

A Report of  
A Two-way Interactive NCIDE-NEP Training in  
Entrepreneurship Skills Development Programme  
using EduSat  
*From Teleconferencing to Live Virtual Conference*  
(28<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> August 2006)



National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education  
Indira Gandhi National Open University

A Report of a Two-way Interactive NCIDE-NEP  
Training in Entrepreneurship Skills Development  
Programme using EduSat- *From Teleconferencing  
to Live Virtual Conference* (28th- 31st August,  
2006)

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NCIDE, in collaboration with NEP, conducted four-day training in entrepreneurship skills development programme using EduSat from 28<sup>th</sup> August 2006 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2006. The two-way interactive sessions had the resource persons at the EMPC, IGNOU end and 30 participants, 15 at each of the regional centres at Agartala and Aizawl.

The aim of the programme was to harness the potential of EduSat based network for content delivery and training for the people of North East India.

The main objectives of the proposed training programme were to:

1. evaluate the potential of EduSat for entrepreneurial training in the North East.
2. test the ability of creating and utilizing dynamic e-content for training and development purposes through this pilot project.
3. sensitise the unemployed youth in NE about entrepreneurship opportunities in NE
4. enable the participants to generate and assess business ideas relevant to their locale.
5. develop entrepreneurial skills in the participants to enable them to set up a small business enterprise.
6. train the participants, especially women, to develop a bankable/viable business plan.
7. analyze the problems and constraints faced in the North East and suggest coping strategies.

It was expected that after undertaking this training programme:

1. the participants would identify suitable business ideas
2. the participants would assess their business ideas in terms of their potential
3. the participants would evaluate their own performance in terms of entrepreneurial competencies
4. the participants would be motivated to train other groups in the region.

5. the trainer group would get inputs in utilization of EduSat for interactive learning and skill development programmes.
6. some reusable learning material in content format would get developed.

**Pre-Workshop Net-meeting (n-meeting):** A pre workshop net-meeting was arranged between the organizers at IGNOU HQ and RCs at Agartala and Aizwal on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2006. This n-meeting took the stock of the arrangements made at the participants' end (SIT) and discussed the activities to be organized during the workshop. Some forms were sent by email to the RCs, which had to be distributed to the participants by the RDs. It was discussed in the n-meeting how these forms were to be used by the participants.

### **Day I (28<sup>th</sup> August 2006)**

The workshop was inaugurated by the Honourable Vice Chancellor, IGNOU Prof. S C Garg. In his inaugural speech, Prof Garg emphasized on the growing needs of entrepreneurial skills and the importance of creating job providers, rather than job seekers. He emphasised that entrepreneurship is a desirable development option for countries like India because not only does it enable us to have a cost-efficient strategy of economic development, it also ensures utilization of local resources and talent and enables regional balance in development.

Prof. M.Kaushik, Director NCIDE and Dr. Jayshree Kurup, DD, NEC coordinated the workshop.

There were a total of three sessions on Day I. As soon as the inaugural session was over the participants from Agartala and Aizawal were asked to introduce themselves. However, due to some technical problems, active two-way video interaction could not take place and the session started with speaker Dr. Arya, Executive Director, National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Business Development (NIESBUD) speaking on "Entrepreneurship as an Employment Option".

The talk was followed by an interactive session where the participants asked general questions about entrepreneurship. As the net-meeting could not be connected between Agartala and IGNOU HQ, participants of Agartala called through toll free telephone lines to ask questions from the resource persons. However, Aizawal was connected on EduSat network through net-meeting.

In the second session on Day I, Prof M Kaushik spoke about “Entrepreneurship- What does it mean for me”. Before the commencement of the session participants at Agartala and Aizwal introduced themselves. Her talk was followed by an interactive question-answer session.

In the third session, Prof Kaushik spoke on “Entrepreneurial Competencies – Do I have what it takes?”. This was an exercise session, which enabled the participants to assess their own competency profile as entrepreneurs. The participants were asked to complete a self-assessment exercise as homework.

On the second day, two-way interactivity was established where the settings for Unicast on VLC was configured from the EduSat Studio, EMPC by sharing the desktops of SIT at Agartala and Aizwal. To avoid the Unicast application running on the PC at the SIT to freeze/hang both Agartala and Aizwal were asked to use the Teleconferencing system for viewing and SIT for interaction.

## **Day II (29<sup>th</sup> August 2006)**

The second day comprised three sessions. The speaker of the first session was Dr A. Mishra, Consultant NIESBUD. Speaking on the “Incentives & Facilities provided for SSI sector”, Dr Mishra informed he participants about the various funding/financial options and incentives available for setting up an entrepreneurship projects in the North East.

Interactive sessions comprised the participants asking about special incentives for bamboo based products, ginger extract, textile and computer training institutes. Questions were also raised about sources of finance and concessions if any.

The second speaker of the day was Prof M Kaushik who dealt with the topic “Opportunity Scanning and Identification – Getting the Business Idea”. This session essentially comprised an exercise in groups. It consisted a series of activities already

explained to the participants at the end of Day1. The participants were asked to discuss their competency profiles, which they had prepared. Before this Prof. Kaushik briefed the participants on the genesis of profile listing. The participants discussed their difficulties on filling the questionnaire, which was distributed to them on Day 1. Prof. Kaushik explained the technique to fill the questionnaire and asked them to take it away as a home exercise for the next day. Then Prof. Kaushik asked the participants at Agartala and Aizwal to divide themselves into three groups of five participants each with a team leader and to identify their business idea. The participants both from Agartala and Aizwal were seen on the screens while they were forming groups, which gave us the essence of virtual reality. After this interaction Prof. Kaushik gave a talk on generating business ideas, which generated some discussions on the process of idea generation.

