

**National Workshop
on
Skill Development
for
Persons with Disabilities**

A Report

3rd July

Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi

Background:

- According to census 2011, there are 26.8 million Persons with Disabilities in India, which constitutes 2.21% of our population. These include Persons with Hearing Disability, Locomotor Disability, Visual Disability, Speech Disability, Intellectual Disability, Mental Illness, Multiple Disabilities and other categories of disabilities.
- India is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) which came into the effect from May 2008. The Government of India has enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act which came into force from 19.04.2017 and is aligned with the spirit of the UNCRPD.
- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act provides various rights and entitlements for Persons with Disabilities and aims to foster inclusive development. It recognizes the needs of Persons with Disabilities and mandates the Government to take appropriate measures for their empowerment and inclusion in the society so that they can live a dignified life independently.
- Persons with Disabilities are one of the most marginalized segments in the society. Most of them do not have access to education, training and thus remain deprived of gainful employment.
- Economic empowerment is one of the key element of independent living and it comes through gainful wage employment or through self-employment. With a view to create a society inclusive of Persons with Disabilities, it is imperative to develop schemes and programmes to enhance skills of Persons with Disabilities to enable them to meet job requirements both in the Public and Private Sector. The National Action plan for Skill Training for Persons with Disabilities was launched by the Department in March 2015 to address this concern.



Present Scenario:

- The Skill Development Programme of the Department is being implemented in accordance with the Common Norms notified by Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship.
- Till Date, 258 training partners comprising of 26 Government Organizations and 232 Non-Government Organizations spread across 28 States and 1 UT have been empanelled with this Department for imparting skill training to PwDs.
- In addition, skill training of PwDs are also being conducted through 7 NIs and 12 CRCs of the Department and National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation.
- During the last 4 years about 1.4 lakh PwDs have been imparted skill training under the Skill Development /Vocational Training program of the Department.
- This year the target is to train 90,000 PwDs under National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs.



Emerging challenges:

- Creating adequate placement opportunity is the biggest challenge for effective implementation of the skill development programme. Though, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act provides 4% mandatory reservation for Persons with benchmark Disabilities in Government establishments, it is not mandatory for the Private Sector.
- Private Sector being run mostly on commercial mode, ensuring a certain level of efficiency is the sole criteria for selection of any candidate for the private entity. Moreover, our private sector is not so opened up and there appears to be negative apprehensions about the ability of PwDs. To overcome the negative attitude in the private sector is also a challenge.
- Every category of Disability has unique ability. Similarly, different regions/areas in the country have different market demand. Each industry/corporate has its own requirement, for example, the requirement of apparel industry and retail sector would be entirely different. Bringing a synergy among all these 3 components i.e. ability of a particular category of Person with Disability, Local market demand and industry requirement is also a challenge while devising course curriculum for Persons with Disabilities.



The Workshop:

- With a view to provide a platform to all stakeholders ranging from training partners to the policy makers and employers and to create a roadmap to achieve the objective of Skill Indian Mission in respect of PwDs, a National Workshop was organized by the Department on 3rd July 2018 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- The workshop was attended by Dr. Thaawar Chand Gehlot, Hon'ble Minister (SJE), Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Minister (SDE) the Chief Guest, Ms. Shakuntala D. Gamlin, Secretary (DEPwD), Shri Kamlesh Kumar Pandey, Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD), Ms. Dolly Chakrabarty, Joint Secretary, (DEPwD), representatives from Industry Associations, Corporate Houses, Sector Skill Councils, Empaneled Training Partners, National Institutes, Composite Regional Centers, various departments of Central Govt. and State Govts. Detailed list of participants is at **Annexure -I**.
- The workshop was broadly divided into four sessions:-

Session I -	Inaugural Session
Session II -	Panel discussion on Skill Mapping viz a viz; Categories of PwDs
Session III -	Panel discussion on ETP perspective : Issues and Challenges
Session IV -	Panel discussion on Placement Opportunities in Private/Public Sector including Mechanism to regulate Post-Training Placement



Session I- Inaugural Session:

