



“UBA - SEG Rural Livelihood: Knowledge and Technology Transfer for Sustainable Rural Development Annual Report 2024-25”



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Introduction

India's rural landscape forms the backbone of the nation, embodying its rich cultural heritage, traditions, and deep-rooted connection to the land. Rural India remains a symbol of resilience amid evolving socio-economic challenges. However, persistent issues such as poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, and climate change continue to threaten the sustainability of rural livelihoods. The UBA-SEG on Rural Livelihood is dedicated to addressing these critical concerns by promoting sustainable livelihood development in rural India. This initiative underscores the need for transformative strategies that alleviate poverty while fostering resilience and inclusivity. Achieving sustainable rural development requires a holistic approach that integrates economic viability,

social equity, and environmental stewardship. Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) play a pivotal role in strengthening rural livelihoods within the framework of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA). UBA Participating Institutions can leverage their academic expertise, research capabilities, and resources to contribute effectively towards building sustainable, resilient, and inclusive rural economies. In response to the directive issued by the National Coordinator, UBA, IIT Delhi, dated March 7, 2024, the UBA-SEG on Rural Livelihood has been established at Gandhigram Rural Institute (DTBU), Gandhigram. This Annual Report highlights the activities and achievements of SEG - Rural Livelihood from April 2024 to March 2025.

Dr.K.Ravichandran
Coordinator, UBA - SEG- Rural Livelihood





Field Visit to UBA Gram Panchayats in Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli Districts (July 12–13, 2024)

On July 12, 2024, Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator, GRI, Gandhigram, visited Sarada Krishna Homoeopathic Medical College, Kulasekharam, and Holy Cross College, Nagercoil, to assess the progress of completed UBA-SEG projects and the ongoing project titled “Veterinary Homoeopathy: A New Insight into Livestock Diseases.”. On July 13, 2024, the UBA-SEG Coordinator visited the Block Development Office, Nanguneri, to discuss the role of UBA in aligning Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs) with the Aspirational Block Development Programme. The meeting was attended by Mr. G. Simiyon, District Forest Officer (DFO), MSME, Tirunelveli, Mrs. V. Yamuna, Block Development Officer, and Dr. M. Johnson Gritto, UBA Coordinator, St. Xavier’s College, Palayamkottai. During the discussion, Dr. M. Johnson Gritto was assigned the responsibility of devising an Action Plan for the development of Ilankulam Village.



Field Visit to UBA Gram Panchayat of Alagappa Chettiar Government College of Engineering & Technology (16.07.2024)

On July 16, 2024, Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator, GRI, Gandhigram, and Prof. N. Panchanatham, Vice Chancellor, GRI, Gandhigram, visited Kundrakudi village to assess the progress of a completed SEG projects. On the same day, Prof. N. Panchanatham inaugurated the UBA-SEG Project on IoT-Based Water Lifting System at Kundrakudi. During the visit, the SEG Coordinator encouraged faculty members and students to seek funding support from various agencies and UBA Subject Expert Groups to enhance their research and development initiatives. Following this, Prof. N. Panchanatham and Prof. K. Ravichandran visited Alagappa Chettiar Government College of Engineering & Technology to evaluate the impact of previously completed SEG projects. A meeting with faculty members was convened to discuss collaborative efforts for implementing UBA projects aimed at village development.



One-Day Orientation Workshop on Gandhian Thoughts and Peace Values for Engineering Students (06.09.2024)

The UBA-SEG on Rural Livelihood, in collaboration with the Department of Gandhian Thought and Peace Science, Gandhigram Rural Institute (DTBU), Gandhigram, and DMI Engineering College, Aralvaimozhi, Kanyakumari District, organized a One-Day Orientation Workshop on Gandhian Thoughts and Peace Values for Engineering Students on September 6, 2024.

The primary objectives of the workshop were to enhance students' understanding of Mahatma Gandhi's teachings, philosophies, and principles, to promote awareness and education to foster a culture of nonviolence and peace, to provide engineering students with skills in peace-making, mediation, and conflict resolution, and to motivate engineering students and faculty members to act as agents of change and contribute to building a just and peaceful society.



Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator, and Prof. R. Mani, Professor & Head, Department of Gandhian Thoughts and Peace Science, GRI, served as resource persons. The session included discussions on real-life examples of influential figures who embraced Gandhian principles. A pre-lecture questionnaire was administered to assess students' awareness of Gandhian and peace values. After the session, the same questionnaire was used to measure knowledge gained. The findings provided valuable insights into students' understanding and learning outcomes.

