



India Business and Disability Network

A CII Initiative



Confederation of Indian Industry



ENABLING INCLUSIVE MAKE IN INDIA

Best Practices in
Disability Inclusion in
Manufacturing Sector

March 2022

Knowledge Partner:
v-shesh Learning Services Pvt. Ltd

Supported By:
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

Copyright © 2022 Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in, or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), in part or full in any manner whatsoever, or translated into any language, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner. CII has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information and material presented in this document. Nonetheless, all information, estimates and opinions contained in this publication are subject to change without notice, and do not constitute professional advice in any manner. Neither CII nor any of its office bearers or analysts or employees accept or assume any responsibility or liability in respect of the information provided herein. However, any discrepancy, error, etc. found in this publication may please be brought to the notice of CII for appropriate correction.

Published by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), The Mantosh Sondhi Centre; 23, Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi 110003, India, Tel: +91-11-24629994-7, Fax: +91-11-24626149; Email: info@cii.in; Web: www.cii.in

Contents

Acronyms Used	04
Introduction	06
About the Study	07
Executive Summary	08
Pillar 1 – Enable	10
1.1: Enabling Environment - Management Commitment and Accountability	11
1.2: Workplace Accommodations and Accessibility	18
Pillar 2 – Employ	28
2.1: Inclusive Recruitment	29
2.2: Inclusiveness in Supply Chain	39
2.3: Career Progression & Retention	41
Pillar 3 – Engage	45
3.1: Workplace Awareness and Sensitisation	46
Pillar 4 – Empower	50
4.1: Disability Inclusion beyond Workplace	51
Annexures	
Annexure 1	57
Annexure 2	59
Annexure 3	60
Annexure 4	62
Annexure 5	64

Acronyms Used

ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
D&I	Diversity and Inclusion
DPO	Disabled People's Organisation
EIC	Early Intervention Centre
ERG	Employee Resource Group
HI	Hearing Impairment
HR	Human Resource
IBDN	India Business and Disability Network
ICT	Information and Computer Technology
IT	Information Technology
ITES	Information Technology Enable Services
ILO	International Labour organisation
KPA	Key Performance Areas
L&D	Learning & Development

NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
NSCS-DA	National Career Service Centres for Differently Abled
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturers
OH	Orthopaedic Disability
OJT	On Job Training
PEEP	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
RPwD	Rights of Persons with Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedure
SPOC	Single Point of Contact
UDID	Unique Disability ID
UN-CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
WHO	World Health Organisation

Introduction

WHO estimates that 15% of the world's population is living with some form of disability. As the world's largest minority, persons with disabilities comprise a pool of talent that remains deeply excluded from the workforce. With labour participation rate being lesser than 1% and inaccessible education and skilling environments, an overwhelmingly large number of Persons with Disabilities work in the informal sector as daily wage laborers, self-employed individuals, street vendors etc.; thus making them one of the most vulnerable segments in India's labour market. Due to limited exposure to this pool of talent and misconceptions about what it would take for them to be included in the workforce, employer organisations in India's private sector remain hesitant to progress from intent to include to realistic hiring and inclusion in the workforce.

Recognizing the important role that private sector can play in mainstreaming persons with disabilities, the India Business and Disability Network (IBDN), led by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in partnership with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Employers' Federation of India (EFI) engages with wide range of companies to encourage, sensitize and enable them to embrace inclusion of persons with disabilities. It is envisaged that the IBDN will emerge as a one-stop solution for policy advocacy, knowledge creation & dissemination; facilitating employment, building capacities and sensitizing employers; and catalyzing partnerships.

In 2019, CII-IBDN partnered with v-shesh Learning Services Private Limited to undertake a study¹ that documented journeys of four leaders from IT/ ITES sector. The objective of the study was to provide a common framework of inclusion practices which, other companies in the IT and related sector, could replicate basis their individual context. This study identified the following four pillars that laid the foundation for effective disability inclusion (i) inclusive policies and governance (ii) inclusive recruitment (iii) awareness and adaptations and (iv) partnerships.

While significant progress on disability inclusion front has been made by companies in IT/ ITES sector, there is a big gap and time-lag in manufacturing companies coming forward to adopt disability inclusion practices. While the nature of the job (skills instead of IT and strong English communication), locations (not urban centric) opens up the scope for a wider range of potential talent, there remain several other barriers as a result of which the opportunity divide remains unaddressed.

There are, however, a few champion companies which have successfully progressed disability inclusion at their workplaces. CII-IBDN and GIZ have commissioned this study to document success factors to drive disability inclusion in the manufacturing sector based on journeys of these champions companies; the ultimate objective being to provide concrete examples and measures that could be replicated by many others organisations in the manufacturing sector.

¹ <https://www.ciiibdn.com/Publication/IBDN-Report.pdf>

About the Study

There is a widely held belief that environments in manufacturing organisations do not lend themselves to disability inclusion for reasons such as safety, nature of work, need to operate large machines, large areas to be navigated (in plants) etc. Conversations with professionals in manufacturing organisations and disability sector consistently suggest that there exist distinct opportunities for inclusion of talent across physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments. Employers in manufacturing suggested that while focus is on opportunities in direct employment, there is a large-scale opportunity in job work (inclusive sourcing) as well. As a confirmation, professionals in disability sector shared examples of sheltered workshops that replicate a much smaller version of manufacturing set-up, adapted to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Building on conversations, this study looked for examples of inclusion of persons with disabilities in workforce in manufacturing sector and shortlisted four champions (Michelin India, Radnik Exports, Spark Minda and WORTH TRUST) given how different they are from each other. While Michelin India is part of Michelin Worldwide (revenues of EUR 21 bln and ~125,000 employees), Radnik Exports is a 50-year-old Indian enterprise supplying garments to some of the most prominent global brands, Spark Minda is an Indian company with presence in 6 countries and 16,000+ employees and WORTH

TRUST operates as an NGO cum enterprise working simultaneously for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and employing them in actual production. Each of these organisations have a different history and approach to inclusion of persons with disabilities which is an evidence of disability inclusion being a result of desire and commitment irrespective of the operating environment. Disability confidence has provided these companies an opportunity to lead the way and discover the skills and talents that would otherwise go unnoticed and untapped, whilst improving reputations by demonstrating their commitment to fair employment practices. Companies participating in this study have expressed hope that their journeys will create a multiplier effect in their efforts towards mainstreaming of persons with disabilities.

This study is built around the common challenges which all companies traversing their disability inclusion journey face and showcases best practices that helped these organisations overcome a range of challenges. As with any such effort, it is neither possible nor desirable to develop a uni-dimensional blueprint that any organisation can follow, but it does outline principles and approaches that can be applied in diverse contexts. These best practices should be treated as a reference and not a quick fix solution for all workplace challenges in disability inclusion.

Executive Summary

The journey of the four participating companies is a picture of diversity in approaches, locations, scale and scope of work. Important lessons can be learnt from them to successfully implement inclusion efforts that are scalable, sustainable and have global relevance. Four themes that appeared consistently are

i) Enable - creation of an enabling work environment through strong management commitment and gradual preparation of workplace **ii) Employ** - identification of relevant jobs (direct or job work) through detailed job mapping, job analysis and study of accommodation needs **iii) Engage** - importance of sensitization - formally by way of sessions or informally while engaging with the community **iv) Empower** – transcending impact beyond the boundaries of the business by building partnership and genuine trust with Disable People Organisations (DPOs) and persons with disabilities in the geography where each organisation operates.

Important findings from the champion companies and other industry best practices are outlined below within four themes (pillars):



1. Enable

1. An integrated “top-down” approach is followed where commitment and accountability is driven by leaders through establishing and articulating a clear vision, setting targets and engaging resources that commit time and goals to disability inclusion. Close collaborations with various business functions helped in applying inclusion in all its dimensions; thus setting the pace.
2. Disability Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) - voluntary and employee-led groups (formal and informal) are an important channel to foster a safe environment and inclusive work culture particularly when they are sponsored and supported by the management.
3. Focus is on improving access to accommodations by (i) proactive accommodation process with centralised funds, clearly defined SOPs and a strong leadership overseeing implementation and (ii) respectful and seamless experience whilst requesting for reasonable accommodations.
4. Focus is on “Total Employee Involvement” i.e. empowering all employees to voice their needs and inputs and actively seek their suggestions. . Ramping up numbers across job roles, diversifying across disability types, proactive grievance redressal, proactive implementation of safety protocols etc. was made possible by some effective inputs that came from the shop floor.
5. Focus is on addressing immediate needs and gradually progressing towards complete accessibility to achieve barrier-free physical environment. *Digital accessibility* needs attention and remains an area of development for all partner companies.



2. Employ

1. Use of inclusive recruitment practices such as detailed job mapping and job analysis, training of HR and Recruitment managers in diversity in disability, accommodation needs and communication etiquettes has helped in setting the pace for several successful placements.
2. People with disabilities are hired across job roles based on their suitability, rather than pre-defined criteria. Inclusive hiring criteria goes beyond the traditional filtering approach. It focuses on job relevant skills and overall learnability, interest and attitude for success.

3. Community outreach and engagement programmes are important sources for building a strong bond of trust with the community; thus leading to better understanding of available skills, skill gaps and how they could be aligned to the requirements at the workplace. This is the most important source for candidate mobilisation for plants which are at a geographical disadvantage (in most cases) due to their presence away from the city centers.
4. Although adaptations of workspaces and providing for reasonable accommodations is common, scope for adaptation of machinery and equipment is also explored.
5. Most companies, in early stages started with nimble attempts of hiring people with mild to moderate disabilities (mostly deaf job seekers) in roles which required limited adaptations. They quickly built on the momentum and confidence of initial successes and diversified into seemingly more “challenging” placements.
6. Labour intensive processes were broken into several sub-tasks allowing employers to hire people across a range of disabilities including people with intellectual disabilities. Common processes explored which gave impetus to disability hiring included assembling small parts to produce light engineering components and performing quality checks on assembled items.
7. Importance to career growth was supported by a combination of job rotations/ enrichment/ training in nurturing and retaining talent.



3. Engage

1. Sensitisation of staff across the entire organisation is not just in the form of formal workshops but also through events, campaigns, volunteering opportunities.
2. There are well defined disability etiquette standards / protocols, to which all employees need to conform to.
3. There are well-managed ERGs (Employee Resource Groups) in place for engaging employees and furthering organisations’ diversity initiatives including (a) offering a safe and empathetic space (b) raising awareness of workplace issues including but not restricted to accessibility (c) improving inclusive hiring efforts.
4. Specialists engaged in initial stages to assist in creating an overall inclusive ethos through awareness activities / sensitization workshops etc. Internal capabilities and overall disability inclusion confidence built gradually.



4. Empower

1. Learnings from CSR and partnerships was used to further the disability inclusion agenda by (a) driving growth across business activities in a responsible, inclusive and sustainable manner (b) repositioning how disability inclusion is perceived and practiced across the organisation (c) building a symbiotic relationship of mutual trust and accountability amongst various stakeholder and (d) building capacity of stakeholders for development of the ecosystem as a whole.
2. Towards this, a diverse portfolio of partnerships across the spectrum (of disability type and thematic area) is helpful in (a) developing an understanding of the multifaceted nature of disability and related issues (b) building a talent pipeline for various business units (c) building outreach and solidarity with the community leading to better candidate mobilisation.



1. Enable

Leadership needs to endorse disability inclusion as an important focus area for the company and communicate their commitment to ensure it cascades across the organisation, thus promoting and sustaining an inclusive culture. Management commitment is also needed to ensure enabling environment where employees with disabilities have accessible infrastructure, tools, technology and accommodation process.

Challenge

1. How does an organisation define disability inclusion goals and policies and cascade them across the organisation ?
2. How does an organisation ensure compliance, monitor progress, revisit goals, and make adjustments as per industry trends/business needs etc ?

Enabling Environment – Management Commitment and Accountability

1. How does an organisation create an accessible physical and digital environment ?
2. What are the types of workplace adaptations that have enabled the inclusion of persons with disabilities ?
3. How does an organisation ensure comfortable and dignified access to accommodations?

Accessible Infrastructure & Enabling Process - Workplace Accessibility & Accommodations

1.1 Enabling Environment - Management Commitment and Accountability

Though each of the champion companies followed their journeys depending on the kind of culture they wanted to build, the common thread across the organisations was the strong vision and accountability of the leader(s) through purposeful monitoring. Some of the common best practices which are followed across the participating companies are as mentioned -

- a. Management recognises the impact of disability inclusion on the bottom-line and actively promotes the business case throughout the company. An integrated “top-down” approach is followed wherein commitment and accountability are driven by the leaders through vision establishment, target setting, and engaging resources who commit time and goals to the disability inclusion agenda. Close collaborations with various business functions helps in setting the pace and tracking progress; e.g. – In the case of organisation’s recruitment goals, the policy directive comes from the management; plans including targets and timelines are developed in conjunction with the business functions and, the inclusion team provides all the necessary support.
- b. Sustainability is achieved in disability inclusion through a comprehensive and holistic approach of applying inclusion in all its dimensions so that the concept thrives throughout the company. All businesses, thus have a shared and collective responsibility to

create an enabling environment where people with disabilities are respected and nurtured.

- c. Disability Employee Resource Groups (ERGs); voluntary and employee-led groups are seen as an important channels to foster a safe environment and inclusive work culture. Management sponsorship and active involvement, gives them the space to evolve.

“Inclusion is best achieved voluntarily; it cannot be imposed. When employees participate voluntarily in programmes and are involved in its progress, success and sustenance is bound to follow”

R Gaur
VP HR, Radnik Exports

An integrated “top-down” approach is followed wherein commitment and accountability are driven by the leaders through vision establishment, target setting, and engaging resources who commit time and goals to the disability inclusion agenda.

- d. All companies have either developed or are in the process of formulating an inclusion policy as per the Rights for Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. The key principles of the Equal Opportunity Policy are disseminated through town halls/ large gatherings, leadership addresses and other such forums. The policy-
 - i. requires managers to give full and fair consideration to candidates/ employees with disability on the basis of their aptitude and abilities; both when hiring and for career advancement, as well as ensuring opportunities for training, career development and other benefits that are available to all.
 - ii. includes code of conduct that reflects the rights of employees with disabilities and addresses topics such as harassment, discrimination etc.
 - iii. identifies a designated team member /ombudsman as the focal point for addressing any complaints/grievances.

Outlined below are some of the innovative strategies followed by the partnering organisations



WORTH TRUST finds its roots in an initiative for the Swedish Red Cross to rehabilitate people with leprosy in 1963. An unbeaten path of moving beyond the traditional activities recommended for those

affected by leprosy, such as basket weaving, cloth weaving, pottery, candle making etc. led to the opening of its first modern engineering workshop which provided industrial training and employment opportunities to them. Today, production units run by the trust manufacture high-quality industrial components, affordable mobility aids, and assistive devices. More than 80% of the staff across these units (located across Katpadi, Puducherry, Tiruchirappalli, and Chennai) are people with disabilities. Of these 18% are women. The surplus generated from the production units is ploughed back into the system and supports the rehabilitation arm which completes the circle of empowerment with

- Technical Training
- School for Speech and Hearing-Impaired children
- Early Intervention Centre for children with Speech & Hearing Impairment and Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Day Activity Centre for children with Intellectual disability
- Outreach activities

“ We are an organisation that is “For, By and Of people with disabilities”. Our vision is to Rehabilitate, Educate, Train, Employ and Empower people with disabilities, thus fostering inclusion and gender parity. Our commitment to the disability community itself became our brand image and message. It created a strong positive word-of-mouth and built respect and trust in the community. It enabled us to multiply to various businesses and cross-subsidise several humble initiatives geared towards their mainstreaming”.

