collaborations, India is empowering its workforce to excel in a competitive global environment.

TOPIC 2: GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES IN PROMOTING SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

1. Introduction

India faces a significant demand-supply gap in skilled human resources. Addressing this challenge, the Government of India, through the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), has initiated numerous measures to upskill workers and foster entrepreneurship. This article details the government's initiatives, focusing on skilling programs, ecosystem development, and entrepreneurship promotion, ensuring a future-ready workforce.

2. Skill Development Initiatives

(i) Role of MSDE and Associated Agencies

- **Mandate:** Coordinate skill development initiatives, bridging demand-supply gaps,

creating technical and vocational training frameworks, and promoting innovation.

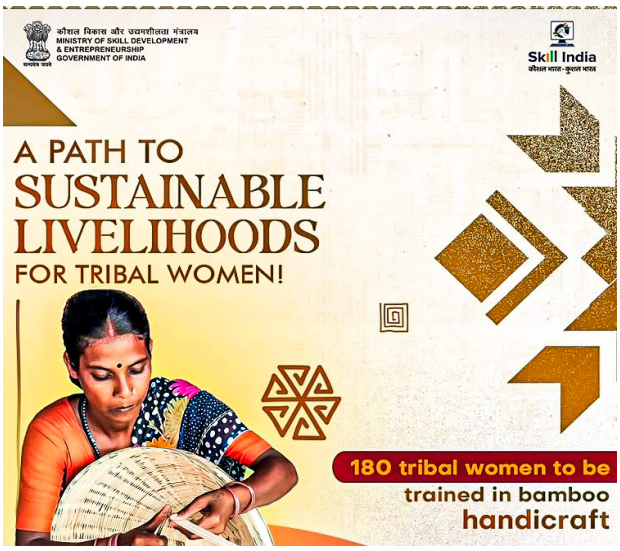
- **Vision 2025 Goals:**
  - Unlock human capital by triggering a productivity dividend.
  - Create aspirational employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.
  - Achieve individual economic gains and catalyze economic growth.
- **Key Organizations Supporting MSDE:**
  - **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC):** Provides certified skilling, upskilling, reskilling, hands-on training, and international mobility.
  - **Sector Skill Councils (37), ITIs (15,000+), and NSTIs (23):** Collaborate under the Directorate General of Training (DGT).
  - **National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) & National Skill Development Fund (NSDF):** Support training and funding initiatives.

(ii) Global Skilling Collaborations

- **Case Study – Israel:**
  - Skilling for 10,000+ workers in sectors like construction and healthcare.
  - Collaboration with Israel's Population Immigration and Border Authority (PIBA) for skill certification, cultural orientation, and job placement.

(iii) Flagship Programs

- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):** Special projects like PM-JANMAN focus on vulnerable tribal groups in collaboration with **TRIFED.**
- **STRIVE Project:** Targets skilling and mentoring trainees in ITIs and NSTIs.



3. Initiatives in Entrepreneurship Promotion

(i) Developing the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

- **Key Focus Areas:**
  - Support for aspiring and existing entrepreneurs across rural, urban, and marginalized regions.
  - Targeted initiatives for women's entrepreneurship and financial inclusion.
  - Simplified regulatory reforms for ease of doing business.
- **Entrepreneurship-Industry Partnerships:**
  - Establish incubation centers in ITIs, NSTIs, and higher educational institutions.
  - Collaboration with strategic industries like electronics, EVs, and solar energy.

4. Training and Education Reforms

- Embed entrepreneurship in school and higher education curricula to foster entrepreneurial mindsets.
- Annual hackathons to make entrepreneurship aspirational.
- Revamp training programs to focus on practical skills like financial literacy, market research, and critical thinking.

5. Major Programs and Achievements

(i) Notable Projects:

- **SANKALP:** Focuses on entrepreneurship among SCs, STs, and marginalized groups.
- **PM DAKSH Yojana:** Provides free skill training with placement assistance to SCs, OBCs, and Safai Karamcharis.
- **Sky-6 Cities Pilot Project:** Promotes entrepreneurship in temple towns like Varanasi, Haridwar, and Puri, resulting in 11,897 trained participants and 5,014 enterprises.
- **Entrepreneurship-Cum-Skilled Development Programs:** Focus on futuristic roles like LED repair technicians and solar PV installers.

