

विज्ञप्ति

एतद् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि Centre for Research in Schemes and Policies (CRISP) के द्वारा Centre for Higher Education Quality Upgradation and Excellence (CHEQUE) प्रोजेक्ट के अन्तर्गत पूर्णतः अस्थायी Academic Mentors के लिये Retired reputed professors/principals of colleges/educational administrators से आवेदन आमन्त्रित किये जाते हैं। आवेदन की अन्तिम तिथि दिनांक 24.03.2025 है।

CHEQUE सम्बन्धी गाइड लाइन (एनेक्सर-1) तथा प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट विश्वविद्यालय की वैबसाइट www.bujhansi.ac.in पर उपलब्ध है, इच्छुक अथ्यर्थी एकेडमिक मेन्टर की अर्हता आदि अन्य विवरण का एनेक्सर-1, प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट से अध्ययन करते हुये आवेदन कर सकते हैं।

उक्त तिथि तक अपने सम्पूर्ण शैक्षिक योग्यताओं एवं अनुभव के साथ नोडल अधिकारी प्रो. अवनीश कुमार, बुन्देलखण्ड विश्वविद्यालय, झांसी के ई-मेल dravanishkumar@gmail.com पर अपना आवेदन (बायोडाटा) प्रेषित कर सकते हैं।

(विनय कुमार सिंह)
कुलसचिव

बुन्देलखण्ड विश्वविद्यालय, झांसी

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प्रतिलिपि :- निम्नलिखित को सूचनार्थ एवं आवश्यक कार्यवाही हेतु प्रेषित।

1. प्रो. अवनीश कुमार, नोडल अधिकारी, बुन्देलखण्ड विश्वविद्यालय, झांसी।
2. वित्त अधिकारी।
3. डा0 दीपक तोमर, सिस्टम एनालिस्ट को इस आशय के साथ प्रेषित कि उक्त विज्ञप्ति को विश्वविद्यालय के वैबसाइट पर प्रकाशित करने का कष्ट करें।
4. कुलपति के निजी सचिव को माननीय कुलपति जी के अवलोकनार्थ।
5. कुलसचिव के आशुलिपिक।
6. सम्बन्धित पत्रावली।

कुलसचिव

Guidelines and modalities for implementation of CHEQUE

Organization Overview

Centre for Research in Schemes and Policies (CRISP) is an organization formed by 10 senior civil servants, who have served at the level of Secretary to the Government of India, for working with the State and Central Governments for designing schemes and policies in the social sector. It desires to make large-scale impact by designing schemes, setting up monitoring systems, and drafting policies covering rural, urban development, poverty alleviation, education, health, and institution building. The objective of CRISP is to bring systematic reforms, thus shifting focus from input-oriented implementation to outcome-focused roll out.

Project overview

The key to upgrading the quality of academic institutions is with Affiliating Universities, which are authorized to keep an oversight of the academic performance and quality of the affiliated colleges. The UGC regulations clearly state the infrastructure and academic parameters to be achieved by each of the affiliated colleges. However, Affiliating Universities have limited resources and time to undertake academic improvement plans for the colleges. As a result, the instrument of affiliation is poorly used, reflected in poor academic outcomes in higher education.

To address this issue CRISP would closely work with the identified university's by engaging reputed academicians as Academic Mentors – who would operate through the College Development (CDC) of the Affiliating University. They will focus on non-accredited government/aided/Private colleges with a student strength of 1000 and above, thereby causing improvement in the academic outcomes and employability of students. The five key goals that the project aims to achieve are to increase the graduation rate, improve academic outcomes for all students, improve employability, secure acceptable standards in all HEIs (measured by the accreditation), and better social outreach of HEIs.

Objectives of the Project

- To achieve accreditation or minimum standards of all the colleges under the project
- To improve academic outcomes through improved curriculum
- To increase employability
- Promote vibrant and student friendly campuses
- Integrating market-oriented skills with Education
- By the end of the project, all the colleges to adopt relevant AEDPs

Modalities of implementation

- The project will run in Pilot mode in (5) Affiliating Universities which are early adapters in the nation, of which, your university will be one of them.
- Each university will cover 20 unaccredited colleges.
- The project will be guided by the CDC of the University, wherein 2 Academic mentors will be placed.
- Each Academic mentor will be guiding and handholding 10 colleges.
- The Academic mentors and colleges will be selected by the VCs office and CRISP collectively.
- The Academic mentors will work in close coordination with CDCs to achieve the project objectives.
- The University will appoint a nodal officer who will be the link between the University-College-CRISP

Selection of Academic Mentors

- Retired reputed professors/principals of colleges/educational administrators preferably from the same university,.
- The Academic Mentors will be selected by the Vice Chancellor, Dean of CDC and CRISP jointly.

Selection of Colleges

- 20 Unaccredited colleges under each university will be identified by the Vice Chancellor and CDC.
- The minimum strength of the students should be at least 1000
- The college should be eligible for accreditation i.e. atleast two batches of students graduated from the College
- The college should be affiliated with the concerned university

Role of Academic Mentors:

- Support the University and contribute to the design of specific interventions to achieve the objectives.
- Work as a facilitator in achieving the objectives of the project and ensuring progression of the identified colleges to accreditation and rolling out the new interventions
- Establish communication channels between universities, colleges and CRISP.
- Visit each college at least once every month.
- Prepare and provide a timeline to the colleges that colleges must strictly work on.
- Support CRISP PMU in monitoring the outcomes of the project.
- Ensure the colleges reach the benchmarks for accreditation and introduce AEDP programs.

