



Guide

# “Inclusion of Disability in the Workplace”

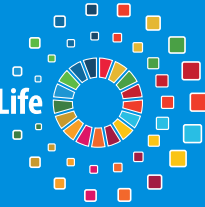


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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Guide

# **“Inclusion of Disability in the Workplace”**



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This guide was prepared by ESCWA consultant Ms. Doha Yahfoufi, under the supervision of Ms. Fathia Abdel Fadil, Disability project coordinator at ESCWA, in cooperation and coordination with the International Labour Organization (ILO).

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## Key messages

1

Available data indicate that employment rates for persons with disabilities are much lower than those without, despite the availability of national legislation and policies that protect their right to work. This gap cannot be attributed to the inability or unwillingness of persons with disabilities to work but rather indicates the existence of cultural, organizational, and physical barriers in the work environment that limit their participation in the labour market.

2

The inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workplace begins with raising awareness among employers, who are directly responsible for the work environment and play a central role in the recruitment process.

3

To this end, this reference training guide, entitled “Inclusion of Disability in the Workplace”, has been devised for private sector companies, to enable them to overcome all barriers and challenges they face, especially those related to stereotypes, prejudices, diversity management skills, and reasonable accommodation in the workplace.

4

The training guide consists of eight modules as follows: (1) Introduction to diversity and inclusion, (2) An overview of the legislative framework and the reality of persons with disabilities, (3) Language and communication, (4) Inclusive workplace: concept and benefits, (5) Inclusive workplace for persons with disabilities: devising a comprehensive strategy/ plan, (6) Workplace inclusion management: overcoming stereotypes and raising awareness, (7) Workplace inclusion management: recruitment, staff retention, and performance management, and (8) Workplace inclusion management: adaptations and equipment.



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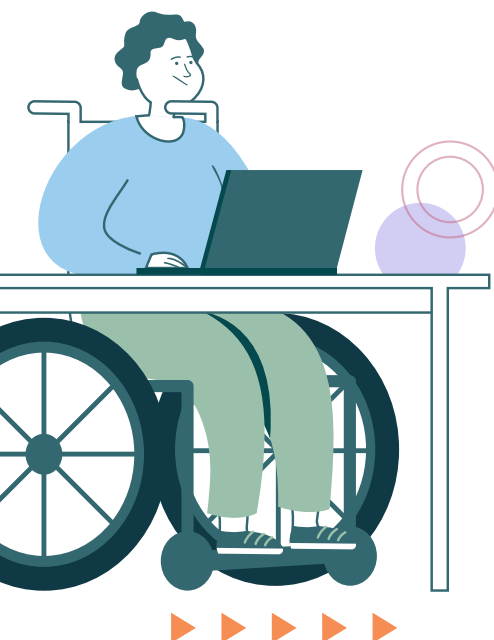
## Introduction

There are at least

# 1.3

billion people with disabilities

They are among the most marginalized and excluded groups from the labour market.



There are at least 1.3 billion people with disabilities worldwide.<sup>1</sup> They are among the most marginalized and excluded groups from the labour market. In the Arab States, available data indicate that employment rates for persons with disabilities are much lower than those without,<sup>2</sup> despite the availability of national legislation and policies that protect their right to work. This gap cannot be attributed to the inability or unwillingness of persons with disabilities to work, but rather indicates the existence of cultural, organizational, and physical barriers in the work environment that limit their participation in the labour market. These barriers must, therefore, be overcome to achieve equality and decent work.

Within this framework, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) attach great importance to the need to raise awareness among employers, who are directly responsible for the work environment and play a central role in the recruitment process.

To this end, this reference training guide, entitled “Inclusion of Disability in the Workplace”, has been devised for private sector companies, to enable them to overcome all barriers and challenges they face, especially those related to stereotypes, prejudices, diversity management skills, and reasonable accommodation in the workplace.

### A. What is the Inclusion of Disability in the Workplace guide?

The “Inclusion of Disability in the Workplace” guide is a training package consisting of several thematic modules on how to include persons with disabilities in the workplace in the Arab States, in line with the principles of decent work, equality, and equal opportunities. It is a participatory process through which company employers are informed about the discrimination and actual barriers facing persons with disabilities. Company employers are also provided during the said process with the necessary technical support to create an inclusive work environment by



changing negative attitudes, policies, and non-inclusive recruitment practices, in addition to providing reasonable accommodations and removing barriers in the work environment.

## **B. Target audience: to whom is this guide addressed?**

The present guide targets employers, line managers, and human resources (HR) officers in the private and public sector organizations, it aims at providing them with basic information and advice on creating an inclusive work environment for persons with disabilities. The guide also comprises a reference tool that they can use in their day-to-day work.

In its first part, the guide targets company workers (co-workers), with the aim of enhancing their knowledge of disability, models, and communication etiquette with persons with disabilities in the workplace.

## **C. Objective: what is the purpose of this guide?**

This guide aims to enable companies to identify and address forms of discriminatory practices towards persons with disabilities in the workplace through understanding disability issues and impacts, adopting a culture of inclusion, and providing reasonable accommodations so as to offer fair employment opportunities for all.

To achieve this goal, the guide provides practical guidance on the following points:

- Key concepts of inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workplace and standards of its achievement.

- Positive effects of adopting disability inclusion on the company, its services, and economic growth.
- Skills and tools that enable companies to make the necessary changes to ensure equal participation of persons with disabilities.
- How to devise and update strategies and plans to promote an inclusive workplace where persons with disabilities have the right, opportunity, and choice to realize their potential as employees working at their full capacity.

## **D. Content: training outline**

This guide consists of eight training modules divided into two parts:

Part I: It includes three training modules targeting all the concerned groups (mentioned above). The said modules tackle general topics related to disability inclusion, relevant legislation, and comprehensive/inclusive language.

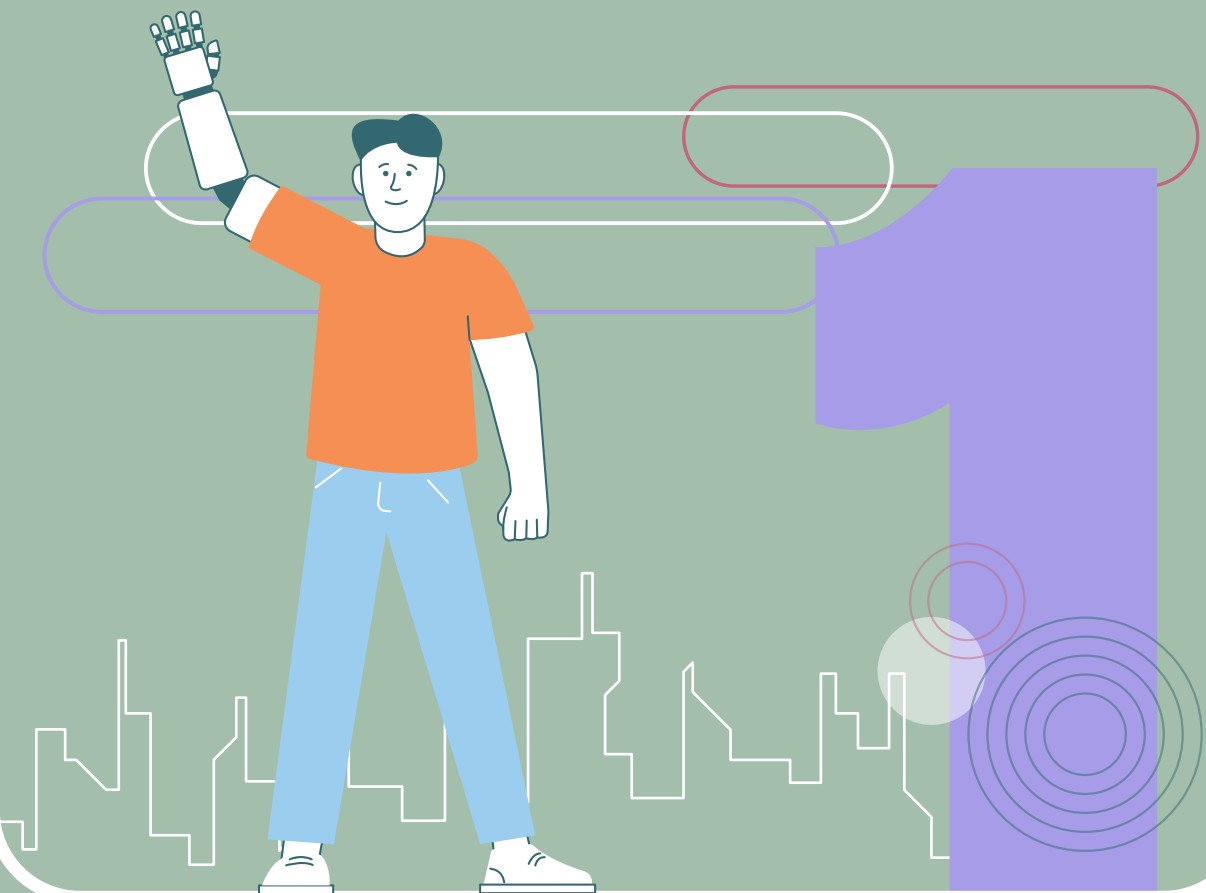
Part II: It includes five modules, mainly targeting employers, HR experts, supervisors, and other professionals working in the field of disability inclusion management in the workplace. Part II provides technical and practical guidance on managing disability inclusion in the workplace (strategies, plans, attitudes, customer services, communication, recruitment, performance management, employee retention, as well as accommodations and adaptations).

Training can be received on one or more of the eight modules separately. However, receiving training on all eight modules of parts I and II is more beneficial.

# Part I



Part I comprises introductory material that can be used by employers, HR officers, and company employees (co-workers) alike, to increase their knowledge and update their information about the concept of diversity, disability, inclusion and inclusive language. It additionally provides them with an overview of the socio-economic reality of persons with disabilities and the legislative frameworks related to them. The primary purpose of this three-module part is to ensure that employers and all employees, regardless of their position, are able to adopt the right concepts regarding disability and inclusion, as well as communicate with confidence. It also seeks to ensure they apply the basic principles of inclusion of persons with disabilities in their day-to-day work.





# Module one: introduction to diversity and inclusion

Module one includes the following main axes:

Understanding diversity in the workplace.

Disability models: from the medical and charitable approach to the human rights approach (medical, charitable, social, and human rights).

Myths versus facts about disability.

Disability, its types, and assistive devices used (examples of aids).

Distinguishing between the four concepts: exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion.

## A. Understanding diversity in the workplace

Human societies are inherently based on the principle of difference and diversity, which constitutes the key element in the evolution of these societies. What is this principle then, and how does it relate to disability and the workplace?

### 1. Difference and diversity

The concept of diversity refers to the varied human features that may exist in society. It is associated with the set of unique qualities and characteristics that we all possess. Diversity covers various characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It also involves acknowledging these differences, as well

as accepting and respecting each person's individuality and uniqueness in a safe, positive, and supportive environment. Diversity is about understanding each other and moving to embrace and respect the rich dimensions of diversity that exist in each of us. Certainly, disability is one of the many aspects inherent in this concept.

### 2. Diversity and how it is related to work

The work environment constitutes the microcosm of society, as it reflects its diversity in principle. Moreover, it invests society's various energies and aims to provide a service or commodity to all its diverse segments.

However, work environments tend to neglect or disregard persons of different characteristics, including persons with disabilities, who often face discrimination in accessing the labour market and decent

work opportunities. Discrimination here refers to treating a person differently based on their personal criteria, regardless of their professional profile or skills, knowing that the concept of decent work emphasized the need to promote equal employment opportunities for all in conditions of freedom, equality, security and dignity, regardless of gender, race, religion, or disability.

Discrimination in this context is linked to stereotypes that often lead to prejudices about the potential of persons with disabilities, and also to considering them unable to work in certain professions. However, the exclusion of persons with disabilities leads to high losses in the labour market in terms of not investing in the available energies of a large number of people on the one hand, and not attracting the category of clients of persons with disabilities on the other.

Therefore, we note that recent trends in several developed countries recommend improving employment opportunities and launching initiatives to integrate persons with disabilities into the open labour market, in addition to promoting the principle of equal opportunities and the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The said measures would remove environmental and cultural barriers and instil the concept of respect for diversity.

## B. Disability models: from the medical and charitable approach to the human rights approach

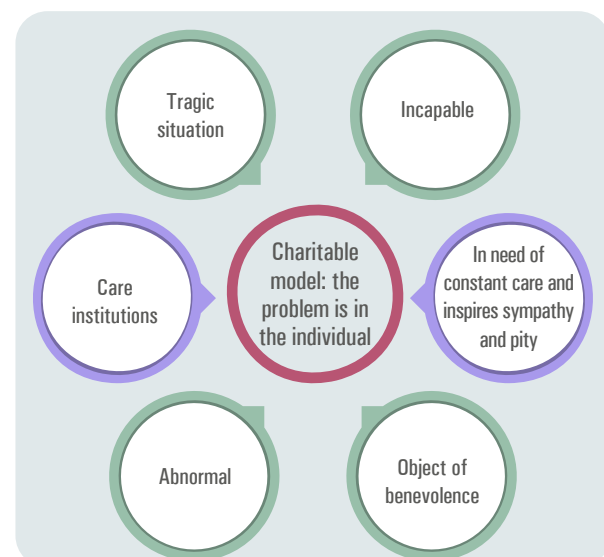
The prevailing culture and perceptions about disability in the world and the Arab

region are closely linked to the model adopted to address and define disability in each country. The universally recognized models to address disability are four and fall into two main approaches:

- The individual approach includes both the charitable and medical models.
- The social approach includes the social and human rights models.

### 1. Charity model

The charity model is individual-centred and tends to view people with disabilities as victims or inspiring sympathy. This model considers that disability is the person’s primary identifier. Moreover, persons with disabilities are seen as recipients and beneficiaries of services. This model also considers that persons with disabilities are in a tragic situation and in need of constant care. It assumes that society is responsible for arranging all services for these vulnerable persons. The charity model is often practiced by religious and community actors who consider serving vulnerable people to be a religious and moral duty.



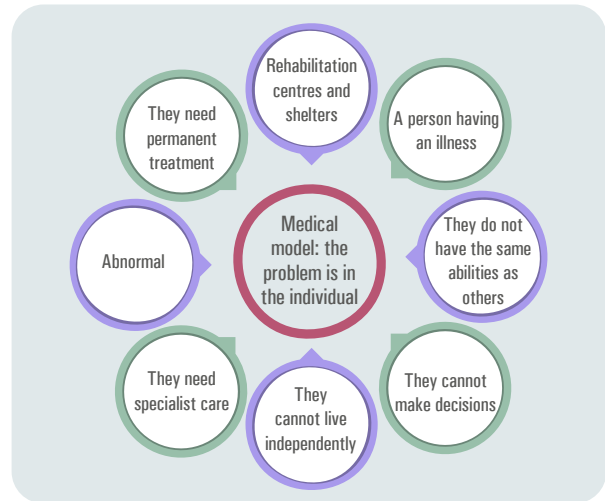
## 2. Medical model

The medical model is similarly individual-centred. It views disability as a health condition and a weakness an individual suffers. As per this model, persons with disabilities are defined as patients. This model assumes that the condition ought to be treated medically. Certainly, this results in frustration and depression.

The medical model has been prevalent for centuries, instilling the understanding of disability as having a biological or medical basis, resulting from the weakness of an organ or system in the human body, or an impairment in its function or structure due to different health conditions.

Unfortunately, the individual approach (medical and charitable models) is still dominant and impacts the work of institutions in Arab States. Its consequences are as follows:

- Becoming subjugated to the medical apparatus
- Stigmatization
- Isolation
- Dependency and lack of independence
- Frustration
- Availability of seasonal services
- Exploitation
- Feeling inferior
- Discrimination and lack of opportunities
- Having a limited scope of engagement and participation, especially in relation to education and employment.



## 3. Social model

The social model evolved in reaction to the individual approach of the charity and medical models. This model focuses mainly on society, considering that the problem lies in society and not the individual. According to this model, which approaches disability as a social issue, persons with disabilities are excluded socially, institutionally, economically, and politically due to barriers in the surrounding environment. This model focuses on reforming society, removing barriers to the participation of persons with disabilities, raising awareness, and changing attitudes, practices and policies.

## 4. Human rights model



The human rights model is based on the principles of the social model and shares the same premise that it is society that needs changing. This model focuses on equity and human rights principles. It aspires to include all persons in society on an equal basis.

This model is based on the texts and recommendations contained in international documents and conventions, foremost of which is the CRPD,<sup>3</sup> which constitutes a key reference point. The model in question considers that persons with disabilities have the same rights as all human beings. This can only be achieved by working to enact and implement legislation and laws that protect all segments of society and provide each group with the protection, services and opportunities it needs to ensure participation and a decent life.

The human rights model treats disability as a development issue that crosses all

areas of life, rather than a humanitarian relief issue that requires charity and compassion, given that it forms part of society’s natural diversity.

Moreover, this model emphasizes the importance of ensuring equality, justice, and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. It also rejects the concept of care and guardianship so as to respect autonomy and privacy. Its priorities involve ensuring that persons in charge at all levels fulfil their responsibilities.

In this guide, we focus on the need to adopt the social and human rights models, as they provide a real understanding of how disability occurs. They also include the right conceptual foundations for creating an inclusive workplace that ensures fair and equal participation for all. Without this perspective and understanding of disability, employers will not be able to establish comprehensive procedures in workplaces and work environments.



### Examples of approaching disability as per the four models:

Examples	A young woman in a wheelchair	A man with an intellectual disability	A girl who is hard of hearing	A man with visual disability
Charity model	"What a pity, this beautiful woman is wheelchair-bound and will never be able to work, marry, and take care of her family."	"Look at this poor man! He seems to be mentally retarded. He is better off living in a nursing home where he'd be looked after."	"It is very sad knowing that she will not be able to work and live alone."	"The poor man! He cannot even take care of himself because he cannot see. He needs someone to take care of him, and he can only work in handicrafts."
Medical model	"Oh, this poor woman has to go to the doctor to get treatment so she can walk like everyone else."	"Maybe there's a drug or treatment that can improve his cognition. He should see a psychiatrist."	"She must undergo surgery to regain her hearing or live in a rehabilitation centre for deaf people."	"Maybe he can have surgery to regain his sight and be able to live like everyone else."
Social model	"It is very important for the community to build ramps in front of public buildings so that she can participate in social life."	"It is a good idea for him to live with his family and work in an inclusive work environment like everyone else."	"Sign language must be provided in schools, public places, and the workplace so that we can communicate with this girl."	"This person can live independently, move, study, and work if the environmental barriers are removed."
Human rights model	"When she gets a job, her employer will provide her with an accessible room. That's her right!"	"Where does he want to work? Let us go and ask him!"	"When this girl grows up, she will be able to go to university and work if she wishes to."	"This person has the right to decide what he wants to do. Employers must evaluate him on the basis of competence and make the necessary arrangements to ensure that he can perform his duties."

## 5. However, does adopting the social and human rights models mean that people with disabilities do not have medical needs?

No, on the contrary, they do sometimes need medical help and specialized support. The point is that medical intervention may indeed be necessary at certain stages. However, it is essential that it is not adopted as a single and permanent approach to disability, as it may not necessarily be required at some point. In addition, the barriers in the environment and their impact on a person’s life and participation in all life aspects should not be overlooked. The social and human rights models emphasize the treatment of a person with disability as any other person and the analysis of all their individual factors, as well as the environmental factors, and how these factors interact with each other. This is aimed at identifying obstacles and addressing the situation simultaneously at the level of the individual and the

surrounding environment. Nonetheless, due attention is extended to the need of persons with disabilities to medical intervention, because of physical impairment, or as a result of diseases that they may be exposed to like any other person without disability.

## C. Myths versus facts about disability

Misconceptions are a direct result of misinformation that is certainly linked to the conceptual legacies perpetuated by the individual approach to disability during its prevalence (i.e., the adoption of the charity and medical models). Moreover, these misconceptions can be attributed to the lack of knowledge about disability. They can also result from some experiences that have instilled some false prejudices regarding disability and the work environment.

