

NIEPID and Jai Vakeel Foundation sign MOU to roll out Structured and Uniform Education for Children with Intellectual Disabilities across India

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In a major move to address the absence of a uniform curriculum for children with Intellectual Disabilities in India, the National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (Divyangjan) (NIEPID) and the Jai Vakeel Foundation (JVF) today in Mumbai signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to roll out structured and uniform education for Children with Intellectual Disabilities (CwID) across the country. The MOU was signed in the presence of Shri Rajesh Aggarwal, Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.



With signing this MoU, NIEPID DISHA Curriculum is set to become a comprehensive education model for the holistic development for all CwDs across India. The MoU brings together NIEPID's Expertise in training and research with JVF's on ground implementation experience creating an uniform, scalable curriculum design to meet the unique needs of children with Intellectual Disabilities.

Through this collaboration, key resources developed by JVF, including NIEPID DISHA Assessment Checklist for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), the NIEPID DISHA Multisensory Curriculum, NIEPID DISHA Digital Portal and Teacher Training will be made available nationally to schools, centres, and organizations serving CwIDs. This partnership not only strengthens India's educational framework but also aligns with global commitments under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). By empowering educators and streamlining implementation, this initiative contributes to the vision of an inclusive, empowered India envisioned in Viksit Bharat.



Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Shri Rajesh Aggarwal, Secretary (DEPwD), stated that Neuro-diversity is the most emotionally difficult and complex sector to work in and therefore DEPwD is partnering with good organizations including NGOs, start-ups, etc. to scale up the solutions. “We are particularly excited to scale up the IEP model built through DISHA Abhiyan. NIEPID DISHA curriculum will be implemented immediately across CDEIC centres, DDRS programmes, and wherever possible. For those schools that want to adopt it voluntarily, we will offer free material and training”, he said.

Shri Aggarwal further informed that the Ministry will scale up the project NIEPID DISHA curriculum by printing the workbooks and learning materials under Development Accessible Learning Materials (DALM) Scheme. Till now the scheme was focused on printing of Braille books for children with visual impairment but now it will be approved nationally to include intellectual disabilities too. This will not only help the divyang children to get the free, reusable books in English, Hindi, Marathi and other regional languages but also the teachers and parents to provide appropriate education in school and home. Also, teacher training programmes will be given CRE status to enable faster, unfettered scaling. The Government will always stand with parents in their journey, he added.

Dr. B.V. Ram Kumar, Director NIEPID noted that NIEPID accreditation of Disha content is a testament to its quality and potential for systematic transformation. We stand united in this effort and remain deeply committed to making quality education accessible to all persons with Intellectual Disabilities across the Nation. Talking about the importance of this collaboration, Ms. Archana Chandra, CEO, Jai Vakeel Foundation, stated that it will be ensured that NIEPID Disha Curriculum gives access to education that is tailored to the unique strengths, needs and potential of each child with intellectual disability, it is not an aspiration but a reality.



About the Disha Abhiyan

Disha Abhiyan, an initiative of Jai Vakeel Foundation, integrates a uniform Assessment Checklist for IEP, a research-based multisensory Curriculum, a Digital Portal, and a Training Ecosystem for educators. Certified by NIEPID in 2019, the model has been implemented across 453 schools in partnership with the Government of Maharashtra, reaching over 18,000 students and training more than 2,600 educators.

- The **Assessment Checklist** is a set of skills-based parameters across developmental domains to design effective, research-backed pedagogies - VAKT (Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic-Tactile) and ‘Interest–Teach–Apply’, promoting an effective and engaging learning experience.
- The **Portal** enables educators to record IEPPs, track assessments, generate report cards, and access curriculum content digitally.
- The **Training Module** ensures educators and school heads are equipped to use the resources to address the individualized needs of CWIDs and implement Disha Abhiyan with uniform quality standards.
- **Support Systems** will be provided to assist with the implementation and usage of all tools.

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