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Project e-Vidya is a major initiative by Tech Mahindra Foundation (TMF) in partnership with Enable India (EI), towards personal development and training of persons with disability on a large scale. It will reach out to many candidates in different geographical locations. The aim of e-Vidya project is to create training &content development in multiple formats and communication tools (electronic, satellites, radio, mobile phone technology and services) to spread and use the training programs effectively across multiple locations.

Enabling the Visual and Hearing Impaired

The process of developing e-learning content for the Visual and Hearing Impaired has been extensive. While a large part of it is research based to identify the need of the learners, the project has also focused on collating existing teaching materials that are instructor led, developing new content, case studies and collaborative materials to suit atypical learners (people with different sensory learning).

Tech Mahindra Foundation has supported this project from the inception- conceptualizing, designing multiple formats, experimental and pilot programmes to ensure efficacy. Extensive questionnaires were administered to visually impaired candidates across the country, research on present and future employment opportunities were mapped by external agencies, and research on methodologies used for dissemination of information and training were studied to see its effectiveness and more important accessibility for non-visual learners.



## -Vidya modules:

Life skills- Adapted for visually impaired (VI) to empower them to live quality life and encourage selfintegration. Online sessions to groups without a sighted instructor have been conducted as pilot programme.

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Spelling Kit- (this addresses common problems faced by VIs who have no visual memory or learning (use of diphthongs or blend) to comprehend why and how of silent letters, words like Deutsche Bank, Axis Bank, or homonyms like to, too, two.

English for VI- A manual addressing communication and language needs of non-visual learner. Understand sighted phrases, non-visual analogies etc,

- Audio plays with underlying messages on Work Ethics with sighted perspective to help them assimilate in work environment and understand unspoken rules and the need to adapt to the organization culture which sighted people learn through imitation.
- Automation of computer exercises- to enable candidates across India for self-learning
- Visual training material (in flash) for Hearing Impaired (HI)

For 2011-12, five more modules are being developed --- Business Case, Peer Sensitization for VI and HIwhich are 2 different modules and Employability for HI and Spelling kit both v2.

The success factors of E-Vidya lie in:

- · The collaboration model(employer outreach program) with companies which has helped large companies gain confidence in the employment and retention of the disabled.
- Working towards a demand- by working closely with companies. EnAble India is able to predict when they would require candidates and hence have enough lead time to make the candidates employable
- The workplace solutions provide to ensure that the disabled can work effectively at the work site is another big success facto
- El believes in team work and has worked with more than 40 nonprofit organizations across India for placement, training, consultancy and more. This has helped maximize the impact and help serve the disabled even better
- $\label{thm:constraints} \mbox{Key enabler for employment has been their expertise on providing the right workplace solution}$
- The learnings are put back into the system through knowledge management and reuse

Enable India profiles the candidates, trains them and places them in reputed companies like CISCO, Deutche Bank, CCD, IBM, Mphasis, Big Bazaar, Thomson and Reuters and the list goes on. So far more than 500 candidates have been successfully placed in these companies.

National Level VI Empowerment Program

TMF is collaborating with some of its outstanding NGO partners working in the field of Visual Impairment to establish a niche National Level VI Empowerment Programme. The idea being that a niche initiative should be driven through participative efforts, anchored by TMF but led and taken forward by its partners. A two session has been planned for this event in October 2011. By the end of this session a concrete action plan is likely to emerge and a final proposal for consideration of the Ops Committee will be prepared by TMF.

 $The plan is to make \hbox{E-Vidya training modules available pan India through the National Level VI empowerment } \\$ program.



Mamatha Esteves 6



9/12/2011 4:50 PM

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Feedback for this article:

Thanks Nikhil. We already have NGOs asking for both translation of the e-vidya material and for usage in their training programs. Probably after we devise a strategy for the VI National Program, we surely will have

Back

🖒 1 Mamatha Esteves (13-Sep-2011)

A path-breaking effort by TMF. A good article, Mamatha. Thanks. Now the challenge is to take it across so that more VI can benefit

1 Nikhil Pant (13-Sep-2011)