



Zero Project Report 2021

Employment and ICT

82 Innovative Practices and Policies from 46 countries,
Impact-Transfer and #ZeroCon21

International study on innovations supporting the implementation of the UN Convention
on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Zero Project – For a world with zero barriers

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“For a world with zero barriers”

FOREWORD BY MARTIN ESSL



After two highly successful four-year research cycles, we are pleased to mark the beginning of our third cycle with the Zero Project's ninth thematic Report – on Employment and ICT. While 2020 was a year that brought enormous challenges to our world, it was also an opportunity for all of us at the Essl Foundation to reflect on how we can make our work even more inclusive. Let me share with you some of our thoughts, our accomplishments, and our dreams.

First digital Zero Project Conference in 2021

We at the Zero Project have always remained attentive to change, with innovation embedded in our DNA. When the world changed so dramatically in March 2020 because of COVID-19, we seized the opportunity to re-invent ourselves and the Zero Project Conference completely.

For the first time, the Zero Project Conference was held virtually. Over three days, the Conference highlighted 82 innovative employment models and technologies for people with disabilities – from civil society, the public sector, and the business sector. For this event, 85 hours of unique content were generated and broadcasted. In addition, many partners of the Zero Project accepted our suggestion that they host their own sessions as part of the Conference's "Partner Channel," highlighting their work and contributions towards disability inclusion. The virtual Zero Project Conference 2021 was an enormous effort, but it paid off. Remarkably, more than 4,000 people from 145 countries registered for the Conference; and the 85 sessions were visited more than 10,000 times, for an average of well over 100 visitors per session.

But our innovation did not stop there. Because during this wonderful new journey we also realized that the incredible content being generated needed a home that people could visit beyond the Conference. And so, the Zero Project Video Portal and Database were born!

Zero Project Video Portal and Database

After attending many virtual events and having organized a virtual conference ourselves, we realized that an integral part of our communication was to provide readily accessible videos of our work and events. This meant integrating audio description, sign language, and multi-language captioning.

To further enhance the Zero Project experience and make it even more inclusive, we launched the Zero Project Video Portal in March 2021, which will be your new digital

destination not only for the content that was generated and broadcast during our 2021 Conference but also for all Zero Project featured material in the future.

Complementing this, we also built a database that digitalizes the Zero Project data, pictures, and videos on innovations since 2013, as well as its ecosystems and networks. This database will be open to everyone later in 2021, not only with written content but with lots of media material such as presentations, videos, and photos.

The Zero Project Almanac 2021

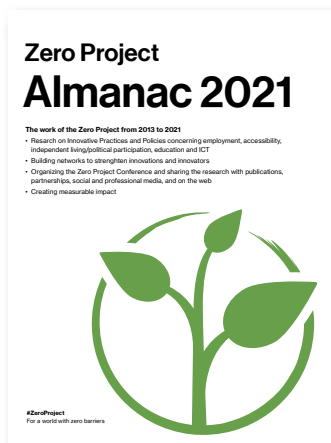
As you may recall, back in January 2017 we published our first Zero Project Almanac covering our research cycle from 2013 to 2016. Well, I cannot tell you how pleased I am to announce the publication of our new Zero Project Almanac 2021.

This edition has even more to offer than just the results of the second research cycle. Rather, it brings together all awarded innovative policies and practices ranging back to 2013 and includes an excellent Annex listing summaries of all 662 Awardees from the past nine years! But not stopping there, we have also produced a parallel edition in German, with a third edition in Spanish to be published later in 2021 by our Chilean partners at Fundación Descúbreme.

You can download the Almanac now from the Zero Project website. And when you do, I think you will notice a decisive shift in our work as we increasingly focus on impact. Specifically, we are increasingly putting our resources and energy into measuring and promoting the progress, change, and opportunities that have been created by our collective efforts and contributions. And as with all aspects of this historical journey into a world with zero barriers, the Zero Project is not about us. It is about each and every one of our partners and supporters, for it is they who are really creating the change we all long for. The Zero Project is merely the catalyst and convenor of the right ideas and the right people.

Powerful partnerships

Partnerships have always been the foundation of the Zero Project, and one of the key partners is Chile's Fundación Descúbreme, which joined forces with us in 2019. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, Carola Rubia and her incredible team were able to launch the first ever (virtual) Zero Project Latin America Conference in November 2020. And with more than 1,500 attendees from around the world, it was a huge success.



Zero Project Almanac 2021



Zero Project Video Portal, launched in March 2021



Virtual Zero Project Conference 2021



Die Presse-Supplement on inclusive employment 2020

Zero Project Impact-Transfer

Another example of what can be done through the power of collaboration is what we, our partners Ashoka and Fundación Descúbreme, as well as our mentors and scaling partners have been able to achieve with the Impact-Transfer initiative, which has successfully completed another round. This 'accelerator programme' supports innovative disability solutions with the highest potential for scalability and/or replicability in other regions and countries, or that can even be adapted for other applications.

Having selected 41 Impact-Transfer fellows since 2017, we look forward to continuing to work with all our wonderful partners, as well as to create further partnerships that support the Zero Project mission for a world with zero barriers.

The Zero Project is also developing new "Solutions Communities" around innovations and innovators – strong communities that are mutually beneficial for everyone involved. Many sessions at past Zero Project Conferences have already been organized by these communities, such as those dealing with the arts and museums, and with IT-based job-platforms. And because Vienna is one of the host cities of the United Nations, we have formed a very special community here in Austria – the Ambassador Circle – bringing together an international group of ambassadors to share and promote innovations on a diplomatic level.

Zero Project in Austria

As with every great idea, it begins at home. And breaking down barriers in Austria is a very personal goal of mine.

Thus, we will continue to strengthen both our corporate and industrial sector dialogues, called in German "Unternehmensdialoge." We have established valuable and strong partnerships not only with regional NGOs but also with such key government bodies as the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Austrian Employment Agency.

We also continue our collaboration with the Austrian newspaper Die Presse by producing an annual supplement on inclusive employment and accessibility. In 2021 a supplement is planned for December 3, the International Day of Disability, just as we did in 2020. We also continue to sponsor the special Austrian Leading Companies Awards in each region within Austria, recognizing extraordinary entrepreneurship in the promotion of inclusive employment.

Finally, we are deeply grateful to the Austrian Parliament for once again co-hosting the opening event of the Zero Project Conference in 2021. I would like to thank President Wolfgang Sobotka personally for being a supporter of the Zero Project and for believing in our mission.

On this note, I conclude by extending my sincere thanks to the entire Zero Project team, so ably led by Michael Fembek. The Zero Project would not be possible without the continuous efforts and dedication of this exceptional team or without the engagement of all the many members of the Project's global network. Together, we will continue to build "a world with zero barriers."

“A partnership for a world without barriers”

FOREWORD BY CATALINA SAIEH, PRESIDENT OF FUNDACIÓN DESCÚBREME



Promoting the inclusion of people with cognitive disabilities

Promoting the access to inclusive and equitable employment of people with cognitive disabilities is a topic very close to our hearts at Fundación Descúbreme. Eleven years ago, when we started working on inclusion, very few persons with disabilities

accessed the open labour market in Chile, and even fewer did persons with cognitive disabilities.

Since our origins as a foundation, we have focused our efforts on closing this barrier through a series of programmes aimed at training people with intellectual disabilities for employment and supporting them to access and remain in the open labour market. Regardless of our growth over the last years, this commitment continues to be at the core of our work, and we have witnessed considerable improvements on inclusion.

We cannot, however, overlook the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the employment of people with disabilities. It has presented us a valuable opportunity to be flexible, to be active, and to adapt to new and alternative ways of working in an inclusive and person-centred environment. The global pandemic has taught us that we need to strengthen our efforts to guarantee the continuity of inclusive employment, and that only in this way will we ensure that no one is left behind – not now, not ever.

Finally, from early on we have realized we could not achieve this goal by ourselves. We needed to create partnerships and alliances to learn from successful practices developed in other contexts, and to build bridges for collaboration around the world.

A partnership for inclusion

In this quest, we found dear friends in the Zero Project. Our partnership with the Zero Project goes back to 2017, when we received a Zero Project Award on Employment for our certification scheme creating job opportunities for young persons with intellectual disabilities.

Since then and based on the trust that we have built with the Essl family and the Zero Project team over the years, we have combined and multiplied our efforts to expand the mission of a world without barriers to the Spanish-speaking community worldwide. The results are starting to speak for themselves, and we are proud of helping to change the view of our societies towards inclusion and diversity.

Both Fundación Descúbreme and the Zero Project share not only a mission and a culture but also an ambition to support people with disabilities to live better and decent lives. We are committed to eliminating the barriers that prevent the inclusion of people with disabilities and to ensuring their rights. We strongly believe that by working together we can do even more and reach even further.

Therefore, we are honoured to be a part of this Zero Project Report focusing on Inclusive Employment. Revisiting this topic after four years makes us marvel at the incredible advancement that has occurred in terms of the access of people with disabilities to equitable employment throughout the world. And we know that such advancement was only possible thanks to the collective efforts of the more than 5,000 organizations that are part of the Zero Project network, working every day to make life better for persons with disabilities around the globe.

With so much accomplished, and with so much left to do, we at Fundación Descúbreme eagerly look forward to continuing our relationship with the Zero Project, and to working with everyone at Fundación Essl as we move ever closer to a world that is truly without barriers.

The ICT Innovation for Inclusion programme

Since 2020, Pacto de Productividad Chile, Fundación Descúbreme, the Zero Project, IDB Lab, and Impact Transfer have joined forces to create the first version of the “ICT – Innovation for Inclusion” programme. Promoted by Fundación Descúbreme and the IDB Lab, the initiative seeks to encourage public-private partnerships at the national level to consolidate a collaboration platform for the effective articulation of the actors within the inclusive employment ecosystem. Led by Pacto de Productividad, the programme aims to implement technological innovations that support the employment of persons with disabilities. Three innovations – identified in the last Zero Project Call for Nominations on Employment and ICT – have already been chosen to implement their solutions in Chilean companies during the second semester of 2021. The organizations behind these solutions will receive support from members of the Pacto de Productividad Chile network, as well as acceleration support from the Impact Transfer programme to clarify their replication model and needs. The work developed by the programme and its partners will be showcased during the Zero Project Conference 2021 on Employment and ICT.

Executive Summary

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The mission of the Essl Foundation and Zero Project

Employment & ICT

How the Report is connected to the CRPD

Communities

The new Solutions Communities of the Zero Project

Impact

How the Zero Project creates and measures impact

Methodology

The 5 steps of the Zero Project research

Selection process

Facts and figures about this year's selection process

About the Zero Project

The Zero Project was initiated by the Essl Foundation in 2008 with the mission to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and to work for a world with zero barriers. Primarily, this is done by researching Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies as well as Social Indicators, and by communicating them worldwide.

The Zero Project focuses on researching and communicating innovations on behalf of persons with disabilities everywhere, and it involves all stakeholders who share our commitment to implementing and realizing the CRPD in all aspects of life. Since the project's early beginnings, and after years of organizing the annual Zero Project Conference at United Nations Headquarters in Vienna, the Zero Project has built a vast global network of experts both with and without disabilities.

Working with this network, the team has developed the expertise to identify, select, and communicate Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies worldwide, working with all relevant stakeholder groups, including several UN agencies.

In 2019, the Essl Foundation and Chile's Fundación Descúbreme announced a long-term partnership to expand the Zero Project mission of a world with zero barriers to the Spanish-speaking community worldwide.

In 2021, 66 Innovative Practices and Policies in employment were selected, and 16 in ICT, for a total of 82.

2020–2021: Employment and ICT

The Zero Project is based on a four-year research cycle. This year's topic focused on Employment, identifying and highlighting inclusive human resource practices and policies. This included innovative programmes developed by all aspects of society: the public sector, civil society, and the business sector. Starting this year, ICT is to be a dimension of our research every year going forward. In 2021, 66 Innovative Practices and Policies in employment were selected, and 16 in ICT, for a total of 82 (www.zeroproject.org).

The Zero Project Conference and Zero Project Latin America Conference

The annual Zero Project Conference is a unique meeting point of people who inspire and want to

be inspired. Held at UN Headquarters in Vienna from 2014 to 2020, in 2021 the Conference was conducted virtually, and was graciously hosted by Bank Austria, because of COVID-19. Also for 2020–2021, the first (and also virtual) Zero Project Latin America Conference was organized by Fundación Descúbreme in Chile, in November 2020.

The Essl Foundation

The Essl Foundation MGE gemeinnützige Privatstiftung is a charitable foundation established in 2007 by Martin and Gerda Essl in Klosterneuburg, Austria, with a focus on scientific research and charitable giving. The foundation initiated, funds, and organizes the Zero Project, with its team based in Vienna. The Essl Foundation holds observer status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Zero Project Impact-Transfer initiative

The Essl Foundation, Fundación Descúbreme, and Ashoka have joined forces in the Zero Project Impact-Transfer programme, an accelerator programme designed to support the internationalization of innovative solutions for a barrier-free world. Since 2017–2018, 41 Zero Project Awardees have received this special support.

The Zero Project in Austria

Within Austria, the Essl Foundation organizes the Zero Project Unternehmensdialoge ("Corporate Dialogues") and Zero Project Branchendialoge ("Sector Dialogues"), which include a series of regional conferences to promote Innovative Practices in inclusive employment. The conferences are co-funded by the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs and co-organized with regional partner organizations. The Essl Foundation in partnership with the Austrian daily Die Presse also publishes newspaper supplements on inclusive employment and accessibility. Also jointly with Die Presse, the Foundation sponsors special awards for outstanding efforts in creating employment for persons with disabilities, as part of the renowned Austrian Leading Companies Award.

The Essl Foundation is also actively promoting the philanthropic community in Austria by co-initiating the Association of Charitable Foundations, the House of Philanthropy (a co-working space of foundations), and the Sinnstifter and Sinnbildungstiftung, which are co-investing vehicles to promote social innovations outside the area of disability.

About this year's research topic

KEY ARTICLES OF THE CRPD RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT AND ICT

The Zero Project Report 2021 focuses on Article 27 (Employment) of the CRPD, revisiting this topic within the 4-year cycle of the Zero Project, and on ICT (covered in Article 9). This page explains the relationship between the CRPD and the Zero Project's research of the past year.

Article 27 of the CRPD is on work and employment. It defines the following rights, among others, to be recognized by the States Parties that have ratified the CRPD:

- (a) *Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;*
- (b) *Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment, and the redress of grievances;*
- (d) *Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training;*
- (e) *Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;*
- (f) *Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one's own business;*
- (g) *Employ persons with disabilities in the public sector;*
- (i) *Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;*
- (k) *Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.*

Based on research from former years, the Zero Project recognized that innovations are focusing on some of the areas mentioned in Article 27. As a consequence, the following subtopics were specifically mentioned in the Call for Nominations in 2020:

1. **Supported employment:** Personal or technical support enabling persons with disability to participate in the labour market
2. **Vocational training:** TVET – Technical and vocational educational training providing skills for employment
3. **Transition models from sheltered workshops:** Methods and programmes to move beyond sheltered employment
4. **Entrepreneurship and micro-finance:** Creation of small

- businesses and the provision of financial means to run them
5. **Transition:** Period between the end of secondary education and the start of employment
6. **Matchmaking:** Bringing employers and employees together and the aligning of capabilities and requirements
7. **Higher education to prepare for the labour market:** University and/or college education to enter the labour market

Innovations very often connect education and vocational training with employment. As a consequence, there is no clear distinction between education (Article 24 of the CRPD) and employment. For further research, the Zero Project team also used several publications and reports as a baseline for designing the Call for Nominations, the selection criteria, and the selection process, including those from the ILO and the Thematic Report of the OHCHR.