Outcome

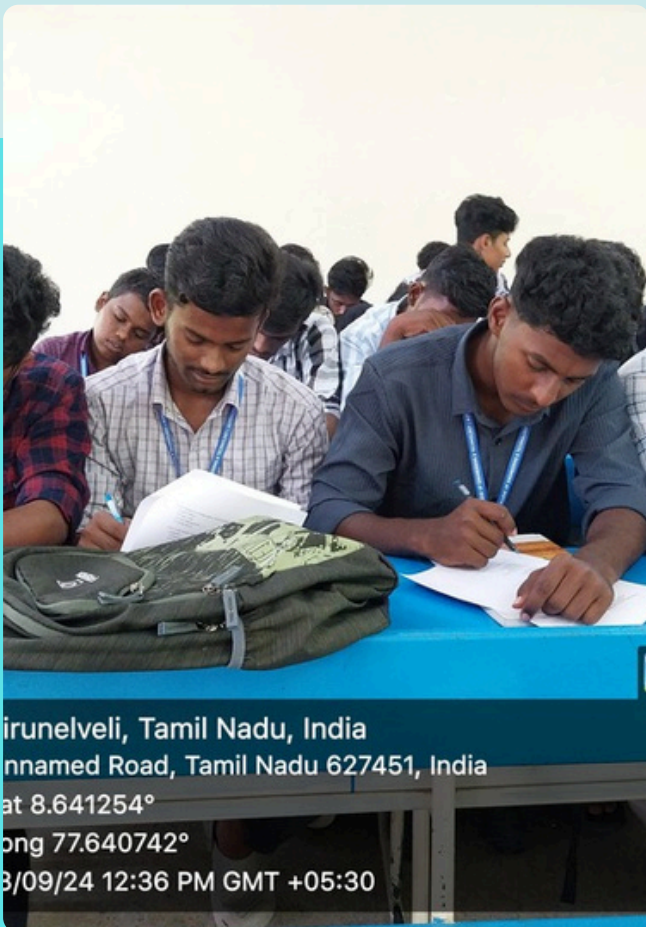
1. This programme encouraged students to incorporate Gandhian values into their personal and professional development while emphasizing the importance of self-reliance and resilience.
2. A total of 175 students and faculty members participated in this workshop.





One-Day Orientation Workshop on Gandhian Thoughts and Peace Values for Engineering Students - 13.09.2024

A second One-Day Orientation Workshop on Gandhian Thoughts and Peace Science for Engineering Students was held on September 13, 2024, organized by the UBA-SEG on Rural Livelihood, the Department of Gandhian Thought and Peace Science, GRI, Gandhigram, and PSN College of Engineering & Technology, Tirunelveli. The objectives of this workshop were similar to the previous session, with an emphasis on enhancing students' knowledge of Gandhian philosophy, fostering nonviolence, peace, and ethical leadership, equipping students with skills in conflict resolution and mediation, and inspiring students and faculty to contribute to peacebuilding and rural development.



Prof. K. Ravichandran, Prof. R. Mani, and Dr. T. Ravichandran, Assistant Professor, Department of Gandhian Thoughts and Peace Science, GRI, served as resource persons. Discussions included real-life case studies of leaders who followed Gandhian principles to help students understand their application in rural livelihood and conflict resolution.

Outcome

1. The key outcome of this Workshop was that students were trained in constructive conflict resolution methodologies based on Gandhian principles.
2. A total of 336 students and faculty members participated in this programme.

Project Proposal Development Workshop for the Aspirational Block, Melaneelithanallur, Tenkasi District - 13.09.2024

On September 13, 2024, the UBA-SEG on Rural Livelihood, Gandhigram Rural Institute (DTBU), Gandhigram, in collaboration with Vyasa Arts and Science College for Women, Vasudevanallur, organized a Project Proposal Development Workshop focused on the Aspirational Block, Melaneelithanallur, Tenkasi District.

The workshop aimed to emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in proposal development to improve the quality and feasibility of ideas, encourage innovative, sustainable solutions for real-world challenges through a systems-thinking approach, and enhance the capacity of UBA Coordinators, faculty, and students to align their proposals with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Aspirational Block.

