

A BARRIER FREE FUTURE

Mainstreaming Persons with Disability in the Workforce **SKILLING & EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY (2020-2024)**

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Reddy's Foundation (DRF) was set up in 1996 with the purpose of enabling young and disadvantaged youth have access to “quality education” and “employability skills” to help them realize their true potential. Over the past two decades, DRF has impacted more than 3.8 lakh youth including over 16,000 Persons with Disability through its flagship skilling programs with the support of partners (refer to figure 1).

The skilling program of DRF was started in 1999 with the aim to provide skilling and employment opportunities to youth across India and was earlier popularly known as “Livelihood Advancement Business School” (LABS). In 2010, during the LABS journey, DRF identified the need to mainstream employment for Persons with Disability and in response to that initiated an exclusive skilling program, named as LABS for Persons with Disability (LABS-PwD). Initially the program was designed for people with physical and speech & hearing disabilities in partnership with State Government of undivided Andhra Pradesh. The success of this initiative encouraged the organization to scale up this program to other parts of the country in partnership with the private sector. In addition, DRF partnered with vocational rehabilitation centres for handicapped and Blind People Associations and NGOs for mobilization of Persons with Disability.

From 2010 till 2016, the focus was on domain based skilling for persons with “physical” and “speech & hearing” disabilities through exclusive training centres across multiple geographies. In 2016, a yearlong research was undertaken which involved engaging with hundreds of

Persons with Disability, LABS-PwD alumni, community members, employers across seventy cities in twenty states, peer skilling agencies and government to evolve and arrive at new solutions for improving the quality of Persons with Disability skilling. Based on the findings, the LABS-PwD skilling model was replaced by an innovative model called GROW-PwD. The key focus of the program was on ‘Core Employability Skills’ which are essential for quality entry level jobs.

In addition, it included the following changes: [a] infrastructural changes to make training centres accessible [b] addition of other disabilities in the program (refer to figure 2) [c] pre and post assessments to measure the skill shift [d] sensitization workshops for corporates to increase awareness [e] mapping job roles in multiple sectors.

The above changes, over the last three years, helped to improve the overall quality of GROW-PwD program and create deeper impact by [a] having 90 percent of training centres in accessible buildings [b] improvement of “core employability skills” among 70 of youth measured through post assessment across disabilities [c] average monthly salary almost doubled when it increased to ₹ 10,453 in comparison to ₹ 5984 in the LABS-PwD program [d] Expanded sectoral placements from the earlier three sectors - Retail, Hospitality and ITES,(LABS-PwD) – to present placements in more than ten sectors (GROW-PwD) .

Figure 1:

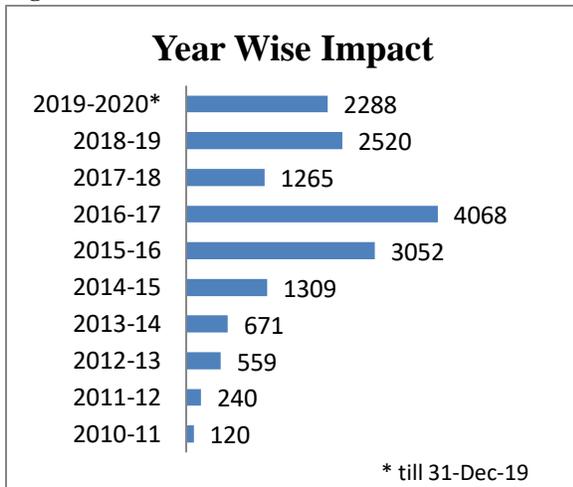
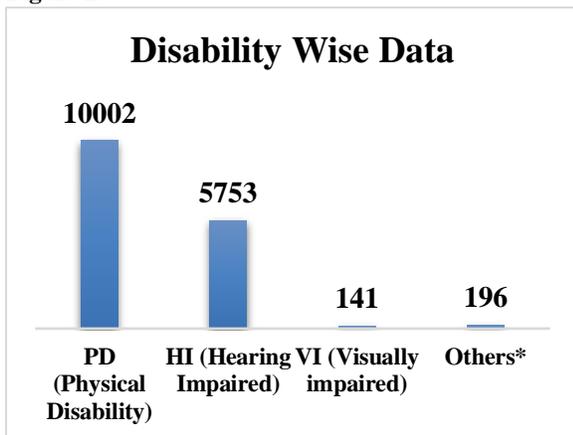


