



SDG 1: No Poverty

END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

Societal transformation is a key pillar of IIT Gandhinagar's research, outreach, and community engagement endeavours. The institution is dedicated to supporting economically underprivileged students through various scholarships and initiatives. Furthermore, it actively engages in efforts to uplift its neighbouring communities. NEEV, NYASA, IITGN-Dakshana Leadership Initiative are such programs.

RESEARCH

Several research activities at IIT Gandhinagar aim for technology transfer which would help the economically marginalised section of society. Low-cost technologies focused on the low-income group are at the core of various research. A few of them are: Development of low-cost novel biomaterials for in-situ groundwater/soil remediation: A safe drinking water production perspective - SERB; Low-Cost and Non-Electric Water Filter for Point-of-Use(POU) Water Disinfection - WIN Foundation.

EDUCATION

IITGN has implemented various programs to support the successful completion of courses for all students, including those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. One such initiative, the Guided Progress Scheme (GPS), was introduced in 2014 to assist academically weaker undergraduate students in developing a structured plan for graduating from the institute. GPS involves limiting the number of credits a student can register for during a semester and assigns students to advisors who guide them on their academic journey.

Another program, the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) initiative, was launched in October 2012 to provide academic support for undergraduate students. PAL is based on the belief that peer groups have a significant influence on students' learning behaviour, as they share a similar generational perspective. The PAL program at IITGN specifically aims to help first-year students who encounter challenges in adapting to English as the medium of instruction. These students are identified during one-on-one interactions with counsellors in their first month on campus.

Senior students, serving as peer educators, are selected through an application and interview process conducted by a faculty member in charge of the PAL program every August. In a typical PAL session, a senior student (usually in their second or third year) supports two first-year students by sharing their knowledge and experiences, helping the newcomers acclimate to the new learning environment. These PAL sessions, lasting four hours each week, usually take place in the evenings. The peer educators receive compensation for their service through the Earn While You Learn (EWYL) scheme at IITGN.

IITGN firmly believes in, “Education is a battle against poverty that everyone should fight “. We strive that money doesn’t come in any student's academic pursuit. For this, the institute has adopted liberal financial aid policies. The table below lists different aids provided to students in the period 2020-21. The institute follows government norms for admitting students from socially/economically backward classes, and the proportion of undergraduate admissions includes Economically Weaker Section (EWS) - 10%, Other Backward Classes - Non-Creamy Layer (OBC-NCL) - 27%, Scheduled Caste (SC) - 15% and Scheduled Tribe (ST) -7.5%. The institute also offers tuition fee waivers and financial aid for economically backward students and Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe/Physically Handicapped students. All students, except a few, reside in hostels, where food and accommodation are significantly discounted. From the academic year 2020-21, all undergraduate and postgraduate students at IITGN having an annual parental income of less than Rs 2.5 lakhs are provided full tuition fee support by the institute

The institute provides Children's Education Scholarship for the children of the institute’s staff up to INR 10,000 per annum per child, which is restricted up to INR 20,000 for a family.

OPERATIONS

In an effort to promote inclusivity and reduce socioeconomic disparities at IIT Gandhinagar, the institution has established a comprehensive system of scholarships and financial aid. This approach plays a pivotal role in addressing economic inequality within the student body. IITGN offers a diverse array of scholarships and financial assistance programs, encompassing both merit-based and need-based categories. These initiatives serve as a bridge to close the financial gap and ensure that deserving students, especially those hailing from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, can access quality education. By providing such opportunities, IIT Gandhinagar is actively contributing to the reduction of economic inequality.

Furthermore, the commitment to supporting students from underprivileged backgrounds extends beyond the institute itself. Alumni of IIT Gandhinagar have also taken it upon themselves to create scholarships that provide financial assistance to those in need. These scholarships are a testament to the dedication of the IITGN community in promoting equitable access to education. For instance, notable scholarships established by alumni include the Dr. T. G. Visweswaraiiah Scholarship, the Shri Satyanarayan Kakrania Scholarship, and the Shri Anandilal Bubna Scholarship, each offering substantial financial support to BTech students at IIT Gandhinagar. This collaborative effort between the institution and its alumni exemplifies a commitment to fostering a level playing field for all students, irrespective of their economic backgrounds.