Article 9: ICT within Accessibility

Starting with the third cycle of its research, the Zero Project recognized the importance – as well as the cross-sectoral nature – of ICT-based innovations. As a consequence, the Zero Project has decided to add ICT as a related subtopic in every research year starting in 2020–2021. The CRPD mentions within Article 9:

- (f) *To promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities to ensure their access to information;*
- (g) *To promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet;*
- (h) *To promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost.*

Within the ICT-section of its Call for Nominations, the Zero Project defined those subtopics in the instructions:

1. Mobile services and smartphone apps
2. Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, and Big Data-solutions
3. Social media
4. 3D printing, Internet of Things, robotics, and automated machinery.

How Innovative Practices and Policies were selected

THE FIVE STEPS FROM THE CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO THE ZERO PROJECT CONFERENCE

For 2021 the Zero Project selected 82 Innovative Practices and Policies from 46 countries, with 41 originating in civil society, 10 in the public sector, 15 in the business sector, and 16 in ICT. In this section the nomination and selection process is described in detail.

As in past years, in 2020–2021 the selection process was conducted in five steps, after an initial “charting of the territory” period in March and April 2020.

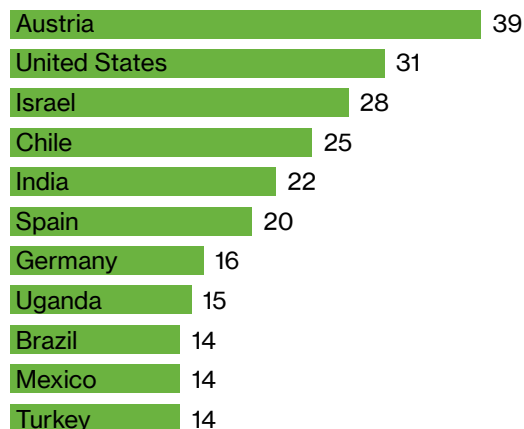
In May, the subtopics relating to this year’s research on employment were categorized as follows:

- Supported employment
- Vocational training
- Transition models from sheltered workshops
- Entrepreneurship and micro-finance
- Transition from education to employment
- Matchmaking employees and employers
- Higher education to prepare for the labour market

In ICT, these subcategories were defined:

- Mobile services and smartphone apps
- Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, Big Datasolutions
- Social media
- 3D printing, Internet of Things, robotics, and automated machinery

COUNTRIES WITH THE MOST NOMINATIONS IN 2020/21



1. Call for Nomination

From May to early July, more than 5,000 experts from nearly every country in the world were approached to spread the Call for and to nominate Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies. The Call was circulated by email as well as across the Zero Project’s social media channels, and was shared by many partners of the Zero Project Network.

Nominations were accepted through the Zero Project nominations platform (a tool developed by the World Summit Award that the Zero Project has been using since 2018, thanks to the generous support of the World Summit Award), which is available in Arabic, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish, or via an accessible Word document in all these languages. For the first time, nominators had to choose one of the four “sectors of origin” of their nomination: (1) civil society, (2) public sector, (3) business sector, and (4) ICT-related innovations.

As a result, a record 475 nominations were received: 247 from civil society, 33 from the public sector, 91 from the business sector, and 104 ICT-related sectors. Thanks to the Zero Project’s new partnership with Fundación Descúbreme, the number of nominations from Latin America and the Caribbean reached a record level of 74.

2. Internal and external peer-review, compilation of the Shortlist

In July the Zero Project team – which for the first time included members of the Zero Project team from Fundación Descúbreme in Chile as well – began reviewing nominations to determine if they correctly fit the annual topic and to assess if they each showed a proven impact on the lives of persons with disabilities (“internal peer-review”).

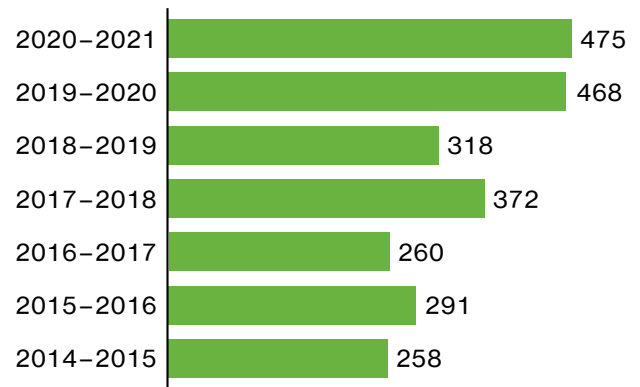
Of those that were judged to fit the criteria, 116 nominations proceeded directly onto the Shortlist, with 209 identified as requiring further analysis (“external peer-review”), and 150 rejected.

2020–2021 research in numbers

NOMINATIONS → SHORTLIST → AWARDEES

371 Employment	189	66
104 ICT	52	16
93 Countries represented	75	46

Total nominations received by the Zero Project since 2014



More than 100 experts from the Zero Project Network participated in the external peer-review, providing some 1,000 individual scores across three criteria: innovation, impact, and scalability/replicability. Based on these scores, the Shortlist of nominations was compiled with a total of 241 nominations (but with 29 “early stage” innovations tagged as “ICT-Track,” which qualified for presentations at the Zero Project Conference, not as potential Awardees). The core Shortlist consisted of 212 nominations.

Based on the Zero Project Shortlist, the 10 participants of the Zero Project Impact–Transfer initiative were selected in parallel (see page 110), and the candidates for the ICT for Inclusion Award of Fundación Descúbreme were chosen.

3. Voting

In September, over 4,000 experts and leaders in the wider Zero Project Network were invited to vote and comment on the shortlisted applications, with each expert being assigned randomly to a group of up to 15 projects.

417 voters from 88 countries took part in this most decisive step of the selection process, with a total of 5,174 votes received. Each of the shortlisted nominations received an average of 29 votes.

4. Fact-checks and Factsheet writing

Based on the votes and feedback, and with additional analysis by topic and geographical region to account for bias and country income levels, 66 Innovative Practices and Policies related to employment were ultimately selected as Zero Project Awardees, and another 16 that are related to ICT.

In this final step of fact-checking and composing a Factsheet on each of the awarded nominations, the Zero Project team conducted additional, thorough research, and requested photos and videos. In addition, personal Life Stories of those who have benefitted from the projects were solicited.

5. Report, Website, Conference

All Innovative Practices and Policies are published in this Report, on www.zeroproject.org, and on all social media outlets.

Life Stories of selected persons who benefitted from these innovations can be found on pages 38, 64, and 96. The Zero Project Report is also made available as an accessible formatted pdf, which includes alternative text. It will also be translated into Spanish later this year.

Due to the pandemic, the Zero Project Conference 2021 was a virtual event, held 10–12 February (see Section 4 on the Conference). Among the many communications tools that resulted from the Conference, an Award Video was produced for each Awardee, and can be watched at streaming.zeroproject.org

THE ZERO PROJECT – PROCESS

Five steps from the Call for Nomination to Report and Conference



The Zero Project methodology

ABOUT INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND POLICIES, THE FOUR SECTORS OF ORIGIN OF INNOVATIONS, THE SELECTION PROCESS, AND THE SELECTION CRITERIA

The three pillars of the Zero Project methodology are: (1) selecting Innovative Practices and Policies on the basis of innovation, impact, and scalability; (2) engaging with the Zero Project network at all stages of the selection process; and (3) disseminating results, especially by organizing the Zero Project Conference. Find a brief description on this page. A thorough description appears in the Report 2020.

Among many other sources, the necessity and impact of “Best Practices” is mentioned in the CRPD itself, encouraging State Parties to share best practices (Article 32).

About the selection process

The Zero Project organizes a multi-step process that engages with thousands of experts – the Zero Project Network – at all stages to identify and select Innovative Practices and Policies: (1) nomination, (2) internal and external peer review to create the Shortlist, (3) voting to select Awardees, (4) writing of Factsheets to check information and analyse results, and (5) communication, publication, and organization of the Zero Project Conference.

About Innovative Practices and Policies

In the Zero Project context, Practices in the field of implementation of the CRPD include projects, programmes, products, and services. Policies refer to laws and regulations from the public sector. In 2020, the Zero Project introduced four sectors of origin of Innovative Practices and Policies to further

improve the research model: (1) civil society (NGOs, DPOs, social businesses, foundations, as well as universities), (2) the public sector (governments, supranational organizations), (3) the business sector, and (4) ICT. ICT receives special attention because of its overarching importance and cross-cutting nature for innovations. In the nomination, peer-review, and selection processes, experts are encouraged to consider three criteria: innovation, impact, and scalability.

Thus, it is the network of experts that makes the selection, with the Zero Project providing the framework for the process.

Encouraging innovation

Experts who nominate, evaluate, or vote are encouraged to look at the degree of innovation, considering also the innovation for certain geographies, contexts, or groups of beneficiaries.

Encouraging impact

Since peer-reviewers and voters have to value the impact of one nomination against another, existing impact (e.g., number of beneficiaries or users, growth rates, etc.) are very important.

Encouraging scalability

Nominations have to have the potential for easy replication, growth, or adaption across borders and have the potential to improve lives and rights of as many persons with disabilities as possible. Thus, scalability encompasses very different types of growing, replicating, or other forms of expansion, and may even mean Open Source strategies or giving away all expertise for free.

Looking at the current stage of an innovative practice or policy, the Zero Project normally focuses on “prototypes and pilots” on the transition-to-scale phase, and also when the project has already started to scale to other geographies. If the nomination is still an idea or only researched, it is normally not considered. Therefore, affordability of products and services and a clearly explained and replicable strategy are important as well.

THE FOUR SECTORS

1. Civil Society
2. Public Sector
3. Business Sector
4. ICT (across all sectors)

THE THREE CRITERIA

1. Innovation
2. Impact
3. Scalability

The Zero Project's new "Solutions Communities" programme

BUILDING INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES FOR A WORLD WITH ZERO BARRIERS

In keeping with the raison d'être of the Zero Project's goal of building a world with zero barriers, the team launched its latest initiative in 2020. The new international "Solutions Communities" programme saw awardees, experts, and community managers harness the power of collaborative work and develop outcomes before and during the annual Zero Project Conference.

The newest Zero Project initiative harnesses the power of networks and ecosystems of knowledge.

Aligning with the Zero Project's mission of building networks in order to utilize the multiplier effect of collaborative work, the idea of "Solutions Communities" was introduced. To date, close to 20 Solutions Communities have been developed – ranging from policy recommendations to on-the-ground implementation. Each of these communities is led by a community manager, a leading individual in their field.

"Solutions Communities have the potential to be a global movement, whereby instead of replicating efforts, we make the pie larger for everyone by building on each other's strengths."

Sumita Kunashakaran, Zero Project Manager for Civil Society, and lead of the Solutions and Communities programme

CURRENT COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE ZERO PROJECT ECOSYSTEM

- Leading NGOs Creating System Change
- Tools and Devices Supporting Mobility and Inclusion
- Arts & Museums
- Social Business in the Circular Economy
- Innovative Assistive Technology for ICT Access
- Building Online Communities
- Online Recruitment and IT-Based Job Platforms
- Communication Tools for the Blind and Low Vision
- Promoting Supported Employment Opportunities for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

(As of March 2021)

A number of these communities were featured during the latest Zero Project Conference 2021, which focused on Employment and ICT. This included discussions on how to improve the employment of people with disabilities, and on such related topics as developing inclusive arts and museums so that individuals with disabilities are able to interact better with the world around them.

Community managers also played an important role in bringing their communities together in such a short time, linking up with individuals from around the world so as to develop methodologies and outcomes to be presented within a matter of weeks. Each community prepared a concept paper that outlined the purpose of the community, the progress made to date, and future steps and potential areas for growth.

In 2021 the Zero Project aims to build communities that also touch on intersectional issues that affect people with disabilities around the world. The Zero Project believes that organic growth is crucial in the success of these communities.

Learn more about these Solutions Communities on the Zero Project Video Portal at <https://streaming.zeroproject.org>.

Interested in joining? Write to office@zeroproject.org

"We need to create specific resources to fully integrate people with disabilities in the arts and culture. This is what the Solutions Communities will keep working on."

Doris Rothauer, Community Manager of Arts and Museums

Impact-Transfer Programme by Essl Foundation, Fundación Descúbreme, and Ashoka

SCALING AND REPLICATING INNOVATIONS IN INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT

The Zero Project Impact-Transfer – a partnership of the Essl Foundation, Fundación Descúbreme, and Ashoka – is an accelerator programme that supports innovative disability solutions with the highest potential for scalability and/or replicability in other regions and countries, or that can even be adapted for other applications. This year, another 10 projects were selected.

From the hundreds of nominations received worldwide for the Zero Project Awards, the most promising initiatives are selected to participate in the Impact-Transfer programme. To date, 41 projects have had the opportunity to work with mentors, get feedback on their replication model, and receive support from a network of peers.

In 2017 the Essl Foundation joined forces with Ashoka to initiate the programme to internationalize the most innovative disability solutions for a barrier-free world. In 2019, Fundación Descúbreme from Chile also joined this partnership. This year, another 10 projects were selected to join this high-potential programme.

How Impact-Transfer works

Step 1

Each year since 2018, 10 projects that have a proven impact model and a strong replication strategy to scale their impact internationally are shortlisted from the nominations for the Zero Project Awards. This

ensures that the selected innovations can be transferred and sustainably replicated to other regions and/or countries. Replication must be a key part of the project's strategy, as this aligns with the Zero Project's ethos of creating a world with zero barriers.

Step 2

Selected projects will undergo a structured six-month programme to prepare for international replication. This includes online webinar trainings on social entrepreneurship, impact modelling, business modelling, replication strategies, and financing strategies. Projects will also be assigned a leading mentor in their field to help guide and provide curated information applicable to each project. Mentors will help to develop a replication plan and provide external input as a subject-matter expert, finalized in the "campus".

Step 3

Impact-Transfer projects also benefit from matchmaking opportunities with potential replication partners from across the Zero Project, Ashoka, and Fundación Descúbreme communities. For example, participants will have the opportunity to present their projects in a dedicated session during the annual Zero Project Conference in Vienna, as well as during the Zero Project Latin America Conference in partnership with Fundación Descúbreme in Santiago, Chile.

Step 4

Beyond the programme, follow-up support provided by the Ashoka, Essl Foundation, and Fundación Descúbreme team as well as the Impact-Transfer-Alumni Community will help to implement the replication strategy and to offer further options for networking and cooperation.

Read more on the Zero Project Impact-Transfer programme on <http://impact-transfer.org/zero-project/>, search www.zeroproject.org, or watch the sessions from the Zero Project Conference 2021 at <https://streaming.zeroproject.org>.

ASHOKA'S IMPACT-TRANSFER

Impact-Transfer is an initiative of Ashoka, the leading global community of social entrepreneurs and change makers. Ashoka nurtures a community of leaders who are creating transformational change. Together we nudge institutions, systems, and cultures to create the 'Everyone a Changemaker' world. Ashoka facilitates the cross-border transfer of solutions that generate social impacts, and makes them available where they are needed by local stakeholders.

Zero Project Conference 2021

The Zero Project Conference, held virtually in light of the COVID-19 pandemic in the venue of Bank Austria Kaiserwasser, took place 10–12 February and included 85 hours of which nearly have been organized by partners!) nearly 500 speakers, some 4,000 registered participants, and 10,000 hours of session attendance! All sessions are now available for viewing on the Zero Project Video Portal.

Various keynotes highlighted the 2021 Conference and were delivered either on site or remotely via video. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from EU Commissioner Nicolas Schmit; Caroline Casey (The Valuable 500); Steve Ingham (Pagegroup); Robert James (Adecco); Sofija Korać (US Mission to the UN); Charlotte V. McClain-Nhlapo (World Bank); Michael A. Stein (Harvard University); Stefan Trömel (ILO), Ashok Vaswani (Barclays Bank UK); and Robert Zadrazil (Unicredit Bank Austria) to name a few.