Here are some common myths and biases regarding disability and work versus the facts:

Myths	Facts
<p>“People with disabilities cannot work in many occupations and perform better in certain jobs depending on the type of disability they have.”</p> <p>Many people tend to pre-categorize occupations in which people with disabilities can work, based on the possibility that people with disabilities may develop some alternative skills to perform certain tasks when they have a disability.</p> <p>For example, people with visual disabilities are classified as proficient in perfumery, crafts, or communications, based on the belief that they develop their sense of smell and hearing to a large extent because they lack vision. Accordingly, work choices offered to them are priorly limited to these fields.</p>	<p>This pre-categorization approach leads to a false generalization that results in unfair practices against persons with disabilities. Therefore, it is completely unacceptable. People with disabilities are not a homogeneous group, but rather human beings like others, with diverse abilities and needs (individual factors). Hence, any recruitment process must be based on the person’s choice, competence, and abilities, not on the type of disability they have.</p>



Myths	Facts
<p>Similarly, another example is considering that people with severe hearing loss have a greater concentration ability. Therefore, it is assumed that they will inevitably excel at data entry or programming, or that they are ideal candidates to work in industries that require the use of machines that make loud sounds and noises.</p>	
<p>“Employing people with disabilities incurs a significant additional cost.”</p>	<p>This belief is inaccurate, as a large percentage of people with disabilities do not require accommodations when hired. It is true that sometimes it is necessary to modify the workplace or purchase a specific program for the individual to be able to perform work tasks. In most cases, however, this does not incur a high cost. We also note that often, people with disabilities themselves resort to simple solutions without the need for significant adjustments. This has been confirmed by several studies, in particular, “Persons with disabilities: labour market perceptions survey”; recently conducted by ESCWA in 2020 in Lebanon, Jordan and Morocco.</p>
<p>“To hire people with disabilities, I first need to ensure that the offices and the entire building are completely accessible.”</p>	<p>Although the ideal scenario is to have a fully accessible work environment, this goal can be pursued gradually. It is incorrect to believe that this is a barrier to hiring persons with disabilities altogether. Not all people with mobility disabilities necessarily need ramps to move, and solutions can often be found without making major changes to the building.</p>
<p>“People with disabilities get sick more often than others and are absent from work a lot.”</p>	<p>Contrary to these stereotypes, several studies (including the ESCWA survey) have shown that the attendance records of persons with disabilities (according to employers) are better than others. They do not miss work often, are committed to work, stay longer with their employers, and have fewer accidents in the workplace.</p>

Myths	Facts
"The productivity of people with disabilities is lower than that of their colleagues without disability."	Contrary to the common belief, several studies have proven that the productivity of people with disabilities is no less than that of other employees.
"Hiring a woman with disability is harder than hiring a man with one."	Once more, studies have shown, going back to institutions that have experienced employing people with disabilities, that there are no additional difficulties involved in hiring a woman with disabilities.
"A person with disability is brave."	Rather than bravery, a person with disability needs environment adaptations and lifestyle modification.
"All people with disabilities need treatment."	Not all people with disabilities necessarily need treatment. Rather, some may need treatment at certain periods of their lives.
"All people with hearing impairments can lipread."	Lip reading is a talent that some people have in varying degrees.
"People with visual disability have a sixth sense."	people with visual impairment do not have a sixth sense. However, their loss of vision helped them better develop their other senses.
"A person with disability is comfortable with people 'of the like'."	In fact, people with disabilities prefer to live with and integrate with all segments of society.
"Money should be raised and given to people with disabilities."	People with disabilities do not need financial assistance. Rather, they need access to equal opportunities in education, employment, as well as health, social and support services.
"Disability is a punishment from God. It results from a mistake or misdeed that a person has committed, and perhaps they deserve it." "What did these parents do to have a child like this?"	Disability is part of human diversity and results from the interaction between a person's impairment (due to an injury, accident, disease, genetic factors, certain genetic syndromes...) and environmental obstacles.
"Most people with disabilities use a wheelchair."	People with disabilities are not a homogeneous group. They are human beings like others and they may have physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities. They do not necessarily use a wheelchair.

Persons with disabilities: Labour market perceptions survey Lebanon and Jordan, policy briefs, 2022, ESCWA, <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/disability-labour-market-survey-lebanon>, <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/persons-disabilities-labour-market-perceptions-survey-jordan>.

Therefore, if you wish to adopt a culture of inclusion and diversity in your workplace, you must start by letting go of false beliefs and focusing on the facts about persons with disabilities associated with modern concepts and definitions of disability and inclusion and the benefits of employing persons with disabilities.

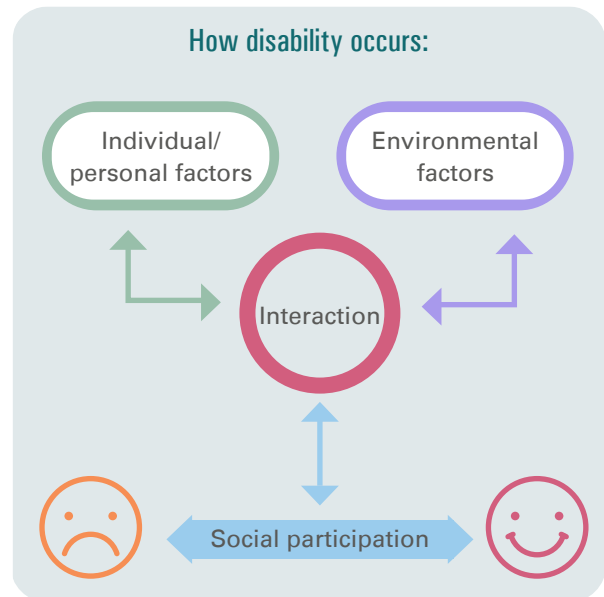
## D. Disability types and assistive devices used

As a human rights issue, the preamble to the CRPD<sup>4</sup> defines disability as follows:

**“Recognizing that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments<sup>5</sup> and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”**

This definition stresses that the true nature of ‘disability’ is not limited to functional restrictions or impairments in individuals, or to difficulty in performance directly resulting thereof, but rather that disability occurs as a result of interaction between these persons and an environment that does not take their needs into account. Therefore, it is necessary to remove all cultural, social, economic and environmental barriers to allow persons with disabilities to participate. Thus, a particular functional impairment does not become a disability if there is a fully inclusive and accessible environment.

**Illustration of how disability occurs as a result of an interaction between individual and environmental factors<sup>6</sup>**



**Disability results from a negative interaction between environmental factors and individual ones (i.e. when environmental factors do not fit individual ones).**

**Full participation results from a positive interaction between environmental factors and individual ones (i.e. when environmental factors are accommodated in a manner appropriate to individual ones).**

Individual factors include an individual’s sensory, physical, psychological, social and economic characteristics, or in other words, their individual abilities, characteristics and needs. As for the environmental factors, they include all factors related to the environment, including legislation, policies, regulations, programmes, services, community culture, as well as economic and social factors, in addition to the available accommodations in the built environment (roads, buildings, transportation, etc.). Here are some examples of these different factors.

## Types of disability

Disability classifications are still not uniform worldwide, but most of them include the following four disability groupings mentioned in the CRPD:<sup>7</sup>

- Physical (mobility) disability
- Sensory disability (visual, auditory and speech)
- Intellectual disability
- Mental (psychiatric) disability

In addition to these four categories, this guide offers the definition of learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorder according to a number of international classifications.

### A. Physical (mobility) disability

"Physical disability is more easily identifiable and manifests as significant difficulty in the performance of functions such as: moving or mobility, like walking, climbing stairs and standing; body movements such as reaching, crouching

and kneeling; and gripping – using fingers to grip or handle objects."<sup>8</sup>

In other words, mobility disability is a decrease or partial or total loss of a person's ability to carry out motor skills (such as walking, standing, carrying objects, going up and down stairs, using fingers to write, etc.) as a result of partial or total impairment of a bodily function, in the absence of appropriate environmental conditions.

The following are examples of the types of impairment or injuries that lead to a mobility disability:

- Multiple sclerosis
- Limb length discrepancy
- Severe burns
- Amputation
- Rheumatism
- Hip dislocation
- Quadriplegia
- Paraplegia
- Hemiplegia
- Cerebral palsy

Examples of assistive devices used by persons with physical/mobility disabilities:



Electric wheelchair



Manual wheelchair



Walker



			
Quadripod cane	Tripod cane	Crutch	Prosthetic devices for people who have leg amputation
			
Toileting aids	Hand brace	Hand brace	Leg brace for people who have polio

## B. Sensory disability

“Sensory disability relates to hearing and vision impairments. Speech impairment is also included under sensory, in that it makes communication difficult, although technically, it could be viewed as a manifestation of any of the other main disability types.”<sup>9</sup>

It can be said that visual impairment is the partial or complete decrease or loss of a person’s ability to see, as a

result of total or partial impairment of the sense of vision (complete or severe visual impairment), in the absence of appropriate environmental conditions. As for hearing impairment, it can be defined as the partial or complete decrease or loss in a person’s ability to hear, whether they have speech problems or not, as a result of a certain impairment of the auditory system (sense of hearing), in the absence of appropriate environmental conditions.

Examples of assistive devices used by people with visual impairments:



Magnifying devices and reading aids for people with low vision



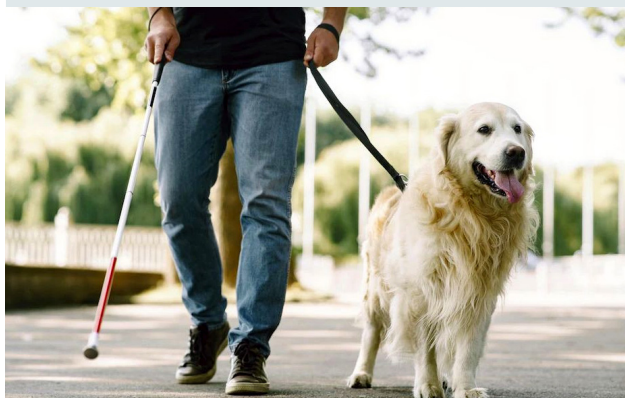
The white cane is used by people with visual impairments for mobility



Tactile letters (Braille)



Dot or Braille wristwatch



Trained animals (such as guide dogs)



Screen-reading programs

As for hearing impairment, it can be defined as the partial or complete decrease or loss in a person's ability to hear, whether they have speech

problems or not, as a result of a certain impairment of the auditory system (sense of hearing), in the absence of appropriate environmental conditions.

### Examples of assistive devices used by persons with hearing impairments:

				
Vibrating alarm	Cochlear implant	Phone sound amplifier	Sign language and lipreading	Sign language and lipreading
				
Sign language		Phone equipped with a screen for transcribing spoken speech.	A smart pen equipped with a speaker and microphone that enables the user to take notes while recording someone's voice instantaneously. The user can later listen to any section of their notes by touching the pen.	

As mentioned in the definition of sensory impairment above, speech disability affects communication. It can be considered as a partial or complete decrease or loss of a person's ability to express speech. It may result from impairment in the organs responsible for speech or from speech problems, in the absence of appropriate environmental conditions. In this case, speech disability ranks as a sensory impairment. However, if it is the result of impaired mental function or impairment of the speech centre in the brain, it falls under the category of intellectual disability or other disabilities. A person with speech impairment may resort to writing or sign language as communication alternatives.


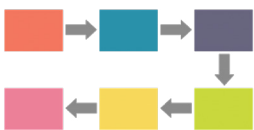


### C. Intellectual disability

"Intellectual disability relates to impairments in the ability to learn, apply knowledge, solve problems, make decisions, and perform certain daily life skills. It manifests as limited adaptive skills compared to others of the same age, and can include difficulties in learning to read, write and calculate."<sup>10</sup> In other words, intellectual disability can be defined as a decrease in a person's ability to perform certain intellectual skills as a result of certain impairment in the higher-level brain functions such as concentration, analysis, counting, memory and communication. It may result in some intellectual or learning difficulties, difficulties in doing daily

activities or communication, as well as social difficulties or ones pertaining to a person’s general behaviour. Additionally, some intellectual disabilities result from impaired mental functions due to genetic or hereditary reasons. These include

trisomy (such as Down syndrome) and others. The severity of the said conditions may vary between mild, moderate, or severe, bearing in mind that disability occurs in the absence of appropriate environmental factors.

Examples of assistive devices used by persons with intellectual disabilities:

			
<p>Speech recognition software that allows performing calculations verbally using a microphone and viewing the results on the computer screen.</p>	<p>Task and time organizers in a simplified illustration or agenda.</p>	<p>BigKey and KidG-love keyboards</p>	<p>Image-based communication</p>

**D. Mental disability (chronic psychiatric illness)**

Mental disability “relates to behavioural or psychological impairments. These are those actions and behaviours that an individual does to make and keep friends and relationships, behave within accepted limits, and cope with feelings and emotions. It can

mean difficulties in relating to others, distressed moods or confused thoughts, behavioural or psychosocial problems.”<sup>11</sup>

In other words, mental disability is linked to the presence of psychiatric disorders or adaptive behaviour disorders as a result of chronic mental illnesses (such as schizophrenia).



Assistive devices include:



There are a number of modern computer programs and applications that help organize tasks and send reminders about them. Moreover, there are applications to organize medicine reminders, and others to measure the level of mood change and alert the person.

## E. Learning disabilities

“Learning disabilities are due to genetic and/or neurobiological factors that alter brain functioning in a manner that affects one or more cognitive processes related to learning. These cognitive processes problems can interfere with learning basic skills such as reading, writing, and/or math. They can also interfere with higher level skills such as organization, time planning, abstract reasoning, long- or short-term memory and attention.”<sup>12</sup>

In other words, learning difficulties result from impairments in the nervous system development and may affect a person’s ability to acquire, analyse and remember information. These difficulties include dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia.

For example, dyslexia is the difficulty in reading and writing languages, knowing

that the IQ of a person with this condition is not low or may be above average. However, a person with dyslexia sees words overlapping, reverses letters when writing, and has difficulty differentiating similar letters, namely p and q, and b and d. Learning disabilities are associated with the absence of appropriate environmental factors.

Assistive devices include:

- Text-to-speech computer programs.
- Word prediction program: The word prediction program was originally designed for students with physical disabilities who have difficulty writing. However, it can be used by persons with learning disabilities because it reduces the need for writing manually and enhances spelling correctness and writing skills.
- Calculators and math programs: These machines and programs make it easier for people with learning disabilities to do math and arithmetic operations.

## F. Autism spectrum disorder

“Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a diverse group of impairments related to brain development that are characterized by some degree of difficulty with social interaction and communication. Other characteristics are atypical patterns of activities and behaviours, such as difficulty with the transition from one activity to another, a focus on details and unusual reactions to sensations.”<sup>13</sup>

The abilities and needs of people on the autism spectrum vary and can evolve over time. Autism may also result in difficulties at the level of behaviour or mental abilities in some cases.

Assistive devices include:



Assistive technologies for people with autism: soothing devices such as weighted blankets and sensory pillows that help a person relax.



Communication devices such as communication boards, single message or sequential message communicators, and learning devices like tablets, smartphones, etc.

It is important to be well aware that:

- Disability only occurs when environmental factors appropriate to the individual's needs are absent.
- Most people with disabilities were not born with these disabilities.
- Anyone can be affected by a disability at any stage of their life.
- A person may have multiple disabilities (i.e. simultaneously having more than one type of disability).
- Some types of disabilities are not necessarily visible to others and are therefore often called invisible disabilities (such as learning disabilities, mental disabilities, etc.).

## E. Distinguishing between the four concepts: exclusion, segregation, integration and inclusion

The full participation of persons with disabilities in the workplace is linked to meeting inclusion criteria. To better understand why the term "inclusion" emerged and the advantages of its adoption, we ought to shed light on the other concepts adopted in dealing with persons with disabilities, identify their principles and distinguish between them. In this context, we define the following four concepts: exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion.

### 1. Exclusion

The concept of exclusion stems from the misconception of distinguishing between so-called "normal" and "non-normal" people simply because they have diverse abilities and needs. Consequently, the "other" (including persons with disabilities) is excluded, marginalized, left out of society, and given no opportunity to participate.

From the perspective of this misconception, terms such as "handicapped", "damaged", "healthy", "normal", "usual", and other discriminatory terms suggest that a person's disability makes them inferior and strips them of their fundamental rights. The concept of exclusion is, therefore, utterly discriminatory and goes against human rights. Hence, the concept of exclusion and all associated terminology should not be adopted, as there are no "normal/natural" persons and others who are not. Persons are different, but enjoy the same rights.

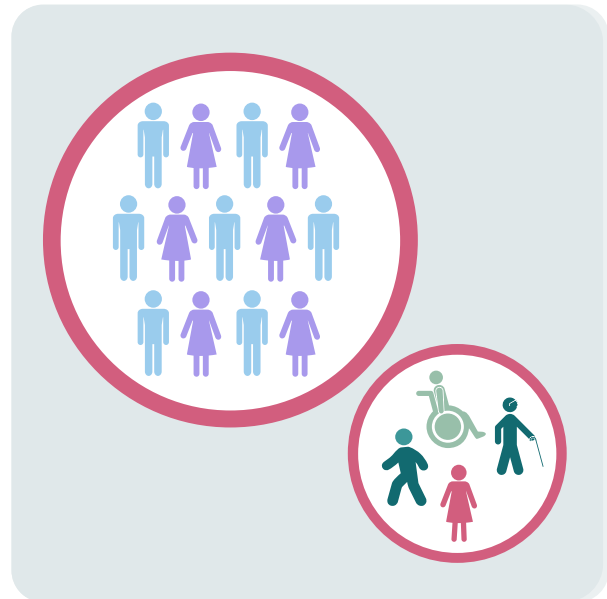


## 2. Segregation

Segregation means separating someone from something or another person. Thus, the concept of “segregation” is based on the racial segregation of groups such as women, ethnic minorities, religious minorities, and persons with disabilities from the rest of the population on the pretext of their differences.

For example, persons with disabilities may be employed in a separate building or sheltered workshops to work on specific job assignments, away from the place or building where persons without disabilities work.

This concept is also discriminatory and should be avoided because it goes against the principles of equality and human rights, namely the right to full participation in the family and society in general and fair treatment in the workplace in particular.



## 3. Integration

To some extent, this concept also assumes that a person must have “normal or ordinary” abilities to be able to participate fully in their society. It considers that it is possible for persons with disabilities to become part of society if they can adapt to the requirements of the community and environment around them. From this standpoint, this concept emphasizes the need to bring about change at the level of the individual themselves by focusing primarily on rehabilitating their abilities to a level that allows them to adapt to the requirements of the surrounding environment and thus become closer to the so-called “normal” status. Similarly, according to this concept, for example, persons with disabilities are employed in the same institution (and the same building) as persons without disabilities, but are placed in homogeneous groups (i.e. persons with disabilities work in their own groups or department within the same building in which everyone works).

It is recommended to avoid this concept as it maintains incorrect discriminatory classifications.

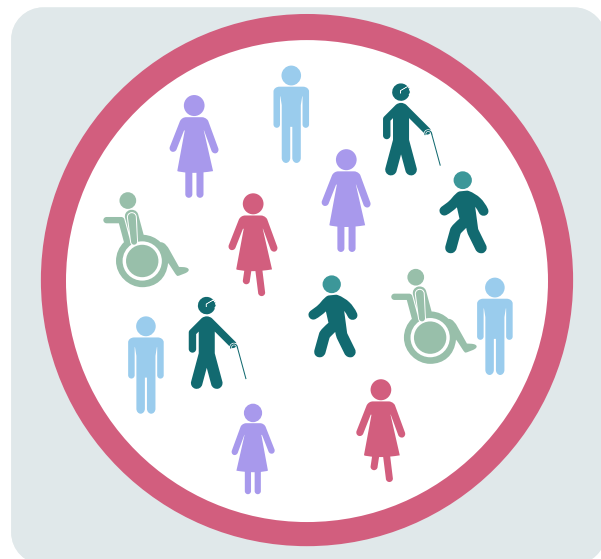


#### 4. Inclusion

Sometimes this concept is confused with the concept of integration, but in reality, the two are different. Inclusion is linked to people's ability to accept others and live in harmony with them. It pertains to the acceptance of differences on the one hand, and the provision of a barrier-free and inclusive environment on the other. According to this concept, if society itself is equipped to include everyone and promote an inclusive environment, then persons, including persons with disabilities, would not face barriers. Moreover, full participation would be accessible to all, as they would have the same fair and equal opportunities.

Inclusion does not focus on disability or diagnosing a person's existing impairment. It rather concentrates on existing capacities and the right to participate fully. This concept is based on the principles of justice and cooperation,

accepting everyone as they are and recognizing the individual characteristics of each person, without trying to bring them closer to the so-called "normal" model of being, thinking and behaving. Difference and heterogeneity are normal in people. This concept, therefore, enshrines the recognition and appreciation of diversity as a human right. It emphasizes the need to remove all legislative, service, economic, cultural, social and environmental barriers to ensure the right of persons with disabilities to live and fully participate in their communities.



Inclusion is a policy that enables all persons to receive the same service or commodity, or to work within an enterprise in the same place and with all persons without discrimination. This is achieved through providing the appropriate means that accommodate each person and ensure that they obtain their full rights. Hence, this policy enhances equality of opportunity and

promotes responding to the diversity of all individuals' needs.

It covers various life aspects and areas, including:

- Family
- Education
- Work
- Culture
- Art
- Sports
- Recreation
- Politics
- Health





## Module two: an overview of the legislative framework and the reality of persons with disabilities

Module two includes the following main axes:

Disability and poverty: a nexus.

Statistics on disability.

Barriers and their effects (identification and analysis).

Twin-track approach to reduce barriers and promote participation.

International legislative framework for the rights of persons with disabilities.

### A. Disability and poverty: a nexus

Poverty and disability are linked in a vicious circle. Poverty often causes disability, or worsens its effects, due to factors such as malnutrition, inadequate housing, working in hazardous conditions, poor medical treatment and inadequate access to services.

People with disabilities are more likely to face barriers to inclusion in society, and to their access to education, healthcare and employment opportunities, hence perpetuating their poverty.