The students who met the cricket legend are from humble backgrounds and are recipients of the 'Satyaram Scholarships' at IITGN and 'Yuva Scholarships' through the NGO Yuva Unstoppable. The 'Satyaram Scholarship' was instituted at IITGN by the former Indian cricketer and philanthropist VVS Laxman in the year 2016 and is being facilitated through the NGO Yuva Unstoppable. It is awarded to the needy and deserving students of IITGN, and they continue to get scholarship support till the completion of their BTech programme at the Institute. Apart from two recipient students of the 'Satyaram Scholarships', ten more first year BTech students of IITGN were awarded 'Yuva Scholarships' by the legendary cricketer through Yuva Unstoppable.

Highly experienced mentors from the Competitiveness Mindset Institute (CMI) and IIT Gandhinagar conducted these sessions, providing the students with a world-class learning experience. The program aimed to equip these budding engineers with the essential skills and knowledge needed to excel in their academic journey at IITs and NITs, offering them a brighter future despite their humble beginnings.

NYASA volunteers worked hard to formally enroll some of the children of construction workers in Basan village's government school. Invaluable efforts of Mr. Sunil Patel (Basan school principal), Prof. Gaurav Srivastava, Prof. Sharada C V, and Prof. Harish (for granting the permission during the covid period) are greatly appreciated to make this a reality. Twenty children have completed their schooling for the academic year 2021-22 and received their transfer certificate from Basan School. This is the first time in the history of IITGN. The special training program has been conducted for the kids to help them to get inducted into formal education.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

IITGN recognizes that achieving SDG 1 requires more than just research; it necessitates direct engagement with local communities. Therefore, the institute actively conducts community outreach programs. These initiatives extend support and capacity-building to the institute's staff and the surrounding areas. By providing training and skill development opportunities, IITGN empowers local communities and enhances their employability, thus addressing the root causes of poverty.

NEEV - Community Outreach Program: NEEV, a flagship community outreach program of IIT Gandhinagar, plays a pivotal role in bridging knowledge and communication gaps within the neighboring communities. NEEV offers comprehensive training, mentorship, and cultivates an entrepreneurial mindset among community members. This not only equips them with essential skills but also encourages self-reliance and economic independence, aligning with the objective of SDG 1.

Focus on Youth and Women: NEEV's strategic focus on youth and women from both rural and urban areas surrounding IIT Gandhinagar underscores the importance of gender inclusivity and the need to empower the most vulnerable populations. By targeting these demographics, NEEV ensures that opportunities for personal and professional growth are accessible to those who often face the most significant economic disparities.

Diverse Training Courses: NEEV's diverse array of training courses is a testament to its holistic approach in tackling poverty. These courses encompass a wide range of skills, including stitching, beautician skills, computer proficiency, specialized computer training, entrepreneurship development, spoken English, and vocational skills. These skills are vital for enhancing employability and creating pathways to economic self-sufficiency.

Market Linkages: Beyond skill development, NEEV goes the extra mile by facilitating market linkages for the products created by program participants. This initiative includes bulk orders for various items such as bags, stoles, and apparel. By connecting the products to markets and enabling income generation, NEEV empowers women to become financially independent.

NEEV conducted four training courses namely Ladies Tailor Training Course, Training of Trainers in Sewing, Beautician Skills Training Course, and Desktop Publishing Training Course during January-March 2022. A total of 58 rural women and youth from nearby villages took advantage of these courses. Additionally, NEEV organised a sale of handcrafted products made by village women on the occasion of International Women's Day and also during the Spring Carnations event at IITGN. NEEV also successfully trained nearly 150 rural youth and women in six skill development courses during April to June 2022. The program provided them with valuable skills, enabling many to start earning income. NEEV trained 145 rural youth and women in six skill development courses, including Stitching Skills, Beautician Skills, Basic Computer Skills, Spoken English Skills, Tally Skills, and Vocational Skills of wiring and CNC machining. These courses are offered entirely free of cost with philanthropic support from the Desai Foundation Trust. NEEV also conducted a Menstrual Health Management Seminar along with Menstrual Day Celebrations with 61 women from nearby villages on May 31, a Career Development Seminar on June 4 with 43 participants, and a five-day Entrepreneurship Development Workshop for 42 youth and women from rural and peri-urban areas of Gandhinagar-Ahmedabad during June 20-24, 2022.