Figure 2:



While we have made progress in enabling Persons with Disability gain skills and enter the workforce but the task has just begun. As envisioned in the World Disability report, 2011: “If people with disabilities and their households are to overcome exclusion, they must have access to work or livelihoods, breaking some of the circular links between disability and poverty.”

We have seen through our work that given the right environment most Persons with Disability can be productively employed. Unfortunately, Persons with Disability in the working age-group, especially in developing countries, experience much higher unemployment rates than persons without disabilities. The sole intent and purpose of formulating this strategy by DRF is to double down on its efforts of skilling and providing quality employment opportunities to youth from different types of disabilities and help them improve their overall well-being and quality of life.

Our work with Persons with Disability over the last ten years has helped us develop a deeper understanding about skilling and employment of Persons with Disability across multiple disabilities, geographies and various industries. This journey has been possible because of the encouragement and support of our partners. We look forward to continuing our journey by catering to more disabilities and creating a wide impact in the ecosystem with the support of our current and future partners.

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SCENARIO OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

According to 2011 census in India, 2.21 percent of total population is estimated to be Persons with Disability and 70 percent of them are in rural area. Out of 13.4 million Persons with Disability who are in the employable age of 15 to 59 years, 9.9 million are non-workers or are marginal workers and are employed in minor agriculture and home-based industries. There is a great opportunity to skill this large pool of unskilled group and bring them into the mainstream employment.

CHALLENGES

Education Scenario of Persons with Disability

Around 70 percent of Persons with Disability population live in rural area and accessibility to special education schools is a challenge for most of them. In urban areas, 67 percent of the total disabled persons are literate Vis-a-Vis 49 percent in rural areas. In urban areas 20 percent has matric/ secondary level education and 10 percent are graduates and above. While in rural areas, the corresponding figures are 10 percent and 2 percent respectively. Around 39 percent of children with disability aged 5-19 are out of school, with the rates much higher for certain disabilities such as severe, multiple and intellectual disabilities. Children with disability are exposed to problems like lesser number of qualified teachers, lack of exposure to external or mainstream environment etc. even when getting educated in special institutions. Further, the special institutions environment results in low self-esteem and low level of self-confidence among majority of children primarily because they stay away from their families and are also cut off from the society. (Reference: Census data 2011)

Skill Gap and Employment status

The skill gap in People with Disability is evident and reasons are numerous - Lack of skill orientation in the traditional education system; absence of exposure to social and soft skills in the formative years; the absence of 'hands-on' training at the work place along with factors like social stigma about Persons with Disability to mention few.

The apprehension of the employers about the ability of PwD employees to perform might be valid to some extent owing to the above factors; which finally results in the poor employment rate for persons with disabilities. However, it is encouraging and important to note then when attempts are made to address this issue through skill training the results have been positive, proving that Persons with Disability are equally competent and productive.

Migration Challenges

Migration is a big hindrance, as around 70 percent of Persons with Disability population live in rural areas and they have to migrate to nearby cities in search of quality job as per census 2011. Lack of family support, poor health conditions, lack of exposure to the urban environment become key deterrents for them to migrate to urban areas and work.

Inaccessible Buildings & Transportation

A freely accessible society without any physical barrier is the first and foremost requirement for Persons with Disability. Right to education, work and freedom of mobility have hardly any relevance unless schools, public transport, workplace and all other key public places are made accessible. It was with this goal that the "Accessible India Campaign" was launched on December 3, 2015 to make public buildings and transports disable friendly. The new Rights of Persons with Disability act passed in 2016 provides mandatory provisions to make all public places accessible.

As per Annual report 2018-19, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disability only 1662 out of 10,000 buildings have become accessible. This factor have largely contributed to the poor participation both in personal and public activities.

