

At a time when governments are obsessed with building Smart Cities, premier [B school](#) — Indian Institute of [Management](#) (IIM), Sambalpur plans to unlock value in Odisha's rural hinterland.

In a first, the institute aims to develop 'Smart Villages' in clusters depending on the potential available in the area.

"It is in the concept stage. The idea is to identify a cluster of villages which have a business potential like weaving and eco-tourism. There has to be an entrepreneur model and it will be proposed to various stakeholders to work together", said Mahadeo Jaiswal, Director of [IIM Sambalpur](#).

The premier [management](#) institute is planning to conduct a series of workshops and identify the clusters for development.

"We will reach out to large industries in public and private sector, for funding from their [CSR](#) fund to create the basic infrastructure", he added.

For making the business model viable, 10 to 20 villages will be taken as a cluster. The chosen villages would not be far from the airports for the convenience of the visitors. To begin with, [IIM Sambalpur](#) plans to develop two clusters in Odisha. If successful, the business model is proposed to be replicated other villages across the country.

"We will have a revenue model for Smart villages to make them sustainable and create wealth", Jaiswal said.

Building Smart Villages is expected to complement the Union Government's push for 100 Smart Cities. More, such self-sustainable villages could also bring in a multiplier effect to the economy

[IIM Sambalpur](#) is also setting up a Centre for Social Entrepreneurship with a business model to promote the start-ups in the social sector.

In this academic year, the [B-school](#) has doubled its intake for MBA course to 120. It has also planned to roll out executive MBA (part-time) and PhD programs.

IIM-Sambalpur is one among the third generation IIMs announced in Budget 2014-15, alongside IIM-Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), IIM-Bodh Gaya (Bihar), [IIM-Sirmaur](#) (Himachal Pradesh), IIM-Nagpur (Maharashtra) and IIM-Amritsar (Punjab).

The institute is presently operating out of a makeshift campus. It has been allotted 237 acres land by the Odisha government at Basantpur on the outskirts of Sambalpur for its permanent campus.