Our Mission
To empower marginalized communities in information dark regions to access, consume and produce information online using digital interventions and ICT (Information Communication Technology) tools.

Our Vision
We envision to create an information rich and digitally uplifted communities through extensive use of ICT and digital media tools.

Who we serve?
Our primary objective is to serve the vulnerable and marginalized communities, i.e., Below poverty line, Women, Artsans, Youth, Differently Abled, Elderly, Tribal communities, Micro and Nano entreprenuers, Micro and Nano enterprises and Nonprofit Organizations.

Where we Operate?
We currently operate in 24 states of India covering 135 Districts, 700 Blocks, 1000 Panchayats and 3000 Villages. We are creating a network of Community Information Resource centres that will be building information rich and digitally uplifted communities across the country.
OUR CORE VALUES

EMPATHY
We empathize with people and their causes to find solutions that best suit a particular community or region.

EQUALITY
We cherish equality as a value when dealing with stakeholders, partners, co-workers and the people we seek to serve.

EMPOWERMENT
We create a work environment that empowers people to fearlessly express themselves, innovate and offer creative solutions, irrespective of their designations or positions within the organization.

TRANSPARENCY
We ensure transparency, good governance and participative decision making based on a deep commitment for equality and fairness.

Our Core Programmatic Verticals

DEF’s work covers six programmatic verticals under which projects are launched and executed:

- **Access & Infrastructure**: Providing people access to the Internet and making them digitally literate.
- **Governance & Entitlements**: Raising awareness about their rights and entitlements and giving them the voice to demand better governance, better delivery of government services and better protection of their basic human rights using digital literacy and digital tools.
- **Education & Empowerment**: Enabling people to access better health, education, skill and livelihood opportunities through digital literacy and digital tools.
- **Markets & Social Enterprise**: Digitally empowering micro-enterprises and communities and grassroots-level civil society organizations with online presence.
- **Knowledge Hub & Database**: Creating a knowledge network of digital practitioners and database of effective ICTD innovations and interventions in an effort to scale up and forge partnerships for specific socio-economic developmental needs.
2002
DEF got registered as a not-for-profit organization under Societies Registration Act, 1860, India.

2004
DEF participated in World Summit Awards formed under the (World Summit on the Information Society) framework of the United Nations.

2005
DEF became the first organization to institutionalize awards in South Asia and India by the name of Manthan Award.

2006
Launched www.gyanpaedia.in in partnership with Ministry of Communication & Information Technology, Government of India to aggregate content created by students & teachers from 500 schools across 7 states of India.

2007
Launched first Community Information Resource Centre with support from Intel.

2010
Expansion of CIRCs – established 25 CIRCs

2011
GOI selects DEF founder as a member of Community Radio Screening Committee

2012
DEF founder becomes member of DEITY’s working group for Internet Proliferation and Governance

2013
DEF expanded its presence in 60 districts across 25 states and 10 countries.

2014
Conceived and Implemented Minority Cyber Gram Yojana, a Ministry of Minority Affairs initiative at Chandauli.

2015
With Support from Indus Towers & Vodafone, DEF reached 150 locations with CIRCs presence

2016
Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) collaborated with the Crowd Sourcing Week (CSW) to host India’s first Crowdsourcing Week Summit in Bengaluru to promote organizations and innovators, looking to embed the power of the crowd in their products and services, connect the dots in the global crowd-powered marketplace.

2017
Developed an android based mobile application “MeraApp” to provide rural India’s vulnerable population with a catalogue of welfare schemes, with comprehensive information on entitlements, in an effort to empower them with access to rights and benefits.

2018
Developed and Launched in house mobile application called “MeraApp” with an objective to provide rural India’s vulnerable population with a catalogue of welfare schemes, with comprehensive information on entitlements, in an effort to empower them with access to rights and benefits under the areas of health, education, social security, finance and livelihood.