(ii) Special Initiatives for Women and Marginalized Communities

- **Project SWAVALAMBINI:** Aims to empower female students through entrepreneurship training in collaboration with NITI Aayog.
- **Programs for Jail Inmates:** Focus on reskilling prisoners to enable financial independence.

- **Capacity Building for FPS Owners:** Covers entrepreneurship basics and financial literacy under PMKVY.

(iii) Collaborations and Partnerships

- **MSME's SFURTI Scheme:** Modernizes traditional industries via cluster development.
  - **Cluster Types:** Heritage (1,000-2,500 artisans), Major (500-1,000 artisans), Mini (up to 500 artisans).
  - **Financial Assistance:** Rs. 8 Cr, Rs. 3 Cr, and Rs. 1 Cr, respectively.
- **HUL CSR Partnership:** Awareness program reaching 1 lakh youth pan-India.

6. Technological Integration and Future Plans

(i) Leveraging New-Age Technologies

- Adoption of **AI, IoT, and blockchain** to deliver training and mentorship services.
- Creation of a **national digital platform** for entrepreneurs to connect with peers and mentors.

(ii) Vision for 2025

- Seamless convergence between skilling programs and credit finance.
- Promote digital platforms like **Skill India Digital Hub** for global freelance opportunities.
- Strengthen partnerships with grassroots entrepreneurs for cluster-based development.

7. Conclusion

The Government of India's multifaceted initiatives aim to build a future-ready workforce while creating an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Programs like PMKVY, SANKALP, and PM DAKSH highlight a commitment to skilling marginalized communities, women, and rural populations. By leveraging technology, fostering public-private collaborations, and integrating entrepreneurship into education, the government envisions a robust, self-reliant India, ready to embrace challenges and drive economic growth.

TOPIC 3: COMPREHENSIVE ECOSYSTEM FOR RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

1. Introduction

India, one of the fastest-growing economies, aspires to become the third-largest global economy in the near future. Achieving this milestone necessitates harnessing the untapped entrepreneurial potential of rural women. Resilience and perseverance are qualities inherent in rural women, making them ideal drivers of India's economic growth. However, their entrepreneurial journey is often hindered by systemic bottlenecks that need to be addressed.

2. Key Statistics:

- Women constitute nearly 48% of India's population but contribute only 17% to the GDP (World Bank, 2023).
- India could boost its GDP by USD 0.7 trillion by 2025 by integrating 58 million more women into the workforce (NITI Aayog).
- Female labor force participation could increase GDP growth by 1.5 percentage points if 50% of women join the workforce.

Despite these opportunities, women own just **20% of enterprises in India**, with most concentrated in micro-units and the informal sector. Interestingly, rural areas outperform urban areas in terms of women-led enterprises, with 22.24% located in rural regions compared to **18.42% in urban areas** (MSME Annual Report).

3. Benefits of Promoting Rural Women Entrepreneurship

i. **Economic Growth:** Enhanced contribution to GDP and rural-urban developmental linkages.

ii. **Social Cohesion:** Inclusive workplaces and better community relationships.

iii. **Employment Generation:** Businesses led by women employ three times more women than those led by men.

iv. **Poverty Alleviation:** Combats rural poverty and unemployment effectively.

4. Government Schemes to Promote Rural Women Entrepreneurship

(i) Skill Upgradation and Mahila Coir Yojana (MCY):

- Focuses on skill development in the coir industry.
- Offers two months of training and a stipend of ₹3,000/month.
- Encourages beneficiaries to establish coir units under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP).

(ii) Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP):

- Sub-scheme of DAY-NRLM aimed at establishing non-farm enterprises.
- Targets rural poor, with priority for women and marginalized groups.
- Over 2.08 lakh enterprises established across 29 states/UTs.

(iii) Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP):

- Empowers women in agriculture by enhancing productivity and livelihoods.
- Covers 1.77 crore women farmers under farm interventions.

