

Report on e-session with rural youth on Entrepreneurship: A Road To Profit And Progress

E-session on Entrepreneurship: A Road To Profit And Progress was conducted by PTVAIM's COEI in collaboration with Learning Space Foundation. This session was conducted by Mr. Satish Kamat. Mr. Kamat is a journalist by profession but he is well known for his contribution to the village of Rajwadi in Konkan Maharashtra where he gathered 4 villages under his fold and helped farmers to convert close to 125 acres of agricultural land productive and commercially viable. With the help of the model he developed, farmers were able to cultivate quality agricultural produce and allied agrarian activities and sell them via app in large town through an app that they developed. This marriage of agriculture and modern technology for marketing and sourcing good produce has been functioning successfully and profitably for close to 5 years! Plus this model is self-sustained and doesn't depend on government grants and funding. This session was attended by 46 youth and young farmers from Palghar district who are all educated and have small cultivable lands which are not giving optimum produce at this point in time.

Ms. Mahabal, Convenor of PTVAIM's IIC introduced the speaker. He spoke at length on the following points and discussed his Rajwadi model. Firstly, farmers from 5 villages were pooled together and made into groups. The farmer groups pooled their financial resources and also volunteered to do some laborious work to build water channels to each farm whereby the entire stretch of 125 acres of land started to get regular water supply. Each farmer group was given guidance regarding which crops should be grown that season. This ensured that all kinds of fruits and vegetables were grown and sourced from Rajwadi. He helped them develop a Rajwadi app on which people from near by towns would place their order for vegetables. These vegetables would be sorted cut and packaged neatly and supplied to the towns twice a week. The model also incorporated other occupations allied to farming such as animal husbandry, breeding and selling of edible as well as ornamental fish, and allied occupation of stitching cloth bags and blankets by the rural women. This model was greatly successful and transformed lives of all farmers and their families in these 5 villages and turned them profitable.

The session was greatly loved by the attendees and they drew a lot of inspiration from it. The language of instruction was Marathi to make it easier for the rural youth to understand. The session concluded with a question-and-answer round in which the rural youth raised several questions especially about the business model and the combination of agriculture and modern technology.



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