

Samaja Prabodhak: Concept and Training Need

Background: Transmission of traditional knowledge across generations is fundamental to protecting and promoting Janajati/indigenous peoples' cultures and identities as well as the sustainability of livelihoods and sustaining culturally appropriate economic development. Traditional knowledge system, which is embedded in the culture, spirituality and world view of a Janajati communities, is expressed and passed down through stories, songs, proverbs, rituals, various art forms like pottery, weaving, cane work, bamboo work, metal work etc, cultural practices, customary laws and language. But as we experience everywhere, there is already a great erosion in traditional knowledge and some indigenous knowledge are in the verge of extinction due to factors such as a) Encroachment of only money-oriented lifestyle and indifference to traditional knowledge and values by younger generation, b) Traditional knowledge holders face a lack of respect and appreciation, c) Threats from preachers of other religious practitioners, d) Developmental & Economic issues, etc. So, the felt need of the time is to Recover, Revitalize, Preserve and pass on traditional knowledge to the next generation.

Objective of the training:

Recovering, Revitalizing, Preserving and Passing on traditional knowledge to the next generation by creating and nurturing a band of future community leader and influencers through these facilitators named as '**Samaj Prabodhak**' who will not only be practitioners of the Indigenous Knowledge and faith system but also will work dedicatedly for preservation and dissemination of the traditional knowledge system and for organising and guiding the youth to sustainable development. This way the youth is neither cut off from his community and made rootless but the youth become a facilitator to raise his community which is rooted in its traditional values of caring and sharing and living in tune with nature.

Methodology, Training components and modalities:

Provide comprehensive background knowledge about the cultural heritage, customs, traditions, and lifestyle of different tribal communities in India. This foundational understanding is crucial for appreciating the significance of their traditional practices.

Provide comprehensive theoretical knowledge about the importance of documenting traditional practices among tribal communities. Cover topics such as the significance of preserving indigenous knowledge, the cultural and ecological relevance of traditional practices, and the potential threats to indigenous knowledge systems.

Teach youths various techniques and methodologies for documenting traditional practices, participatory observation, oral history collection, interviews (Teach participants how to conduct interviews with tribal elders and community members), audiovisual recording (photography, videography, and audio recordings).

Teach youths strategies for engaging with communities in collaborative documentation efforts. This includes building partnerships, establishing communication channels, and involving community members in the documentation process to ensure their perspectives and voices are represented authentically.

Provide guidance on data collection techniques, including field notes, audiovisual recordings, and archival research. Train youths on how to organize, analyze, and interpret the collected data effectively to document traditional practices accurately

Theoretical & Practical Training:

Broad training topics - Dharma, Sanskruti, Belief system, Traditional practices, Indigenous Knowledge, Basics of sustainable development, Basic Computer training, Basic training in English understanding for handling computer, Soft Skills like Communication & programme organising, Primary data collection skill.

Understanding Janajati Traditions, Practices and Traditional knowledge system

- Dharma, Sanskruti, Belief systems and Practices in India
- Overview of Janajati communities in India: Introduction to Janajati Traditions, Customs Practices, Life style & Belief system
- Importance of transmission of traditional knowledge across generations, Present Challenges: Combating stereotypes and misconceptions; Threats for extinction;

Understanding the importance of Cultural preservation and documentation

- Protection and preservation of Janajati traditional practices; Introduction to Cultural Documentation
- Significance of documenting traditional practices for cultural preservation
- Case studies highlighting the significance of documenting traditional practices
- Promoting Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity and Strategies for raising awareness about Janajati traditions

Documentation of Traditional Practices: Documentation Techniques, Tools and Technologies

- Introduction to Documentation Tools; Overview of traditional and digital tools for documentation, including cameras, audio recorders, and GIS mapping software
- Selection criteria and considerations for choosing appropriate tools for different documentation purposes
- Training with Documentation Tools; Practical demonstrations and exercises for using documentation tools effectively in the field
- Tips for capturing high-quality audio, video, and photographic documentation

Documentation Methods and Techniques:

- Participant observation
- Interviewing techniques
- Archival research

Documenting Traditional Practices:

- Techniques for recording rituals, ceremonies, and cultural traditions
- Guidelines for creating written descriptions, photographs, and videos

Documentation Techniques; Oral History / Folk tales:

- Importance of oral history in cultural preservation
- Techniques for recording oral narratives

Audio-Visual Documentation:

- Recording, Photography and videography basics
- Capturing rituals, ceremonies, and cultural artifacts

Data Collection Techniques and Baseline Survey:

- how to conduct interviews with tribal elders and community members
- how to compile, organize and share documentation materials effectively
- Hands-on training in recording oral histories, capturing rituals, and documenting artifacts

Community Engagement:

Community Engagement Strategies and collaboration:

- Community Engagement Strategies - Importance of involving community stakeholders in documentation efforts; Encourage active engagement and participation of tribal communities in the documentation process
- Techniques for involving community members in the documentation process; Establishing trust and rapport with community members
- Collaborative approaches to documentation - Fostering community ownership of documentation initiatives; Facilitate interactions and engagement with tribal communities to foster mutual understanding and collaboration
- Techniques to organize community-based workshops, focus group discussions, and participatory activities to involve community members in the documentation process and ensure their active participation and ownership

Cultural Events and Festivals:

Engage youths in cultural events, festivals, or exhibitions that celebrate tribal traditions and practices. Encourage active participation and interaction with community members to deepen their understanding and appreciation of indigenous culture.

Cultural Sensitivity

Understanding and respecting the cultural norms, values, and beliefs of tribal communities is crucial. This component should focus on raising awareness about cultural sensitivity, avoiding stereotypes, and promoting respectful interactions with tribal individuals and communities.

- *Understanding cultural sensitivity:* Cultural sensitivity and its importance in documenting traditional practices
- How to build rapport, establish trust, and communicate respectfully with community members to facilitate the documentation process.

Ethical considerations in documenting traditional practices

- Exploring ethical issues such as consent, representation, and cultural sensitivity
- Guidelines for ethical conduct when working with tribal communities

Organizing, managing & sharing documentation data

By integrating these training components and modalities, youths can develop the knowledge, skills, and ethical awareness necessary to document and preserve the rich cultural heritage of tribal communities in India effectively.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUT OF Samaj Prabodhak Training Session:

1. Clarity in understanding of cultural heritage, customs, traditions, and lifestyle of tribal communities in India
2. Appreciating the value of Indigenous Knowledge, Tradition and faith system, become aware of the potential threats to IKS and understanding the need for preservation and dissemination of the rich and valuable traditions
3. Understanding the importance of documenting traditional practices among tribal communities
4. Skills to build rapport, establish trust, and communicate respectfully with community members to facilitate the documentation process
5. Develop skills to conduct interviews with Janajati elders / Traditional knowledge holders and community members
6. Know the techniques for recording oral narratives, Capturing rituals, ceremonies, and cultural artifacts by photography and videography
7. Ability to collect basic data and make baseline survey
8. Develop proper skill and ability to organise community-based workshops, focus group discussions
9. Basic computer skills in Words & Excel
10. Organizing, managing & sharing documentation data