



Poverty



Work and Employment Community

Solution Exchange for the Work and Employment Community Consolidated Reply

Query: Employability Training for the Disabled in the Northeast - Experiences; Referrals

Compiled by [Ranu Bhogal](#), Resource Person and [Arif Hussain](#), Research Associate

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From [Laishram Leingakpa](#), The Handicapped Development Foundation, Imphal

Posted 17 September 2007

Dear Members,

The Handicapped Development Foundation (HD Foundation) is a Manipur-based NGO started in 2002 by a few educated disabled people with the assistance of some friends with the sole purpose of working for the overall development of disabled people in the state. Since its inception, the Foundation has been primarily engaged in:

- ♦ Awareness creation about the issues and challenges being faced by disabled people
- ♦ Family counseling to give emotional support to the families of disabled people
- ♦ Giving support to the educated disabled people to pursue higher education and be employed

Currently, the Foundation is planning to start a Vocational Training Centre for disabled people. The proposed training centre, the first of its kind in Manipur, will be based at Imphal. Initially, the training centre will provide computer training for those who have passed a minimum of XII Standard, and cane/bamboo craft and handloom weaving training to illiterate and semi-educated disabled people.

The objectives of the proposed project are:

- ♦ To train disabled people living below poverty line in suitable trades and prepare them for self-employment
- ♦ To develop and encourage the feeling of self-respect among the disabled people through economic and social empowerment
- ♦ To strive for long-term goal of breaking the vicious linkage between disability, poverty and illiteracy by providing backward and forward linkage for economic empowerment
- ♦ To sensitize people/institutions through demonstration/exhibition about the productive capability and prospects of employability of disabled people and mobilize their support for sustainability of the project

In this backdrop, I would like to know from the community members:

- ♦ Organizations/institutions that support disability initiatives as the one mentioned above

- ♦ Contacts for organizations/government departments that focus on northeast India, particularly in the disability sector
- ♦ Success stories/experiences on generating employment opportunities for the disabled

Your valuable responses will help us in finding like-minded partners organizations that will go a long way in achieving our objectives.

Responses were received, with thanks, from

1. [Anantha Lakshmi Ganapathi](#), Development Volunteer, Bangalore
2. [Prasobhkumar R.](#), Centre for Management Development, Thiruvananthapuram
3. [Neeraj Sharma](#), Leonard Cheshire International-SARO, Bangalore
4. [Arif Hussain](#), United Nations, New Delhi
5. [Anjum Khalidi](#), United Nations, New Delhi
6. [Divya Sarma](#), Samraksha, Bangalore
7. [V. R. Raghavan](#), Health Management and Research Institute-Satyam Foundation, Hyderabad
8. [R. S. N. Sharma](#), Consumers International, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
9. [Medha Joshi](#), UNDP-GoI Project, All India Institute of Local Self-Government, Pune

Further contributions are welcome!

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Summary of Responses

Skills training to increase employability is a proven tool for empowering poor and marginalized people as it capacitates them to utilize emerging opportunities in the production and services sectors. Recently, there have been various initiatives by both government and private organizations to increase employability among socio-economically marginalized populations; however, a section of this group, the differently abled, have not yet received enough avenues and opportunities to develop their skills. Responding to a query on how to improve employment options for the disabled, especially in the northeast, members shared information on organizations supporting disability initiatives in the area of skill training. Discussants also came up with relevant experiences and contacts for government and non-government organizations, which are involved with skill building initiatives for differently abled people.

In view of the various constraints, such as limited selection of suitable trades and non-availability of training materials and experts, respondents noted it becomes even more difficult to implement employment-enhancing programs for the differently abled. To help address this problem, members referred non-government **organizations involved with disability initiatives** and organizations working with individuals with disabilities (i.e. visual and hearing impairments or mental disorders). Sharing an example from [Karnataka](#), discussants pointed out the different roles played by an organization- providing training to the differently abled and placement support on completion of the training. Similarly, participants referred the rights-based Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) approach, a holistic endeavor seeking to empower the differently abled. On the level of policy advocacy and sensitization of stakeholders, they referred organizations, which are part of the process of creating an enabling policy environment for disable friendly policies.

Along with non-profit and private organizations, members provided information on government organizations working across the country and have a mandate to provide the differently abled opportunities through training, credit and/or placement support. The major intervention areas for these organizations are provision of financial support for self-employment, training support, and ensuring compliance with regulations to protect the interests of the differently abled, including compulsory employment. Participants also referred to several Government of India organizations entrusted with ensuring compliance with government policies design contribute towards the welfare of the differently abled.

Discussing **successful experiences**, members pointed out a number of initiatives from different parts of the country that could serve as models for future application. They mentioned how several organizations in [Karnataka](#) are facilitating training and absorption of differently abled people in the emerging service sector operations, such as Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and hospitality services. According to discussants, corporate support is crucial in such initiatives. Another successful initiative from [Karnataka](#), highlighted how an industry federation was able to effectively assist in the recruitment of differently abled people to work in companies within the federation.

Respondents also listed cases of individual companies supporting disability initiatives on their own. Notable were some relatively small companies in [Tamil Nadu](#) and [Maharashtra](#) making a point to recruit a number of differently abled people. They were so impressed by the commitment and sincerity demonstrated by these employees, the companies decided to recruit more disabled individuals. A similar example from [Andhra Pradesh](#), highlighted the work of an autonomous state government agency that developed institutions for differently abled people to facilitate their access into mainstream development programs. Members shared another initiative in **Andhra Pradesh** where an agency experimented with organizing differently abled people into groups and then forming group level livelihood enhancement plans for them.

Overall, discussants agreed the best strategy for empowering the differently abled, is through ensuring they have access to livelihood options and equipped with employable skills. They also felt that to make initiatives more effective, organizations and government need to work at different levels, training and organizing disabled individuals at the grassroots as well as engaging in higher-level policy advocacy efforts to guarantee more programs and preferential allocation for differently abled people.

Comparative Experiences

Maharashtra

Employment for the Differently Abled, Pune (from [Arif Hussain](#), United Nations, New Delhi)

Sharayu Precision Tools (SPT), a tool-manufacturing unit, employs more than 36 differently abled men and women. Belying all the company's initial apprehensions and reservations about employing them, the company has found that these men and women are able to carry out all sorts of tasks ranging from riveting, drilling and greasing to polishing and packing. Impressed by their performance, SPT is planning to recruit more differently abled people to work for the organization. Read [more](#)

Tamil Nadu

Appropriate Work for the Differently Abled, Tirupur (from [Anjum Khalidi](#), United Nations, New Delhi)

Sakthi Trading Company, Tirupur is an exporter of spices. The company employs 103 persons (out of total 500) with different abilities. The work distribution is as per the abilities of the person concerned,

e.g. people with orthopedic impairments are given packaging jobs and people with visual impairments do tactile functions like peeling and sorting. Other companies in the area are also planning to recruit differently abled people. Read [more](#).

Andhra Pradesh

From [V. R. Raghavan](#), HMRI-Satyam Foundation, Hyderabad

Institution Building for Empowerment

The Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) works on developing institutions for people with disabilities (PwDs) and linking them up with women federations at the village and block level. These groups of PwDs focus upon articulating their rights and entitlements and also accessing mainstream development programs through their federations. Using these federations, many disabled individuals have accessed the community investment fund of livelihood programs. Read [more](#).

Livelihood for the Disabled through Community Based Rehabilitation, Mahboobnagar

A trust called 'Commitments' based in Hyderabad works in the Mahboobnagar district. Focusing on community based rehabilitation and livelihood promotion, the trust organizes people with disabilities into groups at the block level and helps them formulate livelihood enhancement action plans at the group as well as the individual level. These plans are then linked to government livelihoods programs for financing. As a result of these efforts many government interventions are benefiting PwDs.

Karnataka and Tamil Nadu

CSR Induced Service Sector Employment for the Disabled, Bangalore and Chennai (from [Neeraj Sharma](#), Leonard Chesire International-SARO, Bangalore)

Leonard Chesire International in partnership with local organizations in the urban areas are training differently abled people in service sector oriented trades. The major trades they are providing training on include Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and hospitality services. With support from training organizations and the corporate sector a number of differently abled candidates have been placed with companies like Infosys, Mphasis, and IBM. Read [more](#)

Related Resources

Recommended Organizations and Programmes

The National Association for the Blind, Karnataka Branch, Bangalore (from [Anant Lakshmi Ganapathi](#), Development Volunteer, Bangalore)

NAB Rehabilitation Complex, CA Site No: 4, NAB Road, Jeevan Bima Nagar, Bangalore 560075 Karnataka; Tel: +91-80-25281590; Fax: +91-80-25281439; nabkarnataka@yahoo.co.in

Works in the areas of education, training, rehabilitation, and employment for the visually impaired with an aim of making them self-reliant and confident

National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation, Faridabad (from [Prasobhkumar R.](#), Centre for Management Development, Thiruvananthapuram)

Red Cross Bhawan, Sector-12, Faridabad 121007 Uttar Pradesh; Tel: +91-129-2287512/2287513/2280214/2280335/2264841; Fax: +91-129-2284371; nhfdc@nda.vsnl.net.in; <http://www.nhfdc.org/overview.html#object>

Organization under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, GoI with the objective of promoting enterprise and employment opportunities for the disabled

From [Neeraj Sharma](#), Leonard Chesire International-SARO, Bangalore

National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, Hyderabad)

Manovikas Nagar, Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh 500009; Tel: +91-40-27751741/42/43/44/45; Fax: +91-40-27750198; hyd1_nimhldhk@sancharnet.in; <http://nimhindia.org/>

Organization dedicated to providing equal opportunities to the mentally handicapped in the area of rehabilitation, vocation and employment

National Institute for the Visually Handicapped (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, Dehradun)

116, Rajpur Road, Dehradun Uttarakhand 248001; Tel: +91-135-2744979/2744387/2744491; Fax: +91-135-2748147 nivh@sancharnet.in; http://www.nivh.org/services/services_vocatonal.asp

National level organization for promoting education, vocational training and rehabilitation services for the visually handicapped

National Institute of Occupational Health (ICMR) (WHO Collaborative Center), Ahmedabad

Meghani Nagar, Ahmedabad 380016 Gujarat; Tel: +91-79-22686351/22686352/22686430/22686330/22686242; Fax: +91-79-2686110; nioh@nioh.org; niohicmr@icenet.net

National level organization, working on the issues of occupational health for the disability and relevant employment for the disabled

Leonard Cheshire International, Bangalore

542, 9th Cross, 3rd Phase, J.P. Nagar, Bangalore 560078 Karnataka; Tel: +91-80-26581902; Fax: +91-80-26586113 info@lcsouthasia.org;

http://www.lcsouthasia.org/saro_programmes/saro_thematic_areas/saro_thematic_areas_ics.html

Organization seeking to empower the disabled using a rights-based approach, involved with livelihoods training for the disabled

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Disability Forum, Chennai

Southern Regional - Head Quarters, 98 / 1, Velachery Main Road, Guindy, Chennai 600032 Tamil Nadu; Tel: +91-44-42444555; Fax: +91-44-42444510 cii.south@ciionline.org;

http://cii.in/menu_content.php?menu_id=1090

Supports disability initiatives through assistance in training and placement of disabled people in CII member industries and facilities

From [Arif Hussain](#), United Nations, New Delhi

National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, Cuttack

Olatpur, P.O. Bairoi, District Cuttack, Orissa 754010; Tel: +91-671-2805552; Fax: +91-671-2805862 nirtar@ori.nic.in; <http://nirtar.nic.in/rehabilitation.htm>

Central government institute with the objective of undertaking vocational training, placement and rehabilitation of the physically handicapped

The National Trust, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, New Delhi

9th Floor Jeevan Prakash Building, K.G. Marg Marg, New Delhi 110001; Tel: +91-11-43520861-64; Fax: +91-11-23731648; nationaltrust@nic.in;

http://nationaltrust.org.in/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14&Itemid=32

Trust works towards enabling and empowering persons with disability to live as independently and as fully as possible with all support mechanisms including employment and training support

Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons With Disabilities, New Delhi

Sarojini House, 6 Bhagwan Dass Road, New Delhi 110001; Tel: +91-011-23386154/23386054/23384762; ccpd@hub.nic.in; http://ccdisabilities.nic.in/education_index.htm

Nodal body for ensuring the compliance of different rules related to disable rights, reservations and special provisions like employment and training

Saryu Precision Tools, Pune

C-56, Abhimanshree Society, N. C. L. Road, Pune 411008, Maharashtra; Tel: +91-20-27475299; Fax: +91-20-27470006; info@gatiman.com; <http://gatiman.com/>

Almost twenty-five percent of their workshops employ differently abled people, as a result of their CSR initiative targeting the recruitment of disabled workers

From [Anjum Khalidj](#), United Nations, New Delhi

National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP), New Delhi

A-77, South Extension Part II, New Delhi 110049; Tel: +91-11-26265647/48; Fax: +91-11-26265649 secretariat@ncpedp.org; <http://ncpedp.org/#employment>

Organization registered as a trust and has a mandate of encouraging the employment of the disabled people through direct implementation and policy interventions

Sakthi Trading Company, Tirupur

391, Kallankattu Thottam, Kamaraj Road, Tirupur 641604, Tamil Nadu; Tel: +91-421-210384; stm10@rediffmail.com

Sakthi Trading Company has employed more than a 100 differently abled people for different tasks in the company can be a model for other organizations.

From [Divya Sarma](#), Samraksha, Bangalore

Rehabilitation Council of India, New Delhi

B-22, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi 110016; Tel: +91-11-26532816/26534287/26532384/26532408; Fax: +91-11-26534291; rehabstd@nde.vsnl.net.in; <http://rehabcouncil.nic.in/council/objective.htm>

Government of India organization in charge of ensuring compliance of disability related laws and policies including those concerned with employment

National Society for Equal Opportunities for the Handicapped (NASEOH), Mumbai

Postal Colony Road, Chembur, Mumbai (Suburban) District, Maharashtra 400071; Tel: +91-22-5220224/25; Fax: +91-22-25220225; naseoh@bom7.vsnl.net.in; <http://www.ashanet.org/projects/project-view.php?p=248>

A 40 year old NGO, working for the vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities, a repository of experience on disability initiatives, including training and employment support.

Blind People's Association of India (BPA), Ahmedabad

Vastrapur, Ahmedabad 380015 Gujarat; Tel: +91-79-26303346/26305082; blinabad1@bsnl.in; <http://www.bpaindia.org/Activities.htm>

NGO providing a wide gamut of services- from education and counselling, to rehabilitation and employment support, as well as a multiple disability and advocacy services

National Association for the Blind, Mumbai

Department of Employment, 2nd floor, 11/12, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan Road, Worli Seaface, Mumbai 400025 Maharashtra; Tel: +91-22-4988134; Fax: +91-22-4932539; nabin@bom3.vsnl.net.in; <http://nabindia.org/>

Organization with the objective of empowering the blind through education and training in becoming self-sufficient through employment or self-employment

Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Hyderabad (from [V. R. Raghavan](#), Health Management and Research Institute-Satyam Foundation, Hyderabad)

4th Floor, Hermitage Office Complex, Door No. 5-10-192, Hill Fort Road, Hyderabad 500004 Andhra Pradesh; Tel: +91-40-23298981 ; Fax: +91-40-23211848;

http://www.velugu.org/What_Velugu/what_velugu.html?id=0

Autonomous agency implementing rural poverty reduction programs of Government of Andhra Pradesh, also develops institutions of people with disabilities aimed at employment support.

Functional Vocational Training and Research Society (FVTRS), Bangalore (from [V. R. Raghavan](#), HMRI-Satyam Foundation, Hyderabad)

19, 3rd Cross Hutchins Road, Cooke Town, St. Thomas Town Post, Bangalore 560084 Karnataka; Tel: 91-80-25460585/807277; Fax: 91-80-25465928 fvtf@dataone.in; <http://www.fvtrs.org/desk.html>

Provides vocational training to underprivileged youth, also experienced with employment training for the differently abled

YASHADA, Pune (from [Medha Joshi](#), UNDP-GoI Project, All India Institute of Local Self-Government, Pune)

Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHADA), Rajbhavan Complex, Baner Road, Pune 411007 Maharashtra; Tel: +91-20-25608000; Fax: +91-20-25659135; yashada@vsnl.com;

<http://www.yashada.org/organisation/activity.htm>

Institution of Government of Maharashtra, has disability rehabilitation initiatives like disseminating information on employment schemes for the disabled

From [Ranu Bhogal](#). Resource Person

Sense International (India), Ahmedabad

405, Favorite Residency, Opposite St. Xavier's Loyolla Hall, Memnagar, Ahmedabad 380052 Gujarat; Tel: +91-79-27910792; Fax: +91-79-27911054 info@senseintindia.org; <http://www.senseintindia.org>

Supports local organisations in developing sustainable services for deaf and blind people, also works on disable employment issue.

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, New Delhi

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi 110001; <http://socialjustice.nic.in/disabled/welcome.htm>

Ministry entrusted with the task of ensuring empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised sections including the disabled through employment opportunities

Recommended Documentation

The Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Act, 1995 (from [Arif Hussain](#), United Nations, New Delhi Act; Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs, Government of India; New Delhi; January 1, 1996 Available at <http://www.ccdisabilities.nic.in/Act%201.htm>

Act outlines the rights of people with disabilities, Chapter 6 explicitly outlines the government's responsibilities in relationship to providing employment opportunities for the differently abled

Draft Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace (from [Arif Hussain](#), Research Associate)

Meeting report; International Labour Organization (ILO); Geneva; 2001

Report lists the general duties and rights of employers, competent authorities and worker's representatives specifically in the context of employment for the disabled

Recommended Communities and Networks

Disability India Network, Society For Child Development, New Delhi (from [Arif Hussain](#), Research Associate)

<http://www.disabilityindia.org>; Contact Dr. Vijay Agarwal; Tel: +91-11-41727004; vijay@disabilityindia.org

Network is a database of information related to disability in India, hosted by the Society for Child Development. Helps in bringing together practitioners of disability issues

Related Consolidated Replies

Initiatives in Disability Rehabilitation, from Medha Josh, Yashada, Pune (Experiences). Work and Employment Community, Solution Exchange India. Issued 3 July 2006.

Available at <http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/emp/cr/cr-se-emp-30060601.doc> (Document, Size: 212 KB)

Recommends case studies on initiatives by civil society, government, and private sector on disability rehabilitation

Mapping of Jobs for People with Disability in Specific Industry Sectors, from Alka Chaudhary, CII, New Delhi (Examples; Referrals). Work and Employment Community, Solution Exchange India. Issued 31 August 2006

Available at <http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/emp/cr/cr-se-emp-22080601.pdf> (PDF, Size: 120 KB)

Provides examples of mapping of jobs in the garment and BPO industries and strategies by corporates and NGOs for employment of people with disabilities

CSR Models for Livelihood Intervention, from Raj Jani, Rural Business Hubs, Ministry of Panchayati Raj-UNDP Cell, New Delhi. (Experiences; Referrals). Work and Employment Community, Solution Exchange India. Issued 31 July 2007

Available at <http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/emp/cr/cr-se-emp-27060701.pdf> (PDF, Size: 256 KB)

Provides experiences, examples, resources and contacts for small and middle size CSR initiatives in livelihood promotion and shares strengths and weaknesses of various CSR models

Responses in Full

[Anantha Lakshmi Ganapathi](#), Development Volunteer, Bangalore

The National Association for the Blind (NAB), Karnataka Branch at Bangalore imparts mobility training, vocational training and rehabilitation training to the visually challenged. The organization also offers placement services to the individuals on completion of training.