Socio-Economic Vulnerabilities

Disability figures as an important development issue because there are increasing evidences to show that Persons with Disability experience numerous socio-

economic disadvantages that persons without disabilities do not.

The existence of disability often results in decrease in one's social and economic well-being, including increased expenditures for healthcare, emotional and psychological reasons. Even today, disability is generally considered as incapacity and Persons with Disability are victims to negative imagery and language, stereotypes, and stigma. These often result in negative treatment of Persons with Disability in educational institutions & at workplaces. These negative social attitudes are also present in families where Persons with Disability are perceived as lifelong burdens, both physically and financially, as well as a source of social stigma and embarrassment.

Availability of Data

Disabled Population in India as per census 2011 is 2.21 percent which includes only 7 types of disability. Whereas on the other hand, World Bank data is estimating disability population as 10 to 15 percent in developing countries like India. Furthermore in 2016 Government has come up with a new law on disability and classified the number of disability to 21 types. Therefore; there is a need to update the data which will help in policy, planning and better execution.

OPPORTUNITIES

Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2016

One of the most important happening in relation to the empowerment of Persons with Disability has been the passage of a law on disability called the Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2016. The RPWD act has very comprehensive and compelling provisions that need to be complied by all relevant stakeholders. Some of these provisions relevant to our area of work are [a] inclusion of Persons with Disability in all mainstream formal and non-formal vocational and skill training schemes and programs [b] ensure that a Persons with Disability has adequate support and facilities to avail specific training [c] exclusive skill training programs with active links with the market, for those with developmental, intellectual, multiple disabilities and autism [d] loans at concessional rates including that of microcredit [e] market linkage to sell the products made by persons with disabilities [f] collect disaggregated data on the progress made in the skill training and self-employment [g] provide orientation and sensitization on disabling conditions and rights of Persons with Disability to employers, administrators and co-workers

[h] ensure that the rights of Persons with Disability are included in the curriculum in Universities, colleges and schools.

The Act also enforces “The Central Government shall, in consultation with the Chief Commissioner, formulate rules for Persons with Disability laying down the standards of accessibility for the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, including appropriate technologies and systems, and other facilities and services provided to the public in urban and rural areas”.

Increased Focus in Skilling & Employment of Persons with Disability

The practice of employing Persons with Disability in the private sector in India started barely a decade ago. Industry started welcoming persons with “physical” or “hearing” disabilities for limited tasks initially. A few years later, as technologies to aid other types of disabilities became accessible, the avenues of private sector employment for persons with visual impairment also opened up. This trend is likely to continue with employers looking to hire people with different disabilities.

In order to make use of this given opportunity, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, in collaboration with Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship prepared a National Action Plan for Skill training of Persons with Disabilities. The Plan has an ambitious target of providing skill training to 25 lakhs Persons with Disability by 2022. This also resulted in formation of an organization with a National Vision and focus of skilling Persons with Disability called Skill Council for Persons with Disability. The Skill Council for Persons with Disability (SCPwD) was incepted in October 2015 to offer Persons with Disability meaningful, industry relevant and skill based training. The Organization is promoted by Confederation of Indian Industry under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. It targets skill development of Persons with Disability as per industry needs so that it can help them to be gainfully employed and contribute to India’s growing economy.

Business Benefits to Companies

Corporate Social Responsibility remains a major driver for employing Persons with Disability. Companies are realizing the benefits and advantages like social image

enhancement and widened options for hiring better talent. Additionally, in certain specific cases serving the diverse customer base is proven to be better if the employees are from diverse backgrounds.

Availability of New Assistive Technology

Technology has become an integral part of everyone’s life. These assistive technology solutions has thrown open a wide range of opportunities for Persons with Disability to be independent in various walks of life including activities of daily living, education, employment, and social interaction. For example use of automated and electronic wheel chairs, use of various screen readers, adaptive keyboards and magnifiers to operate computers and mobile phones, availability of advanced and more sophisticated hearing aids, advent of innovative software like word prediction, speech to text and text to speech etc. are some of these technology solutions that has in a way revolutionized the lives of Persons with Disability. Such solutions today have presented an excellent opportunity to Persons with Disability to prove their worth, potential and productivity in performing various tasks successfully and efficiently. Sector Council for Persons with Disability (SCPwD) has developed an expository of assistive technologies available for each disability and its usage.