R. Karthikeyan

CEO and MD, WORTH TRUST

WORTH TRUST has been included in the study for its unique self-supporting, cross-subsidizing model through which it provides dignified employment to persons with disabilities and ploughs back all the surplus into the cause it supports. This has come about due to the central foundation of the Trust which is built on strong community involvement and a comprehensive diversity and inclusion strategy that defines all aspects of the company's activities, from hiring to product manufacturing and marketing.

Strong management commitment and accountability led to the connecting of several dots and following of an organic process towards building this unique sustainable model. Key success elements included –

1. Leveraging Corporate Trust

WORTH TRUST has always had an impressive board comprising of members from big industrial conglomerates across Southern India; TVS Group, Murugappa Group, Rane Group & others and eminent personalities in other fields. The scope of engagement with the board members moves beyond fiduciary to engaging more deeply on strategy, technology, brand etc. The commitment is deepened by establishing linkages with the companies of the board members which gives a strong thrust to the mission and vision of the organisation. Many board members outsource work which ranges from small job work to parts of the assembly line. Students from the technical training institutes run by the trust are also absorbed by these companies.

2. Building a business, not charity

Even though the central theme is to mainstream persons with disabilities, WORTH TRUST units are run as a business and not as a charity.

- Twin engine of surplus generation and disability empowerment fuel each other with each being an equal priority; disability empowerment being the cause and surplus generation being the means to the cause. For example, WORTH Plastics makes both commercial products and assistive devices. While commercial products are sold at a margin to sustain the business and support rehabilitation, assistive devices are sold at a very thin margin thereby achieving outreach and a positive impact on the community.
- There is scrupulous adherence to delivery schedule and quality control standards during production and dispatch, as stipulated by the buying firms. The products are used by original equipment manufacturers (OEMs)- large and medium, and for domestic and export markets. The fact that some of the customers have been with WORTH TRUST for over thirty years, speaks volumes about the quality, timely delivery and fair pricing.

WORTH Brailleurs, WORTH Plastics, WORTH Industries – Katpadi, Puducherry and Tiruchirapalli have received ISO 9001 – 2015 accreditation for their excellence in quality standards. This is a unique

honour for a rehabilitation institution in India to attain. WORTH Industries at Katpadi, Puducherry, Tiruchirapalli and WORTH Plastics have also been accredited for IATF 16949: 2016.

- Professionally run and managed by well-trained and well-qualified personnel.
 - detailed skill mapping, training and workplace accommodations ensures that the right person is deployed in the right role to attain overall impact
 - retired people in senior positions from client organisations are encouraged to join WORTH TRUST in advisory roles. They bring with them a plethora of experience in running big businesses and are a befitting addition
- Adaptability, key to success
 - While the key operating principles remain the same, depending on the location and the local demand, products manufactured in engineering and plastic units differ

Also, there is a constant thrust to diversify into new products to create more opportunities. Founding of the Plastic Unit (for injection moulded components), Assistive Devices Manufacturing Unit, Braille Unit (Perkins Braille; WORTH TRUST is sole assembler of Braille typewriter), WORTH Digitization unit (converts printed books into digital / audio files) are examples of such diversifications

Additionally, to design a flexible company, the following are put in place

- a) vertical hierarchies are replaced by horizontal networks
- b) all functions are brought together by inter-functional teams
- c) strategic alliances are formed with suppliers, customers and even competitors
- d) managers ensure that every employee understands and adheres to the company's policy, strategic mission
- e) Equal Opportunity Policy has evolved into a very versatile document to address the predicament of an organisation as large and as diverse as WORTH TRUST

“The strong foundation on which our businesses are built enable us to diversify across products within the same unit. WORTH Plastic is a classic example where we are manufacturing a wide range of components for leading companies in the country - toilet seat covers and internals for bathroom products, kitchen equipments, bicycle components, containers & pill dispensers for hospitals and some critical components for the auto industry. With each successful partnership, we got the confidence to pursue another. We have an unsatiated thirst and our clients fulfill it by supporting our vision and continuously motivating us to strive for more”

R. Karthikeyan, CEO and MD, WORTH TRUST.

IDEATION

Find strong local partner to host WORTH TRUST Model

TESTING WATERS

Understand local industry and industry requirements - what is being outsourced, what can be produced by WORTH TRUST in line with the ultimate goal of mainstreaming persons with disabilities

REMOVING BOTTLENECKS

Using strong community outreach programs, identify youth with disabilities and train in the required skillsets - *Birth of Technical Training Centre*

EXPANDING BEYOND BUSINESS

Produce, sell, generate surplus and as business stabilises, plough back surplus into *rehabilitation related projects*

Ideation to Expansion – WORTH TRUST Way

3. Commitment to design and manufacture “fit for purpose products”

WORTH TRUST started its journey by manufacturing light engineering components because they offered the flexibility to hire people across disabilities and were less resource intensive in terms of initial capital investment, technical know-how, skill requirement and learning curve. The same has been the defining feature for all production units which came about later.

4. Collective action and collaboration

Technical Training Centres run by WORTH TRUST offered formal training to trainees with disabilities based on demand and requirements of job roles. Many of these skilled trainees were hired by clients who other than sourcing components wanted to practice diversity among their workforce by inducting them.





Michelin's disability inclusion journey started in June 2019 and is reflected in the company's purpose statement "Offering everyone a better way forward". The holistic approach the management at Michelin has taken towards defining disability inclusion goals and policies, ensuring compliance, monitoring progress, making adjustments as per industry trends / business needs etc. serves as a good case study for any organisation which is keen to kick-start and sustain its journey.

1. As a company seeking to become disability-confident, the management recognized very early on that meaningful engagement with organizations of people with disabilities and experts in the field is crucial. Thus, the Michelin Corporate Foundation collaborated with Handicap International (HI)², to design and deploy a structured approach to disability inclusion across countries. Michelin UCH site (SIPCOT, near Chennai) was chosen as a pilot site as it was a new facility with modern technology and tremendous scope for improvement. The objective of the partnership was to develop a holistic and sustainable model of inclusion, consolidate learnings on disability employability, put together best practices and tools for Michelin Group and other companies embarking on similar journey. A disability specialist from HI was permanently stationed at Michelin to provide strategic advice, technical expertise, and coaching. Presence of such a SPOC ensured that the disability inclusion agenda remained alive and active in all conversations and cemented robust policies and processes in early stages of design and implementation. Other than this, implementation partners such as v-shesh, youth4jobs etc. helped in capturing local specificity and enabling on-ground delivery.
2. Michelin has a three-tiered D&I council at the group, region, and country (India) levels. To facilitate learning and communication throughout the organisation, each D&I council includes a representative from every level. The structure ensures that the diversity and inclusion strategy is truly global and that it is closely aligned to the culture, politics, and regulations in each region and country where Michelin operates. Taking diversity and inclusion global also helped create a global



corporate value system that holds diversity and inclusion as a fundamental tenant, not just a temporary fix to the problem of diverse sourcing and recruitment.

Through this approach, vision and goals were set at the group level. After intense consultation facilitated by HI and v-shesh, Michelin evolved actionable plans covering the five dimension - accessibility, HR practices, internal culture, policy and process, and partnership development. To execute and monitor the plans at the plant level, a project monitoring team was set up comprising Managers from various departments - Training, Communication, Human Resources, Legal, and Engineering. HI SPOC was a key member of the project monitoring team.

3. Holistic, process driven and participatory step by step approach was adopted towards developing the disability inclusion plan and launching the disability inclusion campaign -

Step 1: To determine the current level of inclusiveness along each of the five dimensions, detailed diagnostic study (inclusion needs assessment) was undertaken on the following

- Internal policies and strategies and their relevance
- Knowledge and attitudes of employees towards disability inclusion
- Physical and communications accessibility for the entire site
- Human Resources and Management practices

A mixed-methods approach comprising a) voluntary and anonymous survey and b) focus group discussions with employees across departments (safety, production, leadership and training, contractual staff members etc, to capture diverse perspective) was followed to bring together representative statistics and contextual insights.

Accessibility assessment involving comprehensive inspection of the building/physical infrastructure against international accessibility standards was also launched simultaneously

² Handicap International (HI), <https://hi.org/>, Founded in 1982, works across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities. HI addresses a wide range of disability issue in India since 1988, including providing technical support to companies for inclusion of people with disabilities within their workforce using 5 dimensions model of inclusiveness.

Step 2: The diagnosis results were analysed and inter linkages between elements of the five dimensions were understood.



Step 3: Action Plan Workshop was organized to summarize findings and follow a participatory process of designing roadmap with inputs from representatives holding key positions in the company – Training, Recruitment/HR, Legal, Communication, Manufacturing, Engineering, Safety, and Health. The road map which was aligned with Michelin's overall goal, culminated into Inclusiveness Improvement Plan (2IP) which comprised of specific objective, indicator, activities, resources, responsibilities and timelines.

2IP and Baseline Study are two important tools against which the performance of the company is benchmarked by setting goals and monitoring progress.



Step 4: Groups were formed based on inclusion dimensions, and the proposed actions for implementation were further prioritized according to budget and time. Progress was monitored on a regular basis at plant level and communicated to the D&I council.

“Past 2 years was an incredible journey. Being based on the site for the entire duration, helped me to understand Michelin's needs and employees' mind-set, and accordingly provide customized solutions. There was a strong will and commitment from the site leadership, which provided the necessary push forward”

Jose Kurian, Disability & Employment Advisor, Handicap International (India Programme)

- As a first step of rolling 2IP, leaders attended a training session, which equipped them with the knowledge to act as role models - from accomplishing diversity and inclusion goals to supporting the overarching vision of Michelin.
- A robust public relations plan was put forth to create awareness about company's vision as an inclusive workplace committed to equality and to hiring and nurturing people with disabilities. Visually appealing posters generously broadcasted across the campus, videos on intranet, communication from global leaders helped in creating the buzz and garnering participation for the diagnostic and implementation phase.

“Our journey toward disability inclusion was aided by (a) management's commitment to include people with disabilities in the workforce (b) a shift in staff's mindset towards focusing on individual's abilities rather than gender or disability (c) having a disability expert in our team. Our focus on creating an inclusive and enabling environment has resulted in teams actively exploring ways to expand the portfolio of job positions that can be filled by individuals with disabilities.

Ranganathan Bhuvaramurthy, Plant Director, Michelin-Chennai Factory



Strong management commitment and innovation is the

cornerstone of the growth and sustainability of the disability inclusion program across the complex web of 4 business verticals, 8 business divisions, 22 units and 27 factories of the Spark Minda Group. The group has a legacy of community development since decades wherein specific projects were undertaken by various business divisions in and around their periphery. Later a common entity for all the group companies was incorporated as Spark Minda Foundation (100% subsidiary of Minda Corporation Ltd). It is the CSR wing for the group companies that undertakes work for community development by following a multi-faceted approach which is linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and comprises of education, women empowerment, facilitation of healthcare, upliftment of people with disabilities and sustenance of the environment.

While there are practical challenges of creating a robust and active model for such a big and diverse organisation, a well-designed, centrally run structure with business sponsors from each business unit, drives the program strategy, implementation rigour, governance and communication. 4-P structure adopted by the management to achieve this included -

- a. **Plan (Target):** 1200 persons with disabilities across job roles by 2025
- b. **Process:** Towards this goal, a team comprising of the Plant Head, the Production Manager, the Operations Manager, the Quality Supervisor and the HR was formed to conduct detailed job analysis and job mapping
- c. **Prepare :** Detailed trainings were organised by specialists to build internal capabilities
- d. **Practice :** Best practices across units were replicated across the organisation, to achieve scale

“ For us, our commitment to the community of persons with disability is not “Corporate Philanthropy” but “Corporate Social Responsibility” as it directly involves the corporation’s business model and its business practices in the causes of the community. We drive accountability by setting targets and measuring performance across our business. Our leader’s emphasis on setting a culture of acknowledging and appreciating efforts as against rewarding outcomes. Their personal involvement, governance and oversight has ensured that every unit is keen to innovate and expand their disability inclusion practices. Though we have a long way to go, there is no denying that what we have achieved today has far surpassed our initial goals

Ashok Minda

Group CEO and Chairman, Spark Minda Group



Radnik’s journey of hiring persons with

disabilities started with the chance recruitment of the first employee with vision impairment who by his mere presence challenged many stereotypes and pushed the organisation to notice this untapped pool of persons with disabilities as a potential talent pool

1. The senior leader at RADNIK is a personal champion of Disability Inclusion and is directly involved in setting the direction for the D&I agenda. The personal attention of the leader in the initial years in understanding the needs and journey of each and every employee with disabilities has helped in gaining important insights and designing future course of action
2. A D&I lead and a dedicated team for the recruitment and training of persons with disabilities, whose capability has been built through partnership with disability expert organisation, has ensured the rapid rise of the number of Persons with Disabilities at Radnik.
3. Given that the apparel industry is still very manual and labour intensive, ambitious targets of 1-2% (of the total staff as persons with disability) were defined for the organisation. The current pandemic situation did impact the numbers, yet 100+ candidates across all disability type continue to work across various divisions at Radnik

1.2 Workplace Accommodation and Accessibility

Every employee is different—from abilities to job needs, from how they consume information to how they prefer to collaborate and communicate with others. For many, workplace accommodations enable the best of their abilities by reducing discrimination, increasing access to the workplace, and changing perceptions

The experience of participating companies addresses the following myths related to hiring and retaining persons with disabilities in Manufacturing Plants -

▶▶ MYTH 1

Manufacturing is about efficiency and speed. Workers with disabilities are unable to perform at par with non-disabled peers

If an employee satisfies the functional requirement of the job role and all the necessary accommodations are extended as per individual needs, it really doesn't matter whether they are persons with or without disability. It's the "Ability" which matters ultimately.

▶▶ MYTH 2

Persons with Disabilities are incapable of operating large machinery

There are many job roles and workstations linked with a single large machine. It really doesn't matter if the role is associated with a big or a small machine. What matters is whether the candidate has the skill and the knowledge to perform the roles core to the work (with accommodation, basis need).

▶▶ MYTH 3

Since machine adaptation is not possible in most cases, people with disability cannot work in a manufacturing set up

In majority of the cases, machine adaptations are not required. Appropriate job mapping, need based accommodations and ergonomics improvements are sufficient.

▶▶ MYTH 4

People with disability aren't safe in a Manufacturing Facility

Once an organization ensures that all the safety and evacuation protocols are looked into, as per standards and any specific needs of the employee is provided for, it does not matter whether they are persons with disability or without disability. In general, people with disabilities can maneuver around their surroundings comfortably once all accessibility and accommodation needs are provided for.

▶▶ MYTH 5

People with disability should be assigned simple tasks

Assignment of tasks ought to be based on thorough assessment of the abilities and a well-informed process for job role alignment. Rather than making assumptions, it is important to ensure that each candidate gets an opportunity for fair assessment and accordingly decisions are made.

▶▶ MYTH 6

Persons with disability will quit when work pressure increases

People with disability are as susceptible to quitting as their non disabled peers when work pressure increases. In general, disjointed, reactive, and inconsistent accommodations and processes across business units results in lower retention rates and increases hiring and retraining costs.

▶▶ MYTH 7

In cases where an assembly line has a person with disability, worker assignment and balancing problem accentuates many-fold

On the contrary, an assembly line enables a single task to be broken into several sub-tasks; thus, enabling comfortable mapping as per specific functional skills of the candidates.

