

Dates - 8th and 22nd February 2025

Attended By -

Ms. Neha Yadav (Special Educator)

Ms. Philo Maria Alexander (School Counselor)

On 8th February and 22nd February 2025, a two-day online workshop on the legal rights of children with disabilities was conducted by NRF in collaboration with the UN. The workshop was divided into two sessions: Day 1 focused on the legal rights and challenges of children with disabilities from birth to adolescence, while Day 2 addressed issues related to adulthood and beyond.

DAY 1.

Topic - Birth to Adolescence

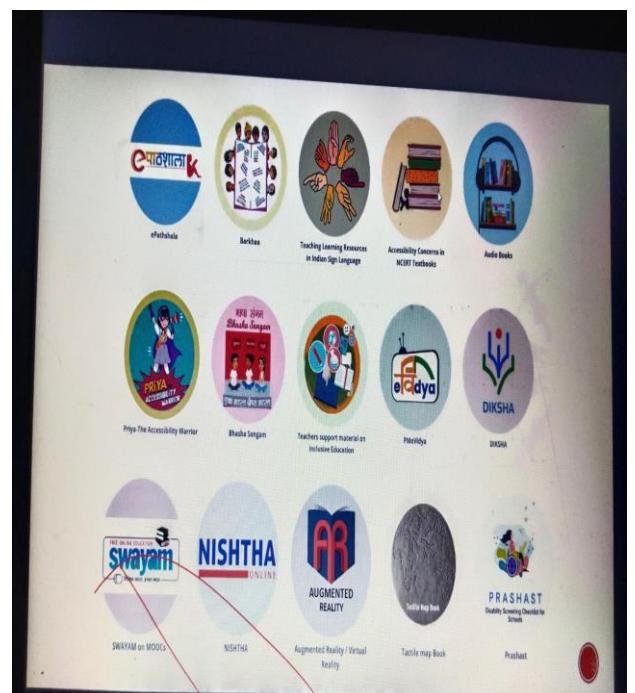


The first day of the NRF online workshop focused on the educational rights, challenges, and inclusive strategies for Children with Disabilities (CWD) in India. The session opened with remarks by Mrs. Rajlakshmi, who emphasized the importance of creating an inclusive educational environment. Dr. Huma Masood, National Program Officer at UNESCO, delivered the keynote address, highlighting key issues such as data gaps, systemic barriers, and the impact of COVID-19 on CWD education.

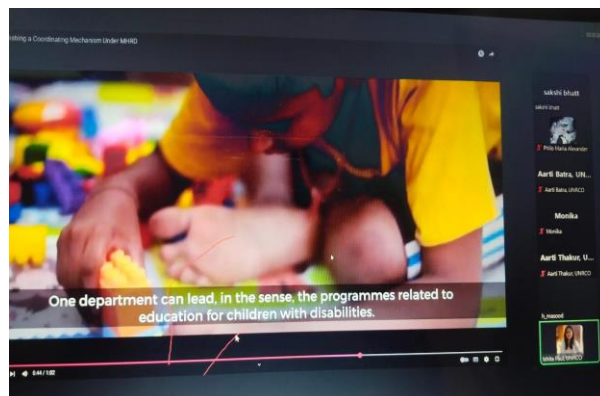
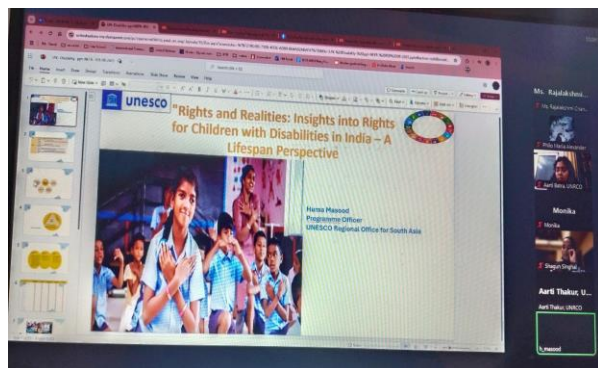
She stressed the need for stronger policies, better collaboration, and the integration of technology to improve accessibility. A key suggestion was the establishment of a dedicated ministry to focus exclusively on the education of children with disabilities.

The second session, moderated by Ms. Arti, featured Prateek, Executive Director of Astha, who spoke about early childhood education and intervention for CWD. He highlighted the lack of proper identification and data, which limits access to

essential services. Astha's initiatives focus on early screenings, parental engagement, and community-driven programs to bridge these gaps.



