

Reports of 15th National Skill Conference

Skills for a Changing World

Date: 12 & 13 October 2023

Venue: Bangalore

12th October

The conference began with a formal session on 12th October 09.30 AM which was graced by Fr. VM Thomas, the president of FVTRS, Dr. Shalini Saxena, Mr. Satyanarayan Patnaik, and Mr. Felix D'Souza. The conference was officially inaugurated by Dr. Sharan Prakash Patil, the honourable minister for skill development and medical education was the chief guest. During the inaugural speech he has lauded the great work of FVTRS and expressed the government interest to collaborate with FVTRS. During the programme he has released the case study document of women entrepreneurs, a project implemented by FVTRS with the support of CITI bank and Child Fund India. Mr. Jimmy Mathew made a brief presentation about FVTRS. Fr. V.M Thomas, the president of FVTRS extended the presidential address and briefed the work done by FVTRS. Mr. Felix D'Souza, Executive director gave the vote of thanks.

The sessions of the first day of NSC mainly focused on micro-planning for the FVTRS strategy, deliberations on the future direction of the Skill Promoting India network, insights into digital marketing from WeCAN, commemorating the 30th anniversary of FVTRS, and acknowledging the efforts of individuals in FVTRS's growth.

Micro strategy planning

All FVTRS staff members collectively examined the 2021-2026 strategy plan, after which the team was divided into eight groups based on state/region, each led by a designated leader. These groups meticulously crafted state-level micro plans to align with and enhance the overall organizational strategy. Here are the leaders of the respective groups.

1. Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan: Mr Ramesh Kumar
2. Madhya Pradesh: Mr Kamalesh Tahed
3. Tamil Nadu : Ms Satya
4. Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh: Mr Krishna
5. West Bengal and North East: Mr Pritam Mukherjee
6. Jharkhand: Mr Sikander Ansari
7. Chhattisgarh: Ms Shikha Shukla
8. Odisha and Bihar: Mr Anil Kumar

The groups engaged in comprehensive discussions and formulated plans in three key areas:

- a. Quality Expansion
- b. Resource Mobilization
- c. Marketing, Recognition, and Linkage. Following the in-depth group deliberations and planning, a plenary session took place where the leaders succinctly presented the essence of their state/regional plans.

The amalgamated insights from the presentations indicate that the field staff is optimistic about training over 60,000 youth and mobilizing resources exceeding two crores in rupees by 2026. The session was facilitated by Mr Felix D' Souza and Mr C P Nicholas.

General Body meeting of SPIN

The associating partners of FVTRS, who serve as General Body members of SPIN, diligently assessed the organization's activities and scrutinized its current status and growth. Expressing gratitude, the office bearers extended their thanks to each member organization for actively participating in and contributing to the organization's development.

The General Body delved into various matters, including the election of new office bearers, membership renewal, the addition of new members, and the formulation of a new strategy plan. Consequently, Ms. Shalini Saxena was re-elected as President, Dr. Subash Sharma as Secretary, and Mr. Himanshu as Treasurer of the organization.

Furthermore, each member organization committed to organizing at least one program under the SPIN banner at their respective locations within this financial year. The General Body also resolved to seek resources for conducting collaborative programs among member organizations.

Key decisions

Mr. Jimmy Mathew facilitated the session. It was decided to pass a resolution to change the treasurer i.e. Mr. Srinivasalu will be replaced by Mr. Himanshu, the new treasurer.

A point person from Dr. Subash Sharma will be placed to handle the communications with monthly payment of Rs.5000/-

- With regards to the Membership fees, it was finalized that there will be a Registration fee Rs.10000/- (one time) for new members and Annual membership fee of Rs.2500/- and Life membership fee is Rs.30000/- . Annual Membership fee may increase in coming years after decision taken by the committee.
- It was decided by the members to develop a SPIN brochure and Annual Report/status report as soon as possible.

- With regards to the 12A and 80G registration of SPIN ,Dr Subash Ch Sharma took responsibility to ensure the above registration as soon as possible. SPIN also will be registered in Darpan.
- There was also decision to continue the E.News Bulletin of SPIN on continue basis by Salini ji .But Salini ji requested all the members to send their case studies on regular basis and requested to response on the whatsapp messages in time. All agreed with this proposal.
- The society registration needs to renew and this will be done by Mr, Jimmy Mathew.