2019
DEF partnered with WhatsApp for a programme “Fighting Against Fake News”.

2020
Expansion of CIRCs – Established 850 centres in 600 locations across the country.

2021
Expansion of CIRCs - established 1000 CIRCs across 135 districts and 23 states of India.
Today, Digital Empowerment Foundation is an integral digital action organisation. DEF’s constantly acts into creation of information empowerment, equitable communities by providing digital access to information, knowledge and contextual capacity. The organization’s main focus is to relate technology to the masses especially on how technology can empower women, youth differently abled and elderly in functional digital literacy, media literacy, and digital up-skilling across agriculture, micro and nano business, health, education, livelihood, and entrepreneurship.

DEF believes that need of access to information and digital dependency is a necessity and should not lead to exclusion. Therefore, DEF constantly works in contextualizing and economizing and making access to digital tools a first priority.

Over the last 19 years, the organization has been actively engaged in digitally empowering local communities through its 1000 Community Information Resource Centres and with the spread of about 10,000 digital foot soldiers located across 24 states and 135 districts in rural, tribal, marginalized, and unreached areas.

DEF has directly impacted more than 15 million people including people below poverty line, women, artisans, youth, differently abled people, and elderly.
OUR IMPACT

- 15 million Digitally Empowered
- 4 million Women Digitally Included
- 1000000 Digital Foot Soldiers
- 6000 NGOs Digitally Enabled
- 500000 Artisans Digitally Empowered
- 5000000 Availed Entitlements
- 10000 Digital Innovations Documented
- 1000 Panchayats Digitally Included
- 135 Districts
- 700 Blocks
- 3000 Villages
- 24 States
MARKET NEED & SITUATION

- Lack of reliable and authentic information
- Lack of digital financial related information & content
- Lack of land & agri extension services related information & content
- Lack of media related information
- Lack of relevanent public and private welfare schemes related info & content
- Lack of relevant skilling courses
- Lack of legal information & content
- Lack of career related information
- Lack of banking, citizen and digital services

70% of rural India do not have access to Internet

70% of women in rural India are able to use computer

50% of students in India do not have access to the Internet for online studies

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We are expanding our Community Information Resource Centres to provide a range of services - education services, governance services, health services, livelihood services, financial services, infotainment services to allow marginalized communities to access information and entitlement services, where and when they need it. Our focus remains on beneficiaries, and our team will continue to experiment with new ways to deliver our core programs to the communities and begin to explore how we can serve a broader to achieve maximum impact in efficient and innovative ways.

**Over the next five years, we will:**

Enable ecosystem of bottom-up digital development to facilitate:

1. Digital Entrepreneurship
2. Digital Health
3. Digital Education
4. Digital Livelihood
5. Digital Entertainment
6. Digital Financial Inclusion
7. Access to Government Entitlements
Establish 3000+ Community Information Resource Centres in 300+ Backward Districts across 28 states of India

Creating cadre of 100,000 Digital Foot soldiers to enable large scale data to influence policy and create information economy.

Expand our nonprofit readiness training with new and current programs

Strengthen our online marketplace, which will provide a digital platform for beneficiaries to scope and secure services anywhere, anytime.

Expand knowledge network, database in the field of ICT for Development across South Asia and Asia Pacific regions.

Expanding the combination of research, advocacy and in-country engagement to strengthen the Internet human rights.

OUR ACTION PRIORITIES

1. Focus on our communities
   Impact Indicators:
   - Number of communities served increases significantly.
   - Our program teams are structured to make sure that community needs are being met.
   - Our programs are achieving our impact goals efficiently.
   - Expansion to new states

2. Improve our organizational and operational capabilities
   - Continue to build our capabilities to reach more communities where and when they need help.
   - Expand and enhance Digital Information Resource Centres around the country
   - Expand our commitment to Roots’ professional growth, satisfaction, diversity, and inclusion.
   - Align organizational structure to support implementation of strategic plan.
Strengthen our financial position.

Improve technological infrastructure to support the strategic plan.

Develop and strengthen key partnerships and convenings.

We have established strong partnerships across the globe.

**Impact Indicators:**

- We stabilize our turnover.
- Our local and national teams collaborate to achieve our goals.

### Improve our organizational and operational capabilities

- Expand use of impact measurements.
- Develop and communicate internal key performance indicators.
- Communicate impact externally

**Impact Indicators:**

- Dashboard is being used consistently by the board, executive management team to make decisions about operations and programs. Our results and impact are being communicated externally.
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