

## **Functional Vocational Training and Research Society (FVTRS)**

### **Report of National Skill Conference 2018**

**14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018, New Delhi**

#### **Introduction**

Functional Vocational Training and Research Society has been organizing the National Skill Conference (NSC) every year. The NSC has been seen as a successful platform where a wide spectrum of stakeholders converge to discuss, deliberate and disseminate on relevant strategies for the sector, understand new perspectives and actions with innovations, as well as the challenges being faced by the skill ecosystem in the country. It is also an occasion to share best practices and scale up interventions by introducing new modules and modifying approaches, and incorporating all what is relevant in today's context.

This year the National Skill Conference 2018 which is 12<sup>th</sup> in the series was organised from 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at New Delhi. The theme for the conference was 'Skilling Primary Sector'.

The primary sector includes Agriculture, Fishery, Non-Timber Forest Produce, Traditional Artisanship and Green skills. Primary sector is the first sector which has been the means of survival for all of humankind. In the hills and forests, it is the tribals and forest dwellers, in the plains, it is the farmers and in the coastal areas it was the fishermen. It was only later that the secondary and tertiary sectors emerged, and these two sectors are very much dependent on the primary sector for their existence. Even today majority of the population in this country still depend on the primary sector for their survival.

Today skilling the Indian population has become one of the primary agendas of the country and various policies, structures and systems have been created for it. The number of stakeholders involved as well as use of resources in skill training has also tremendously increased.

But, the paradox is that it has not adequately reached the primary sector. Most of the focus and efforts are being put in the secondary and tertiary sector. Making things worse is that the skills in the primary sector has not even covered under the understanding of technical skills, as well as that most of the primary sector engagements are corporatized and fully controlled by them. Consequently, traditional workers are either eliminated from the sector or become wage earners who are considered as unorganised workers. Nobody has made serious efforts in seeking the potential of the primary sector in generating alternative energy, nor the use of technology for the upgradation of the primary sectors.

Most of the people who are engaged in the primary sector for their livelihood live in rural areas and remote locations. The existing training facilities are not accessible to them both in terms of location and capability. Most of them are also living below the poverty line. It is also becoming more and more non-remunerative and those who are working there do not want to continue and begin migrating to cities, making the urban poverty situation worse. Hence this conference focused on highlighting the importance of skilling in primary sector and recognise skills in primary sector. It sought various possibilities and strategies of skilling in primary sector.

NSC 2018 was organised in collaboration with ASCI, SCGJ, CYSD, CEMCA, ECOCIATE, IGSSS, Caritas India. Representatives from the Government steering agencies helped realise the skilling scenario in the country and encouraged the house to move ahead. Resourcepersons from organisations such as NSDA, ASCI, SCGJ, World Bank, MSME Foundations, CYSD, CEMCA, ECOCIATE, Techno Serve India, Ecociate, Jal Jeevika, TAAL, VRUTTI, 23.23 Designs and Sourcing, GIZ and ICCO reflected upon the present scenario, challenges and prospective opportunities and the roadmap to address the issues within the primary sector.

The conference was attended by 124 participants who representing FVTRS partners, civil society organisations and other well-wishers of FVTRS from across the country.

### **Inauguration:**

The National Skill Conference 2018 was inaugurated by Shri Manish Kumar, IAS, CEO, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), along with Shri Maneesh Mishra from Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in the presence of Ms. Merry Kappen, Vice President, FVTRS, Abp. Dr. John Barwa, Governing Board Member of FVTRS, Dr. J. Alxendar, Board Member, FVTRS and Mr. Felix D'Souza, Senior Program Manager, FVTRS.

Mr P.M. Phillip, Executive Director, FVTRS, in his welcome address focused on the importance of the primary sector in the larger framework of growth and the betterment of the country. The inaugural session focused on the significance of skilling women, engaging underprivileged youth, and utilizing India's demographic dividend as an opportunity for the primary sector. During his address he reflected that the previous skill conferences held in different parts of the country gave the basic thoughts behind this year's theme. He also expressed his gratitude to the house for coming from different parts of the country.

Ms. Mercy Kappen, Vice-President of FVTRS, in her presidential address spoke about the importance of skilling primary sector. She emphasized the importance of women and girls in the skilling eco-system especially within the primary sector. She also spoke about the need for skill to improve the livelihoods. She deliberated that the wisdom of the traditional practices needs to be fused with modern methods to ensure a better result and enhanced productivity.