Moreover, families that include an individual with disability also face several barriers; they tend to suffer from a greater



degree of poverty compared to similar families that do not include members with disabilities. In the absence of support services and social protection systems, caring for a family member with disability may impose demands on the other family members and reduce the time they have to engage in economic activity or develop their skills.

Moreover, disability disproportionately impacts women and men. In developing countries, women are the primary caregivers, and girls are often taken out of school to care for a sibling with disability.

Women with disabilities face a twofold discrimination: both as women and as persons with disabilities. Although 51 per cent of persons with disabilities globally are women,<sup>14</sup> girls and women with disabilities have less access to education, healthcare and employment than boys and men with disabilities.

## B. Statistics on disability

To get to know the current state of persons with disabilities, we must have an idea about statistics that reflect the reality of the

barriers they face. According to statistics from the World Report on Disability 2011,<sup>15</sup> the most reliable source to date on disability in terms of data and statistics:

- More than a billion people, about 15 percent of the world's population, have some form of disability.
- The number of people with disabilities is increasing. People in older age groups are at a higher risk of disability due to the increase in chronic health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and mental disorders.
- Eighty per cent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries. Most are excluded from vocational training and education.
- Some 785 million women and men with disabilities are of working age, but most do not work. Workers with disabilities earn less than their counterparts without disabilities.
- Only 20 percent of women with disabilities in low-income countries work compared to 58 percent of men with disabilities, and earn less.

In the Arab States, available data indicate that employment rates for

about  
**15%**  
of the world's population  
have some form  
of disability.

**80%**  
of persons with  
disabilities  
live in developing  
countries.

Some  
**785**  
million women  
and men with  
disabilities  
are of working age.



persons with disabilities are much lower than for persons without disabilities. Despite the existence of national legislation and policies that protect the right to work for persons with disabilities, their employment rate is only 14 per cent for women and 34 per cent for men, as stated in the ESCWA report (ESCWA, 2018).

It should be noted here that obtaining the accurate number of persons with disabilities is complicated. This is due to significant discrepancies in the way countries define disability, data quality and collection, source reliability and disclosure rates.

In addition, research indicates the benefit that countries’ economies can derive from employing persons with disabilities. For example, according to an ILO pilot study of 10 low- and middle-income developing countries, the exclusion of persons with

disabilities from the labour force leads to losses ranging from three to seven per cent of GDP (2009).

For more information on the reality of persons with disabilities in your countries, you can view the statistics in the ESCWA e-publication entitled “Disability in the Arab region 2018”; available at: [https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/disability-arab-region-2018-english\\_1.pdf](https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/disability-arab-region-2018-english_1.pdf).

## C. Obstacles and their effects

Persons with disabilities are not a homogeneous group. Like all people, they have different abilities, needs and tendencies. The same applies to the nature of the disability and the resulting needs. They face several different barriers inside and outside the workplace that limit their employment or retention chances. The following are the most prominent of these obstacles in the Arab States:

### General barriers

- Lack of legislation, legal frameworks and supportive policies, and the failure to implement policies, legislations and laws in force.
- Stereotypes and prejudices that prevail in society.
- Lack of accommodation in public places and lack of accessible transportation.
- Lack of education, lack of equipped schools and the absence of inclusive educational programmes and policies.
- Lack or unavailability of inclusive rehabilitation and employment services.
- Rapid change in the labour market and lack of the required skills.
- Lack of data and evidence that limits the ability to develop appropriate strategies to promote inclusion in employment.
- Lack of consultation, and exclusion of persons with disabilities from participating in relevant decision-making.
- Low self-confidence and excessive protection from the family due to identifying with society’s stereotypical view.



## Barriers at the workplace

**Negative attitudes and stereotypes among employers that result from a lack of knowledge and lead to wrong judgments of persons with disabilities. Employers often believe that a person with disability is:**

- Of low productivity, and does not work a lot.
- More prone to missing work.
- Lacks the skills that other people have.
- An additional burden on the company as their employment requires costly accommodations.

**Regulatory or systemic barriers (including unfair working conditions and discriminatory recruitment policies) such as:**

- Non-inclusive job advertisements.
- Stipulating that a person does not have any disability when applying for the job.
- Unfair conditions during the interview and evaluation, hence leading to an unfair selection process.
- An unfair employment contract that sets them a lower salary than their counterparts.
- Lack of job security; they are often the first to be terminated.
- Limited promotion and career advancement opportunities due to disability.
- Lack of flexibility in making accommodations.

**Architectural barriers in the built environment of the workplace such as:**

- Architectural barriers in buildings or outdoor and internal spaces of the workplace.
- Designing stairs, entrances, doors, elevators, bathrooms, offices, halls and sidewalks in a way that is inappropriate for people with disabilities (excessively high desks, narrow corridors without signs, poor lighting, inappropriate door handles...).

**Information or communication barriers and technological and technical barriers, such as:**

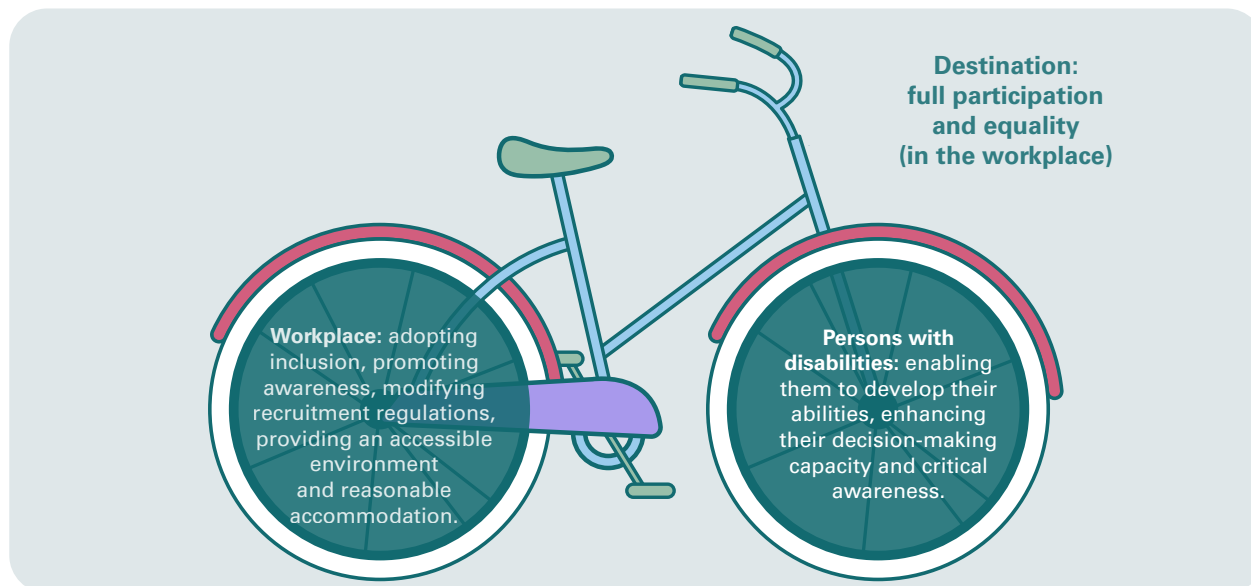
- Electronic documents, including job descriptions, employment contracts, job postings, and interview information that are often unclear or unreadable by a screen reader. The said e-documents may also lack accessibility features such as the availability of alternative text (alt text).
- Use of a very small or hard-to-read font (in job applications and evaluation forms).
- Videos that have no captions and no text.
- Handouts or course materials that are only available in hard copy.
- Use of websites that do not meet accessibility standards.
- Use of work tools that are not accommodated and/or cannot be accommodated.

## D. Twin-track approach to reduce barriers and promote participation

UN agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations point out that the twin-track approach is the most appropriate framework for removing barriers and promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all areas.<sup>16</sup> At the level of inclusion in

the workplace, this approach involves simultaneously working at the two following levels:

- **Level I:** empowering persons with disabilities.
- **Level II:** integrating disability-sensitive measures into the work environment design, as well as workplace policies and regulations.



The twin-track approach to inclusion yields successful results in realizing the full participation of persons with disabilities if both levels are addressed simultaneously, as one complements the other.

To simplify this concept, we refer to the description used in the disability equality training (DET). The said description compares the twin-track approach to a bicycle, whose two wheels are inseparably linked and depend on one another to reach full participation and equality.<sup>17</sup>

## E. International legislative framework for the rights of persons with disabilities

### 1. ILO Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention No. 159<sup>18</sup>

This convention was adopted in 1983 at the ILO General Conference in Geneva. It contains 17 articles aimed at establishing international standards to ensure equal opportunities and treatment for all groups of persons with disabilities in both rural

and urban areas, so that they can work and integrate into society. Article 2 of the convention calls upon member States to devise and implement a national policy for vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities in accordance with national conditions, practice and capabilities (potential).

The convention describes the implementation measures to be taken at the national level. Member States are also reminded not only to provide essential services, but also to evaluate them with a view to improving them.

In addition to convention No. 159, ILO recommendation No. 168 also adopted in the same year (1983)<sup>19</sup> on vocational rehabilitation and employment (disabled persons) affirms the principle of equality in the provision of vocational training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities as follows:

- “Disabled persons should enjoy equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of access to, retention of and advancement in employment which, wherever possible,

corresponds to their own choice and takes account of their individual suitability for such employment" (article 7).

- "In providing vocational rehabilitation and employment assistance for disabled persons, the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers should be respected" (article 8).
- "Measures should be taken to promote employment opportunities for disabled persons which conform to the employment and salary standards applicable to workers generally" (article 10).

The recommendation also reminds member States that such measures include: "reasonable adaptations to workplaces, job design, tools, machinery and work organization to facilitate such training and employment". In view of the increasing deviation from the "object of care" model towards the "human rights" model at the local and international levels, the recommendation stresses the need for "informing disabled persons [...] about their rights and opportunities in the employment field". (article 16).

## 2. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)<sup>20</sup>

The CRPD was adopted on December 6, 2006. Article 27 of the convention recognizes the rights of persons with disabilities to work and employment. It stipulates:

"States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive, and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation".

The article in question also sets out in detail the objectives that States Parties must achieve within this framework when enacting legislation and taking relevant action.





## Module three: language and communication

Module three includes the following main axes:

Inclusive language and terminology: improving verbal and non-verbal communication skills in the workplace.

Disability etiquette: inclusive communication and assistance.

### A. Inclusive language and terminology: improving verbal and non-verbal communication skills in the workplace

Communicating with a person with disability can seem daunting to some. Some people worry that they would say or do something wrong. Although these fears usually come out of good faith, they are completely uncalled for.

**The key point to keep in mind is to treat everyone with respect**

The tips and terminology in this guide are based on what is currently widely accepted worldwide. It is important to remember that everyone is different and has their own preferences. When communicating with a person with disability, you ought to ask them what suits them and respect their wishes.

#### About the term

To refer to a person with disability, there is no dispute that many people still use terms such as “disabled”, “incapacitated” and “person with special needs”, along with terms that express the type of

disability such as “handicapped”, “deaf”, “blind”, “goof” and others.

Unfortunately, the word “disabled” or “handicapped” is still used by some as an insult

#### Key tips when speaking or writing:

- Make reference to the individual first to emphasize their value as a person like any other human being. For instance, say “a person with disability” and not “a disabled person”.
- Avoid limiting the person to their disability. For instance, do not say “this blind person”, or “this paralyzed person”. Rather, say “This is a person with visual impairment”, or “This is a person with mobility disability”.
- Do not refer to a person’s disability unless necessary, and make sure to do so appropriately.
- Avoid using the term “people with special needs”, because it includes diverse categories and not only people with disabilities.
- Steer clear of negative discrimination and refrain from using discriminatory negative terms and expressions, but rather use positive ones.

- Avoid positive discrimination and avoid terms that imply that people with disabilities are overly brave.



## Positive terms

Principle of “person-first language”

Do not say (negative expressions)	Say (positive expressions)
Crippled/wheelchair-bound	A person who uses a wheelchair
Blind/one-eyed	A person with a visual disability/with a visual impairment
Mute/deaf	A person with hearing impairment/who is hard of hearing A person with speech difficulties
Lame/paralyzed	A person with a mobility disability
Mentally retarded	A person with an intellectual disability/a person with a learning difficulty
Crazy/nuts	A person with a mental/psychiatric disability
Retarded/abnormal	A person with Down syndrome
Incapacitated/crippled/handicapped/disabled	A person with a disability

## B. Disability etiquette: inclusive communication and assistance

Your positive attitude towards persons with disabilities is the most important step towards inclusion in the workplace. It instills recognizing the person’s social value, which creates in them a sense of belonging to their workplace and pushes them to hone their productivity. It is, therefore, necessary to know the appropriate method of treatment that guarantees each person their independence and respects their uniqueness on an equal footing with others.

### Etiquette of dealing with people with disabilities

#### General rules to follow in the workplace:

#### Maintain respect for the person:

- Treat persons with disabilities with the same level of respect as others.
- Do not refer to persons with disabilities as a different or separate group, but rather as part of the social fabric.
- Do not describe a person with disability using their condition. Rather, talk about them using their own name. Do not say “paralyzed”, but “so-and-so who uses a wheelchair”.
- Respect people’s privacy.
- Sit on your chair and on the same level.
- Do not touch or use assistive devices of people with disabilities.
- Do not treat adults like children.
- Discover the strengths of people with

disabilities and encourage them to show their talents. Do not make assumptions about their abilities on the basis of their disability.

- Look at them the way you would like to be seen.

### Steer clear of making assumptions, and ask before offering help:

- Do not go overboard and try to diagnose or explain the case medically.
- Avoid making assumptions about the abilities of people with disabilities and steer clear of prejudices. Do not decide on behalf of the person with disabilities. They have the right to decide for themselves.
- Do not assume that everyone needs help.
- You can help a person with disability, but only after asking if they need help and how you can help them.
- Do not take refusing your offer to help personally.
- Be patient when helping and wait for your offer to be accepted. Abide by the person’s specific instructions.
- If a person with a visual disability asks you for your help in guiding them, offer them your elbow.
- Keep calm and do not get nervous. Apologize if you cause any awkwardness.
- People with psychiatric disability may have different ways to accommodate their needs. Ask what would make them more comfortable and respect their needs to the utmost degree.

### When communicating face-to-face, be mindful of your way of talking:

- Use a normal tone of voice when welcoming a person with disability. Do not raise your voice unless asked.
- Shake hands with the person, even if their use of their hand is limited or if they are wearing a prosthesis. It is okay to shake hands using the left hand. If the person can’t shake hands, greet them with a smile and a verbal greeting.
- Take into account the extra time it may take a person with disability to do or say something. Be patient and pay full attention to the person with disability, especially if they speak slowly or with great difficulty.
- Look at the person with disability and talk to them directly, not to their companions, including interpreters. Do not get nervous, and maintain eye contact.
- Do not treat people with disabilities with negligence.
- Do not pretend to understand what a person with disability is saying if you do not. Ask the person to repeat or paraphrase what they said or offer them a pen and paper to write it down.
- It is okay to use common expressions like “see you soon” or “I got to run”.
- Avoid asking personal questions about someone’s disability. If you would like to know general information about their disability, you can ask them. However, make sure to let them know that they can refuse to answer.

In addition to these general rules, you can see the detailed guidelines on disability etiquette for each category of persons with disabilities contained in Part II/Module seven under the section on interviews and tests.

# Part 2



This part includes specialized training material consisting of five modules, mainly targeting employers, HR experts, supervisors and other professionals working in the field of disability inclusion management in the workplace. Its primary purpose is to provide them with technical and practical guidance on workplace disability management (strategies, plans, attitudes, customer services, communication, recruitment, performance management, employee retention, adaptations and accommodations).





## Module four: inclusive workplace- concept and benefits

Module four includes the following main axes:

Defining an inclusive workplace.

Economic advantages of adopting disability inclusion in the workplace.

Duties and responsibilities of the employer and line managers.

### A. Defining the inclusive workplace

The concept of disability inclusion in the workplace is more than just employing persons with disabilities. An inclusive workplace is a place where human rights principles, such as equality, human dignity, respect and independence, are integral elements of the organization's day-to-day goals and behaviours. An inclusive workplace values all employees

for their strengths and competencies. It also offers employees with visible or invisible disabilities equal opportunities to succeed, learn, advance and receive fair compensation.

Moreover, an inclusive workplace is highly productive and provides better customer service, because its workforce is happier, more motivated, and aware of the benefits that inclusion and diversity can bring.





### What does a disability-inclusive workplace look like?



## B. Economic advantages of adopting disability inclusion in the workplace

### Employing people with disabilities is everyone's business

Adopting disability inclusion in the workplace (and the employment of persons with disabilities) has several economic advantages for employers and employees alike. These benefits can represent a significant asset for companies.

Therefore, we notice that "smart workplaces" aim to have an inclusive, diverse workforce. They offer employment for different potentials and talents, including persons with disabilities.

These forward-thinking companies are well aware of the enormous benefits of diversity and disability inclusion in the workplace.



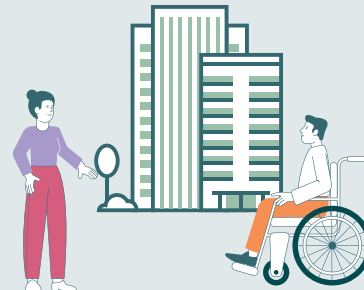
## Did you know that the inclusion of disability in the workplace leads to:

### (A) Improving the company's image

Employing a person with disability demonstrates the company's openness to human diversity and underscores its commitment to an inclusive and more respectful society.

This improves its reputation in the opinion of employees and customers alike, thus leading to the development and advancement of its image and brand. In addition, it expands its customer circle, which would come to include different categories, and contribute to its entry into diverse markets.

Honing the company's reputation in this context in the eyes of its customers gives it an edge over its competitors.



A qualitative study by Kalargyrou and Volis (USA, 2014) found that the work of persons with disabilities in the tourism sector and hospitality services (restaurants, hotels...) contributed to giving a positive impression of the establishments in which they work. Employers said in their statements that having employees that are hard of hearing in the group of workers in a café chain added value to the company, including improving its image in terms of respect for diversity and inclusion, the study indicated.

Study link: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280217390\\_Disability\\_Inclusion\\_Initiatives\\_in\\_the\\_Hospitality\\_Industry\\_An\\_Exploratory\\_Study\\_of\\_Industry\\_Leaders](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280217390_Disability_Inclusion_Initiatives_in_the_Hospitality_Industry_An_Exploratory_Study_of_Industry_Leaders).

### (B) Attracting a wide range of clients and customers

The number of target customers quadruples when products and services are designed inclusively with individual needs in mind (Centre for Inclusive Design 2019, The Benefits of Designing for Everyone, viewed 24 March 2021).

Moreover, the reputation of the brand gains increasing importance. Brands that apply policies and practices that serve the wider community rather than solely focus on financial gain build a reliable and loyal customer base. Many consumers decide to use a brand based on trust.



In a study by Nielsen, 66 percent of customers in more than 60 countries stated that they would buy a brand that follows corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices. There was a clear correlation between brand success and performing well for society and working well with consumers (Nielsen 2015, The Sustainability Imperative: New Insights on Consumer Expectations, pp. 1-19, viewed 1 March 2021).

### (C) Increasing productivity

- Attracting and benefitting from new untapped abilities and energies.
- Employees with disabilities often show greater loyalty and devotion to their employer and are more dedicated to their work.
- Several studies have provided evidence showing that employees with disabilities tend to stay in their jobs longer than other workers and ask for sick leave at a lower rate. They are also less likely to have accidents at work than other workers.
- Employees with disabilities on average put more effort than others because they want to show that they too are competent and fully capable of performing their jobs.
- Studies show that employees with disabilities who perform appropriate roles with the required accommodations in the workplace are more productive than their peers without disabilities (Job Access 2019, 2.2 Disability Employment Basics – Diversity makes good business sense).
- If workplaces were more inclusive with cultures that “promote equality”, employees with disabilities would be 1.5 times more involved in the workplace, with 2.3 times higher career aspirations (Accenture 2020, Enabling Change Getting to Equal 2020: Disability Inclusion, pp. 1–27, viewed 15 October 2021).



### (D) Improving management practices

Hiring persons with disabilities allows companies to learn how to manage differences between employees and adapt to their respective performance and needs.



### (E) Improving long-term fiscal revenues from tax revenues

(Tax exemptions associated with the employment of persons with disabilities as stipulated by the laws of each country).

A study by Zivolich and Weiner-Zivolich showed that Pizza Hut generated more than \$19 million in financial benefits from hiring persons with disabilities and saved more than \$8 million due to reduced turnover rates.

Study link: <https://content.iospress.com/articles/journal-of-vocational-rehabilitation/jvr8-1-09>.



**(F) Promoting teamwork and positive staff relationships**

Adopting workplace inclusion improves acceptance of oneself and others, as well as acceptance of differences between individuals within the team. Thus, this pours into improving employee performance. Working on a daily basis alongside colleagues with disabilities, company employees are made aware of their "differences" and understand that everyone has the ability to act and think, regardless of their status or disability.

Moreover, inclusion fosters collaboration and team spirit, which are key factors in the company and essential for business development.