Workplace Accommodation

- With respect to access to accommodations, all participating companies are working towards achieving the following goals
 - Proactive accommodation process with centralised funds, clearly defined SOPs and a strong leadership overseeing implementation
 - Respectful and seamless experience whilst requesting for reasonable accommodations
- Guiding principle for all being ***“Nothing about us, without us”***. Total employee involvement and empowerment ensures that anytime a

workplace difficulty arises – whether work related or not – people with disability are fully engaged and their suggestions are actively sought. A good example of this being the way deaf staff members are engaged and encouraged to teach basic sign language to their peers. Given that most participating companies have hired deaf and hard of hearing candidates in large numbers, company and role specific signs are learnt by all, to address communication related challenges



WORTH Brailers – Manufacturing Unit at Katpadi; Sole Assemblers of the Perkins Brailers

This partnership enables WORTH TRUST to extend opportunities to 40+ persons with disabilities in a very comfortable and controlled setting. The entire process of assembly is completely manual which enables every task to be divided into several sub-parts. Supervisor with deep understanding of individual accommodation needs, collaborates with them to allocate roles in a such a way that worker assignment and balancing related challenges do not arise and individual needs are addressed. It is thus no surprise that WORTH Brailers employs people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities – all under one roof.

Industry Best Practice – Workplace Adjustments / Enablement Passport³

Enablement Passport is an innovative concept used by many progressive companies to create safe environment where employees can voluntarily explain the impact of their disability, impairment, health concern or mental health condition in the workplace and offer any other detail which will enable them to work and engage with their work environment and team more effectively. These can be short or long term, and can include the following and more -

- Adjustment of work arrangements –
 - Health related - recurring commitment to maintain health (doctors visit, physiotherapy, blood transfusions etc), fluctuations in health condition, ongoing medication that can impact work
 - adjustments to workstation or specialist equipment (like assistive technology and ergonomic furniture)
 - adjustments to role/shift timings / working practices / performance targets
- Adjustment for learning
- Adjustment for travelling
- Preferred communication style
- Emergency needs

This passport enables colleagues to keep a record of their agreed workplace adjustments, making for easier conversations as they progress through their career. To make this a success,

- confidentiality is maintained by establishing data privacy guidelines that clearly state that the information shared is sensitive and any misuse / disclosure / onward transfer without employees' consent will lead to strict disciplinary action.
- all line managers go through necessary disability confident training which enables them to build awareness of different disabilities and confidence to manage enabling conversation with peers.



³Source: Workplace Adjustment Passport at Barclays PLC: <https://tinyurl.com/3mcse86x>

Workplace Accessibility

1. Physical Accessibility

The ultimate goal for any organisation should be that their workplace is made accessible to everyone as per the universal design principals⁴. The step-by-step approach followed by many progressive companies including participating companies are as following:

Industry Best Practice – Workplace Accessibility	
Starting with the immediate need	<p>Rather than trying to achieve a total overhaul, these companies started with immediate needs such as accessible parking, accessible horizontal and vertical circulation, ramps at entries and exits, accessible washrooms etc and gradually achieved complete accessibility as per the guidelines⁵. None of these changes were major, but they went a long way in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) hiring of persons with disabilities. b) making the workspace safer and more accessible for employees. c) establishing the companies' dedication towards creating an inclusive environment for everyone.
Enlisting expert insights	In addition to engaging accessibility consultants, these companies sought inputs from their employee with disabilities in understanding the issues/areas of improvement.
Investing in employee education & training	Basic concepts of accessibility are included in all trainings to ensure that everyone understands the needs of persons with disabilities and they can support each other well.
Revisiting Accessibility	An internal team, comprising of members from facilities, civil works and persons with disabilities conducts periodic audits and proposes need based changes. Some companies have also organised master training sessions for a group of employees to make them adept at basic concepts of accessibility and enable them to conduct regular reviews with their colleagues with disabilities.

2. Fire Safety and Evacuation

The focus on access into the premise is matched with arrangements for safe egress and evacuation in the event of an emergency. Some of the common best practices across companies include

- Regular training for staff involved in evacuation process-
 - Disability awareness and disability evacuation etiquette
 - Moving, lifting and handling techniques
 - Good practice in communication, including use of communication systems
 - Design and use of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)
- One to one mapping of persons with disabilities with fire marshals / floor wardens / buddies
- Regular checks of systems and equipment used for evacuation
- Regular fire-drills (morning / evening) to cover all shifts

⁴https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_design

⁵2016-Harmonized Guidelines and Space Standards for a Barrier free built up environment

3. Digital Accessibility

While all participating companies understand and appreciate that assistive technology is one of the biggest equalisers in the successful mainstreaming and inclusion of persons with disabilities, it remains a development area which needs due consideration.

Industry Best Practice – Workplace Accessibility

Promising business practices w.r.t. accessible ICT include the development of a comprehensive strategy that includes the following:

1. Securing leadership “buy-in” to establish and sustain corporate commitment to accessible ICT.
 - Adopting and implementing ICT accessibility policy to include technical accessibility standards, protocols for evaluation and testing, training and guidance
 - Adopting specific technical ICT accessibility standards and functional performance criteria (e.g., WCAG 2.1 A and AA) regarding software applications and operating systems, web-based intranet and internet applications, telecommunication products, video and multimedia products etc.
 - Establishing a mechanism for centralised expertise and/or funding by appointing dedicated resources -
 - Appointing a Chief Digital Accessibility Officer who is knowledgeable about the accessibility policy and legal requirements and responsible for coordinating the implementation
 - Appointing a cross-functional committee which is in-charge of monitoring, maintaining and reporting to the Chief Accessibility Officer
 - Establishing measurable objectives and benchmarks; designing and implementing data collection and continuous improvement strategies, including tracking and reporting systems
 - Providing outsourcing guidelines to suppliers and business partners, including copies of the ICT accessibility guidelines, and ensuring that ICT accessibility standards are included in all deliverables
2. Designing a dynamic list of all platforms, devices and applications that use ICT and prioritise testing and implementation of changes based on factors such as frequency and nature of use.

Rather than achieving total accessibility, companies start with immediate needs and gradually progress. This includes –

- a) Generic application/ tools (HR Systems, attendance, payroll, LMS, etc.) that are commonly used by all employees are given priority.
- b) Core application relevant to the work the staff with disability has been hired.
- c) Pre-hiring and onboarding material.
- d) Training videos / multimedia content is made accessible (captioned and audio described).

Other than this, it is assured that all new applications being developed/ procured have an inclusive design. Digital accessibility also includes covering third party applications like Practo etc.

- Using automated accessibility testing tool to evaluate conformance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 A and AA;
- Enabling manual testing by users with different disabilities to identify accessibility barriers otherwise not apparent through automated testing.

3. Conducting training for WCAG 2.1 A and AA accessibility requirements, for all employees and contractors who design, develop, procure, maintain, or have other responsibilities related to ICT (in-house staff, including program managers, contracting and procurement officers, software developers, web developers, and video and multimedia developers, IT help desk staff).
4. Retaining an independent Website Accessibility Consultant (in-house / outsourced) who advises businesses on how to conform to WCAG 2.1 A and AA.
5. Incorporating a robust system to handle feedback. Providing contact information of the SPOC and instructions on how to file a complaint, etc.

“At the time when we started our journey of disability inclusion, there was limited knowledge of accessibility and accommodations. There were hardly any specialist organisations and there was no readily available knowledge / rule book that could be tapped into. This was not a deterrent for us or our employees due to our conviction to make it happen and our resolve to include persons with disabilities in every decision related to them to ensure that the solutions were truly representative of their needs”

R Gaur, VP HR, Radnik Exports



Outlined below, following the common best practices, are some of the innovative strategies followed by the partnering organisations for workplace accommodation and accessibility



What we see as "ergonomics problems" are, in most cases, rooted in the design of equipment and manufacturing processes.

Ergonomics professionals can provide valuable input in creating work environments and work solutions that accommodate workers with disabilities arising from Injuries, chronic or progressive diseases and/or physical changes associated with ageing.

As WORTH TRUST diversifies its workforce to include people across disabilities including people with spinal cord injury, the need to ensure comfortable machine posture and proper ergonomics becomes even more pertinent. WORTH TRUST has recently inducted on Board, as Trustee a professional medical doctor who is also a Physiatrist⁶ with extensive knowledge of ergonomics for workplace adjustments and improved accessibility. WORTH TRUST has also collaborated with Mary Varghese Institute of Rehabilitation, CMC Vellore⁷; India's first rehabilitation centre for persons with disabilities, for their guidance and support in identifying accessibility and ergonomic requirements for training and employment of people with spinal cord injury.

“ Way back in 1963, when we started our work and consequently set-up our centres, there were no guidelines which could be followed to build accessible premises. While retrofitting in built environment has its own set of challenges, the silver lining was that our people became their own advocates. We followed an open culture where they were encouraged to voice their needs and through this total employee involvement, slowly and gradually several accessibility features were incorporated in all our facilities; making them functionally accessible for people with even severe disabilities”.

R. Karthikeyan

CEO & MD WORTH TRUST

Workplace Adaptation

Mentioned below are examples of some basic workplace adaptations (Low Tech – Low Cost) which have made working on the shop floor a possibility for persons with disabilities



S. Chandrababu;

WORTH Plastics
(Injection Moulding Machine), Katpadi

Small workplace accommodation of providing comfortable stools (with/out backrest / armrest basis need) makes it possible for a crutch user to work seamlessly throughout office hours



K Nagalakshmi

Accounts Department,
WORTH Plastic, Katpadi

“ Before providing me with a wheelchair, a specialist at WORTH TRUST understood my needs and accordingly customized it by removing the footrest. The way our individual needs are addressed; we feel truly valued”



S. Kadharbasha

WORTH Mobility Aids Unit,
Katpadi,

All the relevant material / sub-parts are kept close to the employee to enable comfortable access

⁶A physiatrist diagnoses, manages, and treats pain from injury, illness, or medical conditions, predominantly using physical means for recovery such as physical therapy and medicine

⁷<https://www.cmch-vellore.edu/>



The indigenous changes incorporated in Hopper Dryer Loader in the Plastics Injection Moulding Unit to enable comfortable loading of raw material is an example of employee involvement and empowerment to find solutions to the challenges at the workplace.

Having a process around engaging people with disabilities in process improvement, troubleshooting goes a long way in identifying solutions as per the universal design principles

Hopper Dryer Loader– WORTH TRUST – Plastic Unit

Alternate to climbing steps and loading the machine; designed in consultation with disabled colleagues

Workplace Accessibility



Michelin's approach to all elements of disability inclusion has been proactive and not reactive. Rather than

initiating the process of assessing the physical environment at the time of recruitment, experts were engaged when Michelin was just initiating its disability inclusion journey. Some of the key best practices included the following:

1. All elements of the campus – shop floor and office area were audited from the lens of all disabilities – physical, cognitive and sensory.
2. Michelin started with immediate needs, rather than trying to achieve total overhaul, and has a robust plan for meeting all accessibility needs as per guidelines over time
3. Key stakeholders from facilities and administration were closely involved in the study with the experts and while shadowing them internal capabilities were built to take on the agenda further and incorporate changes basis need

which was adopted for the entire company. For instance, checklist in validation process was refined based on the inputs of a trainee with disability and this quality improvement in the process was appreciated and recognized by the company.

2. A three-way collaboration between disability partner, L&D team & persons with disabilities enabled several members from the L&D team to learn basic sign language. They got the opportunity to hone their learning by providing job related training in sign language. By addressing the communication barrier, they were able to build an deeper understanding of the needs of people with hearing impairment and accordingly provide customized solutions.

Workplace Accommodation

- 1 For Michelin, embracing diversity and forming a welcoming and inclusive culture is not just the right thing to do, it makes business sense. People with disabilities feel confident to voice their opinions and suggest solutions everytime a workplace situation arises, be it work related or any other. There have been instances where trainees with disabilities suggested solutions to challenge they faced,

“We needed a lot of handholding support from our partner agency during the initial recruitments. We followed a very hands-on learning approach and with each recruitment, our team progressed in their understanding and confidence in leaps and bounds. In the recent placements, the team could liaison very closely with the deaf trainee in breaking down processes into sub processes and designing visual process maps. By doing this ourselves, we feel that we have very comfortably circumvented the communication challenge with the deaf and we are absolutely ready to ramp up the numbers.

Ranganathan Bhuvaramurthy

Plant Director, Michelin-Chennai Factory



3. Candidate training and onboarding is a carefully designed process comprising a mix of classroom and job training (OJT). A structured approach comprising 3-level support is extended to the candidates.

a. Though this is the norm for all joiners, it has emerged somewhat like a universal design for the company that helps all trainees in getting onboarded and learning and applying the skills in a manner that is expected of them by the corporate. The 3-layered support extended includes the following:

- Monitor – Overall in-charge of training including designing and delivering classroom sessions and coordinating and monitoring OJT. Trainees with disability are engaged in the class room to build basic understanding post which they are shifted to the shopfloor for practical on-ground learning
- Tutor –The new recruit shadows the tutor, who works on the shopfloor and provides OJT until validation (found fit to work alone).Underlying process followed for the training is “I do, We do, you do”
- A buddy is assigned (1:1) for navigating the physical workplace and other demands of work

b. All buddies, tutors and monitors go through detailed peer sensitization which helps them in building the understanding of disability, accommodation needs and communication etiquettes.

c. Trainees are assessed at all levels . Before working on the shopfloor they must clear safety validation and they are allowed to work at the plant only after clearing Validation Qualification Certification. All assessments are designed and conducted as per the specific accessibility needs of the candidate.

d. Regular structured and unstructured reviews are organized between the manager and Employee with Disability. Review notes are documented by managers to analyse progress.

“The multi- layered structure – Monitor, Tutor and Buddy coupled with extremely empathetic team members and leaders ensured that the candidates got all round support and settling in was not a challenge”

Sudhakar, Shop Manager OCP-PK,
Michelin- Chennai Factory

e. Given that communication is the main challenge that the deaf experience at workplaces, breaking the communication barrier particularly helped in the initial phase of settling-in. This was achieved by a) introducing adapted english training course for deaf trainees; training also included Michelin specific technical words that were used on a daily basis b) providing mandatory sign language training to their peers.

SIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING





“ Employment potential of people across disabilities in even advanced technology production has improved many-fold by the application of Kaizen philosophy, and Poka-Yoke techniques in particular. We have dedicated “Kaizen Hours” wherein every individual on the shop floor has to suggest a “Poka-Yoke ^{Kaizen8}” every quarter, as part of his KPA (key performance areas). These can vary across the following thematic areas – productivity, quality, cost effectiveness, delivery, safety and morale.

It is interesting to see so many suggestions come from the peers / buddies of persons with disabilities who have carefully observed them while working and accordingly made several suggestions which can improve their workability. This is, in many ways a happy validation of the fact that our colleagues feel empowered to voice their inputs and their non disabled peers truly understand their work and accommodation needs.

Ravindra Jagdale

Lead HR, Minda Corporation Ltd.

Kaizen refers to continuous improvement in performance, cost/effectiveness, and quality. Kaizen strives to empower the worker, increase worker satisfaction, facilitate a sense of accomplishment, and thereby create pride-in-work. Poka-Yoke or error-proofing techniques are part of the collection of Kaizen techniques. These techniques reduce the physical and cognitive demands of a task, thereby making it more accessible.

These principals are widely adopted across the shop floor at Spark Minda and this has had a direct positive implication in the inclusion and workplace productivity of persons with disabilities.



Broaching Operation – The job requires loading the machine and pushing the start button. There is always a fear of hand getting into the machine, thus making the process hazardous.

The “Poka-Yoke Kaizen” includes putting both hand sensors to avoid accidents. Once the operation stops, the operator can unload the job and start the next operation. With this process enhancement, several people with vision impairment have been hired in this and similar process.

Water Deep Machine – This is used to detect punctures in water jacket cavity. Here the job is loaded in the machine and the operation starts. Later the operator has to visually inspect the job for defects. There is always a fear of hands getting into the machine, thus making the process hazardous.

The “Poka-Yoke Kaizen” includes installing handpress switch buttons on both sides, which need to be pressed together to start the job. This ensures the necessary safety precaution. With this process enhancement, several deaf employees have been hired in this and similar process.



Packaging Operations- Packing jobs in plastic bags and storing in bins was a challenge for person with vision impairment as there were no tactile markers. To deploy colleagues with vision impairment, racks with compartments were put in bins.

⁸<https://www.kaizenmgtsys.com/poka-yoke/>



2. Employ

79% of international business leaders agree that enhanced customer satisfaction was a core outcome from a diverse and inclusive workforce, with 85% believing it enhanced business performance⁹. Looking at how we recruit will enable us to embrace diversity and value inclusion

⁹EHRC Equality Act 2010 – Statutory Code of Practice for Employment

Challenge

1. What are the pre-requisites before an organisation embarks on its journey of hiring persons with disabilities?
2. How does the organisation mobilise talent, especially considering many manufacturing units have a geographical disadvantage?
3. How do organisations identify suitable opportunities which result in sustainable employment ? How does it ensure that these are not restricted to a few job roles or a few disability types ?
4. How does the organisation make hiring of persons with disabilities a part of their regular recruitment process and identify the right skill-sets to match their need ?

Inclusive Recruitment

1. Is there an innovative way to make customers, vendors, sub-contractors, suppliers, etc. aware of and committed to the organisation's disability inclusion policy - Trickle effect to achieve scale in impact?

Inclusiveness in Supply Chain

1. How does the organisation instill the confidence in employees with disabilities that they will be offered a nurturing growth environment, unbiased by their disability?
2. How does the organisation indeed "walk the talk" ?
3. How does the organisation ensure that it is perceived as a career company by one and all ?

Career Progression & Retention

2.1 Inclusive Recruitment

The adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in 2006 has further strengthened the social model of disability and granted persons with disabilities with a wide spectrum of human rights including the right to employment based on the principles of equal treatment, accessibility and non-discrimination. This forms the basis of the recruitment policy for the participating companies.

For most participating companies, hiring of persons with disabilities started as a CSR activity and very soon became a core business activity. The goodwill and support generated internally and externally (clients / end-users, backwards linkages) gave the necessary impetus to the effort and enabled numbers to ramp up.

Industry Best Practice

Before delving into recruitment, it is ensured that the following MUST HAVE's (as articulated under the ENABLE Pillar) are in place

1. Physical accessibility of premises (entry to exit) - External & Internal Environment, Fire Safety & Evacuation
2. Social Inclusion at Workplace -Employee survey (formal/ informal)- to gauge level of disability awareness, unearth hidden biases, understand willingness to work with colleagues with disabilities
3. Enabling Process and Policies - Review HR/ other policies from a disability equity lens; ensure protocols are in place for reasonable workplace accommodations

The key common practices of these companies which laid the foundation of Inclusive Recruitment can largely be categorised under the following headings

Job Mapping and Job Analysis

- a. Job Mapping - Identifying prioritised job-roles for inclusive hiring based on company specific criteria. Some of the criteria could be-
 - roles with high churn and hence more likely to have more open positions
 - roles that do not have stiff targets or require a lot of preparation;
 - roles that are unique in their combination of functional needs (mobility, hearing, vision, learning)
- b. Job Analysis – This involved reviewing description of each job role by a) Segregating core (essential) & marginal functions for each job description b) Defining physical demands and work environment demands c) Listing out typical workplace accommodations.

Recruiter Sensitisation and preparation of recruitment process

3. Training HR / Recruitment Teams in
 - Job Mapping and Job Analysis
 - Understanding diversity in disability and accommodation needs
 - Communication etiquettes including. Do's & Don'ts for conducting inclusive screening and interview (online and offline)
 - Understanding needs and accordingly providing for accommodations during screening, assessment, onboarding and training

Laying the Foundation for Inclusive Recruitment

The following guiding principles enabled participating companies to go over job mapping and job analysis process to identify suitable opportunities for persons with disabilities and make necessary accommodations. This may/may not have been a formal job mapping exercise which transcended into well-defined SOPs¹⁰.

Parameters defining job role



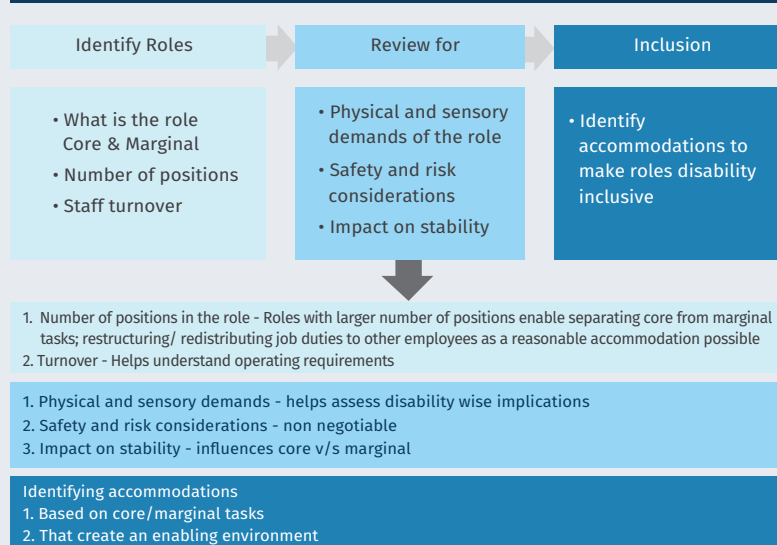
Core/Essential functions - If ceased, serious consequences would occur or the job would cease to exist. Individual who hold the position must be able to perform unaided/ with reasonable accommodations

Marginal Functions - Occupies a small percentage of time, failure to perform may have minor consequence. Could be performed by the with minimal to moderate disruption / inconveniences

Inclusion Indicator

High	Can perform this role
Medium	Can perform tasks core to this role; marginal elements may need to be redefined
Low	Cannot perform (at least few) tasks core to the role; Regulatory / Safety consideration

Framework



¹⁰Refer Annexure - Sample Job Analysis for Enabling and Core Function

Type	Details	Prevalence across companies
Workplace Adaptations¹¹		
Adaptation of workstation / work area	Physical accessibility, safety protocols, ergonomics	Common; case by case basis
Adaptation of machinery and equipment	Physical design and functioning of machinery / equipment	Uncommon - contingent on parameters such as –availability, cost etc.
Reasonable Accommodations		
Review of job description, Flexibility of work schedule	Process changes -Splitting core (essential) functions into sub-parts, changes in marginal functions	Common - contingent on overall flexibility –number of roles available, size of the team etc.

“ Like we have standards for physical and digital accessibility which every organisation must conform to, there should be similar standards for machines as well. Only then will we have the desired flexibility to consider persons with disabilities across majority of roles on the shop floor”

Vikas Thapa, Group Chief Human Resource Officer, Spark Minda Group

Other success parameters across partnering organisations include the following -

- Inclusion and not Integration – Most often persons with disability are seen placed in very few roles which are either relatively sheltered such as packaging or are in teams which already have persons with disabilities. It is important to note that people with disabilities may have similar context but they may not want to be together always. This integration without inclusion does not let the ethos of inclusion spread across the organisation. At all participating companies, persons with disabilities are seen across the shop floor doing miscellaneous tasks. People are truly hired for their “ability factor”
- People with disabilities hold positions in core D&I, HR and Recruitment Teams. Further, they are hired in mainstream jobs and not just merely in support functions or less critical roles. There are well defined and closely monitored targets for recruitment and penetration across roles and levels.

“Who would know best what people with disabilities want and need than people with disabilities themselves. Including them in core decision making teams ensures that we don’t short-circuit and miss them all together”

Nunes Ignatius Myke

Senior Manager – Braille Division
& Marketing Services.

- Relaxed selection criteria enabled access to a large talent pool that may otherwise go unnoticed; focus was always on learning capability of the candidates and their interests and passion which can be leveraged with appropriate job-role based training.

¹¹Refer Annexure for Adaptation Matrix

“The shift from traditional filtering approach comprising of skill-to-skill match for the job requirement, cut-off scores, aptitude tests, multiple interviews etc to customised job-role specific assessment enabled us to accommodate persons with disabilities, who are often discouraged by tough entry criteria. Further, the teams gained the confidence to move forward by a) starting with some placements that required limited workplace adjustments b) implementation of inclusive apprenticeships that was in many ways the litmus test wherein non disabled employees worked alongside persons with disabilities and gained the necessary confidence”.

R Gaur

VP HR, Radnik Exports

- d. Most companies began by hiring deaf trainees and ensured that at least their immediate peers, team leaders, members of L&D team understood the basics of sign language. Further, jobs with least safety issue were considered. For general safety the following process is adhered to
- Educating the trainees on the alerting system and process of evacuation
 - Making it mandatory for persons with disabilities to participate in mock drills
 - Assigning a buddy (a hearing person) to alert the trainee with disability to any safety issues (forklift movement if unnoticed; safety alarm/siren)

“There are 39 people with disabilities – locomotor, hearing and vision working across the two Die-casting plants in Pune. All the shop floor supervisors and their peers are trained in sign language and they can manage the initial training and on-boarding independently. In case they get stuck, there are other deaf (may / may not be from the same division) who step in for support. We also arrange a refresher session every quarter which is mandatory for everyone to attend. We are hoping that with these small efforts, someday everyone will be able to converse in sign language”

Sachin Dethe

Lead HR, Minda Corporation Ltd.

- e. Given that all participating companies have their offices away from the city centre (common across most manufacturing plants) the following helped in circumventing the skill gap, extending their hiring outreach and building candidate pipeline to organically grow the number of persons with disabilities in the organisation -

- strong community outreach
- in-house training programs including government certified courses run at the company premise
- apprenticeship programs culminating into full time employment gradually
- partnerships with local NGOs/ DPOs and organisations such as the following for their pan-India recruitment efforts - Youth4jobs, Sarthak, Vishwa Yuva Kendra, v-shesh, and Samarthanam
- accessing exclusive portals for hiring persons with disabilities - MONSTER, JOBABILITY and NAUKRI
- periodic exclusive recruitment drives at the company's premises, at higher education institutions and other government Institutes such as ITIs, NCSC-DA
- internal referral programs/campaigns etc have helped in sustaining the effort but do not contribute to big numbers

“Hosting, volunteering or participating in an inclusive job fair or taking up charitable initiatives, increases your company's involvement with the community and such “disability-inclusive” efforts will attract their attention and approval”.

Sanjiv Jalan

Head - Corporate Audit & Governance,
Spark Minda Group

- f. In addition to assistance in accessing trained pool of candidates, all organisations have partnered with specialist organisations in training managers in inclusive recruitment and on-boarding process especially in the initial phase, until organisation confidence was built to manage independently

Outlined below, following the common best practices, are some of the innovative strategies/ recruitment models followed by the partnering organisations -



- a. Most roles in which persons with disabilities are hired in the manufacturing unit require assembling small parts to produce light engineering components and performing quality checks on assembled items. These roles offered the flexibility to hire people across disabilities and were less resource intensive in terms of initial capital investment, technical know-how, skill requirement and learning curve.
- b. The main source for accessing candidate pool is the in-house training centre; most centres offer core technical training in relevant courses and infuse confidence in the trainees to work on any machine in the Engineering Industry.
- c. Building inter linkages amongst businesses/ initiatives has helped in value creation with limited resources. Mentioned below are a few examples.
 - Having the Training Centre and the Production Unit in the same campus ensures that trainees get continuous exposure. In this case, the “On Job Training” model has proven particularly effective as after the initial training, part of the job work in the assembly line is transferred to the trainees. This ensures that they get practical hands-on training on various job works before they join the workplace formally.
 - Vocational training course for students with intellectual disability (at the day care centre for children with intellectual disability) is designed in such a way that some of the learning outcomes can add value to assistive devices unit. Beading of braille abacus is one such activity; wherein final product is included in the learning kit
 - Parents of children at the early intervention and day care centre are engaged in activities such as writing on braille slates etc. This ensures that their spare time (while waiting for their children) is optimally utilised

“Perception, fear, myth and prejudice continue to limit participation and acceptance of persons with disability in the workplaces. Contrary to these notions, we believe that every person has something to contribute in the workplace. We walk the talk by extending opportunities to diverse disabilities under the same roof. This is possible by (a) a very open mind set of not fitting a candidate to a particular role, but instead understating his / her competency and accordingly adapting a job role (b) detailed job mapping including breaking every function into several sub-functions and (c) building deep understanding of individual needs”

Nunes Ignatius Myke

Senior Manager –Braille Division
& Marketing Services



Vignesh

Packaging Division (Mixie)
Plastic Manufacturing Unit

Vignesh is a true WORTH TRUST alumni. He enrolled in school and ITI Centre by WORTH TRUST and later joined their Plastic Unit

“This is my home. Where else will I go”

“On job training” model has proven particularly effective as after the initial training, part of the job work in the assembly line is transferred to the trainees.



During COVID, when new recruitment was not a possibility, Michelin used this opportunity to focus on building robust processes, creating organisation wide sensitization and prepared for accelerated growth in numbers gradually

- a. To source talent pool, Michelin has tied up with colleges such as Satyabhama University. Deep engagement with the institute has over the years helped in building strong brand equity for the company in the institute. Additionally, CSR outreach, internal referrals, job fairs and NGO tie-ups are also important sources for mobilization.
- b. Gender stereotyping about jobs is set from a young age and is a global issue. Very early on in its disability inclusion journey, Michelin challenged this by placing women with disabilities in roles such as tyre building wherein, they worked on the shop floor and made truck tyres, weighing more than 60kg. This helped Michelin in expanding the target pool and addressing several stereotypes related to what women **“can and should”** do.
- c. Innovation has been key to the success of Michelin in its journey. Some successful examples include

- i. Taking that extra step to make the candidates comfortable and believe in Michelin’s commitment to disability inclusion.

“Like most manufacturing units, we too are placed far from the city centre and candidate mobilization is one of our biggest challenges. During one of the interviews, I realized that the candidate and her parents were very nervous about the distance she would have to travel daily. Their fears were genuine and if unaddressed, would have resulted in an attrition very soon. Realizing the gravity of the situation, I made them speak to another female candidate with disability who had similar doubts at the time of joining and had now settled very well. I kept in touch with the parents and patiently addressing all their concerns. Today their daughter is successfully working in our office and parent guidance, peer counselling has become a part of our on-boarding process”

t

Shop Trainer

- ii. Constantly striving to understand a candidate’s interest and competencies and accordingly adapting a job role basis need-

“Value addition task of stripping (which accounted for 20% of the job) was carved out of staff working in various shift and made into a separate job role to be performed by hearing impaired trainee. Having a clear understanding of various tasks along with the risk factor and physical demand of the job made this possible. Seeing the candidate settle in and perform so well gives us the confidence to encourage our teams to innovate and absorb candidates across disability types with varying accommodation needs”

Jai Ganesh Devarajan, Learning and Development Manager

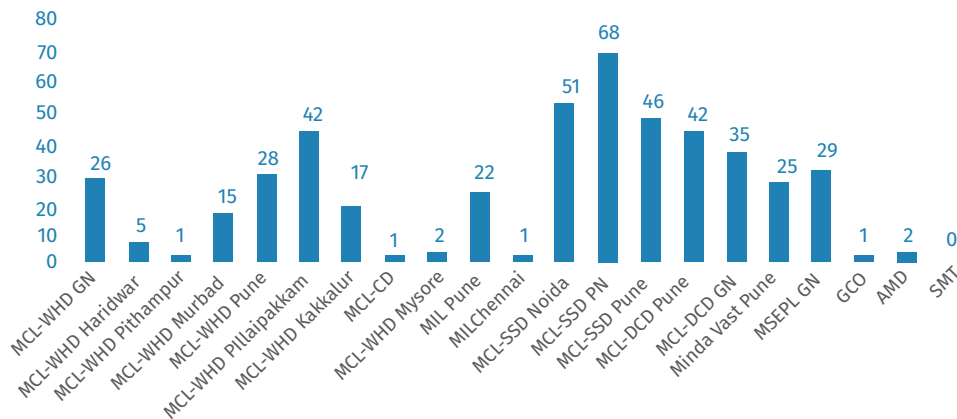


“People with disabilities deserve the chance to build a life for themselves in the communities which they choose to live in. The only thing that can bring about their inclusion is a change in mindset. The roles which we thought they could perform and the roles which they are performing today have limited congruence. The sky is the limit once you have decided”

Sarika Minda

Chairperson, Spark Minda Foundation

Number of persons with disabilities working across plants of Spark Minda Group 2021-22



1. Actionable, achievable workforce diversity plan has helped Spark Minda to create an impressive cohort of people with disabilities over the years. Explicit action items for everyone; from business leads to diversity hiring lead, to operations teams have enabled recruitment and penetration across roles and levels.

“We are trying to start a first of its kind product line for assembly lock-set which would be fully managed by people with disability. If this experiment works, it will mean minimum 20 new opportunities and the confidence to start many such assembly lines which will engage people across physical, sensory and cognitive impairment.

This is a proposal which came through the monthly ideation meetings between the Plant Head, HR and Operations Head. Their experiences and several big and small successes in placing people with disability on the shop floor have given them the confidence to see this through”

Yuvraj Thorat

Head HR,
Minda Vast Access Systems Pvt Ltd, Pune

2. Similar to WORTH TRUST, most roles in which persons with disabilities are hired in the manufacturing unit across factories require a) assembling small parts and components to create new products and b) performing diagnostic tests on assembled items. Centre of Excellence which is being set-up in Noida is seeking affiliation with NSDC¹² to customise the Assembly Technician Course¹³ and offer it at its centers. This will help in dealing with the manpower related challenges by creating a captive group (mostly mobilised through camps, rural outreach, centre walk-ins) trained in requirements specific to the company. Given that there is tremendous scope for such skills in manufacturing sector with sub-assembly divisions (small part) in general, such roles offer a promising career for people with disabilities.

¹²<https://nsdcindia.org/>

¹³https://nsdcindia.org/sites/default/files/ELEQ6303_Electronic_Sub_assembly_Technician_v1_29_05_2019.pdf

The biggest advantage of small parts manufacturing assembly line is that every process can be broken down in several simple sub-process - with each sub-process requiring different basic skills, thereby accommodating people with diverse level of functional abilities.

3. Spark Minda has dealt with the manpower sourcing challenge by following a multi-pronged approach –

- Dedicated centralised sourcing – Most units share their requirements with the Foundation, which tries to mobilise suitable candidates through camps, outreach efforts and networks. This dedicated sourcing provides credence to the effort
- Adhering to process – Early on in its journey, a detailed deployment matrix was created to identify what role is best suitable for which disability. This exercise was performed at all unit locations by a team comprising of Production In-charge, Operations In-charge, HR and CSR team. Initial handholding support was extended by external vendors to conduct the exercise. This helped in establishing a baseline so that one could understand need, priorities goals, strategically allocate resources and track year-over-year progress. It is important to note here that this is a dynamic list which is revisited at regular intervals basis changes in operation, expansion and innovation
- Customised assessment – Rather than checking for parameters which may not have direct implication on work, it made sense to test the candidates on the specific skills needed to perform the job roles and make suitable adjustments in the work environment

	SW Assy							
	Level II	Level II	Level II	Level II	Level II	Level III	Level II	Level II
	Rotor Assembly & Greasing	Punching	Lock Bar & BLB Assembly	SW Body Screwing	Cable Tie Tightning	SW Testing	Functional Testing	Packing
Persons with Visual Impairment		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Persons with Hearing Impairment	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Persons with Speech Impairment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Persons with Mobility Impairment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total Requirement	3	4	4	3	4	2	2	3
Legend	✓	Suitable Operation						
		Less Suitable						

“Very early on in our journey we realized that standardized assessments won’t work for most aspirants. We thus revamped our entire screening, training, post training assessment and this helped in many more ways than what we had envisaged – (a) our conversions improved without any impact on the quality as we were now focusing on the candidate’s skills, attitude and cultural fit (b) intake of people with disability improved many-fold (c) overall process of recruitment and on-boarding became more stress-free”

Praveen Karn, Head - Group CSR, Spark Minda Group



Post Training assessment designed to check for speed, efficacy and accuracy



Practical, activity-based Fire Safety Training

- Building strong relations – Spark Minda has built a strong database of candidates, especially people with locomotor disability through its outreach efforts; local camps and ongoing support in repair and distribution of assistive devices being the most dominant sources for candidate outreach. It collaborates with other NGOs / DPOs to share data. This symbiotic relationship helps it in accessing talent pool across diverse disability and identifying suitable opportunities for persons with disabilities enrolled with it. Partnering with both state employment agencies and local disability groups has also given diversity hiring efforts a great impetus
- Innovation - Spark Minda's prison project wherein assembly units are placed inside the prison and everything from inventory, training and production support is extended by Spark Minda has really helped in taking production outside their premises without compromising on quality. It has been a win-win for all as it helps Spark Minda to expand capacity without investing in real estate and additional manpower. It helps inmates to earn a dignified living; a step towards reintegration with the society. The success of this project has encouraged Spark Minda to seek similar partnerships (in pipeline) with other captive groups such as rehabilitation centres, local NGOs/DPOs etc.

4. With so many persons with disabilities working across business units, overtime in-house capabilities are built for training and on-boarding candidates. There is a set process for induction wherein people go through

detailed training for two days post which they observe on the shop floor for 2-3 days. Once they have some semblance of the role, they move into the role with the supervisor supporting them.



Vinod Yadav –

Person with Vision Impairment
In-wire Harness Division – MSIL,
Pune

Vinod takes care of a sub-process which leads to assembling of wires to transmit signals/ electric power.

“ I have attended so many job fairs and nothing happened until a camp organised by SPARK MINDA in Pune changed my life forever”

Many people with intellectual disabilities, even though they may have skills that are suited to assembly line or other work in the industry, currently only have the option of working in sheltered environment producing products that are not necessarily of market quality; thus earning lower wages. If companies can partner with DPOs and pass on job work, then this group of individuals can be gainfully employed, further upgrade skills and earn decent wages.

RADNIK

1. Specialist agencies conducted the initial job mapping and helped Radnik in identifying less intensive roles to begin with. HR and Recruitment team worked very closely with them at this stage and quickly came up to speed with the knowledge and nuances for conducting this exercise independently in the future.
2. Relaxed selection criteria enabled access to a large talent pool that otherwise go unnoticed due to lack of traditional qualifications.
3. Referrals and NGO tie-ups continue to be the strongest source for candidate mobilisation
4. Building in-house training capability rather than relying on or outsourcing the training to disability experts enabled deeper understanding of needs of persons with disabilities and engagement; this capability was built through a three-way collaboration between the NGO partner, L&D team & persons with disability.
5. A structured approach towards onboarding candidates was followed which includes buddy assignments for navigating the physical workplace, breaking down of job role processes into small units that are easily understood by the new hires, peer sensitisation, regular reviews to record progress and troubleshooting

“ The manufacturing process of garments involves repetitive, routine and continuous operations with some variation in style. There is tremendous scope to break each task into several sub-tasks basis individual ability to understand and process instructions. Several roles ranging from simple to complex; from unskilled to highly skilled can be explored depending upon the aptitude and functional skills of the person.

The management at Radnik, gave us a free hand to analyse each role¹⁴, conduct work trials and delve deeper into the accommodations which could open up roles for persons with vision impairment. These learnings have helped us in transcending impact beyond the borders of Radnik Exports to several other garment manufacturing companies.

Nitasha Kachru

Deputy Director ,Research, Training & Employment -NAB Centre for Blind Women & Disability Studies



Photo credit : NAB Centre for Blind Women & Disability Studies

¹⁴Annexure - Sample Job Analysis for Garment Manufacturing

2.2 Inclusiveness in Supply Chain

A key factor in furthering the impact of disability inclusion in the whole ecosystems is the need to enlist as many constituent groups (i.e., suppliers, clients, contractors, etc.) as possible.

All participating companies reported having established (or are attempting to establish) a policy or criteria on disability inclusion in their contracting processes with suppliers / contractors. To tangibly enable inclusion, supply chain policies have direct reference to accessibility standards for vendors and suppliers and vendors who incorporate/ agree to incorporate accessibility features in their infrastructure facilities (both physical & digital, product / services) are a preferred choice. Additionally, such cascading supply chain policies help boost employment for people with disabilities by empowering and supporting vendors in working with them.

“Being socially responsible does not mean that we are not conscious of our bottom-line. We are embracing our responsibilities towards the community and environment we benefit from by weaving that obligation into the fibres of our business. This has had a positive rub-off on both, our suppliers and our clients who have actively gone ahead and taken up causes related to disability inclusion. Further, an inadvertent benefit of the same is that our social consciousness also makes us their preferred choice”

Dhirendher Sharma

AGM-HR, Radnik Export

Outlined below are some of the innovative strategies/ models followed by the partnering organisations-



WORTH TRUST started its journey by receiving some contract work from major South Indian conglomerates like Standard Motors, TVS, Tube Investments (currently Murugappa) etc. For these companies, sourcing and sub-contracting from WORTH TRUST is a preferred choice due to its inclusive model. The partnership was a win-win for both as while it enabled WORTH TRUST to grow, it provided a unique opportunity to these clients to include some of these inclusion practices in their businesses. Many even hired trainees with disabilities from the technical institutes run by WORTH TRUST and sought their support in creating a nurturing working environment and career path for them.

Automobile Sector	Brakes India Pvt. Ltd., Sundram Fasteners, Rane TRW Steering Systems, Rane (Madras) Limited, TAFE, Turbo Energy Pvt. Ltd., Transenergy Limited, Tenneco, Ampere Vehicles
Home Appliances	Panasonic Home Appliances India Ltd., Philips India Limited, Maya Home Appliances
Lifestyle Products	Parryware ROCA, TI Cycles Ltd.
Healthcare Sector	CMC Hospital, Narayani Hospital



“Amongst competitors, we are a preferred choice for our clients because of all the work we are doing with the community, making us score very well in our social audit. A collective attitude that continually builds and embeds support for people with disabilities is not only the right thing to do, it is also the right thing that will bring exceptional business results”.

N.K.Modi

ED & CEO MCL-SMAD

Some of the practices followed by Spark Minda to boost employment for people with disabilities in its ecosystem include:

- a. Backward Linkage- Empowering and supporting vendors in working with persons with disabilities. This includes impact sourcing from NGO / DPO working with persons with disabilities, choosing vendors who hire/include persons with disabilities as potential partners etc.
- b. Forward Linkage - Encouraging OEMs (for whom Spark Minda produces products) to hire people with disabilities by a) organizing floor visits and interactions b) encouraging participation in camps either as volunteers, potential recruiters or c) by linking their CSR agenda. Additionally, Spark Minda provides complete hands-on support in recruiting and on- boarding persons with disabilities.



2.3 Career progression and retention

“When it comes to diversity and inclusion, most companies often do the first part right which is hiring. It is the next part – the inclusion part; about giving everyone a conducive environment and equal opportunity to grow which is challenging.

An equal opportunity workplace is one where people feel the confidence in the systems, the leadership and the team in providing them with a nurturing growth environment, unbiased by their impairment. Company specific practices towards creating a work culture which keeps employees engaged, happy and productive, span the spectrum of wellbeing, career development, training, opportunities to network and collaborate”.

P Rajasekharan, Co-founder, v-shesh Learning Services Pvt Ltd

All participating companies strongly believe that to maintain their competitive edge, they need to successfully recruit and retain qualified employees. Establishing career development plans for all employees, including those with disabilities is key to achieve this outcome. Supervisors discuss career expectations with each employee, including employee's interests, talents, and skills in relation to the requirements of available jobs. Typical programs include goal setting, team building, networking, mentoring, performance evaluations, leadership opportunities, supervisory and management development, and professional skills training.

Given the diversity across roles, the focus of the partnering companies is on creating polyvalent more than specialists. Same rules apply for everyone, irrespective of whether they are disabled or non-disabled and hence everyone has to mandatorily move across roles horizontally and vertically.

Given the diversity across roles , the focus is on nurturing polyvalent or multiple basic skills rather than specialising in one skill alone. Importance to career growth is supported by a combination of job rotations, enrichment and training to nurture and retain talent.

Career Development tool for people with disabilities

- Career lattice opportunities include moving laterally to explore jobs where an employee's skills and interests have the best fit.
- Job rotations familiarise employees with the entire operations of the business, helping an employee recognise the transferability of skills and scope across all roles
- Job enrichment allows more responsibilities and new assignments

“The enthusiasm to not continue with the status quo and instead go all out to train the employees with disabilities for new roles, new opportunities and new challenges is what makes the partner companies “champion companies”. This is a paradigm shift from the recruitment practice observed across other manufacturing units where persons with disabilities are engaged in the same work for years with no visibility of any change or progression”.

P Rajasekharan

Co-founder, v-shesh Learning Services Pvt Ltd

Key best practices followed by the participating companies are outlined below –



“Near 0% attrition rate across all businesses cannot be a co-incidence. It is the outcome of deep engagement which makes everyone feel valued and chase organisation vision with the same fervour. For us it is important to show every candidate a growth path which enables them to remain motivated to perform and put their best foot forward”.

R. Karthikeyan

CEO & MD, WORTH TRUST

Given the scale of operation and possibilities across different domains, WORTH TRUST ensures that all candidates move horizontally and vertically across functions. This, in addition to making them generalists ensures that monotony does not set-in work.



Arockiam

(extreme left)
Assistant Manager,
WORTH Plastics

Arockiam joined WORTH TRUST immediately after completing his course from ITI Puducherry in 1989. He has had an impressive career starting from Machine Operator, Shift In-charge, Machine Maintenance In-charge, Mould Maintenance in-charge, Production In-charge, Overall Shop Floor In-charge and Assistant Manager.





At Michelin, parameters defining job mapping include a 5th element i.e., career path. Only those roles are opened to persons with disabilities wherein there is a clear career path.