(iv) Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK):

- Provides services like digital literacy, skill development, and access to government entitlements.
- Acts as a one-stop solution for rural women entrepreneurs.

(v) Women Enterprise Development Scheme (WED):

- Offers financial assistance for business ventures in the Northeastern region.
- Provides loans up to ₹15 lakh with a concessional interest rate of 8%.

(vi) Annapurna Yojana:

- Targets women entrepreneurs in the food service sector.
- Offers collateral-free loans up to 50,000 for a tenure of 36 months.

(vii) Mudra Yojana Loans for Women:

- Facilitates access to finance for small businesses with a 25-bps interest reduction for women entrepreneurs.
- 69% of the 44.46 crore loans under the scheme have been sanctioned to women.

(viii) Startup India Initiative:

- Promotes startups with over 46% having at least one-woman director.
- Reserves 10% of the Fund of Funds for Startups (₹1,000 crore) for women-led startups.

5. Loopholes in Current Schemes

- **Lack of Awareness:**
  - Poor promotion and outreach, especially in rural areas.
  - Limited digital literacy impedes access.
- **Skewed Focus:**
  - Emphasis on financial and skill development support overlooks challenges like market linkages and mentorship.
- **Absence of Targeted Schemes:**
  - Most schemes cater to all genders, with insufficient focus on women-specific issues.
- **Sectoral Neglect:**
  - Inadequate attention to service-sector entrepreneurship.
- **Limited Online Access:**
  - Incomplete digitization and unfriendly interfaces hinder scheme utilization.

6. Recommendations

i. Comprehensive Support Framework:

- Include entrepreneurship promotion, business support, market linkages, finance access, training, and mentoring in schemes.

ii. User-Centric Design:

- Ensure end-to-end support for users throughout the scheme lifecycle, from registration to grievance resolution.

iii. Enhanced Digital Access:

- Improve user interfaces and integrate multilingual content.
- Use audio-visual aids for awareness and application processes.

iv. Last-Mile Accessibility:

- Enable physical and assisted access to schemes.
- Employ female frontline workers for effective outreach.

v. Gender-Disaggregated Data:

- Collect, report, and analyze data to evaluate scheme impact on women entrepreneurs.

vi. Formalization of Enterprises:

- Facilitate the transition of informal businesses to the formal sector with the help of trained personnel.

7. Conclusion

Unlocking the entrepreneurial potential of rural women is essential for India's aspiration to become the third-largest global economy. Their resilience and perseverance position them as catalysts for economic growth. A robust and inclusive ecosystem, backed by well-designed government initiatives and targeted support, can transform rural women's enterprises into significant contributors to India's development story.

TOPIC 4: SKILLED FARMERS: BRIGHT FUTURE OF INDIAN AGRICULTURE

1. Introduction

India has been an **agricultural country** for centuries, yet its farmers are often labeled as **unskilled laborers** or **illiterate**. This was not the case historically, as ancient Indian agriculture reflected advanced **scientific methods** and **deep knowledge**.

2. Historical Context

(i) Ancient Knowledge

- Sage **Parashar Rishi** authored ***Krishi Parashara*** **(2000 years ago),** outlining scientific formulas for **sowing, irrigation**, and crop yield.
- His work, ***Krishi Kandam***, is recognized in a **University of Massachusetts** research paper.
- **Surpala** authored ***Vriksh-Ayurveda***, earlier mentioned in **Varahamira's Brihat Samhita**.
- **Acharya Chanakya** detailed procedures on **agricultural products** and **livestock management**.

(ii) Impact of Foreign Invasions

- The arrival of **foreign invaders** and later **British rule** disrupted agricultural science:
  - **Heavy taxation**, starvation, and exploitation reduced agriculture to mere **livelihood for the poor**.
  - Innovation and investment **declined**, and farmers became disconnected from **productivity** and **experimentation**.