**(G) Increasing staff's motivation to work**

The effort made by a person with disability to overcome the challenges facing them may inspire and motivate those around them to do the same and spare no effort.

Buciunene and Kazlauskaitė found in a study that providing disability awareness training to coworkers without disabilities generated a work culture with higher respect for inclusion and diversity, enhancing the work and overall productive capacity of the company. Improved team morale was another component of an enhanced workplace culture owing to the presence of employees with disabilities. Similarly, Solovieva et al. confirmed in another study that workers with disabilities enhanced motivation and participation in the workplace.

Links to the two studies:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49693515\\_Employer\\_benefits\\_from\\_making\\_workplace\\_accommodations](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49693515_Employer_benefits_from_making_workplace_accommodations).

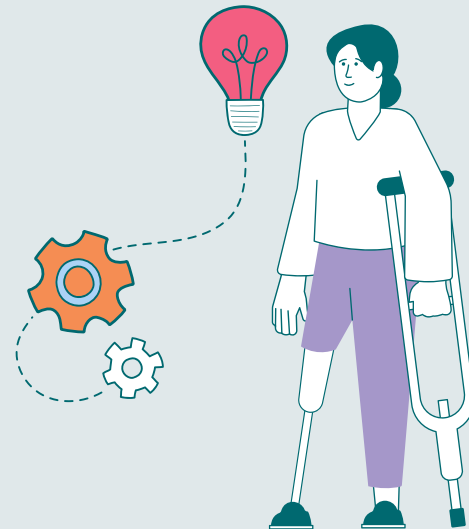
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235283349\\_Integrating\\_people\\_with\\_disability\\_into\\_the\\_workforce\\_The\\_case\\_of\\_a\\_retail\\_chain](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235283349_Integrating_people_with_disability_into_the_workforce_The_case_of_a_retail_chain).



### (H) Promoting innovation

- People with disabilities face new challenges every day. Therefore, they are used to finding solutions. They also know how to be flexible, creative and open to possibilities. A company has a lot to gain from this innovative way of thinking and acting.
- Appointing a person with disability sometimes requires the adaptation of the job to their individual needs. This job adaptation can certainly benefit all employees, greatly increasing the company's productivity.
- Challenging prejudices and breaking out of classic stereotypes is essential for any company that wants to evolve. Employing workers with disabilities is completely congruent with this logic, hence maintaining a dynamic state of mind conducive to innovation.

One study pointed to the innovation and creative skills of people with disabilities as an advantage of their employment. For example, some employers in the industrial sector have noticed that people with hearing impairments were creative. In the tourism and hospitality sector, staff with disabilities have helped develop several services. Similarly, Scott and others delved into the employment of people with autism. The researchers underscored the various abilities of persons with autism, including their creative skills.



Study link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29392591/>.

### (I) Underscoring CSR

- The employment of persons with disabilities is a tangible initiative in the fight against discrimination and exclusion.
- By employing workers with disabilities, the CSR discourse is actualized, and misconceptions are corrected by rejecting the prevalent ideas about disability.



Thus, including disability in an organization's core values can have a three-pronged benefit on work, employees and society.

## C. Duties and responsibilities of the employer and line managers

### To manage disability-related issues in the workplace, employers must:

Adopt a clear strategy to manage disability inclusion, such that it:<sup>21</sup>

- Forms an integral part of the overall recruitment policy and the human resource development strategy.
- Aligns with national policies and legislation, as well as relevant international conventions.
- Is drafted in consultation with representatives of workers and employees with disabilities.
- Is based on the organizational structures adopted in the company or a new structure created for this purpose.

It is also imperative that those responsible for drafting the strategy are trained in the management of disability inclusion in the workplace, or that relevant specialists are consulted.

Line managers must:

- Provide fair day-to-day follow-up and foster a culture in which everyone is

respected and given the opportunity to live up to their potential.

- Implement employee management policies and practices without discrimination, and push persons with disabilities to believe they are capable of accomplishing their work effectively.
- Be the first point of contact when an employee needs to discuss their health concerns or change or modify their work or work hours so that they can perform most effectively.
- Manage absences, keep in touch with the employee in case of illness, and actively support their return to work.
- Adopt a trust-based management style that makes employees with disabilities more comfortable discussing any barriers they face, and helps create an open and inclusive culture.

Line managers have constant one-on-one relations with employees. Hence, they should be comfortable having sensitive conversations with employees and asking about their conditions on a regular basis. If employees realize that their line manager has a positive approach to equity and inclusion, they are likely to tell them about their disability or health condition.





## Module five: inclusive workplace for persons with disabilities - devising a comprehensive strategy/plan

Module five includes the following main axes:

Understanding change processes/approaches (McKinsey 7-S).

How to start creating an inclusive workplace for people with disabilities (devising the plan)? – Actions to take at the level of:

- Policy and planning
- Physical and human work environment (triple A strategy)
- Human resources
- Employment
- Marketing and customer services
- Company media
- Company activities and social responsibility

### A. Understanding change processes/approaches (McKinsey 7-S)

Although the company's strategy is the driving force therein, other factors must be taken into account to apply the strategy and achieve tangible results. Sometimes even companies with sound strategies, in theory, stumble upon the smallest obstacles, because the strategy is actually only one component of a set of interconnected and key elements, including shared values, company structure and systems, skills, staff and management style. Without alignment with these elements, the strategy fails to deliver the desired change. Therefore, it is necessary to work on implementing

the strategy within the framework of one of the approved change management models, of which we mention in this guide the McKinsey 7-S model.

#### What is the McKinsey 7-S model?<sup>22</sup>

This model was developed in the late seventies by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman, former consultants at McKinsey & Company. They identified seven internal elements of an organization that need to align to successfully manage any change. This model was initially developed to assess the reality of organizations when initiating and managing the change process.

The McKinsey model has become a widely used approach to evaluation and change

management. It importantly defines seven key areas, categorized as "hard" or "soft", including:

Three hard areas	Four soft areas
Strategy	Shared values
Structure	Skills
Systems	Style
	Staff

Hard elements are relatively easy to identify, and management can directly influence them. However, it can be difficult to describe the four soft elements, given that they are influenced by the company's culture and values. That being said, they are just as important as the hard elements to achieve the required change at the company level.

Let us look at each element separately:

- Strategy: this is your company's plan to integrate disability and transform into an inclusive workplace.
- Structure: this is how a company is organized, including departments, divisions, tasks and responsibilities.
- Systems: the daily activities and procedures that staff use to accomplish tasks.
- Shared values: these are the core values of the company. They reflect business ethics and general behaviours.
- Style: the adopted leadership style.
- Staff: the employees and their general capabilities.
- Skills: the actual skills and competencies of the company employees.

The model states that the seven elements need to align and support one another for the company to function properly.

## When to use the McKinsey 7-S model?

The McKinsey model can be used in various situations when it is helpful to examine how different parts of the company work together. For example, it can help in:

- Improving the company's performance in disability management.
- Determining the best way to implement your proposed strategy for adopting inclusion in the company.
- Gauging the potential impacts of future changes that disability inclusion can cause at the company level.
- Identifying the needed changes in the seven elements (hard and soft) to achieve inclusion.

## How do we use the McKinsey 7-S model to manage the change required for disability inclusion in the workplace?

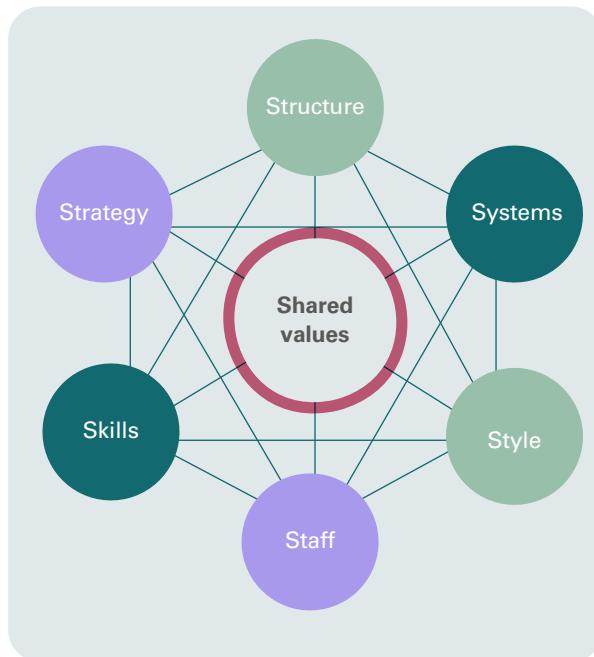
The McKinsey 7-S model is often illustrated visually as in the following figure. The seven elements are arranged in a circle, with the three hard areas on top, and the skills, staff and style below. Placing the shared value element in the centre of the model at the core of the process emphasizes that it is central to the development of all the other critical elements.

This illustration stresses the need to consider each of these elements individually, as well as in relation to one another. Below we will explore the seven elements in detail. We will also learn how to use the seven elements to improve performance or manage the required



change when adopting inclusion in companies, as well as to ensure that they all work in harmony.

In any change management process, particularly change related to adopting inclusion in the workplace, it can be helpful for managers to assess whether they have correctly assessed these seven core elements. This can help them reflect and identify specific areas where investment is needed to make change successful.



### To implement the McKinsey 7-S model in your company, follow these steps:

1. Start with your shared values<sup>23</sup>: do they align with your structure, strategy and systems? If not, what needs to change?
2. Then look at the hard elements – your strategy, structure and systems: how supportive are they of one another?

Specify where changes need to be made.

3. Next, look at the soft elements – shared values, skills, (leadership) style and staff: do soft elements support the desired hard elements? do they support each other? if not, what needs to be changed?
4. As you adjust and align elements, you will need to make modifications, then re-analyse how this affects other elements and their alignment.

**You can use the list of questions attached in annex 1 proposed for managing the adoption of inclusion (self-assessment of the company's status) based on the McKinsey 7-S model.<sup>24</sup>**

This list of questions is a starting point to explore your company's current status in terms of adopting inclusion based on the seven elements of the McKinsey 7-S model. Use it to analyse your current situation first and then repeat the assessment after implementing your proposed inclusion adoption plan to measure your progress and identify areas that need further improvement.

If there are gaps in inclusion adoption within your company or at the management level of your team, there is likely a discrepancy in one or more of these seven elements.

Once these discrepancies are revealed, you can work on aligning these elements

to ensure that they all contribute to your company's shared goals and values of disability inclusion.

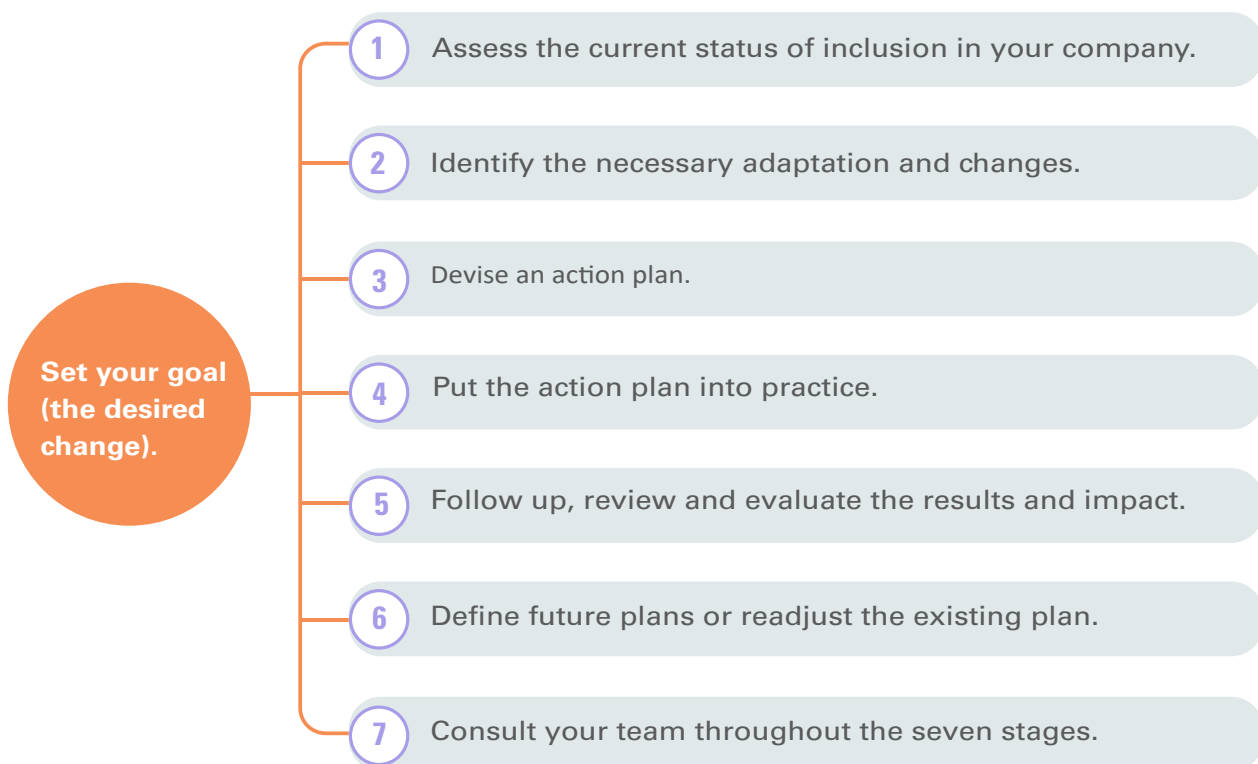
In addition to evaluating the seven elements in the proposed list of questions, you as an employer must assess the availability and accessibility standards in terms of buildings and information, the extent to which your company complies with the required accommodation standards, and the extent to which the company's building, various departments and transportation are accessible to all, including persons with disabilities. You can carry out the said assessment based on the standards in your country's building code or

refer to an accessibility and universal design specialist.<sup>25</sup>

## B. How to start creating an inclusive workplace for persons with disabilities? (Devising a strategy/plan)

To build an inclusive workplace for persons with disabilities, it is necessary to adopt a clear methodology that includes all the steps to be taken into account at all levels: practical, theoretical and administrative. In this guide, these steps will be divided into seven (including an assessment step that can be carried out using the McKinsey model). The said seven steps branch into certain characteristics and criteria.

### The seven steps to disability inclusion in the workplace:



### **Step one: set your goal (the desired change)**

First of all, let go of prejudices and set your mind to adopting inclusion based on the social and human rights models. Afterward, start defining your goal.

To define your goal, you need to weigh your company's characteristics, including its size, nature of work, geographic location, environment, employee and customer categories and goals. The economic sector to which the enterprise belongs may entail special criteria, or legal requirements and duties that must be complied with. Additionally, the company in question maybe serves very diverse communities and clients, or perhaps lacks certain skills or staff. Maybe your company works in the industrial sector or a field that usually attracts specific categories of employees due to traditional perceptions. Or perhaps the workforce in your company is spread across different locations and rarely meets face-to-face.

All these factors influence your goal and the course you take to bring about change. In turn, this helps in contextualizing the second step: reviewing and evaluating workplace elements.

### **Step two: assess the current status of inclusion in your company**

Assess and analyse the current reality of adopting inclusion in your company. Review the existing inclusion criteria using a change management model such as the McKinsey 7-S model.

When conducting the assessment, do not forget to focus on evaluating the following points (included in the list of suggested questions for managing the adoption of inclusion):

1. Company vision, mission and values.
2. Demographic distribution of employees and customers.
3. Official policies and procedures adopted by the company:
  - Policies for addressing discrimination.
  - Employment, wages and compensation policies.
  - Sick leave policies.
  - Training and skill development policies.
  - Health and safety policies.
  - Performance management procedures, disciplinary and grievance measures.
  - Measures to respond flexibly and adapt work when needed.
  - Measures to address conflict and disagreement between diverse groups.
  - Measures to retain employees who experience work injuries.
  - Measures related to maternity and breastfeeding periods.
  - Policies for purchasing from suppliers who adopt inclusion.
  - Policies for providing services to customers without discrimination.

#### 4. Unwritten ground rules in the company:

- Employee behaviours and attitudes.
- Connectivity and communication.
- Measures adopted to consult and involve the team.
- The company's various activities (media, social...).
- The (built) work environment and the extent to which it meets the standards of universal design (see the standards mentioned in module eight).

### Step three: identify the necessary adaptation and changes

Based on the results of the evaluation of all elements in your company, identify deficiencies and discrepancies, things to be modified and the necessary changes at all the levels mentioned in the assessment phase (vision and mission, shared values, planning and strategy, written systems, policies and procedures, physical and human work environment, human resources, recruitment, marketing and customer services, communication and information availability...).

### Step four: devise an action plan to implement the proposed adaptation, specifying:

- Smart objectives.

For each measure or change you want to implement as part of your action plan. It is helpful to spend time contemplating the outcome of measures, the means to gauge their impact and the timeframe of implementation and review.

- Detailed activities.
- Timeframe.
- Distribution of responsibilities.

(See the proposed model for developing the plan elements in annex 2).

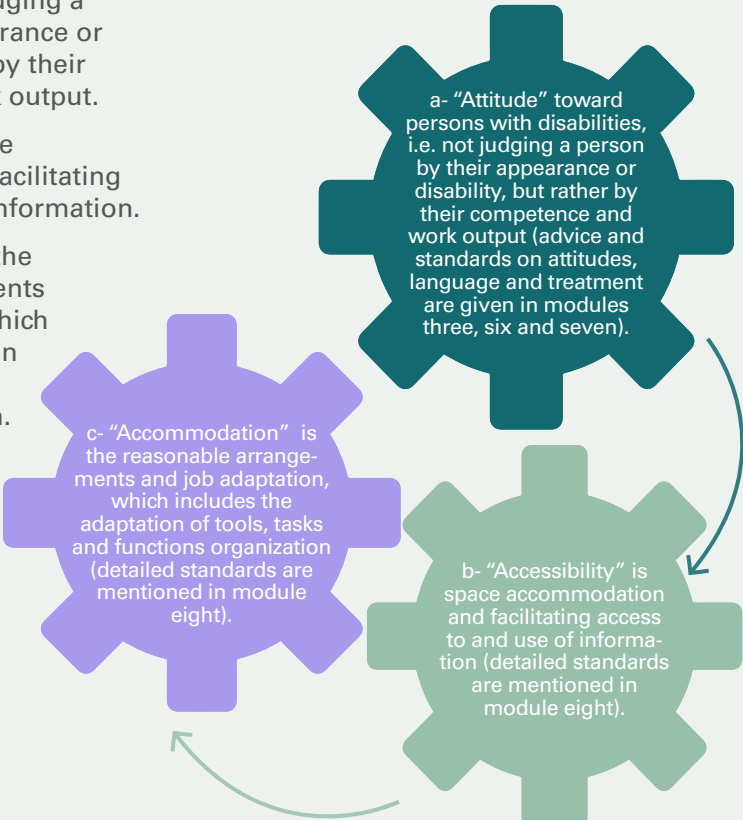
Make sure to consult with the team when drafting the plan and throughout all the steps.

Determine the nature of the specialized technical consultation you need and hire specialized experts to provide it (e.g. experts in employment offices affiliated with organizations of persons with disabilities, occupational therapists specialized in inclusive employment services and job analysis, experts in accommodation and universal design...).