Alongside the impressive speaker lineup, the focus of the 2021 Zero Project Conference, remained squarely on the 82 “Innovative Practices and Policies” from 49 countries, each of which received a Zero Project Award for its efforts to bolster employment for people with disabilities. Additionally, for the third time the “Her Abilities Awards” was also presented during the Zero Project Conference.

In working to keep videos from the conference accessible, the Zero Project has launched the Zero Project Video Portal on which the entire conference is available free of charge as a stream.



Ghada Fathi Waly, Executive Director of the United Nations Office at Vienna and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, one of the few speakers to appear in person at the virtual Zero Project Conference 2021.

Zero Project Latin America Conference 2020

As part of the long-term cooperation between the Essl Foundation and Fundación Descúbreme, the latter organized the first Zero Project Conference outside of Austria. More than 1,500 people from 52 countries participated in the virtual Zero Project Conference for Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Spanish-speaking community on Inclusive Education.

On 18 and 19 November 2020 the first Zero Project Conference for Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Spanish-speaking community was held as a virtual conference in English and Spanish, with a focus on Inclusive Education.

The Conference brought together more than 60 experts and featured four major topics addressed by specialists in Inclusive Education and the rights of people with disabilities. The line-up of keynote-speakers included Daniela Bas (UN DESA), Javier Guemes (Fundación ONCE, Spain), Cecilia Breinbauer (Director, Comunidades Inclusivas, International Center for Health

Systems Strengthening, United States), and Maria Soledad Cisternas Reyes (President of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

Many innovative practices and policies from the years of Zero Project research were presented so as to promote access to inclusive and quality education for people with disabilities, carefully selected by Fundación Descúbreme with relevance to Latin America.

The next Zero Project Conference for Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Spanish-speaking community will be held in September 2021.

Overview: Innovative Policies/Practices 2021

Country by country from A to Z: 66 Innovative Policies/Practices on Employment and 16 on ICT. The second page number refers to the description as an Impact-Transfer fellow.

EMPLOYMENT

Country	Headline of the Factsheet	Organization/Programme	page
Afghanistan	Providing bicycles and training to support income-generation activities	AABRAR – Bicycle Training Programme	20
Argentina	Job portal for persons with disabilities, going international	Incluyeme – Job portal	21
Argentina	Technology centres offering accessible training in digital skills and career support	Trust for the Americas – POETA DigiSpark	22
Australia	Business disability network connecting students with disabilities to paid internships	AND – Stepping Into Internship Program	23
Austria	Workplace adaptations for the blind as a business service	Videbis – Workplace adaptation	24
Austria	Pharmacy specialized in employment and services for deaf people	Marien Apotheke	25
Austria	Job-matching based on coaching for students with disabilities and company-partnering	myAbility Talent® Programme	26/112
Bangladesh	Person-centred job training and employment for people with disabilities	PFDA-Vocational Training Center	27/113
Bangladesh	Job fairs organized by the Disability Network	BBDN – Business and Disability Network	28
Bangladesh	Promoting self-employment in agriculture and aquaculture by training and microfinance	DRRA – Microfinance Programme	29
Bangladesh	Disability-inclusive approach to bring families out of extreme poverty	Humanity & Inclusion – Inclusive Poverty Graduation	30
Belgium	Employing people on the Autism Spectrum and hiring them out as consultants	Passwerk	31
Brazil	Job clubs as employment entry points for people with intellectual disabilities	Instituto Clemente – Professional Inclusion	32
Bulgaria	Comprehensive job-creation model from East Europe expanding internationally	JAMBA – Career for All	33/114
Cambodia	Training job coaches to support jobseekers with disabilities and employers	Light for the World Cambodia	34
Canada	A skills-based approach to matching jobseekers with autism to local employers	Avalon – Autism Employment Facilitator	35
Chile	Ecological car washing service employing a majority of people with disabilities	Seco Chile Carwash	36/110
Chile	Municipality Council running a four-step job integration model	City of Providencia – Labour Inclusion Programme	37
Chile	National state-run training and job-placement programme for people with disabilities	SENCE – Training for Work	40
China	Career development and job matching support for graduates with disabilities	CareER Association	41
Colombia	National Training Service making itself accessible and inclusive	National Training Service (SENA)	42
Colombia	National and cross-sector coordination to promote inclusive employment	Programa Pacto de Productividad	43
Denmark	Employer-driven job creation for people with intellectual disabilities	Lev – Inclusion Denmark – KLAPjob	44
DR Congo	Entrepreneurship training and support for persons with disabilities	Kadiwaku Family Foundation	45
Egypt	Using analytic tools to make workplaces more accessible and jobs more inclusive	Helm – Workplace Inclusive Solutions	46/112
Ethiopia	National guideline to make vocational training centres fully accessible	Federal TVET Agency – Inclusion Guidelines	47
Ethiopia	First deaf-run social enterprise selling paper bags to fight plastic pollution	Teki Paper Bags	48
Finland	Municipality-funded work coaches for people with disabilities	City of Helsinki – Supported Employment	49
Germany	Growing social business in IT-remarketing with a high rate of inclusive employment	AfB social & green IT	50
Guatemala	Lottery funds for employment support of people with hearing or visual disabilities	Blind & Deaf Committee – Labour Inclusion	51
Hungary	Two restaurants run by persons with disabilities	Kék Madár Alapítvány – Ízlelő restaurants	52
India	Smart Inclusion Centres in universities that connect students with employers	Youth4Jobs Foundation – College Connect	53/114
India	Inclusive job preparation and placement in the media & entertainment sector	Aims Media – Ability Enhancement Programme	54
India	Fast-growing café chain with a majority of employees with disabilities	MITTI Café	55
India	Training volunteers to teach entrepreneurship development	Naman Seva Samiti – Ujjawal	56
India	Vocational training and seed capital to support entrepreneurs with deafblindness	Sense International India	57
Ireland	Assigning job coaches for young jobseekers with intellectual disabilities	Cope Foundation – Ability@Work	58
Ireland	Internships for people with intellectual disabilities at a leading consultancy	TCPID – Graduate Internship Programme	59
Israel	Training people with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities for ICT jobs	itworks – Technology Accessibility Program	60
Jordan	A work coach model for persons with intellectual disabilities	Sana – Sana Work Program	61
Kenya	An app that connects jobseekers with disabilities with job opportunities	Riziki Source App	62

Country	Headline of the Factsheet	Organization/Programme	page
Lebanon	Vocational training and micro-financing for young people with disabilities	LUPD – Lebabese Union of Persons with Disabilities	63
Mauritius	NGO federation training and placing young adults with intellectual disabilities	Inclusion Mauritius – Supported employment	66
Mexico	Labour inclusion index and job platform for disability-inclusive companies	Alianza Éntrale	67
Moldova	A catering service training and vocation programme	Eco-Razeni Association – Floare de Cireş	68
Montenegro	Ministry of Education organizing Individual Training Plans for transition to work	Ministry of Education – ITPs	69
Nigeria	Providing vocational skills and career development to young adults with disabilities	Special Needs Initiative for Growth – TVET	70
Pakistan	Sign language relay service with a successful scaling strategy	DeafTawk	71/110
Philippines	Training persons with disabilities in the Philippines to work as digital freelancers	Virtualahan	72
Russia	Solving social issues to increase job opportunities	Ingka Group (IKEA) – Abilympics project	73
South Africa	Expanding a chain of coffee shops run by deaf young people	I Love Coffee	74/113
South Korea	Transforming sheltered workshops to offer vocational training and employment support	Sohwa Aram VR Centre – Job Plus	75
Spain	Vocational support for people with intellectual disabilities in the penal system	APSA Penitentiary Programme	76
Spain	DPO federation running a business sector-encouragement programme	COCEMFE – Making businesses Inclusive	77
Spain	Moving inactive people with disabilities from social services to employment	Fundación ONCE – One-on-One	78
Spain	Making civil service positions accessible for people with intellectual disabilities	Plena Inclusión – Public Sector Employment	79
Tanzania	Training and online job-matching for students and graduates with disabilities	Employable Africa – Envision Africa	80
Tanzania	Entrepreneurship training programme for women with disabilities	FUWAVITA	81
Uganda	Young people trained as Disability Inclusion Facilitators to motivate employers	Light for the World – 12.4% Work-Initiative	82
Uganda	Providing income-generating activities to refugees with disabilities	World Vision – Inclusive Livelihood	83
United Kingdom	Service package for companies, substantially reducing cost of workplace adaption	Microlink PC (UK) Ltd. – MiCase	84
United States	A cross-sector partnership promoting accessible technology in employment	Department of Labor – ODEP/PEAT	85
United States	Government-level initiative to promote inclusive employment policies	Department of Labor – SEED	86
United States	Consultancy developing and implementing quality standards in Customized Employment	Griffin-Hammis Associates	87
United States	Individualized supports help adults with autism find jobs	Keystone – Adult Autism Project	88
United States	Public-private partnership connecting jobseekers with disabilities to employers	New York City/MOPD – NYC: ATWORK	89
United States	Government-led training and hiring services for people with intellectual disabilities	State of Vermont – Transition Program	90

ICT

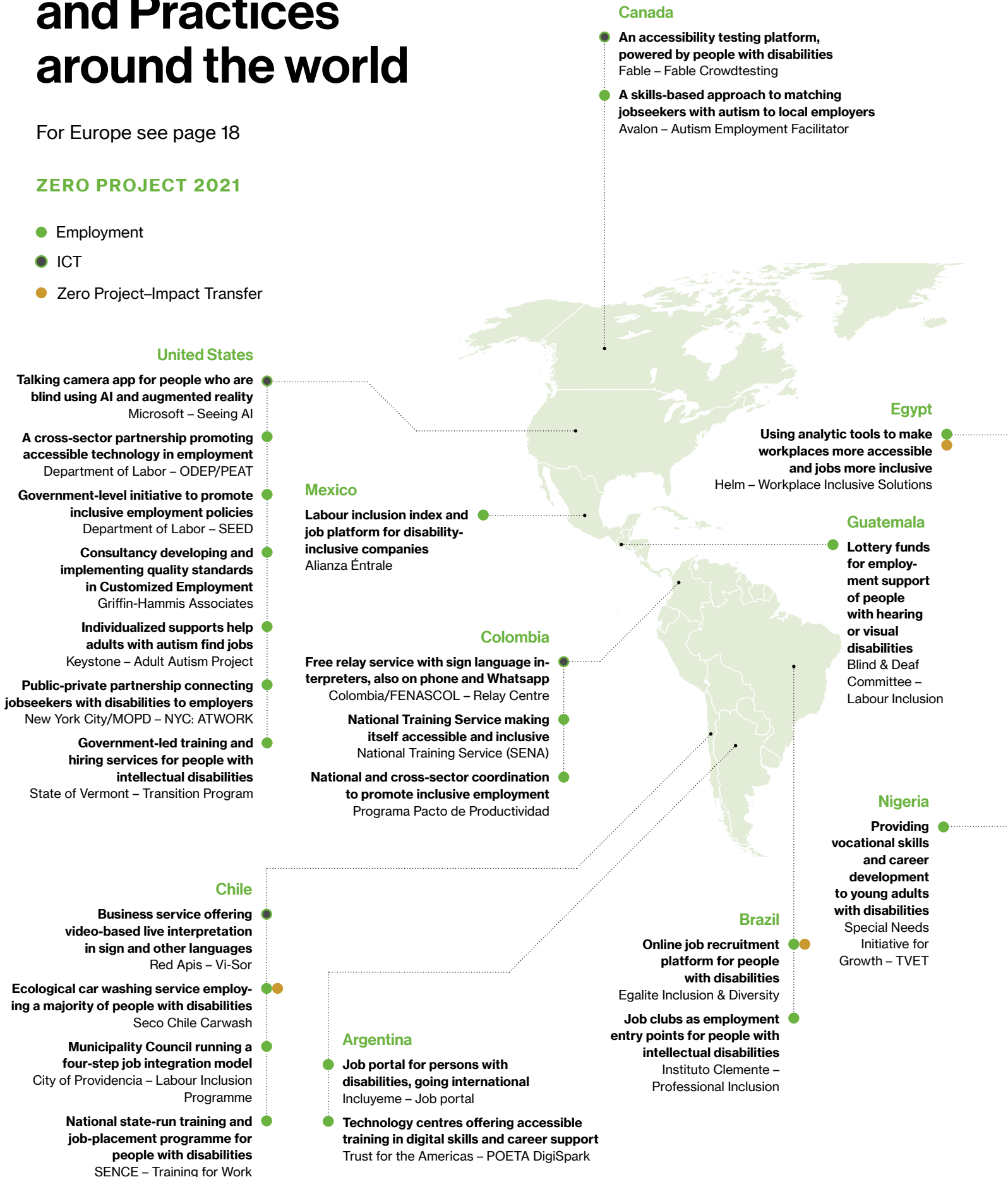
Country	Headline of the Factsheet	Organization/Programme	page
Brazil	Online job recruitment platform for people with disabilities	Egalité Inclusion & Diversity	92/111
Canada	An accessibility testing platform, powered by people with disabilities	Fable – Fable Crowdstesting	93
Chile	Business service offering video-based live interpretation in sign and other languages	Red Apis – Vi-Sor	94
Colombia	Free relay service with sign language interpreters, also on phone and Whatsapp	Colombia/FENASCOL – Relay Centre	95
France	Open space to invent and make tailor-made technical aids for persons with disabilities	My Human Kit – Humanlab	98
France	Remote sign language interpretation and transcription for professional users	Tadeo	99
India	Free learning tool for visually impaired persons to improve their computer skills	EnAble India – EYE Tool	100/111
India	Accessible online library provided for free as a corporate social initiative	TCS – Accesible Online Library	101
Italy	Accessible phone calls for the deaf for private and professional needs	Pedius – Pedius Work Inclusion	102
Netherlands	App with hands-on information on rehabilitation to fieldworkers in low-income countries	Enablement B.V. – RehApp	105
Norway	Teaching sign language with videos, Artificial Intelligence, and gamification	SignLab – Toleio	103
Spain	App facilitating citizen reporting of accessibility barriers	COCEMFE – AccesibilidApp	104
Turkey	An indoor navigation system for the blind and visually impaired	Poilabs – Indoor Navigation	106
United States	Talking camera app for people who are blind using AI and augmented reality	Microsoft – Seeing AI	107
Viet Nam	Blind programmers developing free software for blind users	Sao Mai Technology Center for the Blind	108