Self-Employment Opportunities

As per census 2011 (and updated data of 2016) , more than 72 percent people out of the 36 percent available disability working population are unskilled and part of informal workforce. Parallely we have seen an increased thrust by government in helping youth to take up self-employment and or become entrepreneurs. It is widely agreed by most stakeholders that self-employment is very well suited to Persons with Disability due to reasons such as gaps in required skill sets and educational qualification to get into formal employment, migration issues and complexities involved in certain disability to get into formal employment.

The government also has been introducing a number of schemes for providing financial resources to set up self-employment ventures such as the Swarna Jayanti Swarosgar Yojana (SJSY) and the Prime Minister’s Employee Guarantee Scheme (PMEGP) and National Handicapped Finance Development corporation (NHFDC) which has been set up to exclusively provide self-employment loan and conduct focused entrepreneurship Development Training (EDP training).

All these programs and schemes have a lot of potential to bring positive changes in the lives of Persons with Disability, if executed well.

DRF'S SKILLING AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

In the context of all the challenges and opportunities mentioned above, DRF has developed its skilling and employment strategy¹ focused exclusively on Persons with Disability. The strategy has considered various variables and complexities associated with disability such as; type & extent of disability, age, educational qualification and various forms of employment opportunities available. The strategy can be summarized as *“Equip Persons with Disability² from different socio-economic background with appropriate market aligned foundational and technical skills for better jobs or self-employment”*

The purpose of the strategy is to enhance DRF's contribution to the national skilling priorities for Persons with Disability and also help to: [a] guide its future work on skilling for Persons with Different Disabilities [b] sharpen its current programs and approaches [c] respond to emerging opportunities; and [d] align its work better with the priorities of its current and future partners and the larger ecosystem.

We envision that this strategy will also help DRF to contribute towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 “Decent Work and Economic Growth”, as we focus on economic inclusion of Persons with Disability to ensure that they are not left behind.

The skilling strategy consists of three core sections: [1] Principles [2] Strategic priorities and [3] STRATEGY components.

1. PRINCIPLES

All our Persons with Disability skilling initiatives are guided by the following ten principles.

- 1.1 accessible training centres
- 1.2 improving participation of women with disability
- 1.3 trained and sensitized staff
- 1.4 customized training curriculum³ to suit the needs of different disabilities & geographies
- 1.5 use of appropriate assistive technologies

- 1.6 formal jobs in inclusive and mainstream environment, with reasonable accommodation assistance
- 1.7 collaborating with Private Sector and NGO partners to design and test new ideas
- 1.8 engaging with Government for better outreach and setting up learning platforms for larger impact
- 1.9 Aims to protect and promote economic and social rights of People with Disability.
- 1.10 promoting “peer group disability training and sensitization” to build buddy system for an inclusive work environment

2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2.1 Corporate Outreach

The awareness level among the corporates in relation to employment of Persons with Disability in the private employment has gradually witnessed an upward trend in the last decade. There was a period when Persons with Disability were restricted to very few job roles such as in banking, teaching, and office front desk. This scenario started to change towards the beginning of new millennium and with some focused efforts taken by development organizations a large number of corporates today have opened up many employment opportunities to Persons with Disability. However there is still a huge scope to employ Persons with Disability in new sectors in large numbers. To address this requirement, DRF will work on mapping of job roles for Persons with Disability in different industries and conduct sensitization workshops across sectors, geographies to create awareness about disability and business benefits to improve job opportunities for Persons with Disability.

2.2 Focus on Rural Population

Around 70 percent of Persons with Disability are in rural areas with very low levels of employment. Those working, are either in informal sector or poor quality jobs. Therefore, major thrust will be on rural areas with the aim to provide training to the group with less education in order to provide them with appropriate skilling and employment opportunities in rural and urban locations based on feasibility.