(iii) Post-Independence Green Revolution (1960s)

- Focused on **population growth, hunger, and poverty**.
- Science was introduced to agriculture with a focus on **chemical fertilizers**, **pesticides**, and **subsidies** to increase production.
- **Current Issues** (Green Revolution aftereffects):
  - **Soil degradation** due to chemicals.
  - **Groundwater depletion**.
  - **Climate change impacts** reducing productivity.
  - Farmers **not receiving fair prices** for produce.

3. Need for Skilled Farmers in Modern Agriculture

To ensure **food security**, sustainability, and prosperity, **skilling farmers** is critical.

(i) Technological Development

- Use of **automation**, **data analytics**, and **precision farming** demands skilled farmers.
- Farmers must learn to utilize technology to reap its full benefits.

(ii) Sustainable Practices

- To combat **climate change**, farmers need to adopt:
  - Regenerative practices
  - Agroecology
  - Sustainable farming methods.

(iii) Bridging Skill Gaps

- Despite advancements, most farmers still rely on **traditional methods**.
- Skill development can address farmers' **lack of awareness** about challenges and opportunities.

(iv) Employment Generation

- Agriculture is often viewed as a **compulsion**, not an employment avenue.
- **Skill development** can optimize:
  - **Work efficiency** on farms
  - Inclusion of **landless farmers** in productive agricultural work
- **Results: Increased farmer income** and agriculture's employment capacity.

4. Government Initiatives for Skill Development in Agriculture

(i) Programs and Schemes:-

- Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)
- National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)
- PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprise (PMFME)
- Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)
- National Beekeeping and Honey Mission

(ii) Special Focus on Women Farmers

- **80% of rural women** depend on agriculture.

- Women contribute **60-80%** of India's total food production.
- **Empowerment Programs**:
  - **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** and **Farmer-Producer Organizations (FPOs)**
  - **Examples:**
    - **Jeevika** (Bihar)
    - **Mahila Lakhpati Scheme** (Madhya Pradesh)
    - **MKSP** under NRLM

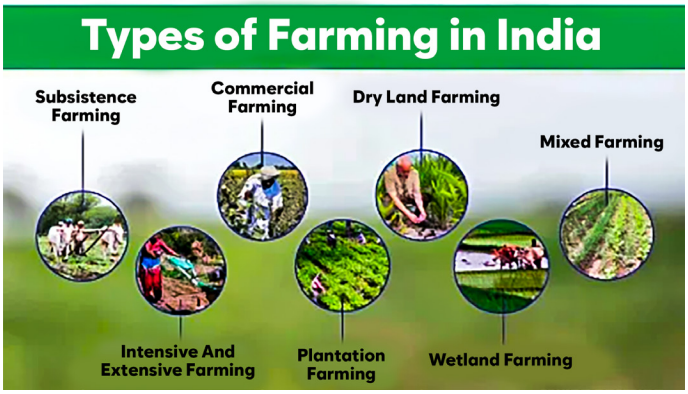
(iii) Capacity-Building Platforms

- **Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA):**
  - Promotes decentralized **farmer-friendly extension systems**.
  - Facilitates **technology demonstration** through **Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)**.
- **National Skill Development Mission** (2015):
  - **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**
  - **Agriculture Skills Council of India (ASCI)** collaborates with:
    - **National Training Institutes (NTIs)**
    - **SAMETIs, KVKs, Agricultural Universities**
- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):**
  - **9.72 lakh** individuals trained in agriculture and allied sectors (till October 2023).
- Skill Training for Rural Youth (STRY)
  - 7-day short-term training program (includes local visits).
  - Implemented by **MANAGE** in collaboration with:
    - SAMETIs
    - ATMA
    - KVKs
- Centers of Excellence (COE)
  - Set up under **Mission Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)**.
  - Trained **3.60 lakh farmers** (by October 2023).
- Per Drop More Crop (PDMC)
  - Provides training, awareness programs, and exposure visits for farmers.
- Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)
  - **52,080 farmers** trained in **mechanized farming** (2021-Nov 2023).
- Drone Training for Women SHGs
  - Rs. **1,261 crore fund** for 15,000 SHGs to operate drones.
  - Purpose: Renting drones for **fertilizer and pesticide spraying**.
- Food Processing Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP)
  - Under **PMFME**, **54,767 beneficiaries** trained (till November 2023).