Dr. John Barwa, Governing Board member of FVTRS, during his address to the house talked about the need of primary sector for universal survival. He reflected that the youth demographic dividend is an opportunity for the country to grow; future of humanity lies in the hands of youths who can bring the change in the society, thus building the skills of underprivileged and marginalized youths is of utmost important. And skill building within the primary sector is a must for the nation to survive.

Mr Manish Kumar, IAS, in his speech elaborated the importance of skill development in primary sector and how this can bring a transformational change in the society as well as in the country. He added the ground level difficulties of the people living in rural pockets and who were dependant on the primary sector. He shared an experience of economic and social transformation using skill development as a tool while he was in Tripura. He reflected that Recognition in Prior Learning is missing within this primary sector. However, NSDC has given much importance to recognise the learning in agri-allied sectors. It is evident that the certification of prior learning helps beneficiaries to get more wages and better opportunities.

Mr Maneesh Mishra, during his speech spoke about the packaging of skills within the primary sector, so that this would lead to the livelihoods enhancement. He shared some of the bright examples of entrepreneurship development within the primary sector. He narrated about how the industry has been growing over the years and sustaining life and livelihood of the people. He also shared a couple of cases from east Bihar and some initiatives taken by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship for skill development within the primary sector.

Dr Alexander, General Body member of FVTRS with his inspiring words made the house learn about the deep connection between the spirituality and social service. He elaborated how different religions have narrated about the service to mankind. He emphasized on holding the hands together irrespective of cast, creed and religion to achieve the desired goal. He focused on rural poverty and migration as key concerns that the country needs to address.

At the end of the inaugural session, 'Knitting Opportunities -The Skill Net Way II' (A three-year report of Skill Net) was released by the distinguished guests. Following this, Mr Felix D'Souza delivered the vote of thanks.

### **Thematic Session:**

Dedicated sessions were held on Agriculture, Fisheries, Non-Timber Forest Produce, Traditional Artisanry and Green Jobs. These sessions were attended and moderated by experts and dignitaries from each sector, who addressed the members of the audience that comprised of NGOs working at grassroots level across the length and breadth of the country. These sessions looked at the problems faced by the specific sectors, and the possible solutions that can be implemented or are being implemented in the country in the current scenario.

### **Agriculture and Allied Activities:**

The panel discussion was focused on how agriculture has become a crisis today and needs crisis management with policies aimed at increasing productivity which need to go beyond technical skills in order to utilize the demographic dividend and engage the youth that is currently not participating.

The unskilled agriculture sector has become a risky enterprise and non-remunerative. This leads to increase in poverty, hunger, distress migration etc. Majority of unemployed youth are migrating to different cities and states in search of employments and livelihood opportunities..

While the agriculture and allied sector's share in India's economy has progressively declined to less than 19% due to the high growth rates of the industrial and services sectors, the importance of agriculture sector in India's economic and social fabric continues to remain. Firstly, nearly three-quarters of India's families depend on rural incomes. Secondly, the majority of India's poor (about 70 percent) are found in rural areas. And lastly, India's food security depends on producing cereal crops, as well as increasing its production of fruits, vegetables, fish, meat and milk to meet the demands of a growing population with rising incomes. To do so, a productive, competitive, diversified and sustainable agricultural-allied sector needs to emerge at an accelerated pace.

In India, informal sector employs nearly 90% of the workforce, most of which is either non-skilled or inadequately skilled and there is very little investment or opportunity for formal 'skilling'. To get productive employment, especially in the agri-allied informal sector, it is crucial to acquire skillsets with strong labour market linkages.

India records a low 5% of workforce (20-24 age group) with formal vocational skills. There is a need for speedy reorganization of the ecosystem of skill development within the agri-allied primary sector. If we look specifically to the agricultural sector, women being an integral part of the agricultural workforce constitute a huge number. Nearly 30% of the total cultivators and 50% are the agricultural labourers are women. If women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could raise total agricultural output by 20% to 30% and reduce the world hunger by 12-17%.

Agriculture and allied sectors which have remained weak in terms of human resource base also remain neglected as far as skill development is considered. Although 32 competencies-based curricula for vocational courses in the discipline of agriculture and allied sectors are available across diverse areas, yet enrolment in such courses fall behind the set targets. Several modules have also been developed across a wide range of disciplines in the agricultural sector covering hundreds of occupations, but they fail to be delivered due to non-availability of proper skill providing institutions at the reachable areas of the rural community.

