Record of Discussion of the 'Orientation Session' under Cycle 3 of the Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) for Heads of Institutions/representatives from 40 identified Higher Education Institutions, including Central Universities, IITs, IIITs, IISERs, and IIMs, held on 02.04.2025 at 11:00 AM.

1.   An Online Orientation Session for Cycle 3 of the Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities (CBSLD) was organized on 02.04.2025 at 11.00 AM under the chairmanship of the Secretary (Higher Education) in collaboration with the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) and the ChangeInkk Foundation as the resource partner. The program aims to strengthen the capacity building of faculty in the area of specific learning disabilities and equip them to provide support to students with learning disabilities. The orientation session was held for the heads of institutions from 40 identified higher education institutions (HEIs) to orient them about the program and the implementation plan for Cycle 3. The list of HEIs present is attached in the **Annexure**. The session underscored the importance of institutional support and prioritisation of inclusion in higher education.

2.   Mr. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Director D/o of Higher Education, welcomed the participants and provided a brief introduction of the Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) program and outlined the agenda for the orientation session.

3.   Mr. Vineet Joshi, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, welcomed Directors, Vice-Chancellors, and dignitaries to the orientation program. He affirmed that the traditional quest for academic success through marks and grades often overlooks underlying challenges faced by students with disabilities, eventually leaving them behind. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 addresses this gap by emphasizing support for SEDGs who have been historically underrepresented groups, including students with disabilities, ensuring that diverse backgrounds are taken into consideration. In his opening remarks, he shared highlights of a conversation with a Vice-Chancellor about the additional time needed to teach students with learning disabilities, underscoring the importance of specialized methods and faculty patience. The training programs should aim to equip faculty members with both technical skills and an empathetic, inclusive mindset, an objective that lies at the core of this programme. Secretary (HE) also emphasized the transformative potential of AI in education, particularly for students with learning disabilities. However, he stressed the need for conscious efforts to make AI tools accessible to all learners. In addition to this, Teacher motivation and early identification of learning disabilities were highlighted as critical factors for successful inclusive education. He concluded that the insights from this program would help prepare future policies to create a more inclusive learning environment.

4.   Ms. Rina Sonowal Kouli, Joint Secretary, Department of Higher Education, delivered a focused presentation on Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities, outlining the critical need for such initiatives in higher education. She underscored the alignment of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 with the provisions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016, emphasizing that both frameworks advocate for inclusive education and the support of students with diverse learning needs. Ms. Kouli highlighted the pressing importance of equipping faculty with the skills and understanding necessary to support students with specific learning disabilities (SLDs). In today's classrooms, there are many students with SLDs who would require tailored support, and research shows that early intervention significantly increases the likelihood of academic progress for these students. She further stressed the need for key stakeholders across the education system to possess the

capability to identify and respond to the unique needs of students with SLDs. The presentation included data on the number of students with SLDs who are registered and have qualified for national-level examinations to higher education institutes, as well as their enrollment in institutions. These statistics point to the growing presence of SLD students in higher education and the corresponding need for institutional readiness and support systems. She reaffirmed how important it is for HEIs to undergo regular capacity building to address the needs of students with SLDs and become inclusive in all respects. Accordingly, Capacity Building for Special Learning Disabilities is implemented to begin with the capacity building of key stakeholders concerning specific learning disabilities among students under the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme. An overview of the implementation of the previous cycles was provided. As part of the cycles, different sessions were conducted like Orientation Sessions, Sensitization Sessions, Masterclasses, In-Person Workshops and Monitoring of Implementation. Around 900 faculty members from these 60 institutions benefited. Upon the success of the previous cycles, the third cycle is being organized with 40 new higher education institutes identified. Join Secretary (HE) concluded by presenting the implementation plan and tentative schedule for the third cycle of the program.

5.   Prof. Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar, Chairman, University Grants Commission, in his remarks which emphasized the significance of inclusive education for students with all types of disabilities. He highlighted that the UGC has issued detailed guidelines to support students with disabilities throughout their educational journey—from admission to integration within campus life. These guidelines outline actionable measures not just for administrative units but also for faculty, staff, and the wider campus community. The goal is to ensure that students with disabilities feel welcomed, supported, and motivated rather than isolated. Institutions must demonstrate openness and readiness to provide the necessary facilities for these students. Professor Kumar underscored that this should not be treated as a one-off initiative or a compliance formality. Instead, it should be a continuous and integral part of institutional culture. He envisioned that localized efforts should evolve into a national movement, with inclusivity becoming a core value across all institutions. His concluding remarks included a call for more frequent such initiatives to benefit the entire educational ecosystem.