¹ DRF has a separate Skilling Strategy for its Youth Skilling Program

² Persons with Disability from age group of 18-40 years

³ Demand estimation will be done by conducting primary and secondary research and aligning on the problem

2.3 Blended Training Model

We will transition from a classroom only training model to a blended training model. Focus will be on developing effective ways of delivering blended training without adversely affecting the learning outcomes. This will require digitization of content, setting up digital classrooms, training of trainers and strengthening our Learning Management System. This will enable us to reach out to more remote areas either directly or in association with local stakeholders. This will also reduce the concern of mobility for training purpose to a great extent.

2.4 Digital Training Model

Digital training program will also be introduced to reach out to Persons with Disability who cannot attend classroom training due to family, health, and disability concerns but have access to smartphone and net connectivity. This will help these youth to receive quality training from home, while also ensuring effective utilization of both human and financial resources.

2.5 Segmented Approach

Since we are focusing on the skilling and employment needs of Persons with different disabilities, greater emphasis will be laid on following different approaches in skilling them due to their diverse needs. Apart from providing training in our training centres, we will tap on colleges and universities to work on building skills of Persons with Disability. Further, since certain specialized and focused training are required among specific groups such as persons with intellectual and multiple disabilities, necessary collaboration and partnership will be established with expert organizations to achieve the desired results. Mobile learning will be offered to the group who are not otherwise not able to utilize the facility of classroom training for various reasons. However, for all the skilling initiatives, focus will be on building core employability skills and technical skills as required for the entry level job.

2.6 Community Outreach

One of the major reasons for various difficulties faced by Persons with Disability is the lack of awareness among community. Though various steps have been undertaken both by the government and developmental organizations, there still a lot needs to be done in this area. Therefore, constant efforts will be made to spread awareness in the community, parents in particular, relating to importance of skilling and employment opportunities of Persons with Disability.

2.7 Type of Disability

Although it is important to focus on all 21 disabilities (as per RPWD act 2016), DRF will be focusing majorly on people with 15 types of disabilities (refer to Annexure A). These disabilities have been chosen based on few critical criteria such as: numbers of Persons with Disability, skilling and employment opportunities available and availability of technical resources. The 15 disabilities are grouped into five sub categories. The rationale of not focussing on remaining 6 disabilities is that they are largely medical conditions and relatively new for skilling intervention. Within the 15 disabilities that we will be focussing on, there is a greater need to intensify our efforts on two specific sub categories of, Persons with Intellectual and Multiple Disability.

2.8 Focus on Age Group of 18-40 years

Persons with Disability enroll for schooling, in most cases, at a comparatively later age than their non-disabled peers. This is due to a combination of socio-economic and environmental factors. Further as per the census data 2011, the majority of Persons with Disability belong to the age group ranging from 20 to 39 years which is also called as the 'working' age group. Thus, taking all such factors into consideration, for all employment related programs our focus is on 18 to 40 years age group irrespective of disability.

2.9 Reskilling and Upskilling

Though the private sector has opened up to allow for opportunities for Persons with Disability, we find that PwD employees continue to be either underutilized or do not get a proper career growth opportunity after a certain point; thereby emphasizing the need for appropriate re-skilling and up-skilling as a priority. To address this specific need, we plan to intervene with apt skilling with the required customization will be conducted either at their workplace or in select skilling centres. Such training will be provided in line with the given job roles and its related sectors.

2.10 Self-employment

Around 90 percent of the group in the working population group are either unemployed or employed in unorganized sector. Imparting training to this group on various facets associated in self-employment will enable them to set up their own innovative and successful ventures. Also providing practical and functional training program with various self-employment establishment and management techniques. Training will be implemented in association with microfinance institutions, government and special institutions with a

As part of our strategic focus we have chosen not to do the following:

- Focus on programs which require heavy infra investment. [e.g. setting up manufacturing or high end IT lab for skilling]
- Undertake obsolete skilling initiatives which are not viable and market feasible
- Will not undertake any program that would only promote charity for Persons with Disability
- Will not be working on the 6 newly added disabilities as specified under our strategic priorities
- Will not work on skilling program in schools for children below 18 years

focus on innovative training based on market conditions and type and extent of disability.

