

## RUDSETI: A perfect avenue for entrepreneurial training in agriculture and allied fields for rural youth

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“Un-aimed opulence, in general, is a roundabout, undependable, and wasteful way of improving the living standards of the poor.”

-Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen

Indian economy is at the tipping point and youth of the country will determine the direction the economy takes. India enjoys a demographic dividend where more than 50 per cent of its population comes under working age group of 15 to 59 years which offers an economic opportunity to be utilized for fast tracking India's economic growth and development. According to Census Survey of India (conducted in 2011) the current proportion of population under 25 years of age is 51 per cent and proportion under 35 years is 66 per cent. In India youth constitute 27.5 per cent of the population who are aged between 15 years to 29 years which contribute 34 per cent in India's Gross National Income (National Youth Policy, 2014). Comparatively China's current economic boom is said to be the direct consequence of the large proportion of youth in its population. With proper education, job openings and health care, our youth are sure to tip the economy in the right direction. Despite of demographic dividend and increased literacy among youth, unemployment is the biggest challenge the country's youth is facing mainly because of lack of any form of social security system as well as proper and adequate avenues for vocational training.

At present, close to 686 parastatal organizations and over 1000 educational institutions and NGOs are engaged in conducting entrepreneurship development programmes in the country. Most of these organizations are established, sponsored and/or financially supported (directly or indirectly) by the central/state governments, financial institutions and public sector banks. Presently, close to 10,000 EDPs of various kinds are being conducted in India, covering about 250,000 potential entrepreneurs from various target groups like general, women, science and technology, educated unemployed, micro entrepreneurs,

existing entrepreneurs, etc., every year.

An innovative initiative was taken way back in the year 1982 jointly by *Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara* Educational Trust, Syndicate Bank and Canara Bank to motivate unemployed rural youth to take up self-employment as an alternative career. Under the stewardship of the visionary leader and aided by total support from the sponsors, Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSETI) has successfully executed challenging assignments and conducted innovative experiments in Rural Development. RUDSETI Institute has established 27 units across 18 States in India. The head quarter is located at Ujire in Dakshin Kannada district of Karnataka. All the 27 units of RUDSETI Institute are equipped with infrastructure facilities to conduct residential training programmes.

One important unique feature is that the RUDSETI conducts not only demand driven skill development programme but also organize root level need based training programme with an intention to provide self-employment to rural youth. For example in the farming sector RUDSETI may organize need based training programme like training on Seed Certification System, Seed Production and Processing System, Micro Irrigation system, Rainwater Harvesting System etc.

The motto of the institution is overall development and providing self-employment. The Institute conducts more than 60 types of training programmes, which are of short duration, ranging from 1 to 6 weeks such as comprehensive agriculture and allied activities, dairy management, comprehensive horticulture, sericulture, poultry, piggery, mushroom cultivation, sheep rearing, cultivation of medicinal plants, agro-forestry, apiculture, vermin-composting and food processing etc. Institution also provides special Training to the officials of nationalized banks and rural development banks, Government officers with regard to providing information related on self-development and self-employment to the people of the

society, working in a particular locality.

Training modules of RUDSET Institute are so designed that Entrepreneurship Development (ED) is achieved through Human Resource Development. The training modules of ED/Skill development programmes of RUDSET Institute have been accepted as standard modules by the funding agencies such as Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Department of Industries and Commerce. Through excellent liaison with various Government departments, developmental agencies, banks and networking with other Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs), RUDSET Institute has been able to provide support to the trained entrepreneurs for establishing their ventures. So far, RUDSETI has trained 3.69 lakh youths of which 2.53 lakh trainees have settled with their self-employment ventures, thus constituting around 69 per cent to the settlement rate, which is a matter of pride for RUDSETI. Thus, the model has proved successful for the past 29 years in building the morale of the rural youth and empowering them to acquire a productive identity by taking up self-employment ventures in their own places. The success of RUDSETI has inspired the Central Government to start more than 500 institutes on the lines of RUDSETI ([www.rudseti.org](http://www.rudseti.org)).

**Vision of RUDSETI :** “Transformation of rural youth to acquire productive identity through short duration interventions”.

**Mission of RUDSETI :** Channelizing youth power in wealth creation and empower youth to share economic progress equitably.