The plan ought to include objectives and measures that ensure making the necessary adaptation (as required by the company reality) at the following levels:

Level	Examples of criteria to be met
<b>Company policy, shared values and planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Incorporate inclusion and disability in the company's vision, mission and objectives as a socio-economic goal.</li> <li>● Include in the company's policy a clause that takes into account diversity in all its forms.</li> <li>● Include in the company's mission a clause stipulating the adoption of the principle of equal opportunities and equality for persons with disabilities.</li> <li>● Include in the company's values principles stipulating respect for diversity, different needs and equality for persons with disabilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Human resources</b>	<p>Efforts to adopt inclusion criteria include:</p> <p><b>Company system:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include an item within the company's regulations that supports and motivates the adoption of diversity and inclusion and considers the said item a key one.</li> <li>● Ensure the company's internal system takes into account the law on the employment of persons with disabilities.</li> <li>● Ensure taking a positive attitude toward persons with disabilities and following non-marginalising practices in the workplace.</li> <li>● Adopt a system to collect employee and customer complaints, regardless of their kind, and take them into account.</li> </ul>

Level	Examples of criteria to be met
<p><b>Human resources</b></p>	<p><b>Company’s general structure and team’s skill development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Raise awareness of and train staff on diversity issues and the needs of persons with disabilities in the workplace by conducting training courses and awareness activities on a regular basis.</li> <li>● Introduce the theme of diversity and inclusion consistently as part of the training courses that the company usually organizes to develop the skills of its employees.</li> <li>● Assign a reference in the company responsible for ensuring the integration of disability standards into work systems and programs and update them in line with the needs of persons with disabilities and the company capacities.</li> <li>● Enable employees with disabilities to benefit from training and leadership skill development opportunities provided by the company on an equal basis as employees without disabilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work environment (physical and human)</b></p>	<p>To make the work environment inclusive and appropriate for persons with disabilities, the following three elements must be addressed:</p> <p>“Attitude” toward persons with disabilities, i.e. not judging a person by their appearance or disability, but rather by their competence and work output.</p> <p>“Accessibility” is space accommodation and facilitating access to and use of information.</p> <p>“Accommodation” is the reasonable arrangements and job adaptation, which includes the adaptation of tools, tasks and functions organization.</p>  <p>The diagram consists of three interlocking gears of different colors: a dark teal gear at the top, a purple gear at the bottom left, and a light green gear at the bottom right. Arrows indicate a clockwise flow from the teal gear to the light green gear, and from the light green gear to the purple gear. Each gear contains text describing one of the three elements mentioned in the text above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a- “Attitude” toward persons with disabilities, i.e. not judging a person by their appearance or disability, but rather by their competence and work output (advice and standards on attitudes, language and treatment are given in modules three, six and seven).</li> <li>b- “Accessibility” is space accommodation and facilitating access to and use of information (detailed standards are mentioned in module eight).</li> <li>c- “Accommodation” is the reasonable arrangements and job adaptation, which includes the adaptation of tools, tasks and functions organization (detailed standards are mentioned in module eight).</li> </ul>

Level	Examples of criteria to be met
<b>Employment system</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When assessing whether applicants possess the required specifications and competencies, give the opportunity to persons with disabilities on the basis of competence rather than disability.</li> <li>● Provide vocational and administrative training and rehabilitation opportunities for persons with disabilities who are not employees within the company or institution.</li> <li>● Adopt a policy of retaining employees who may come to have a disability as a result of an accident (inside or outside work).</li> <li>● Consult employees with disabilities on measures that can improve and hone their work performance.</li> <li>● Enable employees with disabilities to benefit equally as all other employees from the insurance, social and health benefits prescribed in accordance with the approved labour regulations.</li> <li>● Give employees with disabilities in the company the opportunity to be promoted and move from one department to another, i.e. to benefit from the system that is generally applied in the company to all employees.</li> <li>● Ensure that an employee with disabilities is treated equally as other employees.</li> <li>● Ensure the company's internal system respects the rights of employees and seeks to improve working conditions.</li> <li>● When the inclusion criteria are integrated into the employment system, all procedures therein must be modified to become inclusive. These can be summarized as adapting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ The job announcement.</li> <li>◇ The job application.</li> <li>◇ The interview.</li> <li>◇ The job description.</li> <li>◇ In addition to ensuring employment continuity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Detailed criteria are mentioned in module seven.</p>

Level	Examples of criteria to be met
<b>Company production and marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bear in mind that the company's production or commodity may be consumed by all members of society, including persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• Use a mark or sign on the product that indicates that the company adopts diversity and that the product is for everyone.</li> <li>• Develop an inclusive marketing policy that respects difference and diversity and avoids discrimination (customer services, advertising...).</li> </ul>
<b>Company media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the company's database on diversity and disability.</li> <li>• Publish success stories and experiences that showcase the best cases of diversity and inclusion in companies.</li> <li>• Announce all that the company applies in terms of its management of diversity within its media department and programme (magazine, e-mail, publications, media platforms...), given the benefits and positive image this produces.</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> Duha Yahfoufi, "How to Make Your Business Inclusive?" Lebanese Physically Handicapped Union and YMCA Jerusalem – Rehabilitation Program, Beirut 2015.

### Step five: put the action plan into practice

Distribute responsibilities and proceed to implement the plan's items. Start making changes at various levels according to the set timetable.

In addition, throughout the plan implementation, you should monitor and evaluate periodically.

### Step six: follow up, review, and evaluate the results and impact

How to know if the goals have been achieved successfully?

Bringing about change in workplace culture isn't easy and takes time. However, these measures can help you gauge how successful you have been and share your experience with others.

(a) Re-evaluate the elements using the McKinsey model (post-evaluation);

(b) Measure your results and impact by:



Re-reviewing your policies, and appraising what has changed:

- Are you now convinced that the policies in your company are comprehensive and inclusive of persons with disabilities?
- Are the employees aware of these policies and has their implementation thereof improved?

Consulting the employees. Repeat the consultation you did before devising your action plan:

- What do employees and their representatives feel has changed?
- What measures do the employees feel still need to be taken?
- Repeat the survey of employees' attitudes to see if they have a better understanding of diversity, inclusion and the importance of equality and human rights.

Taking another look over the data in the follow-up and monitoring reports you have carried out during the implementation process.

Measuring the impact of your actions in achieving/improving inclusion in the workplace is very important, both to ascertain what has been achieved and to plan for future action.

- Identify the difficulties and challenges you have encountered;
- Identify the adaptation you could not make and what remains to be done;
- Define the lessons learned from the experience.

### **Step seven: define future plans or readjust the existing plan**

In conclusion, modify the plan based on the results of the evaluation in case you have not achieved all the goals.

If the goals are achieved, set future goals and plans to hone diversity and inclusion management.

Disability inclusion in the workplace is important for small and large businesses alike. Many small businesses have achieved many benefits by adopting inclusion and diversity standards, becoming suitable workplaces that attract prime local talents, as well as customers and the surrounding community.

The above seven steps can be used to integrate disability into the workplace by any company regardless of size. Small business owners, however, may prefer to modify and simplify each step to make it practical and convenient for them and their employees.



# Module six: workplace inclusion management - overcoming stereotypes and raising awareness

Module six includes the following main axes:

How to change attitudes in the workplace?

Disclosure and confidentiality.

## A. How to change attitudes in the workplace?

### 1. Countering unconscious bias and promoting good communication

Preconceptions often govern the work environment and recruitment decisions. Unconscious bias can lead to the belief that most people with disabilities cannot work, thus limiting their employment opportunities and certainly affecting their inclusion within the work team. Research shows that the most effective way to counter unconscious bias, improve productivity and make the work environment enjoyable, is to interact directly with persons with disabilities and promote good communication and friendly relationships between employees.

Therefore, to ensure that persons with disabilities feel at ease in the work environment and achieve inclusion seamlessly, it is necessary to change negative attitudes and increase the awareness of company managers and employees through the following:

- Ensure that everyone in the company is familiar with inclusive terminology and the etiquette of dealing with persons with disabilities.
- Introduce workers with disabilities to everyone to establish direct contact with them and avoid surprised reactions from employees.
- Give workers with disabilities time to get accustomed to the workplace.
- Avoid any discrimination from supervisors or staff towards employees with disabilities. If any case of discrimination is reported, appropriate measures must be taken immediately to put an end to such behaviour.
- Give employees and workers with disabilities actual tasks that lead to real work achievements. Being hired on the basis of charity or compassion is not what any worker would want.

### 2. Raising awareness among employees/workers including persons with disabilities

Educating employees about disability and inclusion is a key step towards a more

understanding, diverse and stimulating work environment. This is achieved by:

- **Providing disability awareness training for all staff:** hold awareness meetings and seminars in various formats, such as presentations, videos about persons with disabilities and some practical exercises (in disability awareness training workshops, it is recommended to collaborate with organizations for persons with disabilities to achieve better results.)
- **Providing specific written guidance on interaction with persons with disabilities** to reduce information gaps and eliminate discrimination.
- **Organizing panel discussions in the presence of staff with disabilities** to tell their stories and express their opinions to qualitatively improve the work environment.
- **Publishing awareness materials on the culture of disability and inclusion** periodically and ensuring that employees have access to them.
- **Establishing a support network for persons with disabilities** to involve all employees in providing services and assistance to workers with disabilities when needed and contribute to creating an inclusive environment.

## B. Disclosure and confidentiality

An individual's disability may be invisible. For example, you may not know that a person has a mental disability or mental health condition unless they tell you about it.

**An individual has the choice of whether to tell you about their disability or not.**

Employees have different preferences regarding what they tell their employer about their disability or health status.

Some choose not to say anything, worried about jeopardizing their career prospects, or because they know that their employer has prejudices.

As an employer, you should be aware that it is a person's right to choose whether to disclose to you that they have a disability or not. You ought to respect this right as there is no legal requirement to disclose a disability to the employer.

That being said, it is important that an employee with a disability discloses having a disability before employment for their own benefit as well as for that of the employer. If an employee informs the employer about the nature of their disability and individual needs, then the employer can provide the necessary adaptation to make the job accessible to that individual, hence giving the opportunity to optimise their skills and abilities. Therefore, it is necessary to abate the fears of persons with disabilities and encourage them to disclose the nature of their disability and needs.

### How can an employer encourage employees to disclose a disability?

- The company's active promotion of a positive approach to diversity and difference and its clear commitment to disability and inclusion may encourage team members to feel more confident about disclosure.
- Ensure to make it an easy-going conversation. The term "disclosure" may strike some people as formal and having

negative and/or legal connotations. Therefore, using less formal everyday language may help break down barriers regarding discussing disability. You can ask the person to "share" or "inform" rather than "disclose" or "announce".

- Often, it is best if the manager initiates the conversation, which you ought to have privately in a place where the individual feels comfortable. Moreover, you should listen empathetically and respond honestly. It is also possible to start discussing possible accommodation and support.

### Confidentiality and consent to share information

- If an employee tells you about their disability or health condition, the information should be treated as

confidential, ensuring that the person's privacy is respected. Moreover, the person should be reassured in this regard.

- Consent to share information about a disability or health condition must always be requested from the concerned individual.
- If the person expresses consent to share information about their disability or health condition, discuss with them who can be told about that information and what they want/do not want colleagues to know.





## Module seven: workplace inclusion management - recruitment, staff retention, and performance management

Module seven includes the following main axes:

### Recruitment:

- Principles of inclusive recruitment and employment.
- Adapting recruitment process: practical steps.
- Post-employment procedures: practical tips.

### Adaptation of other employment policies:

- Performance management.
- Sick leave.
- Job continuity (employee retention).
- Resignation from company or organization.

### A. Recruitment

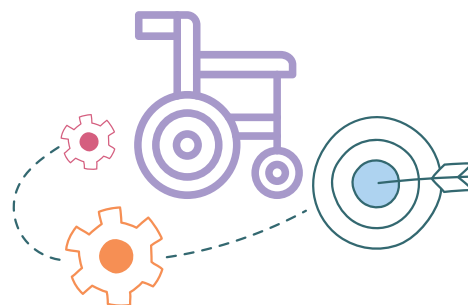
You can make a tangible change in the way people with disabilities are employed through your decisions and actions!

This module previews the most practical measures that employers, hiring managers, and HR officers can take to manage diversity, recruitment processes, and inclusive applications in the workplace, thus bringing about the desired change.

#### 1. Principles of inclusive recruitment and employment

First off, it is essential to adhere to the following principles:

- Let go of prejudices and focus on academic qualifications and experience.
- Approach the recruitment process from an economic perspective.
- Adopt diverse and flexible recruitment and selection means and raising team-awareness.
- Ensure that information on these procedures is accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Adapt each stage of the recruitment process as needed.



## 2. Adapting the recruitment process – practical steps at the level of:

### A. Preparing for employment

Ensure that:



With the help of the following questions, gauge the feasibility of taking an alternative approach to achieve the optimal outcome:



Keep in mind that you may not have to make any adaptation. Additionally, many adjustments can be made directly by simply consulting the concerned person (i.e. the candidate with the disability himself/herself) and can be implemented

easily and at little or no cost. In some cases, advice and guidance on the appropriate adaptations may be obtained from employment services or specialized agencies, including organizations for persons with disabilities.

## B. Vacancy announcement

Ensuring equal opportunities starts from the first step in the recruitment process, i.e. the vacancy announcement.

When you announce a job vacancy in your company, you should address the largest number of people possible to increase your chances of finding suitable people for the vacancy. To achieve this, you can follow these steps to make your vacancy announcement inclusive:

- Make sure that the wording of the advertisement is clear and in plain language. It can also include illustrative images.
- Make the advertisement available in at least two languages, one of which is Arabic (the native language of the target audience).
- Make your advertisement available in a variety of formats when posted (print, audio and video).
- Ensure that the font size and type used in the advertisement is at least 14 for Latin characters (English, French, Spanish...) and 16 for Arabic ones.
- Avoid using light fonts and unusual typefaces.
- To attract a wide range of applicants, make the content of the job advertisement directed to everyone. Indicate that your company is committed to inclusion, diversity and the principle of equal opportunities, and welcomes applications from people with disabilities.
- Clearly state in the announcement that candidates shall be considered solely on the basis of their competence and qualifications without any discrimination.
- Be careful not to include any discriminatory condition in the job application requirements (such as requiring that the person must have no disability, or only accepting applications of people with a certain type of disability).
- Advertise your vacancy through a variety of media to attract a diverse audience. Consider using a combination of channels, including ones that specifically reach people with disabilities, such as:
  - ◆ Advertising in the media and newspapers.
  - ◆ Advertising on websites and the company's communication sites that can be accessed and used by persons with disabilities.
  - ◆ Communicating with employment offices that seek to employ persons with disabilities.
  - ◆ Communicating with other institutions and associations concerned with persons with disabilities and their employment.
  - ◆ Announcing your intent to hire people with disabilities when participating in job fairs.
- Providing a contact person for people who may have questions about the recruitment process, or who may need adaptations or accommodations during the hiring process.

## C. Job applications and forms

When designing job application forms, you can follow the steps below to make the application forms easy to use and accessible to everyone without any barriers:

- Offer the job application form in various formats (making it available in a hard copy in large font and a soft copy that can be filled in electronically).
- Ask various kinds of questions (such as multiple-answer, closed-ended, or simplified questions).

- In the job application, use simple language and reduce the number of words to make it easier for the applicant to fill out the application with the required information.
- Avoid asking direct questions about the person's disability, but rather ask about their need for any adaptation/ accommodations.
- Keep in mind that you may have to provide verbal instructions about written questions, if necessary.
- In addition to questions related to academic qualifications, it is preferable to include some questions that allow applicants to demonstrate having the required skills by mentioning their practical and volunteer experiences. An applicant with a disability may have gained experience in unpaid work, such as volunteer work.

## D. Conducting interviews and assessment tests

Here are some inclusive measures you can apply to promote equal opportunities when conducting a job interview:

### Ensuring certain considerations are taken into account

- Interview applicants with disabilities who have the required qualifications or experience.
- Make sure you know sufficient, key information about the job tasks to identify priorities and the tasks that the applicant should master.
- Prepare a list of questions about the skills and capabilities that the applicant must have to accomplish the job tasks, but do not bring up their disability. Ask all applicants the same questions.
- Do not presuppose how the person you interview accomplishes the required job tasks because they certainly have alternative techniques that you would come to know.
- When inviting a person with a disability to a job interview, ask if they plan to come to the interview by car, if they would like someone to escort them from the company entrance/ reception desk to the interview room and what arrangements they need.
- Provide all necessary accommodations to facilitate the participation of applicants with disabilities in the job interview (e.g. allocating to them the parking space closest to the entrance, providing an equipped elevator, and ensuring that the interview room is barrier-free...). When needed, allow the accompanying person to be present at the interview.
- Train receptionists on how to welcome applicants with disabilities and provide them with assistance when needed.
- Ensure the availability of accessible toilets at a convenient distance from the interview room.



### Written assessment tests

When devising written assessments, you can follow the steps below to make them easy to use and accessible to everyone without any barriers:

- Ask all applicants to specify the accommodations they need while taking the evaluation tests.
- Provide accommodation as per the applicant's needs, such as:
  - ◇ Offering the tests in a format suitable for an applicant with a disability, such as a hard copy in a large font or Braille, or a soft copy that can be filled out electronically or verbally.
  - ◇ Extending the test duration if the person needs more time.
  - ◇ Allowing the use of assistive devices when needed.
- Asking questions in various ways (avoid asking vague questions, simplify the question as much as possible and focus on questions that allow the applicant to demonstrate having any practical experience directly related to the required tasks other than the theoretical academic specialization).
- Alongside questions, you can present illustrations or coded (multiple-answer) questions.
- Use practical tests that focus on demonstrating the required skills in practice.

### Tips on communication and interaction during the interview

- Keep calm. Try to create a relaxed, reassuring atmosphere during the job interview.
- During the interview, use positive expressions and apply the advice stated in module three.
- Steer clear of regarding the applicant sympathetically. Do not exaggerate care and attention and treat them with respect like everyone else.
- Look at providing accommodations as a right and not a favour or service provided to a person with a disability.
- Do not forget to talk directly to the person and not their accompanying care person or interpreter and call them by name like any other applicant.
- When asking questions, focus on the person's abilities. If you are uncertain about the person's ability to perform certain key job tasks, simply ask them directly how they plan to perform these tasks.
- Allow a sign interpreter or an accompanying care person to attend the interview when needed.
- At the end of the interview, thank the applicant with a disability and say the things you usually tell all applicants about appreciating their coming to the interview and the result date. Moreover, ask if the person has a car or companion, or if they need someone to help them call a taxi, drop them off at the nearest bus stop, etc.

Here are some additional guidelines regarding the etiquette of interacting with persons with disabilities in a job interview or a meeting:

### People with mobility/physical disabilities

- When you are talking to someone who uses a wheelchair, it is best to be at eye level for better communication.
- Do not lean on their wheelchair, as a person with physical/mobility disability considers the chair part of their personal space.
- Some people who use a wheelchair prefer to move from their chair to the office chair during a meeting.
- Do not keep a person who uses a crutch standing for a long time. Rather, invite them to sit in a chair with a high seat and armsets to make getting up easier. A person also prefers to keep their crutch within arm's reach.
- If the applicant has mobility problems in their hands, you can help with writing or using the equipment.

### Example 1

- Nabila applied to work as a marketing employee at a communications company.
- She has paraplegia and uses a wheelchair.
- When inviting her to the interview, the recruiter asked her what accommodation she needed during the interview.
- Nabila told the recruiter that she needed to park her car near the entrance upon arrival to enter the company with ease. She also said she preferred conducting the interview in an accessible hall.
- The recruiter told Nabila that the company's entrance and corridors were barrier-free and easy to get around. He also mentioned that the interview hall was easily accessible.
- At the time of the interview, the recruiter asked the staff at the parking lot to leave a parking lot close to the entrance empty, and to facilitate Nabila's access to it. He also requested the receptionist to ask Nabila upon arrival if she needed an escort to get to the hall.
- During the interview, the recruiter sat opposite Nabila at eye level.
- He began the interview by welcoming her and explaining the evaluation mechanism. He also mentioned the strengths that had caught their attention in her application.
- The recruiter asked Nabila what practical steps she would follow when marketing a new product.
- He also asked how she would perform the tasks that required her to move outside the company, and Nabila told him that she would travel using her equipped car without any problem.



### Persons with hearing disabilities

- Choose a calm space for the interview.
- Place signs to indicate the location of the bathroom, offices...
- After consulting with the applicant, ensure the availability of sign language interpretation, or having the instructions or questions in writing.
- Stand close to the person (at a distance of less than 3 metres) so that they can clearly see and hear you.
- Be patient and clarify the question if you notice that the person did not grasp what you mean.
- Screaming is not helpful. In fact, it can be counterproductive. Speak up only when requested, and you can also communicate in writing.
- When talking to a person who uses lip reading, sit in a well-lit place, look directly at them and speak clearly. However, do not exaggerate the movement of your lips and do not put anything in your mouth or smoke when talking to them. In addition to lip movement, the person relies on facial expressions, so be engaged.
- If the interview involves a screening committee of more than one person, make sure that each person speaks individually.

### Example 2

- Ziad has a hearing disability and has applied for a position as a production line worker in a plastic manufacturing plant.
- The recruiter sent a written message to Ziad's phone inviting him to the interview and asking him about the accommodation he needed.
- Ziad told the recruiter that he would prefer the questions to be available in writing and that a sign language interpreter would accompany him to the interview.
- A few days before the interview, the recruiter made sure to place signs in obvious colours to indicate the directions to the interview room. He also made sure that the team participating in the interview was aware of the guidelines for communicating with Ziad.
- During the interview, the recruiting team members sat opposite Ziad and maintained eye contact.
- They started the interview by welcoming him and each was talking separately a little slower than usual. The evaluation mechanism was explained, and the strengths that had caught their attention in Ziad's application were also mentioned.
- The recruitment team presented the questions in print to Ziad before starting to ask them.
- The recruitment team made sure that Ziad was able to know what he was being told throughout the conversation and gave the sign language interpreter enough time to convey their speech.

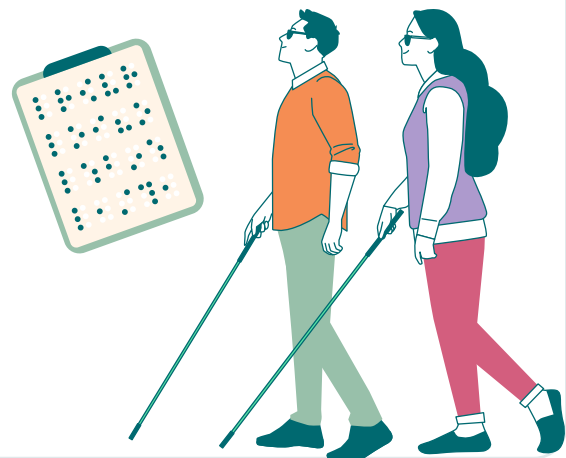


### People with visual disabilities

- If they do not reach out to shake hands, a verbal greeting would do to greet a person with visual disability.
- Introduce yourself and the people present when meeting someone with a visual disability.
- When you invite a person with a visual disability to sit down, ask them if they need help and how you could help before offering any assistance.
- If they ask for help, ask, "Would you like to hold my elbow?" Do not take theirs. This way you would be able to guide the person, not "drag" them. Then, give them verbal guidance.
- If you are guiding someone while walking, let them know when there are stairs, ramps, or other obstacles ahead. Tell them whether the direction is up or down, right or left, using spatial directions.
- When entering an unfamiliar venue, such as the interview room, give the person a brief description of its general layout.
- If you want to leave the room, even if briefly, let the person with a visual disability know.

### Example 3

- Rami has a partial visual impairment and has applied to work as an accountant at the Ministry of Economy.
- He holds a Master's degree in Accounting and Financial Auditing.
- During the interview, the recruiter asked Rami how he prepared financial reports and audited invoices.
- Rami replied that he could do this by using a computer program, which enabled him to enlarge the writing on the screen to the size that suited him. He also said that he could use a fixed magnifier to read invoices.
- As for reading any information that might be sent to him on the phone, Rami mentioned that he used the reading mode feature available on his phone.
- The recruiter listened to Rami intently. He asked Rami to come to the Ministry on a specific date to demonstrate how he accomplishes these tasks.
- Before leaving the room, the recruiter told Rami that he would return after a few minutes.



### People with skeletal dysplasia

- Put things within their reach.
- Do not pat them or kiss them on the head.
- Do not use their assistive devices.
- Sit at a level comfortable for them.
- As you usually do with everyone else, walk up to them and shake their hand. Introduce yourself and ask them about themselves.

### People with speech disabilities

- When talking to a person with speech impairments, give them your full attention and listen to them. Do not act like you understand what they are saying if you do not, but rather repeat what they said for verification, or ask them to repeat.
- Ask questions that require brief answers, or ones the person can answer with a nod, for example.
- Do not speak up as most people with speech impairments have no trouble in hearing and understanding.

### People with intellectual disabilities

- Some people may need more time than others to read some posts, fill out a form, or understand your question. Be patient, repeat the question or explanation more than once if necessary and provide help when needed.
- Use simple and clear phrases. Do not speak more than one idea before making sure the person understands everything you are saying.
- Sometimes a person may ask you to write down some information that you may find very simple. Remain composed and write down that information. Bear in mind that some people cannot memorize information that you may consider simple.
- Break down questions into smaller, clear questions.
- Provide tools that accommodate the person's needs in assessment tests (for example, if they have difficulty writing).

### People who have epileptic seizures

- If the person experiences a seizure in your presence, there is nothing you can do except make sure their head is protected and wait for the seizure to end.
- A person usually wakes up from a seizure disoriented and embarrassed, so give them some space to understand what happened.
- Watch out! Bright and flashing lights may trigger seizures for some people.

### People with psychiatric/mental disabilities

- Give the person extra time during the assessment or interview process.
- Make the interview less formal by changing the venue and arranging for it in an informal setting.
- Make sure drinking water is available during the interview. This is especially important for candidates taking medications that can have side effects such as fatigue or increased thirst.

## E. Recruitment procedures

Follow the usual procedure to inform a candidate with a disability that they have been chosen for the position (mention that they were selected on the basis of their qualifications that fit the job requirements, without exaggerating their capabilities).

- However, if they are not chosen, inform them of that, giving them the job-related reasons.
- Ask the selected candidate about any reasonable accommodation they need to read the contract and recruitment documents.
- Make sure that the document and contract are available in accessible formats if needed (Braille, soft copy, large print font...), or tell the person that the HR department is ready to help read the papers and contract, if desired.
- Make sure that the recruitment documents and contract do not contain any discriminatory clauses and that they give employees with disabilities the same rights as others.
- Make sure that the person is aware of everything contained in the recruitment documents and has a full understanding of the terms of employment contained in the contract.
- Ask the person to sign the forms, documents and contract as usual. If they need any adaptation, they would say so themselves.

## 3. Post-employment procedures: practical tips

### A. Employee job orientation (welcoming workplace newcomers)

#### (1) Orientation and training

As with any other new employee, it is essential that every newly hired employee with disabilities is welcomed, and then provided with training and mentoring to introduce the company.

#### (2) Providing access to information and systems

Make sure that an employee with a disability is provided with basic information about the job and workplace. Also, ensure that this information is easily accessible.

#### (3) Discussion and provision of accommodation

Do not forget to discuss the need for any special functional training or personal support required during this phase.

#### (4) Training of supervisors and co-workers

Do not forget to organize the necessary training courses for the management team, supervisors and co-workers so they apply inclusive methods and learn alternative communication techniques to better interact with colleagues who have difficulty speaking, hearing, or understanding verbal language.

#### (5) Follow-up

Initiate follow-up to ensure that any problems that may arise are identified and

resolved quickly. In this context, you can resort to the technical support provided by the State and/or organizations for persons with disabilities.

With regard to salary delivery after employment, generally, employees with disabilities should receive their salaries in the same manner as others, but subject to adaptation or accommodation if necessary and after consultation with the employees themselves.

## B. Work experience and supported employment

- In case you are unable to hire a person with disability immediately, try at least to provide practical training opportunities for job seekers with disabilities, to enable them to acquire the skills, experience and work behaviours required for specific positions in your company.
- This practical training gives you the chance to test this person's ability to perform the required tasks, and you may decide to hire them once the internship period is over.
- You can appoint a supervisor to assist the person during the internship period or hire a work coach by coordinating with one of the employment services offices (governmental or affiliated with organizations for persons with disabilities).

## C. Following up progress

Keep the recruitment process of persons with disabilities in your company subject to constant monitoring and evaluation to ensure that it meets the inclusion criteria and evolves over time. Review and evaluate:

- Measures taken during interviews and evaluations.
- Etiquette during and after the recruitment process in terms of interacting with persons with disabilities.
- The accommodations implemented and their effectiveness.
- Training programmes developed on inclusion and disability.
- Employee performance and behaviours during the experience.
- How satisfied are employees with disabilities, and the degree of their inclusion in the team.

## B. Adaptation of other employment policies

### 1. Performance management

#### A. Discussing performance

- To ensure that an employee with disability is not discriminated against in the performance appraisal process, the following measures can be taken:
  - ◇ Using easily accessible meeting rooms.
  - ◇ Allowing an employee with a disability a longer period to prepare for meetings and performance appraisals.
  - ◇ Presence of a co-worker or assistant to support employees with disabilities with any necessary accommodation.
- Remember that performance management must be essentially a positive process. Focus on the support needed to help everyone perform at their best.
- To effectively manage your team's performance, you should have regular

discussions with all your team members on an individual basis. These discussions can be formal meetings that focus on individual work performance and provide constructive feedback.

- An informal approach can also be an effective way to provide ongoing feedback and troubleshoot any issues that may affect an individual's performance. Informal conversations can also help identify possible solutions to overcome any barriers a person faces, and help them perform at their best.

## B. Performance monitoring and evaluation

- Monitor and evaluate the performance of employees with disabilities according to the same standards as their peers without disabilities. Ensure that the evaluation process is impartial and unaffected by an employee's disability except in terms of accommodations they need.

## C. Accommodations and performance improvement

- You should not assume that a person with disability can perform outstandingly in certain tasks due to their disability.
- If the underperformance of an employee with disability is a problem, you need to discuss possible accommodations or support that can help close their performance gap. Possible adaptation could include training, additional supervision, mentoring, or modifying the said employee's responsibilities.

## D. Promotion and career advancement

- Give employees with disabilities equal opportunities as other staff in the workplace to gain the skills and experience needed to advance their careers.
- Encourage workers with disabilities to apply for promotion, particularly when they appear to be reluctant to do so. Such reluctance may be due to prejudices and stereotypes towards disability, or certain barriers resulting from the inconvenience of the work environment to their individual needs.
- When considering the promotion of workers, consider previous experiences (if any), competencies, current performance and abilities, as well as qualifications appropriate to the basic requirements of the job.
- If an employee with a disability moves to another department of your company, their new manager needs to know the accommodations they need as soon as possible. Remember to ask the employee if you can pass on any information and reports about workplace accommodations to other individuals (new supervisor or manager).





## E. Internship opportunities, guides and courses provided by the company

- Increase opportunities for employees with disabilities to benefit from training programmes during their time at the company.
- Look into adapt schedules, places and programmes to facilitate the participation of employees with disabilities in career development processes for all company employees.
- When developing training programmes in your company, make sure they meet inclusion standards and are accessible to employees with disabilities.
- Adopt an equal opportunity policy for enrolment in external courses (outside the company) and ensure that training manuals, content and materials are accessible to employees and workers with disabilities. Additionally, ensure that employees with disabilities can reach the locations of these courses, including those with intellectual disabilities and with communication difficulties.

## 2. Sick leave

Do not assume that employees with disabilities take more sick leaves than other employees in the team; this is often not the case.

### A. Managing absence effectively

- Employees may generally need time off for a variety of reasons, from short-term illness to long-term health problems.
- Effectively managing absence is vital to support people's needs and curb its impact on work.

- As a line manager, you play a critical role in this regard: from day-to-day management of sick leaves, to creating an open and inclusive work environment in which colleagues feel they can discuss health issues. This is also related to the effective management of persons with disabilities in your team. For example, this can be achieved by:
  - ◇ Identifying cases in which absences may be disability-related.
  - ◇ Learning how to support the individual in such cases.
  - ◇ Learning how to manage an individual's disability-related absences.
- If a member of your team takes a lot of sick leaves and you are unaware of their health condition that requires absence, discuss this with them to find out exactly why they are having problems and whether accommodations can be made in the workplace to help them.

### B. Prolonged absence as a result of an accident, injury, or illness and going back to work (in line with the deadlines set by the country's inclusive Labour Law)

- Stay in regular contact with any employee on a long leave, not only to know how they are doing, but also to keep them connected to work. This makes it easier for the person to get back to work when they are ready to.
- If the person is looking forward to returning to work after a long absence, discuss accommodations that can help get them back into the work routine. Such accommodations could include:

- ◇ Phased return to work – for certain days a week or on a part-time basis as a start (with adapting work duties during this period).
- ◇ Redefining the job role.
- ◇ Moving to a different job role.

### C. Disability-related absence

- In some cases, persons with disabilities may need to take additional time off for medical treatment or rehabilitation, for example.
- Recording such absences as regular leaves and deducting them from the overall vacation days may deprive the concerned employee of taking other vacations. To avoid this, we recommend that you register disability-related absences separately. Some employers follow a "disability leave" policy to help managers implement this.

### 3. Job continuity (employee retention)

Effective employee retention framework

- It is vital to have an effective framework for retaining employees/workers who have come to have disabilities; it saves you spending on recruitment and training and allows you to retain valuable skills, experiences and talents.
- If one of your employees/workers comes to have a disability, treat them the way you treat a new employee with a disability. However, keep in mind that they may still be coping with their new disability and its effect on their daily lives.

## 4. Separation from company or organization

Several reasons can lead an employee with a disability to be separated from work, including, for example, resignation, dismissal and retirement.

### A. Dismissal

- If you are considering dismissing an employee with a disability, make sure that you have taken all reasonable steps, such as to improve that person's performance or attendance prior to dismissal.

### B. Termination interviews

- A termination interview should be conducted with all employees/workers with disabilities who submit their resignations. They can be asked whether their decision to leave has been affected by barriers hindering their work or affecting their performance. Feedback can be taken from them to see what can be done differently in the future.





## Module eight: workplace inclusion management - adaptations and accessibility

Module eight includes the following main axes:

- Accessibility:
  - ◇ Access to the built/physical environment.
  - ◇ Access to information.
  - ◇ Accommodation and adaptation costs (myths versus facts).
- Adaptation and reasonable accommodations:
  - ◇ The importance of job descriptions and analysis.
  - ◇ Reasonable accommodation and assistive devices (concept, standards and examples).

As mentioned earlier in module five,<sup>26</sup> to integrate disability into the work environment, a three-element strategy must be adopted: attitudes, accessibility, and accommodations (the triple A strategy).

This module shall help you learn about the concepts of accessibility and reasonable accommodations.

### A. Accessibility

Accessibility is about removing all barriers from the workplace, so that everyone has equal access to the site, tools and tasks required to perform their role.

**In the workplace, we can identify three categories of problems that employees with disabilities can face in terms of equipment and accessibility:**



Workplace accessibility

The ability to easily move around and access all departments in the workplace

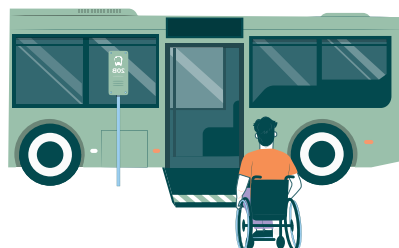
Access to and use of information

# 1. Access to the built/physical environment

<b>Problem I: barriers to accessing the workplace</b>		
<b>Solution: facilitate access to the workplace</b>		
<b>Actions</b>		
<b>Making company entrances accessible</b>	<b>Making the parking area accessible</b>	<b>Making the company's transportation means accessible</b>
<b>Some fundamental parameters</b>		

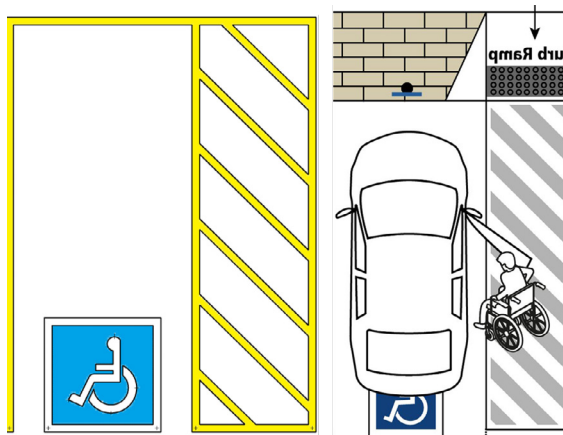
## Accessible company transportation means

If the company provides transportation to its employees using means of its own, it must install equipment in some of these buses or cars, such as providing a mobile ramp and safety straps to harness wheelchairs inside the car/bus...



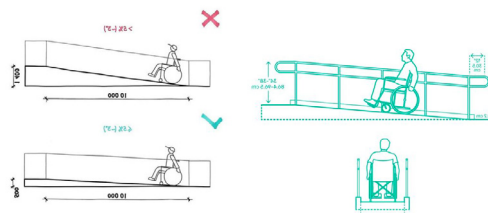
## Parking area

- Allocate the parking area closest to the entrance for persons with disabilities and install equipped external corridors linking the parking lot to the entrance, including walkways, tactile indicative signs and contrasting colours.
- The width of the parking lot for people with disabilities is 330 cm (equal to the usual parking area + 80 cm of obstruction-free space added to one of the sides).
- The accessible parking spaces should be clearly identified using the International Symbol of Access (ISA) (in a different colour).

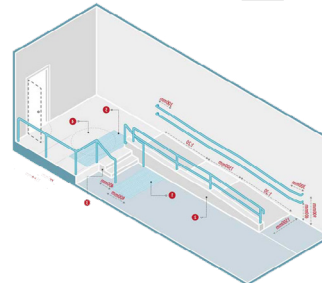
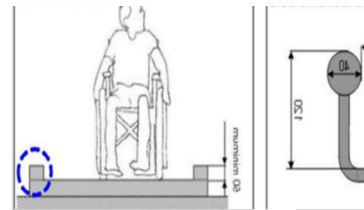


## Company entrance:

- If there is a staircase at the entrance, it should be replaced by a ramp, with a slope of less than or equal to 5 per cent.



- The ramp width must be at least 120 cm in public places.
- On both sides of the ramp, a double railing must be installed, with the upper edge being no more than 90 cm high and the lower edge at 70 cm.
- It is preferable to choose a round-shaped railing with a 40-millimeter diameter.
- The floor of the slope must have a rough non-slip surface.
- Moreover, guards or borders with a height of 5 to 10 cm must be added on either side of the ramp to prevent slipping.
- Provide obstruction-free landing with a diameter of 150 cm at the top of the ramp (in front of the entrance) and its bottom, to allow direction/lane changes.
- Provide a 140x120 cm rest area if the ramp is long (every 10 meters when adhering to a slope of less than or equal to 5 per cent).
- Install a tactile strip in a colour contrasting with that of the floor colour (yellow to draw attention) before and after the ramp to alert persons with visual disabilities, in addition to guidance paths with different textures and different colours to indicate the right direction.



## Problem II: barriers that prevent movement in the workplace and access to all departments

Solution: allow mobility within the workplace and access to all departments

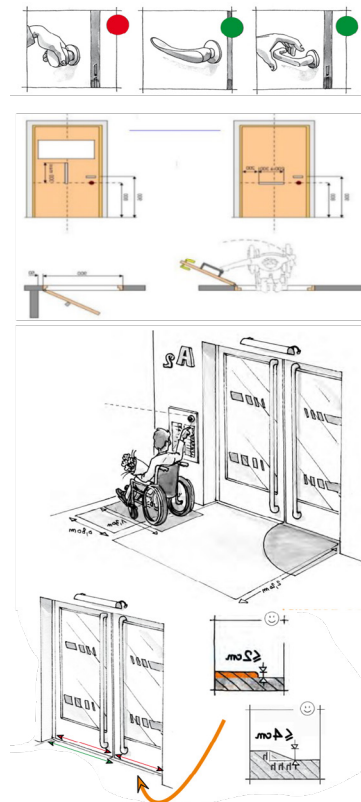
### Actions

- Ensuring the following places/utilities are accessible:
  - Elevators.
  - Corridors between different sections (providing well-dimensioned corridors and spatial orientation signals).
  - Doors.
  - Location of biometric attendance system.
  - Sanitary unit/toilet.
  - Offices.
  - Administrative and HR departments.
  - Workshops and production lines.
  - Break and dining rooms/cafeteria or company canteen.
  - Changing rooms and staff lockers.
  - Showrooms.
  - Meeting and conference rooms.

## Some fundamental parameters

### Doors

- The width of the door must be at least 80 cm.
- The door handle should be installed at a maximum height of 80 cm. Round knobs are not recommended. Rather, it is recommended to use lever-type handles that are easy to hold and control.
- It is preferable to use sliding doors, especially for the main company entrance and elevator doors for example, provided that they open automatically or with great ease. Moreover, it is necessary to place coloured round or rectangular signs on glass doors, 10 cm from the bottom and 60 cm from the top, to forewarn people with visual impairments and protect them against bumping into the door.
- It is preferable to omit doorsteps whenever possible. If not omitted, they should not be more than 2 cm high, so as not to obstruct the movement of people who use wheelchairs.
- A sign printed in Braille letters indicating the name of the department or office ought to be added so that a person with visual impairment can identify what room it is. Additionally, a sign in a specific colour can also be added showing the writing clearly for people with a partial visual impairment, or with a hearing disability.



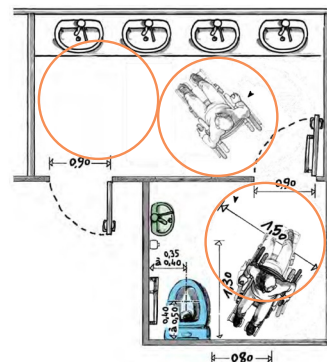
### Elevator

- A minimum space of 150x150 cm must be left in front of the elevator.
- The control panel must be mounted at a height of 100-130 cm as a maximum, preferably horizontally rather than vertically. Printing on control buttons ought to be in Braille and/or in tactile, illuminated letters and numbers (or in colours different from the background colour for improved visibility).
- The elevator cab should be at least 140 cm deep, with a minimum width of 110 cm, or an optimum width of 125 cm.
- It is preferable to install handrails at a height of 90 cm, on both sides and the back of the elevator.
- It is preferable to install sound indicators to announce the arrival of the elevator.
- The net width of the elevator door should not be less than 80 cm. It is preferable that the elevator door is of a net width of 100 cm, and automatically opens and recloses at an interval of no less than 10 seconds. If the elevators are opened manually, they ought to be easy to open.



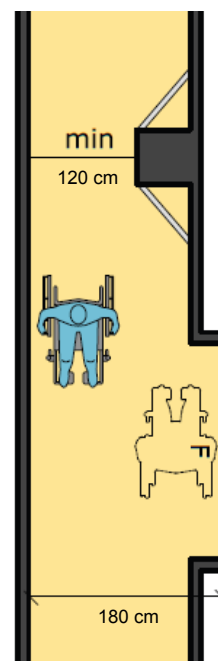
## Sanitary unit/toilet

- The toilet door should open outward.
- It is necessary to leave a space of 150×150 cm in the centre of the sanitary unit to allow full-turn manoeuvring of a wheelchair.
- The toilet floor must have a rough non-slip surface.
- The toilet should be a floating one, installed at a height between 45 cm to 50 cm.
- An unobstructed space should be left next to the toilet of at least 80×80 cm to allow transitioning from the wheelchair to the toilet.
- Flushing arrangements must be installed next to the toilet at a height of 100 cm, and the paper dispenser at a height of 60 cm.
- Handrails should be installed on the wall, as well as mobile vertical and horizontal grab bars on both sides of the toilet, at a height of 80 cm.
- Sinks must be placed at a height of 70 cm (lower edge) and 85 cm (upper edge). They must be floating, 55 cm deep, and 70 cm wide.
- It is preferable to use single-lever mixing-type faucets; mixers that work with push-button or touch; or the self-closing type.
- Downward-tilted mirrors ought to be used.
- It is preferable to install the lighting controls at a height of 100 cm, as well as for the soap and paper dispenser, in addition to hanging the towel next to the sink at the same height (100 cm).