3. STRATEGY COMPONENTS

The five strategy components discussed below are defined in relation to the functional classifications and capabilities of different disabilities. They are categorized in line with their potential performing capabilities of various tasks using their basic sense organs and other parts of the body such as physical, sensory and intellectual. This has been done in order to enable them to get trained and perform as per their disability needs and requirements. We have grouped several types of disability in to a single component where ever necessary which has resulted in arriving at the following five strategy components to help us work with 15 disabilities.

STRATEGY COMPONENT 1 (SC01) SKILLING OF PEOPLE WITH SPEECH AND HEARING DISABILITY

Sub disability categories included: Hard of Hearing, Deaf and Speech and Language Disability

Key Strategy Components

- Involve Parents Associations to increase awareness about job opportunities
- Providing accessible education to deaf youth through interactive and multimedia
- Certified sign language interpreters for training
- “Deaf friendly” environment at training centres and promote sign language among team
- Customized communication modules for hard of hearing and hearing impaired
- Identify non-voice job roles in different sectors for employment
- Training and orientation on sign language to the employers
- Promote the usage of ‘Assistive Technology’ available to enhance their performance at work place
- Explore self-employment opportunities as per the need and interest of aspirants and also of trade and market conditions.
- Providing necessary training and Hand holding support at all stages of establishment and consolidation of self-employment ventures.

Preferred Delivery Model

Implemented through skilling centers, special education colleges/ special institutes/at workplace using blended delivery approach or delivered digitally.



STRATEGY COMPONENT 2 (SC02)

SKILLING OF PEOPLE WITH LOCOMOTOR DISABILITY

Sub disability categories included: Physical disability, Cerebral palsy, Dwarfism, Leprosy cured, Acid attack survivors, Muscular Dystrophy

Program Objectives

To impart placement led training on “Core Employability Skills” or “Technical Skills” and help youth with “Locomotor Disability” get in to entry level jobs in different sectors or specific jobs roles in a particular sector and doing upskilling/re skilling of youth who are at work. Also to facilitate appropriate self-employment opportunity to aspiring youth with locomotor disability.

Key Strategy Components

- Ensuring different forms of physical accessibility features in training centre to include people with locomotor disability

- Employer led courses to suit the aspirations, qualification and competency of locomotor disability
- Carrying out appropriate mapping of job roles to suit the needs of persons with locomotor disability
- Placement of aspirants in inclusive environment with major emphasis on accessible physical environment
- Sensitization workshops for employers mainly focusing on the need to ensure barrier free and accessible environment in workplaces.
- Promote the usage of ‘Assistive Technology’ available to enhance their performance at work place
- Explore self-employment opportunities as per the need and interest of aspirants and also of trade and market conditions.
- Providing necessary training and hand holding support at all stages of establishment and consolidation of self-employment ventures.

Preferred Delivery Model

Implemented through training centres, using blended delivery approach or delivered digitally.

STRATEGY COMPONENT 3 (SC03)**SKILLING OF PEOPLE WITH VISUAL DISABILITY**

Sub disability categories included: Low Vision and Blindness

Program Objective

To impart placement led training on “Core Employability Skills” or “Technical Skills” and help youth with “Visual Disability” to get entry level jobs in different sectors or specific jobs roles in a particular sector and upskilling/re skilling of youth who are at work. Also to facilitate self-employment opportunities to aspiring persons with vision impairment.

Key Strategy Components

- Collaboration with blind associations for academic expertise
- Visual aids, tactile aids, auditory aids and equipment for training youth with low vision and blind
- Well trained trainers equipped with screen reader software and use of other technologies
- Providing required ‘Assistive Technology’ training to visually impaired
- An Orientation & Mobility (O&M) training to youth for safe and independent mobility
- Identify voice based and technology accessible job roles for placement
- Sensitize and support employers in identifying and customization of job roles
- Orientation and training to employers on computer screen reader software and other aids for blind person to better perform at work
- Explore self-employment opportunities as per the need and interest of aspirants and also of trade and market conditions.
- Providing necessary training and hand-holding support at all stages of establishment and consolidation of self-employment ventures.