Digital Marketing Programme of Women Entrepreneurs – WeCAN

Ms. Aundrey D’Souza and her colleague, Dr. Lakshmi Devi, provided valuable insights into the potential of digitally marketing products for women entrepreneurs and fostering a network among them. They highlighted that women entrepreneurs can leverage digital platforms to network, sell products online, seek consultations, broaden their connections, and propel both themselves and their businesses toward success.

WE-Can stands as a steadfast ally on the entrepreneurial journey of women, tailored to provide support for those managing micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). It's a platform designed to empower women entrepreneurs, offering them the tools and resources needed to navigate and thrive in the business landscape.

Celebration of 30th anniversary of FVTRS , Awards and recognition

FVTRS marked its 30th anniversary with a formal program, wherein Ms. Sheela, who warmly welcomed the audience. Fr. V M Thomas, the President of FVTRS, eloquently spoke about the organization's accomplishments and extended heartfelt congratulations to every member of the FVTRS family. Mr. Felix D’Souza expressed gratitude to the audience for their unwavering support over the years, contributing to FVTRS's numerous milestones. Dr. Subhash Sharma shared his experiences as a partner in livelihood promotion and skill development with FVTRS, while Mr. C P Nicholas presented a visual journey of FVTRS's achievements through a captivating photo collage. The event served as an occasion to honour outstanding performances in 15 different categories, particularly highlighting the commendable efforts of field staff and trained youth. Associating partners were also recognized with mementos and citations.

Adding vibrancy to the celebration, the program featured a high-quality, colorful cultural showcase organized by the field staff. It was a fitting tribute to 30 years of dedication and success.

13th October

The conference began at 09.30 A.M. Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, Additional Chief Secretary; Government of Karnataka has given the key note address in the inaugural session on 13th.

She started her presentation by saying skilling plays a pivotal role in fostering the prosperity and development of any nation. To advance beyond a "Government-dependent" paradigm, a transition towards a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) approach is imperative. Collaborative efforts between the public and private sectors can create a dynamic skilling ecosystem that efficiently addresses the evolving demands of the job market. Industry integration is essential to strike a balance between the supply and demand for skills, ensuring that the workforce remains relevant and adaptable.

In the quest for future skills, there is a crucial need to refocus on "soft skills," with an emphasis on effective data management. As technology continues to reshape industries, the ability to navigate and leverage data becomes increasingly vital. Therefore, skilling initiatives must encompass a comprehensive understanding of soft skills to equip the workforce for the challenges of the digital era.

Another significant aspect that warrants attention is the reduction of prevailing gender gaps within the skills industry. Equal access to skill development opportunities is not only a matter of social justice but also a strategic imperative for harnessing the full potential of the workforce.

Furthermore, bridging the gap between training providers and the private sector is essential. Collaborative efforts can create opportunities for skilled youth, linking them to relevant industries. Additionally, forging connections with government schools and hotels to implement skilling programs on their premises can be instrumental in broadening the reach of such initiatives. This multifaceted approach ensures that skilling is not only tailored to industry needs but also inclusive and accessible, fostering a robust foundation for national development.

During this session she has released the research report "**national study on skilling and employment among the youth**". This study was conducted by FVTRS in association with Central University, Karnataka at Gulbarga.

Panel Discussion-1- Future Skills: The Emerging trends, challenges and Opportunities

Panelists

- 1. Dr. Saji Varghese-Christ University**
- 2. Dr. Venket Ravi- Gandhigram university-Dindigul**
- 3. Dr. Akkai Padmashali- Activist**
- 4. Mr. Ramesh- Director- Unnati**
- 5. Mr. B. Ghosh-CEO-Rotary , Kolkotta**
- 6. Moderator- Dr. Kiran- Central University- Karnataka**

The panel discussion brought together diverse perspectives from five experts, each sharing valuable insights gleaned from their experiences in distinct yet impactful areas. The first panellist Dr.Saji Varghese from Christ University delved into the sustainable production of straw and pens derived from coconut tree waste. Their expertise shed light on innovative ways to repurpose agricultural by-products, contributing not only to waste reduction but also to the creation of eco-friendly alternatives.

The second area of discussion revolved around the four models of the GRI (Gandhigram University Madurai) applied to skill development in rural youth. The panellist Dr.Venaket Ravi in this domain shared their knowledge on leveraging GRI frameworks to enhance and standardize skill-building initiatives in rural settings. This model-based approach not only ensures efficiency but also facilitates effective monitoring and evaluation of programs aimed at empowering the youth in rural areas.