India is a house to large number of small and marginal farmers with an average land holding of approximately 1-hectare, which hinders the application of modern technology and equipment leading to low production and remuneration, thus compelling distress migration across the country.

India is the 2nd largest seed producing country and front liner in agri-allied sector produce export. Thus, there are huge opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship development in this sector-Transformation from farm-workers to agri-preneurs. For this, farmers have to be entrepreneurs with certain cognitive, non-cognitive and technical skills to leverage value-chain opportunities in the agri-allied sector. Non-cognitive skills are very important as these are related to ability of analysis and decision making. Such skills are directly related to decision making in agriculture such as which crops to cultivate, when to cultivate, where to sell, what value addition is to be done etc. There is also a need to have higher attention of policy makers on non-cognitive skills packages along with the specific skilling.

With initiatives like e-NAM (National Agriculture Market) and growth of e-commerce market, modernization is happening at a greater pace. Digital farm advisory and market information support is gradually taking place due to inter connectivity of every Gram Panchayats using broadband digitization.

Investments are needed at different levels of education to promote skill development in the primary sector. There are multiple skill development opportunities in agriculture and allied sectors. There is a greater scope of primary processing at the local levels. There is greater demand for food technicians to advise and certify the licensing in the food processing. Some of the major emerging trends in agriculture are agri mechanization, market modernization, digital agriculture, food processing. etc. In the last 5 years, custom hiring model for rental of agri-equipment has witnessed a tremendous growth.

**Moderator:** Shri Jagadananda, CYSD.

**Panellists:** Col. P.S. Gupta, ASCI, Mr Balakrishnan M Kutty from World Bank, Mr Kirti P. Mishra from Ecociate and Mr SuryamaniRoul from TechnoServe.

### **Fisheries:**

The emphasis during this session was given to the need for different kinds of technical skills required for different kinds of fishing along with the importance of maintaining the biodiversity during fishing. The speakers looked at how there is a need for a paradigm shift in practices, so that people shift from catching fishes to growing fishes, and in order to support this shift, fish workers need to be given the right skills to understand the various opportunities available to them, along with the breeders and the fish feeders. The session stressed on the need for a shift from resource creation to optimum resource utilization.

Fisheries is a rising sector which has almost 1% contribution to the GDP of India. However, over the years, fisheries sector has grossly been neglected and income of fishermen has not reached at the desirable levels. Marine fisheries is almost saturated while inland fisheries is emerging and has lot more opportunities. Over the years, production of marine fishes have remain constant while Inland fisheries is growing with a rate of 6% annum. There are multiple type of units where fish is being produced which ranges from 1 ht pond to 3000 ht reservoirs.

There are more than 30 lakh members in fishery cooperatives. Fishery cooperatives are playing a critical role in development of the fishery. Now government is taking effort to bring fisheries in parity with agriculture. Introducing fishermen credit card (FCC) is one of them. FISHCOPFED is looking after development, welfare and commercial promotion of fisheries in the sector. The government has opened an Aqua one centre to address all the issues related to fisheries, and is planning open up such centres in every district in the country.

Majority of the activities in fisheries sector is carried out by the men while women have very limited roles. Shifting from fish hunting to fish culture is a paradigm shift specially in tribal areas. There is a need of skilling the fisher community. Apart from fish-culture and value addition, some of the basic skills set required are technical, managerial, marketing and sustainability skills. Enterprise promotion in fishing, breeding and feed producing have bright futures.

Native varieties are not promoted by the projects and Governments, while the prices of these varieties are 2-3 times higher than the Indian major carps. Management of fish waste is a major challenge while it has multiple usages. Feed management at local level is another opportunity for local fishers and landless people. Seeds and nets are the major investment areas in the fisheries sector. All government schemes are focused around asset creations and not focusing on innovation and enterprise development. There is also lack of value-chain based schemes in the sector. Cluster based approach needs to be adopted based on the availability of resources in the area.

The major aim of skill development in agriculture and allied sectors is to double the farmers' income by doubling the production. However, our potential is only 4.5 million metric tonnes

by exploiting 80% of the resources. So, doubling the production is not possible through marine fisheries. It is here that aquaculture can be potentially used to increase fish production. We have to sustain the livelihood of the fishermen and also maintain the targeted production. For this we need huge infrastructure and skilled workforce.