Preferred Delivery Model

Implemented through skilling centres, special govt/private Colleges/Institutions, at Workplace using blended delivery approach or delivered digitally.

STRATEGY COMPONENT 4 (SC04)**SKILLING PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY**

Sub categories included: Intellectual disability, Specific Learning disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder

Program Objective

To provide appropriate skilling to “Persons with Intellectual Disability” in order to equip them to take up appropriate economic activity in a controlled environment. Also to facilitate appropriate self-employment opportunity to aspiring youth with Intellectual Disability.

Key Strategy Components

- Involve Parents Associations to increase awareness about job opportunities
- Collaborate with expert agencies for the training
- Selection of trade as per functionality of the group and job analysis for suitability
- Certified disability expert trainers to support in determining appropriate training strategies for persons with intellectual disability and autism
- Focus on self-advocacy training to express themselves
- Develop appropriate social competence and effective communication skills
- Help creating suitable work environment for people with Autism to perform better
- Promote the usage of ‘Assistive Technology’ available for better performance at work place
- On the job training and apprenticeship model for better training on employability skills and work place ethics
- Sensitize and capacitate employers for better communication strategies at work
- Identify “sheltered employment” and inclusive environment for performing job
- Explore self-employment opportunities as per the need and interest of aspirants and also of trade and market conditions.
- Providing necessary training and hand holding support at all stages of establishment and consolidation of self-employment ventures.

Preferred Delivery Model

Implemented in association with specialized government and other special institutions with practical and hands-on training model.

STRATEGY COMPONENT 05 (SC05)

SKILLING PERSONS WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

Program Objective

To impart appropriate functional and technical skills to “Persons with Multiple Disability” enabling them to participate effectively in productive economic activity. Also to facilitate appropriate self-employment opportunity to aspiring youth with multiple disabilities.

Key Strategy Components

- Certified special trainers having competency standards to deliver quality training
- Customized training content to suit the needs of persons with different type or extent of multiple disability
- Including the mild category of persons with multiple disability in the regular processes of technical and functional training
- Integrating other categories of persons with multiple disability in wage employment or sheltered employment training opportunities
- Practical and functional training program with the use of various assistive technology solutions where ever required
- Explore self-employment opportunities as per the need and interest of aspirants and also of trade and market conditions.
- Providing necessary training and hand holding support at all stages of establishment and consolidation of self-employment ventures.

Preferred Delivery Model

Implemented in skilling centres or also in partnership with special institutions with using blended delivery approach or delivered digitally.

⁴ DRF is currently working on 5 disabilities and plan to work on 15 disabilities in the next 5 years.

PARTNERSHIPS

We recognize that the execution of this strategy will only be possible with support of current and future partners and various stakeholders. We strongly believe that this skilling strategy will help us to [a] strengthen our collaboration with current partners and help in developing new partnerships [b] strengthen our work with the government at state and national level which will enable us to contribute to policies, plans and schemes for Persons with Disability [c] collaborate with international bodies and multi-lateral organizations for promoting inclusion of Persons with Disability in mainstream employment [d] establish partnerships with expert agencies for appropriate assistive technology solutions for mainstreaming Persons with Disability in the workforce [f] partner with certified agencies to promote and conduct accessibility audits to enable accessible and barrier free work environment for persons with different disability.

CONCLUSION

We envision that our skilling strategy will guide our work in contributing to system reforms or system strengthening in the area of different disabilities⁴. This will be driven through evidence-based advocacy, providing need based technical assistance, knowledge sharing and knowledge partnerships with various stakeholders from Government, Private Sectors and NGOs. With this strategy we also aim to impact at least 20,000 Persons with Disability in next five years by helping them build their employability and entrepreneurial skills and mainstreaming them in the workforce.