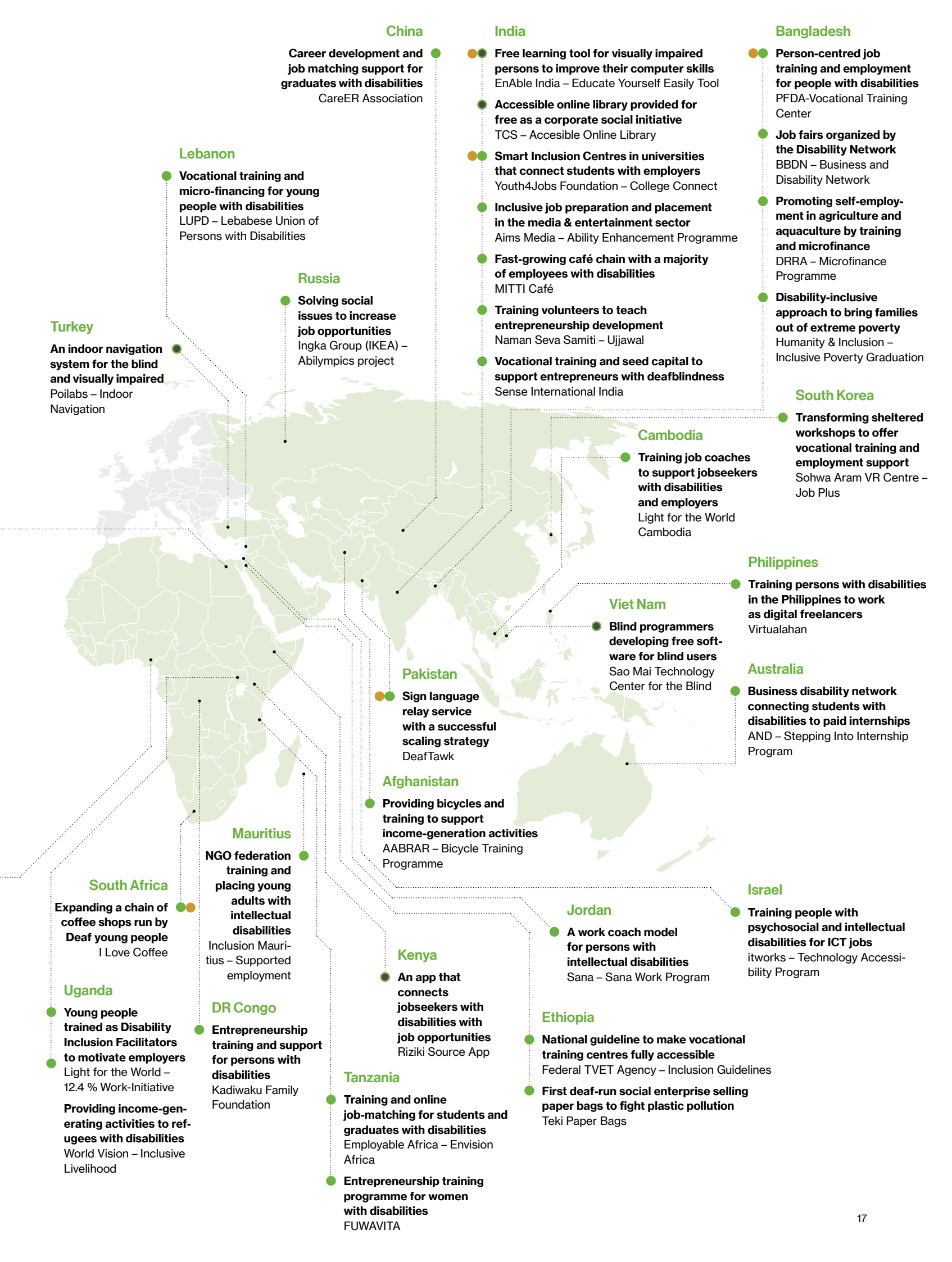
Innovative Policies and Practices around the world

For Europe see page 18

ZERO PROJECT 2021

- Employment
- ICT
- Zero Project-Impact Transfer





China

● Career development and job matching support for graduates with disabilities
CareER Association

India

- Free learning tool for visually impaired persons to improve their computer skills
EnAble India – Educate Yourself Easily Tool
- Accessible online library provided for free as a corporate social initiative
TCS – Accesible Online Library
- Smart Inclusion Centres in universities that connect students with employers
Youth4Jobs Foundation – College Connect
- Inclusive job preparation and placement in the media & entertainment sector
Aims Media – Ability Enhancement Programme
- Fast-growing café chain with a majority of employees with disabilities
MITTI Café
- Training volunteers to teach entrepreneurship development
Naman Seva Samiti – Ujjawal
- Vocational training and seed capital to support entrepreneurs with deafblindness
Sense International India

Bangladesh

- Person-centred job training and employment for people with disabilities
PFDA-Vocational Training Center
- Job fairs organized by the Disability Network
BBDN – Business and Disability Network
- Promoting self-employment in agriculture and aquaculture by training and microfinance
DRRA – Microfinance Programme
- Disability-inclusive approach to bring families out of extreme poverty
Humanity & Inclusion – Inclusive Poverty Graduation

Lebanon

● Vocational training and micro-financing for young people with disabilities
LUPD – Lebabese Union of Persons with Disabilities

Russia

● Solving social issues to increase job opportunities
Ingka Group (IKEA) – Abilympics project

Turkey

● An indoor navigation system for the blind and visually impaired
Poilabs – Indoor Navigation

South Korea

● Transforming sheltered workshops to offer vocational training and employment support
Sohwa Aram VR Centre – Job Plus

Cambodia

● Training job coaches to support jobseekers with disabilities and employers
Light for the World Cambodia

Philippines

● Training persons with disabilities in the Philippines to work as digital freelancers
Virtualahan

Viet Nam

● Blind programmers developing free software for blind users
Sao Mai Technology Center for the Blind

Pakistan

● Sign language relay service with a successful scaling strategy
DeafTawk

Australia

● Business disability network connecting students with disabilities to paid internships
AND – Stepping Into Internship Program

Afghanistan

● Providing bicycles and training to support income-generation activities
AABRAR – Bicycle Training Programme

Mauritius

● NGO federation training and placing young adults with intellectual disabilities
Inclusion Mauritius – Supported employment

Israel

● Training people with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities for ICT jobs
itworks – Technology Accessibility Program

South Africa

● Expanding a chain of coffee shops run by Deaf young people
I Love Coffee

Jordan

● A work coach model for persons with intellectual disabilities
Sana – Sana Work Program

Uganda

- Young people trained as Disability Inclusion Facilitators to motivate employers
Light for the World – 12.4 % Work-Initiative
- Providing income-generating activities to refugees with disabilities
World Vision – Inclusive Livelihood

Kenya

● An app that connects jobseekers with disabilities with job opportunities
Riziki Source App

Ethiopia

- National guideline to make vocational training centres fully accessible
Federal TVET Agency – Inclusion Guidelines
- First deaf-run social enterprise selling paper bags to fight plastic pollution
Teki Paper Bags

DR Congo

● Entrepreneurship training and support for persons with disabilities
Kadiwaku Family Foundation

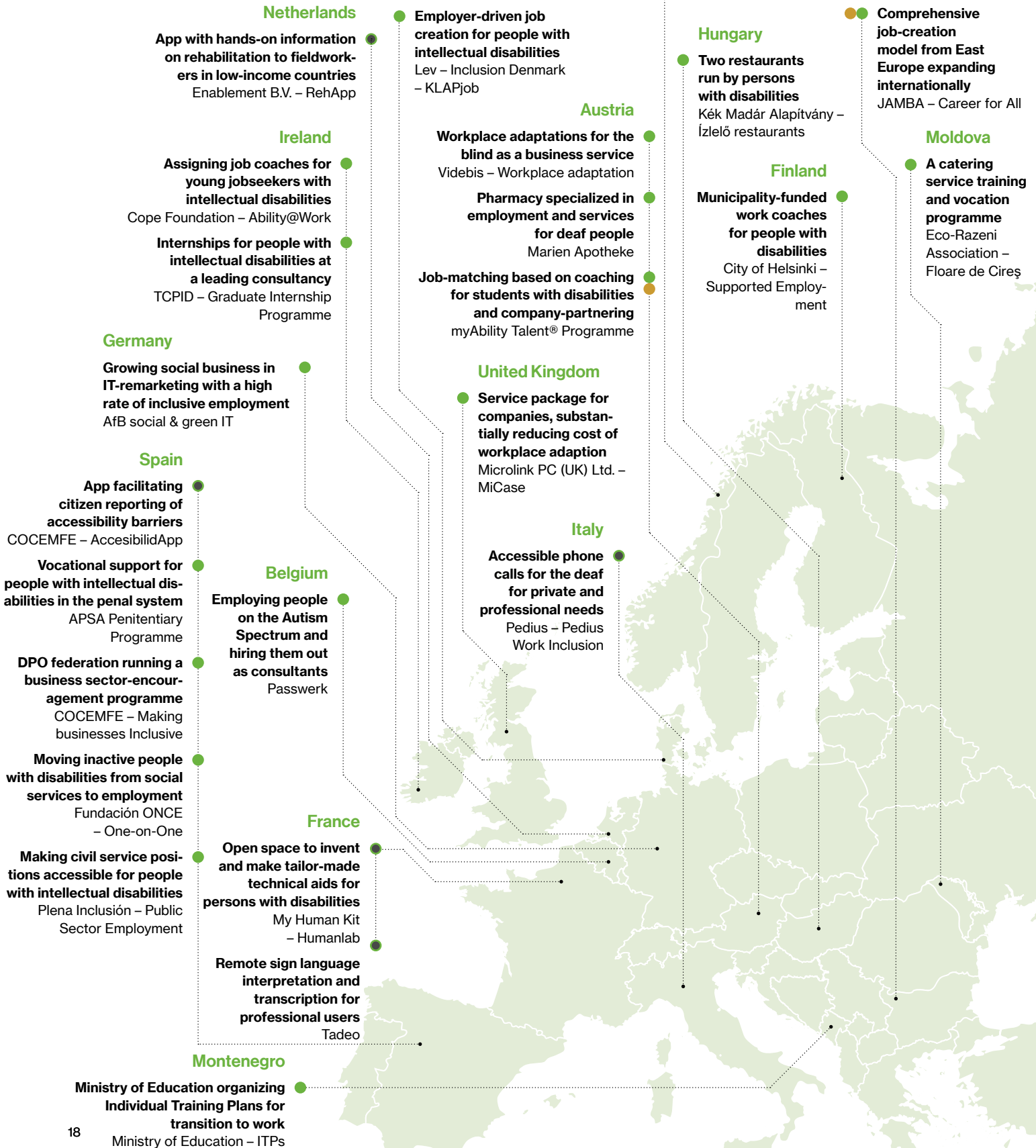
Tanzania

- Training and online job-matching for students and graduates with disabilities
Employable Africa – Envision Africa
- Entrepreneurship training programme for women with disabilities
FUWAVITA

Innovative Policies and Practices in Europe

ZERO PROJECT 2021

- Employment
- ICT
- Zero Project-Impact Transfer



SECTION 1:

Innovative Policies and Practices in Employment

Factsheets

Factsheets from all 66 Innovative Policies and Practices 2021 listed by country of implementation.

Life Stories

Persons with disabilities or their peers explain how Zero Project Awardees have changed their life.

Providing bicycles and training to support income-generation activities

AFGHANISTAN/AABRAR – BICYCLE TRAINING PROGRAMME

Afghan Amputee Bicyclists for Rehabilitation and Recreation (AABRAR), based in Kabul, is an NGO that runs a monthly bicycle training programme for persons with disabilities. Participants learn to ride and repair a bicycle in addition to receiving vocational, health, and literacy training. Following training, participants receive a bicycle. They can then work in bicycle repair, use the bicycle to offer mobile services, or use it as transport. From 2001 and 2020, AABRAR has trained 7,125 persons.

Problem targeted

For people who have had amputations or have lost mobility for other reasons, there are limited opportunities to find work in Afghanistan.

Solution, innovation, and impact

AABRAR runs this bicycle-training programme with 20 participants per month. An experienced trainer teaches the trainees how to repair and ride bicycles, which are modified by AABRAR's mechanics to accommodate the needs of the trainees' disabilities. The programme provides accommodation and meals to the participants during the training period, which also includes numeracy classes, health education, and first aid instructions. AABRAR also provides vocational training relevant to the local market to support adult trainees to use the bike for income generation. Upon completion, participants receive a certificate and a bicycle from AABRAR, which they can use to set up mobile businesses or as a low-cost mode of transportation to other work.

“I cannot express my happiness. As a result of the training I work and generate income for my family.”

Jamal Khan, AABRAR Trainee

AABRAR estimates that more than 5,600 people are using their skills in income-generation activities, such as selling mobile phone recharge cards, using knife sharpening tools and machines, running mobile fresh juice or snack shops, and bicycle repair.



An AABRAR trainee works in his bicycle repair shop.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

From 2001 to 2019 the organization spent \$4,631,250 on this programme. The cost to AABRAR per trainee is \$650. The entire programme is grant-funded from several international donors, such as the European Union and UNICEF, as well as donations from local businesses in Afghanistan.

AABRAR originally started the project with 240 trainees in the Nangarhar province and has since replicated it to other parts of Afghanistan, including Kabul, Kunar, and Laghman. By 2025, AABRAR aims to provide training to 2,000 persons per year across seven provinces of Afghanistan.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2001

- Between 2001 and 2020, 5,600 trained persons with disabilities have used their new skills to find work.
- The cost of delivering training is \$650 per person.
- A project of Civil Society.



Mr. Syed Waheed Shah

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Job portal for persons with disabilities, going international

ARGENTINA AND SEVEN OTHERS/INCLUYEME – JOB PORTAL

Incluyeme.com, a corporation launched in 2013, is Latin America’s first job portal for people with disabilities and is present in eight countries of the region. In 2020 the company had a database of more than 200,000 registered users with various disabilities looking for a job. Among Incluyeme clients are such corporations as Accenture, IBM, and Microsoft. Incluyeme also provides recruiter training and awareness workshops to companies that are seeking to employ persons with disabilities.

Problem targeted

In Latin America the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities is very high, but they are unable to use mainstream job portals.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Headquartered in Buenos Aires, Incluyeme.com operates in seven other countries of Latin America: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

Jobseekers can sign up on the portal, upload their resume, and start applying for available jobs as per their interests. Incluyeme also provides various courses to job seekers through a platform called Capacitacion Inclusiva.

Incluyeme offers a job listing platform to companies that are interested in hiring people with disabilities, and provides them with workshops to improve their work culture. Over 1,000 job opportunities are posted every year from more than 500 companies, including Accenture, IBM, Microsoft, Siemens, and Unilever.

“Incluyeme is an excellent platform. From the first minute the staff is committed and gives help!”

Calixto Huespe, an Incluyeme user

The company itself also hires people with disabilities and works with NGOs to create new solutions and get feedback on content, such as its educational courses. From 2013 to 2020 more than 1,900 people with disabilities have found employment through the job portal.

✉ Mr. Gabriel Marcolongo
gabriel@incluyeme.com – www.incluyeme.com



A group of young job seekers with various disabilities.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Incluyeme charges membership fees and provides consulting services. The company has been cash-flow positive since 2016 and is reinvesting all proceeds to increase reach and impact.

Incluyeme.com was chosen as one of the top ten social start-ups in Latin America by Ashoka, and its founder was selected as one of 2020’s Young Global Leaders by the World Economic Forum.

By 2025, Incluyeme aims to employ more than 500 people with disabilities per month while working with 2,000 companies.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- Registered job portal users increased from 120,000 in 2017 to 200,000 users in 2020.
- Successful job placements went from 252 positions to 322 during the same time period.
- *A project of the Business Sector.*

Technology centres offering accessible training in digital skills and career support

ARGENTINA/TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS – POETA DIGISPARK

The Trust for the Americas is a non-profit organization affiliated to the Organization of American States (OAS). It promotes socio-economic inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean. Since 2013, it has partnered with Microsoft and an Argentinian NGO to run POETA DigiSpark, a programme offering accessible digital skills training, mentoring, and career development. Over 1,200 people have accessed work and educational opportunities such as internships, jobs, and further study through the programme.

Problem targeted

Argentina's education system does not equip students with disabilities with the skills needed to compete in a modern labour market.

Solution, innovation, and impact

POETA DigiSpark offers free and accessible online and in-person training in technical, digital, and life skills in its technology centres. These centres offer sign language interpreters and assistive technology, and partner with potential employers to ensure that participants are trained in skills that are in demand locally. In addition, participants receive career guidance and mentoring, and are linked to potential employers. Employers, for their part, must guarantee at least minimum wage and benefits.

POETA DigiSpark has trained over 4,000 people in Argentina. Between 2017 and 2019, there was a 60 per cent increase in the number of people trained and a 25 per cent increase in the number of people supported to take up opportunities such as internships, jobs, self-employment, or starting formal education.

“Thanks to POETA DigiSpark’s training and mentorship, I was encouraged to study software development.”

POETA DigiSpark participant

The programme also promotes inclusive employment practices among employers, including the adoption of assistive technologies.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The Trust for the Americas has a wide portfolio of donors – from the public and private sectors and from



A student engages in training at a POETA DigiSpark technology centre.

multilateral organizations. POETA DigiSpark has been administered in Argentina since 2013 through a grant from Microsoft Philanthropies. Aligned with Microsoft's Global Skilling Initiative, the project will grow within the country in 2021.

Since April 2020, the programme is increasingly shifting towards a virtual training model and adapting its content for accessible online use.

POETA DigiSpark is already being implemented with local partners across Latin America, targeting other vulnerable groups such as at-risk youth and refugees. Its centres in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico focus on persons with disabilities.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- From 2013 to 2019, more than 4,000 participants have been trained (2019: 800+; 2018: 700+; 2017: 500+).
- There have been some 200,000 visits to POETA DigiSpark technology centres (2013: five centres; 2020: seven centres).
- *A project of Civil Society.*



Ms. Veronica Phillippe

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Business disability network connecting students with disabilities to paid internships

AUSTRALIA/AND – STEPPING INTO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The Australian Network on Disability (AND) is a national membership organization supporting businesses to welcome people with disability as employees and customers. In 2005 it launched the “Stepping Into” programme to connect university students with disabilities to employers in the open labour market. Available in all six states and two territories, by 2020 “Stepping Into” had facilitated over 1,500 internships providing practical paid work with over 140 Australian employers.

Problem targeted

Due to the lack of opportunities and work experience, many university graduates with disabilities in Australia do not find jobs corresponding to their qualifications and skills.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Through the “Stepping Into” internship programme, employers offer a minimum of 152 hours of paid work during university breaks. The programme matches students with employers based on location, degree, career goals, and skills. Once students are interviewed, employers select suitable candidates and provide feedback to those who are not selected. Each intern decides whether they want to share disability information with their employer. The programme focuses on the skills and adjustments needed, not on disability.

“I’m a people’s person and Stepping Into has matured my ability to communicate and to work in a team.”

Georgia Kemp, a Stepping Into intern

The programme focuses exclusively on the open labour market. Every intern is paid wages, usually between US\$17 and US\$24 per hour, plus retirement benefits. All interns pay taxes. In 2019, 958 students applied for 214 paid internship opportunities with 66 employers across the country, compared to 437 students in 2017.

AND works closely with employers and provides disability awareness training to all managers. Some companies report joining AND specifically to participate in the “Stepping Into” internship programme.



AND intern Georgia at a team meeting at the Department of Family & Community Services.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The programme is self-financed by a fee of US\$2,700 that employers pay to AND to support a student’s referral, recruitment, interviewing, etc. Interns’ salaries are covered by the employers.

AND has replicated the programme across Australia and in a variety of professions. It has also developed a methodology to help others to replicate the programme with the support of training, project plans, workflows, and documents.

By 2023, AND will have grown the program and strengthened connections with alumni to facilitate career development and progression.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2005

- From 2005 to 2020 over 4,100 students applied for 1,478 internships.
- A 2018 impact review of 426 alumni found 99 per cent would recommend the programme.
- A project of Civil Society.



Ms. Isabel Heiner

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Workplace adaptations for the blind as a business service

AUSTRIA/VIDEBIS – WORKPLACE ADAPTATION

Videbis GmbH, an Austrian company launched in 2000, provides visual aids, products, and software solutions tailored to the individual needs of persons with low or no vision. Through its hardware and software solutions, companies can create an accessible workplace for its employees, and jobseekers can find employment based on their actual qualifications. From 2016 to 2019, Videbis has equipped a total of 1,082 workplaces for persons with visual disabilities.

Problem targeted

People with visual disabilities in Austria have difficulty finding and/or retaining employment due to the lack of accessible equipment in the workplace.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Videbis has a broad team of experts, such as specialized opticians, Braille system specialists, and software technicians, who work with clients to determine the best suitable solutions for them. They also assist in finding the best means to finance the devices and even provide the option to rent equipment.

Depending on the solution and intervention, the client undergoes training to use the software or hardware in the state of the art Videbis headquarter. The range of products includes barrier-free lighting, electronic aids, software adaptation, and suitable work glasses, among others. In 2020 there are nine Videbis employees who are blind or with low vision. They are involved in the development of the company's solutions, and thus use their own experiences in the application of assistive technologies.

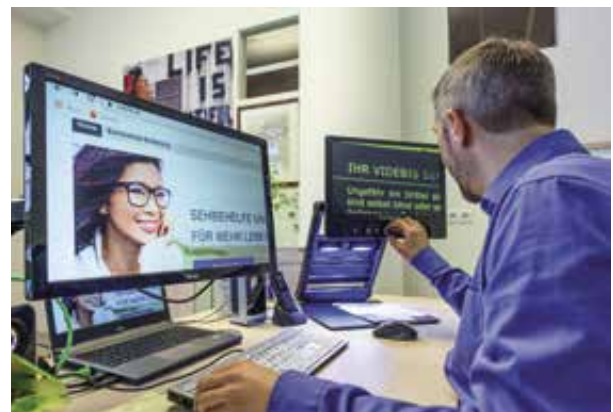
“I am very comfortable in the course of your care and support.”

Kristina Ivanovic, a Videbis client

From 2016 to 2019, Videbis adapted approximately 350 workplaces per year and supported over 2,000 persons with disabilities in their workplace.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In 2018 and 2019 combined, Videbis generated over €2.2 million in sales from its workplace equipment.



A work station is prepared for a visually impaired person.

The company has opened three additional branches and is now operating in Vienna, Linz, Graz, and Innsbruck. New headquarters were opened in 2019, hosting a showroom in which equipment can be tried out as well as seminar facilities.

Videbis is following the latest trends in ICT developments, and employees often adapt the required software to the specific needs of the visually impaired/blind user. The company also advises some software manufacturers on accessibility. Videbis aims to maintain existing jobs for blind and visually impaired people and create new jobs for the young.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2000

- From 2016 to 2019, Videbis provided services to 2,000 people with visual impairments.
- Videbis currently operates branches in Vienna, Graz, Linz, and Innsbruck.
- A project of the Business Sector.



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Pharmacy specialized in employment and services for deaf people

AUSTRIA – VIENNA/MARIEN APOTHEKE

Marien Apotheke is a small Vienna-based pharmacy, founded in 1909, specializing in the support of deaf customers. In 2008 the pharmacy hired a deaf apprentice, unique in Austria. It then went on to train pharmaceutical assistants who are deaf and to provide sign language courses for staff to communicate with deaf customers. Marien Apotheke is attracting customers with hearing impairments from all over Vienna and its surroundings.

Problem targeted

There are very few deaf people working in the Austrian health sector, and deaf customers are under-served.

Solution, innovation, and impact

In 2008, Marien Apotheke hired a deaf apprentice, and – after seeing the impact and potential of these new competencies – in 2013 hired a deaf graduate of a pharmaceutical study in Austria 2013. He was the first and is still the only deaf pharmacist in Austria, graduating in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

After that, Marien Apotheke developed its strategy by building a barrier-free work and training environment for deaf people in the pharmacy, and for customers to get fully comprehensible and accessible advice. Sign language courses have been attended also by the hearing staff to communicate with deaf customers.

“The importance as a deaf pharmacist is that deaf persons are informed in their mother tongue.”

Sreco Dolanc, a deaf pharmacist at Marien Apotheke

Marien Apotheke the main contact point for deaf customers for pharmaceutical services in Vienna and Lower Austria, the province surrounding Vienna. Marien Apotheke has created a barrier-free newsletter, along with free health information videos and lectures in Austrian sign language. In 2020 the pharmacy employs three deaf staff members and has recently employed two staff members with Asperger Syndrome who are supported through mentorships and clearly defined workflows.



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Sreco Dolanc, a deaf pharmacist at Marien Apotheke, talks to his customers.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project does not require additional funding. The programmes of the Ministry of Social Affairs partly fund the salaries of the deaf staff members and the sign language interpreters, according to Vienna regulations for subsidies. The Fonds Soziales Wien (Vienna Social Fund) partly funds the mentoring of the staff with Asperger Syndrome.

Marien Apotheke aims to improve the service in Austrian sign language in the coming years. As of 2020 it is in the process of obtaining FairForAll, a certification for accessibility. Additional services such as medication management in sign language are being evaluated.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2008

- In 2020 there was one deaf pharmacist and there were two deaf support staff.
- Marien Apotheke is the main contact point for customers with hearing impairments in Vienna and its surroundings.
- A project of the Business Sector.

Job-matching based on coaching for students with disabilities and company-partnering

AUSTRIA/MYABILITY – MYABILITY TALENT® PROGRAMME

myAbility is an Austrian social enterprise offering strategic consultancy services to companies on disability inclusion. It operates in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. The myAbility Talent® Programme is a career programme that aims to bring together students and graduates with disabilities and companies. The students receive coaching and exposure to companies through networking and job shadowing. From 2016 to 2020, 52 jobs have been created, 130 'Talents' trained, and over 200 employees sensitized.

Problem targeted

Students and graduates with disabilities often face unconscious bias from employers, which makes it difficult to find employment.

Solution, innovation, and impact

myAbility works with graduates and students with disabilities or chronic illnesses, with a focus on economic and technical field of studies. Following a selection process, chosen participants, called 'Talents', receive presentation and empowerment trainings, one-on-one career coaching, expert subject input, and career workshops.

Simultaneously, myAbility meets with partner companies, offering advice and inclusion training as well as preparing staff for the job shadowing part of the programme. Companies and Talents attend matching events, where they undertake short interviews and where job shadowing is arranged. At the end of the programme there is a celebration event, at which Talents receive certificates followed by a programme evaluation.



Students take a break during a job support day in Munich.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The programme is financed by the participating companies, which receive benefits such as sensitisation, advice, support, and recruitment opportunities. Participation in the programme is free for the Talents.

The programme started in Vienna and has been successfully replicated in Zürich, Berlin, and Munich. In 2021 the programme will be conducted also in Frankfurt and Hamburg (tbc). myAbility is looking to replicate to other European countries in the near future.

There is a structured approach to replication, which consists of assessing the needs of the two main target groups in the new market area, developing a pilot project, and evaluating and standardizing for further roll-out.

“Through the programme participants are able to gain insights into the varied everyday working life.”

Johannes Zimmerl, Head of HR at REWE

From 2016 to 2020, myAbility has arranged 1,620 coaching hours and 720 job support days. Of the 130 Talents who have completed the programme, 52 have started work or have received offers from participating companies.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- From 2016 to 2020 myAbility provided 1,620 coaching hours and 720 job support days.
- Of the 130 Talents who have completed the programme, 52 have started work or have received offers from participating companies.
- *A project of Civil Society.*



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Person-centred job training and employment for people with disabilities

BANGLADESH – DHAKA/PFDA-VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER

PFDA-Vocational Training Center (PFDA-VTC) is a social welfare organization based in Dhaka that builds skills and promotes employment opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities, including autism, Down Syndrome, and cerebral palsy. It offers personalized vocational training programmes, ranging from basic life skills to trade-specific training, based on individual capacity. From 2014 to 2019, PFDA-VTC has trained more than 450 people, over 300 of whom have been placed in employment.

Problem targeted

There is a lack of specialised vocational services in Bangladesh to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Every student at PFDA-VTC receives an 'Individual Target Plan' with specified vocational training outcomes based on their industry interests, support needs, and stage of learning. Progress is monitored quarterly and tracked via VTC's Curriculum Unit Measurement Operating software (CUMO). Alongside vocational training, therapeutic interventions and training for families and carers are also offered.

When a student is ready, PFDA-VTC matches them to an employer in a process involving the student, employers, family members, and educators. Once agreed, the employer signs a memorandum of understanding setting out the employment conditions, salary, benefits, and workplace adaptations.

“I used to sit at home. Now I work and give my salary to my family and everyone is happy.”

Delowar Hossain, a former PFDA-VTC student

VTC staff support the student when starting their role, reducing support as the student becomes increasingly comfortable. Trained students may also enter self-employment or sheltered employment on completion of the programme. PFDA-VTC has supported 217 people into full time employment, 21 into self-employment, and 96 into sheltered employment.



A training session at the PFDA-VTC computer lab.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The PFDA-VTC budget for academic year 2020/21 is \$475,000. About a third of funding comes from student fees (with subsidies for students in financial hardship). Other funding comes from corporate donations, grants, and the sale of handcraft products.

PFDA-VTC plans to replicate this model in seven cities in Bangladesh to support persons with disabilities in rural areas, with donor support. The use of technology is also being explored, for example, online training modules during COVID-19 and incorporating machine learning or other technology to support individuals who have communication difficulties.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- 217 people have found salaried employment, 21 have established self-employment, and 96 are in sheltered employment.
- Approximately 1,500 parents of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have also been trained.
- A project of Civil Society.

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Job fairs organized by the Disability Network

BANGLADESH/BBDN – BUSINESS AND DISABILITY NETWORK

In 2017 the Bangladesh Employers Federation established the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) to create a more disability inclusive workforce. BBDN is centred on advocacy, inclusion services, and awareness raising through job fairs. They bring together employers, DPOs, and NGOs presenting experiences and practices to facilitate disability inclusion. Between 2017 and 2020 four job fairs were organized, resulting in more than 350 jobs with a retention rate of 80 per cent.

Problem targeted

There is no platform in Bangladesh to match companies seeking qualified candidates and people with disabilities seeking job opportunities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

With the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN), employers and employers' associations have created a vehicle to enable a more disabled-friendly workforce. This means that for the first time in Bangladesh, it is no longer NGOs and disability representatives alone who are addressing this issue, but also employers who are coming together and trying to take the lead on this topic.

“I am feeling really great after getting a job, and I can stand on my own feet now.”

Ratan, successfully employed at the BBDN Dhaka Job Fair in 2017

BBDN holds meetings, webinars, and events with employers where implementations of disability-friendly actions are discussed. The organization presents successful policies, practices, and models to promote the integration of persons with disabilities. The commitment and engagement of companies are monitored. The motivation of companies to participate ranges from good experiences in the past to the implementation of their corporate social responsibility commitments. The actual matching process primarily occurs at job fairs, which bring together jobseekers with disabilities, BBDN, and companies.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Members of the employer network pay an annual fee (€1,000 for Founding members and €250 for General



A job candidate receives an appointment letter from an employer at the Dhaka Job Fair.

members) and sponsors co-finance all BBDN activities. Moreover, BBDN continues to acquire funds from various development partners, such as the International Labour Organization, and is also funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office and the German GIZ.

BBDN and partners are jointly working towards an IT-driven job matching process as part of the Innovation to Inclusion programme led by Leonard Cheshire. BBDN is also working with Sightsavers to build the disability confidence of employers. Through both programmes BBDN wants to serve 80 companies by 2022.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- BBDN has assisted with more than 350 job placements, with a retention rate of 80 per cent.
- Through scaling with partners, BBDN expects to reach 8,000 people with disabilities and close to 80 employers in Bangladesh by 2022.
- *A project of the Business Sector.*



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Promoting self-employment in agriculture and aquaculture by training and microfinance

BANGLADESH/DRRA – MICROFINANCE PROGRAMME

The Disabled Rehabilitation & Research Association (DRRA) is one of the largest non-profit development organizations working in the field of disabilities in Bangladesh. DRRA's 'Jibika' project supports people with various disabilities in Sathkhira and Jhenaidah districts to run their own vegetable or crab farming businesses by providing training and microfinance. Between 2017 and mid-2020, 514 people with disabilities were involved in running their own businesses.

Problem targeted

Often, people with disabilities in Bangladesh have limited access to sustainable income due to a lack of access to training and finance.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Jibika project targets people who may be community-bound because of their disability. The initial group of participants was selected in South-West Bangladesh through physical and psychological assessments. The groups were then split based on the climate condition, income status, marketing facilities, and availability of resources, with groups selected for aquafarming and for vegetable cultivation and vermicomposting.