Similar services are extended to other disabled in some projects implemented by it. You may like to visit the NAB Karnataka website: www.nabkarnataka.org for further enquiries and possible partnership.

[Prasobhkumar R.](#), Centre for Management Development, Thiruvananthapuram

National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is a non-profit company wholly owned by the government of India. The objectives of the company are:

- ◆ Promote economic development activities for the benefit of persons with disabilities.

- ◆ Promote self-employment and other ventures for benefit/ economic rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.
- ◆ Extend loans to persons with disability for pursuing professional/technical education leading to vocational rehabilitation / self-employment.
- ◆ Assist in the up gradation of technical and entrepreneurial skills of persons with disability for proper and efficient management of production units.
- ◆ Assist self-employed individuals with disability in marketing their finished goods.

The objectives of the corporation are completely in line with your requirements. Please check NHFDC's website www.nhfdc.org for more details.

Neeraj Sharma, Leonard Cheshire International-SARO, Bangalore

I work with Leonard Cheshire International, South Asia Regional Office (LCI-SARO) based at Bangalore. LCI is a United Kingdom based organization working on rights based Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) approach to promote Education, Employment and training, Advocacy and awareness among the disabled people.

Coming to your query, I would say that there are many organizations, apart from LCI, working on disability issues, including the national institutes (resource organizations) in respective area of disability. Some of them are National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped (NIMH, Secundrabad-<http://www.nimhindia.org/>), National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH, Ahmedabad-<http://www.nioh.org/>), National Institute for the Visually Handicapped (NIVH, Dehradun-<http://www.nivh.org/>) etc.

Work and Employment for the disabled people is one of LCIs' priority areas. Our focus is to help disabled people acquire and develop marketable skills, help them in getting wage employment through direct placements or become self employed, build their self-confidence and help them become independent.

We are working with many organizations based at Bangalore and Chennai (urban areas) to help disabled people get training in areas such as Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), Call Centres in particular and in also in other areas related to hospitality and service sector. As a result of the combined efforts of NGOs, placement and training organizations and corporate sector especially the CII Disability forum, many candidates (with Visual impairment, Speech and hearing impairment and Orthopedic handicapped) have been placed with companies such as Infosys, Mphasis, IBM, and many other mid size BPO firms. ITC Group has placed many physically challenged candidates apart from providing training to them. Physically challenged candidates are working with Cafe Coffee day and Shell Petrol Pumps. Thus, we have observed that in urban centers if a training program focuses on technical skills and most importantly on development of core life skills (including communication skills), it may lead to sustainable livelihoods for the disabled people.

Similarly, in rural areas it is quite possible to create self-employment avenues for disabled people and by their family members at their home. Again, apart from providing vocational and technical skills input, basic business management skill inputs (numeric skills, profit and cost estimation etc.) must be provided along with core life skills. Many disabled people have started small business activities in production, trading, and services sector and leading dignified and independent life in our project areas.

If you want further details or want exposure to the interventions discussed, you may contact us on info@lcisouthasia.org or livelihood@lcisouthasia.org . For further details on our work, you can visit <http://www.lcisouthasia.org/>

Arif Hussain, United Nations, New Delhi

It's heartening to know the efforts your organization is putting in to promote employment training for the differently able in Manipur. There could be nothing more empowering for the differently able than teaching them skills and motivating them to become independent.

Pertaining to your specific query, there are many government and non-government organizations, which support employment training and employment for the people with different abilities. Most of these organizations have a pan-India coverage and mandate, and are open to support initiatives anywhere in the country.

