Report on "Training of the Trainers"

Topic : Community Service Project

during 10th & 11th August, 2022

in online mode

Organized by

Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education (APSCHE) &

Board for Community Development through Education (BCDE)

In association with Training Partner

UNICEF : Yuvatha Society

Background

The Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education proposed to implement a Community Service Project across the all Higher Education Institutions in Andhra Pradesh. To facilitate capacity building to all the faculty members spread over in different disciplines to have common objectives on Community Development, Desired Outcomes, it felt to provide orientation training to the Master Trainers. So a Training of Trainers (ToT) organised in collaboration with UNICEF : Yuvatha as technical and implementation partner. Community Service Project integrates meaningful community service with instruction and participation for youth in the state. This project aims to link the community with the educational institutions for mutual benefit. The communities get benefited with focussed contribution of students and the institutions develop social sensibility and emerge as socially responsible entities.

The approach is to train a set of trainers (ToT) thereby enabling them to take the learnings forward to the colleges' level. These Master Trainer (MTs) are expected to capacity build the faculty at their respective institutions and together they orient students on this project. The ToT consists of initial orientation and context setting of the project along with introducing the participants to social tools, methodologies and existing literature.

Objectives of the Project

This project aims to create awareness on a plethora of elements in the community we live in, enabling the students to be able to take action. Community development is important for human development and nation-building because it teaches people to think about the places they live, what surrounds them, and how to protect their neighborhoods. As communities contribute to the social, political, cultural, and economic development of their countries, it is very important for students to understand its functioning and ecosystem in order to bring solutions to the problems. The following are the objectives of the Community Service Project,

- To sensitize the students to the living conditions of the people and help them realize the stark realities of the society
- To bring about an attitudinal change in the students and make them aware of their inner strengths

- To make students socially responsible citizens who are sensitive to the needs of the disadvantaged sections
- To help students to initiate developmental activities in the community in coordination with public and government authorities.
- To develop a holistic life perspective among the students and linking the community and college for mutual benefit

In this regard, a two-day online training was planned and conducted with the master trainers from various educational institutions of the state on 10th and 11th of August, 2022. An average of 150 – 200 participants took part in the 2 day training which was interactive and enriching. The training was deployed through Webex medium which is widely used by the participants. This 2 day training mainly aimed to position the project, orienting the Master Trainers on the know-how's of the project. It also opened a dialogue on why this initiative is necessary and enriching for the students along with making them a part of the state building process. The below are the pointers touch based upon in this 2 day scheduled sessions,

- To set the context for the Community Service Project and aligning it to understand the need of the project,
- To inculcate a sense of community service, social responsibility among through the ToT model in the participants,
- To sensitize the master trainers on certain development issues prevailing in the society,
- To provide enhanced knowledge on development issues in the State and align them with SDGs,
- To capacity build them on identifying available statistics of the state across various state and center generated reports to gather holistic view for the scope of the project,
- To build the capacities of master trainers to hand hold the students as needed and give them necessary inputs.

TRAINING

The training took place on the online platform webex with around 170 - 200 participants across the 2 days. The training consisted of participants hailing from

both technical and non-technical backgrounds. The participants learnt from guest speakers who are also subject experts in their respective fields on the deployed topics. The discussion components of training are designed to cater for both types of audience to keep them engaging and their learning interesting.

 The flow of the topics are sequenced to bring logical flow to the context, starting with giving foundational information about aspects of development in general and later transiting into the state of Andhra Pradesh on different parameters. The table given below is the agenda that was executed over the sessions day-wise:

Day 1

Topic	Description
Introduction: Community Service Project, Objectives and Expectations	The guidelines of the CSP were discussed along with its end objectives. Procedure and implementation plan was also oriented to the participants. Role of master trainers, faculty mentors and students were discussed
Introduction: UN SDG's and SDG agenda 2030	Participants were introduced to Sustainable Development Goals as a concept. Each of the goal was explained along with the agenda 2030
Overview: Alignment of SDG's and Localisation of SDG's	The relevance of SDG's to CSP was learnt by the participant. They have also learnt how to localise SDG's with respect to any developmental activity in the given context
Introduction: NFHS data, Reflections on AP state and it's Socio Economic Survey	Participants learnt about different surveys/ reports available at central/state level official websites especially National Family Health Survey and socio economic survey with respect to Andhra Pradesh state. They have also learnt about how this existing statistics/ information can be used to identify and align problem with the literature

Role of Youth & Mentors in achieving objectives of CSP	Participants learnt about why – How's addressing active involvement of youth in this project. The roles of CSP mentors (faculty) were laid and clearly discussed. They have also learnt about importance of their role in achieving the objectives of CSP

Day 2

Intro: Design thinking & Alignment of Design thinking principles to CSP	A deep dive was made to understand the concept of design thinking principles along with activity-based learning. The participants learnt the framework and how it can be used as a tool to understand multilayers of a problem to be able to bring out of the box solutions
Overview & Principles of Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR)	Participants are introduced to the methodologies of CBPR. This gives an understanding on different approaches and sensitivities while working with communities. Participants learnt the importance of participation and a sense of ownership of the community in the development process
Identification of a Problem	Amongst different problems that persist around us, participants are introduced to a framework on how to identify and narrow down on which problem to work on with a set of standard matrices
Framing a Research question	Participants understand the difference between a problem statement and a research question. They also learn about how to draw hypothesis of the research question