It is encouraging to realise that nowadays, incubation centres in aquaculture are coming up. However, there is a lack of financial linkage which needs to be addressed to sustain the start-ups and help them accelerate. Government has provided an outlay of Rs 10,000 crores for National Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Scheme mainly for developing the infrastructure and environment for the sustainable development in this sector with multi-stakeholder involvement. Skill development forms a crucial part of the scheme to take forward the initiatives of increasing the fish production and improving the farmer's income.

**Moderator** Ms. Sanjogita Mishra, from Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, NewDelhi.

**Panellists:**Mr. Bimal K Mishra, FISHCOFED, Mr. Amod Khanna from TAAL and Mr. Neelkanth Mishra, ASHOKA Fellow and founder of Jal Jeevika.

### **Forest and Non -Timber Forest Products:**

The panel discussion helped to outline the extent, reliance and livelihood significance of NTFPs for forest dependent communities and suggested strategies for effective use of NTFP for the sustainable development of tribal communities.

There is lack of valid and evidence-based data on number of people depending upon the NTFPs and exhaustive list of NTFPs present in the country. Different NTFPs are available in different seasons. With greater information, effective consultations with stakeholders and strategic approaches to policy-making, NTFP laws and policies can promote ecological sustainability, equity in trade and improved rural livelihoods.

The NTFP policies work best through outreach and education of the tribals and their products on available incentives, policies, laws with supportive legal framework, including government support for producer, promoting trade and processing groups and creating market access and premium prices through certification, tax breaks etc. In some cases, particularly when there is sudden and high commercial demand, a more involved regulatory framework is also necessary, including permits, quotas, taxes and restrictions on trade.

The eco-system stakeholders are not having clarity about who is responsible for regulation of harvest, what are the rules and regulations for harvesting and marketing of NTFPs etc. A robust monitoring mechanism with the active involvement of people can be done. Seasonality is directly linked with designing a skill development program as their collection, processing, storage and marketing happens in different seasons and require a set of different skills. There are multiple enterprise opportunities available at different value chains of NTFPs.

The majority of NTFPs sold by the primary collectors to the middlemen don't undergo any basic value addition. They sell it raw with very restricted price. The processing and value addition are largely done by the intermediaries and brand companies. Capacity building of the primary collectors on identification of right species, collection time, cleaning, follow non-destructive harvesting techniques, sorting, drying, storage, packaging and value addition would enhance their income and increase the value and quality of the product.

**Moderator:** Mr. John Peter Nelson, Director, IGSSS New Delhi.

**Panellists:** Mr. Ashwini Chandak, Ecociate and Ms. Pratima B, VRUTTI.

### **Traditional Artisanship**

The session on traditional artisanship focused on moving Artisans from the cadre of labour to designers and craftsmanship. In a growing technology-run and industrialised world, people are increasingly forgetting the traditional crafts and moving towards new innovation. Due to this, artisans are moving to alternative income generation methods like daily wage labour and farming, and as a result traditional art is losing its grip. Preserving and protecting the skills and knowledge of traditional craftsmen is a growing challenge. So, it is high time that art forms are revived, and awareness is spread about them in urban space. Let's move towards a world where handcrafted items are given due respect and the artisans are also get the recognition they deserve for their skills.

Since the craft sector is the second largest employer in rural India after agriculture, it is a source of supplementary income for the seasonal agricultural workers, who have limited alternative employment opportunities in the rural areas. Investment should focus on building the four cornerstones of artisan sustainability:

- Nurturing artisan talent and skill upgradation
- Developing new business approaches
- Building demand for crafts
- Encouraging institutional participation

The crafts sector in India provides tremendous opportunities to improve economic, environmental and social conditions of rural communities. These include economic opportunities like employment and income generation to diverse communities and to those with different levels of education. Artisans can serve as key drivers of specialization and competence in precision manufacturing

The sector of handicraft not only provides employment, but also enhances the economy and brings in a sensible artistic approach of self-expression for the artisans. Handicrafts are matchless expressions as they represent culture, tradition, and heritage of a country.

There is a great demand for rich brocades and zari work. The repertoire of saris ranges from Banarsi Amru, Tancoi from Surat, Paithani, Patola, and Kancheevaram to the cotton saris from the tribal regions of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh etc. There is a profusion of materials available to the consumers these days. One can get a variety of garments made of different silks and mixed fabrics.

Richly embroidered garments, woven shawls and household items are in vogue these days. Mainly craftsmen from Kashmir, Punjab, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, North Eastern states etc create these products. There is a flourishing market for pherans and tablecloths from Kashmir. Woollen shawls from Himachal and North Eastern states too are popular.