Role of the Affiliating Universities (AUs):

- Introducing the AMs and CRISP with the College Development Council (CDC).
- Directions to CDC and selected unaccredited colleges to cooperate with the AMs in rolling out the various initiatives under the project
- Selection of Academic Mentors and Nodal Officer and introduce them to the colleges through required instructions.
- Appropriate instructions to CDCs for collaborating with AMs in developing the identified colleges as Model Colleges of the University

Role of College Development Council (CDC):

- Introducing the AMs to the colleges as representatives of CDC.
- Facilitate through instructions for any kinds of workshops for the identified colleges.
- Provide the data of the identified colleges to the AMs as and when required.
- Introduce the project, its objectives and outcomes to the colleges as a tool of motivation.
- Chalk out Action plan in collaboration with the Academic mentors and CRISP.

Role of Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) – CHEQUE

- Provide backend support to the AMs, such as providing latest updates, developments, toolkits, rubrics, presentations etc.
- Orientation programs for mentors
- To monitor the progress of identified colleges and project outcomes.
- Schedule meetings with all the stakeholders involved in the project.
- Prepare reports, maintain repository of progress, capture best practices, recommend strategies of the project.
- Coordinate and schedule meetings with VCs of partnering University, CRISP for review of progress and reporting by Academic mentors
- Process the payments to be made to the Academic mentors

Role of identified Colleges

- To establish a committee which will dedicatedly work on achieving the objectives of the project.
- To strictly adhere to the instructions given by the CDC, AMs, in order to achieve the objectives of the project.
- Adopt SWAYAM courses into the curriculum for all courses.
- Establish an Institutes Innovation Council (IIC).
- Be a participating institute, adopt a village and engage all the students under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan.
- Prepare Institutional Development Plan

Timeline of the Project

The project will be implemented for the Academic Year 2025-26. Upon successful achievement of the outcomes of the project, it will be further scaled up to 5-10% of institutions under the University.

Expected outcomes of the Project

- Completion and retention rates enhanced to 60%
- Employability of final year graduating students increased by 20% over the baseline figure.
- All the identified colleges are accredited as per the standards, and preparation of Institutional Development Plan
- Curriculum is revised/enriched using an outcome-based approach and benchmarked curricula
- Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Programs (AEDP) introduced
- Embed online learning into credit framework, establish IIC, and adopt Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

Centre for Higher Education Quality Upgradation and Excellence (CHEQUE)

PROJECT REPORT

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN SCHEMES AND POLICIES (CRISP)

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Executive Summary

Higher Education determines the pace of growth of any society. Indian Higher Education is at a crossroads plagued by poor Gross Enrolment Ratio, unsatisfactory academic outcomes, outdated curriculum, inadequate research and the resultant unemployable graduates coming out of the system. Unless these are addressed on an emergency basis, the demographic dividend, available in a narrow window of 30 years, will fail to manifest, and the result will be devastating for the growth of the economy in the long run.

CRISP has been running projects to improve the quality of higher education in UP, Telangana, and MP states. It also runs the National Initiative for Skill Integrated Higher Education (NISHE) project in 7 States. All these projects have greatly impacted the higher education scenario in these States. However, the outcomes could have been better with more involvement of the State Government and more cohesive action between all the stakeholders, especially the universities which affiliate with the colleges. These lessons guided the formulation of this project named: Centre for Higher Education Quality Upgradation and Excellence (CHEQUE).

The key to upgrading the quality of academic instruction is with the Affiliating Universities, which are authorised to keep an oversight of the academic performance of the affiliated colleges. UGC has issued 3 Regulations clearly defining the infrastructure and academic parameters to be achieved by each of the affiliated colleges. However, Affiliating Universities hardly have the time and capacity to undertake academic improvement plans for the colleges. As a result, the instrument of affiliation is poorly used, and this is reflected in the poor academic outcomes in the entire system.

The project aims to address this issue by **strengthening the Affiliation system** by bringing in reputed academicians as **Academic Mentors** – who would operate through the College Development Council (CDC) of the Affiliating

University. They will focus on non-accredited government/aided colleges, thereby causing improvement in the academic outcomes and employability of students. The five key goals that the project aims to achieve are to increase the graduation rate, improve academic outcomes for all students, improve employability, secure acceptable standards in all HEIs (measured by the accreditation), and better social outreach of HEIs.

The project will run on Pilot mode in (5) Affiliating Universities which are early adapters, covering (50) unaccredited government/aided colleges and will be taken to the accreditation process, benefiting more than 5 lakh students who mostly come from poorer economic backgrounds. Revamped curriculum and connect with the NISHE project of CRISP (apprenticeship-embedded degree programmes) will improve employability even in the remotest colleges. The Unnat Bharat Abhiyaan will improve social outreach.

At the faculty level, it aims to improve the capacities of the faculty through the Faculty Development Programmes and promote research on local issues. At the student level, it promotes vibrant campuses by organising student activities, thereby ensuring that students attend classes and gain skills to become employable after their studies.

This is a low-cost, high-impact project that uses systemic changes that would strengthen the academic oversight by universities and thereby improve the overall academic outcomes.

1. Context and Background

- 1.1. By 2030, India will be amongst the youngest nations in the world. With nearly 140 million people in the college-going age group, one in every four graduates in the world will be a product of the Indian higher education system (Ernst & Young, 2013)¹. The developmental disparities are an unsolved problem of the Indian HE system. India's elite educational institutions stand like isolated ivory towers in the middle of encircling poverty, illiteracy and backwardness. Rural India is completely neglected. In almost half the districts in the country, higher education enrollments and completion rates are abysmally low, and dropouts are high; almost two-thirds of Indian universities and 90 per cent of Indian colleges are rated as below average on quality parameters.
- 1.2. Various initiatives, like RUSA, for improving access, have resulted in establishing colleges in every district and an increase in the number of students in Higher Education Institutions so as to not only make the HEIs viable but also improve access, especially for women and rural youth. In the year 2020-2023, the student enrolments increased from 3.85 Crore enrolments to 4.29 Crore² With a growth rate of 3.68 percent. Despite these encouraging figures on enrolment, the GER at 26 (national average) still is much lower and is the result of widening divides in terms of the quality of the HEIs and in keeping many educated from the several of the rural HEIs not only outside the education system but also in job and employment markets. The Education and Skills subindex score in the Knowledge Economy score for India is around 2.26, which is half of the average of Asia and the Pacific (4.66) and far below the OECD average (8.01).
- 1.3. The **weak linkage of education with developmental processes** is creating frustration amongst the youth, resulting in poor enrolments,

¹ Higher Education in India: Vision 2030, FICCI Higher Education Summit 2013, Ernst & Young.

