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# Two-Day Hands-on Awareness & Training Workshop on **Accessibility**

**30-31 October 2025**

A Report



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Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi  
Laboratory of Inclusive Design (LID), IIT Roorkee

A Report on 'Two-Day Hands-on Awareness and Training Workshop on Accessibility'  
ICMR-NITM Campus, Belagavi, Karnataka  
October 2025

Report Team :

Dr. Ravinder Singh, Scientist D, ICMR

Ms. Seema Verma, Senior Technical Officer, ICMR

Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja, LID, IIT Roorkee

Mr. Divyang Purkayastha, LID, IIT Roorkee

Design & Conceptualisation :

Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja

Mr. Divyang Purkayastha



# Preface

This compilation is a fusion of an intense capacity building workshop on 'Hands-on Awareness and Training Workshop on Accessibility' held at ICMR-NITM Campus on 30-31 October 2025. With an intent of bringing an understanding of accessibility and a sensitisation towards inclusion, this workshop was conducted successfully under the aegis and support of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Department of Health Research (DHR), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India. Needless to say, the leadership and creation of accessible infrastructure by National Institute of Traditional Medicine (NITM) reflected an ideal choice to host this workshop. It was an engaging experience for the participants who have gained exposure between the fundamentals of understanding disability, needs of accessibility, rights through policies, process of ideation and the details of infrastructural elements that go in the making of an accessible environment. An interdisciplinary and an intersectoral approach was employed to curate this workshop.

The workshop comprised of 7 sessions. Session 1 focused on understanding disability and relevant policy frameworks. Session 2 highlighted accessibility perspectives through the case of inclusive tourism. Session 3 involved a hands-on design thinking activity for accessibility using personas. Session 4 shed light on digital accessibility perspectives. Session 5 involved immersive field-based disability simulation exercises for understanding built environment accessibility. Session 6 discussed accessibility criteria for built environment elements and accessibility assessment protocols. Session 7 impacted on accessibility as a fundamental right and legal mandates around it. This workshop employed case-based studies, theoretical foundations, design thinking and field-based orientations as part of the wide ranging deliberations.

Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja  
Professor and Founder  
Laboratory of Inclusive Design (LID)  
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee





# Acknowledgements

This report deeply acknowledges the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, Department of Health Research (DHR), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India, for initiating the idea of workshop on accessibility training for officials working in various institutions. It acknowledges the initiatives taken by the host institution **ICMR-National Institute of Traditional Medicine (NITM)** and the director **Dr. Subarna Roy** for his efforts in hosting the two-day workshop along with ICMR and its officers for their kind support.

The support, efforts and participation of various individuals and organisations were instrumental for the success of this workshop. These include

1. Hon'ble Chief Guest Shri Gangadhara K N, Addl. District & Sessions Judge, Belagavi
2. Shri Jagdish Rajesh, Deputy Director General (Admin), ICMR
3. Dr. Subarna Roy and Team at ICMR-NITM
4. Dr. Ravinder Singh, Scientist-D, ICMR
5. Ms. Seema Verma, Senior Technical Officer, ICMR
6. Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja and Team from Laboratory of Inclusive Design (LID), IIT Roorkee
7. Samriddh Foundation for the Disabled
8. National Centre for Disability Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)
9. Planet Abled
10. National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP)
11. Ashtavakra Accessibility Solutions
12. Youth4Jobs Foundation

We acknowledge the image support used in this document to ICMR and LID teams.



ACCESSIBILITY *for ALL* ICMR-NTM



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# 1

## Introduction

Accessibility is a fundamental human right for persons with disabilities and other diverse needs. As per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, accessibility is mandated across built environment and various associated systems.

To make our institutional systems more accessible and inclusive, it is necessary to imbibe a holistic understanding of accessibility and its associated processes (including assessments and ideations) in all stakeholders involved in the system. In such a scenario, capacity building becomes essential. This workshop was aimed to be a means of sharing and enhancing the understanding through sensitisation and awareness of accessibility for officials working in ICMR.

This workshop combined fundamental concepts around disability, accessibility and inclusion with policy paradigms and practical implications like assessments / audits. Through hands-on activities like design thinking and disability simulation, this workshop provided an experiential learning to enrich the sensitivity and exposure of the participants. This paves the way for the participants to carry forward these learnings into their respective institutions and enable an inclusive organisational perspective.



