



Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs)

Accessibility of quality education to all has been a major challenge in countries all over the world. In India, there are several disadvantaged groups, such as women, minorities, SCs and STs, OBCs, PwDs, EWSs, who lag behind others in the field of education. Taking all together in the development of the nation is the prime goal of the Government of India. Accordingly, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the need to address the issues of students belonging to Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs).

The students belonging to SEDGs face several challenges and difficulties in accessing quality education because of socio-cultural, economic, and historical reasons. The NEP 2020 has indicated people with the following identities as Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) and emphasized on their increased participation, particularly in higher education.

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(i) Gender Identity:

- Female (Girls and Women make up about half of all SEDGs and, in particular, those belonging to underrepresented groups have multiple disadvantages)
- Transgender.

(ii) Social Backwardness Identity:

- Scheduled Castes (SCs)
- Scheduled Tribes (STs)

(iii) Educational and Economic Backward Identity:

- Non-Creamy Layer among Other Backward Classes (OBCs)
- Economically Weaker Sections (EWSs)
- Students from the vernacular medium schools

- First Generation Learners

(iv) Minority Identity:

- Religious Minorities
- Linguistic Minorities

(v) Persons with Disabilities and Benchmark Disabilities.

- A person with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment,
- A person with not less than forty percent of a specified disability as certified by the certifying authority.

(vi) Vulnerable and Low Socio-economic conditions:

- Migrant communities, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes
- Low-income households Below Poverty Line (BPL)
- Child beggars and Children in vulnerable situations

Objectives of SEDGs Cell:

1. To protect all the constitutional rights of the SEDGs students.
2. To ensure that the HEIs are inclusive, safe, and secure for the SEDGs students.
3. To provide socio-emotional and academic support and mentoring for the students belonging to the SEDGs through proper counselling and monitoring programme.
4. To ensure proper implementation and monitoring of orientation and bridge courses designed by the HEIs to benefit SEDGs students.
5. To ensure implementation of all such programme designed and developed by HEIs to increase the participation of SEDGs students in academic activities.
6. To ensure implementation of Government's policies, including reservation policies and various schemes, programme, facilities and guidelines for SEDGs students.
7. To ensure that the HEIs develop appropriate outreach programme to help the SEDGs students to avail the various opportunities of educational/academic programmes of HEIs.
8. To ensure proper implementation of preventive measures and Laws against discrimination and atrocities, and for safeguards of students belonging to respective categories under SEDGs.
9. To circulate, publicize, facilitate, and monitor the implementation of all UGC and Government guidelines and instructions issued from time to time in reference to SEDGs.
10. To redress the grievances and complaints of the SEDGs students within 15 days through a Grievances Redressal Committee (GRC) without compromising the safety, privacy and

dignity of the complainant.

Functions of SEDGs Cell:

1. To co-ordinate with other existing cells and statutory bodies of the HEIs and enable implementation of the existing schemes and provisions, including scholarships and fellowships of the Govt. of India and respective States.
2. To ensure the implementation of orientation and bridge courses, earn-while-learn schemes, and outreach programme designed and developed by HEIs for SEDGs.
3. To provide socio-economic, academic, and psychological support and mentoring for such students through proper counselling and mentoring programme.
4. To ensure sensitization of faculty, staff, counsellors, and students on the SEDGs issues and their inclusion in all aspects of the HEIs.
5. To explore and generate funds from various sources like Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) and Alumni to provide more financial assistance and scholarships to SEDGs to mitigate opportunity costs and fees for pursuing higher education.
6. To coordinate with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) to raise awareness about the implementation of various policies for inclusive and equitable quality higher education.
7. To work as a ‘Single Window’ for students belonging to SEDGs for their grievances, basic needs, amenities, facilities, welfare measures, and scholarships and fellowships.
8. To upload and disseminate guidelines, facilities, welfare, and safety measures on HEI’s portal and maintain such records to review and monitor amenities and basic facilities for a safe and secure environment for SEDGs.
9. To circulate, publicize, and facilitate existing welfare schemes like – Remedial, NET, entry into services, and residential Coaching for SC/ST/OBC (non-creamy layer), Minority Community, and PwD Students.
10. To establish a team of counsellors, social workers, and faculty members to provide emotional and social support to SEDGs to adapt to the environment of the HEI.
11. To focus on overall personality and skill development, including professional and soft skills, so as to ensure enhancing the student employability.
12. To organize periodic meetings and to monitor the progress of various schemes and all the HEIs may prepare a database of such schemes for SEDGs.
13. To assess the needs of SEDGs and make necessary recommendations to the authorities of the HEIs.

14. To make faculty, staff, students, and service professionals aware of facilities available for SEDGs.
15. To sensitize all the students to bring an attitudinal change towards SEDGs to ensure participation of SEDGs in curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities in the HEIs.
16. To hold regular meetings with representatives of SEDG students to check their grievances and also meet with management/authorities of HEIs to facilitate discussion of the grievances of SEDG students and maintain the confidentiality of deliberations and data.
17. To review, monitor, and ensure disposal of all grievances within 15 days.
18. To inform all students during induction/counselling session about Zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination.