



AMICI NEWS



March 2005 / Vol 4.3 / Private Circulation

Recognising differences



Disability is a part of human life, part of the way things are. Let us engage with it, enquire into it, and make friends with it. Disabled people do this from the inside, people who are not disabled need to do it from the outside. Does Impairment entail a loss? It becomes a loss when measured against the standards of an able-bodied world. In truth, dependency and inter-dependency are part of the substance of all our lives to a degree, and yet disability is seen as bringing extra dependency. The only thing that makes disabled people more 'dependent' is that they have fewer choices.

'The problem is not how to wipe out all differences, but how to unite with all differences intact' - Rabindranath Tagore, famous poet from eastern India.

Real integration of disabled people can be achieved only on the basis of a full recognition of their differences. This in turn depends on their being able to make a free choice to identify themselves as a distinct social group. How can disabled people express and celebrate their different-ness? By coming together in groups, by forming a movement, by developing their own culture and becoming a part of a multi-cultural society.

Disabled people need to be able to meet among themselves as a distinct group, in order to develop their own culture as a contribution to the sum of human experience and expression. It is in such a distinct group that change can begin, where disabled people can feel the strength of being with others faced with the same difficulties, where an actual experience of empowerment can happen through a shared understanding. With this new strength they are then better equipped to come forth and make their contribution to the totality of human experience. 'The celebration of difference, we will then discover, is the celebration of humanity, of being members of the human family.'

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Legal cell for people with disabilities

VOICES has set up an information and resource centre for persons with disabilities. This caters to information related to education, employment, information about institutions working for the persons with disabilities, Government schemes like bus passes, scholarships, maintenance allowance etc. The centre is in partnership with the Office of the Commissioner for Disabilities and the State Department for the Welfare of the Disabled and Senior Citizens.

From March 3rd a legal cell for people with disabilities has started at **VOICES**. Inaugurated by Sri L Krishna Murthy, Commissioner for disabilities, Office of the State Commissioner for Disabilities, Government of Karnataka and the cell is coordinated by Sri Shiva Kumar senior and noted advocate. Legal advice will be provided on appointment. For further details, persons with disabilities can contact the following number

080-25213903 or email at voices2@vsnl.net. For information related to disability issues please contact the **INFORMATION HELPLINE- 25213903** from 10am to 5pm between Monday-Friday. This will help both persons with disabilities and the community at large.

Disability information cell

(Monday to Friday) - 10am to 5pm

Legal information cell

(Thursday) - 4pm to 6pm

All queries pertaining to disability will be answered by prior appointment. Please call **080-25213903** to make an appointment. **VOICES** request all the readers to pass on this information to as many people as possible who are in need and kindly make use of this facility and help both persons with disabilities and the community.

NCPEDP – Towards Promotion of Inclusive Education

According to a survey conducted by NCPEDP less than 1% disabled youth in India has access to education and less than 0.5% has access to higher education. The 3% reservation for disabled candidates in all Universities and Colleges is rarely adhered. The results of the study were made public at an event held on Independence Day, 15-Aug-04 by launching an Awareness Campaign on Inclusive Education through a series of advertisements and other promotional material. A Seminar on "Mainstreaming Children and Youth with Disabilities in the Indian Educational System" was organised on 17-Sep-04. A Draft blueprint to Mainstream Disabled Children & Youth in

the Indian Education System was drawn up and circulated to all stakeholders. A meeting was called on 26-Oct-04 between all the key stakeholders. The Ministry for HRD directed that a Committee be formed to take the agenda of inclusive education forward. A meeting was convened on 17-Feb-05 in the Chamber of the Ministry-HRD to discuss the various issues regarding Inclusive Education for Disabled Children and to prepare a Comprehensive Plan of Action for people with disabilities. A Core Group was formed which included eminent persons and the Executive Director of NCPEDP to prepare a Draft Action Plan.

ROLE OF CBR WORKER - By Y.B. Jayanth Kumar, CBR Co-ordinator

Is it so important? Yes, no doubt as facilitator (catalyst)

He or she will be the person promoting the rehabilitation interventions to the families having people with disabled person and the community in a CBR programme. For which a local person must be selected with self motivated, interested, with innovative ideas and voluntarily willing to support needs of people with disability in the locality. Person must be trained, exposed in CBR, in order to improve the inclusive environment around PWDs to express their needs and aspirations. Do you think people with disability would be the right persons to carry out the work? Think...



Many times it is so happens that CBR workers tend to help the PWDs with external ideas and thoughts, rather than understanding and encouraging what PWDs are trying to express for themselves. Such situations some times may lead in to absolute collapse of any rehabilitation interventions in any circumstances. Thus, role of

a CBR worker is so crucial in any CBR programme. If the facilitator is person with disability, it will be even better to plan, facilitate and to monitor the rehabilitation process for PWDs. All it requires is to become friend of PWDs, listen and sensibly understand what exactly they need and try to encourage it. Further appreciate their abilities and build on still what they can do to empower themselves and to support their family.

Try to encourage an inclusive environment to initiate their self-help group to create awareness regarding the resources available, to exchange views, to share problems and to come out with ideas to resolve issues of their own. Build capacities of all such groups to advocate for themselves to exercise-protect their rights and to become pressure groups at village and block level. Develop links with similar kind of groups to join with independent living movement of people with disability at state, national and international level.

I don't believe in the social era of man, this kind of established brotherhood, with its regulations and police, but in the advent of the free and victorious reign of love. What is wanted, what will determine and settled everything, is to love one another. - Raoul Follereau

How effective is skill training and self employment for a disabled?



Murthy from Ramanagara taluk had acquired physical disability through polio (both legs) when he was 3 years old. When his father expired 15 years back, he was supposed to shoulder the responsibility as the only earning member of that family. But none of the villagers or his parents were encouraging him due to his severity of disability. All the villagers were showing sympathy rather than providing him the opportunity to earn his livelihood. Neighbours and the family members used to call him with his disability rather than calling him with his name. All this took a turn when the Malavalli Project staff identified him.

After the discussion with his family and Murthy, the project planned for vocational rehabilitation for Murthy. Project searched for the local available trades

where he can earn his livelihood and get trained in that trade comfortably. Tailoring was one of the areas, in which Murthy was also interested and got arranged for the training locally. He was trained for a period of 6 months. He learnt to sew shirts, pants and other garments used by the villagers. Later on project guided him to apply for a loan. The loan of Rs. 10000/- was sanctioned through which he purchased sewing machine and started earning small some money. Apart from vocational rehabilitation to Murthy, project found there is a need for tricycle for his mobility and also to bring the raw material for his business. Project managed to provide him with the tricycle through which he is moving around in the village. Now the same neighbours and villagers, who used to criticize him, are giving their clothes to be stitched by him. This has built more confidence in Murthy. Now, he is helping the project in creating awareness in the village and they have formed a self help group, where he is one of the active members and a motivator too, by responding to many of the problems raised in the self help group. – *From our Malavalli Project*

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