Upskilling Rural Youth of India

Why in News?

In a recent group discussion held by Life Skills Collaborative, most of the rural youth preferred to stay in their village which necessitates the importance of upskilling them.

Why is upskilling necessary for the rural youth?

> *UN projects that almost 50% of the Indian population will be living in urban areas by 2047.*

- **To overcome agrarian crisis** – Farming is the main source of rural livelihoods including children who work on family-owned farms.
- But the rural economy is experiencing a major occupational shift with more farmers quitting agriculture to join non-farming jobs, hinting at an agrarian crisis.

> *The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) data recorded 34 million farmers leaving their farms and transitioning to other sectors such as construction during 2004-05 and 2011-12.*

- **To reduce unemployment rate** – According to NSSO, the unemployment rate among rural male and female youth stood at 17.4% and 13.6% respectively in 2020.
- **To control migration** – Many rural youth migrate to urban areas in search of meaningful employment which impacts livelihood of urban dwellers.

How can youth in rural India be made employment-ready?

- **Rural education** – Technical as well as life skills are needed to empower youth in these areas through formal education.
- The success stories of ***Mexico's tele-schools and Bhutan's well-being-infused curriculum*** can be introduced.

> *According to '**LSC Voices 2023 survey**', of 15,856 young people across 11 districts, 66% of youth aged between 19 and 22 had never taken any kind of vocational training with only 5% of them enrolled in these courses.*

- **Vocational training** – It will imbibe relevant rural skills in them to ensure a secure living where they currently live.
- **Placement opportunities** – Industrial Training Institutes need to provide avenues for

placements to vocational skill aspirants.

- **Alternate employment opportunities** – Rural India can boost employability in both traditional and non-traditional trades, leading to a vibrant economy by offering skills in fields like agricultural mechanisation, pollution monitoring, nursing and digital technologies via e-learning,
- **Upskilling opportunities** – Indian government have launched ***'Skills on Wheels'*** initiative with NSDC and IndusInd Bank to promote skilling to students' doorsteps.
- **Promoting life skills** – If learning is infused with rural life skills in schools, rural education will have the potential to nurture a generation capable of thriving.
    - Example, courses in both industry-specific skills (such as in healthcare, electrical, construction) and life skills by Pratham.
- **NGO's participation** – Bharat Cares, a non-profit organisation in India is working towards empowering the underprivileged through skilling.

Skills on Wheels
• A customized bus will promote 'Skill India Mission'. • **Initiative by** – NSDC and IndusInd Bank in 2023 • **Objectives** – To equip rural youth, particularly women with key Digital Skills and make them job and future-ready and to improve their livelihood. • To bridge the gap between the skilled people required in the industry and the unemployed youth. • **Target** –60,000 youth will be empowered over a period of **5 years.** • **Activities** – It will travel across the length and breadth of aspirational and backward districts and spreads awareness at grass root level about free skill training programs.

References

1. The Hindu| Upskilling Rural Youth of India
2. PIB| Skills on Wheels Initiative

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