

PRAGYA

TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR TEACHERS

Workshop on “Understanding Maps”

Date: 25th October 2024

Duration: 90 minutes

INTRODUCTION

A training workshop was organised by Vision Empowerment in collaboration with DWDS, Government of Karnataka, supported by Microsoft, Bosch, and Wipro mainly for the visually impaired teachers from various schools in Karnataka from October 23 to 25, 2024. The venue was National Association for the Blind, Jeevan Bhima Nagar, Bangalore. In total, 37 teachers from 24 special schools for the blind across Karnataka took part in the workshop. On 3rd day, a session was conducted on “understanding maps”, facilitated by Saswati Paik, a faculty of School of Education, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru. This session introduced five elements of maps to the participants in an innovative manner along with tactile tools.



OBJECTIVES

The workshop aimed to help visually impaired teachers develop skills to understand and teach the elements of maps and enhance their ability to instruct visually impaired students in geography.

KEY TOPICS COVERED

The session covered a few aspects as described below:

Introduction to Map Elements: The participants were introduced to five basic map elements of a map, title, direction, scale, coordinates and legends/index. The concepts were introduced with the help of the position of our face and its different elements on the same.

Tactile maps and tools: Various tactile tools were provided to help participants feel and interpret map elements. These tactile tools were made up of various materials from our day-to-day life such as packaging materials (cardboard, foam pad etc), threads, pulses, toothpicks, ice cream sticks and plastic straw. These local materials can be utilised by the teachers to make their own TLMs at no cost.



Photo 2: Participants experiencing tactile map

Practical activities:

Teachers were engaged in hands-on activities using tactile tools. They practiced how to explain each element of the map using tactile tools. Thus, the teachers could get an understanding about the simple strategies to teach map related concepts to visually impaired students, and to create appropriate inexpensive tactile tools.



FEEDBACK

Participants gave positive feedback and appreciated the tactile resources and teaching techniques provided. They expressed that these tools would greatly support their teaching. Some of them expressed that similar sessions must be conducted in their schools as well for the children. This workshop could successfully empower visually impaired teachers with a better understanding about five elements of a map. It is expected that such a session will help teachers to teach many important concepts to visually impaired children in an interesting, effective and meaningful manner.