



SDG 16: PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

SDG 16 is one of the vital SDGs as it directly relates to the delivery of other SDGs. The Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGN) focuses on strengthening its efforts in significantly contributing to achieving different SDGs. IITGN is reinforcing international relations, its participation as advisors for the government and relishes the academic freedom that all the IITs have been given by the government.

Research

The institute's Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) discipline is involved in research related to indigenous communities. One of the projects, "Effects of reverse migration among the indigenous communities following India's Covid-19 induced lockdown" supported by the Social Science Research Council is being conducted by one of the research groups of the HSS discipline. Another research group focuses on human-animal relations and community based conservation projects in Arunachal Pradesh, especially Dibang valley and the Idu Mishmi community.

Operations

The institute has formed several groups/ committees in which students have elected representation. There are

student volunteering groups as well. The counselling service of IITGN provides a variety of services to students which are aimed at fostering independent thinking and responsibility.

Student groups and committees

Details of the student bodies at the institute are mentioned below:

- **Student Council:** The Student Council consists of secretaries who are responsible for managing the execution of activities in their respective domains. Student initiatives at IITGN are coordinated and executed by the Student Council and Student Senate. They are responsible for governance, long-term strategy building and the management of student activities on campus.
- **Student Senate:** The Student Senate is an elected body that deliberates on various aspects of student life at IITGN. The Student Senate, which meets thrice a semester, has representation from BTech, MA, MSc, MTech and PhD students. Currently there are 30 students in the senate. The Student Senate is coordinated by the Convener. The Student Senate has, under its domain, multiple standing committees viz. Health Committee, Hostel Maintenance Committee, Mess Council, Alumni Association Committee, Steering Committee of the senate, Election Commission and Rules & Procedures Committee.
- **Senate Student Affairs Committee (SSAC):** All reported cases of academic copying, and a departure from acceptable norms of conduct and behavior including

non-academic matters shall be dealt with utmost seriousness and in a fast track mode by the Senate Student Affairs Committee (SSAC).

- Anti-Ragging Committee
- Animal Management Committee: The IITGN campus has been constructed in an area which hosted several native animals, such as dogs, nilgais, langurs, hare, snakes, etc. Infrastructural developments often lead to human-animal conflicts. It is necessary that the practices followed within the campus are humane and ethical and a general resident may be unaware of all aspects of their behavior towards animals. The institute has issued an advisory on animal management within IITGN campus which lays down a set of humane and ethical practices to minimize human-animal conflicts and ensure smooth functioning of the institute processes.
- NYASA: NYASA is a student-run initiative which primarily focuses on the betterment of construction workers and their families. It also provides some essential services including health and education to the nearby villages, namely Palaj and Basan. Initiatives by NYASA include NYASA school, Sanjeevani and donation drives. Sanjeevani is the annual medical camp for people of all age groups from villages around our campus. <https://initiatives.iitgn.ac.in/nyasa/>
- Green Office: The Green Office at the institute undertakes various initiatives to promote awareness on sustainability aspects such as water management, solid waste management, etc. among the IITGN community and neighbouring villages. <https://sites.google.com/a/iitgn.ac.in/greeniitgn/about>
- Clubs: IITGN holds technical and cultural activities at regular intervals, co-ordinated by the various clubs. <https://iitgn.ac.in/student/lifeoncampus/clubs/>
- Election Commission: Election Commission IIT Gandhinagar is a formal body to conduct elections for student council, student senate and for the position of class representative.
- Health Committee: Health Committee at IITGN strives to improve the health of the IITGN family in all ways possible. The Health Committee helps provide temporary health treatment through immediate first aid and creates awareness on issues related to health.
- Alumni Relations Office: The Alumni Relations Office at IIT Gandhinagar was established with the motive to give a platform for the Alumni to contact and connect with the alma mater. The alumni of IIT Gandhinagar can contact Alumni Relations office for any requests related to the institute.
- Maintenance Committee: The committee looks after all the maintenance facilities provided to the students in the hostels.
- Commercial Establishment Management Committee

(CEMC): The committee is responsible for the smooth functioning of the different commercial establishments at the institute.

Student volunteering groups

Different student volunteering groups at the institute are as follows:

- Control Room: The Control Room is a student run initiative which was responsible for addressing day-to-day concerns of the students during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - Special Volunteer Force: This team of volunteers was created during the pandemic to provide voluntary support for various anticipated and unanticipated services. This team consisted of students, faculties, staff and other members of the community.
 - Hostel sub-group of Crisis Management Group: This team was formed as a part of the crisis management group. During that time the number of cases on campus were rising and this group was responsible for paying special attention to the hostels and hostel residents.
 - NYASA: NYASA works to support and educate the children of the migrant construction workers in and around the campus. Students volunteer for the various events that are organised by NYASA.
 - Volunteers for Campus Animals (VCA): This group works for the welfare of animals on campus like dogs, and birds. Students voluntarily work in these groups for feeding animals and other activities as well.
- Counselling Centre

The institute has a dedicated Counselling Centre, consisting of faculty in charge of counselling services, counsellors, and student guides. The institute counsellor along with student volunteers and faculty counsellors offers free advice and assistance to students to address academic, personal, or interpersonal issues. We aim to provide students with a genuine and empathetic environment for their overall growth and well-being. The counselling service is available to all the students throughout the year. Students are encouraged to meet the institute counsellor for any assistance on emotional, interpersonal, and personal problems. Sometimes, the counsellor identifies any student in need of help and approaches them. In some cases, the faculty or student guide refers students to the counsellor.