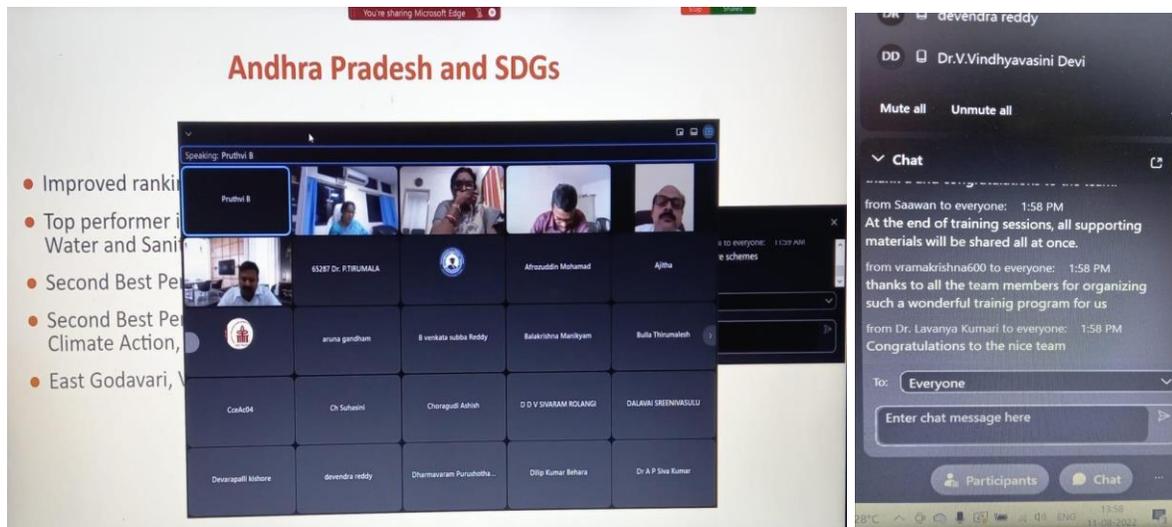|	
Problem Tree analysis	This tool was introduced to the participants to enable them to understand the causes, effects and the affected of the specific problem. This acts as a template to break down the problem into above said three different components to understand the problem better and how to go about it

Outcomes

The topics trained on the 2 days gave a holistic idea about the procedural and implementational aspects of the project, along with a bird eye view on aspects of community development. A set of 200 master trainers would take the learnings forward to the field level to the colleges across the state of Andhra Pradesh. The outcomes from the intervention were:

- Master Trainers were sensitized on the broader development goals set by the United Nations at international level
- Awareness created on localisation of the sustainable development goals
- MTs were sensitized on the development agenda of the State, schemes of Govt. of India and Government of Andhra Pradesh
- A convergence mechanism was developed for the Community Development project with various existing schemes/ programmes
- Oriented on different sources of existing government generated surveys, report to understand the performance of the state at various matrices which helped them understand the current status of the state
- Enhanced abilities in analyzing the data and evidence-based approaches
- Trained to identify problems along with providing framework to narrow down on problem analysis
- Delivered frameworks of design thinking principles to incorporate within CSP for better approach to solutions
- Awareness created on practical cases/ interventions and their impact on the community.

Observations

There had been a diversity in the background of the participants. While some are well versed with certain topics covered during the training, many lacked foundational understanding on a lot of social structures and processes discussed. This training helped them to understand concepts out of their subject knowledge and triggered a thirst for social awareness. While few of the participants coming from engineering institutions mentioned some level of community projects taking place at their college level led by the students, few participants appreciated this initiative.

The sessions have been very interactive in nature with frequent checking for understandings, polls, asking the participants to rate their understanding via chat box and fun activities when the pulse of the session felt low. Participants showed interest and enthusiasm to share their experiences of community participation and of their institutions.

Participants requested for a detailed manual on CSP as the information provided in the guidelines of CSP isn't adequate to understand the end to end process. A manual with instructions on which year students among the course are eligible/ have to be included and timeline of the program, what are the dos and don't while in action would keep them at a much better place of understanding. The participants have requested for a standard uniform protocol for the project across

various institutions and a reliable support cell to address all their doubts on the project when in need.

Conclusion

The Community Service Project is one of its kind and a great initiative to institutionalize community development as part of the academic curriculum. This project aims to provide a wide range of awareness to students in understanding society with critical lens and multi dimensionally. This ToT plays a very crucial part in carrying the spirit of this program to the Master Trainers. The same spirit is expected to get translated to students through faculty mentors whom the MTs shall train. Although only 2 sessions took place, on an online platform the absorption of the MTs was highly commendable.

The interactions were two way and there was meaningful exchange of dialogue aiming to understand the concepts better. Participants were very keen for the next session, especially for the offline ones to experience these social concepts which are very fantasizing and new for many. Participants showed a sense of pride and gratitude for being a part of this project aiming for upliftment of the communities through their contribution.

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