6.   Ms. Aparajita Singh (Resource Person, ChangeInkk Foundation) delivered a detailed presentation on various aspects of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs). The presentation emphasised the need to clarify common misconceptions about the condition before taking the necessary action to create a more inclusive higher education institution. She discussed several key points regarding Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs), which are lifelong conditions that impact how individuals process information and acquire knowledge. Conditions such as Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, and Dyspraxia were highlighted, with dyslexia accounting for approximately 80% of cases. During the presentation, a triad representing academics, life skills, and emotional well-being was presented to illustrate how the lives of students with learning disabilities are impacted. Daily challenges faced by individuals with SLDs include low self-esteem, memory difficulties, heightened sensitivity to stimuli, slow information processing, planning struggles, and inconsistencies in written and spoken communication. It was stressed that only 1 in 20 individuals get identified to have a learning disability, and there's a 35% higher chance of students dropping out of college. Furthermore, it highlighted the remarkable achievements of individuals with dyslexic thinking, emphasizing their capacity for innovation and global contributions. The presentation identified key pillars for SLD inclusion in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), including admissions, academic support, on-campus support,

access to resources, and employment opportunities. She highlighted the need for a framework to support SLDs while asserting that enabling policies are in place to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities in educational institutions.

7. Following the presentation, the participants and representatives asked their queries about the program and implementation in their institution.

8. The session concluded with closing remarks by Prof. Kumar Suresh from NIEPA. He shared the progress made during the previous two cycles of the program and highlighted his observation that many participants initially had limited awareness or understanding of specific learning disabilities. However, through sustained engagement and dialogue during the program, they developed a more informed and empathetic perspective. By the end of the program, several participants expressed a genuine commitment to initiating inclusive practices within their respective institutions.

9. The session ended with a vote of thanks.

List of Participants for Orientation Session under Cycle 3 of Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs)

A. List of Attendees

Affiliation Details	Names of Attendees
Ministry of Education, UGC, AICTE and NIEPA, Resource Persons	1. Mr. Vineet Joshi, Secretary, Higher Education, MoE 2. Prof. Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar, Chairman, UGC 3. Prof. T G Sitharam Chairman AICTE 4. Ms. Rina Sonowal Kouli, Joint Secretary, D/o Higher Education, MoE 5. Mr. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Director, D/o Higher Education, MoE 6. Ms. Partha Kansabanik, DS, D/o Higher Education, MoE 7. Mr. Ramesh Kumar Sharma, US, D/o Higher Education, MoE 8. Prof. Kumar Suresh, NIEPA 9. Ms. Noopur Jhunjhunwala, Trustee, ChangeInkk Foundation 10. Ms. Aparajita Singh, ChangeInkk Foundation

B. List of Institutes

i) List of Present Identified Institutes

S.No.	Name of Present Identified Institutes
1	IIT Bombay
2	IIT(ISM) Dhanbad
3	IIT Hyderabad
4	IIT Jodhpur
5	IIT Patna
6	IIT Bhilai
7	IIITD&M Kurnool
8	IIIT Kota
9	IIM Lucknow
10	IIM Nagpur
11	Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalayas
12	Central University of Tamil Nadu
13	Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya Wardha
14	Nagaland University
15	National Institute of Technology Rourkela
16	National Institute of Technology Silchar
17	National Institute of Technology Mizoram

18	National Institute of Technology Puducherry
19	NITTTR Chandigarh

ii) List of Present Institutes (Additional)

S.No.	Name of Present Institutes (Additional)
1	NIT Surathkal
2	NIT Goa
3	NIT Srinagar
4	NIT Jamshedpur
5	NIT Hamirpur
6	NIT Jaipur
7	NIT Trichy
8	IGNOU
9	Central University of Kashmir
10	Central University Karnataka
11	Sikkim University
12	Indira Gandhi National Tribal University
13	English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU)
14	Manipur University
15	Dr. Hari Singh Gour Vishwavidyalaya
16	Central Sanskrit University
17	Maulana Azad National Urdu University

iii) List of Identified Institutes which did not participate

S.No.	Name of Absent Identified Institutes
1	IIT Mandi
2	ABV- IIIT&M Gwalior
3	IIIT Agartala
4	IIIT Bhagalpur
5	IIIT Kalyani
6	IIM Ahmedabad
7	IIM Calcutta
8	IIM Kashipur
9	IIM Jammu
10	IIM Sambalpur
11	IISER Tirupati
12	University of Delhi
13	Jawaharlal Nehru University
14	Central University of Jammu
15	Sardar Vallabhbhai National Institute of Technology Surat
16	National Institute of Technology Arunachal Pradesh
17	National Institute of Technology Meghalaya
18	School of Planning and Architecture Bhopal
19	Indian Institute of Science (IIsc.) Bengaluru
20	National Institute of Advanced Manufacturing Technology (NIAMT) Ranchi
21	Board of Apprenticeship Training (NR) Kanpur