Training is provided in farming techniques, and group members meet monthly for coordination and feedback. Modules are provided in Braille, sign language, and video according to the participants' needs. Participants were supported to obtain microfinance, and they received training on planning and marketing.



Raju, a Jibika project participant, monitors the growth of his vegetables.

microfinance institutions and government services provided interest and collateral-free loans for the project's running capital. Through income-generating activities, targeted youth with disabilities become economically empowered and contribute to their families' income.

As of 2020, 13 local partner organizations are replicating the DRRA model, and 30 other partner organizations in Bangladesh will replicate the model by 2022. In addition, DRRA is one of the core members of the Liliane Foundation Inclusion Network, which aims to expand the model.

“Inclusive economy is not possible without inclusive microfinance!”

Farida Yesmin, Executive Director, DRRA

From 2017 to 2019, 208 persons were undertaking aquafarming, rising to 306 by 2020. The project also organized an organic vegetable fair in Jhenaidah and two reflection workshops to raise awareness.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project is donor funded, and the main financial partner, Liliane Fonds, provided €95,615 across the first two years of the project. At the same time, local

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- 13 local partner organizations are currently replicating the project.
- In 2020, the loan amount minimum increased to \$236 per person.
- In 2020, the highest profit was \$906 by a single person.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Disability-inclusive approach to bring families out of extreme poverty

BANGLADESH/HI – INCLUSIVE POVERTY GRADUATION

In 2011, Humanity & Inclusion (HI), a leading global development NGO based in France, initiated a project in Bangladesh entitled ‘Taking Successful Innovation to Scale: Pathways for Disability – Inclusive Graduation out of Poverty’. The project supports families of persons with disabilities to transition out of poverty through a comprehensive model, including health care, training, and livelihood support. The project is in its third phase (2018 to 2022) and in 2020 is supporting 1,447 households.

Problem targeted

In Bangladesh a fifth of all people living in extreme poverty have a disability. Approaches to poverty alleviation exist, but are not disability-inclusive.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Disability Inclusive Poverty Graduation project is a series of timed interventions delivered over four years. The first step is to provide rehabilitation services, such as occupational therapy and counselling, as well as financial support to meet basic food needs. Participants then receive vocational skills training and are coached to find work or to start their own business. The project facilitates participants’ access to local markets and financial services.

In the final step, participants learn about their rights, personal financial management, and disaster risk reduction strategies so their income becomes resilient. Accessibility measures include making structural adaptations in a person’s home or workplace, providing modified tools, and providing documents in such accessible formats as Braille, pictorial, and easy



A participant in the Disability Inclusive Poverty Graduation project tends to his cattle.

Office (75 per cent), HI itself, and Bangladesh Steel Re-Rolling Mills, Ltd.

In 2020, HI is scaling the model in Bangladesh and has conducted a randomized control trial to evaluate the model. Based on its findings, it will publish a report in 2021. HI’s model was adapted from an existing poverty graduation model developed by BRAC, an international development NGO.

HI has replicated the model in Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali, and is supporting three NGOs and eight DPOs to make their livelihoods disability-inclusive.

“With HI’s support I am running a shop, my children go to school, and we can eat three times a day.”

Koiser, a 55-year-old programme participant

language. Two pilot phases ran between 2011 and 2018, with over 95 per cent of targeted households having graduated to above the national poverty line.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project budget is \$5.3 million and is funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2011

- Project has grown from supporting 600 households in phase one (2011–2014) to 1,447 households in phase three (2018–2022)
- 95 per cent of targeted households have graduated to above the national poverty line.
- *A project of Civil Society.*



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Employing people on the Autism Spectrum and hiring them out as consultants

BELGIUM/PASSWERK

Passwerk is a Belgian social enterprise established in 2008 that trains and hires people on the Autism Spectrum before leasing them to companies, and provides them with long-term job coaching. Passwerk “consultants” are specialized in IT services, such as software testing, business intelligence, software development, and quality assurance. In 2020 the company employed over 120 such consultants all over Belgium, and it has assigned them to more than 200 clients since its start.

Problem targeted

There is a lack of work opportunities and job coaching for people with autism in Belgium, where the unemployment rate for this group is 90 per cent.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Passwerk trains and employs people with autism. Prospective consultants go through an extensive selection process, which includes interviews and tests, and successful consultants are then trained for a particular job. For example, software testers are taught test design, management, and tools, and must pass an international certification as part of their training.

Consultants are then matched to an assignment by a job coach, who evaluates the skill requirements for each task and the suitability of a specific client’s workplace and company culture.

“Joeri complements the team very well. His eye for detail and his constant accuracy are very valuable.”

Nick Vancauwenberghe, Teamleader at QA Rail, Televic, a Passwerk client

Passwerk encourages consultants to work on-site where possible to promote inclusion. Coaches also prepare future colleagues for working with a person with autism.

Most Passwerk consultants earn more than persons in comparable positions and are provided with long-term individual support throughout their careers.

In 2020 the company employed more than 120 consultants. In addition, 12 people have been trained as x-ray screeners at Brussels Airport through a partnership with G4S, a security company.



Two test engineers are busy in their work environment.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In 2019, Passwerk had income of €6.1 million and showed a profit of €0.5 million. About 10 per cent of revenues were income via subsidies and support payments from the government. Part of Passwerk’s profit goes towards projects that work to promote the wellbeing of people with autism and the ICT Community for ASD Fund, which is administered by the King Baudouin Foundation.

In the next five years, Passwerk expects to grow its staff to 400 consultants. The company is also seeking to develop new service offerings outside the IT sector and is conducting research into market opportunities.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2008

- More than 120 consultants in employment in 2020 (2019: 119; 2017: 68)
- There are currently 15 job coaches.
- Passwerk has four offices in Belgium.
- A project of the Business Sector.

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Job clubs as employment entry points for people with intellectual disabilities

BRAZIL/INSTITUTO CLEMENTE – PROFESSIONAL INCLUSION

Instituto Jô Clemente (IJC) is a São Paulo-based non-profit organization supporting the health, social inclusion, and rights of people with intellectual disabilities. Through its Professional Inclusion programme, started in 2013, it uses a three-stage model to increase the labour inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. The model consists of job clubs, supported employment, and community-based rehabilitation. In 2019 more than 500 people gained employment in the open labour market.

Problem targeted

In Brazil there is a lack of support for people with intellectual disabilities looking for employment.

Solution, innovation, and impact

IJC's model has three parts: (1) job clubs, (2) supported employment, and (3) community-based-rehabilitation (CBR). Job clubs are two-hour group meetings led by a job coach, held once or twice a week over three months. Participants develop behaviours to improve self-esteem and learn work readiness skills.

The model places participants with employers from sectors such as retail, food production, and administration, respecting the participants' choices, strengths, and needs. Post-placement, participants are hired within national standards for formalizing jobs in the country, receiving wages and benefits on equal terms with other workers. There is a 90 per cent retention rate after the first year.

“People have the respect of other colleagues in the company, deconstructing any stigma or prejudice.”

Silvana Paixão, Human Resources
Manager at Colgate, an IJC partner

Through CBR, IJC trains local professionals in peripheral areas of São Paulo through its job clubs and supported employment methodology to expand access. These professionals hold meetings for young people at local Social Assistance Reference Centres, where IJC staff offer additional employment support. Between 2009 and 2012, IJC supported fewer than 100 people into work, but that number climbed to 507 in 2019.

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A participant in the IJC Professional Inclusion programme at work in his office.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In order to be financially self-sufficient, IJC charges companies a monthly fee of approximately \$90 per person until the support period ends. Its income in 2019 was \$610,000.

The model is designed to be low-cost and replicable and has been implemented partly by the Association for the Education of Men of Tomorrow, an NGO based in Campinas, a city close to São Paulo, that started to follow the training model from IJC.

IJC aims to expand to Rio de Janeiro and south-east Brazil, and ultimately to be established in all main Brazilian cities within five years.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- The project has grown from supporting fewer than 100 people before 2013 to supporting 507 in 2019.
- 92.5 per cent of participants consider the service to be good or excellent.
- A project of Civil Society.

Comprehensive job-creation model from East Europe expanding internationally

BULGARIA/JAMBA – CAREER FOR ALL

JAMBA is a Bulgarian NGO and a social enterprise supporting job seekers with disabilities and assisting companies with recruitment and inclusion. Alongside an online job-matching platform, JAMBA trains job seekers in CV writing, interview preparation, business English, computer proficiency, and other professional skills. From 2017 to 2020, over 2,000 people have registered on the online platform, and JAMBA has supported the recruitment of over 300 people. It has also expanded to Hungary and Austria.

Problem targeted

There is a lack of professional training and employment support targeted to the needs of people with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

JAMBA offers accessible training programmes to job seekers with disabilities. It focuses on essential skills in the business sector, such as business English, programming, graphic design, advertising, accounting and many others. Training lasts from one month to one year depending on the course, and for many courses people receive official certifications.

“We want to create opportunities for equal access to education, job development, and inclusion.”

Iva Tsoleva and Joana Koleva, Co-founders of JAMBA

In 2020, JAMBA focused on IT jobs that can be done remotely and in rural areas. In Bulgaria, JAMBA has trained 590 people, over 300 of whom have secured employment in one of JAMBA’s 58 partner companies. The organization also works actively with employers to ensure they can provide accessible work environments. It offers companies diversity and inclusion training and advises them on legal frameworks, including tax and other incentives, for employing people with disabilities.

In addition to the accessible online job platform, JAMBA organizes annual career fairs to bring candidates and companies together.



Participants at the Career Fair “Equality Means More” in Bulgaria.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In Bulgaria, JAMBA established a social enterprise alongside the existing NGO so it can receive donations and generate income. Revenue comes from recruitment commissions (usually equivalent to one month’s gross salary for the position), companies paying subscriptions for the online job platform, business training, and consultancy services. Services are free for candidates with disabilities.

JAMBA has set up legal entities in Hungary and Austria, and the team has developed a toolkit to support replication covering all the necessary steps from developing a local team to knowledge transfer. It is looking to expand to five additional European countries by 2025.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- From 2017 to 2020, JAMBA has expanded to three countries.
- More than 300 persons with disabilities have found jobs in the open labour market.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Training job coaches to support jobseekers with disabilities and employers

CAMBODIA/LIGHT FOR THE WORLD CAMBODIA

The international NGO Light for the World, through its country office in Cambodia and together with Essential Personnel Cambodia and Cambodia Asia Talent, created the Accessible Employment project in 2018. The project trains people with and without disabilities to become job coaches, who then work with jobseekers with disabilities and employers to promote inclusive employment. From 2018 to 2020, ten job coaches were trained and 54 people received job support.

Problem targeted

Employer attitudes towards jobseekers with disabilities are a significant barrier to finding work in Cambodia.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Accessible Employment project trains people with and without disabilities as job coaches to support both jobseekers and employers. They identify companies, conduct awareness trainings, and check workplace accessibility. A manual has been developed to standardize both the process of training job coaches and the support that coaches offer. Training venues are accessible, with sign interpreters available when needed and resources in Braille.

Once trained, the job coaches primarily work with young people and women with disabilities and guide them through the job readiness process, such as providing career planning support and interview training. Persons find work mostly in manufacturing and offices. Across 2018 and 2019 job coaches have worked with 125 people with disabilities, and have

“I learned how to be more confident, to plan and organize myself, and to find ways to get a job.”

Ms. Sarah Oath, an Accessible Employment programme participant

engaged with employers to promote inclusive employment, address prejudice, and discuss reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

Since 2018 the project has organized two national employment forums and other networking events, connecting jobseekers with 32 companies.



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Accessible Employment programme participant Sina Meng at work.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project costs between \$85,000 and \$90,000 per year. It is funded by foundations in Europe via Light for the World and through a grant from the Australian Government through the Australia-Cambodia Cooperation for Equitable Sustainable Service.

Light for the World aims to grow the model across Cambodia and increase the number of people supported and placed in work. The project is contributing to the development of a database of jobseekers with disabilities by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Ministry will endorse the manual, along with the training and other tools, to become a national standard.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- 32 companies have been connected to jobseekers with disabilities.
- 125 jobseekers have been supported between 2018 and 2020.
- A project of Civil Society.

A skills-based approach to matching job-seekers with autism to local employers

CANADA/AVALON – AUTISM EMPLOYMENT FACILITATOR

Avalon Employment, Inc. is a Canadian NGO based in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador that provides employment services for people with autism and developmental disabilities. In 2010 it launched the Autism Employment Facilitator model, an individual job-matching process focused on identifying skills, both formal and informal, matching the person to employment opportunities and offering follow-up support to individuals and businesses. The model supported 70 to 80 individuals in 2020.

Problem targeted

The traditional ‘train to work’ model does not address the specific needs of people with autism.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Jobseekers undergo a two-step process to identify skills using a Jobseeker Questionnaire, which they are encouraged to fill out with input from family, former employers, etc. This helps identify the ‘hidden’ skills that people have gained through volunteer work, hobbies, or social groups such as learning independently, interpersonal skills, and other responsibilities. These interviews also cover preferred work patterns, necessary adjustments, and areas in which an individual would not like to work. From this an Employee Toolkit is developed, which reflects the person’s skills, interests, and support needs, and also outlines the job adaptations and workplace adjustments that are needed.

“Working independently is one of my goals. I used to need a job coach, but now I can do this alone!”

Kathleen Clarke, Greeter/Contact Tracer at Staples



Kathleen Clarke, an Avalon client, works as a greeter at Staples.

Avalon then works with local employers to find jobs that match jobseekers’ strengths and interests in industries such as hospitality and tourism, post-secondary education, retirement care facilities, and retail. Relationships with local companies have been developed over Avalon’s 28 years of providing services.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The Autism Employment Facilitator model is entirely

funded by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as part of its strategy for Autism Supports and Education Models.

Avalon has produced a manual of the model to support adaptation and replication. By 2022 it plans to extend to a further 15 sites in Newfoundland.

The model was also implemented in Bangladesh, Nepal, and India in 2014 as part of a project of Disability Rights Promotion International, a disability rights monitoring initiative based at York University, Canada.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2010

- Avalon Employment has supported individuals to access over 1,750,000 hours of paid employment.
- The Autism Employment Facilitator model has been implemented in Bangladesh, Nepal, and India.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Ecological car washing service employing a majority of people with disabilities

CHILE/SECO CHILE CARWASH

Seco Chile is a social enterprise that provides ecological car-washing services to businesses and institutions across Chile. Currently, 55 per cent of its employees are persons with disabilities, and employment is open to anyone physically able to wash a car regardless of age, gender, education level, or type of disability. Further, full training is offered. The average wage is 15 per cent higher than Chile's minimum wage. From 2017 to 2020, Seco Chile has grown from 95 to over 300 employees.

Problem targeted

Many people with disabilities in Chile are unable to complete secondary education and consequently cannot find employment.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Seco Chile provides manual car-washing services in the private car parks of businesses, hospitals, universities, etc.

There is no education barrier to working at Seco Chile. Before starting, all employees are trained in the washing process, protocols, and use of materials. There are flexible working conditions depending on the needs of employees. Individual clients must book in advance, so schedules for the day can be planned. The workday is limited to a maximum of six hours. The service is paid for by bank transfer or, in company locations, can be deducted from the client's pay check. A supervisor oversees each location and is responsible for contact with clients, scheduling, and quality control. Twelve supervisors working for Seco Chile are people with disabilities.

“While maintaining our values, we have achieved labour inclusion and personal satisfaction.”

Rodrigo Carvajal, CEO and Founder, Seco Chile

Seco Chile has developed its own cleaning product that is ISO 9001 certified and biodegradable. No water or electrical equipment is needed, just the cleaning product and a cloth.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Seco Chile has developed a social franchise model.

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A female Seco Chile employee washes a car while listening to music.