² Ministry of Education, Govt. of India. (ON3429) & Past Issues.

completion rates (25-30% on average, calculated using enrolment and pass percentage data AISHE 2020,2021&2023) and progression to higher education and employment. The occurrence of such a situation is the result of strategies oriented towards encouraging mass education without any concern for the quality of the educational provisions and correlation to the developments in the labour market.

- 1.4. In an attempt to reform the system, the National Education Policy 2020 has proposed a slew of transformative changes, which include providing greater choices and flexibility to the students and focusing on employability through the introduction of specific credits for skilling, apprenticeships and internships. However, many of these have yet to be implemented at the institutional level, highlighting the need for a support system.

2. Education as an investment:

- 2.1. As stated by OECD, 2023, people with higher levels of education are more likely to find employment, remain employed, learn new skills on the job and earn more over their working life compared to those with lower levels of education. Education breaks the vicious cycle of poverty by reducing the chances of passing on the poverty to the next generation.
- 2.2. **Education has a positive impact on GDP per capita:** The estimated impacts vary between studies, but the median value is that one additional year of schooling is linked to an 18% increase in GDP per capita (UNICEF, 2015). Further, as observed by the World Bank, a 1% increase in the literacy rate increases GDP growth by 0.3 percent and "increasing average year of schooling by one year can increase a country's GDP growth by 0.37%" (UNESCO, 2012)³. This holds true for

³ Reaching out-of-school children is crucial development for all, UIS Fact Sheet, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, June 2012, No.18.

India, which is the 5th largest economy in terms of its GDP in the world, an achievement driven by its labour force.

2.3. Correlation of GER with GDP: A review of the literature shows that the quality of the education system improves and is influenced by the increase in the number of graduates and people pursuing higher education. Further, education is essential for economic recovery, growth and job creation. Thus, investing in the next generation of innovators, makers and creators through quality education is the best way to jump-start an economy. It is believed that expanding higher education had a significant impact on labour productivity and economic growth. (Jungblut, 2017; Kalamova, 2020; Liu, 2017)⁴. As reported by many countries, the correlation of GER in Higher Education with GDP, Per capita Income and Unemployment rates in 10 states of India where CRISP is present was identified to have a positive correlation.

2.4. All ten states have a positive correlation between the Gross Enrolment Ratio and the state's GDP, indicating a positive relationship, i.e. an improvement in GER of the State has also experienced an improvement in GDP. Except for Uttar Pradesh, all states have a substantial correlation value ranging between 0.7 to 0.9, indicating a higher degree of causality, empirically proving that improvement in higher education had a positive impact on GDP growth (Li, J., Xue, E., Wei, Y. *et al.*, 2024)⁵.

2.5. A similar pattern between GER and the Per Capita Income of the state has been observed with all the 10 states, showing a strong positive correlation between the two variables. An improvement in the Per Capita Income would improve the GER of the state.

⁴ Jungblut J (2017) The political economy of higher education finance. The politics of tuition fees and subsidies in OECD countries, 1945–2015. *Eur J High Educ* 7(1):96–99; Kalamova, M (2020) Resourcing higher education: challenges, choices and consequences. Higher Education Policy Team. Paris: OECD Publishing; Liu, L (2017) Exploring the relationship between education economy and individual civic attitudes: a cross-national analysis in England, Spain, Sweden, Poland and Chinese Taipei

⁵ Li, J., Xue, E., Wei, Y. *et al.* How popularising higher education affects economic growth and poverty alleviation: empirical evidence from 38 countries. *Humanit Soc Sci Commun* 11, 520 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03013-5>

- 2.6. Concomitant manifestation of the significant increase in the number of students graduating from higher education without the required skills and knowledge eventually resulted in negative effects on the labor market. Thus, it is essential to regard the relationship between educational attainment and earnings development as one with qualitative rather than quantitative implications (Dobre et al., 2008; Constantinescu, 2012)⁶.
- 2.7. To mitigate the risks associated with actions proposed by different strategies especially with those related to the over accumulation of educational capital compared with the labor market needs, should be revisited and the educational systems should be reformed using quality criteria. There are structural and functional features in the sector that need attention. Correcting the systemic weakness of the system, creating a positive academic environment, fostering an educational standard of teaching and research and, above all, inspiring more students to take up education not only for its economic benefits but also for its intrinsic value is the need of the hour.

3. CRISP higher education projects:

- 3.1. Considering the importance the higher education sector has in fulfilling the ambitions of the Country looking at becoming \$30 trillion economy by 2030, CRISP has, on invitation by the State Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh, entered into MoU with all the three States, and prepared projects for academic excellence – PEHLE-UP (for Uttar Pradesh), HEIGHTS (for Telangana) and EXCEL-MP (for Madhya Pradesh).

⁶ Constantinescu, M. (2012). The economic crisis – implications on methods and instruments used in quality of life studies. *Theoretical and Applied Economics*, 8(573), 125-134
Dobre, M., Aceleanu, M., & Negotei, I. (2008). The role of education in the insertion of young people into the labour market. *The Quality of Integration. Regional Development*, 95-100.