IIT Gandhinagar's comprehensive and multifaceted approach, encompassing research, community engagement, skill development, and market linkages, is making a significant impact on SDG 1. It actively contributes to poverty reduction and the empowerment of communities within its vicinity, aligning with the United Nations' sustainable development agenda.

NYASA, a student-led initiative within the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IITGN), was established in 2011 with a focus on uplifting and educating the children of migrant construction workers near the campus. The core mission of NYASA is to provide underprivileged children with educational support, mid-day meals, and essential supplies, aiming to break the cycle of poverty and offer them better opportunities.

Within the IITGN campus, NYASA offers basic education, along with a holistic development approach that includes various activities like computer sessions, sports, and medical camps to divert these children from construction sites. Various new ways are evolved with the help of CCL, IITGN to make learning interesting for these children as most of them have never been part of formal schooling and need to be taught in innovative ways.

NYASA's impact extends through programs like Akansha, where IITGN students teach government school students in nearby villages, and Umeed, which provides computer and Basic Spoken English classes for security guards at IITGN, offering skill development opportunities. Incorporating a broader community focus, NYASA embodies trust, care, and empowerment, emphasising the transformative power of education and personal development to create brighter and more promising futures for the underprivileged children and the community it serves.

The team NYASA called for donations from the IITGN community and conducted distribution drives for the donated items like clothes, winter wears, toys, umbrellas, footwear, bags etc. for on-campus workers (like housekeeping staff, mess staff etc.) and construction workers. They also distributed T-shirts to all contractual staff. On the occasion of Diwali pooja, NYASA volunteers distributed sweets and new dresses among the children of construction workers. Overall, these efforts provided monetary relief to more than 1000 construction workers.

NYASA, in collaboration with the institute's social outreach, distributed essential items during the pandemic, such as masks (348), reusable sanitary napkins (112), mosquito repellent coils (210), fruit packets (2 bananas, 1 Apple, and 1 Orange - 600 packets), and sweets 600. The volunteers also conducted a 'sweets and fruits distribution' drive at the construction workers' colony. NYASA also paid gratitude to the entire contractual and housekeeping staff for their endless effort in helping the community by continuously providing essential services during the lockdown period.

On April 17, 2022, NYASA school students and members visited Science City. The group had a great time touring the Space Hall, Planet Earth, Nature Park, Robotics Gallery, and Aquatic Gallery. The current team initiated and reached out to various funding agencies for the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund, and we were able to secure material contributions (Soft drinks, Food Packets, Spectacles) from various outlets during the Sanjeevani. We have increased our number of sponsorships for the 2022 Sanjeevani; this has been a new initiative for NYASA.

The Shramik Kalyan Samiti (Labour Welfare Committee), in collaboration with NYASA, IITGN, distributed a total of 594 hoodies among the construction workers and 463 T-shirts to all the contractual staff between January to March 2022. The distribution drives were conducted as a gratitude gesture to recognise their unceasing efforts toward institution-building and for providing relentless essential services during the pandemic. The volunteers also conducted a sweets and fruits distribution drive at the construction workers' colony.

Exposure camps for students: The Humanities and Social Sciences discipline, in collaboration with a local educational organisation based in Chhota Udepur and the Azim Premji University, organised a three-day exposure camp on higher education opportunities for about 26 students of Chhota Udepur, a rural tribal district in Gujarat, from May 20 to 22, 2022. The residential workshop was designed to inform students pursuing higher secondary and undergraduate studies about various higher education opportunities and different career streams across disciplines. The workshop was organised by Prof Nishaant Choksi.