The third speaker of the session was Dr. S.K. Jain, Department of Management Studies IIT, Delhi who gave his talk on product selection. This was followed by a highly interactive session where the participants in groups presented the business ideas identified by them.

### **Day III (30<sup>th</sup> August 2006)**

The third day comprised three sessions. The first session started with a series of activities. In the beginning Dr. Jayshree gave a brief overview of the last session and current session. This was followed by another brief overview by Prof. M. Kaushik on the activities to be carried out by the participants on market assessment. The participants were asked to groupwise present the assessment on their business ideas. The assessment format had been distributed to the participants in advance. The session was highly interactive where Prof. Kaushik had a one-to-one interaction with the group leaders/group participants on their business assessment. As an innovative approach during the one-to-one interaction the participants sitting at the other end were shown in the background and the face of the resource person speaking was shown in a box on the same screen, which gave a 'look n feel' of virtual f2f interaction.

Following this, in the second session, Dr. K Vagrecha, Reader School of Management Studies, IGNOU and Mr. Prashant Misra, Senior Manager (Marketing) Punjab National

Bank spoke about “Understanding Financing Options”. These talks were followed by two-way interactive discussions. The third session started with a brief presentation on SWOT analysis by Prof. M. Kaushik followed by a talk on “Understanding Ownership Structures” deliberated by Dr. Neeti Aggarwal, Reader School of Management Studies, IGNOU.

#### **Day IV (31<sup>st</sup> August 2006)**

Day four also comprised of three sessions. The first session was highly interactive where participants were required to fill and present the SWOT analysis format provided to them for their business idea. The participants analyzed the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of their business ideas in a one-to-one interaction with Prof. M. Kaushik. After the interactive session, Prof..Kaushik gave a general idea of a business plan.

The speaker of the second and third session, Dr. Ravindra Julka, Development Banker and Entrepreneurship Training, Coordinator Centurion Bank of Punjab gave a talk on “Business Plan Preparation”. A new experiment on virtual classroom was done in this session by showing the participants and the resource persons together on the screen.

The participants were then briefed by Prof. Kaushik on developing a business plan on the basis of the business plan format distributed to them. The participants were given a ten day period to conduct their market survey, complete the cost data and finalise their business plans. It was decided that the participants would mail these plans by 10<sup>th</sup> September to the NCIDE or NEP. The NCIDE would do a preliminary assessment of the plans and forward the plans with their comments to the bankers for a detailed plan evaluation. The participants were also informed that the bankers’ assessment of groupwise plans would be discussed with them on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September, where they would also be able to interact at length with both the faculty and the bankers. This segment of the training session ended with a note of thanks from Dr Kurup.

#### **Session on Evaluation of Business Plans (September 18, 2006)**

The participants had submitted their project proposals ten days after the above mentioned training programme. These proposals were based in the prototype of “preparation of

business plan”, which was provided to them on the first day of the training programme. These proposals were evaluated by the NCIDE and Mr Ravindra Julka.

On September 18, 2006, the participants were called for another 2-way interactive training session. The sessions were conducted by the NCIDE faculty, Dr Jyashree Kurup and Mr Ravindra Julka. A general feedback was shared in the first session while the bankers evaluation comprised two sessions.

The first session was an interactive feedback session conducted by Dr Jayashree Kurup, DD, NEP and Dr. Moumita Das, AD, NCIDE. Welcoming the participants to the session Dr. Jayashree informed them about the proceedings of the day. The participants from Agartala had sent two business plans and those from Aizawl had sent five business plans. These business project proposals of the participants were assessed for any technical discrepancy in an interactive manner. The participants at Agartala and Aizawl actively took part in the discussion.

The second session comprised the evaluation of the business plans by Dr Julka. He took each one of the seven plans and assessed apprised the participants of the strengths and weaknesses of each business plan and provided expert opinion and comments. This session was also highly interactive where the participants asked questions as to how they can actually implement the business plan and actually start their business. Prof Madhulika Kaushik, Director, NCIDE joined the discussion and provided answers to the participants queries. The participants were requested to rectify the limitations of their business plans as identified by the panel and to resubmit them to the NCIDE/NEP. They were also assured of the handholding support that the university would extend to them by the way of advice during the stages of plan implementation.

The session ended with the vote of thanks by Prof. Kaushik thanking Dr Julka for his valuable opinion, all the experts who had spared their valuable time and come for the training programme, the NCIDE team comprising Dr Jyotsna Dikshit and Dr Moumita Das, who had worked behind the scenes, and Dr Jayashree Kurup who had efficiently coordinated between the regional centres and IGNOU headquarters.



## **Workshop Observations**

The participants had a hitch in facing the camera on the first day, But from the second day they became familiar and friendly to the technology and participated enthusiastically in the interaction.

### ***Technical:***

- ❖ The technicians present at the SITs require training from time to time on new technologies used in EduSat based conferencing to avoid runtime technical glitches.
- ❖ Better quality cameras would definitely enhance the teaching-learning experience through EDUSAT. The camera at Agartala was not of good quality and thus could not transmit quality video from the SIT side. A phased replacement of existing webcam camera with better equipment would go a long way in improving interactivity and clarity. Configuration may be decided in consultation with EMPC.
- ❖ The participants should be trained a day in advance for tele protocol. A multimedia kit on edu-etiquette should be developed for the participants. NCIDE proposes to undertake this exercise, if approved.
- ❖ Overall, the high levels of interactivity achieved during the training session, and the possibility of transacting all the training related dialogue throughout the workshop, as well as the exchange of all formats and real time discussion on each of them by the participant group provided enough support to the premise that EduSat can serve as a very effective tool for skill based training. The NCIDE proposes to reaffirm this through diverse employable skill based training initiatives.