3.2. After approval of the projects by the State Governments, CRISP has constituted State-level teams with an experienced academician as State Lead (except in MP) and two to three young professionals (CRISP Fellows) in each State. The main goals were to improve the national ranking of select institutions, NAAC accreditation to more institutions, Faculty development programme, curriculum revision, use of EdTech for better outcomes, increase research output and promote innovation in the institutions. The strategy followed was to work with the State Government to undertake the reforms needed to achieve the above goals.

3.3. The following creditable achievements resulted in these projects:

A. PEHLE-UP (*Project for Excellence in Higher Learning Education Uttar Pradesh*) Project

The goals and the progress on each are as follows:

Goal 1: Improving the Ranking of HEIs at the National Level

- Selected 100 institutions for promotion in national rankings.
- Uttar Pradesh achieved the highest-ever participation in NIRF rankings, with a 124% increase, rising from 45 HEIs to 103 HEIs.
- Engaged with 100+ institutions, offering specialised support to around 10 HEIs with the highest potential for national rankings.
- The "Sanjeevani" guidebook is being developed for colleges applying to the NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework).

Goal 2: Quality Assurance: NAAC Accreditation

- Identified 766 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for NAAC.
- Engaged with 300+ institutions to initiate the accreditation process.
- Since the initiation of CRISP's efforts, the number of accredited HEIs has doubled, achieving the highest participation in a single year.
- Over 100 HEIs have successfully submitted their IIQA and SSR, and they are awaiting results, showcasing a notable advancement in the accreditation process.

- Developed public resources for all colleges, including the NAAC Guidebook, NAAC Rubric, Mentor-Mentee Scheme, Quantitative Matrices Guide, Baseline Data Analysis Report, and User Manual to support the NAAC Accreditation process. These have been **developed by CRISP team** for suiting the requirements of the UP Colleges, and have been published on CRISP website and are now publicly available.

Goal 3: Monitor Implementation of NEP-2020

The CRISP-UP team developed a monitoring mechanism the effective implementation of NEP in the state by conducting a quantitative survey of 150+ colleges to address implementational challenges.

Goal 4: Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Programs (AEDPs)

- In 2024, AEDP was launched in 20 institutions under the purview of UP HED, offering 21 programs with 232 students admitted to date.

Goal 5: Promoting Research in UP HEIS

- The team prepared a proposal for Fellowship for Young faculty Researchers' Excellence (FYRE) in collaboration with the CRISP-Telangana team.

Goal 06: Tech-driven Education

- During the capacity-building workshop, we promoted Ed-Tech, SWAYAM, and online MOOCs. At least 15 HEIs have introduced value-added courses that emphasise Ed-Tech.

Goal 08: Innovation And Entrepreneurship

- Built a rapport and are in constant touch with about 162 inactive IICs and 11 active IICs.

Goal 09: Faculty Development and Leadership Program

- Proposed establishing a State Level Faculty Development Academy. We are collaborating with 9 institutions under the Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMTT), initiating research on programs starting with the University of Lucknow.

Outputs

State-Level Policy Initiatives

1. Establishment of the State Level Quality Assurance Cell (SLQAC) and Regional Level Quality Assurance Cells (RLQAC), long-awaited developments to enhance institutional quality standards.

University-Level Capacity Building Workshops

2. Workshops at 8 state public universities to promote the PEHLE-UP Project with a Focus on NEP implementation, accreditation, ranking, Ed-Tech, and AEDPs. Workshops with an additional 5 universities are in the pipeline.

Institutional Engagement

3. Over 600 institutions have been engaged through these workshops.
4. Individual handholding support has been provided to over 200 institutions.
5. The team has conducted on-site visits to more than 60 institutions.

Publication

6. Launch of the "Towards the Goal of PEHLE-UP" by CRISP
7. Submitted a research report, "Pilot Project: Institutional Baseline Analysis of Institutions for Annual Activity Plan", to UP Higher Education Department to make policy-level decisions.

These activities have been instrumental in advancing the PEHLE-UP Project's objectives, with detailed goal-wise achievements outlined below.

Most importantly, the project has spread the quality consciousness in hundreds of HEIs, with institutions seeking assistance on NAAC and NIRF. The project has earned recognition from key officials, including the Chief Secretary, underscoring our role in achieving upcoming targets.

B. HEIGHTS project: TELANGANA

The goals and the progress on each are as follows:

Goal 1: Promoting Quality and Excellence in HEIs (NAAC, NIRF, IDP)

- CRISP has worked with 200 colleges and supported them in applying for assessment and accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Out of these 109 colleges successfully submitted their applications and 102 colleges are accredited and rest of them are in final stages of processing by NAAC. This has resulted in an increase of accreditation status of general degree colleges from 12% to 20%.
- Facilitated nine NAAC workshops (online & physical), providing awareness and hands-on experience, benefiting around 800 faculty members on NAAC process and post-accreditation initiatives, i.e. establishing Internal Quality Assurance Cells(IQAC).
- Rubrics and guidance handbook prepared as a knowledge resource for supporting institutions in the process of NAAC accreditation.
- “Readings for Higher Education Quality Upgradation and Excellence” comprising a compilation of expert talks, Best Practices and experiences of HEIs published

Goal 2: NIRF Ranking of HEIs:

- Individual Mentoring of 25 colleges was taken up, out of which **six figured in the NIRF** (National Institutional Ranking Framework) ranking band.
- IDP (Institutional Development Plan) workshop held for 34 cluster colleges benefitting around 100 faculty members. Colleges are expected to finalise their IDPs by October, 2024.
- CRISP has conducted sessions in workshop mode on IDP at 8 colleges, who will mentor 40 colleges in preparation of IDP.

- Supported 106 recently accredited colleges in submitting their Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR), establishing functional Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs), enhanced data management practices, submitting proposals for funding for the development and enrichment of curriculum by including SWAYAM/MOOCs/Skills courses etc.
- Report 'Reforming Higher Education in Telangana - Proposed Interventions' was submitted to the State Government.