## Hallways

- The width of the corridors must be at least 120 cm, allowing one person in a wheelchair and another person to pass at the same time, or 180 cm allowing the passage of two people using wheelchairs simultaneously. At corners, the width should be approximately 220 cm.
- It is preferable to install horizontal handrails along the walls of the corridors at a height of 90 cm.
- RDU: The picture refers to (millimeters – mm), so it is easier to write it in cm.
- Preferably, the floor must be customized to help people with disabilities identify a barrier-free path to move around, such as tactile paths or other guide paths with different textures, and having contrasting colours that allow them to be tracked using a white cane.
- It is preferable to provide written signboards and symbols to indicate sections and places that are accessible and usable for everyone, including people with hearing and intellectual disabilities. Writing should be in colours different from the background colour of the signboard to be clearly noticeable and easy to read.



## Offices

- Office furniture should be arranged and coordinated in a manner that allows people with disabilities to move around easily and safely.
- It is necessary to leave a space of 150×150 cm in the office lobby to allow full-turn manoeuvring of a wheelchair.
- Use desks and tables that are 70-75 cm high, allowing easy entry of a wheelchair underneath.
- It is preferable that the desk drawers and tables are placed beside and not under the desk, and their height should not be less than 40 cm.
- It is better that the office floor be free of obstacles such as carpets or coarse rugs.
- It is preferable to install lighting control buttons, shelves and bells at a height between 90 cm, at least, and 130 cm, at most.
- Preferably, the floor must be customized to help people with disabilities identify a barrier-free path to move around, such as guide paths with different textures and contrasting colours.



## 2. Access to information

**Problem III: barriers to access and use of information in the workplace**

**Solution: make information accessible and usable**

### Actions

#### Ask yourself if the content you have produced is compatible with screen readers

People who have partial or complete visual impairments may use assistive technologies such as screen readers that work by reading page content aloud. Screen readers make content on a page accessible and provide an alternative way to navigate through a document, website, or application. Several different screen reading software are available and their features such as reading speed, language and even Braille can be modified.

#### General tips on ensuring accessibility through screen readers

- Write in clear language, avoiding complex terminology and abbreviations.
- Place the text under appropriate headings.
- Write short, simple sentences.
- Check your reading order.



- Avoid using colour to express meaning.
- Line the text to the left (for foreign languages) and to the right (for Arabic) to enable the reader to easily find the end and beginning of lines.
- When images are for aesthetic purposes, be sure to mark that they are, so that screen readers skip over them.
- Provide meaningful descriptions of important images, as alt text. Also, think about where to place the images so as to avoid interrupting the flow of the text.
- Do not forget: screen readers do not read comments, so it is best to avoid them when editing documents. You can replace using comments by using the Track Changes feature.
- Finally, verify that the document is accessible using the built-in Word checker.

### Reading order

- Have any sections of the text been completely skipped?
- Is the main content easily accessible? There shouldn't be too many "marginal" entries before starting the main content.
- Is anything extra being read at the end of the content? This should be avoided as much as possible.

### Headings

- Do you use headings to structuralize the content?
- Have you appropriately marked headings so that the screen reader recognizes them?

### Graphics

- Is an alt text used appropriately for any graphics, images, or illustrations?
- Have illustrations been added alongside the text to simplify the concept or information contained for people with intellectual disabilities?

### Links

- Can all hyperlinks be accessed and opened using a screen reader? This means enabling access to them without using the computer mouse.

### Tables and graphs

- Have tables or graphs been placed appropriately so that the screen reader can recognize and navigate through them?
- Has an appropriate alt text that explains all the necessary content been attached to tables or graphs?
- Does the screen reader include all tables or graphs?
- Have simplified alternatives been provided to communicate the information contained in these tables and drawings to persons with intellectual disabilities?

## Lists

- Have lists been formatted correctly for the screen reader to recognize and read in a logical order?

## Videos

- Does the audio content of the video clearly explain what is happening in the movie? Does the film include transcriptions of everything being said?

## Navigation

- Can a user easily locate in which part of the content they are?
- Is it easy to use lists or the content page to navigate through the content?
- For websites, is it easy to find the search function or access the homepage?
- Keyboard
- Is it easy to access all elements exclusively using keyboard shortcuts?

## Bear language use in mind

- When drafting work documents or any materials containing information of any kind, language choices are very important. Additional language barriers and cognitive requisites may also contribute to hindering the understanding of messages. Make information clear, simple and accessible to everyone, including people with intellectual disabilities. Try not to excessively complicate ideas.

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## Do not forget the alt text

- Alt text is used to describe the content of an image, document, video, or website page. Alt text is useful for conveying important information about what is displayed and makes it accessible to people with visual, hearing and intellectual disabilities. It also ensures that image descriptions are used and that the information in images is accessible to everyone.

## When to use alt text?

- We always recommend that you attach an alt text (image descriptions) to each image you post on your digital channels. If you forget to attach alt text to your image, the screen reader simply says "image"; hence excluding persons with a partial or complete visual impairment from your content.

### **Key tips on how to use alt text**

- Keep your description of the image concise and make sure it is consistent with the rest of the content.
- Describe what the image generally shows, focusing on the details most relevant to your target audience. Just choose a few basic details that communicate the picture.
- If the image contains a sense of humor, be sure to convey it in your alt text.
- Websites and social media offer ways to insert a text description of an image that a screen reader can communicate, allowing the recipient to build a mental image of the scene.
- Make sure to provide an alt text that conveys everything said in the video to ensure that it is easily accessible to people with hearing and intellectual disabilities.

### **Consider colour contrast and vision clarity**

- The colour contrast between the background and the text may enhance a person's ability to access information. If your content does not portray enough contrast, the text can become indistinguishable for many people, because of the way they perceive colours, or even because of the lighting conditions in which they try to read the information.

### **Do not forget to add illustrations**

- It is preferable to add simplified illustrations or drawings alongside difficult or complex texts or phrases to simplify the concept or information displayed to people with intellectual disabilities.

### **Include subtitle and caption options**

- Both subtitles and captions must be available in several alternative formats suitable for all people (with hearing, visual, or intellectual disabilities), so that they can access content in a video or live content and understand what is happening or the topic being addressed. For example, subtitles and captions can be provided in writing, in clear and simplified language, or by providing sign language interpretation in the video.
- The difference between subtitles and captions is that the former is just a transcription of spoken words, while captions also include descriptions of background sounds, for example.
- However, both subtitles and captions are beneficial to everyone, as they provide a different way to access information.

The web content accessibility technical guidelines (WCAG 2.1)<sup>27</sup> were developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and were widely adopted as the standard for the transition to digital accessibility compatibility. These guidelines include requirements known as success criteria. In total, 78 success criteria have been identified, with a level assigned to each. In WCAG 2.1, three levels of conformance are defined: A (lowest), AA, and AAA (highest). For a website to be accessible to everyone in an acceptable manner, it must be designed to meet at least the criteria of the second level of conformance (AA). For it to be fully accessible and ideal for all, its design must meet the criteria of the third level of conformance (AAA).



The said criteria include a lot of technical specifications. Therefore, it is best to work on applying the guidelines in coordination with your company’s web programming specialist.

### 3. Accommodation and Adaptation costs (myths versus facts)

There is a widespread belief that making the workplace accessible to persons with disabilities requires significant financial investments. However, this is a misconception, as hiring people with disabilities does not necessarily require workplace accommodation. Most often, when staff with disabilities require certain equipment, these are simple and do not require high expenses. In addition, the provision of accommodations and equipment does not always mean changes to the built environment. It could mean changes in the working hours or in the way information is communicated.

Moreover, people with disabilities are experts in what they need, and are keen to help accommodate the

workplace properly.

Bear in mind that accommodations benefit not only persons with disabilities, but also all employees. On the one hand, accommodations enhance employee satisfaction and performance, and on the other, they improve the company image, as well as attract new categories of customers.

## B. Adaptation and reasonable accommodations

### 1. The importance of job description and analysis in providing accommodation

In addition to accommodating and ensuring the accessibility and usability of the built environment and information, the inclusion of a person with disability in the labour market may require

accommodating the job, or modifying the job tasks, the way of performance and the tools used. This aims at accommodating and adapting work so that a person with a disability can accomplish their tasks and achieve the best possible result.

To identify these adjustments in consultation with the staff member with disabilities, it is necessary to rely on the detailed information in both the job description and job analysis.

### What is a job description?

A job description is a key element that contributes to the management of work in an elaborate and organized manner. It allows the assessment of a person's professional abilities on the one hand, and their additional needs on the other.

It is a written description of the work performed by an employee, detailing the main elements of the work data that define a job. It generally consists of key information about the work, including the job title, a short summary paragraph on the basic objectives to be achieved by the employee and detailed statements of duties and responsibilities, with each duty and responsibility described in a separate paragraph.<sup>28</sup>

#### Job descriptions can be used in:<sup>29</sup>

- **Job evaluation:** job descriptions are the only solid basis for determining the relative value of jobs in a company.
- **Determining salary:** job descriptions are used in determining salaries and wages.
- **Recruitment:** job descriptions are essential in the recruitment and selection of employees, as it helps in advertising a job, measuring the capabilities of individuals to achieve job requirements, completely informing them thereof, as well as gauging their motivation to carry out work.
- **Performance appraisal:** a job description is a useful tool for a manager when evaluating an employee's performance on the job site. It reminds both the manager and the employee of all the things that need to be considered and discussed during the evaluation process.
- **Training:** job descriptions can constitute a foundation in planning training workshops.
- **Management development:** job descriptions of senior positions or managerial and supervisory responsibilities can contribute to developing a company's organizational structure.

It should be noted that as part of the accommodation process, job descriptions can be adapted as needed.

### Job analysis

To ensure the effectiveness and productivity of workers/employees with disabilities, it is vital that the company conducts a job analysis. A job analysis gives valuable information to a person with disabilities and ensures that they optimally perform tasks. It also helps the company clarify its needs and requirements for the vacancy.

A job analysis is a systematic process that includes five main elements:

### 1. Purpose:

What is the general nature of a particular job? What makes it significant?

### 2. Functions:

What are the main functions of the job? How complex is it? How does it relate to other functions within the same department or in other departments?

### 3. Environment:

In which work environment are the tasks performed?

### 4. Job requirements:

What working requirements apply to this job?

### 5. Qualifications:

What educational level, knowledge, skills and attributes are required to perform the job in question?

Accuracy while performing a job analysis is crucial. Lack of precision in the process of defining tasks leads to difficulties in identifying:

- Tasks that can be eliminated or modified in the initial job description to make it more suitable for a person with disability.
- Adaptations and adjustments needed at the level of the work environment, tools and equipment that make the job more suitable for an employee with a disability.

When conducting a job analysis, always keep in mind that a person with a disability is capable and has the needed skills to perform the job. The purpose of the job analysis is not to discriminate against persons with disabilities and exclude them from performing certain tasks. Rather, it is an assessment that can be conducted in the case of any applicant, whether or not they have a disability. If a company has never hired persons with disabilities before, it is crucial to conduct this job analysis with the utmost seriousness. Do everything possible to make this first hiring a success.

Job analysis processes can be performed with the help of specialized employment offices affiliated with the State or organizations for persons with disabilities. You can also contact occupational therapists who are qualified to perform this type of job analysis.

## 2. Reasonable accommodation and assistive devices (concept, standards and examples)

When hiring or retaining workers/employees with disabilities, employers may need to make reasonable accommodations to enable these individuals to perform their jobs effectively.

Reasonable accommodations at work are not intended to place an additional burden on an employer, nor to give an employee an unfair advantage or special treatment. Reasonable accommodations in the workplace aim to provide appropriate and necessary adjustments or adaptations to accommodate the individual characteristics

or differences of a worker/job candidate, so that they enjoy the same rights as others. Often, reasonable accommodations may be provided at little or no additional cost to the employer, hence bringing tangible benefits to both the employer and the worker.

In this section, we shall preview the different types of possible adaptations, while emphasizing that in many cases, they may not be required.

A reasonable accommodation is any adaptation of the job, i.e. changes in the spatial environment of work, or in the way the job tasks are performed, in such a way that they are prepared and equipped to allow a person with a disability to accomplish their tasks and achieve the best results.

It should be noted here that adapting and equipping the workplace to make it accessible for use by persons with disabilities is often as simple as rearranging furniture inside a room, modifying the work programme, organizing rest times, etc. These actions do not incur additional costs. Rather, they only require a detailed and clear study of the needs and capabilities of each person, in an attempt to find the best solutions that complete the process of professional inclusion.

Employees with disabilities report that workplace accommodations are a key factor that contributes to their continuity at work.

### **What is the difference between reasonable accommodations and accessibility?**

Sometimes, the broader accessibility and usability measures, aimed at making companies accessible to all, are confused with the specific concept of reasonable accommodation. While the two are complementary in nature, they are different. Therefore, we must start off by explaining the meaning of each.

Reasonable accommodation is typically seen as an individual adaptation of the work environment and workplace and their conditions (including tasks, tools, regulations, job requirements and the built environment in which the individual works), in response to the employee's special requirements that often result from an individual request.

Accessibility and usability entail general measures in the work environment that allow access to and use of the built environment and information, taking into account the needs of a range of employees and customers alike, including those who are expected to work for the company in the future. The concept of accessibility covers issues such as the design of the built environment and information, the types of technologies used in the workplace, or other ways in which work is organized. It also includes strategic planning by companies on a proactive and ongoing basis.

The concept of reasonable accommodations includes four categories:

### Adapting job tasks, including:<sup>30</sup>

- Redesigning or modifying devices, machines, or equipment used to perform job tasks.
- Modifying the sequence of performing job tasks.
- Splitting job tasks into several subparts and reorganizing them.
- Modifying working hours or times.

### Adapting job requirements, including modifying:

- Recruitment terms, employment mechanisms and contracts.
- Requirements of promotion and career advancement.
- Training systems adopted in the company (capacity building of employees).
- Conditions for benefitting from the employee health insurance.

In addition to applying the necessary accommodations that ensure that employees with disabilities receive employee and social benefits on an equal basis with other employees.

### Adapting working conditions, including modifying:

- Performance appraisal procedures.
- Sick leave and absence systems.
- Team communication trends and means by providing training sessions on diversity and inclusion for the team or management staff.
- Adopted public safety standards.

### Adapting the spatial work environment:

Modifying the built environment and securing equipment in accordance with the internationally agreed accommodation standards to ensure that the employee can access and use the work environment. Additionally, communication systems need to be modified, as well as the information made available.

#### When should you apply reasonable accommodations to a career or job in your company?

- An employer does not have to modify a job (its tasks) if there are no employees with disabilities in the company.
- An amendment is required and necessary when:
  - ◆ A person with a disability applies for a job (job opportunity).
  - ◆ The company has an employee with disability, or an employee who is expected to have one.
  - ◆ The position or tasks of an employee with disability in the company change, resulting in a change in their required tasks and responsibilities.

#### How are reasonable accommodations applied?

There is no standard or optimal formula for applying reasonable accommodations, as they are subject to personal factors. Accommodating and equipping the workplace requires some flexibility and careful observation, as well as a detailed study of each person individually.



### The mechanism used to apply reasonable accommodations:

Analysing the information stated in the job description (available in the company) of the position that the person with a disability will occupy.

Conducting a job analysis by weighing the five elements mentioned above, in addition to devising a detailed evaluation list that includes:

- **Job conditions:** working hours, rest times, the position in which work is performed (standing or sitting...), and the nature of work (individual or in a group).
- **Job tasks** and the required skills.
- **Applied work method:** the expected performance by an employee, their way of work, significance and skills they need.
- **Means, tools, and machines used** to perform work.
- **Studying the workplace built environment.**
- **Defining the type of disability** that the job applicant has.
- **Assessing the individual abilities and needs of a person with a disability** applying for a job and/or who is already an employee and determining their competence.
- **Studying the requirements of the company and the work team.**
- **Identifying problems or constraints** that require intervention to make the necessary accommodations/adaptation.
- **Devising equipment and accommodation proposals** that allow a person to carry out their tasks easily, independently and safely.
- **Studying the company's material and human capabilities** to implement accommodations.
- **Choosing the most appropriate and least-costly accommodations** in consultation with the employee with a disability.

- **Implementing reasonable accommodations**
- **Following up** with the employee for a certain period to ensure that the accommodations are suitable for them, evaluate how effective the applied measures are, as well as identify any other challenges.

### Who implements reasonable accommodations?

Implementing the process of work adjustment and providing accommodations is not the sole responsibility of the employer. In the first place, as mentioned above, the employer must consult with the employee with disability, and possibly consult employment offices for persons with disabilities and/or qualified occupational therapists to conduct the assessment and determine the proposals for appropriate adjustments.

The adaptation process is implemented in several stages, including successive meetings between the employer and the person with disability, as well as close monitoring of the reality of work.

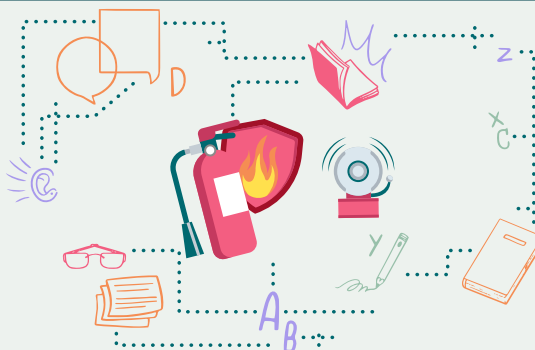
It is also quite vital to discuss the accommodations with the concerned person themselves. Through their experiences, persons with disabilities develop skills in solving the problems they face and become experts in overcoming everything that can hinder their work. No person is better than a person with disability himself/herself to propose the necessary adaptations they need in the workplace to improve their productivity at the lowest possible cost.

### Practical examples of reasonable accommodations

Changing working conditions, bearing in mind that an employee can perform tasks in a different manner, such as allowing someone with a social anxiety disorder to have their own office instead of shared offices that are bustling with movement and people throughout the day.



Making workplace changes to fairly meet public safety standards for all employees, such as using a fire alarm system that includes an audiovisual alert to warn all employees in the event of a fire, including employees with hearing and visual impairments.



Allowing an employee who uses a wheelchair to perform their duties in a location other than the initially designated office if the need arises, for example allowing them to use offices on the ground floor.



Changing the equipment used, for example, providing a modified keyboard that allows employees who have paralysis of the upper limbs or arthritis to use it easily.



Allowing employees who have come to have a disability to return to work gradually in flexible working hours, or allowing them to work on a part-time basis.



Making changes in the physical workplace environment, such as changing the desk height, or moving office furniture to allow an employee to access and use their desk.



Changing appraisal procedures, such as giving extra time or providing assistive devices during the appraisal process, or conducting a performance trial instead of a traditional formal interview.



Providing additional equipment or assistance, for example, a new chair or specific software such as a screen reader.



**It is important to remember the following:**

- Not all accommodations are related to the physical working environment, such as wheelchair ramps.
- Other adjustments can be less obvious but equally important, such as changing working hours or increasing individual supervision.
- Workplace adaptation can be made to anyone, not just to employees with disabilities, such as changing working hours for someone who has childcare responsibilities.

**Cost of accommodations and accessibility**

**Some employers worry that hiring people with disabilities and making accommodations entail significant additional costs, but most adaptations cost little or nothing at all.**

**Case Study: Hanan and workplace accommodation**

- Hanan is a girl with autism spectrum disorder with remarkable professional skills.
- She obtained a data entry diploma after graduating from high school.
- Hanan has difficulty coping with noise and does not feel comfortable with people standing around her.
- Hanan avoids shopping malls and direct contact with other people, even in large family gatherings.
- Sometimes, Hanan may need support and assistance to interact at social events.
- She likes sticking to a routine and knowing her work schedule beforehand.
- Hanan works as a data entry officer in the HR department of a food company.
- Hanan's direct supervisor determined the accommodation arrangements that Hanan needed after consulting and coordinating closely with her, the company's HR department and the employees following up from the recruitment office that helped Hanan find this job.

**It was not difficult to meet the accommodation requirements which included the following:**

- Allowing Hanan to work in a quiet place.
- Allocating Hanan a laptop so she can move to another office when needed.
- Agreeing on a weekly work schedule every Monday.
- Holding a monthly meeting with Hanan during the first three months for evaluation purposes.