Parameters defining job mapping at Michelin	
Core (essential) job function	Physical & Sensory Demand
Safety Risk	Disability Accommodation
Visible career path	

Managers are trained to help their team members visualize a potential career path within the organisation and together, they define specific milestones and the support they may need along their journey. Clear, direct and consistent communication from the manager about career advancement helps workers feel more engaged. Job rotation is encouraged to shake up the workers' daily routine, gain new skills, build appreciation for their colleagues' duties and a better understanding of the business as a whole.

Further, comprehensive wellness solution are introduced which include third party tie-up, toll free numbers broadcasted throughout the campus with the objective to remove the stigmatisation around mental health and give the staff members the confidence to come forward, self-declare and take support.

“At Michelin, management places each employees' professional development at the heart of the company policy and only opens those roles that help them to build their skills, knowledge and further their careers. If their career advancement is not given due credence, it will affect their morale and productivity and they may be left feeling that they aren't valued”.

Ravi Shankar Narayanasamy, Shop Manager – Extrusion





Somnath Mali

Person with Hearing Impairment
Post Machining Process – Minda Vast, Pune

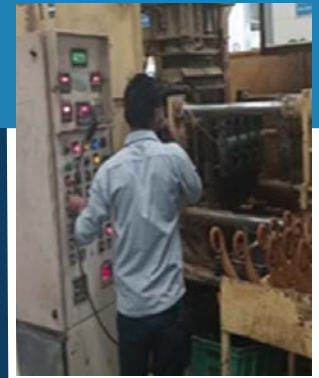
Somnath joined at the entry level and now manages a team of 32 in a role involving various sub-processes across the workstream – Visual Inspection to Packaging.

“No one has ever doubted my abilities because of my disability. I see a clear career path for myself and with such a supportive team, I am confident of achieving greater heights”.

Amol Tope

Person with Locomotor Disability
GDC Machine Maintenance – MCL-DCD, Pune

“When I got paralysis, it was almost as if all my leaders had a personal KPA to find a suitable opportunity for me keeping in mind my specific needs. While finding options, they ensured that the role had parity with my pre- paralysis job role in terms of nature of job, seniority and working culture. Not even once I have felt that something has changed”.



Other Initiatives –

- i. Given that there are so many people with disabilities across factories, local tie-ups are established with NGOs / DPOs who send trained interpreters to assist in regular connects with the candidates. While many team members know sign language, having an external resource gives people with hearing impairment a safe space to express themselves.
- ii. Chai Pe Charcha – Plant Head sits with persons with disabilities and their team members once a quarter to understand their needs. These are excellent opportunities for persons with disabilities to build rapport with their leaders and express themselves in an informal setting.
- iii. A calendar for Skill Development Programs is designed at the Group Level and cascaded across the organisation. It includes skill enhancement, upskilling and refresher sessions which are customised for specific needs of people with disabilities. Their inputs on their learning needs are actively sought in designing and rolling-out these trainings.
- iv. In case anyone expresses the desire to study further, prepare for government jobs etc., there are well defined policies in place to actively support them. This could be in the form of paid leaves, assistance with filling forms, arranging scribe, interpreters etc. This support has gone a long way in gaining their trust and solidarity.
- v. Wellness efforts journey at Spark Minda started by sensitising management team on the impact of mental health issues on businesses and employees and need for dedicated intervention. Spark Minda not only offer these programs to employees but also to their family members and support staff (contractual) including drivers, security guards, housekeeping etc. One of the most important outcomes of these wellness efforts are that the whole stigmatisation around mental health is removed and many people have felt confident to come forward, self-declare and seek support.



3. Engage

Disability awareness and inclusion training can often take a backseat to other seemingly more pressing priorities within the workplace. If prioritised like other business imperatives, research shows that the return on investment includes access to wider talent pool, higher retention rates, enhanced engagement and productivity, and a stronger brand as an employer of choice for all.

Challenge

1. How does the organisation normalize disability and create an overall positive ethos for persons with disabilities?
2. How does an organisation ensure that all its employees are sensitised and disability etiquette standards are reiterated and strictly conformed to?

Workplace Awareness and Sensitisation

3.1 Workplace Awareness and Sensitisation

For each of the participating companies, focus is not only on hiring a diverse workforce, but also on leveraging diverse perspectives for the benefit of the business as a whole. To bring out these diverse perspectives effectively, it is important to create awareness of unconscious biases and provide forums to share and discuss multiple perspectives.

Most champion companies started by engaging specialists to conduct various types of awareness and sensitisation workshops ranging across thematic areas related to disability inclusion. Gradually, internal capabilities were also built to conduct some of these sessions, mentioned below -

- Session for leadership on industry best practices, policy etc
- Session for HR / Recruitment Managers – Inclusive Screening and Recruitment
- Disability etiquette training customized to disability type and audience– managers, peers, support staff
- Accessibility of built-in environment and accessibility standards
- Training in emergency preparedness and evacuation of persons with disabilities,
- Deaf awareness and sign language training

Additionally

- i. There are structured disability etiquette standards to which all employees have to conform to. This is made a part of onboarding processes and is re-iterated in several ways in multiple platforms.
- ii. Classroom sessions are coupled with combination of internal and external activities/events which create awareness. Active volunteering, especially is looked as a very powerful means of awareness creation.
- iii. ERGs (Employee Resource Groups) are seen as useful, low-cost tool for engaging participants and furthering the organisations' diversity initiatives. Like all business programs, they are carefully planned and achieve the following
 - offer a safe and empathetic space where people with disabilities and their allies can openly discuss issues
 - raise awareness of workplace issues including unconscious bias that affect people with disabilities
 - improve inclusive hiring efforts
 - create business case for incorporating industry best practices towards creating an inclusive ethos for persons with disabilities
 - centralised budgets and well defined (and documented) processes for accessing reasonable accommodations, well-structured plan for improving physical and digital accessibility etc

“Our Disability ERG is a part of our leadership brand. With work related to employees with disabilities fairly streamlined, our leaders are encouraging them to gradually extend their focus to supporting employees who are caregivers of children with specific needs, employees with older family members experiencing age-related disabilities, veterans with service-related disabilities as well”.

Pramode Parasramka

MD, Minda Silca Engineering Pvt Ltd.

For all the participating companies, one of the most important indicators suggesting that they are indeed doing well in creating awareness and an inclusive environment for persons with disabilities is the improved disability statistics. This includes -

- Increased disability hiring as many more consider the company an employer of choice
- Improved retention and overall improved performance of people with disabilities working in the organisation
- Increased number of people who feel confident to self-declare

“Employees with disabilities (mostly invisible) refrain from workplace disclosure due to miscellaneous reasons such as denial or lack of awareness, burden of proof (official diagnosis), social stigma etc. While people who disclose are more likely to access accommodations as per their specific needs, feel less nervous and isolated and bring their 100% at work; yet potential stigma of disclosure becomes the number one reason that deters them.

In the recent past, we have seen many people with disabilities come forward to self-declare. This is a great validation for us that we are on the right path wrt. creating a positive ethos of disability inclusion and giving our employees the confidence that self-declaration will not be detrimental to them in anyway. Identifying champion and disability-specific resource groups, including senior leadership in awareness efforts have helped in underscoring the importance of inclusion”.

Shobhika Ghai, Assistant Manager, Spark Minda Foundation

Outlined below, following the common best practices, are some of the innovative strategies followed by the partnering organisations (in addition to classroom sessions) to build awareness about disability inclusion in their respective organisations.



“No awareness and sensitization session can match the experience of walking around our centres and observing people with the most diverse and severe physical, sensory and cognitive impairment work together. We are proud of the ecosystem which we have nurtured where people from diverse backgrounds are given a harmonious and inclusive work environment and everyone from “guard to board” speaks the same language of respect.

Our people help you realize the possibilities that exist if the organisation is flexible. These informal walks and interactions have encouraged so many of our clients to hire persons with disabilities”.

Nunes Ignatius Myke, Senior Manager – Braille Division & Marketing Services

Managers are required to mandatorily spend time at the rehabilitation centre to understand candidate needs. This is found to be an essential element in preparing workplace and customizing job role. Additionally, when trainees are made to rotate across job roles, managers are required to monitor their progress very closely. This enables them to place trainees in roles that are most appropriate for them.

Events, campaigns, volunteering opportunities are almost always more effective in touching that sensitive chord and building upon formal classroom / online training sessions.



“ Michelin sees diversity as a human imperative and a key contributor to Company’s performance. My absolute priority is to provide a safe and fulfilling work environment for all Michelin employees. I want to ensure their daily work experience is aligned with our Purpose and our core value of Respecting People.”

Florent Menegaux
Group Michelin CEO

Some of the innovative means used by Michelin to create awareness beyond the realms of the classroom were as following -

- a. At the time when Michelin was just rolling out its disability inclusion plan, Madhavi Latha (inclusion specialist) was invited as a speaker to set the tone, inspire key stakeholders and make them realize the possibilities. The session helped Michelin in charting its own journey and identify some quick wins that could be targeted first to get the process rolling. Such sessions are a regular practice now and attract huge turn-outs from across businesses.
- b. Inclusive marathon was a big success wherein Michelin staff ran with people across disability types. It helped in creating awareness in a fun way beyond the boundaries of office.
- c. Experience zone kiosks were designed to first immerse learners in an experience and then reflect upon the experience to develop new understanding, new attitudes or new ways of thinking. These kiosks were placed in the cafeteria which is a frequently visited location. Activities chosen ensured balance between experiential learning and underlying content. They engaged the learner to a point where what was learned and experienced struck a critical, central chord within the learner. Example of one such empathy building activity was “Read my lips” wherein participants learnt that lip reading is not easy and one cannot just assume that all hard of hearing people can lip- read. Participants discover that context & gesture / signs make communication a lot easier.
- d. While all team members of deaf recruits went through mandatory deaf sensitization and sign language training, new deaf joiners are encouraged to teach few new words to their team members daily. This not only empowers the new recruit but also cements the learning of the team. This coupled with L&T teams ambitious target of training 500+ people in 2022-23 promises a workplace where everyone is signing.





“We invite everyone to visit our camps. In every conversation you hear about all the barriers people with disabilities face which restrict them to the confines of their homes and deprive them of mainstream opportunities. In every conversation you also get motivated to become an enabler. All our managers and supervisors have to mandatorily volunteer at the camps and there hasn't been a single instance when they have not come back fully charged to explore possibilities”.

Sumedh Lawhale

Senior Executive, Spark Minda Foundation

Other than this, story-telling is seen as one of the most powerful means of sensitizing people. Case studies and examples that are based on real employee experiences and insights are published in newsletter and intranet regularly. The company invites leaders from within and outside to share their personal stories and learning with large employee groups. First Day Celebration (celebrated on the first day of every month) is an open forum to bring all the units together to share experiences, best practices and enable collaborative learning. This platform is also used by PwD to showcase talent, sensitize teams and teach sign language.





4. Empower

No one is included until everyone is included!!

Empowering the community and impacting the overall ecosystem not only helps in improving the company's brand but also helps in building the talent pipeline.

Challenge

1. In what ways can organisations expand their sphere of influence so that they can positively impact the overall ecosystem
2. What are the innovative partnerships a company should seek (with vendor, customer, external agency / consultants) to have a wider impact on the community ?
3. What should be the governance mechanism to ensure the success of these partnerships ?
4. How can disability inclusion goals of the organisation be woven into its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Policy in a way that they serve the CSR objectives and impact the overall ecosystem?

Disability Inclusion beyond workplace

4.1 Disability Inclusion beyond workplace

It is fascinating to see how the participating companies have combined CSR and/or leveraged several partnerships and coalitions to transform the disability inclusion landscape within the company and outside; thus addressing the following imperatives in a very organic way -

- Ensuring that growth across its business activities is responsible, inclusive and sustainable
 - Achieving systemic transformation in the way disability inclusion is perceived and practiced within the organisation
 - Building a symbiotic relationship of mutual trust and accountability amongst all players – community, business, government and civil society
 - Enabling capacity building and encouraging investment and innovation by other players to improve outcomes for the ecosystem as a whole
- A diverse portfolio of partnerships ranging across a spectrum (in terms of disability type and thematic area) has helped the organisations in
- Developing multifaceted understanding of disability and related issues - This learning directly feeds into the organisation level decision making wrt. future course of action and impacts the larger ecosystem
 - Building the talent pipeline for various business units - Given that most manufacturing companies are away from city centres, the associated geographical disadvantage can be a huge deterrent in any expansion effort. Amongst others, identifying suitable candidates tops the list.
 - Community outreach has helped attract people with disabilities who are interested in working. Many firms use a push tactic for recruitment, such as posting job openings or reaching out to other NGOs.
 - Building solidarity with the community through these initiatives helped in mobilising candidates, giving impetus to existing / new training centres, outsourcing / executing in house trainings.



Outlined below, are some of the innovative strategies/ models followed by the partnering organisations



“Positive brand reputations are gained by developing a step-by-step strategy that goes well beyond hiring people with disability to building belief in the organisation’s intent and pursuit for long term changes at the ecosystem level”

At WORTH TRUST, its social responsibility i.e. empowerment of persons with disabilities forms the core of the organisation. Revenue and Surplus generation is a means to this cause to ensure self-sustainability. Several organisation level and location-specific coalitions brought together companies, investors, governments, civil society and citizens to agree on shared priorities

and develop common plans for action to achieve scale and systemic impact in disability inclusion. The gradual expansion to Puducherry, Chennai, Trichy, Tirupattur are examples of such coalition which brought ecosystem level changes in and around its areas of operation and enabled production and rehabilitation related activities to develop hand-in-hand.

Location	Type of Production Unit
Katpadi	WORTH Engineering Industries - Auto / Non-Auto component part manufacturing
	WORTH Plastic – Plastic Molding Unit (Commercial product and assistive devices)
	WORTH Brailers – Sole assemblers of Perkins Brailers
	WORTH Mobility Aids – Wheelchair, Tricycle, Walkers & other Mobility Aids and Fabrication of Industrial Accessories
	Assistive Device incl. Universal Braille Kits, Braille Slate, Stylus, Abacus, Taylor Frame
Puducherry	WORTH Engineering Industries - Auto / Non-Auto component part manufacturing
Trichy	WORTH Engineering Industries - Auto / Non-Auto component part manufacturing & Fabrication
Chennai	WORTH Digitization - converts printed books to digital word / audio files and printing of Braille Books
Location	Type of Rehabilitation Activity
Katpadi	Technical Training Center (Turner and Machinist)
	Transitional School for Children with Speech & Hearing Impairments
	Early Intervention Centre (EIC) for Infants with Hearing Impairment
	Early Intervention Centre (EIC) for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
	Day Activity Centre for Children with Intellectual Disability, Learning Disability and Cerebral Palsy
	Outreach activities for the welfare of the Differently-Abled
Puducherry	Technical Training Center (Turner)
Trichy	Technical Training Center (Turner and Welder)
Tirupattur	Day Activity Centre for Children with Intellectual Disability, Learning Disability and Cerebral Palsy
	Early Intervention Centre (EIC) for Infants with Hearing Impairment
Ranipet	Nodal Agency for Ranipet District for welfare of Persons With Disabilities supporting the government
	Early Intervention Centre (EIC) for Speech & Hearing Impairment will be commissioned shortly
	Early Intervention Centre (EIC) for Autism Spectrum Disorder will be commissioned shortly
Chennai, Gummidipoondi	Technical Training Centre (Machinist, Turner, Horticulture and Smart Phone Technician) with Rotary Club of Madras

All the experiences gathered has established its strong presence in the community and feeds into its

- a) mission of moving forward with the whole community as one
- b) vision to rehabilitate, educate, train, employ and empower persons with disabilities, fostering inclusion and gender parity.