The third panellist Dr. AkkaiPadmashali addressed a pressing concern – the exclusion of sexual minorities from mainstream development. Drawing from their experiences, they highlighted the importance of inclusivity in developmental frameworks, emphasizing the need to create opportunities that are accessible and supportive for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Unnati's approach to skills and employment was the focus of the fourth panellist, Mr. Ramesh, the director of Unnati presented Unnati's unique strategy as a case study, shedding light on their successful methods of skill development and employment generation. This could include insights into curriculum design, industry collaboration, and the holistic approach adopted by Unnati in shaping the future of the workforce.

Lastly, the fifth panellistMr. B. Ghosh, the CEO of Rotary Calcutta delved into the intersection of digital transformation and capacity building. Their insights likely explored how the evolving digital landscape necessitates a parallel evolution in the skill sets of the workforce. The discussion might have touched upon strategies for capacity building that aligns with the demands of the digital era, ensuring that individuals and organizations are equipped to thrive in an increasingly digitalized world.

Collectively, these panellists provided a comprehensive overview of diverse yet interconnected facets of development – from sustainable production practices and skill-building models to issues of inclusivity, innovative approaches to employment, and the symbiotic relationship between digital transformation and capacity building.

The key insights captured from the discussion underscore a transformative landscape in skilling and employment. A notable trend is the expanding scope of opportunities facilitated by innovations and creativity, suggesting a dynamic paradigm that encourages novel approaches to workforce development. Beyond the urban-centric perspective, there is a growing recognition of the untapped potential in rural areas, urging a shift in focus towards solutions emanating from these regions. The imperative of translating theoretical knowledge acquired in educational institutions into practical skills is emphasized, highlighting the need for a robust skilling ecosystem. The Gandhigram Universities four

models surfaced as strategic frameworks, encompassing collaboration with rural youth, coordination with professionals, engagement with the corporate sector, and the establishment of collaborative skilling schools. Moreover, the discussion emphasized the vital need to integrate 'Skills' into mainstream curricula, signalling a departure from traditional educational models towards a more holistic approach that equips individuals with practical competencies essential for real-world application. In essence, these insights collectively point towards a comprehensive re evaluation of skilling and education, aligning them more closely with the dynamic demands of the contemporary employment landscape.

Other Key highlights were:

- Social justice cannot be attained without addressing discrimination of sexual minorities; need to consider sex work as skilled professional; including sex workers and sexual minorities in planning and implementation of projects to ensure inclusive approach
- Communication skills and confidence building among the youth; creating and inculcating concept of continuous learning among the youth; connecting value system to life skill and attitude; moving the thought process from platform of sympathy to platform of empathy
- Build technical skills for NGO in areas like fundraising, project management, technology aided decision making

Panel Discussion-2- ESG – Need, Relevance, Challenges, Opportunities

Panelists

1. **Dr. Ms. Indu K Murthy-director- CSTEP**
2. **Mr. Basavaraj Samshi- Samathan foundation**
3. **Dr. Sunil Pinto- Remedias**
4. **Mr. Amit Sarwakar- Collin Aerospace**
5. **Moderator-Jimmy Mathew-Manager-FVTRS**

During a recent discussion, four panellists delved into the multifaceted landscape of ESG standards, shedding light on its concept, relevance, and overarching importance. The discourse underscored the escalating pertinence of ESG in the face of pressing environmental issues and the challenges posed by climate change. The consensus was clear: adopting ESG practices is not just important but imperative for fostering long-term sustainability and mitigating adverse impacts on the environment. The responsibility of companies to scrutinize and ameliorate their environmental footprints emerged as a central

theme, with a call to actively engage in initiatives such as reforestation, renewable energy adoption, and the incorporation of energy-efficient technologies.

A noteworthy revelation was the transformation of ESG from a mere trend to a fundamental shift in how businesses operate. The imperative for embracing ESG standards was underscored as essential for navigating the complex landscape of contemporary commerce. Beyond corporate realms, the panellists advocated for the integration of ESG principles into skilling curriculums, positing that organizations should skill their workforce in alignment with these standards.

The discourse also spotlighted a specific emphasis on renewable energy as a linchpin in addressing climate challenges. Additionally, a call to re-evaluate agricultural-based skilling initiatives surfaced, underscoring the need for sustainable practices in this sector.