- The workshop was inaugurated with lighting of a lamp by Hon'ble Minister (SJ&E), Hon'ble Min (SDE), Secretary (DEPwD), Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and Joint Secretary (DEPwD) who were on the dais.
- While welcoming the distinguished guests and participants, Ms. Dolly Chakrabarty, Joint Secretary (DEPwD) briefly explained the importance for holding the workshop and contours of program spread across three sessions of interactive panel discussions.
- Secretary (DEPwD) in her opening address stressed that economic empowerment of Persons with Disabilities is the key to their well-being and can enable them to lead a life with dignity. She also outlined the need to have close tie up with industry to know their requirements and prepare Model Curriculum for skilling of PwDs matching with adaptability of individual category of PwDs which would significantly enhance placement of PwDs leading to sustainable livelihood.
- Dr. Thawar Chand Gehlot, Hon'ble Minister (SJE) emphasized on the need to consolidate existing momentum towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) so that there is a greater pace in achieving the target of inclusion of all segments of the society including Persons with Disabilities. He reaffirmed that Persons with Disabilities are valuable human resources and stressed on enhancing their opportunities for their economic empowerment. Hon'ble Minister stressed that National Action Plan launched in March 2015 aims at achieving this objective which envisages a target of skilling 25 lakh PwDs by the year 2022. He informed that during the last four years, under the Skill/Vocational training Programme of the Department about 1.4 lakh PwDs have been benefitted. He stressed that there is a greater need of close interaction among all stakeholders especially Industry to come forward so as to achieve the desired target.
- Chief Guest, Hon'ble Minister (SDE) – Shri Dharmendra Pradhan in his address hailed the Skill Training Program by DEPwD. He outlined the objectives of Skill India Mission and contended that creating adequate placement opportunity is the biggest challenge for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities and emphasized on the need to create more and more industry linkages. Hon'ble Minister assured full help and

cooperation of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Ministry of Skill development and Entrepreneurship for the betterment of the lives of the Persons with Disabilities. He also pointed out that MSDE has trained more than 51,000 PwDs under Skill India's flagship scheme of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). He stressed that the target set by the MSJE for skill training program of PwDs Should not be reduced. MSDE will render all possible help to achieve the target of Skill Training of 25 Lakh PwDs by 2022.



Session – II: Skill mapping viz a viz; Categories of PwDs:

- This session was moderated by Dr. Arundhati Bhattacharya, Ex Chairman, SBI. Other panelists in this session were:
 - Ms. Sunita Sanghi, Senior Advisor, MSDE
 - Ms. Anuradha Dalmia, Director, NIEPVD
 - Shri R. Bhattacharya, Head, Socio Economic Rehabilitation Deptt, AYJNISH
 - Dr. Himangshu Das, Director, NIEPMD
 - Shri Sanjay Pradhan, Lead Affirmative Action, NSDC

- While moderating the session, Dr. Arundhati Bhattacharya pointed out that the demand for skill mapping should come from industry and should be in consonance with the job opportunities available for mapped skill sets.

- Representing Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Ms. Sunita Sanghi stressed on the need to create mechanisms for cross ministry coordination using best practices and stronger links between providers of education, vocational training and enterprises, including incentives for apprenticeships.

- Representatives of National Institutes charted the way forward that included adaptation and modification of existing Model Curriculum as per the needs of specific disability.



Session -III : ETP perspective : issues and challenges:

This session was moderated by Ms. Dolly Chakrabarty, Joint Secretary, MSJE. Other panelists in this session were:

- Ms. Niharika Nigam, Head, Standards and Quality Assurance, SCPwD
 - Shri Naveen Sharma, General Manager, CSC SPV, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MEITY)
 - Shri Uma Shankar Bhaduri, Senior Consultant, Kendriya Bhandar
 - Dr. Jitendra Agrawal, Chairman, Sarthak Education Trust
 - Shri Raj Kapoor, Managing Director, Assocom- India Pvt. Ltd.
- Ms. Dolly Chakrabarty in this session briefly explained the process flow of the Department for empanelment of training partners as well as selection of their proposals for conducting the program. She stressed that there is a need for the ETPs to look into the local demand and employment opportunities before deciding on the job role for skill training. The ETP should also have close tie up with industry and corporate sector.
 - Representative of SCPwD elaborated upon the process followed for assessment and certification and also shared plans for way forward that included sensitizing and incentivizing employers and creating an enabling environment for better job roles in industry.
 - ETPs in their presentations pointed out the challenges which they are facing while executing skill development training program for PwDs. These challenges are centered around evaluation criteria, assistive aid use of Public Financial Management Systems (PFMS), Process flow of consideration of their proposals etc. Some of the ETPs were of the view that 100% advance in assistive devices should not be granted at the start of training in order to avoid drop outs.