Goal 3: Technology Driven Education

- Workshops conducted by CRISP in collaboration with SWAYAM-NPTEL for universities / potential colleges/SWAYAM local chapters
- Report on implementation modalities of SWAYAM for Telangana prepared.

Goal 4: Promoting Research

- In the absence of Central /State funding for research to colleges, CRISP has reached out to more than 200 colleges at different workshops motivating the General Degree Colleges to take up research on local issues through extension and outreach.
- The team had prepared a Fellowship for Young Faculty for Research Excellence (FYRE) proposal and identified 50 young professors to engage in a research fellowship program for enhanced research productivity.

Goal 5: Innovation and Entrepreneurship

- Identification of active, inactive and moderately active IICs in the state.
- Publication of best practices as a knowledge resource.
- Delivery of best practices by institutions as exemplars during workshops to motivate the colleges

Goal 6: Faculty Leadership and Development

- Faculty from 64 colleges benefited from the sessions by experts on 'Aligning Pedagogies for education of present and future' and 'Online and

blended modes of teaching' from the workshop held at Osmania University.

- Two-day workshop on preparation and significance of IDP was conducted, benefiting 100 faculty.
- The feedback from the teachers who attended the workshops has been collected and is found to be positive. The main take away has been that most colleges which attended the workshop, went back and applied for accreditation.

Goal 7: Curriculum Development

Analysis was done for 10 most sought out subjects in the state for intervention through national level experts to engage with curriculum revision was identified. This allowed committees to be constituted for new programmes such as AEDPs in the state, the team is in talks for other programs.

C. National Initiative For Skill Integrated Higher Education (NISHE)

The project was designed to address the unemployability of graduates by integrating skill training and apprenticeships into higher education programs to produce job-ready graduates.

Improve employability by embedding sustainable skill training within degree programs, aligning curricula with industry demands, and incorporating practical experience through mandatory apprenticeships

The project will be implemented across 10 states: Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh.

The project involves establishing skill-integrated courses in 1,433 colleges, covering 11 sectors, over three years. It will include faculty training, curriculum development, and monitoring in collaboration with State Governments and SSCs.

Achievements From The States In Skilling In Higher Education

UTTAR PRADESH

Facilitating Job Orientation through AEDP Program: Collaborated with 20 HEIs for conducting 21 AEDP programs for the Academic Year 2023-2024, having received admissions totaling 232 students.

TELANGANA

Facilitating job orientation through the AEDP program resulted in 1,097 total admissions. In AY 2023-24, 857 admissions were recorded across 12 colleges, and in AY 2024-25, 240 admissions were received across 26 colleges.

RAJASTHAN

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Rajasthan government, identifying 50 colleges and courses. Additionally, meetings were held with government officials and university vice-chancellors to further the initiative.

KARNATAKA

Facilitating of job orientation through 46 AEDP programs in 45 Colleges in the State resulted in 1458 total admissions in AY 2024-25

MADHYA PRADESH

Facilitating of job orientation through 99 AEDP programs in 74 Colleges and 10 Universities in the State resulted in 358 total admissions in AY 2024-25

MAHARASHTRA

Facilitating of job orientation through 26 AEDP programs in 18 Colleges in the State resulted in 177 total admissions in AY 2024-25

SECTORAL INVOLVEMENT

NISHE proposes to cover 10 key sectors. These are sectors led by the Sector Skill Councils (SSCs), which are oriented to the requirements of the education

system and where credible apprenticeship linkage systems exist. It is envisaged that new sectors will be added to the effort every year.

3.4. The CRISP projects for the past two years have demonstrated the enormous potential for quality improvement. The CRISP teams have spread the quality message across the States, and the change has started in several colleges, as seen from increased applications for the accreditation, NIRF and AEDP.

3.5. The projects faced **challenges** due to:

- a) Non-involvement of the State Governments (on whom much reliance has been laid in the project) due to their preoccupation with their administrative matters.
- b) There is a conflict between the state government and the governor's office on managing the HEIs. This led to each one shifting responsibility to others, resulting in laxity in implementation.
- c) Universities which affiliate with the colleges have done little to oversee academic quality in the colleges. The CDC teams have focused on the administrative matters with little focus on the academic matters.

3.6. In view of the lessons learnt in the past 2 years, CRISP feels that there is a need for a change in the strategy. The universities that UGC authorises through the affiliation system should be strengthened to take up academic improvement by hand-holding the weak institutions, especially the government and government-aided institutions. Keeping these in view, this project named "**Centre for Higher Education Quality Upgradation and Excellence (CHEQUE)**" has been prepared.

4. The Vision and Mission of the CHEQUE Project

4.1. **The vision** of this project is to contribute to "**Increased access to quality higher education across geographies and improving**

retention, graduation rates and employability of the students enrolled in HEIs".

4.2. The **Mission** is to

- Support the Affiliating Universities to provide academic guidance to the colleges so that they will receive accreditation, and improve academic outcomes.
- Engaging the teaching and student community to connect to local communities and generate ideas that inspire and result in excellence in quality teaching, learning, research and innovation;
- Ensure universal access to higher education and improved completion and continuation rates

The core objective of the project is ***"fostering learning communities reaching the unreached"*** and includes:

- Ensuring Minimum Learning and Attainment (MLA) levels of all the students enrolled in Indian HE, focusing on improved student enrollment, retention and graduation rates, especially those from remote rural areas.
- Guiding systematic review and updating of the program provisions and including appropriate activities that uphold academic quality and efforts for continuous improvement.
- Steward curriculum development and modification processes that align with national and international standards and are responsive to industry and societal needs.
- Promoting Accreditation and Institutional Development Plans
- Designing and facilitating faculty development programs (FDP)/Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in the use of educational technology and instructional design
- Facilitate student internships and apprenticeships

- Incorporating feedback from diverse stakeholders (Alumni, employers, Community, etc.) and appropriate data to enhance the quality and relevance of the educational processes.
- Sharing the innovative and best practices and experiences in applying and scaling up these practices.
- Collate, analyze and interpret data to support the Policy and decision-making.
- Deliver quality education by applying innovative teaching and learning practices, tools, technologies, and techniques that improve learning outcomes and assessment.

5. Strategy:

5.1. Strengthening academic oversight by Affiliating Universities:

The strategy is to work with (50) Affiliating Universities (AUs) by strengthening the College Development Councils (CDCs) charged with the responsibility of academic improvement of the affiliated colleges.

- a) In each of these CDCs, the project will deploy reputed educationists who will act as Academic Mentors (AMs). All AMs will work on honorarium and will agree to spare 10 full days a month for mentoring the colleges.
- b) Each AM would mentor (10) unaccredited colleges which have not less than 1,000 student enrolment, each year, which are affiliated to the university and achieve the outcomes outlined in this project.
- c) The AMs would function on behalf of the AU and would represent the CDC when they visit the adopted colleges.
- d) The AMs will work along with the college faculty and administration to put in place systems to ensure academic excellence, teacher training/motivation, and student activities to create a vibrant campus.

5.2. The Student Learning and Success (SLS) strategy

SLS strategy would be developed to ensure that every student enrolled in the Higher Education Institution (HEI) is provided with the tools to successfully complete college and reach their next-level goals of employment /higher education. The project would facilitate the implementation of the strategy through the development and deployment of appropriate policy, change management, identification of required resources and providing required training.

Five Key Goals Articulated with Student Learning and Success Strategy

1. Increase graduation rate;
2. Improved learning outcomes for all students;
3. Provide students with new and relevant learning opportunities;
4. Build on students' strengths and interests;
5. Provide students with an effective transition to work/higher education

5.3. Principles:

Taking an **Inclusive Learning (IL)** approach, the **Student Learning and Success (SLS)** strategy shall be characterized by the following principles, some of which represent a change in the orientation of the system towards what the HEIs should do for students or enable them to do:

- a) equip all students with skills they will need as lifelong learners
- b) accord equal importance to all programs and not limited to those leading to immediate employment, apprenticeship and other forms of training, internship
- c) provide all students with opportunities to explore the connections between what they learn on campus and future employment or study.
- d) enable credit accumulation and credit transfer and recognise and reward student accomplishments to help them overcome barriers to further mastery of their skills

- e) Minimise the difficulties that students face when they transit /move from the initial year to the final year of graduation
- f) accommodate the different ways the students learn/student learning preference
- g) actively engage all students and enable them to continue on the campus despite the individual student's challenges.

6. Specific Initiatives under the project

6.1. Accreditation:

Accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is the national authority for academic standards. The accreditation follows a process which includes sharing the data covering 7 pillars (details in table 1).

- 1) Curricular aspects (100 marks)
- 2) Teaching Learning and evaluation (350 marks)
- 3) Research innovation and extension (110 marks)
- 4) Infrastructure and learning resources (100 marks)
- 5) Student support and progression (140 marks)
- 6) Governance Leadership and Management (100 marks)
- 7) Institutional values and best practices (100 marks)

The college is assessed based on the data provided on these 7 pillars, and it is verified by a team of academicians. The verified data is taken for deciding on accreditation.

Based on wide-spread criticism of the physical inspection system, Government has completely revamped the accreditation process, mandating that all the data should be place on website, allowing public and stakeholder verification. The verified data would be used for **Binary accreditation (yes/no), eliminating the scoring system that led to**

several unacceptable practices. The revamped accreditation process is a comprehensive guide to judge the academic performance and standards.

Table1: Accreditation parameters

Criteria	Key Indicators (KIs)	Affiliated/Constituent Colleges	
		UG	PG
1. Curricular Aspects	1.1. *(A) Curricular Planning and Implementation	20	20
	1.2 Academic Flexibility	30	30
	1.3 Curriculum Enrichment	30	30
	1.4 Feedback System	20	20
	Total	100	100
	2. Teaching-Learning and Evaluation	2.1 Student Enrolment and Profile	40
	2.2 Catering to Student Diversity	50	50
	2.3 Teaching-Learning Process	50	50
	2.4 Teacher Profile and Quality	60	60
	2.5 Evaluation Process and Reforms	30	30
	2.6 Student Performance and Learning Outcomes	60	60
	2.7 Student satisfaction Survey	60	60
	Total	350	350
3. Research, Innovations and Extension	3.1 Promotion of Research and Facilities	NA	NA
	3.2 Resource Mobilization for Research	15	15
	3.3 Innovation Ecosystem	NA	10
4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources	4.1 Physical Facilities	30	30
	4.2 Library as a Learning Resource	20	20
	4.3 IT Infrastructure	30	30
	4.4 Maintenance of Campus Infrastructure	20	20
	Total	100	100
5. Student Support and Progression	5.1 Student Support	50	50
	5.2 Student Progression	30	25
	5.3 Student Participation and Activities	50	45
	5.4 Alumni Engagement	10	10
	Total	140	130
6. Governance, Leadership and Management	6.1 Institutional Vision and Leadership	10	10
	6.2 Strategy Development and Deployment	10	10
	6.3 Faculty Empowerment Strategies	30	30
	6.4 Financial Management and Resource Mobilization	20	20
	6.5 Internal Quality Assurance System	30	30
	Total	100	100

	3.4 Research Publications and Awards	15	25	7. Institutional Values and Best Practices	7.1 Institutional Values and Social Responsibilities	50	50
	3.5 Consultancy	NA	NA		7.2 Best Practices	30	30
	3.6 Extension Activities	60	50		7.3 Institutional Distinctiveness	20	20
	3.7 Collaboration	20	20		Total	100	100
	Total	110	120				
					TOTAL SCORE		1000*

6.2. Curriculum revision and faculty training:

With the participation of the Affiliating University, the project will strive to revise the curriculum to incorporate the latest developments and market requirements. The faculty would be trained in administering this revised curriculum using participative teaching-learning activities to make the classrooms more vibrant. The updated curriculum, participative teaching/learning activities, and concept-based assessments will be aligned to improve learning outcomes. The active teaching-learning process should promote critical and creative thinking, problem-solving and higher-order analytical skills.