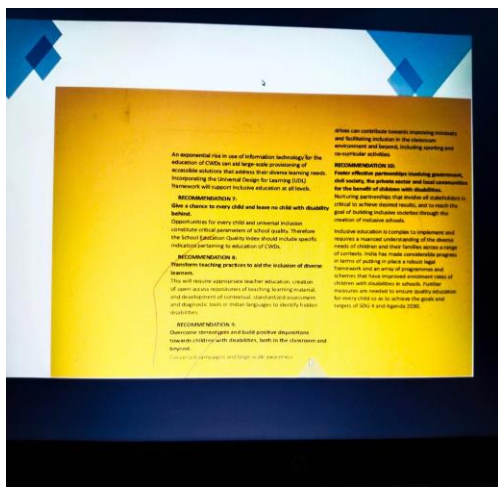
The discussion also touched upon malnutrition, difficulties in obtaining disability certification, and the role of ASHA and Anganwadi workers in providing early support. These frontline workers play a critical role in early detection and intervention but require greater training and resources to be more effective.



The discussions throughout the day emphasized the urgent need for a structured and data-driven approach to inclusive education. Experts stressed that policies must be aligned with ground realities, and collaboration between government, private organizations, and NGOs is essential for meaningful change. The session provided valuable insights for counselors and educators, reinforcing the need for a holistic support system that ensures every child with a disability receives equal opportunities in education.

DAY 2.

Topic - Adulthood and beyond

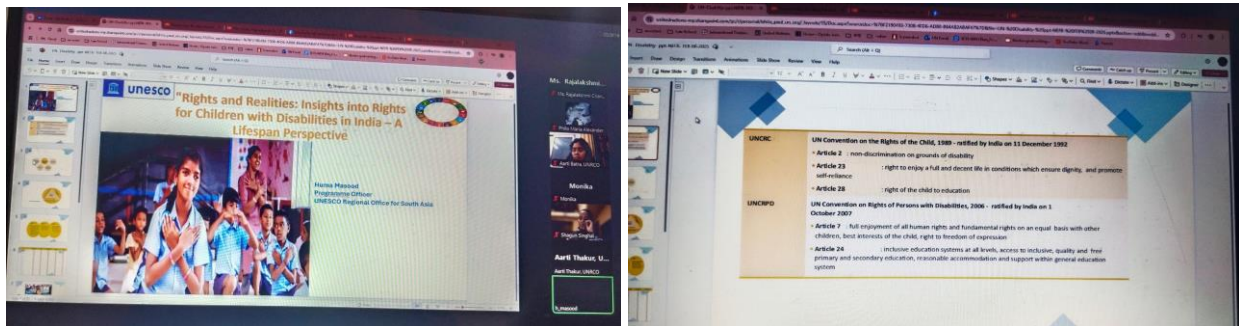


On the second day of the session, discussions focused on strengthening advocacy and building capacity for persons with disabilities (PWDs). The United Nations (UN) has established a disability outreach list to share job vacancies, key announcements, and essential information. Additionally, 26 UN agencies have signed a non-discrimination agreement, ensuring equal opportunities for PWDs. Training and sensitization programs have also been conducted for senior leadership, junior professors, and HR personnel to promote inclusivity. The UN is also working on reasonable accommodation and accessibility audits to improve workplace environments for PWDs.

A major highlight was Mission Accessibility, presented by Rahul, emphasizing the right to non-discrimination. He discussed provisions allowing individuals with over 80% disability to vote from home. Concerns were raised regarding the lack of provisions in housing schemes and the Marriage Act for PWDs. The session also addressed financial management, including guardianship under the National Trust Act (NTA) for individuals with autism, cerebral palsy, and intellectual disabilities, and the Senior Citizens Act (2007), which allows legal intervention if elderly individuals face neglect.

The session explored legal aspects, focusing on substituted and supported guardianship under the RPWD Act (Sections 13 & 14). Discussions also covered financial management, highlighting the importance of trusts and wills for PWDs.

A crucial issue was educational and employment rights. Cases of students denied MBBS admission due to disability were highlighted, with successful legal battles ensuring their right to medical education. The session concluded with a call for stronger advocacy and policy reforms for PWDs.



Takeaways for Implementation in School

1. Enhancing Early Identification and Support

Implement early screening programs in collaboration with specialists to identify students with disabilities at an early stage.

Train teachers and school staff to recognize signs of learning disabilities, autism, and other conditions that may require special interventions.

Strengthen parental engagement by conducting regular awareness sessions on inclusive education and available support systems.

2. Training and Sensitization for Teachers and Staff

Organize regular sensitization workshops for teachers, helping them understand the challenges faced by students with disabilities.

Conduct training sessions on reasonable accommodations so that educators can modify teaching methods according to students' needs.

3. Creating an Inclusive and Accessible Environment

Ensure that classrooms, libraries, and washrooms are physically accessible with ramps, handrails, and barrier-free spaces.

Implement reasonable accommodations in examinations, such as extra time, scribes, or assistive technology for students with disabilities.

4. Building Awareness and Advocacy Among Students

Conduct awareness campaigns to promote peer support and reduce stigma around disabilities.

Report By

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