India has an obsession with gems and jewellery since ancient times when India was referred to as the 'golden bird'. This obsession is strong till date and India has become the largest importer of gold in the world. The present-day jewellery tradition of India is a fine example of assimilation between traditional and modern designs and techniques.

**Moderator:** Mr Joseph I. Injodey, General Body member of FVTRS.

**Panellists:** Mr. Tamal Sarkar, ED, Foundation for MSME Clusters, Dr. Gaganpreet Kaur, NSDA, Ms Sonali Pal from 23.23 Designs and Resources.

## **Green Jobs**

The Skill Council for Green Jobs (SCGJ) is incorporated under the Societies Registration Act XXI, 1860 on 1st October 2015 with a mission to identify skilling needs of service users as well as manufacturers and service providers within Green Businesses sector, and implement nation-wide, industry-led collaborative skills development & entrepreneur development initiatives that will enable to meet India's potential for 'Green Businesses'.

India ranks amongst the top 10 countries for production of renewable energy through solar, wind and biomass. Sadly, the existing skill mismatch could not only pose hurdles to further growth, but also leave the poor out of the greening of the economy. Closing this green skill gap is an imperative for establishing sound environmental sustainability programmes.

A rise in global temperatures due to climate change may have an adverse effect on Indian agriculture by changing the monsoon precipitation dynamics. As a result, production of climate sensitive crops would suffer drastically. Adapting to this new and changing scenario is the need of the hour. Model simulations suggest that policy interventions such as environmental taxes could potentially be used to yield positive net environmental and health benefits with minimal economic costs for India.

The successful transition to a low-carbon economy will only be possible by ensuring that workers are able to transfer from areas of decreasing employment to other industries, and if adequate human capital exists to develop new industries that will grow as a result of climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. Skills development activities will play a major role in each of these transitions.

**Moderator:** Dr Praveen Saxena from Sector Skill Council for Green Jobs.

**Panellists:** Mr Rajeev Ahal from GIZ and Mr Abhay Siddham from ICCO.

## **Major Recommendations of National Skill Conference 2018:**

### **Policy level/Strategic Action Points:**

1. Create e-learning Modules & Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) in Open Distance Learning (ODL) mode for specific business skills like book keeping, accounting, taxation, etc.
2. Create blended and innovative financing approach in collaboration with banks.
3. Gearing up educational institutions and firms to provide the new skills for new occupations and sectors that will emerge from the green economy.
4. Simplify/Demystify Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. All grassroots organizations already have access to large number of skilled human resources who are



engaged in earning gainful livelihoods. However, these skilled people do not have certificate for recognizing their skills. The organizations at the grassroots level are not aware of the process to follow in order to get the skilled communities certified. The process needs to be simplified and followed up with effective IEC tools.

5. Provide common facilitation platforms for Processing, Marketing & Financial Management. All practitioners of the primary sector are mostly at micro level and cannot afford to buy tools and equipment individually or hire the services of a chartered accountant or e-commerce. If there are common facilities provided to them at a common platform, it will be beneficial to the entire sector and economically viable for all stakeholders.
6. Create bargaining power through cooperatives in primary sector – core and allied areas. Until now Farmer Producer Organizations have been created and SHGs created for production. However, we need to create cooperatives and associations of MSMEs providing allied services to primary sector like value addition processes.

### **Programme level/Operational level Recommendations:**

1. Initiate FVTRS – NSDC partnership with access to relevant sectors. It was suggested that a location-wise list of FVTRS partners be created with all the sectors / trades in which they are imparting skilling. Then the trades be mapped to NSDC defined Job Roles and relevant Sector Skill Councils be identified. Then an overall proposal of partnership be presented to NSDC for partnership such that all of FVTRS partners can provide NSQF aligned skill training leading to SSC certification.
2. Educate / Train themselves (trainers) and their communities on digital skills and usage of social media for business. Many of the primary sector workers do not know how to take full advantage of simple digital tools for improving their livelihoods. Even basic usage of WhatsApp, Youtube, Facebook, Instagram and other social media tools can make a huge difference to their business. Hence, basic knowledge needs to be imparted to the communities involved in preservation of traditional and primary skills.
3. Take action for RPL by connecting with SSCs and TPs. While FVTRS-NSDC partnership may take time, it was suggested that each of the FVTRS partners try to locate a local NSDC training partner who can collaborate with them to provide RPL certificates to skilled youth in their communities.
4. Reach new communities for newer areas of skilling like fisheries, artisans, etc. Based on the proceedings of the conference, FVTRS partners were urged to expand their skill offerings to newer sectors such that a holistic / integrated solution can be developed specially to make the community self-reliant.
5. Develop non-cognitive skills: soft and social skills. Any individual who aspires to successfully earn his/her livelihood through the primary sector needs to work with a community and has to be entrepreneurial in his/her approach. Hence there needs to be sufficient focus on polishing and honing the non-cognitive skills like communication, problem solving, team work, entrepreneurial skills etc.
6. Help youth by multi-skilling them to utilize the opportunity existing in becoming integrated end-to-end service providers for which there is a huge demand. This also has relevance as the primary sector is very much seasonal.
7. Increased advocacy and awareness on specific schemes for MSMEs and Artisans.
8. Training on business ethics for behavioural change of artisans.