Additionally, the following partnerships have helped it in expanding its locus of impact beyond its areas of interventions -

Assistive devices and technology

- WORTH Digitization converts printed books to digital word / audio files. It has partnered with Bookshare to create content; online library of accessible e-books for people with print disabilities, such as visual impairment, severe dyslexia, and cerebral palsy. The unit hires several people across disabilities who could continue working remotely as well during the pandemic
- WORTH mobility devices and assistive aids unit produced best in class products and supplies at cost to organisations such as National Association for the Blind, Saksham Trust, ALIMCO, Sparsh Products, CMC Vellore etc which have pan-India reach.

Research and new product development

- There are ongoing efforts to collaborate with leading Technical Institutes like Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), National Institute of Technology – Karnataka (NITK) for research and development work in areas of Assistive Devices and Accessibility for Research, New product development and product validation etc.
- WORTH TRUST is also in the process of collaborating for mutual support with start-up organisations like Neomotion, which is incubated by IIT Madras. This initiative offers huge scope for product upgradation of Wheelchairs, helping users and amputees. People associated directly and indirectly through camps can also benefit

Training and Education

- WORTH TRUST has hosted training sessions to share best practices to enable new organisations to identify replicable

production models (based on local context) and expedite their journey from ideation to execution. Sessions are extended to organisations in India, Vietnam, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, UK (Workability International and Remploy), USA (Centre for International Rehabilitation) and Japan (Workability Asia).

Camps and other outreach programs

- Outreach program of WORTH TRUST include (a) organising camps (b) providing physiotherapy, medical care and rehabilitation services to the remote neighbourhood.
- Camps are one stop shop for providing (a) Counselling & Guidance (b) Implementing various Government schemes (c) Distribution of Aids and Appliances to persons with disabilities (d) Distribution of bus passes, scholarships, welfare cards, national ID cards, train passes, pension for the persons with disabilities (e) Organizing Medical Camps for Eye and ENT Treatment etc.
- This is also a good platform to create awareness about all the rehabilitation work which is done by WORTH TRUST and mobilise participation. Local tie-ups with District Collectorate, District Differently-Abled Welfare Officer, Municipal Commissioner, Block Development officer, Social Work Departments and NGO/DPO networks help in mobilization and post camp follow-ups.

“We know that the ecosystem is truly changing when the house owner who provide boarding and lodging facilities to the staff with disabilities (who have settled close to Katpadi Unit) has now incorporated basic accessibility features in the rooms and washrooms. Or when the auto driver confidently tells a wheelchair user that he has a slide board which will help him in transferring onto the auto comfortably ... we have indeed come a long way !!

Nunes Ignatius Myke

Senior Manager – Braille Division & Marketing Services



Spark Manda Foundation was incorporated under Section 8 of Companies Act and is the CSR wing for The Group Company. Amongst the 6 focus areas of the foundation, “Saksham” - empowerment of people with disabilities is one of them. “SAKSHAM” supplements the Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) and Sustainable Development Goals; Goal 10 which focuses on reducing inequalities amongst the population and Goal 17 which encourages partnerships and collaboration with likeminded organisations, governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Saksham programme started in 2014 with organizing annual camps for empowerment of person with disabilities. These camps aim at their holistic development and overall independence by distributing (incl. repairing and maintaining) assistive aids and devices, facilitating UDID registrations, providing counselling support, screening and registering for employment, skill development and on job training. The choice of location is based on the presence of business and collaborations with government and non-government organisations. Local tie-ups with District Collector and Magistrate, Block Development officer, Social Work Departments and NGO/DPO networks established during these camps also feed into ongoing recruitment needs of the business.

YEAR	CAMP
2015	: Indonesia
2016 & 2017	: Uttar Pradesh
2018	: Vietnam, Uri, Pune
2019 & 2020	: Pune
2021 & 2022	: Pune, UP

“Our disability inclusion journey started with these camps and took multiple forms as we progressed. Different units very creatively innovated to accommodate their local community needs and built long-term solidarity with them. Camps like the one in Baramulla, Uri, Jammu & Kashmir in association with the Sadhana Project of the Indian Army, gave impetus to our work and gave the team the confidence to explore and expand their areas of engagement”.

Sana Damania

State Lead - Uttar Pradesh, Spark Minda Foundation

Saksham was expanded in scope and an element of continuity (to the services that were delivered in the camps in a project mode) was built into it when Centre for Empowerment of Person with Disabilities were established in Pune and Noida in 2018 and 2021 respectively. Saksham centres emerged close to the factory blocks and have wide outreach to rural pockets, where opportunities are further denied due to lack of access. Services at the centre included – a) Providing prosthetic-orthotic devices and assistive aids to Person with Disabilities (including repair and maintenance) b)Facilitating employment by imparting skills with either on-job training or vocational training c)Helping in getting UDID / Accessing other misc. government schemes d) Organizing job fairs in collaboration with its partners and other like-minded organisations.



Camp – UP; 2021



Camp – Maharashtra (2019-20)

Other interventions that have helped it in expanding its locus of impact beyond its direct areas of interventions –

Assistive devices and technology

- Amongst all the partnerships, collaboration with Bhagwan Mahavir Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) popularly known as Jaipur Foot has been most beneficial, mutually. It started with Jaipur Foot providing raw material to the centers and support during camps. While it has helped Jaipur Foot achieve deep penetration to the interiors of the country, this partnership has helped Spark Minda build credibility as a source of affordable and quality assistive aids and devices

Research and new product development

- Realizing limited functionality of a regular tricycle which was distributed in camps, Spark Minda Foundation has collaborated with IIT-Bombay to customize Confy trike¹⁸ (tricycle for paraplegic) into an attractive and self-reliant mobility solution which can be used by small entrepreneurs to carry load. Spark Minda captured user need. Post that, basis detailed research zeroed in on Confy trike to make suitable modifications. Design

(manual and machine) and budget finalization is underway. Post this pilot distribution will be planned

- Since awareness about UDID card including understanding of the process of online registration and it's benefits is still limited, Saksham Team started creating awareness about the same and assisted Persons with Disabilities with registration in its camps and centers. A detailed independent study was launched by the Foundation to understand the outreach of the UDID¹⁹ program to Persons with Disabilities in Pune and Uttarakhand. The study extended to gauge user feedback, on-ground impact and status of distribution. The learnings from the study will be shared with the government with the objective to help with expediting the process of UDID creation and making it more robust by addressing some of the on-ground challenges. User aspirations wrt. expanding the scope of benefits within the purview of UDID were also included. The Foundation looks forward to leveraging its deep networks and outreach to launch several such studies to capture on-ground realities and make systemic changes at policy and advocacy level

¹⁸<https://rnd.iitb.ac.in/research-glimpse/confy-trike-tricycle-paraplegics>

¹⁹Unique Disability ID (UDID) project is being implemented by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India with the goal to build a National Database for Persons with Disabilities and promote openness, efficiency, and ease in the delivery of government benefits to people with disabilities.



“CSR is seen as a creative opportunity to strengthen business while contributing to the society at the same time. Smart partnerships with organisations whose values resonate with our own and map with what we can offer in capabilities, knowledge, resources, relationships, etc., provides the practical way forward to creating value for both the business and the society simultaneously.

Hemalatha Kalluvalipil

Gopalakrishnan, CSR

“Mainstreaming of these children was not only the right thing to do for the community but also for the business as this is the captive group the company would be tapping into for recruitments overtime. It’s a win-win for all; rural-urban migration related challenge for the families and the challenge we face in mobilising talent, due to the geographical disadvantage of our factory is addressed simultaneously

Navaneetha Krishnan Arumugan

Manager CSR, Public Affairs & Government Relations

Given that disability inclusion has over the years emerged as a strong business directive, it is also chosen as a CSR mandate. An effort-optimised intervention model is chosen wherein instead of spreading themselves too thin, all the efforts are concentrated around 10 panchayats in the close vicinity of the UCH plant. A detailed needs assessment study followed, which identified inclusion of children with disabilities in schools and ICDS centres (Integrated Child Development Services) as one of the biggest gap areas.

The multi-pronged intervention model aimed to achieve the following

- To increase participation of children with disabilities in mainstream schools using strategies of universal design in teaching and learning
- To enable all stakeholders involved in the education of children with disabilities with

appropriate awareness, knowledge and skills for meaningful inclusion and outcomes

- To promote inclusion for children with disabilities in the home-based programmes at schools and community

In addition to this, all the other CSR initiatives (related to health, education, livelihood etc) were also extended to persons with disabilities and their families. Amongst others, the most unique intervention being formation of Self-Help Groups (SHG) of people with disabilities / their caregivers etc. It became a means of support each other’s financial and emotional needs. This group along with the community workers emerged as an advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities and actively supported information dissemination, awareness sessions, access audits in schools, misc. support and guidance to other persons with disabilities/caregivers/families etc.



Annexure 1

About the participating companies



Workshop for the Rehabilitation and Training of the Handicapped (WORTH) was established in 1963 by the Swedish Red Cross with the objective of rehabilitating leprosy cured persons generally ostracized by society, through industrial training and employment. WORTH Trust today, is a fully self-sustained rehabilitation organization. The production centers, which employ mostly persons with disabilities, enable them to generate a surplus, with which the entire cost of its Technical Training Centers for the Speech & Hearing Impaired and Physically Challenged boys and girls, School for Speech and Hearing Impaired children, Early Intervention Centre for the Speech & Hearing Impaired Infants and Autism Spectrum Disorder, Day Activity Centre for the Mentally Challenged children and outreach activities are met. Registered as a charitable Trust, WORTH is managed by a Board of Trustees made up of eminent persons in diverse fields, united in their common interest in the service of persons with disabilities.



The Michelin Group is a global leader in Tyres, headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France. Founded in 1889, the Michelin Group provides tyres to over 170 countries. The Michelin Group makes tyres locally for your specific needs and road conditions in one of our 69 production facilities around the world. Michelin's 114,000 employees worldwide are committed to making the safest and most relevant tyres for you. Michelin are leaders in innovation and sustainable development for the mobility of people and goods.

Michelin has started the Chennai factory a decade ago and is expanding its product portfolio in the distribution network and establishing its greater footprint in Indian market. Michelin offers a range of tyres featuring the best of Michelin's Innovative Technology.

In 2009, Michelin Group has set up this 225 acre facility for manufacturing of Truck and Bus tyres. Michelin has Research and Development and Digital support unit at Pune which also is a part of global digital support network and has over 1000 employees.



Minda Corporation (incorporated in 1985) is one of the leading automotive component manufacturing companies in India with a pan-India presence and a significant international footprint. Minda Corporation is the flagship company of Spark Minda, which was part of the erstwhile Minda Group. The Company has a diversified product portfolio that encompasses Mechatronics; Information and Connected Systems and Plastic and Interior for auto OEMs. These products cater to 2/3 wheelers, passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles, off-roaders, and after-market. The Company has a diversified customer base including Indian and global Original Equipment Manufacturers and Tier-1 customers. For assimilating the latest technologies, Minda Corporation has a dedicated R&D facility and collaborations with the pioneers and leaders of the automobile industry. This has provided Minda Corporation with the cutting-edge in product design and technology to meet strict international quality standards.

RADNIK

Radnik Exports is a leading manufacturer of fashion garments, active gear products, sportswear, uniforms, accessories, etc for various multinational clients. Driven by the desire to give back to the community, take part in philanthropic causes, and provide positive social value, Radnik Exports engaged in several initiatives in turn helped it in building a positive brand around their company. This included – skill development training for women, creating awareness about hygiene and health issues amongst women, projects related to sustainability of water and resources, and pension schemes for people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

A chance placement of a person with vision impairment in 2009, paved way for many successful placements in the future and almost became a norm across all its business verticals.

v-shesh opportunity to ambition

v-shesh is an award-winning impact enterprise that prepares students and job-seekers with disabilities for suitable opportunities with a strong focus on employability & making the first job connection.

v-shesh facilitates disability inclusion at workplace in policy and action, through a range of pre- and post- recruitment services – disability awareness workshops, accessibility audits, inclusion solutions, job analysis, etc. v-shesh has worked with 100+ organisations and conducted 100+ disability awareness sessions & 200+ accessibility audits.

v-shesh, is structured as a business in its efforts to build a self-sustaining organisation. v-shesh's team is an example of diversity both in terms of gender (40% women) and disability (25% Persons with Disabilities) and has offices spread across Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi NCR, Hyderabad and Mumbai . v-shesh's work in disability inclusion has won recognitions by way of the 2013 NCPEDP Shell Helen Keller Award for Workplace Disability inclusion and 2014 NCPEDP Mphasis Award for Universal Design, 2018 CNBC ICICI Social Enterprise of the year award. V-shesh is mentioned as Top 10 Diversity consultants in the Global Diversity List (supported by The Economist magazine).

Annexure 2

Sample Job Analysis for Enabling and Core Function

Department/ Role/ Positions	Finance Department (various roles)						
Inclusion indicator	High						
Functions/tasks to be performed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Desk component - Invoice processing, Project finance, Payroll/MIS, Employee/Vendor Recovery, Inventory Management, Costing etc. 2. On site/ plant - 3rd Party Audit, Inspections, Asset Verification 						
Job mapping – Enabling Function	Each Business is supported by several Enabling Functions – Finance, HR, IT, Engineering, Commercial, Others – CRS, Environment, Health, Safety						
Educational qualifications/skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Graduate (Commerce) / MBA - Ability to understand and process domain related tasks, compliance and company policies - Good interpersonal skills and working knowledge of computers 						
Physical and sensory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to workspace - Usage of computers and processing physical documents 						
Safety requirements specific to role	- None						
Opportunity for inclusion (Sensitisation of manager and colleagues and some redefinition of job role may be required)	<table> <tr> <td>Mobility</td><td>High/ accessible environment + reasonable accommodations</td></tr> <tr> <td>Hearing</td><td>High/ accommodations for communication for external communication</td></tr> <tr> <td>Vision</td><td>Medium/ Inspections may require visual confirmations</td></tr> </table>	Mobility	High/ accessible environment + reasonable accommodations	Hearing	High/ accommodations for communication for external communication	Vision	Medium/ Inspections may require visual confirmations
Mobility	High/ accessible environment + reasonable accommodations						
Hearing	High/ accommodations for communication for external communication						
Vision	Medium/ Inspections may require visual confirmations						