**Mission statement of RUDSETI :** “Instead of writing someone else’s account through wage employment after three to five years of collegiate education, it is more meaningful to write one’s own account by embarking upon some self-employment”. - Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade, President, RUDSET Institute.

**Philosophy of RUDSETI :** The fundamental belief behind the EDP training is that latent entrepreneurship is lying dormant in a wide variety among men and women and they need a spark to arouse their motives, which takes place through psychological educational process for starting any entrepreneurial activity.

**Objective of RUDSETI :** The fundamental objective of RUDSETI is entrepreneurisation of rural youth by stimulating their psyche followed by bringing technology, training and credit within their reach thereby developing self-confidence.

**Services of RUDSETI :** The following services are provided in an innovative, effective and cost effective manner, with a spirit of service:

- Creating awareness on self-employment/ entrepreneurship.
- Developing motivation and positive attitude.
- Training youth to acquire hard skills and soft skills.
- Handholding for establishment and successful running of enterprise.
- Linkages with banks for financial assistance.

**Unique specialities of RUDSETI :**

- Visionary leadership provided by Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade supported by two leading nationalized banks coupled with religious sentiment which influences dedicated hard work.
- Free training as well as free food and accommodation for trainees.
- Training curricula is perfect blend of soft and hard skills proportion in 70:30 or 80:20.
- Training methodology involves experiential learning cycle *i.e.* practical to theory.
- Attention on each trainee with excellent facilities for hands on practice focussing on practical orientation, rigorous training and extended hours of learning.
- Short term training with long term follow-up / Escort services for a period of 2 years.
- Variety of training programmes to suit the local needs.
- Past trainees becoming trainers and imparting training.
- High rate of settlement, 69 per cent of trained youths with income generated from the enterprise ranging from Rs. 2,500 to 50,000 per month and additional employment generated in the range of 1 to 50 persons.

**Course modules :** EDPs attempt to develop the candidate’s latent qualities and skills to become a successful entrepreneur. A course module is the standard guideline which has to be followed by every RUDSET institute and can be modified upto 30 per cent to suit the local requirements. Each course module covers four aspects namely behavioural aspect, Technical skills, skills to launch enterprise and skills to manage enterprise.

The training module of RUDSET training programme is unique in nature as it focuses on psychological preparedness of trainees to learn hard skills and take up entrepreneurial venture by incorporating both soft skills and hard skills in the syllabus. The unique short duration need based course module is structured out of practical experience, research and experiment by consulting all

stakeholders at RUDSET institute according to the guidelines circulated by National Academy of RUDSETI (NAR), Bangalore. The NAR is the supreme body which review the syllabus of training programme prepared by RUDSET institute and approves the training module for inclusion in standardized module of RUDSETI which is accepted as standard module by SIDBI, NABARD, Department of Industries and Commerce, KSWDC etc. It reviews these course modules on an on-going basis and revises and updates them based on the feedback of respondents and different stakeholders.

**Resource persons :** The official from sponsor bank having rich experience in rural development (generally have qualifications in agriculture and allied subjects) is deputed as Director of RUDSET institute. The director as well as in-house faculties who handle soft skills part of EDP inputs such as behavioural inputs, managerial inputs, banking, launching formalities etc. have to undergo training at NAR, Bangalore before joining the RUDSET institute. These officers supported by committed staffs and expert practioners or guest faculties maintain a conducive environment for learning. Cordial trainer-trainee relationship, discipline, guidance for personality development and socialisation with fellow trainees offers excellent scope for effective learning. Most of the guest faculties are ex-trainees who handle hard skills part of EDP inputs and have real first-hand experience in their respective field which help the trainees to learn effectively.

**Training methodology :** The widely acclaimed effectiveness of RUDSET training programme is due to its unique training methodology where participants are stimulated to shed inhibitions and develop interest in learning through structured psychological exercises in their vernacular languages. Besides lecture sessions, behaviour simulation games, exercises, field visits, hands on experience, interface with supporting system, group discussions, case study etc. are effectively used in the training.

**Infrastructure of RUDSETI :** Every RUDSET institute has well developed campus consisting of administrative office, smart classrooms, work shed, dormitories for trainees and guesthouses for guest faculty and mess facilities. The institutes also have library, recreational facilities and audio-visual aids which facilitate quick learning.