- **NRLM Initiatives:**
  - Training focuses on:
    - **Drones, natural farming, agro-ecological practices**
    - **Organic farming, micro-irrigation, livestock management**
  - **1,94,057 community resource persons** trained.
- Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying
  - **12,500 farmers** and **marine fishermen** trained.

5. Role of Agri-Startups and Private Sector

- As of **31st December 2023, 2,800 agri-startups** are operational.
- Agri-startups bridge farmers with **technology**, enhancing skills and productivity.
- Need for **government-private sector collaboration** to ensure long-term farmer development.



6. Agricultural Research Infrastructure

India boasts strong infrastructure for agricultural research:

- **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**: 97 institutes
- **Agricultural Universities**: 53
- **National Research Centers**: 18
- **Project Directorates**: 25
- **All-India Research Projects**: 89

7. Conclusion

India's **agricultural transformation** lies in **skilling farmers** to leverage **technology, innovation**, and **sustainable practices**. Collaboration between **government** and **private sector**, along with strong research infrastructure, will pave the way for a **bright future** in Indian agriculture.

TOPIC 5: SKILL AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA

Skill development and entrepreneurship are the cornerstones of national progress, spanning agriculture, manufacturing, services, and social sectors. As **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** emphasized in his **Independence Day speech**, India has the potential to emerge as the *"Skill Capital of the World"* owing to its vast youth population. Both skill development and entrepreneurship are crucial for economic growth, employment generation, and social mobility.

1. Understanding Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

- **Skill Development:** It refers to enhancing or acquiring technical, soft, or interpersonal skills for better employability, productivity, and adaptability. It includes formal education, training programs, on-the-job learning, mentoring, and self-study.
- **Entrepreneurship:** It is the process of creating, developing, and managing innovative businesses to generate value. It fosters innovation, utilizes opportunities, and drives economic progress.

Both are complementary, maximizing socio-economic benefits through government initiatives like ***Skill India, Make in India, and Startup India.***

2. Government Initiatives for Skill Development

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) coordinates skill development across the country with objectives to create a learner-centric, demand-driven skill ecosystem.

(i) National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

- NEP 2020 integrates skill education into mainstream education.
- Removes barriers between academic and vocational education.
- Introduces skill modules from Class 6 to promote career exploration.
- NSQF-aligned courses ensure education meets industry standards.
- States like Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Sikkim have implemented innovative models like industrial hubs and organic farming practices in schools.

(ii) Samagra Shiksha Scheme

- Aligned with Skill India Mission to vocationalize school education.
- Key features:
  - Exposure to skill education in 1 lakh+ upper primary schools.
  - Hub-and-Spoke model for infrastructure utilization.
  - Career guidance and integration with external stakeholders.

(iii) Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

- Provides free short-term training aligned with NSQF.

- Focuses on reskilling and upskilling youth (age **15-45**).
- **PMKVY 4.0** emphasizes ***new-age skills*** like AI, AR/VR, Climate Change, and Green Economy.
- **Impact:** 1.48 crore beneficiaries, including 65 lakh women.

(iv) Skill India Mission (2015)

- An umbrella scheme improving employment and productivity.
- Includes:
  - ➢ National Skill Development Mission (NSDM)
  - ➢ Creation of specialized group service ***Indian Skill Development Services (ISDS).***

3. Other Key Schemes

i. **Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS):** Targets non-literates and school dropouts for vocational training (26.4 lakh trained).

ii. **Craftsman Training Scheme (CTS):** Long-term industrial training via 14,930 ITIs nationwide.

iii. **Advanced Vocational Training Scheme (AVTS):** Short modular industrial courses for workers.

iv. **Vocational Training Program for Women:** Demand-driven courses aimed at socio-economic mainstreaming of women.

v. **National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme:** Combines basic and on-the-job training with industry support.

vi. **SANKALP:** Supported by the World Bank to strengthen institutions and promote inclusivity.

vii. **Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH):** A unified digital platform for skill training, education, and employment.

4. Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in India

Entrepreneurship is pivotal for fostering innovation, boosting economic growth, and creating employment. The government has launched several flagship programs to nurture startups and entrepreneurial ventures.

(i) Startup India Program (2016)

- Builds an ecosystem to promote innovation and job creation.
- **Focus areas:**
  - ➢ Funding Support through Stand-Up India scheme (loans up to ₹10 lakh - ₹1 crore).
  - ➢ Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Self-Employment and Talent Utilization (SETU).
  - ➢ Startup India Seed Fund Scheme to fund innovative startups.

(ii) BHASKAR (Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry)

- A one-stop digital platform for startup collaboration, research, and knowledge-sharing.
- Aims to empower entrepreneurs across all stages.

(iii) Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)

- Provides **micro-credit loans** up to ₹10 lakh for micro-enterprises.
- Covers manufacturing, trading, services, and agri-aligned activities.

(iv) PM Vishwakarma Scheme

- Targets traditional artisans (Vishwakarmas) for upskilling.
- Provides **modern tools, credit support**, and market exposure.
- Implemented by the *MSME Ministry* and supported by MSDE and Ministry of Finance.

5. Challenges in Skill and Entrepreneurship Development

Despite significant progress, several challenges persist:

i. **Social Stigma:** Vocational education is still perceived as inferior to academic education.

ii. **Inadequate Infrastructure:** Shortage of training facilities and qualified trainers.

iii. **Skill Mismatch:** Disparity between skills imparted and industry needs.

iv. **Technological Changes:** Rapid advancements like Industry 4.0 demand continuous upskilling.

v. **Regulatory Hurdles:** Complex labor laws hinder entrepreneurial growth.

6. Opportunities and the Way Forward

India's demographic dividend, coupled with enabling policies, provides a golden opportunity to become a global hub for skills and entrepreneurship. Key steps include:

i. **Enhancing Integration:** Bridge the gap between education, skills, and employment.

ii. **Focus on Digital Skills:** Prepare youth for future industries (AI, Robotics, Green Economy).

iii. **Promote Inclusive Development:** Increase participation of women, marginalized, and rural communities.

iv. **Global Collaboration:** Leverage partnerships with international organizations for best practices.

v. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Improve implementation through effective governance and feedback mechanisms.

7. Conclusion

The skill and entrepreneurial ecosystem in India is undergoing a transformative shift. Government initiatives, such as PMKVY, Startup India, and Skill India Mission, are playing a pivotal role in equipping the youth with future-ready skills. While challenges like infrastructure deficits and skill mismatches remain, targeted policies, industry partnerships, and active societal participation can harness India's potential. By enhancing skill development and promoting entrepreneurship, India can realize its vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047 and become a global leader in innovation and productivity.

TOPIC 6: SKILLING THE YOUTH THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

1. Introduction

Skilling refers to enhancing individuals' abilities, knowledge, and technical expertise to meet dynamic job market demands. As global economies undergo rapid technological transformations—marked by automation, AI, and Industry 4.0—the need to upskill youth has become paramount.

- According to **ILO**, skilling boosts **economic resilience** and poverty reduction.
- UNESCO links skill development to **Education for Sustainable Development Goals** (ESDG) for social inclusion and productive employment.
- The **World Economic Forum (WEF)** emphasizes developing digital literacy, problem-solving, adaptability, and other 21st-century skills to meet **Fourth Industrial Revolution** demands.

India, with **65% of its population under 35**, is uniquely positioned to harness its **demographic dividend** through technology-driven skilling.

2. Importance of Skilling

(i) Addressing Critical Challenges

- Youth Unemployment
  - ➢ Skilling equips young individuals with employable competencies, addressing India's **24% unemployment rate among graduates** (CMIE, 2023).
- Technological Disruption
  - ➢ Rise of **automation and AI** demands re-skilling and up-skilling to mitigate workforce displacement.
  - ➢ Example: **NASSCOM** estimates India must upskill **1.4 million IT professionals by 2025** to stay technologically relevant.
- Economic Growth and Productivity
  - ➢ A skilled workforce enhances **productivity, innovation**, and **global competitiveness**.
  - ➢ **Example:** IT, telecom, fintech, and manufacturing sectors generate millions of jobs requiring specialized skills.

