



Empowering the Marginalized for Five Decades



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With the explosion of the internet, significant strides have been made in India to move many essential services (such as Aadhar card, Ration Card, opening bank accounts, etc.) on-line so that local villagers do not have to travel long distances for these essential services. However, based on Oxfam 2022 Digits Divide Report on India, only 38 percent of households in the country are digitally literate. Additionally, only 31 percent of the rural population uses the internet as compared to 67 percent of the urban population. Pandemic situation exacerbated the digital divide problem, especially for migrant workers.

IDS has been privileged to work with [Digital Empowerment Foundation \(DEF\)](#) to address this issue. DEF is a Delhi-based non-profit organization that has been a leader in digital empowerment for over two decades, reaching over 30 million individuals in marginalized communities, providing digital literacy and up-skilling opportunities in various sectors.

With IDS grant, DEF launched the "**Digital Skilling of Migrant Workers**" program. Through a strategic survey, the project identified Muzaffarpur in Bihar, Chandauli in Uttar Pradesh, and Nuapatna in Odisha as the most affected regions. The aim was to provide comprehensive digital training to migrant workers, enabling them to diversify their skillsets and enhance their employability. The collaborative effort included a baseline survey to assess the existing knowledge gaps among 480 migrants. Recognizing the lack of digital literacy and awareness of government entitlements, the training program integrates online and offline modules. Workers were equipped with skills in smartphone usage, Google accounts, UPI payments, internet safety, and e-governance.

With a community-centric approach, the 600 trained workers contribute through peer-to-peer training, amplifying the project's impact. This initiative reflects DEF's holistic

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relief efforts into a sustainable, empowering project aligned with the organization's mission of leveraging digital tools for societal betterment. Upon completion, the trained workers are now capable of seeking online employment and applying for entitled government schemes but also have the potential to establish micro-enterprises. Drawing inspiration from DEF's successful entrepreneurial programs.

By supporting inclusive programs, India Development Service is furthering the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #4: Quality Education



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