# 2

## Experts



### **Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja**

Founder, Laboratory of Inclusive Design (LID)  
Professor, Department of Architecture & Planning (DAP)  
Joint Faculty, Department of Design (DoD)  
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee



### **Prof. (Dr.) Hemlata**

Director  
National Centre for Disability Studies  
Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)



### **Ms. Neha Arora**

Founder  
Planet Abled



### **Ms. Asifa Parveen**

Program Manager  
National Centre for Promotion of Employment  
for Disabled People (NCPEDP)



### **Dr. Sangita Thakur**

Founder  
Ashtavakra Accessibility Solutions



### **Ms. Jyothi Bezawada**

Technical Project Lead  
Youth4Jobs Foundation



### **Mr. Divyang Purkayastha**

Prime Minister's Research Fellow (PMRF)  
Laboratory of Inclusive Design (LID)  
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee



INDIAN EMPLOYER

# 3

## Agenda Summary

Day 1 : 30 October, 2025 (Thursday)

Session Title	Session Highlights	Resource Persons
<b>Inaugural Session</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Welcome &amp; Introduction;</li><li>2. Launch of ICMR Accessibility Initiative</li><li>3. Context Setting of the Workshop</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Chief Guest Shri Gangadhara K N, Addl. District &amp; Sessions Judge, Belagavi, Karnataka</li><li>2. Shri Jagdish Rajesh, Deputy Director General (Admin), ICMR</li><li>3. Dr. Subarna Roy, Scientist-G and Director, ICMR-NITM</li><li>4. Dr. Ravinder Singh, Scientist-D (Non-Communicable Diseases Division), ICMR</li><li>5. Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja, Professor and Founder, Laboratory of Inclusive Design, IIT Roorkee</li></ol>
<b>Session 1 : Understanding Disability &amp; Policy Frameworks</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Accessibility Landscapes and Perspectives: Sensitisation through Global Paradigms</li><li>2. Persons With Disabilities and their Entitlements</li><li>3. Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja, Professor and Founder, Laboratory of Inclusive Design, IIT Roorkee</li><li>2. Prof. (Dr.) Hemlata, Director, National Centre for Disability Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)</li></ol>
<b>Session 2 : Accessibility Perspectives from Inclusive Tourism</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Accessibility insights from built environment to services</li><li>2. Inclusive travel and tourism perspectives</li></ol>	Ms. Neha Arora, Founder, Planet Abled
<b>Session - 3 : Design Thinking in Accessibility</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Importance of Design Thinking process in accessibility</li><li>2. Steps of Design Thinking</li><li>3. Hands-on Activity on Given Themes and Personas</li></ol>	Ms. Sangita Thakur, Founder, Ashtavakra Accessibility Solutions



परिष्कार Reception  
Pick-up & Drop

Drive-In  
परिष्कार Parking  
खंडी Carga

## Day 2 : 31 October, 2025 (Friday)

Session Title	Session Highlights	Resource Persons
<b>Session - 4 : Digital Accessibility by Design</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome &amp; Introduction;</li> <li>2. Launch of ICMR Accessibility Initiative</li> <li>3. Context Setting of the Workshop</li> </ol>	Ms. Jyothi Bezawada, Technical Project Lead, Youth4Jobs Foundation
<b>Session - 5 : Built Environment Accessibility Simulation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hands-on field oriented activity</li> <li>2. Disability immersion and simulation using assistive products</li> <li>3. Understanding built environment barriers and challenges</li> </ol>	Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja, Professor and Founder, Laboratory of Inclusive Design , IIT Roorkee
<b>Session - 6 : Accessible Design &amp; Audit of Built Environment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elements of built environment and accessibility criteria</li> <li>2. Accessibility assessment / audit protocols</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja, Professor and Founder, Laboratory of Inclusive Design, IIT Roorkee</li> <li>2. Mr. Divyang Purkayastha, Prime Minister's Research Fellow (PMRF), Laboratory of Inclusive Design, IIT Roorkee</li> </ol>
<b>Session - 7 : Accessibility as a Fundamental Right</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Importance of Design Thinking process in accessibility</li> <li>2. Steps of Design Thinking</li> <li>3. Hands-on Activity on Given Themes and Personas</li> </ol>	Ms. Sangita Thakur, Founder, Ashtavakra Accessibility Solutions
<b>Valedictory and Closing Session</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certificate Distribution</li> <li>2. Felicitation of Experts</li> <li>3. Vote of Thanks</li> <li>4. Closing Remarks</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ms. Seema Verma, Senior Technical Officer, ICMR</li> <li>2. Dr. Ravinder Singh, Scientist-D (Non-Communicable Diseases Division), ICMR</li> </ol>