A Seco Chile location with a four-person team washing six cars a day has an annual income of appx. €68,000, allowing for a decent profit margin. Franchisees pay a franchising fee to use the branding and approach, commit to Seco Chile's mission and values, and buy the cleaning product directly from Seco Chile.

Seco Chile is looking for a global corporate partner that might be interested in offering the service at a number of international locations. The organization has been awarded several national and international recognitions, and has been presented at the ILO Business and Disability Network, Geneva.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- Between 2017 and 2020, Seco Chile has grown from 13 to 45 clients.
- In 2020, 12 supervisors working for Seco Chile are people with disabilities.
- A project of the Business Sector.

Municipality Council running a four-step job integration model

CHILE – PROVIDENCIA/LABOUR INCLUSION PROGRAMME

Providencia is a district in the Chilean capital of Santiago de Chile. The Municipality of Providencia runs the Providencia Labour Inclusion Programme, a four-step model supporting people with disabilities into work. Jobseekers undergo an assessment of their experience and needs and then receive job skills training. Support continues through to the signing of an employment contract and starting a job to follow-up evaluation and contact. From 2013 to 2020, 118 people found a job through the programme.

Problem targeted

People with disabilities can face difficulties in identifying, obtaining, and sustaining long-term employment.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Municipality of Providencia's employment department offers a four-step Labour Inclusion Programme to people with disabilities. (1) Jobseekers undergo a semi-structured interview to assess their education and work background, support networks and needs, and health status. (2) Training is offered in job-searching skills such as CV writing and interviewing, as well as support to find and apply for jobs. (3) Once a job is secured, the municipality works with both the employer and employee to support contractual on-the-job training and any reasonable adjustments. (4) The final stage involves ongoing support to resolve any issues and to review progress and performance.

The municipality's employment department is in an accessible building, offers online video-interpretation in sign language, and easy-to-read formats are used in the assessment, training, and monitoring processes.

“The programme was a great help. I now have a job that provides me with well-being and peace of mind.”

Luigina Arata, a Labour Inclusion Programme beneficiary

From 2013 to 2020, 356 people with disabilities enrolled in the programme, and 118 have found work. Many of the positions have salaries above the average wage in Chile.



A jobseeker takes part in a one-on-one employment support meeting with video sign language interpretation.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Providencia receives \$32,000 annually from the Servicio Nacional de Capacitación y Empleo (National Training and Employment Service) to cover staff costs, including occupational therapists, psychologists, and social workers. In 2018 some additional funding came through the Government Laboratory Public Innovators Network.

Providencia aims to develop a programme for companies to support them to further develop their inclusion practices for people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. The project has not been replicated, but Providencia has shared its experience with other local employment offices and companies.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- 37 people with disabilities were hired in 2019.
- 356 people with disabilities have enrolled in the programme since 2013.
- Highest monthly incomes are between \$640 and \$700, compared to the average national labour income of \$430.
- *A project of the Public Sector.*



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Life Stories from Africa, Asia, and Europe

THE STORY OF JONATHAN MÉNIR: A 3D PRINTING & VIDEO GAMES EXPERT

“I regained enormous confidence in myself.”

Rennes, France

I am now 35 years old and live in Rennes. I want to play video games again and drive racing cars. With the evolution of my disease I was a little desperate, because I no longer had the strength or dexterity to hold a joystick in my hands.

Thanks to the few contacts I have in Rennes, I heard about My Human Kit and its Humanlab. I liked the idea of getting involved in my disability and being an actor of my own project. With Humanlab I participated in a training that allowed me to gain knowledge in 3D printing, and in just two weeks I was able to model my low pressure contactor and print it.

This was an important step, given that these contactors cost almost €100 in the market place and that with the lab we were able to make them for less than €5.

The idea of playing video games came back to me. We worked on a project to test contactors, which then enable control of one's environment or, in my case, the ability to play video games. All of that allowed me to regain enormous confidence in myself. I decided to set up an association, something really focused on home automation, video games, digital manufacturing, and information technology. The idea is to have a blog, a YouTube channel, and to share the videos of these tutorials.

i See also Factsheet on page 72.



THE STORY OF ELENA: A CATERING SERVICE EMPLOYEE

“I got my first pay slip at the age of 31!”

Moldova

Elena broke down and cried with joy when she received her first pay slip – at the age of 31. She had never been to school and imagined no one would ever give her a job, at least not a real one. Elena was born with an intellectual disability and had always lived with her both disabled parents. Now this young woman is employed, with a regular living wage and a mission within her. As the right-hand of a chef, Elena knows how to chop vegetables, mix ingredients, and even how to prepare basic recipes. Her father, who is a wheelchair user, talks with admiration about the great change in his daughter's life: “She has opened up to the world, and she has even started to smile and has friends!”

Today, Elena is one of eight full-time employees at Cherry Blossom, Ltd – the first catering social enterprise in Moldova. As a result, she is empowered to earn her own livelihood, to improve her parents' life, and to build her future.

i See also Factsheet on page 68.



THE STORY OF JEISSON

“Independence, self-confidence, and quality of life”

Colombia

Jeisson is a deafblind apprentice with SENA, a Colombian disability organization, who has trained in Comprehensive Early Childhood Care. In the Barro Blanco educational institution, he provides support and motivation to a deafblind child as part of his training process.

i See also Factsheet on page 43.

THE STORY OF ANETH: A DEAF UNIVERSITY GRADUATE AND HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE

“I was the first deaf person to reach university level in my country.”

Tanzania

At the age of 5, Aneth suddenly became deaf after suffering from the mumps virus, and she experienced many challenges in her educational journey due to the lack of sign language interpreters to assist her. Nonetheless, Aneth bravely persevered, and ultimately she became the first deaf person to reach university level in Tanzania. Once she was accepted at the University of Dar es Salaam, Aneth fought until the university hired the first sign language interpreter to assist her in classes and seminars. Aneth now came to see being deaf as a gift and is proud of it. But that was not the end of her challenges. After graduation she experienced job discrimination when many organizations denied her employment due to her deafness. It was this situation that gave her the idea of establishing an organization – called FUWAVITA – to use as a platform to fight for the rights of women and girls with disabilities. Through FUWAVITA, Aneth has succeeded in empowering many women and girls with disabilities through economic generation skills and leadership programmes.

i See also Factsheet on page 81.

THE STORY OF HAREEM: A DEAF PERSON BECOMES AN ENTREPRENEUR

“Finally, I felt connected with the world.”

Pakistan

Our world is not designed for people with different abilities. Being a user of sign language, I have always faced major barriers in communication. A minor disease for most people meant something different to me. The anxiety of not being able to properly communicate my symptoms left me unsatisfied with the doctor's diagnosis.

Even though I would visit a doctor when I felt unwell, I used to be traumatized by afterthoughts. What if he didn't get all of my symptoms? What if there is a major disease undetected as a result of our communication barrier? The mere possibility would give me stress. Then I attended a seminar of young entrepreneurs and came across a startup called Deaftawk, and connecting with them made me instantly feel at home.

Finally, I was no longer in a foreign land; these people could understand me and had solutions for me. Getting acquainted with Deaftawk opened up a number of opportunities for me that had felt impossible before. I finally felt connected to the world.

i See also Factsheet on page 71.



National state-run training and job-placement programme for people with disabilities

CHILE/SENCE – TRAINING FOR WORK

SENCE is the National Training and Employment Service in Chile. In 2014 it started its Training for Work programme for people with disabilities, consisting of vocational training in both trade-specific and soft skills as well as post-training work placements. During training, people receive a daily allowance and are also eligible for a childcare stipend. From 2015 to 2020 there were a total of 9,929 participants, of whom 7,995 completed the programme.

Problem targeted

A lack of education and training opportunities for people with disabilities in Chile results in a significant employment gap.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Training for Work programme is offered nationwide to people with disabilities aged 16 and over, including training in both trade-specific technical skills and more general employment skills. People also learn about their social and employment rights, and can strengthen their literacy and numeracy skills. With the help of regional partners who enlist companies, participants complete their work experience of 180 to 360 hours. For those who complete the training, the final stage is a post-training work placement, offering a contract of at least three months and a salary above minimum wage. On average, 56 per cent of trainees who complete the programme are employed within a year.

“It was an emotional, beautiful experience to learn about new job opportunities.”

Juan Pablo López Didier, 36,
Basic Bakery Techniques Course

The programme is run by vocational training organizations, foundations, higher education institutions, and local government agencies. These organizations are monitored and supported by regional SENCE agencies with guidelines, materials, and a web platform where performance indicators are recorded. SENCE also works with the national Network of Inclusive Companies and the Disability



A Train to Work trainee is supervised as she works at making pizza.

Committee of the Federation of Chilean Industry to connect employers with the programme.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Train for Work is fully financed by the National Training Fund. The budget for 2020 was approximately \$3.5 million and will increase to \$3.6 million in 2021. A total of 2,325 training places were available, and 1,245 will be added in 2021.

The programme has not been replicated internationally, but detailed documentation exists to support its implementation. In addition, it is based on an internationally verified model of supported employment, so it could be adopted by other countries.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- Between 2019 and 2020, 314 people had post-training work placements, corresponding to 33 per cent of those who passed the training.
- 56 per cent of programme graduates are employed within 12 months, according to an independent study published in 2019.
- *A project of the Public Sector.*

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Career development and job matching support for graduates with disabilities

CHINA – HONG KONG/ CAREER ASSOCIATION

CareER Association is a charitable organization based in Hong Kong. In 2014 the organization started to provide career development, peer support, and job matching services for students and graduates with disabilities to support a smooth transition from university to employment. It also offers training workshops and coordinates internship opportunities. In 2020 it had nearly 600 people registered in its jobseeker database, and supports approximately 60 job placements a year.

Problem targeted

There are few career opportunities for graduates with disabilities that match their education and skills.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The CareER programme fills the gap between graduates with disabilities and the job market. It offers free peer support and career development programmes, such as job skills training workshops and career advice. In addition, the organization provides an internship programme, so graduates can gain work experience; and it offers assessments, job coaching, and counselling to those further from the job market. From 2014 to 2020, CareER has recorded approximately 60 job placements annually.

Moreover, CareER has built strong relationships with special education offices in universities to promote its services and recruit students and graduates, and holds an annual meeting bringing all these offices together to discuss and share project plans and strategies.

“We are empowering people with disabilities to find careers through peer support and with corporate partnerships.”

Walter Tsui, Co-founder and CEO, CareER

CareER has thirteen employees, six of whom are persons with disabilities. It is the first higher education student and alumni union for persons with disabilities in Hong Kong, and in 2020 is the only NGO in Hong Kong providing services to all ten of the disabilities recognized by the government.



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Walter Tsui of CareER moderates a panel at a CarER Development Programme graduation ceremony.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

CareER’s annual budget is €490,000. Half of its funding comes from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, a well-known association of business people, and other private charitable trusts. The remaining comes from corporate sponsorships and annual fundraising. CareER is working with such companies as Goldman Sachs, J.P. Morgan, AXA, and Generali as employment partners.

Looking ahead, CareER aims to develop a scholarship and alumni mentorship programme by 2023. It is also developing Hong Kong’s first disability inclusion index, which measures corporate diversity and inclusive culture.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- CareER is the only database of jobseekers with disabilities who have graduated from higher education in Hong Kong.
- From 2014 to 2020 the programme enabled 300 successful job placements.
- A project of Civil Society.

National Training Service making itself accessible and inclusive

COLOMBIA/THE NATIONAL TRAINING SERVICE (SENA)

The National Training Service (SENA) is the Colombian public organization responsible for investing in the vocational training of the Colombian labour force. Established in 2014, SENA works to include people with disabilities in its programmes through such measures as hiring advisors to support people with disabilities, providing sign language interpreters, and by working with companies to facilitate inclusive training. In 2019, SENA supported 1,543 people with disabilities to find work.

Problem targeted

People with disabilities face difficulties finding employment due to a lack of personalized support.

Solution, innovation, and impact

SENA works to ensure that its trainings and education services are inclusive of people with disabilities. Many measures are aimed directly towards them, such as the availability of sign language interpreters, training in the use of assistive technology and immersive readers, training videos provided with captions and audio-description, and adjustments to the curriculum design for training programmes.

SENA also supports people with disabilities to generate their own income by providing resources to create small businesses. Other measures are tailored towards supporting organizations to employ people with disabilities, such as providing reasonable adjustments and coordinating apprenticeships, where SENA provides economic support and legal benefits to apprentices.

“I am very happy that SENA supported me. Now I work, I am capable, I show my talent, and I feel free!”

Beatriz Helena Quiroga, a Human Resources Assistant at Ingridion

In 2019, SENA supported 1,234 apprenticeship contracts, an increase of 5 per cent over the previous year. Between 2014 and 2019 it has provided resources to 53 entrepreneurs with disabilities, generating 175 jobs.

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Beatriz Helena Quiroga at work in her role at Ingridion.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

As a public entity, funding is allocated from the federal budget and additional income is generated through providing professional training services, certification, and various investment projects. In 2019 the total budget was more than \$3.5 million, an increase of 18 per cent compared to 2018.

SENA is in the process of eliminating all physical barriers to access in its 117 training centres, employment agencies, and business development centres across the organization, while also preparing for a certification in web accessibility for its training portal and other web applications. In addition, it will look to increase its efforts on inclusion of women with disabilities in the labour market.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- In 2020 there was an 85 per cent job retention rate of people with disabilities.
- From 2017 to 2020, 4,106 job placements were generated for people with disabilities.
- A project of the Public Sector.

National and cross-sector coordination to promote inclusive employment

COLOMBIA/PROGRAMA PACTO DE PRODUCTIVIDAD

Fundación Corona is a Bogota-based NGO supporting marginalized people in Colombia. It is the lead partner in an alliance of civil society and public-sector partners called the Productivity Pact Programme, starting in 2009. This cross-sector programme has developed a model of inclusive employment that promotes local coordination between key organizations and provides tools, training, and assistance to support implementation. From 2009 to 2020, 700 people found work through the programme.

Problem targeted

A lack of coordination between key agencies has resulted in a fragmented approach to inclusive employment in Colombia.

Solution, innovation, and impact


The Productivity Pact Programme brings together partners, NGOs, the Ministry of Labour, and the National Training Service (SENA). Its aims to build the capacity of key entities in the employment system, focused on employers but also including DPOs, training bodies, trade unions, and employment agencies. Its model of inclusive employment identifies routes to employment, the different agencies involved, and the legislative framework, and it produces tools and guidelines to support various entities to adopt good practices.

“Pacto has accompanied us in defining an institutional policy for people with disabilities.”

Magda Hernández, Colombian National Learning Service

The programme also analyses labour inclusion in the municipalities where it is active. Based on the results, it supports local employers, vocational training institutions, and other intermediary organizations to embed inclusion in their employment processes; and it promotes the benefits for employers, including financial rebates and preference in public tenders.

The project has developed an e-learning portal to deliver its training and resources virtually. Its model has also been adopted by SENA and the Public Employment Service.

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A young woman works as a packaging assistant in Exito Laureles supermarket, in Medellín.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Fundación Corona and Fundación Saldarriaga Concha contribute a combined \$69,000 annually, with in-kind contributions from other partners. Additional funding is generated through charging private-sector companies for disability inclusion consultancy. The target for 2020 was \$94,000.

Starting in four cities in 2009, the project has scaled nationally and is currently being replicated in Santiago de Chile, led by Fundación Descúbreme.

In Colombia, Fundación Corona's aim is that the programme's guidelines will be formalized into a national technical standard for disability inclusion in the workplace.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2009

- 220 companies have been directly supported by the programme.
- 307 other agencies, such as training bodies and intermediary organizations, have been trained.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

Employer-driven job creation for people with intellectual disabilities

DENMARK/LEV – INCLUSION DENMARK – KLAPJOB

Lev – Inclusion Denmark is a Danish advocacy organization working to improve the living conditions of people with intellectual disabilities. LEV's KLAPjob project forms partnerships with a variety of companies to identify and advertise jobs on the open labour market. People with intellectual disabilities are then supported to apply for and undertake interviews with the aim of gaining meaningful employment. From 2014 to 2019, KLAPjob has successfully supported people into 3,684 jobs.