Department/ Role/ Positions	Raw Material Store (various roles)						
Inclusion indicator	Medium						
Functions/tasks to be performed	<p>All employee at RMS work on misc. functions ranging across the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive Raw Material, Machines, Supplies and other items used for production and account for them - Overlooking the process of goods storage by the contractor and contractual workers. Provide adequate and appropriate storage for items in such a way the FIFO can be applied in disbursement - Physical checking of material received, taking invoices, generating Good Received Note (GRN), maintaining records in SAP. 						
Job mapping – Enabling Function	Common function across all manufacturing units with tremendous scope to include PwD						
Educational qualifications/skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Min 12th pass / Diploma - Ability to understand and process compliance and company policies; Good working knowledge of computer - Sound Computer Knowledge 						
Physical and sensory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to visit the storage area, loading and unloading bay several times during the day to oversee process. Since the work requires a) continues interaction with vendors / contractual staff b) frequent checks to ensure that the material is received, stacked properly and disbursed as per FIFO, the roles suitability for people with vision and hearing impairment needs to be checked on a case by case basis. 						
Safety requirements specific to role	Moving vehicles in this area such as fork lift and palette trucks are a risk to safety of all the employee, especially at blind turns because of no man machines segregation and no separate walk ways						
Opportunity for inclusion (Sensitisation of manager and colleagues and some redefinition of job role may be required)	<table> <tr> <td>Mobility</td><td>High/ accessible environment + reasonable accommodations</td></tr> <tr> <td>Hearing</td><td>High/ accommodations for communication for external communication</td></tr> <tr> <td>Vision</td><td>Medium/ Inspections may require visual confirmations</td></tr> </table>	Mobility	High/ accessible environment + reasonable accommodations	Hearing	High/ accommodations for communication for external communication	Vision	Medium/ Inspections may require visual confirmations
Mobility	High/ accessible environment + reasonable accommodations						
Hearing	High/ accommodations for communication for external communication						
Vision	Medium/ Inspections may require visual confirmations						
Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sound Alarm, Strobe Lights and Signal Indication lights should all be present in a fork lift and pallet truck to avoid accidents; Separation in travel path of Man and Machine - Basis need, redefining JD to include role related to mainly data and coordination with vendors; limited need to visit the shop floor 						

Annexure 3

Functional requirements for jobs across textile manufacturing units

The below matrix is designed based on detailed job analysis conducted at Radnik Exports. This can be used as a starting point and contextualized as per organisation and role specificity to identify suitable opportunities for people across disabilities

Department	Tasks	Mobility	Hearing	Vision	Cognitive
Cutting	Layering	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Cutting	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Ticketing of cut garment pieces	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Bundling of cut garments	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Receiver at fusing machine	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
Sewing and Finishing	Marking of seam allowance on cuff, collar etc (with template)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Folding / Turning - Collar band, Cuff, yoke etc (with template)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Sewing specific parts, assembling	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
	Counting and issuing garments to finishing and washing department	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Pressing	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
	Buttoning	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Packing	Folding of garments	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium
	Checking	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium
	Packing – polybag type, hanger type	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Carton marking	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
Washing	Counting of garments	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Manual washing	Low	Medium	Low	Medium
	Machine washing - Loading and un-loading garments	High	Medium	Low	Low

Functional requirement criteria –

Mobility

High - Have to move frequently / stand long hours, need to pick / lift objects, good dexterity in hands is a must

Medium - Infrequent movement / need for standing, picking / lifting objects intermittently, good dexterity in hands is a must

Low - Mostly sitting job, good dexterity in hands is a must

Hearing

High - Most work involves making decisions on auditory inputs. Significant work to be done over voice calls

Medium - Limited work involves making decisions on auditory inputs. Limited work to be done over voice calls

Low - Limited / No work involves making decisions on auditory inputs. Limited work to be done over voice calls

Vision

High - Most work involves making decisions based on visual cues (colour codes, handwritten, markings)

Medium - Limited work involves making decisions based on visual cues (colour codes, handwritten, marking)

Low - Limited / No work involves making decisions based on visual cues (colour codes, handwritten, marking)

Cognitive

High - Most work involves making decisions based on cognition ; Limited repetitive routine work, attention to detail important

Medium - Limited work involves making decisions based on cognition; some repetitive -routine work, attention to details important

Low - Mostly repetitive and routine work, limited work involves making decisions based on cognition; attention to details important



Layering and Cutting Function – requires standing for hours, layering cloth (seem by seem), viewing Auto-Cad drawings and monitoring cutting as per template



Ticketing of cut garment – Repetitive work; requires checking / adjusting unique number on the ticketing machine (accessible interface missing), good hand dexterity must



Bundling of cut garments – Repetitive work; requires standing for hours, layering cloth (seem by seem), bundling and numbering as per ticketing sequence



Checking (Initial, before and after washing, before packaging) - attention to detail, good hand dexterity must



Sewing and assembling – requires long hours of sitting, excellent dexterity in hand, attention to detail and speed to ensure no bottlenecks in assembly line



Manual washing – requires long hours of standing, excellent dexterity in hand and attention to detail; ensuring that all clothes are washed properly

Annexure 4

Best Practices - Workplace / Process Adaptations across champion companies which made disability inclusion a possibility

Common Practices

Employ	All companies did away with formal screening and assessment (training and post-training) and instead replaced it with focus on his/her skills, attitude, and cultural fit . This gave a boost to the recruitment and helped reach out to the candidates who would have otherwise been missed out. E.g. paper-pencil test were replaced by activity-based test to check a person's speed, accuracy, hand eye coordination, and efficiency.
Employ	After detailed job mapping and job analysis, an individual is mapped to the role based on his interest, aptitude and functional skills instead of a predefined criterion. Additionally, candidates may be rotated across several roles until the right fitment is observed. Supervisors play an important role in enabling this individual centric mapping which has long-term implications on trainees' retention and productivity . Though very small in number at this stage, such detailed intervention has enabled trainees with intellectual disabilities too, to be gainfully employed across the partnering companies.
Employ	Not following a rule book of fitting a candidate to a particular role, but instead understating his / her competency and accordingly adapting a job role . This could take the form of a) splitting a role into several small sub-roles b) carving a new role by combining a sub-process that is undertaken across shifts e.g. - value-added work of stripping, which was formerly undertaken by non-disabled staff on various shifts, has been transformed into a job function for hearing impaired trainees at Michelin.
Enable	Training - ITI Training, on boarding, and process enhancement for the hearing impaired are visual, hands-on, and conducted in sign language (native).
Enable	Similarly, classroom training were shortened and instead replaced by practical hand-on / activity-based training.
Enable	All companies encourage their people to become their own advocates and suggest process / machine enhancements which can improve the overall working experience. At Spark Minda, this is made more formal by introducing dedicated "Kaizen Hours" wherein every individual on the shop floor has to suggest a "Poka-yoke Kaizen" every quarter, as part of his KPA . These can vary across the following thematic areas – productivity, quality, cost effectiveness, delivery, safety, and morale and has been instrumental in many big and small changes across the organisation which has improved the overall inclusion of PwD at workplace.
Enable	Shop floor workflow is optimised carefully so that employees with disabilities need to expend minimal effort navigating through the relevant areas.
Enable	Simple adaptations such as providing a stool (basis need) near the workstation have made it possible for people with locomotor disabilities (crutch / caliper users) to work on machines comfortably.
Enable	Visual alarms were put in several machines in addition to sound alarms to make them accessible to people with hearing impairment.
Enable	Having an in-house training centre or active affiliation with training centres ensures that the trainees get continuous exposure and after the initial training , part of the job work in the assembly line is transferred to them . This ensures that they get practical hands-on training on various job works before they join the workplace formally.

WORTH TRUST

Enable	All units focus on practicing good ergonomics in the workplace to enable employees across disabilities type to work more efficiently and productively. This also addresses overall workplace hazards.
Enable	Assistive devices provided to the staff members are customised based on their specific requirements. Having an in-house mobility aid and devices unit helps in ensuring that all users get what suits their needs the best; thus improving their overall experience inside and outside the workplace.
Enable	All the relevant material / sub-parts are kept close to the employee to enable comfortable access.
Enable	WORTH Braille Unit designed a mechanism to hold the spring, and screw in a clip so that the blind employees are easily able to pick up various parts required for assembling items for the braille typewriter.
Enable	In consultation with staff with disabilities, the Unit purchased and incorporated a device for loading the Hopper Dryer Loader machine without climbing.
Enable	Vocational training course for students with intellectual disability is designed in such a way that some of the learning outcomes can add value to assistive devices unit. Beading of braille abacus is one such activity; wherein final product is included in the learning kit.

Spark Minda Foundation

Enable	Broaching Operation – There is always a fear of hand getting into the machine, thus making the process hazardous. “Poka-yoke Kaizen” introduced included putting both hand sensors to avoid accident of an employee. With this process enhancement, several people with vision impairment have been hired in this and similar process.
Enable	Water Deep Machine – There is always a fear of hand getting into the machine, thus making the process hazardous. “Poka-yoke Kaizen” introduced includes installing hand press switch buttons on both sides, which need to be pressed together to start the job. This ensures the necessary safety precaution. With this process enhancement, several deaf employees have been hired in this and similar process.
Enable	Packing jobs in plastic bags and storing in bins was a challenge for person with vision impairment as there were no tactile markers. To deploy colleagues with vision impairment, racks with compartments were put in bins.

Michelin

Employ	Given several prejudices associated with work in the manufacturing sector, candidates (especially females) and their parents are given sufficient opportunity to interact with other employees, visit the plant, etc before they make the decision. This proactive attempt, addresses their concerns and instills confidence in their ability to work in a manufacturing plant.
Enable	A sign language dictionary of technical and non-technical words was created to encourage communication among hearing and deaf employees. Among the technical words were Michelin-specific terms related to the manufacturing process. Non-technical words included everyday words used in the workplace.
Enable	Transportation staff was educated about the needs of trainees/ employees with disabilities. Van drivers, for example, are instructed to text the employees with disabilities when they arrive at the pick up location or if there is any change in schedule

Annexure 5

Disability Inclusion and Workplace Adaptation in the Manufacturing Sector from Across the World

1. Omron Taiyo

www.omron-taiyo.com.

Omron Taiyo is a joint venture between Omron and Japan Sun (Taio). The factories produce electronic goods like timers, sensors, power supplies, thermometers, and sockets. With over eight joint ventures, seven hundred employees across the following disabilities are gainfully employed – locomotor, hearing and intellectual.

1. Metal fabrication for the visually impaired - Beyond Vision

<https://www.thefabricator.com/thefabricator/article/shopmanagement/metal-fabrication-for-the-visually-impaired>

Milwaukee-based Beyond Vision, a 98-employee not-for-profit organization that began as a state agency in 1903 and transitioned to a not-for-profit enterprise in 1985. About 80 percent of direct-labor employees are visually impaired in this metal manufacturing job shop. They perform call-center work, manufacture, assemble and package products, and distribute office supplies at military bases.

2. Textile Factory for All-Blind Work Crew - The Dallas Lighthouse

<https://uproxx.com/life/dallas-lighthouse-for-the-blind-video/>

North Texas based The Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind is outcome of a vocational rehabilitation services program started in 1920. It produces textiles, markers, vinyl, and plastics and majority of the employees here are people with vision impairment. While the factory is filled with heavy machinery, every part of the manufacturing process is fitted with modified machines designed for the blind and visually impaired, allowing them to excel at their jobs.

3. Tyler, Texas - Horizon Industries

<https://www.cbs19.tv/article/news/local/special-report-no-limitations-for-blind-workers-at-horizon-industries-in-tyler/501-3cf9bc21-35c1-4a21-8b6e-ccb21509060b>

Horizon industries makes paper wiping towels for industrial environment including U.S. military. More than 30% of staff is blind or visually impaired. It is part of East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind, a non-profit that provides rehabilitate support to people with vision impairment from the surplus generated, making it a rare, self-funding non-profit. The factory uses some adaptive technology to help its blind employees, as well as features such as textured walkways to help blind workers navigate the building.

4. Peckham factory - Lansing, Michigan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRqj40s7CIc>

Peckham factory in Lansing, Michigan, makes 300,000 garments a month for the American military. About 1,200 employees work two shifts a day to meet production deadlines. 85 percent of the sewers and other workers at Peckham live with "significant" disability - blindness, deafness, emotional trauma or other mental illnesses. Several machine and workplace adaptations have made this possible.

5. JAN (Job Accommodation Network) provides some interesting and effective workplace accommodations for people with specific needs. Examples of a few are given below and for more , refer to the link

<https://askjan.org/publications/case-studies/Accommodating-Employees-in-Manufacturing-Settings.cfm>

- a. Workplace adaptation for a forklift driver who developed sensitivity in hands due to blood disorder which made tight grasping of forklift steering a challenge - Forklift fitted with spinner ball to eliminate the need for tight grasping ; solution can be extended to machine operations by people with reduced dexterity in hands.
- b. Workplace adaptation for an employee with severe hearing impairment in a role of material handler (common role across all stores in manufacturing set-up) –
 - Setting path for forklift and pedestrian travel
 - Provide mirrors in pathway and strobe light on vehicles which make shadows with prominent radii on the floor
 - Vehicles to stop at all intersections
 - Individual to wear bright colour vest and hard hat (basis comfort) and carry vibrating pager which can be activated by co-workers in dangerous situation
- c. Workplace adaptation for employee with cerebral palsy and intellectual disability who face challenge in putting stickers in plastic bottles accurately –
 - A wooden jig secured the bottle and allowed employee to use both hands to place the sticker
- d. Workplace adaptation for a machine operator with arthritis who faced challenge in turning switches
 - Small tabs replaced with large cushioned knobs and he was given gloves with non-slip dot gripping ; thus, improving grasp and reducing the need to apply force to press buttons

6. Nihon Rikagaku Industry - Japanese chalk company

<https://www.nippon.com/en/features/c00613/>

The company has made many small workplace adaptations which has made working of people with even severe learning difficulties a possibility.

7. Renault , France

<https://www.renaultgroup.com/en/news-on-air/news/renault-and-disability/>

Renault in its capacity as a vehicle manufacturer is adapting its vehicles and in its capacity as an employer is including several workplace adaptations and accommodations to include people across disability types.



Confederation of Indian Industry

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering Industry, Government, and civil society through working closely with Government on policy issues, interfacing with thought leaders, and enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and business opportunities for Industry.

For more than 125 years, CII has been engaged in shaping India's development journey and works proactively on transforming Indian Industry's engagement in national development. The premier business association has over 9000 members, from the private as well as public sectors, and an indirect membership of over 300,000 enterprises from around 294 national and regional sectoral industry bodies.

With 62 offices, including 10 Centres of Excellence in India, and 8 overseas offices in Australia, Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Singapore, UAE, UK, and USA, as well as institutional partnerships with 394 counterpart organizations in 133 countries, CII serves as a reference point for Indian Industry and the international business community.

Confederation of Indian Industry

The Mantosh Sondhi Centre

23, Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi – 110 003 (India)

T: 91 11 45771000 / 24629994-7 • E: info@cii.in • W: www.cii.in

Follow us on:



[cii.in/facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cii.in)



[cii.in/twitter](https://twitter.com/cii_in)



[cii.in/linkedin](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cii-in)



[cii.in/youtube](https://www.youtube.com/cii.in)

Reach us via CII Membership Helpline Number: 1800-103-1244



The India Business and Disability Network (IBDN) is a CII initiative to facilitate inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and workplace diversity in India.

The primary purpose of IBDN would be facilitating inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and workplace diversity in India.

The IBDN is going to be a one-stop solution to promote employment of PwDs while responding to the needs of the private sector. The IBDN will give a platform for companies' mutual learning and experiences as well as context-based solutions and engagement with other stakeholders.

Goal of IBDN: Promote and enable inclusion and equal opportunities for Persons with Disabilities at workplace through knowledge sharing, collaborative action, and improving technical skills of member organisations as well as to facilitate and assist companies in adopting products and services to create inclusive and accessible workplace.

Join the exclusive network for inclusion & mainstreaming of PwDs #CII4PwDs

For further information on IBDN, please contact

Kirti Sharma / Sarbani Chakravarty
T: +91-124-4014079- 289
E: ibdn@cii.in / W: www.ciiibdn.com



[/IndiaBusinessDisabilityNetwork/](https://www.facebook.com/IndiaBusinessDisabilityNetwork/)



[/linkedin.com/company/indiabusinessdn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/indiabusinessdn)



[/IndiaBusinessDN](https://twitter.com/IndiaBusinessDN)