# 4

## Day 1

30 Oct, 2025 (Thursday)

### Inaugural Session

The workshop commenced with an Inaugural Session, being coordinated by **Ms. Seema Verma, Senior Technical Officer, ICMR**, with the following guests gracing the dais and sharing their thoughts :

1. Chief Guest **Shri Gangadhara K N**, Addl. District & Sessions Judge, Belagavi, Karnataka
2. **Shri Jagdish Rajesh**, Deputy Director General (Admin), ICMR
3. **Dr. Subarna Roy**, Scientist-G and Director, ICMR-NITM
4. **Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja**, Professor and Founder, Laboratory of Inclusive Design, IIT Roorkee

This was followed by **Dr. Ravinder Singh, Scientist-D, ICMR**, providing a momentum through a speech on past initiatives of accessibility in ICMR as well as planned future activities.



Commencement with performance from students of Samridh Foundation for Disabled



Lighting of the Lamp Ceremony



Context Setting by Prof. Gaurav Raheja, IIT Roorkee



Address by Shri Jagdish Rajesh, Deputy Director General (Admin), ICMR



Address by Chief Guest Shri Gangadhara K N, Addl. District & Sessions Judge, Belagavi



Address by Dr. Subarna Roy, Scientist-G and Director, ICMR-NITM, Belagavi



Address by Dr. Ravinder Singh, Scientist-D, ICMR



Felicitations of Shri Jagdish Rajesh, DDG (Admin), ICMR



Felicitations of Chief Guest Shri Gangadhara K N, Addl. District & Sessions Judge, Belagavi



## Session - 1 : Understanding Disability & Policy Frameworks

The session was conducted by **Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja**, Professor and Founder, Laboratory of Inclusive Design (LID), IIT, Roorkee and **Prof. Hemlata**, Director, National Centre for Disability Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).

The speakers briefed upon various aspects of disablement as a model of understanding and the shifts required from medical to social model. Examples / insights were discussed from international and national policy paradigms, including UNCRPD and RPwD Act of 2016.

Essential understanding of types of disabilities, including classification of visible and invisible disabilities, was discussed, showcasing the journey of disability policy and frameworks in India. The session sensitised the participants regarding key terminologies around the concept and notion of disability in India.





## Session - 2 : Accessibility Perspectives from Inclusive Tourism

This session was conducted by **Ms. Neha Arora**, Founder of Planet Abled. The session discussed broad accessibility perspectives, rooted in the experience of a tourism context.

Neha shared about key considerations and understanding of accessibility for diverse user groups from built environment to services. She shared examples from tourism experiences, processes and narratives to explain the key accessibility perspectives.

The session provided the participants with a holistic systemic understanding of accessibility, considering the entire experience of travel chain.





## Session - 3 : Design Thinking in Accessibility

**Ms. Sangita Thakur**, Founder of Ashtavakra Accessibility Solutions, conducted this session, involving various perspectives and insights on design thinking as a process. She shed light on the importance of design thinking in the domain of accessibility to identify key pain points. Various tools and methods including empathy mapping, user persona building, etc. were discussed.

The audience was organised into groups and guided to ideate and brainstorm using the design thinking process on key themes associated with given personas. The groups presented their ideas which were reviewed by the team of experts.

This session served as an icebreaker for greater interdisciplinary actions, providing hands-on approaches to the participants to come up with accessibility-oriented solutions of identified problems.



# 5

## Day 2

31 Oct, 2025 (Friday)



### Session - 4 : Digital Accessibility by Design

This session was conducted by **Ms. Jyothi Bezawada**, Technical Project Lead at Youth4Jobs Foundation. It was an in-depth session on the practice of digital accessibility involving various examples and illustrations. Jyothi discussed various regulatory perspectives related to digital accessibility.

She elaborated on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), as a fundamental basis. She focused primarily on imparting an understanding of the Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW). She shared about tools to assess and evaluate accessibility of web-based products.

As a concluding note, the participants gained live exposure to state-of-the-art digital accessibility practices for their respective institutions.