- Social Inclusion
  - ➢ Skilling empowers marginalized communities, promoting **inclusive growth** and **poverty reduction**.
  - ➢ **Example:** Government schemes like PMKVY integrate skilling for rural youth and women.

3. Role of Technology in Skilling

Technology has revolutionized the skilling ecosystem, offering **scalable, accessible**, and **customized solutions**.

(i) Scalability

- Online platforms like **SWAYAM**, **Coursera**, and **DIKSHA** deliver Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), training **millions simultaneously**.
- Example: SWAYAM delivers AI and data science content to learners across India.

(ii) Accessibility

- Digital tools overcome **geographical and socioeconomic barriers**.
- **Example:** Platforms like **Unacademy** and **YouTube** bring affordable learning to rural learners.
- Mobile internet access in rural India, reaching **65 crore users**, democratizes education.

(iii) Customization

- AI-driven platforms like **TCS iON** tailor learning to individual needs using **adaptive assessments** and interactive modules.
- Personalized career pathways ensure better learner engagement and outcomes.

4. Government Initiatives for Technology-Driven Skilling

(i) Digital India Campaign (2015)

- Aims to create a **digitally empowered society** through:
  - ➢ Robust digital infrastructure.
  - ➢ Delivery of government services digitally.
  - ➢ Promotion of digital literacy.
- As of 2023, **40 crore Indians** have benefitted, fostering digital inclusion.

(ii) Skill India Mission (2015)

- Aligns vocational training with **industry demands**.
- Partnerships with companies like **Google** and **Microsoft** provide training in **coding, web development**, and **cybersecurity**.
- By 2024, **14 million individuals** trained, including 5.4 million in reskilling.

(iii) Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)

- Through **Atal Tinkering Labs**, students access hands-on experience in **robotics, 3D printing**, and **AI**.

(iv) Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

- Provides certifications in **digital marketing, data analytics**, and other high-demand fields.

(v) Budget 2024-25 Highlights

- Rs 2 lakh crore allocated for **employment and skilling** over five years.
- Internship opportunities for **10 million youth** across **500 companies** with stipends and grants.
- **1,000 ITIs** upgraded to connect curricula with **industry needs** under a hub-and-spoke model.

5. Emerging Technologies and High-Demand Courses

To prepare youth for future-ready careers, the following skills and courses are in high demand:

Technology/ Course	Purpose
Cybersecurity	Combat increasing cyber threats.
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	Develop machine learning, NLP, and AI tools.
Quantum Computing	Build expertise in quantum mechanics.
Blockchain	Manage cryptocurrency and decentralized apps.
Augmented/ Virtual Reality	Applications in gaming, education, and health.
Data Science	Analyze large data sets for decision-making.
Cloud Computing	Deploy and manage cloud infrastructure.
Internet of Things (IoT)	Manage connected devices for industries.
Robotics	Build automation solutions.
Renewable Energy	Focus on solar, wind, and sustainable energy.

6. Challenges and Way Forward

A. Existing Challenges

i. **Low Vocational Training Penetration**
   - Only **3.7%** of India's workforce has formal vocational training compared to **52% in the U.S.** and **96% in South Korea**.

ii. **Skill Mismatch**
   - Growing disconnect between **industry demands** and **existing curricula**.

iii. **Digital Divide**
   - Limited internet access in rural areas hinders equitable learning opportunities.

iv. **Dynamic Job Market**
   - Jobs of the future require **adaptability** and continuous re-skilling.

B. Way Forward

i. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):** Collaborate with tech companies to ensure curricula align with real-world industry demands.

ii. **Strengthening Digital Infrastructure:** Expand affordable internet and e-learning solutions to rural and marginalized areas.

iii. **Skill-Based Hiring:** Promote recruitment based on skills over degrees to bridge employment gaps.

iv. **Focus on Emerging Technologies:** Emphasize courses in AI, IoT, blockchain, and data science to prepare a future-ready workforce.

v. **Promoting Entrepreneurship:** Encourage youth to innovate and establish technology-based startups.