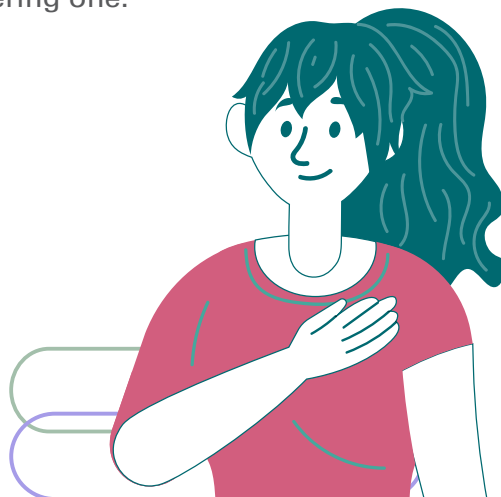
# Conclusion

This guide included the key theoretical information and practical steps that pour into achieving disability inclusion in public and private sector institutions and companies if adopted in the workplace. Employers in both sectors are encouraged to give the utmost importance to the information in this guide, which helps employ new untapped energies and skills, as well as attract new customer categories.

Adopting inclusion and employing persons with disabilities is an economic issue par excellence. These steps contribute to increasing the national income and improving the social status of persons with disabilities by ensuring their economic independence and providing them with the opportunity to become part of the economic cycle. Moreover, disability

inclusion in the workplace also has many benefits for your organization.

To earn this benefit, just take the first step and adopt disability inclusion in the workplace to make your company a smart, pioneering one.



## Annex 1. Potential evaluation model

List of proposed questions for the management of inclusion adoption (self-assessing the company's reality) based on the McKinsey 7-S model<sup>31</sup>

This list of questions is the starting point to explore your company's current reality in terms of adopting inclusion based on the seven elements of the McKinsey 7-S model. Use it to analyse your current situation first, and then repeat the assessment after implementing your proposed inclusion adoption plan to measure your progress and identify areas that need further improvement.

### Guide to inclusion of disability in the workplace – ESCWA in cooperation with ILO

#### List of proposed questions for the management of inclusion adoption (self-assessing the company's situation) based on the McKinsey 7-S model

Company name	Country/area	Nature of evaluation (preliminary/post)	Date

This list helps you conduct a self-assessment of the company and explore and evaluate its situation, as well as the extent to which disability inclusion criteria are met, by answering the set of questions below in consultation with your working team.

**The list includes a number of yes/no questions, in addition to providing explanations and examples in the elaboration space. Try to describe your company's reality as accurately as possible in this space. This will help you later on in determining your priorities regarding the best accommodations to make.**

The list also includes a number of questions that require evaluation as per the following five measurement scores:

- **0: Completely lacking** (i.e. when the criterion subject of the question is completely lacking in the company).
- **1: Scarcely applied** (i.e. when the criterion is applied in the company yet scarcely, and below the required or sufficient level).
- **2: Acceptable** (i.e. when the criterion is applied in the company at the minimum level needed).
- **3: Adequate** (i.e. when the criterion is met in the company in a sufficient and effective manner that allows the inclusion of persons with disabilities as required without any discrimination).
- **4: Advanced** (i.e. when the company applies the criterion subject of the question to the fullest extent).

Criteria rated from 0 to 1 should be prioritized when devising the plan. Criteria that are classified 2 and 3 should also be taken into account and included in the plan to be addressed simultaneously.

Strategy						
1. Does your company have a vision and mission?	Yes	No				
2. Do the company's vision and mission clearly reflect your commitment to respecting a culture of diversity and inclusion?	Yes	No	Explain where and how this is stated in the vision and mission:			
3. Do you have a strategy?	Yes	No				
<b>If you have answered question 3 by yes, please rate the following points (questions 3.1 to 3.5) according to the five measurement scores from 0 to 4.</b>	0 Completely lacking	1 Scarcely applied	2 Acceptable	3 Adequate	4 Advanced	Please elaborate
3.1 To what extent does your strategy include the culture and criteria of inclusion?				-		
3.2 To what extent are the policies and procedures contained in the strategy inclusive of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others?						
3.3 To what extent does the strategy adopt a framework that ensures respect for the diversity of employee and customer needs?						

3.4 Does the strategy include objectives and mechanisms to ensure that changes in employee and customer requirements are inclusively addressed?						
3.5 Is the strategy in line with CSR issues?						
<b>Structure</b>						
4. How is the company/team structure organized?						
5. Explain the company hierarchy.						
6. Are there any conditions that prevent certain groups (such as women or persons with disabilities) from holding certain positions?	Yes	No	What are they?			
7. Is the work of persons with disabilities organized in certain departments separately from the rest of the teams?	Yes	No	What are they?			
8. Does the company structure include positions specifically allocated for persons with disabilities?	Yes	No	What are these positions?			
<b>Please rate the following points (questions 9 to 11) according to the five measurement scores from 0 to 4.</b>	0 Completely lacking	1 Scarcely applied	2 Acceptable	3 Adequate	4 Advanced	Please elaborate:



9. To what extent are inclusive criteria applied in organizing and dividing teams?						
10. To what extent do different departments coordinate tasks in inclusive manners?						
11. How decentralized are decisions related to disability inclusion and relevant matters?						
<b>Regulations (include formal and informal policies and procedures)</b>						
12. What key systems run the company? Take into account financial and HR systems, as well as communications and document storage.						
13. Are these systems (at all levels) inclusive and accessible without any barriers for persons with disabilities?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:			
14. Are your company's recruitment and promotion procedures clear and available to all applicants equally?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:			

<p><b>15.</b> Are there any conditions within the company regulations that prevent persons with disabilities from employment or promotion?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>16.</b> Is a job analysis usually conducted?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>17.</b> Do job descriptions focus only on objective criteria related to the job in question, and can the procedures applied by the company adversely affect certain groups?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>18.</b> Flexible work policies: does the company have procedures in place to handle flexible work requests, in a fair and objective manner?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>19.</b> Are there clearly defined procedures for performance management that take individual needs and cultural differences into account, and are they objective and uniform for all staff?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:

<p>20. Are evaluation mechanisms and tools inclusive and designed to meet diverse individual needs and ensure fair evaluation?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>21. Does the company have a clear policy on illness and sick leaves? Does this policy take into account the individual needs of persons with disabilities?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>22. Does the company have procedures in place to help employees return to work, taking into consideration individual needs when doing so?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>23. Does the company have clear health and safety policies in place, with regular risk assessments and convenient check-ups to enhance employee health?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>24. Are the adopted risk assessments conducted routinely, for example, for pregnant women or staff working in certain high-risk areas?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:

<p>25. Are the company's policies regarding wages and remuneration clearly regulated, based on objective criteria that are easily understood by employees?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>26. Do you have clear guidelines on the salary scale, bonuses and pay-related remuneration?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>27. Have you conducted an equal pay audit to ensure that there are no pay gaps by gender, disability, or ethnic group?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>28. Do the company's procurement procedures include equality and human rights measures?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:

<p>29. In aims at reinforcing the company's commitment to inclusive workplace standards, do potential suppliers need to provide evidence in their tenders that they take equality and human rights seriously, adopt disability inclusion and treat their employees and customers with dignity and respect?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>30. If you are a service provider, do you have a strategy to make sure that all customers are treated equally and fairly?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p>31. Are services provided and the diverse needs of customers from different groups, including clients with disabilities, being taken into account?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>Shared values</b></p>			
<p>32. What are the core values of your company?</p>			
<p>33. Is respect for diversity and inclusion part of these values? Is it clearly indicated?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:

34. Is the company and team culture inclusive and respectful of diversity?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
35. Do values affect work? To what extent?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
36. Are employees familiar with the values (particularly those related to inclusion and disability), and to what extent?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
37. Do employees adhere to these values? How committed are they?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<b>Style leadership</b>			
38. Does the company have clear and well-known policies that define the expected behaviour in the workplace?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
39. Have consequences been identified for unacceptable behaviour? What are the controls in place, and how are they monitored and evaluated?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
40. Are the managers aware of these policies and are they trained to promptly address complaints?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:

<p><b>41.</b> Are the employees aware of these policies and do they have access to this information?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>42.</b> Does the company have procedures in place to deal with the disputes that can arise between employees of different groups due to prejudices?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>43.</b> Does the company have clear disciplinary and grievance procedures that all managers follow and employees can access?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>43- A-</b> Are these disciplinary procedures easy to understand?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>43- B-</b> Are these measures fair to all, or could they adversely affect certain groups of employees?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<p><b>44.</b> Do employees have access to an independent arbitration or dispute resolution process if they disagree with the outcome?</p>	Yes	No	Please elaborate:

<p>45. Does the company have a focal point (a specialist in the field of disability who is entrusted with the task of following up on everything related to accommodation and other necessary matters)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Please elaborate:</p>
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**Staff/team**

Geographic distribution of employees: assessing the demographic composition of your workplace helps you collect and analyse data about your employees by age, gender, ethnic group, religion or belief, and disability. You will hence be able to note the distribution of employees belonging to different groups across positions in the company structure. Therefore, you will be able to identify which of these categories is unrepresented or underrepresented within the company.

<p>46. What categories are represented in your team?</p>			
<p>47. Is any of the categories poorly represented?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Please elaborate:</p>
<p>48. Are the positions of employees distributed among the different categories?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Please elaborate:</p>
<p>49. What positions or specialties does the team include?</p>	<p>Please elaborate:</p>		
<p>50. Are there any conditions that prevent certain categories from being employed in certain positions?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Please elaborate:</p>



51. Are all staff of all categories treated fairly in terms of job application, pay, compensation and retention?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
52. If some groups are underrepresented among your employees, do you have strategies to address that?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
53. Are the internal rules and processes inclusive and accessible to all that the team applies to stay on track?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
54. What are the vacancies available in the company?	Please elaborate:		
55. 55. Are there gaps in the required competencies? Is there a mechanism to look for diverse potentials (including those of persons with disabilities) to fill these gaps?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
56. 56. Are staff at all levels involved in instilling a culture of human rights at the level of service delivery?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
57. Does the company have employees with disabilities?	Yes	No	In what capacities?

Skills			
58. What are the most represented skills within the company/team?	Please elaborate:		
59. Do current employees/team members have the ability to perform the required tasks?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
60. Does the company adopt a clear mechanism to accommodate the function and tools when needed?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
61. Are skills monitored and assessed fairly in a diverse and inclusive manner?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
62. Does the company offer regular training workshops in equality, human rights and disability inclusion in the workplace?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
63. Does the company apply procedures to ensure that all employees have access to training workshops on development, and disability and employment?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:

<b>64.</b> Do the procedures take into account the individual needs of all groups of employees, including staff with disabilities?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<b>65.</b> Does the company have a clear programme to train employees and develop their job skills? Is this training conducted on an ongoing basis?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:
<b>66.</b> Are there any factors that prevent persons with disabilities from benefitting from job skills training?	Yes	No	Please elaborate:



## Annex 3. Model experiences of companies in the adoption of inclusion – success stories

Documented experiences can be found on the following websites:

Global business and disability network – ILO	<a href="https://www.businessanddisability.org/videos/">https://www.businessanddisability.org/videos/</a> <a href="https://www.businessanddisability.org/publications/">https://www.businessanddisability.org/publications/</a>
Jordan – success stories of employing persons with disabilities – Jordanian Ministry of Labour	Success stories of employing persons with disabilities – Jordanian Ministry of Labour (mol.gov.jo)
Lebanon – guide: diversity at the workplace – Lebanese Union for People with Physical Disabilities.	<a href="https://lphu.com/%D8%AF%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%86%D9%88%D8%B9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84-1/">https://lphu.com/%D8%AF%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%86%D9%88%D8%B9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84-1/</a>
State of Palestine – Workplace diversity guides – YMCA.	<a href="http://www.ej-ymca.org/rehab/publications/2014/dalil15.pdf">http://www.ej-ymca.org/rehab/publications/2014/dalil15.pdf</a>

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Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 'Human Rights and Disability' <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HRDisabilityen.pdf> (2002) New York and Geneva, United Nations.

World Report on Disability, World Bank/WHO, 2011.

Disability in the workplace: employers' organizations and business networks, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2016.

Making Inclusion a Reality in Development Organisations – A manual for advisors in disability mainstreaming, International Disability and Development Consortium, 2012.

Promoting diversity and inclusion through workplace adjustments: a practical guide/ International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2016.

"Recruiting, Hiring, Retaining, and Promoting People with Disabilities"; Anupa Iyer and Sharon Masling, Curb Cuts to the Middle Class Initiative, February 3, 2015.

Job and work analysis: guidelines on identifying jobs for persons with disabilities, Robert Heron, International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2005.

Managing disability in the workplace, ILO code of practice, Geneva, International Labour Office, 2002.

Employability – A Resource Guide on Disability for Employers in Asia and The Pacific, ILO, 2007.

Employing persons with disabilities: guideline for employers, ILO, IFC, Australian Aid.

Recruiting, managing and developing people with a disability or health condition, a practical guide for line managers, Disability Confident, department for work and pensions, UK, 2020.

Disability-Inclusive Development Toolkit, CBM, 2017.

Kenji Kuno, DET Manual Series No. 6: Doing Disability Equality Training: A Handbook for Trainers, MPH Publishing, Kuala Lumpur, 2012.

Promoting access to the built environment: guidelines, CBM, Nov 2008.

End the cycle of poverty and disability: fact sheets and videos, CBM.

Job coach handbook: a practical guide to job coaching, Kenji Kuno, Yeo Swee Lan, Hiroshi Ogawa and Daisuke Sakai, MPH Group Publishing Sdn Bhd, 2012.

Disability employment information for Human Resources and Hiring Managers, Victorian public sector, job access website, Australian Government.

Disability Etiquette – Tips on Interacting with People with Disabilities, United Spinal Association.

Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance for employers  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com).

Employers Forum on Disability [www.efd.org.uk](http://www.efd.org.uk).

Canadian Human Rights Commission [www.chrc-ccdp.ca](http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca).

”كيف تصبح شركتك دامجة“، ضحى يحفوفي، اتحاد المقعدين اللبنانيين وجمعية الشبان المسيحية في القدس – برنامج التأهيل، بيروت، 2015.

التنوع في مكان العمل – دليل تدريبي لاستثمار الطاقات – اتحاد المقعدين اللبنانيين، بيروت، 2005.

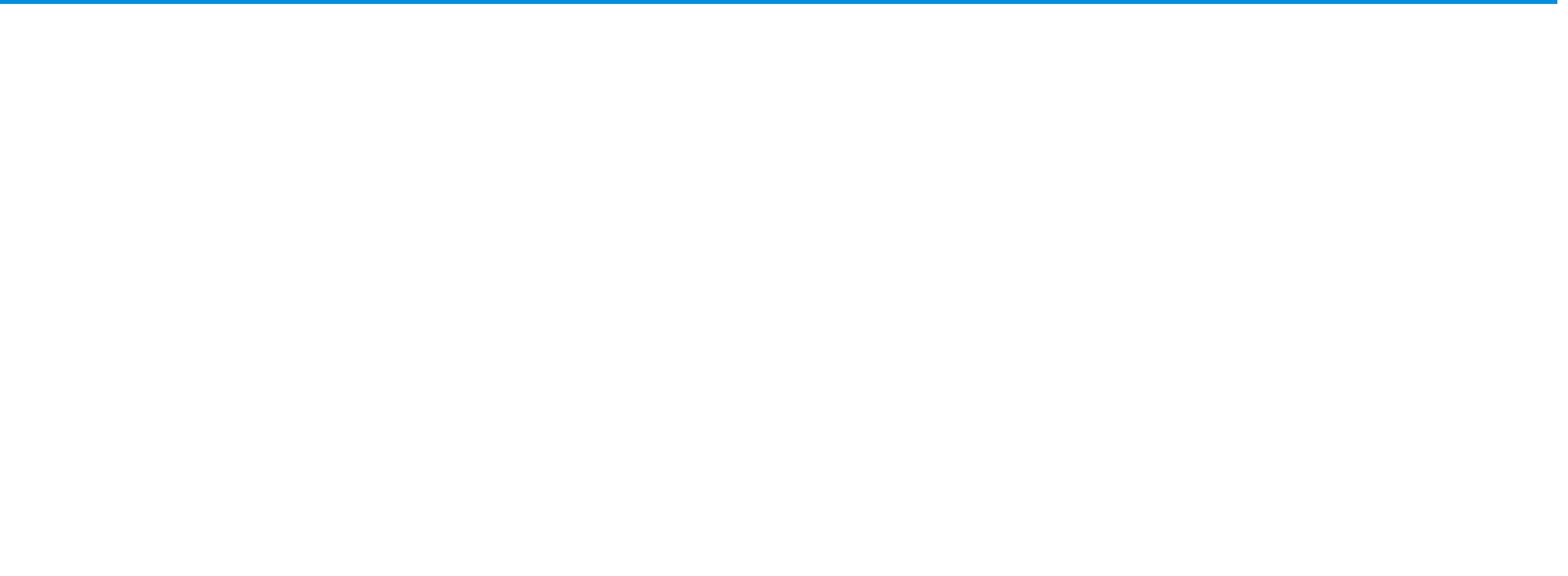
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# Endnotes

- 1 WHO fact sheet on disability, December 2022, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>.
- 2 <https://archive.unescwa.org/ar/publications./-2018الإعاقة-البلدان-العربية>
- 3 <https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/crpd/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-crpd>.
- 4 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2007, <https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>.
- 5 It should be noted that the expression 'impairments' in the source text in English was mistranslated into Arabic. Work is underway to amend it.
- 6 OHCHR Training Package on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations, 2014.
- 7 Article 1 of the convention, "Purpose" – <https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>.
- 8 UNRWA, 2013, Disability Toolkit. <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/file/disability%20/DISABILITY%20TOOLKIT%20English.pdf>.
- 9 UNRWA, 2013, Disability Toolkit. <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/file/disability%20/DISABILITY%20TOOLKIT%20English.pdf>.
- 10 UNRWA, 2013, Disability Toolkit. <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/file/disability%20/DISABILITY%20TOOLKIT%20English.pdf>.
- 11 UNRWA, 2013, Disability Toolkit. <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/file/disability%20/DISABILITY%20TOOLKIT%20English.pdf>.
- 12 Learning Disability Association of America. <https://ldaamerica.org/types-of-learning-disabilities/>.
- 13 <https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/autism-spectrum-disorders>.
- 14 World Report on Disability, World Bank and World Health Organization, 2011. <https://www.who.int/teams/noncommunicable-diseases/sensory-functions-disability-and-rehabilitation/world-report-on-disability>.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 DET Manual Series 6: Doing Disability Equality Training: A Handbook for Trainers, Kenji Kuno (2012) Kuala Lumpur, MPH Publishing.
- 17 DET Manual Series 6: Doing Disability Equality Training: A Handbook for Trainers, Kenji Kuno (2012) Kuala Lumpur, MPH Publishing.
- 18 [https://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS\\_103529/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_103529/lang--en/index.htm).
- 19 [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---normes/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms\\_r168\\_ar.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_r168_ar.pdf).
- 20 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>.



- 21 See module five for detailed procedures for adopting an inclusive workplace strategy and action plan.
- 22 Disability-Inclusive Development Toolkit, CBM, 2017.
- 23 Shared values are the key principles that shape the company’s culture and govern the internal behaviour of its employees as well as the relationships with suppliers and customers.
- 24 This list has been developed for use in this guide. It was modified after review with 50 trainers from 19 Arab countries trained on this guide and after trial in a number of companies in these countries. It is a suggested model that companies can use or draw on when conducting self-assessments.
- 25 For more information on the concept and standards of workplace accessibility, see module eight of this guide.
- 26 Under Step Four (of the seven steps for disability inclusion in the workplace) in Devising an Action Plan – p. 43.
- 27 <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>.
- 28 ف. ناصر، ب. مقداد، ض. يحفوفي، ح. حليلة، ه. شهيب، س. ماضي، ”دليلك إلى الوصف الوظيفي“، اتحاد المقعدين اللبنانيين، 2008.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 ف. ناصر، ب. مقداد، ض. يحفوفي، ح. حليلة، ه. شهيب، س. ماضي، ”دليلك إلى الوصف الوظيفي“، اتحاد المقعدين اللبنانيين، 2008.
- 31 This list has been developed for use in this guide. It was modified after review with 50 trainers from 19 Arab countries trained on this guide and after trial in a number of companies in these countries. It is a suggested model that companies can use or draw on when conducting self-assessments.



Inclusive work environments represent a major challenge to empowering persons with disabilities and promoting inclusive employment. This is due to various difficulties and the interactions these environments impose between actors in the environmental and social systems, which impedes progress towards achieving inclusive work environments for persons with disabilities. Negative attitudes, misconceptions, discrimination and the absence of inclusive employment and diversity management strategies and programmes also result in low employment rates for persons with disabilities.

The guide to inclusion of disability in the workplace is a training tool for employers. It consists of several modules on better inclusion of persons with disabilities into labour markets in Arab countries by improving employment attitudes, policies and practices. This guide aims to highlight to public and private sector companies, the discrimination that persons with disabilities face in obtaining employment and the barriers that hinder their access to employment opportunities on an equal basis with others.

The guide consists of eight training modules divided into two parts and covering various topics, including issues of inclusion, language and communication, inclusion management and the importance of developing comprehensive strategies and plans in this context. Each part can be used as an independent training material, based on the need and priority. The two parts can also be used together to achieve greater benefits and a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the basic issues that will enhance the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market in the Arab region.

