ISED News Desk

ISED has drawn up the following research themes for the year 2022-23:

1. Social and Solidarity Economy
   Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) is a brand new area of global debate since the active days of Covid-19. This is a response to the massive disruption in livelihoods and enterprise in the context of the Pandemic. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the OECD have been the pioneers in shaping this global agenda, and for initiating debates in the subject area. ISED research and other initiatives during the year will focus on the relevance and potential of the theme relating to enterprise development and entrepreneurship promotion in India.

2. Local Economic Development Policy & Enterprise Security
   The contemporary global trend in unemployment has contributed to an enhanced interest in Local Economic Development (LED) strategies. While there is a critical role of SMEs in any LED agenda, the recent experience demonstrates a serious trend toward enterprise insecurity among SMEs. The concept of ‘enterprise security’ was originally mooted by ISED in 2013. The Institute will continue to collect more recent evidences and experiences relating to particular subsectors. The rural and urban context of enterprise and skill development will be specially focused.

3. The New Technology Paradigm & the Circular Economy
   The new technology paradigm based on Meta-World has the potential to revolutionise production, exchange, and economic transactions, with possible implications on the labour market as well. The time also

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demands a fresh look at manufacture as such, based on sources and uses of resources. While the circular economy, to a large extent, is the answer, its relevance in the Indian context, with a special focus on SMEs, requires detailed studies.

4. Development Myths & Reality of the Knowledge Economy
The knowledge economy has created significant illusions on work organization and enterprise around the world, as also in India. While the ‘platform economy’ has emerged as an alternative that can contribute significantly to enhance productivity, it also faces several practical problems that demand detailed examination. The Institute would explore productivity trends associated with ‘platforms’, especially in the context of small businesses and establishments, as also the implications of digitization.

5. Business, Social Responsibility & Responsible Business
Against the larger canvas of sustainability, a fresh look at social responsibility, and the strategy of responsible business, in the Indian context is crucial. This is equally important in the case of both large and small businesses today. However, to what extent SMEs can afford such practices, given their teething problems of day-to-day business? This will be the focal point of investigation and deliberations of the Institute during the year.

6. Labour Market and Enterprise Development
While there is a mounting problem of unemployment in India, labour market rigidities, as also the level of achievement motivation, act as deterrents to production and productivity, especially in the MSME sector. While on the one hand, entrepreneurs increasingly join the
stream every year, the stock and quality of entrepreneurship resources is an area demanding meticulous investigation and analysis. The need for an Entrepreneurship Resource Policy for the country, argued by the Institute so far, will be taken forward on the basis of fresh evidences.

7. India’s Manufacturing Policy & Regional Experience
The Institute will continue its enquiries relating to the PLI scheme, and of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan Policy in general, on the basis of fresh evidences.

8. Gender and Enterprise
The Institute will continue its enquiries relating to ‘Genderpreneurship’. It will also contribute to the debates in the subject area, with a focus on social and solidarity groups and Business Development strategies for women.

9. Youth Entrepreneurship
The division between ‘mainstream entrepreneurship’ and ‘start-ups’ has substantially contributed to ambiguities in policies and their implementation relating to employment promotion in India. It is important that these ambiguities are demystified both at the policy level and in practice. The Institute will orient its research and other activities with a focus on vital areas such as aspiration, motivation, and achievement motivation. It is expected that such enquiries are helpful to program design and implementation at the national level and in the States.

10. Competitiveness and Sustainability of MSMEs
Along with the major disruption in the economy, resulting from the
Pandemic, SMEs today are facing a significant productivity crisis. Their overall competitiveness has significantly come down in several subsectors. As explained by the shrinking of the markets, escalation of transaction cost, labour attrition, mounting energy cost, and declining energy efficiency of production, the sector today is craving productivity enhancement measures. While the problem needs to be looked into from a subsector angle, the Institute, under its Subsector Development Reporting Programme, will meticulously look into these aspects.

12. Financing Enterprise Development: National and regional experience
As a response to the disruption in the economy, the Government of India and the RBI have come up with several measures of pump-priming and financial restructuring. The global experience and lessons indicate the need for and relevance of a paradigm shift in MSME financing. This essentially means an enhanced development orientation, on the one hand, and ‘responsible business’ practices on the other. The Institute will continue its ongoing work in this area.

13. Climate Change & the Green Economy
In the agenda of ‘sustainable development through enterprise’, climate change and the imperatives and opportunities of the Green Economy are crucial. Studies in this area will focus on issues of enterprise security, the need for productivity enhancement through conservation of energy and other crucial inputs, as also the opportunities around the Green Economy.