**Beneficiaries :** Any unemployed youth having ability to read and write, in the age group of 18-45years, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, gender and economic status, having aptitude to take up self-employment or wage

employment and having some basic knowledgin the related field.

**Operational mechanism of RUDSETI :** Before starting any training programme, RUDSET institute has to follow some set of standard procedure for maintain high rate of settlement of trainees. EDP has been divided into three phases based on the activities to be taken viz., pre-training, training and post-training phase. Elaborate discussion about each activity is discussed below.

**Pre-training phase:** The following activities are undertaken during pre-training phase of EDP.

**Identification of the training needs :** Systematic study and documentation of raw material based, market based and skill-based opportunities helps them to conduct 'demand-led' training programmes. The institute working in their respective areas has to assess the demand requirements of various products and services for which officials from RUDSETI interact with producers, consumers and a cross section of the local community. There is a need to have proper balance between youth trained in different skills to avoid unhealthy competition among them and to identify specific programmes conceived by financial institutes, banks, developmental agencies, Departments of Government which intend to provide credit and other supportive linkages to the rural youth.

**Development of training module and necessary infrastructure :** Based on the availability of entrepreneurial opportunities the suitable training course module is prepared by incorporating the blend of soft and hard skills in 70:30 ratios by respective RUDSET institute. In case of a new EDP training module has to be sent to NAR, Bangalore for approval which approves by judging the content and the duration according to enterprise. The institutes have to also arrange expert practioners who deal with the technological aspect of training programme.

**Methods of generation of applications :** A calendar of the training programmes is prepared and sent to all the Bank branches, Government Departments and NGOs well in advance to have wide publicity. Apart from this the RUDSETI also generates application from the following sources:

**Word of mouth:** Ex-trainees of the RUDSET institute serve as carriers of message by way of "word of mouth" to other unemployed youth at their reach which has a multiplier effect and helps in generating more applications. Applicants generated by this way are very genuine and have more likelihood of getting trained as they are most needy and have first-hand experience of the impact of

training programme.

**Media coverage :** The calendar of training programme or announcement of the specific training programme is published in the press media, All India Radio and television to spread the message to larger mass within short period of time.

**Entrepreneurship awareness camp:** It is a method of generating application through mass motivation in which awareness is created among youth about the business opportunities available for self-employment, entrepreneurship and support available from the Banks and Government agencies. School and colleges, grassroots service organizations like Rotary Club, Lions Club, Junior Chamber, *Mahila Mandalas*, youth and caste based organizations and even *Panchayat Raj* institutions are requested to host these programmes in which many successful alumni of the institute participate and provide live examples of impact of RUDSETI training. EAP also provides information about the institute and availability of training facilities which helps in generating application at later phase of awareness camp after one to one counselling and identifying the need.

**Selection of potential candidates for training :** One of the important factors which determine the quality, outcome and impact of the training is “selection” of the right candidates with “felt need”. RUDSETI employs several tools to ensure this which have been discussed below.

**Assessment of application form:** It was the first tool in selection of potential candidates as the application form of the RUDSET institute is designed in such a way that it

gives proper insight into the candidate’s personal background, general information, his role and responsibility in the family, basis for the selection of the activity, his investment capability etc.

**Personal interview:** For skill development programmes the short-listed candidates, through assessment of application form, are called for personal interview and some simple skill test. The personal interview should be conducted as per the as per the protocol envisaged in Focused Behavioural Event Interview (FBEI) method or modified FBEI developed by Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII). If a candidate was recommended by the manager of sponsoring bank, the candidate may be given preference over others as there is a likelihood of financial assistance which may ensure the settlement of candidate.

**Training phase:** The candidates who are selected for EDP training are provided free residential training utilizing the appropriate training methodologies. The trainee has to strictly adhere to the training schedule of the institute.

**Post-training phase:** After the EDP training, the trainee were escorted for two years rigorously through regular correspondences, individual contacts, Unit visit, Village / Taluk / District / Branch level meeting etc. The post-training follow-up helps them to sustain their motivation and utilize their learning to take-up self-employment venture through facilitating credit linkages to the needy one. The trainees discuss their problems with RUDSETI officials who try to appropriately solve them.

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