An intriguing proposition put forth by the panel was the need to initiate ESG practices at the grassroots level – starting from our homes. This call to action emphasized that ESG is not solely a corporate concern but a collective responsibility that extends to individuals and households. In essence, the conversation coalesced around the overarching idea that ESG is not just a contemporary buzzword but an indispensable framework for ushering in a more sustainable and responsible future.

Panel Discussion -3: Scope for work place skills

Panelists

- 1. Dr. Ms. Albina Shankar-Director-Mobility India**
- 2. Ms. Bhuwana Subramanyam- Education consultant, Award winning Marketer**
- 3. Dr. Romate John- Head, Psychology department, Central University-Karnataka**
- 4. Dr. Akash Sethi- Director-Quest Alliance**
- 5. Moderator- Dr. Jonas Richard, Head , Social Work department- Kristu Jayanti College**

The discussions centered on pivotal insights regarding the future of education and skills development. A prominent theme was the imperative shift towards a learner-focused approach, emphasizing the nurturing of learners as "innovators" through the empowerment of choice in their educational journeys. The consensus underscored the growing importance of instilling career decision-making skills as a critical competency for the future workforce.

A notable evolution was highlighted in the transition from 'digital literacy' to 'digital fluency,' signifying an emerging area of focus for the youth. The emphasis here was on cultivating skills that enable seamless collaboration with evolving technologies, recognizing the dynamic nature of the digital landscape.

The discourse also touched upon the significance of fostering responsible citizenry among the youth, encouraging their active participation in community activities and contributions to the larger society. It became apparent that education should not only prepare individuals for professional success but also instill a sense of social responsibility.

The overarching advice emphasized the need for continuous learning and skill upgrading to stay relevant, resilient, and confident in an ever-evolving landscape. The workplace skill scope was envisioned as industry-agnostic, emphasizing the importance of continuous learning and fostering an entrepreneurial mindset. In essence, the discussions highlighted the transformative shift in educational paradigms towards preparing the youth not only for careers but for a holistic and adaptable engagement with the challenges of the future.

Some key Insights

- Important workplace skills for future: Productivity; Communication; Team work; Leadership; Adaptability; Critical thinking and Emotional intelligence
- Challenges in developing workplace skills: Rapid technological change; Diversity and inclusion; Remote work; Work-life balancing
- Need to create an inclusive and accessible workplace for PWD: Accessibility, policies and flexible work arrangements.
- Training and employment is the first step towards improved quality of life

Recommendations for follow up Actions

FVTRS to explore possibilities of the following:

- Developing a policy for ESG compliance in order to increase collaboration with CSR
- A policy decision to focus on 'renewable energy' and promote agri-based skilling
- Emphasize on promoting new-age workplace skills to meet with the emerging future industry demands
- 'Inclusive approach' to be part of the organizational culture – PWD, Transgenders, sexual minorities etc.
- Constant review of approach and method to keep relevant and updated through studies and action research
- Study and explore the potentials of digital science and related skills

Award Ceremony

In this 15th National Skill Conference, FVTRS has instituted its National Awards in five categories to recognize the commendable work of NGOs, CSR& foundations. The awards were meant to appreciate their outstanding contributions to social development and nation-building. The categories of award

- Best vocational skill training initiatives in skill development to the youth
- Best initiatives in employment/ livelihoods generation to youth through building networks
- Best vocational skill training initiatives in skill development to the youth
- Best innovative in entrepreneurship development by the women and creation of employment.
- Best eco friendly initiatives in skill development and livelihood promotion
- Best differently abled skill training and employment initiatives

There were 28 nominations for the award and based on the set criteria and scrutiny by an internal team, 8 of them were selected for the award and they are:

Best Eco-friendly skill development	SebaJagat,Odisha
Innovative vocational skill training initiative	Rozgar Dhaba-Bihar and Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS) Ajmer
Initiatives in employment/livelihood generation through network with departments and industries	St.Thomas Charitable and Educational Trust, Erode & Madurai (STCNT)-Tamil Nadu and Institute of Social Research & Development (ISRD) Bhopal
Innovation in entrepreneurship development by women and creation of employment	CareshipKarnataka and Gram Vikas SewaSansthan(GVSS) Uttar Pradesh
Skill training and employment creation for differently abled youth	Azad Vikalang Kalyan Samithi (AVKS) Madya Pradesh

The awards were given away by Dr. Markus Pfefferer, CEO, COMANO Advisory LP and Mr. Harshith from Altissian. The programme was concluded with vote of thanks proposed by Mr. C.P Nicholas, Manager, FVTRS.

Jimmy Mathew