Session – IV: Placement Opportunities in Private/Public Sector including Mechanism to regulate Post-Training Placement

This session was moderated by Ms. Shakuntala D. Gamlin, Secretary, DEPwD. Other panelists in this session were:

- Ms. Shobha Mishra Ghosh, Assistant Secretary, General, FICCI
 - Shri Pawan Yadav, Assistant General Manager, HR, Subros Ltd.
 - Shri Anil Kapoor, Ex. Director, HR& CC, BHEL
 - Shri Piyush Dutt, CHRO, Vishal Megamart
 - Ms. Regina Roberts, Assistant Vice President, HR, WIPRO
 - Shri S. K. Bose, Executive Director, Indian Oil
 - Shri. Amitabh Adhikari, Sr. General Manager & Zonal Head HR, North
- Ms. Shakuntala D. Gamlin in this session elaborated upon the need to develop a comprehensive plan for effective skill development programme for PwDs synergized with the job opportunities based on geographic area as well as capabilities of various class of PwDs. She also stressed that there is a need to develop disability inclusive livelihood programmes so that they are engaged productively through ensuring better access to loans or other financial support to start a business, redesigning the working environment to enhance the efficiency of PwDs in private sector.
 - There was a common perception that PwDs are valuable resources from employment view point and there needs a paradigm shift not only in the methodology of recruitment of PwDs but also in sensitizing other employees towards the needs of PwDs and creating a disabled friendly workplace.
 - Representatives of PSUs asserted that their organizations are committed to exceed mandatory quota of reservation for PwDs. Additionally, PwDs are also increasingly being given roles based on interest, willingness and capabilities rather than restricting to traditional fields like HR, Finance, Quality control etc.
 - Representatives of Private Sector shared their experience of employing PwDs and elaborated upon the fact that recruiting PwDs is not driven by corporate social responsibility obligations but by the benefits that it brings to company in terms of reduced employee attrition rate, increased customer loyalty, better performing employees, social inclusion etc.

- Both Private & Public Sector representatives shared many success stories and shed light on how the experience gained can be utilized in employing increased & larger number of PwDs.



Major Takeaways from Workshop:

Government/DEPwD Perspective:

- There are policies in place. But, there is lack of awareness amongst all stakeholders about requirement of Skilling of Persons with Disabilities & there is a need of dissemination of information across all stakeholders' including industry.
- There is a need to create an environment for better sensitivity in the society towards the Persons with Disabilities. The Society should understand that there is life beyond; if given proper environment, training & support and if there are policies and infrastructure, in place for this.
- There is a need to revisit the classification of PwDs for the purpose of suitability of jobs in the context of employability parameters. Such parameters may be as follows:-
 - Employable without support
 - Employable with minimum support
 - Employable with high support
 - Engagement based employment so that in the long run of engagement, organisation can have positive output and at the same time, the PwD will feel empowered and rehabilitated.
- There is a need to revisit evaluation criteria for assessing training program. Drop out/failed candidates should also be considered for financial support. In addition to this, online mechanism of evaluation and certification is necessary for immediate declaration of results.
- There is a need to have centralized training on working of Public Financial Management System (PFMS).
- There is also a need to segregate job role requirement on the basis of priority:-
 - Job role with high potential of placement opportunity
 - Job roles with promising placement in the near future
 - Other Job roles based on regional and local specific demand.

- Robust use of IT starting from application to processing of proposal of ETP should be applied.
- Accessibility of skill training information and other measures should be ensured.
- Incentivizing employers and creating enabling environment are identified as two key components of Government intervention.

Industry Perspective:

- The industry should come out with a common job portal for Divyangjan which can be accessed by all ETPs and other entities.
- The industry representatives opined that there is need for workplace adjustment and sensitization of the able bodied employees in order to incorporate PwDs in all streams of work.
- Industry representatives were of the opinion that finding such PwDs who can be recruited as per company's parameters are difficult to find, hence there is a need for increased interaction between industry and training providers.
- The mapping of jobs should be industry driven. The industry should flag out its requirements in terms of job roles in which training should be provided viz viz physical requirements of such job roles.

ETP Perspective:

- There is a need for close linking of training partners with financial institutions for scaling up opportunities of self-employment.
- Awareness program focusing on rural areas about the skill training program is required for participation of Rural Youth with Disabilities in skill training.
- It was emphasized that Skill training has critical role in shaping career of PwDs, however, the job roles should be in accordance with the demands of industry and there should be increased emphasis on aspects such as Soft Skills etc.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to all the dignitaries, panelists, representatives of States, CCPD, National Institutes, Composite Regional Centers, ETPs and other participants by Shree KVS Rao, Director, DEPwD.