Outcomes

1. Identification of project proposals aimed at improving livelihoods in Melaneelithanallur Block, Thenkasi District (Aspirational Block)
2. A deeper understanding of funding sources and financial opportunities for project implementation.
3. Establishing collaborations with Gram Panchayats, Higher Educational Institutions, and NGOs for sustainable development efforts.
4. At the conclusion of the programme, a focused discussion was held with Gram Panchayat leaders to outline development strategies for Melaneelithanallur.
5. The event witnessed active participation from seven faculty members and 89 student volunteers and five villagers.



During the session, Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator, delivered a presentation on the Aspirational District Programme and Aspirational Blocks Programme. He highlighted key development gaps in Melaneelithanallur based on the Gap Report and advised the UBA Team on preparing project proposals for the holistic development of the block. This workshop provided valuable insights to faculty members and students of Vyasa Arts and Science College, Vasudevanallur, Tenkasi District, on Government schemes and initiatives for regional development.

Project Proposal Development Workshop for Generating Livelihood Opportunities in Ramanathapuram – Aspirational District Programme (20.09.2024)

A Project Proposal Development Workshop for generating livelihood opportunities in Ramanathapuram, an Aspirational District, was organized on September 20, 2024, in collaboration with Raja College of Arts and Science, Mandapam, Ramanathapuram. The objectives of this workshop were:

1. To enhance the capacity of UBA Coordinators and faculty members of Higher Educational Institutions in Ramanathapuram to design effective Project Proposals for village development in alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. To develop livelihood strategies that cater to the needs of marginalized communities in Ramanathapuram.
3. To encourage multi-sector collaboration between Government agencies, academia, NGOs, and local communities for holistic Gram Panchayat development.
4. To provide insights into funding opportunities at State, National, and International levels for livelihood development projects.

Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator, served as the resource person. Following an introductory session on the development framework for Aspirational Districts and Blocks, participants were engaged in identifying project proposals addressing specific livelihood challenges in Ramanathapuram. Prof. K. Ravichandran also shared real-life examples of successful livelihood projects from other Aspirational Districts.

The workshop significantly contributed to empowering UBA Coordinators and faculty members to develop well-structured project proposals and seek funding through UBA.

Key Outcomes:

- **Draft Project Proposals:** Participants developed proposals focused on livelihood generation in Ramanathapuram.
- **Enhanced Awareness:** Increased understanding of funding mechanisms and proposal development strategies.
- **Strengthened Partnerships:** Collaboration between Higher Education Institutions, Gram Panchayats, and key stakeholders.
- **Empowered Participants:** Faculty and UBA Coordinators from ten Participating Institutions were equipped to initiate livelihood projects for rural development.
- **Institutional Motivation:** Higher Education Institutions in the district were encouraged to actively engage with Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA).



Two-Day Project Proposal Development Workshop on Rural Livelihood and Entrepreneurship Development (30.09.2024 & 01.10.2024)

A Two-Day Project Proposal Development Workshop on Rural Livelihood and Entrepreneurship Development was organized at GRI to empower UBA Coordinators and faculty members of UBA Participating Institutions in designing livelihood-generating projects for Gram Panchayat Development in Tamil Nadu. The workshop focused on Aspirational Blocks, guiding participants to create sustainable, inclusive, and action-oriented proposals capable of attracting funding and generating employment for rural youth, women, and marginalized communities. The Objectives of this workshop were: to enable UBA Coordinators and faculty members to identify key areas for development interventions and submit project proposals to UBA and other funding agencies, and to evaluate and refine project proposals with expert guidance.

This workshop was organized in commemoration of Dr. Devendra Bhai's Centenary Celebrations. Prof. K. Ravichandran, SEG Coordinator, GRI, Gandhigram, and Dr. R. Ramesh, SEG Coordinator, NIRDPR, Hyderabad, served as resource persons.



Key Themes:



1) *Understanding Aspirational Blocks: Challenges and Opportunities*

- Analysis of livelihood challenges in Tamil Nadu's Aspirational Blocks.
- Identification of potential sectors: agriculture, fisheries, rural industries, eco-tourism.
- Case studies of successful livelihood initiatives.

2) *Project Proposal Writing*

- Training on developing structured, fundable proposals (objectives, budget, monitoring & evaluation).
- Ensuring sustainability, scalability, and community ownership.
- Aligning proposals with national schemes (Aspirational Districts Programme, SDGs – SDG 1, SDG 8, and SDG 10).

3) *Leveraging Local Resources for Livelihood Generation*

- Mapping natural, financial, and human resources within Aspirational Blocks.
- Engaging local cooperatives and financial institutions to support rural entrepreneurship.
- Using technology and innovation (digital agriculture, rural crafts, sustainable tourism).

