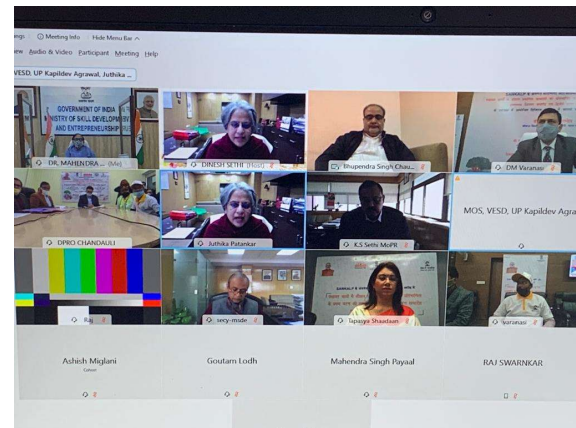


Skill India undertakes Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for workers under Department of Panchayati Raj in Chandauli and Varanasi



Varanasi/Chandauli, December 21, 2020: In line with its vision to promote decentralization and local governance for better planning and implementation of skill development programmes, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) is conducting a Special Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) program for workers with Department of Panchayati Raj (DoPR) in Chandauli and Varanasi. The programme, implemented under SANKALP Programme of MSDE, has been rolled out in Sevapuri and Baragaon blocks in Varanasi that include 167 gram panchayats and in Niyamatabad and Sahabganj blocks in Chandauli that include 160 gram panchayats.

The implementing agency for the programme is National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). After initial preparations such as getting trainers onboard, setting up of RPL camps at appropriate locations and mobilization of candidates with the support of DoPR, Uttar Pradesh training started in the first week of Oct-2020. Considerable progress has been made since then and nearly 2,250 candidates have been enrolled for training. Today, at a virtual event, **Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Hon'ble Union Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** felicitated over 900 workers who have successfully completed their RPL training with skill certification and announced the launch of phase II of the programme.

Under the partnership, MSDE is supporting the State Skill Development Missions (SSDMs)/District Skill Committees (DSCs) in selection and onboarding of the PIAs and facilitating successful execution of the programme. Both ministries (MSDE and MoPR) are being supported by Directorate of Panchayati Raj, UP and the State Skill Development Mission, UP and are monitoring the pilot to comprehensively understand the key challenges and learnings and implement necessary corrective measures.

Commenting on the initiative, **Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Hon'ble Union Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** said, "About 70% of our country's population resides in rural India and hence the inclusion of gram panchayats is crucial for the success of District Skill Development Plans and will provide a huge fillip to the Skill India Mission. Through RPL, we aim to align the competencies of the pre-existing workforce of the country to the standardized framework. Certification builds confidence, brings respect and provides recognition to the candidates, it has the potential to make skills aspirational. Supporting formalization of the informal learning of youth will supplement their efforts in finding sustainable livelihood opportunities and reduce inequalities based on privileging certain forms of knowledge over others. We aim to expand this initiative in all villages of India as a key step in the direction of our honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Skilled India. The pilot in addition to recognizing the skills of the trainees shall also link them with work opportunities emanating from the Gram panchayat's development work."

The event was also graced by **Shri. Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary, Minister, Panchayati Raj, Uttar Pradesh and Shri. Kapil Dev Agarwal, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Vocational Education & Skill Development, Uttar Pradesh**

The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, through its World Bank supported program of Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP), has been working with state and district-level skill development machineries to encourage innovative best practices at the local level that result in enhanced access, quality and capacity in the skilling ecosystem. The initiative will contribute in development of rational and realistic state skill development plans, finally leading to a well-grounded national plan for skill development. Down-streaming the skill development planning to the gram panchayat (GP) level would contribute to decentralization in the true sense. Thus, creating sustainable employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for workers and drive socio-economic development of the local economies. This will further enhance the scope of replicability and scalability of the RPL programme to other GPs across the country.

Sharing her joy on becoming a certified sanitation worker **Mrs. Sangeeta from Phoolpur in Varanasi** said, "The RPL training has helped me immensely in understanding the significance of following standard practices to maintain cleanliness of our surrounding for our health and well-being. We learnt the importance of segregating wet waste from dry waste and even received a kit which had a uniform, mask, gloves and other necessary tools and equipments required for us to stay safe while we do our job. I express my gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister and Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Hon'ble Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship for conducting the training for people like us who have the experience of working as sanitation workers but were not certified. The certification will help us get recognized for our skill, earn better and live a respectful life."

Talking about how the training has helped him, **Sanjay Vishwakarma, lead carpenter, wooden furniture from Jivnathpur in Chandauli** said, "I have been working as a carpenter for 15 years making all kinds of modern as well as traditional furniture. Today, I have been finally recognized for my skill with a government certificate under RPL which has opened up the doors for several new opportunities for me. For the first time post-independence, under the noble leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister such a unique skilling programme has started. I will go and tell everyone how good this programme is, and encourage may more people to join and get trained for better livelihood prospects."

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programme recognizes the value of learning acquired outside a formal setting and provides a government certificate for an individual's skills. Candidates receive exposure to concepts of digital and financial literacy and an accidental insurance coverage for three years at free of cost. No fee is charged from a candidate for participating in the RPL program and every successfully certified candidate will receive INR 500. The learnings from the RPL programme in Chandauli and Varanasi will be incorporated in the national launch of the proposed scheme aiming at getting gram panchayats skill ready for jobs of the future. This initiative is part of a larger programme on 'Skill Development Planning at the level of 'Gram Panchayat' that focuses on introducing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in a structured manner in GPs of various districts across the country.

For more information on Skill Development, please follow the links below:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SkillIndiaOfficial; Twitter: @MSDESkillIndia;
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzNFVNX5yLEUHIRNZJKniHg>