7. Conclusion

Skilling the youth through technology is pivotal for India's **economic growth** and **social equity**. As the nation moves toward becoming a global workforce hub, accessible, scalable, and personalized technology-driven skilling solutions will play a transformative role. Collaborative efforts by the government, industry, and educational institutions will enable India to leverage its demographic dividend, empowering its youth with future-ready skills. Bridging the digital divide and prioritizing emerging technologies will ensure India's youth are **employable**, **innovative**, and resilient in a rapidly evolving global economy.

TOPIC 7: BUILDING A SKILLED WORKFORCE IN RURAL INDIA

1. Introduction

The phrase **"Where there are skills, jobs will follow"** underpins the importance of developing a skilled workforce for economic growth. Rural areas, often underserved in skill development, are crucial for reducing migration, boosting local entrepreneurship, and addressing the aspirations of India's youth. With 65% of its population under 35 and a median age of 28, India can leverage its demographic dividend through robust skilling initiatives. Despite improvement in employability from 34% to 51.25% over a decade, significant challenges remain.

2. PM's Package for Skilling and Employment

The Union Budget 2024-25 announced a new centrally-sponsored scheme to skill 20 lakh youth over five years, complemented by a ₹2 lakh crore package to support employment and skilling initiatives. Highlights include:

i. **Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs):** Upgradation of 1,000 ITIs.

ii. **Skill Development Targets:** Benefitting 4.1 crore youth within five years.

iii. **Financial Support for Education:** Revised model-scale loan schemes with government-backed guarantees up to ₹10 lakh, with interest subvention for 1 lakh students annually.

3. Government's Skill Development Initiatives

The government has undertaken several measures under its **Skill India Mission (SIM):**

(i) **National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (NPSDE):** Focuses on bridging skill gaps, equity for marginalized groups, and fostering entrepreneurship, particularly among women.

Key Schemes:

(a) **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):** Industry-relevant skilling programs.

(b) **Craftsman Training Scheme (CTS):** Vocational training through ITIs.

(c) **National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS):** Encourages apprenticeships across industries.

(d) Targeted Programs for Rural Youth

- **Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gramin Kaushal Yojana (DDU-GKY):**
  - **Focus: -** Placement-linked skill development in 37 sectors.
  - **Outcome: -** 16.5 lakh candidates trained; 10.52 lakh placed by mid-2024.
- **Rural Self-Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs):**
  - **Focus:** Self-employment training in 64 courses for rural youth.
  - **Outcome:** Over 50.72 lakh candidates trained, 36.23 lakh settled.

4. Industry Partnerships for Skilling

Collaboration with industries ensures that training aligns with market demand:

(i) Sector Skill Councils (SSCs): 36 councils led by industry leaders to define skill standards.

(ii) Industry 4.0 Skills: Programs in AI, robotics, and emerging technologies under PMKVY 4.0.

(iii) National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET): Regulates vocational education for quality assurance.

5. Global Skilling Standards

India has made strides in global skilling initiatives through:

(i) Skill India International Centres (SIIC): 30 centres, including operational units in Varanasi and Bhubaneswar.

- **MOUs with Countries:** Partnerships with nations like Australia, UK, and UAE for mutual recognition of qualifications.
- **International Placement:** Deployment of over 25,000 skilled workers abroad.

6. Challenges and Opportunities

i. Challenges:

- Quality of jobs and wages in rural areas.
- Agriculture-dependent workforce: Nearly 50% of rural workers rely on agriculture.

ii. Opportunities:

- Expansion of agro-processing industries to create rural jobs.
- Employment Incentives Scheme targeting first-time workers.
- Establishment of 12 industrial parks across 100 cities for decentralized job opportunities.

7. Conclusion

Skilling rural India is crucial for bridging economic and social disparities. By aligning skilling programs with industry needs, fostering local entrepreneurship, and ensuring global competitiveness, India can unlock the true potential of its rural workforce. A combination of focused government initiatives, industry collaborations, and targeted programs can ensure that rural youth not only find meaningful employment but also contribute significantly to India's growth story.