To ensure greater effectiveness in the implementation, we will have a mid-term strategy refresh in 2022 to review [a] the progress made towards the purpose of this strategy [b] to take stock of various changes in the ecosystem and its impact on our work and strategy [c] impact of awareness workshops organized by DRF in terms of increase in job opportunities [d] the extent of successes we have obtained in our new initiatives such as: working with severe, intellectual and multiple disabilities and facilitating self-employment initiatives.

We look forward to work with Government, Corporate CSRs, Foundations, Employers, Community based Organizations, and NGOs for skilling and employment of PwDs to enable them for decent work and economic growth.

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Annexure A

Functional Categories of Disabilities				
Category of disability	Sub classification	Type of disability	Description	
Physical Disability	Locomotor Disability	Locomotor Disability	A person's inability to execute distinctive activities associated with movement of self and objects resulting from affliction of musculoskeletal or nervous system or both.	
		Leprosy Cured Person	A Leprosy Cured Person means a person who has been cured of leprosy but is suffering from- (I) loss of sensation in hands or feet as well as loss of sensation and paresis in the eye and eye-lid but with no manifest deformity; (ii) manifest deformity and paresis but having sufficient mobility in their hands and feet to enable them to engage in normal economic activity; (iii) extreme physical deformity as well as advanced age which prevents him/her from undertaking any gainful occupation, and the expression "leprosy cured" shall be constructed accordingly.	
		Cerebral Palsy	Cerebral Palsy means a Group of non-progressive neurological condition affecting body movements and muscle coordination, caused by damage to one or more specific areas of brain, usually occurring before, during or shortly after birth.	
		Dwarfism	Dwarfism means a medical or genetic condition resulting in an adult height of 4 feet 10 inches (147 centimeters) or less.	
		Muscular Dystrophy	Muscular Dystrophy means a group of hereditary genetic muscle disease that weakens the muscles that move the human body and persons with multiple dystrophy have incorrect and missing information in their genes, which prevents them from making the proteins they need for healthy muscles. It is characterized by progressive skeletal muscle weakness, defects in muscle proteins, and the death of muscle cells and tissue.	
		Acid Attack Victims	Acid Attack Victim means a person disfigured due to violent assaults by throwing of acid or similar corrosive substance.	
	Visual Impairment		Blindness	Blindness means a condition where a person has any of the following conditions, after best correction—(I) total absence of sight; or (ii) visual acuity less than 3/60 or less than 10/200 (Snellen) in the better eye with best possible correction; or (iii) limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of less than 10 degree.
			Low Vision	Low Vision means a condition where a person has any of the following conditions, namely: (I) visual acuity not exceeding 6/18 or less than 20/60 unto 3/60 or up to 10/200 (Snellen) in the better eye with best possible corrections; or (ii) limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of less than 40 degree up to 10 degree.
		Hearing Impairment & Speech and Language Disability	Deaf	Deaf means persons having 70 DB hearing loss in speech frequencies in both ears
			Hard of Hearing	Hard of Hearing means person having 60 DB to 70 DB hearing loss in speech frequencies in both ears
			Speech and Language Disability	Speech and Language Disability means a permanent disability arising out of conditions such as laryngectomy or aphasia affecting one or more components of speech and language due to organic or neurological causes
	Intellectual Disability	Intellectual Disability	Intellectual Disability	A condition characterized by significant limitation both in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem solving) and in adaptive behavior which covers a range of every day, social and practical skills.
			Specific Learning Disabilities	Specific Learning Disabilities means a heterogeneous group of conditions wherein there is a deficit in processing language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself as a difficulty to comprehend, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations and includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and developmental aphasia;
			Autism Spectrum Disorder	Autism Spectrum Disorder means a neuro-developmental condition typically appearing in the first three years of life that significantly affects a person's ability to communicate, understand relationships and relate to others, and is frequently associated with unusual or stereotypical rituals or behaviors
Multiple Disabilities	Multiple Disabilities	Multiple Disabilities	Multiple Disabilities (more than one of the above specified disabilities) include deaf blindness which means a condition in which a person may have combination of hearing and visual impairments causing severe communication, developmental, and educational problems.	