4) *Partnerships and Collaboration*

- Strengthening collaborations between HEIs, NGOs, Government agencies, and local communities.
- Exploring Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for sustainable project implementation.
- Identifying funding sources for rural development.



The workshop was inaugurated by Dr. L. Rathakrishnan, Registrar (i/c) at 10:30 AM on 30.09.2024 at the Faculty Guest House, GRI, Gandhigram. During his inaugural address, Dr. L Rathakrishnan emphasized that rural development is a critical factor in national progress and highlighted the importance of economic resilience and quality of life improvements in rural areas.

Workshop Structure:

- 1. Expert Sessions:** Presentations by Prof. K. Ravichandran and Dr. R. Ramesh.
- 2. Interactive Group Work:** Participants collaborated on developing project proposals.
- 3. Case Studies & Best Practices:** Discussion of successful rural livelihood projects.
- 4. Proposal Review & Feedback:** Experts provided constructive feedback on draft proposals.

A total of 33 participants from 18 UBA institutions attended the workshop. During Valedictory Session, Prof. N. Panchanatham, Vice-Chancellor, GRI (DTBU), Gandhigram, delivered valedictory address at 3:30 PM on 01.10.2024. Prof. Panchanatham congratulated the participants on the successful completion of the workshop and commended the UBA for fostering grassroots innovation and entrepreneurship. He emphasized:

- The importance of rural entrepreneurship in unlocking rural potential.
- The need for project proposals to reflect local dynamics and align with SDGs.
- The significance of collaborations between academia, Government, and local stakeholders.
- The necessity of translating academic knowledge into actionable solutions.

Workshop Outcomes:

Capacity Building: 33 participants gained expertise in project proposal drafting.

Project Proposals: 72 draft proposals addressing local livelihood challenges were developed.

Strengthened Partnerships: Collaborations between HEIs, Gram Panchayats, producer collectives, and private entities were reinforced.

Action Plans: Clear Action Plans for each Aspirational Block were formulated.

This workshop significantly enhanced the capacity of UBA Coordinators, faculty members, and students to develop impactful livelihood projects that align with Government priorities and attract funding for rural employment initiatives.



Visit to Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited (16.10.2024)

On October 16, 2024, Dr. K. Ravichandran visited Neyveli Lignite Corporation Ltd. (NLC), Neyveli, to discuss the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UBA-GRI and Neyveli Lignite Corporation. The visiting team included Dr. K. Ravichandran, SEG Coordinator, and UBA Team members viz., Dr. R. Mani, Professor & Head, Department of Gandhian Thought and Peace Science, and Dr. M. Muthukumar, Assistant Professor & Director in Charge, Centre for Geoinformatics, GRI. Discussions were held with NLC officials regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support for UBA-SEG projects in UBA Gram Panchayats in southern Tamil Nadu.

Field Visit to Theni District on 15.11.2024

Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator on Rural Livelihood, GRI, Gandhigram, inaugurated the SEG Project on Rural Livelihood under the title "Rural Entrepreneurial Development Awareness Programme" organized by Mary Matha College of Arts and Science, Theni, at D. Vadipatti Gram Panchayat. Following this, Prof. K. Ravichandran visited Mary Matha College of Arts and Science, Theni, and provided insights into UBA's role in rural development, the functioning of Subject Expert Groups, methods for proposal development, and strategies for fostering entrepreneurship in rural areas. He further guided faculty members and students in analyzing GAP reports to identify resource and infrastructure deficiencies for project proposal development.



Field Visit to Thoothukudi District & NTPL, Thoothukudi on 19.11.2024

Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator, conducted a field visit to Thoothukudi District on 19.11.2024 to monitor ongoing UBA projects. Additionally, he visited NTPL, Thoothukudi, and engaged in discussions with NTPL officials to explore support under CSR initiatives for executing UBA projects in Southern Tamil Nadu. In the afternoon, he visited Holy Cross Home Science College, Thoothukudi, and interacted with the Principal and UBA Coordinator regarding the implementation of the following UBA projects:

- Sustainable Rural Livelihood for Women through Value-Added Products using Indigenous Cow Dung
- Entrepreneurship Development for Rural Women through the Production of Eco-Friendly By-Products from Corn Husk

Prof.K.Ravichandran also met with the UBA Coordinator of Kamaraj College, Thoothukudi, and provided guidance for the effective execution of UBA projects in rural villages.



