



शिक्षा मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION

Report on Orientation Session of  
Capacity Building Program for Specific  
Learning Disabilities (SLDs)

**under**

Malaviya Mission Teacher Training  
Program (MMTTP)

**Organized by**

Ministry of Education in collaboration with ChangeInkk Foundation

**Anchored by**

National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA)

Venue – Online

Dated – 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024

## Introduction

The Orientation Session marks the first phase of the Capacity Building Program for Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) under MMTPP in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This session was organized for the heads of 41 HEIs to introduce the issue and provide an overview of the program's implementation plan. Representatives from these institutions, including Central Universities, IITs, IIITs, IISER, IIMs, and regulatory bodies, participated to commence the Capacity Building on SLDs. The program aims to enhance the capacities of institutions to foster inclusion for students with SLDs.



In January 2024, the pilot program was launched with the heads of institutions (HoIs) and distinguished members of regulatory bodies. The program began with an orientation, followed by the launch of a survey to benchmark inclusive practices at their respective HEIs. Under the orientation session the Directors/HoIs and members of regulatory and accreditation bodies, including the Ministry of Education (MoE), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), University Grants Commission (UGC), National Testing Agency (NTA), National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), and National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) were sensitized.

**Inaugural Address:** The session was inaugurated by Shri K Sanjay Murthy, Secretary of Higher Education, MoE. In his opening remarks, he welcomed the Directors, Vice-Chancellors, dignitaries from HEIs, regulatory body functionaries, and resource persons for the orientation program. He highlighted that NEP 2020 recommends educational institutions offer inclusive education and respond to the special needs of students with disabilities. While acknowledging the ongoing efforts of many institutions, he emphasized that this initiative aims to further prepare institutions to make more structured and coordinated efforts toward inclusion.

He noted that 'Capacity Building on SLDs is a crucial step envisioned in National Education Policy NEP 2020, as it brings focused attention to the issues of SLDs, encouraging institutions to become exemplars for others to follow. He pointed out that while physical disabilities are often visible, learning disabilities are harder to comprehend, and most initiatives have primarily addressed physical disabilities. To provide context, he shared data on the number of SLDs students registered and qualified for various national-level examinations and offered courses in premier institutions.

Smt. Rina Sonowal Kouli, Joint Secretary of the Department of Higher Education: Joint Secretary gave a brief presentation on the Capacity Building program, emphasizing its necessity. She highlighted that the NEP 2020 mandates increased access for Divyang students in classrooms, with equity and inclusion as the cornerstone of all educational decisions. She stressed NEP 2020's commitment to the principles of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, which aims to empower Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). SLDs are classified as one of the Intellectual Disabilities (IDs) among the 21 disabilities identified in the RPwD Act, 2016.

She pointed out that since many classrooms include students with disabilities who require continuous support, there is a need for special educators and faculty with the relevant skills to understand their special requirements. She reiterated the importance of regular capacity building for HEIs to address the needs of students with SLDs and ensure inclusivity in all aspects. She concluded her presentation by outlining the implementation plan, mode of engagement for each session, prospective participants, and the overall timeline of the program.

## Speakers and Their Contributions

**Mr. Arun Fernandez, Founder of DLearners, and Ms. Shilpa Rao, Principal Partner at TCS-PI:** They shared their personal experiences as individuals with SLDs, discussing the unique challenges they faced in processing written



and verbal information differently from the mainstream. Their stories highlighted their challenging journeys and dispelled doubts about the capabilities of individuals with SLDs to reach their full potential. One of them mentioned that their dyslexic thinking made them more innovative and resilient, as they developed unique ways of visualizing scenarios and linking pieces of information to address everyday challenges creatively. A key takeaway from their experiences was the difficulty SLDs face in convincing people in their personal and professional lives to make necessary accommodations, given that SLDs are not always visibly apparent.

**Concluding Address:** The orientation session concluded with closing remarks from Prof. Shashikala Wanjari of NIEPA, who expressed her gratitude towards the participating institutions, resource persons, and the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, for their support of the initiative. As a coordinating partner, Prof. Wanjari assured that NIEPA is committed to assisting in the implementation of the Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities for effective outcomes.

## Overview of the Session

Smt. Noopur Jhunjhunwala, Trustee of the ChangeInkk Foundation, delivered a comprehensive presentation addressing various aspects of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs). She emphasized the importance of dispelling misconceptions and adopting appropriate responses to foster a more inclusive society. She highlighted the need to change the narrative, advocating for recognizing individuals with SLDs as different learners rather than disruptors.

She presented statistics on the global and national prevalence of SLDs, noting that SLDs are lifelong conditions characterized by differences in information processing and learning. Dyslexia, a common SLD, accounts for approximately 80% of all SLDs cases. Her examples helped participants visualize how individuals with dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia perceive information.

The presentation also introduced a triad model encompassing academics, life skills, and emotional well-being to illustrate the multifaceted impact of SLDs on individuals' lives. She drew attention to the struggles with self-esteem, memory, sensitivity to overstimulation, slow information processing, planning difficulties, and the mismatch between verbal and written communication that individuals with SLDs face daily.

Additionally, she highlighted various global companies founded or led by individuals diagnosed with dyslexia, demonstrating that people with SLDs can achieve remarkable success. The presentation underscored the utility of 'dyslexic thinking' and the imaginative capabilities inherent in SLDs. She outlined the way forward for HEIs to help individuals with SLDs unlock their potential.

## Key Outcomes and Recommendations

After a detailed presentation on the conceptual understanding of SLDs a Q&A session followed. Vice-Chancellors, directors, academicians from participating HEIs, functionaries of regulatory bodies, and other dignitaries were invited to raise queries about SLDs and the implementation of the Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities in their institutions.