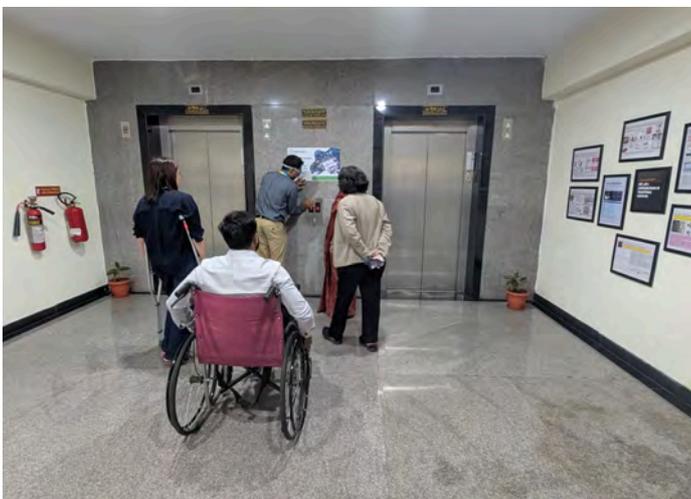




## Session - 5 : Built Environment Accessibility Simulation

**Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja** led this session with a hands-on field oriented workshop. The intent was to sensitise the participants through immersive simulations on accessibility as a holistic experience starting from the entrance and drop off points to the indoor experiences of the built environment. It dealt with critical insights into design of various built environment elements like security counters, kerb ramps, entrances, materials, handrails, etc., through experiences with wheelchairs, crutches and simulations of other disabilities.

A detailed elaboration was held on accessibility and inclusion in toilets followed by reflections from the participants. Through this session a live first-hand exposure to accessibility was achieved which is expected to carry forward into the participants understanding





## Session - 6 : Accessible Design and Audit of Built Environment

In this session led by **Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Raheja** and supported by **Mr. Divyang Purkayastha**, the participants were given a professional insight into accessibility assessment through systemic frameworks.

Various elements of the accessibility built environment were discussed with elaborations on specific accessibility assessment criteria, based on the Harmonised Guidelines & Standards of Universal Accessibility in India, 2021. Examples from the context of healthcare built environments were discussed.

This session provided a methodological approach towards the development of an accessibility audit exercise which could be taken up by the participants at their respective institutions.





## Session - 7 : Accessibility as a Fundamental Right

In this session led by **Ms. Asifa Parveen**, Program Manager at NCPEDP, the participants were given insights on the fundamental rights of persons with disabilities across various sectors, rooted in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016.

Various case studies were discussed to highlight various initiatives intersecting with other rights e.g., right to education. Asifa also discussed various recent Supreme Court judgments.

This session was instrumental in imbuing an understanding in the participants that accessibility is not an option but a mandate to be achieved for a progressive future.



## Valedictory and Closing Session

The session concluded with a valedictory ceremony with certificate and prize distributions. The team of experts were felicitated with a memento as a token of gratitude,

Vote of Thanks and was shared for all the participants, experts, the organising team, **Ms. Seema Verma** and **Dr. Ravinder Singh** from ICMR, New Delhi, as well as the supporting members of the host institution of ICMR-NITM.



# Valedictory and Closing Session



# 6

## Key Learnings

The two-day extensive workshop was instrumental in giving an **overview** and hands-on sensitisation and awareness on accessibility for officials of ICMR. The participants were from **diverse professional backgrounds** across administration, engineering, finance, healthcare and medical sciences.

The **interactive sessions** covered the essential aspects of accessibility, from fundamental knowledge to **practical implications**.

Various **disability and policy frameworks**, along with **accessibility perspectives**, using processes like **design thinking** were discussed in detail.

A holistic understanding of accessibility emerged through hands-on and **immersive disability simulation** exercises, **digital accessibility** frameworks, **accessibility assessment/audit protocols** and understanding of **accessibility as a right** and mandate for inclusive institutional environments.







This report is a summary of the two-day hands-on awareness and training workshop carried out for representatives and officials from various Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) institutions across India. The workshop was hosted and organised by ICMR at the ICMR-NITM Campus in Belagavi, Karnataka on 30-31 October 2025.

Laboratory of Inclusive Design (LID), IIT Roorkee, led the initiative with support of partner experts from other organisations.



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