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Empowerment of PwDs through sustainable enterprise creation



The **Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad**, continues to drive entrepreneurship and inclusive growth through its education programs and social initiatives. Recognising the need for a holistic approach to business development, EDII Ahmedabad is not only equipping aspiring entrepreneurs with essential skills but also **extending its reach to marginalised communities**, ensuring that opportunities are accessible to all.

As part of this mission, EDII organised a **Roundtable Meet** under its '**Support, Activate, and Build Assured Livelihoods (SABAL)**' initiative, which aims to **facilitate the creation of 3,000 enterprises for PwDs, including 1500 technology-driven and 1500 general enterprises**. This meet brought together corporate leaders and government officials to strategise on fostering an environment where PwDs can **establish and sustain their enterprises**, integrating them into the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Bridging Education and Enterprise: EDII's Entrepreneurial Training Initiatives

The discussions at the Roundtable Meet were a natural extension of EDII's larger efforts to cultivate a **strong entrepreneurial ecosystem**. The institute's **postgraduate diploma programmes**, which have produced a **high success rate among graduates**, serve as a critical foundation for fostering new ventures. These programmes not only equip students with the skills to navigate the entrepreneurial journey but also instill a culture of innovation and self-reliance, values that align directly with the goals of the SABAL initiative.

According to a recent survey, **78% of EDII's postgraduate (PG) alumni have pursued successful entrepreneurial careers**, with a substantial number contributing to **family businesses, launching start-ups, or leading social enterprises**. EDII offers two specialised, **AICTE-approved programmes**:

- **Post Graduate Diploma in Management—Entrepreneurship (PGDM-E)**: A two-year, full-time programme that provides specialisation in **New Enterprise Creation, Family Business Management, and Social Entrepreneurship**.
- **Post Graduate Diploma in Management—Innovation, Entrepreneurship, & Venture Development (PGDM-IEV)**: A milestone-based learning approach focusing on **business model development, market validation, and start-up incubation** at EDII's **CrAdLE incubator**.

With a **42-year legacy**, EDII has supported over **1,000 family businesses, incubated 100+ start-ups, and built a thriving network of 1,800+ successful alumni**. The institute is accredited by the **National Board of Accreditation (NBA)** and is a recipient of the **USASBE Outstanding Entrepreneurship Programme Abroad Award (2014)**. Their **outcome-based courses** are designed to align with market needs and industry demands. Beyond a robust core curriculum and diverse electives, students benefit from **specialised seminars, milestone-based learning, expert mentorship, and hands-on exposure** to tech-driven businesses, ensuring a holistic and practical education.

Expanding the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Through Inclusive Development

Building upon a strong foundation, EDII is **actively working with corporate partners to expand entrepreneurial opportunities beyond traditional demographics**. The pivotal roundtable meeting brainstormed on creating a better world for PwDs through an

effective synergy between government, corporates, and institutions. The discussions revolved around the specific objectives of ensuring the empowerment of PwDs:

- **Best practices for PwD inclusion** in entrepreneurship, from infrastructure improvements to workplace integration.
- **Aligning the initiative with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** to ensure long-term impact.
- **Strengthening corporate and institutional support** for PwD-led enterprises. Participating corporates committed to impactful interventions, including:

- **Community Sensitisation Campaigns** to promote PwD inclusion.
- **Immersive Life Skills Training** for adolescents with disabilities.
- **Business Opportunity Sourcing** to help PwDs establish ventures.
- **Credit Linkage Support** for PwD-led businesses.
- **Entrepreneur Growth-Cum-Counselling Programmes (EGCP)** to mentor PwD entrepreneurs.
- **Micro-Skillpreneurship Development Programme (MSDP)** to equip unemployed PwDs with business skills.

Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General, EDII, emphasised the institute's dedication to **inclusive economic empowerment**, stating, *"By providing the right training and opportunities, we can ensure that entrepreneurship is not limited to a select few but becomes a viable option for all, including Persons with Disabilities."*

Adding to this, **Dr. Raman Gujral, Professor and Director, Dept. of CSR Partnerships**, noted, *"Our past initiatives have already reached over 8,533 PwDs through skill-training programmes, resulting in the creation of 1,247 enterprises. This is just the beginning—we aim to scale these efforts and ensure more PwDs gain access to sustainable livelihoods."*

A Unified Approach to Sustainable Enterprise Development

EDII Ahmedabad is ensuring that entrepreneurship is not only about profit but also about social impact. The institute's dual approach—nurturing future entrepreneurs through academic programmes while simultaneously expanding opportunities for marginalised groups through corporate partnerships—sets a benchmark for holistic economic development.