During the session, the Director of IIT Tirupati, Director of IIT Trichy, Director of IIT Jammu, VC of Central University of Andhra Pradesh, and Dean/Faculty members from IIT Kharagpur, IIT Kanpur, IIM Bangalore, and

others welcomed the efforts of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, in organizing this program. They acknowledged the importance of building their institutions' capacity to effectively address SLDs concerns and unequivocally extended support for its implementation according to the program's timeline.

**Conclusion:** In his closing remarks Secretary, Higher Education thanked all the participating institutions and requested them to identify their resources to continue the program with subsequent sessions for successful implementation.

**Future Steps:** The initiative marks the start of a journey towards building an inclusive ecosystem within the HEIs. In the second phase, over 300 heads from five departments will be sensitized, and 41 institutions will be selected to implement the program. Over six months, each institution will be trained to implement inclusion processes in collaboration with the ChangeInkk Foundation.

In phase three, department-wise masterclasses will be held to foster an inclusive ecosystem, sensitizing over 400 heads of departments and two representatives from each department. The fourth phase includes a two-day in-person workshop to support masterclass participants in sharing their insights, challenges and suggestions for creating an inclusive environment for students with SLDs and introducing them to Inclusive Action Plan. This will be followed by individual monthly check-ins with institutions to monitor progress and address issues, ensuring sufficient time for implementation.



## Appendices

**Table 1: List of Individual Participants:**

<b>List of Participants for Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs)</b>	
<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>
1.	Shri K Sanjay Murthy, Secretary, Higher Education
2.	Prof. K.N. Satyanarayana, Director, IIT Tirupati
3.	Prof. Shashikala Wanjari, VC, NIEPA
4.	Dr. G. Aghila Director-NIT Tiruchirappalli
5.	Director, IIT Jammu
6.	Prof SA KORI, VC, Central University of Andhra Pradesh
7.	Prof. Amrita Banerjee, IIT Bombay
8.	Prof. Anil Suraj, IIM Bangalore
9.	Ms Alka Bharat
10.	Mr Annavaram, University of Hyderabad
11.	Ms. Aparajita Singh ChangeInkk
12.	Dr. Dipali, IISER Pune
13.	IIT Indore
14.	NIT Calicut
15.	Ark Verma, IIT Kanpur
16.	Mr Arun Fernandez, Founder, Dlearners
17.	Mr Asit, Nit Warrangal
18.	Ms Vyjayanthi, NIT Goa
19.	NIT Calicut
20.	Mr Vinay Mohan Das MANIT
21.	Mr PRAHLAD PRASAD, NIT Jamshedpur
22.	Dean(AA), IIT Tirupati
23.	IIT DELHI
24.	Dean FAA IIT Ropar
25.	NTA
26.	UGC
27.	Mr Dipak Gayen
28.	Director, IIT Roorkee
29.	Prof. N. P. Padhy
30.	Mr B. Ravi
31.	Director, NIT CALICUT
32.	IIT Kharagpur
33.	Prof. Vimal Katiyar Dean, R&D IIT Guwahati
34.	Prof. Vimal Katiyar Dean, R&D
35.	Mr Damodar Reddy
36.	Ganga D
37.	Dr. Govardhan
38.	Central University of Rajasthan
39.	Mr Jitendra Kumar
40.	Dr J K Tripathi
41.	Dr. Rajshree Kamat, MANIT, Bhopal
42.	Ms Khushboo Chhangani, IIM Banglore
43.	Prof Kumar Suresh, NIEPA

44.	Mr M M Malik
45.	Dr. Meena Murmu
46.	Dr. S. Mini, NIT Goa
47.	Ms Priyamitra Munoth
48.	Dr. Naman Garg, IIIT Una
49.	Dr. Naveen Cheggoju IIIT Una
50.	Ms Neeraja Dashaputre IISER Pune
51.	Mr Naresh Nagwani, NIT, Raipur
52.	Mr Narendra Londhe, Nit Raipur
53.	Ms Noopur Jhunhunwala, Trustee, ChangeInkk Foundation
54.	Mr P. HARI KRISHNA PRASAD, NIT Warrangal
55.	P.M., NIT Warangal
56.	Ms Poornitha, ChangeInkk
57.	Dr. P. R. Sahu, IIT Bhubaneswar
58.	CUSB
59.	Dr Raghu, IIT Goa
60.	Mr Rajendra Srivastava, IIT Ropar
61.	Ms Shilpa Rao
62.	Mr Ravi Kant, Central University, South Bihar
63.	Registrar, IISER Mohali
64.	Registrar, University of Hyderabad
65.	Ms Ritika
66.	Dr. Rupashree Baral, IIT Madras
67.	Mr Subramanian, IIT Gandhinagar
68.	Mr S Ahlawat, IISER MOhali
69.	IIT BHU Varanasi
70.	Mr Santanu Misra, IIT Kanpur
71.	Ms Sonia
72.	Dr Sadhana Parashar NTA
73.	Prof. Swati Pal, IIT Bombay
74.	MMTTC, Central University South Bihar
75.	Mr Timir Berawala, IIT Gandhinagar
76.	Mr Udai Pratap Singh, IIT Roorkee
77.	IIT Ropar Prof.
78.	K.N. Satyanarayana
79.	IIT Roorkee
80.	Prof. N.K. Navani, VC, IIT Roorkee
81.	Prof. N. P. Padhy, Director, MNIT
82.	VC, NEHU
83.	VC, C.U. Haryana
84.	IIT Jammu
85.	AR, Academic, IIT Kanpur
86.	Mr Viral Shah, IIT Gandhinagar
87.	NITC
88.	Joint Secretary, D/o Higher Education, MoE
89.	Deputy Secretary, D/o Higher Education, MoE