One of the institutes is "National Institute of Rehabilitation Training & Research (NIRTAR)" based at Cuttack, Orissa. An autonomous institute under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, one of the objectives of the institute is to undertake vocational training, placement and rehabilitation of the physically handicapped. More about the institute can be found at its website <http://nirtar.nic.in>. "National Trust" is another such institution, which supports disability initiatives. Information on its activities and support modalities is available on <http://nationaltrust.org.in/>. Another institution "Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities" established under the "Persons with disabilities (equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation) Act, 1995" is the nodal body for ensuring the compliance of different rules related to disable rights, reservations and special provisions.

The office can be contacted in case of any dereliction or non-cooperation by any agency as far as employment of the differently able people is concerned. The commission can be reached at <http://www.ccdisabilities.nic.in/>.

As far as success stories goes, I recall reading about Sharayu Precision Tools (SPT), a tool-manufacturing unit in Pune. The unit employs more than 36 differently able men and women (almost 25% of its total workforce). Belying all the initial apprehensions and reservations about employing them, the company found that these men and women are able to carry out all sorts of tasks ranging from riveting, drilling and greasing to polishing and packing. Impressed by their performance and determination, SPT is planning to recruit more differently able people to work for the unit. For more details, the organization can be contacted on info@gatiman.com or on their website <http://gatiman.com/>.

I hope these contacts will prove to be useful for your noble venture.

Anjum Khalidi, United Nations, New Delhi

National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (N.C.P.E.D.P.) is an organization registered as a trust and has a mandate of encouraging the employment of the disabled people. NCPEDP can be contacted for further information on employment for the disabled. More about NCEDP can be found at <http://ncpedp.org/about.htm>

As one of the success stories in the area of employment for the disabled, Sakthi Trading Company is a good example. Sakthi Trading Company based at Tirupur, Tamil Nadu is a manufacturer and exporter of spices under the brand name "Sakthi Masale". The company follows disabled friendly Human Resources policies and provides maximum possible opportunities to them. Out of the 500-strong workforce of Sakthi Trading Company, 103 are disabled persons. The company employs people with all disabilities: currently it has 35 persons with visual impairments, 10 with hearing impairments, 50 orthopaedically disabled and 8 persons with mental disabilities. The work has been divided to suit persons with specific disabilities. While people with orthopedic impairment are responsible for packaging, visually impaired persons are

given jobs that utilise their tactile functions such as sorting and peeling. Persons with mental disability are given routine mechanical jobs that do not require complex decision-making.

This is a good example of a responsible enterprise providing employment to the disabled. For further details, they can be contacted at: Sakthi Trading Company 391, Kallankattu Thottam, Kamaraj Road, Tirupur-641604, Tamil Nadu: +91-421-210384, email: stm10@rediffmail.com

I hope this information will be useful for you.

Divya Sarma, Samraksha, Bangalore

There are many organizations, which are working in the field of vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities. Indeed, vocational rehabilitation is one of the pillars of the rehabilitation policies of the government, and the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 focuses on this aspect, and a certain percentage of government jobs (about 3 %) are reserved for people with disabilities.

Vocational Rehabilitation, supply of aid appliances to enhance mobility, ability to live independently, and advocacy to create an enabling environment to support people with disabilities is the principal strategies adopted by most NGOs working in the field of disability.

Although I am not sure of any specific organizations in the North East, The Rehabilitation Council of India is the government department, which is in charge of implementing the rehabilitation policies. They are involved in training and capacity building and other support for NGOs to work in this field. More information on their services can be found at www.rehabcouncil.nic.in

National Society for Equal Opportunities for the Handicapped India (NASEOH- www.naseoh.org) is another national organization working for the vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

There are also organizations working in the area of any one specific disability/handicap, like the Blind People's Association of India (BPA- <http://www.bpaindia.org/>). Another national organization is National Association of the Blind (NAB- <http://www.nabindia.org/>). These organizations work on the specific problems of specific disabilities and how these might impede functioning.