Using the MOOC courses on SWAYAM/NPTEL expands the options for the students. Leveraging online, offline, and hybrid models of ICT along with capacity building for teachers and students, facilitating credit transfers, credit equivalence, and credit accumulation are contemplated in the project.

This would be possible only with highly motivated faculty. The project proposes to create a nurturing ecosystem for faculty's personal and professional growth with appropriate mentoring, development opportunities, advanced studies, and incentives for Research and Innovation. The project proposes to identify suitable online programs on SWAYAM for faculty development. The project would also create alliances, networks, clusters, and consortia of academic institutions amongst themselves and the research institutions and industry.

6.3. Integrating market-oriented skills with education:

Integrating the skills required for the future workplace would enhance employment opportunities. The National Initiative for Skill Integrated Higher Education (NISHE) will be woven into this project to improve employability.

6.4. Measurable increase in employability

The project will bring the employability of the students as a defining outcome of the degree programmes. This would start with a change of the mindset of the colleges using the AM network/mentoring. This would be followed by:

- a) Conducting a **baseline of the placement** of the students who passed out of the college in the previous year.
- b) Setting a target for the college to **plan for a 20% year-on-year increase over the baseline in the project period.**
- c) Towards this end, plan for **courses in soft skills** in partnership with M/S Talerang which is already associated with CRISP in the NISHE project.
- d) Conduct an **employability test** (consisting of testing aptitudes, skills and employable skills) for all the final year students, preferably using public goods, or taking the assistance of agencies like Career Launcher which expressed interest in participation at a very low or nominal cost.
- e) Placing the students in at least 2 **industry internships** during the degree programme.

6.5. Vibrant and Health-promoting campuses

The project would create a vibrant environment in the campus which would involve all the students in participative and productive activities: this could range from student clubs on various activities, Unnat Bharat Abhiyaan under which colleges adopt villages, health-promoting activities including support to mental health issues faced by the students.

7. Pilots and scaling up

7.1. There are 356 Affiliating State Public Universities, which have 43,000 affiliated colleges. Of these colleges, only about 10,000 (1/4th) have been accredited. For spreading the message of maintaining quality in higher education, the number of accredited colleges should go up to at least ½ of the colleges. There is therefore a need to double the number of accredited colleges by improving the standards as reflected in the (7) pillars of accreditation. However such a scaling up would required establishing that this model would work, and therefore this project is to conduct a Pilot Project, results of which can be evaluated to understand what works, what are the impediments and what doesn't work. Hence this project.

7.2. Pilot projects:

Starting from November 2024 till March 2026, a Pilot Project will be run (5) affiliating universities which are early adapters covering three States: UP, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh – where CRISP is already running higher education projects. The criterion for selection is the willingness of the State Government and also the preparedness/commitment of the Affiliating university to improve quality in their affiliated colleges.

After completing the Pilot program, it can be scaled up to (50) Affiliating universities.

7.3. Strengthening of Affiliation Wings with Academic Mentors:

In these universities, the Affiliation Wings (College Development Councils) will be strengthened by providing services of (2) **Academic Mentors** who are highly respected and experienced educational administrators who will act as Mentors for the affiliated colleges. These mentors will be attached to the Affiliation wings. Still, they will have a clear mandate to adopt 10 colleges (each) to improve academic outcomes as laid down under the project.

7.4. Selection of AMs:

The selection process of AMs will be made easy and transparent, with the Vice Chancellor, Dean of CDC, and CRISP jointly deciding the AMs from among the retired Professors, preferably from the same university. They will be selected based on their contributions to building institutions and positivity to bring in more change.

7.5. Selection of colleges:

Each Academic Mentor will choose (10) not-accredited colleges, with a student strength of not less than 1,000, with a focus on the Government/Government Aided colleges. The project aims to show better academic outcomes, which should result in the college's accreditation. Accordingly, (50) colleges will be taken up in the Pilot Project for improvement and accreditation under this project.

7.6. Role of Mentors:

Mentors will represent the AU and will guide all the academic parameters of the Project, including preparing the college for accreditation.

- a. Work as a bridge between universities, colleges and CRISP.
- b. Support the colleges in achieving their objectives.
- c. Visit each college at least once every month.
- d. Prepare and provide a timeline to the colleges that colleges must strictly work on.

7.7. Incentivizing the AMs:

The AMs will be provided an honorarium of Rs. 5000 per day for the days spent with the colleges adopted. Apart from this, if the adopted college gets accredited by NAAC, it will be provided with a one-time financial incentive of Rs. 50,000 per college.

7.8. Role of Affiliating Universities (AUs):

- Facilitate the movement of the Mentors and arrange for their work in the selected colleges.
- Introducing the CRISP with the College Development Council (CDC).

- Directions to the CDC for selecting the colleges that are in the process of NAAC accreditation or will shortly start their accreditation process.
- Academic mentors will be selected from their particular university only; hence, they will take the list of potential mentors.

7.9. Role of State Govt:

The State Govt will be a party to the project and will be the starting point. CRISP is already associated with the following States: Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, AP and Madhya Pradesh. These States could be taken up for the project to start with. However, depending on the interests of the other States, the project could be extended.