These recommendations were seen as the next steps to resolve the issues that had been discussed in the panel discussions, and the audience was motivated to use these and other creative ways to better skill the primary sector in India.

### **Valedictory Function:**

The National Skill Conference 2018 was concluded with a valedictory function at 3 PM on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Ms. Mercy Kappen Vice President of FVTRS Presided the function. Dr. Joseph Stanley welcomed the guests. ABP. Dr. John Barwa, Fr. Paul Moonjely, Director Caritas India and Dr. J Alexander spoke during the function. During the function the Souvenir of the conference was also released. The partners who contributed for the souvenir with articles were recognised and appreciated during the function with certificate of appreciation. Certificates of appreciation were also given to three partners who have contributed most as part of the Skill Support Mission initiated by FVTRS this year.

All the dignitaries present during the function appreciated the FVTRS team for selecting a very relevant theme and for the smooth and successful conduct of the conference. They all appreciated the presentations and resource persons. Mr. P M Philip Executive Director proposed vote of thanks.

### **Silver Jubilee of FVTRS**

Functional Vocational Training and Research Society celebrated its Silver Jubilee on November 14, 2018 at USI, New Delhi. All partners of FVTRS across the country along with Board members of FVTRS attended the programme. Mr. D. J. Kennedy, Former Executive Secretary of FVTRS and Mr. Jagadananda, former Board member of FVTRS were present as chief guests.

The programme began with a brief introduction to the occasion by Ms. Sheela followed by the invocation song. As the song was sung, all the persons who served FVTRS in different positions and went to eternal rest were remembered. The programme then followed with a welcome address by Mr. P. M. Philip, Executive Director of FVTRS. The inaugural lamp was lit by five stakeholders representing different roles in the organisation - they were former Executive Secretary, Vice President, Director, staff and a partner. After the lamp was lit, the song 'carry your candle' was played. This song meaningfully conveyed the mission of FVTRS to serve the marginalised and underprivileged of Society.

Mr. Felix D'Souza, the Senior Programme Manager of FVTRS, presented a brief report of FVTRS over the last twenty-five years. The report included the genesis, growth and development of FVTRS. He made the audience aware of the achievements and interventions of FVTRS in the field of skill training for school dropouts.

The Silver Jubilee messages were delivered by Mrs. Mercy Kapen, Vice President of FVTRS. Mr. D. J. Kennedy and Mr. Jagadananda were the chief guests of the day. Abp. Dr. John Barwa, Mr. J Alexander, Mr. Joseph Stanley, Dr. Joseph Injody, Bro. Amalan and Mr. John Peter Nelson, general body members of FVTRS, graced the occasion with their presence. All of them in their messages appreciated FVTRS for its achievements and wished success for the years ahead in serving the poor and needy. After this, the messages received from Sr. Daphne, former president of FVTRS and Mr. Santhosh Vas, former Board member of FVTRS, were read out to the audience.

FVTRS had brought out a document titled 'SILVER JUBILEE MEMORIES'. This book briefly enumerated the genesis and growth of FVTRS including a spectrum of activities carried out during the last 25 years. It also contained messages from former leaders of FVTRS. This book also has a brief description of the contributions made by all the former leaders of FVTRS. This document was released during the occasion. After the release a cake was cut to mark the Silver Jubilee.

This occasion was also used to recognise the long-standing service of Ms. Noyola Sheela and Ms. DivyanaNayagi in FVTRS for over 20 years.

There after a short audio video presentation of 5 minutes was presented to the audience giving a flash back of the past. The programme concluded with cultural programme followed by dinner.

**Insert document cover page**