Field Visit to Monitor UBA-SEG Project in Trichy District on 24.01.2025

Prof. K. Ravichandran visited Srimad Andavan Arts and Science College, Thiruvanaikoil, to assess the progress of the UBA-SEG project titled “Entrepreneurship Development of the Rural Community through Household Waste to Health and Wealth - An Innovative Approach to Microgreen Cultivation” on 24.01.2025. He also visited Esanakorai village to interact with project stakeholders and assess their engagement.



Field Visit to Monitor UBA-SEG Project in Nagapattinam District on 25.01.2025

Prof. K. Ravichandran visited Tamil Nadu Fisheries University, Thalainayeru, on 25.01.2025 to evaluate the ongoing UBA-SEG project “Women Empowerment through the Development and Commercialization of Fish Kure”. During the visit, he interacted with trainees and encouraged them to undertake income-generating activities through value addition. He also distributed certificates to trainees for the successful completion of training in value addition.

Inauguration of UBA Food Court at Mohamed Sathak Engineering College, Ramanathapuram on 05.02.2025

The UBA Food Court, an initiative promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities, was formally inaugurated on 05.02.2025 at Mohamed Sathak Engineering College, Ramanathapuram, under the UBA initiative.

Dr. Vadivel, UBA Coordinator, Mohamed Sathak Engineering College, welcomed the gathering. The Food Court was inaugurated by Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator, GRI, Gandhigram, along with Er. S. Shanmugasundaram, Executive Director (Retd.), NLC, Neyveli, and Dr. V. Nirmal Kannan, Principal, Mohamed Sathak Engineering College, Ramanathapuram.

Outcome

1. This initiative focuses on generating sustainable income opportunities by involving villagers, students, faculty, and local residents in food preparation and sales.
2. A dedicated food production unit has been established to develop value-added products from Palmyra sprouts, utilizing locally available resources to support rural entrepreneurship.
3. The project aligns with UBA's broader objectives of promoting sustainable rural development, economic empowerment, and community-led growth.

Launch of "Thulir Sambrani" at Sindalakarai Village on 11.02.2025

The formal launch of "Thulir" Cup Sambrani and Stick Sambrani, a brand developed by two local women entrepreneurs from Sindalakarai, took place on 11.02.2025. Dr. N. N. Krishnaveni, UBA Coordinator, welcomed the gathering. The product was officially launched by Prof. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator, GRI, Gandhigram, and Dr. M. S. Rubha, Principal, Holy Cross Home Science College, Thoothukudi.

Outcome

1. The "Thulir" brand is an outcome of the UBA - SEG Project, implemented by Holy Cross Home Science College, under the SEG: Rural Livelihood & Entrepreneurship Development.
2. A production unit was established in Sindalakarai, Thoothukudi District, to create value-added products using cow dung, supporting local women entrepreneurs.
3. This initiative aligns with UBA's goal of fostering sustainable rural development and economic empowerment.





Product Launch under UBA-SEG: Empowering Rural Women through Livelihood Initiatives – 20.03.2025

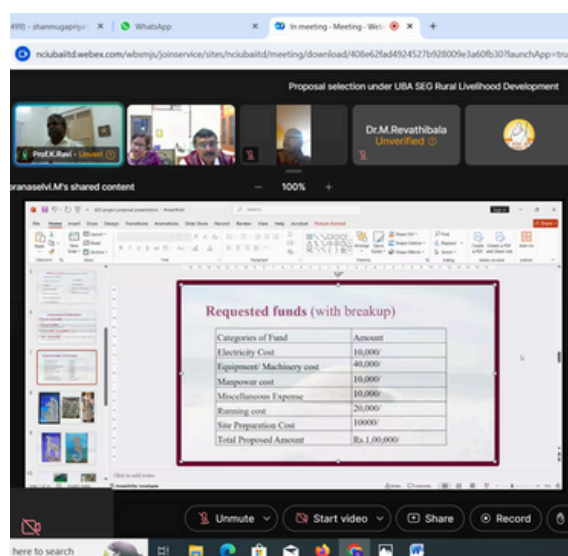
- ➔ The Unnat Bharat Abhiyan Cells of Holy Cross Home Science College, Thoothukudi, and St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai, have been actively promoting sustainable livelihood and employment opportunities for rural women through the UBA-SEG on Rural Livelihood and Entrepreneurship Development. With dedicated funding support, Holy Cross Home Science College has successfully established a manufacturing unit for producing cup sambrani and stick sambrani in Sindalakarai village, Thoothukudi District, empowering rural women with entrepreneurial opportunities. Similarly, St. Xavier's College has facilitated the production of value-added mushroom products including mushroom soup, mushroom pakoda, mushroom pickles, and mushroom soap in Tharuvai village, Tirunelveli District, benefiting women from socially and economically weaker sections.
- ➔ To mark this significant milestone and market launch these products into the market, a special event was organized on March 20, 2025, at Gandhigram Rural Institute, Gandhigram. The product launch for market was presided over by Dr. N. Panchanatham, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Gandhigram Rural Institute (Deemed to be University), Gandhigram. The event was further graced by the presence of Dr. L. Radhakrishnan, Registrar (i/c), Dr. K. Ravichandran, UBA-SEG Coordinator on Rural Livelihood, along with Dr. S. Kavithamaithily, Dr. N. N. Krishnaveni, Dr. M. Johnson Gritto (UBA Coordinators), and other distinguished dignitaries.
- ➔ The event showcased the success of UBA's initiatives in fostering sustainable rural livelihoods and empowering women through skill development and entrepreneurship. The launch of these products represents a significant step toward promoting rural enterprise, economic self-sufficiency, and inclusive growth in UBA-network villages.