- To provide permission to work to improve higher education in the state and provide access to the selected higher educational institutions.
- Data becomes a crucial part of the project from which the health of higher education will be determined based on the targets for each state, which the starting point of various parameters will set.
- Quarterly meetings are needed to monitor the project and highlight the work being done on the field and support needed wherever necessary. Based on the meetings, course corrections for the projects may be done as needed.

7.10. College Development Council

- Scheduling the workshops with the affiliated institutions and city/district and introducing them to CRISP and mentors to build the credibility of the academic mentors (AM).
- Provide detailed data to the mentors.
- Support the selected colleges as and when required.
- Preparing colleges for the project - motivated to improve the quality of education so that mentors will not have to start from scratch.

7.11. Project Monitoring Unit (PMU)

- To monitor the progress of each college and mentor.
- Provide backend support to the mentors, such as providing the latest updates, toolkits, and presentations.

- C. Schedule meetings with the department of Higher Education of each state.
- D. Prepare reports and snapshots of the state-wise progress of the projects.

7.12. **Colleges**

The active role of the college is crucial as this is the main stakeholder of the project.

- a. To establish and activate all the committees of the college, such as IQAC, where 1 dedicated teacher is given responsibility for each attribute.
- b. Work closely with the Mentor.
- c. Establish data collection process.
- d. Appoint Institutes Innovation Council- Coordinator to establish IIC in the college.
- e. For SWAYAM Courses, check the list of courses available on the portal and link it with the university rules and regulations so that students can enrol in SWAYAM and get their credits transferred.
- f. Identify villages nearby where students will be sent for research.
- g. Give responsibility to the students to lead the various clubs, such as placement cell, Alumni cell, departmental representatives, and literary club.

8. Activities under the Project

The project will take the following actions:

- a) Identification, orientation and deployment of (10) most reputed academicians and academic administrators on the project.
- b) Activating academic support wings of (5) Affiliating Universities and their College Development Councils.
- c) Intensive handholding of (50) unaccredited colleges with high student enrollment over a period of 4 years.

- d) (1,500) Faculty training and re-training in improved teaching-learning processes
- e) Ensuring improved student learning outcomes for 5 lakh students in 50 colleges.

9. Organizational Structure

- 9.1. The (10) Academic Mentors at (5) Affiliating Universities will form the base of the CHEQUE project structure.
- 9.2. To support them, there shall be a PMU consisting of a National Lead and assisted by (4) Senior Associates. The PMU will help in identification, orienting and facilitating the AMs, and will keep a record of their activities. They will also be responsible for systematic monitoring of the functioning of the CDCs with respect to the academic outcomes of the adopted colleges.
- 9.3. Interns will be part of the monitoring and evaluation of CHEQUE sub-projects.

11. Expected Outcomes

- 11.1. The CHEQUE project, after scaling up, is expected to reach 5-10% of HEIs in the Country and, therefore, will set role models which States can adopt for other colleges.

- 11.2. Since the focus of the project will be on government or government-aided colleges, nearly 5 lakh students in the pilot project, from economically backward sections will benefit. This will reach to 30 lakh students when the project is fully scaled.
- 11.3. The following outcomes are expected with this investment:
1. Completion and Retention rates enhanced to 60%
 2. 40% of students are placed and 30% progress to Higher education and /or Research
 3. 15% of the students clear National level exams such as CUET, NET, GATE, JAM, etc.
 4. 50% of the affiliated colleges eligible for accreditation are accredited
 5. 100% of Accredited colleges move to level accreditation/continue the accreditation status
 6. Curriculum (of 10 most sought out subjects) is revised/enriched using an outcome-based approach and Benchmarked curricula
 7. Embed online learning at least for 20% credits.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 12.1. Each participating HEI will prepare an Action plan that documents the strategy, targets and evaluation mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the action plan in tackling the various components. CRISP will provide a guide with standards of evidence expected for reporting the outcomes and the impact. The three types of evaluation would
1. Narrative Evaluation using Theory of Change (ToC) as a means for process evaluation
 2. Empirical Enquiry Evaluation (EEE) to assess the impact
 3. Causality Evaluation (CE) to demonstrate a cause and effect

12.2. Collecting data where systems are not designed to support intense evaluation will be challenging. Thus, Taking a joint approach of ToC, mathematical testing and contribution analysis, an evaluation framework that will meet the monitoring and evaluation requirements shall be developed.

UGC Regulation on Affiliation

Provisions of UGC (Affiliation of Colleges) Regulation 2009

8. Withdrawal of affiliation:

8.1. The privileges conferred on a college by affiliation may be withdrawn in part or in full, suspended or modified, if the college, on due enquiry, is found to have failed to comply with any of the provisions of the Act, the Statutes, the Ordinances, the Rules and Regulations or any other direction or instruction of the UGC /University/Statutory/Regulatory body concerned, or failed to observe any of the conditions of affiliation, or has conducted itself in a manner prejudicial to the academic and administrative standards and interests of the University.

9. Penalties on the Universities granting affiliation to sub-standard colleges or failure of Universities / colleges to comply with the Regulations of Commission:

9.1 If any University grants affiliation to a college which does not fulfill the conditions/ requirements for affiliation as per the Regulations, or if the University grants affiliation in contravention of the relevant provisions of the UGC Act and Regulations, the Commission may take such action as it may deem fit, including that of withholding the grants to the University and/or delisting the said University from the list of universities maintained by the Commission under Section 12B of the UGC Act.

UGC (Affiliation of Colleges) Regulation 2012

5. Eligibility Criteria for Permanent Affiliation :

1. After clause 5.4 the following clause shall be inserted.

“5.5 The College shall be accredited by NAAC or any other statutory accreditation agency by State/Central Government.”