During the pandemic, Counselling Centre provided its services to the family members of the community who tested positive during the pandemic for addressing their anxiety, fear, etc., and ensuring the good mental health of the IITGN community.

Support groups during Covid-19

At the peak of the first lockdown, the institute established a Shramik Kalyan Samiti (Labour Welfare Committee), in collaboration with Central Public Works Department, to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of over 800 migrant construction workers, who were involved in various campus development projects at the institute before the coronavirus-induced lockdown was announced. This was followed by the constitution of the Padosi Gram Sahyog Samiti to assist neighbouring villages of Palaj and Basan. These committees provided very critical support in the form of medical screening, supplying of food items and cooked food, distributing sanitary napkins, recharging mobile phones, and such others, which helped face the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The institute provides free medical support and consultation to construction workers in its medical centre. A free screening test of all workers was done in the workers' housing colony. Institute also provides ambulance services to workers needing medical examination or treatment.

The institute launched a fundraising drive to provide support for construction workers and their families, while they were confined in the labour colonies due to sudden discontinuity of work. For every rupee of donation, IITGN matched the amount to double the funds raised for workers' welfare. The volunteer groups involved regularly sensitised the workers and created awareness about preventive measures against Covid-19, such as frequent hand washing and social distancing. Breathing techniques were explained to labourers. All the workers' colonies were equipped with a first aid box.

The welfare of construction workers on the IITGN campus is among the most far-reaching community outreach activities of the institute. It ensures that they get pukka housing units with water supply, electricity, LPG connection and clean sanitation facilities. The impetus for the creation of various support groups and facilities was driven in large part by one of IITGN's grounding principles of societal engagement and shared concern for the welfare of the community.

Collaborations with the government

The institute provides expert advice to the local, regional and national governments and conducts training and capacity building programmes for the government officials. The institute receives funding and is supported by government agencies to research on various areas related to sustainability. The institute undertakes policy-focused research in collaboration with government departments.

Institute events

The institute provides outreach, general education, upskilling and capacity-building to policy and lawmakers on relevant topics including technology, social sciences,

climate change, etc. Sustainability Fair organised by Dr Kiran C Patel Centre for Sustainable Development is one of the examples of the institute events that aims at fostering collaborations between IITGN faculty and organisations and industries in the area of sustainable development. The Fair serves as a platform for government bodies, NGOs, and other organisations working in the area of sustainable development to share ideas and practices on water, pollution & waste management, energy, climate change, wildlife and ecosystems.

Cultural spaces

IITGN's open-air theatre Rangmanch has a seating capacity of 2,000 to facilitate large events. Integrated with a garden, it has been designed for multiple purposes, including cultural performances, events, street plays, and other community programmes. Additionally, the seating space has trees as well as grass strips between each row of seats, making the space appropriate for morning walks and contemplation.

Education

The institute has introduced some courses that relate to SDG 16 such as HS 644 - Critical Perspectives in Sociology and Anthropology, HS 424 – Indian Systems of Ethics, and HS 327 - Anthropology, Citizenship, and Human Rights.

The following short courses and lectures were organised at the institute relating to SDG 16:

- 'Anthropology and Human Rights' by Dr Rosa Maria Perez, IITGN on 26-30 August, 2019
- 'Universal Basic Income and Land Rights for Women: An Anti-Capitalist Critique' by Prof Nivedita Menon, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on 4 November, 2019

Community outreach

2nd Decennial Lecture

IITGN organised the 2nd lecture under the IITGN Decennial Lecture Series on 18 April, 2019. Former Deputy Chief of the Army and currently Member of the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB), Lt Gen Subrata Saha (Retd) delivered his talk on 'India's Emergence as a Superpower – Security Imperatives'.

Winter Institute in Digital Humanities (WIDH)

Winter Institute in Digital Humanities (WIDH) was organised by IITGN and the University of Saskatchewan (USask) from 8-22 December, 2019. The programme had four keynote talks by Prof Anil K Gupta, Shri P Sainath, Prof K P Jayasankar, and Prof Jatindra Kumar Nayak. The event was coordinated by Prof Arnapurna Rath, IITGN, and Prof Raj Srinivasan and Prof Jim Clifford, USask.

Dibang Seminar

The Humanities and Social Sciences discipline of IITGN organised 'Dibang Research Seminar: Initiating Dialogue Between Idu Mishmi and Research Scholars' on 10-11 December, 2019, at Anini, Dibang Valley district in Arunachal Pradesh. Around 15 Resource persons from various organisations, scholars, leaders and shaman priests from the Idu Mishmi community conducted the sessions. The seminar was coordinated by Prof Ambika Aiyadurai.