SEG Projects sanctioned during 2024 - 2025



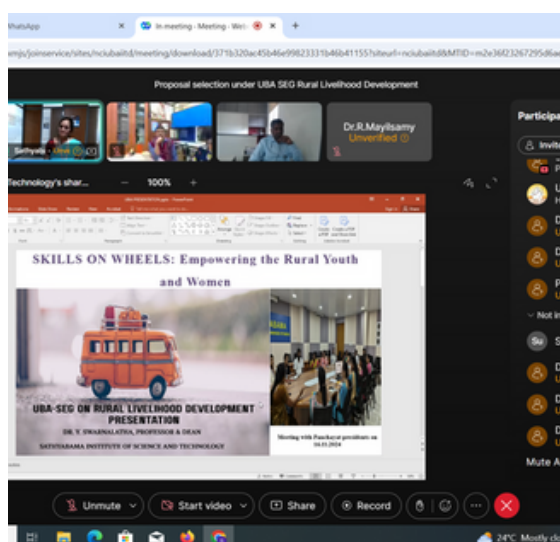
1st Phase

For the May–June 2024 cycle, the UBA-SEG Rural Livelihood and Entrepreneurship Development received a total of 200 proposals. After an initial screening, 52 proposals were shortlisted for an online presentation, out of which 22 were selected for implementation. As of March 31, 2025, significant progress has been made, with 14 proposals successfully completed, while the remaining 8 are still ongoing.



2nd Phase

For the November 2024 cycle, the UBA-SEG Rural Livelihood received a total of 70 proposals. After evaluation, 34 proposals were shortlisted for an online presentation, out of which 15 were selected for implementation.





Key outcomes

01

Capacity Building: Trained 33 faculty members and UBA Coordinators on Project Proposal Development.

02

Livelihood Projects: Developed 72 Draft Proposals for Gram Panchayat livelihood initiatives.

03

Entrepreneurial Support: Facilitated CSR partnerships, funding linkages, and training for rural entrepreneurs.

04

Women Empowerment: Launched women-led enterprises in incense production and food processing.

05

Community Engagement: Strengthened collaboration between HEIs, Panchayats, and local stakeholders.



Policy Recommendations

01.

Institutionalizing Rural Livelihood Initiatives

- Develop a structured framework for HEIs to integrate UBA projects into their curriculum and research programmes.

02.

Enhancing Funding Mechanisms

- Establish a dedicated Rural Livelihood Innovation Fund to support sustainable enterprise development.

03.

Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships

- Facilitate MoUs with corporate entities for CSR funding and technical support in rural projects.

04.

Capacity Building for HEIs

- Organize national-level training programmes on project proposal writing, impact assessment, and rural livelihood.

05.

Scaling Successful Models

- Document and replicate best practices in other rural regions through a centralized knowledge-sharing platform.

06

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Develop a standardized impact assessment framework to measure the effectiveness of livelihood interventions.



Conclusion

The UBA-SEG on Rural Livelihood has made significant strides in fostering rural employment, women empowerment, and sustainable development. Strengthening institutional support, funding, and collaboration will ensure long-term impact and scalability of these initiatives.