These are some organizations, which are working at the National Level, I am sure there are many local level organizations working on the issue of disability. Information on local partners can also be found on the sites mentioned above.

I hope this will be useful for your query.

V. R. Raghavan, Health Management and Research Institute-Satyam Foundation, Hyderabad

I have been associated with Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), an autonomous agency implementing rural poverty reduction programs of Government of Andhra Pradesh. SERP focused on institution building of people with disability (PwD) and followed an inclusive approach to network them with women federations at village and block level. In addition, the groups of PwDs focused on articulating their rights and entitlements and accessing mainstream development program through their federations and the federations of women Sanghams. This approach yielded good results as many disabled could access livelihood support from the community investment fund of Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Programs (APRPRP). One can write to SERP, Hyderabad or to Dr. Gangadhar (commitments@hotmail.com) for further details.

Another initiative is by a trust called 'Commitments' based at Hyderabad. The trust has a field operational unit at a small town 'Kosgi' in Mahboob Nagar district of Andhra Pradesh. The trust works in eight blocks in the district as a pilot with the support from Action Aid and APRPRP/SERP. Its major focus is community based rehabilitation and livelihood promotion.

After organizing PwDs in groups at block level, 'Commitments' formulated a livelihood enhancement action plan for the individual PwDs and also for their groups to augment their livelihood needs through the government programs. They also tested a few models through pilots with fund support from APRPRP. Contact information of the Project Coordinator Mr. L. Krishna Murthy, is: Project Coordinator, Commitments, 21-30, Market Yard, Kosgi, Mahboob Nagar- 509339, Andhra Pradesh, Phone : +91-8505-281556/ 271456

A visit to these groups can give a better idea of the intervention and can also inspire many to scale up the processes aimed at empowerment of PwDs.

R. S. N. Sharma, Consumers International, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

It is indeed a great cause that you are working for. I personally appreciate the efforts and your interest in seeking information from the members on this. As you might know, Functional Vocational Training and Research Society (FVTRS) at Bangalore, funds NGOs for imparting vocational training to youth. I strongly feel that, FVTRS would come forward for supporting disability initiatives in the Northeastern India. Apart from FVTRS, there is another organization by the name "Community Based Rehabilitation Forum (CBR Forum)" based at Bangalore that supports disability initiatives in the country. You can approach these two organizations for support and guidance.

The contact address of FVTRS is:

Functional Vocational Training and Research Society
19, 3rd Cross, Hutchins Road,
St. Thomas Town Post,
Bangalore-560084
Phone: +91-80-25460585/25807277
Fax: +91-80-2546 5928
Email: fvtf@dataone.in

For the contact person and address for CBR Forum, you can get in touch with FVTRS people.

I hope these contacts will be helpful to you.

Medha Joshi, UNDP-GoI Project, All India Institute of Local Self-Government, Pune

Yeshwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHADA), Pune the Administrative Training Institution of Government of Maharashtra, has taken some initiatives in Disability Rehabilitation. 'Needs of the Disabled' is one of there thirteen Key Result Areas for working.

Broad activities undertaken by YASHADA in field of Disability Rehabilitation are as below:

1. Sensitization training for middle /top level functionaries of Government and Non-Governmental Organizations
2. Establishing a Resource Center having:
 - o Information Kiosk providing information on all legal provisions, schemes, programs, cases, success stories etc. at one display

- An outlet as a platform for supporting exhibition and sale of the products made by the disabled
- A permanent poster exhibition providing information on all kinds of disability and its social and medical cause, effect and available cure
- Skills developments trainings to the disabled for entrepreneurship promotion

For further details you can contact YASHADA at:
YASHADA,
Rajbhavan Complex, Baner Road, Pune 411007
Phone -020-25608000

Many thanks to all who contributed to this query!

If you have further information to share on this topic, please send it to Solution Exchange for the Work and Employment Community in India at se-emp@solutionexchange-un.net.in with the subject heading "Re: [se-emp] Query: Employability Training for the Disabled in the Northeast - Experiences; Referrals. Additional Reply."

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