Problem targeted

Municipal job centres in Denmark do not have legal obligations towards people with intellectual disabilities, and many continue to work in sheltered workshops.

Solution, innovation, and impact


KLAPjob works with employers to identify part-time unskilled service jobs meeting certain conditions, such as shorter working hours or a single supervisor. The jobs are advertised on public job websites. KLAPjob promotes the websites to persons with intellectual disabilities, and supports applicants and companies with the application process, interviews, and paperwork. Persons with intellectual disabilities in Denmark receive disability benefits to cover their basic needs.

KLAPjob employees sign regular employment contracts and receive a salary that increases their disability benefits by up to 25 per cent, depending on their working hours. Employees can also join a labour union at a favourable rate.

“With my KLAPjob I don't sit at home bored. I have good workmates who make me more social and outgoing.”

Mathias Dam Nielsen, 26-year-old McDonalds employee

The project emphasizes the importance of choice and supports applicants to find the job that best suits them, resulting in a retention rate of 65 per cent after two years. Further, 80 per cent of employees have expressed satisfaction with their work and many report an improvement in health and social abilities.

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Asbjørn Jensen works at his KLAPjob in the supermarket Rema 1000, where he is responsible for stocking frozen goods.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

KLAPjob is funded by grants from the Social Reserve Fund under the Ministry of Employment, with an annual budget of €1.5 million. KLAPjob aims to continue increasing the number of people obtaining jobs in the open labour market, focusing on those aged 18 to 25. Internationally, they hope to continue their co-operation with the Norwegian organization Arbeid og Inkludering (Work and Inclusion).

The organization is in talks with potential Hungarian partners regarding possible replication. In addition, it is in dialogue with Inclusion International and local partners on their employment programmes in Uganda and Myanmar.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2009

- 632 people with disabilities found employment in 2019, up from 270 in 2014.
- 80 per cent of employees express satisfaction with their work.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

Entrepreneurship training and support for persons with disabilities

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO/KADIWAKU FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Kadiwaku Family Foundation (KFF) is a non-profit organization based in Kinshasa, focused on fighting the poverty of people with disabilities. Its inclusive entrepreneurship accelerator programme supports people with disabilities to develop the skills needed to start their own business. Launched in 2018, the project had been implemented in seven cities in the DRC. Of the 502 young entrepreneurs who were supported by the programme, 360 have become successful entrepreneurs.

Problem targeted

People with disabilities in the DRC have limited access to programmes that support entrepreneurship.

Solution, innovation, and impact

KFF's inclusive entrepreneurship accelerator programme targets young people with disabilities, especially young women. At KFF training centres, participants are trained in skills needed to start, manage, and develop their small businesses. Those who develop the strongest plans receive customized business support, such as networking and mentoring. KFF also offers co-working spaces with meeting rooms and Internet access to support entrepreneurs. It has developed a network of programme alumni and disabled entrepreneurs in the DRC who also provide support. To date, 360 successful alumni have started businesses, mostly in the fields of IT and telecommunications, finance, and fashion.



Working as a tailor.

“Thanks to the training, I have a savings bank account and have learned to use social media.”

Rose Mpunga, former KFF trainee

In September 2020, KFF launched a mobile app with resources and information on entrepreneurship for people unable to attend training. The foundation has also provided anti-discrimination and diversity training to 51 companies to promote employment of people with disabilities.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project budget was \$127,050 over two years.

The United States African Development Foundation provided \$91,500 with the rest coming from other funders and programme revenue.

In partnership with the Ministry of Disabled Persons, KFF designed a guide to self-employment for people with disabilities, and oversees its implementation in defined regions. In November 2020, KFF started a corporate partnership to allow 500 young people with disabilities in rural areas to access the programme over the next three years. Moreover, the foundation received a grant of \$50,000 from a new source and plans to expand the programme to other countries in the Africa Great Lakes region.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- Over 70 per cent of young people trained have gone on to set up their own business.
- KFF has also trained 51 employers on diversity and inclusion.
- *A project of Civil Society.*



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Using analytic tools to make workplaces more accessible and jobs more inclusive

EGYPT/HELM - WORKPLACE INCLUSIVE SOLUTIONS

Helm is a Cairo-based foundation focusing on the promotion of disability inclusion, with a particular emphasis on employment. Starting in 2016, Helm works with companies to offer both recruitment job analyses and accessibility consulting services. Using these results, Helm works with companies to design strategies and adaptations to make them more inclusive. From 2016 to 2020, Helm has completed over 1,000 accessibility audits and supported the recruitment of 100 people with disabilities.

Problem targeted

There is a lack of understanding among employers about reasonable accommodations and inclusive workplaces.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Helm has two services to make workplaces inclusive. The first is a recruitment job analysis, where it reviews a company's disability employment policies, practices, and culture, and collaborates with them to design a disability hiring strategy and to support recruitment. For example, Helm worked with Mars, the multinational food producer, to deliver a customized work preparation course for its 20 new factory operators with disabilities. Helm has supported recruitment to a wide range of roles, including accountants and marketing professionals.

“The inclusion of people with disabilities is part of our strategy to achieve sustainability.”

Ahmed Fahmy, President of Henkel Egypt, a Helm partner

Helm also offers accessibility consulting and provides suggested improvements and their costs. Helm has developed software to generate automated reports on this topic. It has audited the offices and factories of over 200 partners, including the Egypt branches of Wrigley, Vodafone, and Amazon; and it has made recommendations on adaptations for employees and customers, such as barrier-free entrances, visual fire alarm systems in offices, and Braille signage.



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Helm participants staff the application booth at the 2018 World Youth Forum.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project is 20 per cent funded through grants from organizations such as the Vodafone Egypt Foundation and 80 per cent through companies paying for the consulting services provided. Helm works across most provinces in Egypt and wants to replicate the inclusive workplace model in other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It is working on digitalizing its processes to increase efficiency, maintain consistency in service delivery, and to facilitate replication. To further support replication, Helm wants to connect with non-profit disability organizations; government agencies; and employer, business, and HR networks in the MENA region.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Helm's model is implemented in around 200 organizations all over Egypt.
- From 2016 to 2020, Helm has completed a total of 1,063 accessibility audits.
- A project of Civil Society.

National guideline to make vocational training centres fully accessible

ETHIOPIA/FEDERAL TVET AGENCY – INCLUSION GUIDELINES

In 2019 the Ethiopian Federal Technical and Vocational Education and Training Agency (TVET Agency) published a “Guideline for inclusion of people with disabilities in TVET.” It contains measures to enable people with disabilities to access centres and courses for vocational training. The TVET Agency is working with the Ethiopian Centre for Disability and Development (ECDD), an NGO, to support the transition of these centres. By 2020 more than 30 state institutions have implemented the guideline.

Problem targeted

Despite the Federal TVET Agency’s policy of disability inclusion, few of the 1,200+ TVET institutions accept trainees with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The guideline was published to bridge the gap between the TVET Agency’s policy on inclusion and its implementation. It defines roles and responsibilities for key partners, including vocational training centres, NGOs, and DPOs. The guideline applies at the federal, regional, and local level, and all TVET agencies, private and public, are required to implement it. The TVET Agency is tracking implementation.

The guideline, prepared with technical support by ECDD, is available in English and Amharic, and other Ethiopian language versions are planned. Workshops in various regions have familiarized government officials, TVET personnel, and DPO members with the guideline. ECDD is supporting training institutions to become physically accessible, recruit and train trainees with disabilities, modify training curricula, and



A student attends a practical garment-making training workshop at a mainstream TVET college.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Funding for implementing is the responsibility of regional TVET authorities and training centres. ECDD received €250,000 funding from Light for the World, an international NGO, to support its work and to ensure and supervise its practical application.


Additional funds of €30,000 have been secured to print the guidelines in other major Ethiopian languages, including Oromifa, Tigrinia, and Somal. The immediate focus is on ensuring implementation in all 1200+ vocational training institutions in the country.

“The guideline offers knowledge and technical leadership to implement disability inclusion in TVETs.”

Director, TVET Agency

provide assistive aids. It is also training instructors in basic sign language.

An estimated 1,200 young Ethiopians with disabilities have completed training in the 30 vocational training centres that have implemented the guideline in 2020.

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FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2019

- There are more than 1,200 TVET institutions in Ethiopia, 30 of which have already implemented the guidelines.
- Around 1,200 young Ethiopians with disabilities have completed inclusive vocational training.
- *A project of the Public Sector.*

First deaf-run social enterprise selling paper bags to fight plastic pollution

ETHIOPIA/TEKI PAPER BAGS

Teki Paper Bags is an Addis Ababa-based social enterprise that produces and sells paper bags as a replacement for plastic bags. Teki was developed for and by the deaf community and employs mainly young deaf women to design and produce the bags. The organization's official language is Ethiopian sign language, which is used during production, distribution, and awareness-raising for the company. Since 2016 the organization has employed 18 deaf people and produced over 1.1 million paper bags.

Problem targeted

Organizations that focus on disability employment can struggle to achieve sustainable long-term goals, while environmental projects often have great long-term goals, but less immediate impact.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Teki was developed to provide employment for young deaf women in Addis Ababa and to create paper bags to reduce plastic use. Tools and production tables have been designed to meet the needs of deaf employees. The majority of hearing staff are fluent in Ethiopian sign language. Sign language posters and two interpreters support visitors in communication with staff. Bags are sold to a variety of professional clients, such as hotels, restaurants, and private businesses. Teki has produced over 1 million paper bags since 2016.

“The shortest road to a more inclusive society is summed up in three words: Lead by example!”

Clement, Inclusion Catalyst of Teki

As of 2020, 18 of the 27 staff employed by Teki are deaf. Teki provides fair wages, and ensures that employees are supported to spend time with their families and to continue their education. It also covers transport expenses as part of its fair wage approach, easing problems for employees who would otherwise need to travel by bus, which is challenging as drivers often indicate stops by shouting out nearby landmarks.



Ms. Mimi Legesse

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Mimi, Elsa, and Yeaynwaga meet to discuss work in the Teki offices.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Teki is self-funded from the sales of paper bags. Depending on the type required, the bags are sold for between \$.05 and \$.50 each. This income has made it possible for the organization to expand, but Teki is now looking for external funding to create an additional 150 jobs and to purchase machinery to create the world's largest deaf-run company within three years.

The enterprise will continue to promote the bags by giving away free samples to focus groups. Moreover, it will be eligible for a VAT reduction, which will help sales growth. Teki aims to replicate the model in other countries with similar contexts.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- As of 2020, 18 of the 27 staff employed by Teki were people who are deaf.
- Bags are sold for between \$.05 and \$.50 each.
- A project of the Business Sector.

Municipality-funded work coaches for people with disabilities

FINLAND/CITY OF HELSINKI – SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

The Supported Employment Service is part of the health and social care services offered by the City of Helsinki. Established in 1995, it offers individual work coaching for people with autism/developmental disabilities or other disabilities while they look for work, as well as once they are in the workplace for as long as needed. At the same time, employers are supported in getting subsidies and adapting their workplace. From 2016 to 2019 the programme has supported between 240 and 273 users per year.

Problem targeted

There is a lack of individualized employment support for people with disabilities to find work.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Supported Employment Service is open to people aged 18 or over with a developmental disability, autism spectrum disorder, speech and language development or other disability. The work coach and jobseeker jointly map out skills, job options, and support needs. This directs the job search, whereby work coaches provide support identifying suitable roles, completing applications, and attending interviews. Once a person is employed, work coaching continues in the workplace, with the goal to reduce support over time. If necessary, support can be requested again after the coaching has been completed.

“My job coaches supported me every step of the way. I think I am what an employee should be.”

Rasmus Ellenberg, a pharmacy employee

In addition, the Supported Employment Service provides support to employers, such as applying for pay subsidies (ranging from 30 to 100 per cent) and reasonable adjustments. Employers can also receive a bonus of €1,500 once employment has lasted 16 months. Jobseekers found employment for example in restaurants and catering, mailing services, and property maintenance, ICT, retail and logistics. Between 2017 and 2019 the annual number of people who found work through the programme annually increased from 163 to 195.

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Kalle and Topi enjoy a break at Helsinki City Hall from their summer jobs of recycling and organizing the archives.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The programme's annual budget in 2020 was €804,000 and is entirely funded by the City of Helsinki. In 2020 the City of Helsinki received additional grant funding of €1,022,000 through a project supported by the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to make supported employment accessible to a larger number of users. The model is based on international best practices originated from the United States and Sweden in the 1990s and has been adapted to local circumstances ever since. The model has proven to be replicable.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 1995

- In 2019, 71 per cent of the participants found work. In 2019, 118 new employment contracts were made via the service.
- When hiring a person with disabilities the employer receives a government subsidy, usually equal to half of the cost.
- *A project of the Public Sector.*

Growing social business in IT-remarketing with a high rate of inclusive employment

GERMANY AND OTHERS/AFB SOCIAL & GREEN IT

AfB is a social enterprise in the IT remarketing sector, founded in Germany and active in 19 locations across Austria, France, Germany, Slovakia, and Switzerland. AfB specializes in refurbishing and remarketing IT hardware received from companies and public institutions. The organization creates jobs for people with a range of disabilities in all areas of the company at competitive wages. As of 2019, AfB employed 200 people with disabilities, and is constantly expanding to new locations in Europe.

Problem targeted

People with disabilities can find it difficult to gain and retain long-term employment at reasonable wages due to a lack of accessible workplaces and tasks.

Solution, innovation, and impact

AfB collects IT hardware that is no longer needed from companies and public sector organizations and then erases data, tests, cleans, and remarkets the hardware with guarantees of at least 12 months. The refurbished devices are sold through AfB's own shops or online retailers.

People with disabilities work alongside people without disabilities across all business areas, including administration, warehousing, sales, and development. Tasks and roles are broken down into individual steps so that people with certain disabilities who might prefer repetitive tasks can work in all process steps.

“We show that inclusion and professionalism are not contradictory in the highly competitive IT sector.”

Nicole Cvilak, Global Manager, AfB

In 2020 the company has 440 employees, of whom 200 are people with disabilities. Since 2004 annual income has grown from €80,000 to €39.7 million. In 2020 more than 475,000 devices were collected and 65 per cent have been re-sold. Moreover, AfB has realized significant annual savings of raw materials (e.g., iron – 22,900 tons) and of CO² (17,000 tons) when compared to creating hardware from scratch.

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AfB employee Manuel Garcia takes apart a hard drive.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The organization generates income through its IT refurbishments and sales. Key buyer groups are small and medium-sized companies, schools, NGOs, people from socially disadvantaged income groups, and the environmentally conscious. AfB's financial targets are the repayment of loans, an equity ratio of 80 per cent, complete economic independence from state subsidies, and a balanced relationship among financial security, return on equity, and growth.

In 2019, AfB has expanded to Trnava, Slovakia, a region where there is a high unemployment rate for people with disabilities. By 2025, AfB aims to provide 300 jobs for people with disabilities.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2004

- In 2019, 45 per cent of AfB employees were people with disabilities.
- 475,000 IT devices were processed in 2019.
- From 2004 to 2019 annual income increased from €80,000 to €39.7million.
- *A project of the Business Sector.*

Lottery funds for employment support of people with hearing or visual disabilities

GUATEMALA/BLIND & DEAF COMMITTEE – LABOUR INCLUSION

El Benemérito Comité Pro Ciegos y Sordos (Committee for People Who Are Blind and Deaf) is a Guatemalan NGO and rehabilitation and education organization. In 2000 the Committee started a labour inclusion programme that trains and supports people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or visually impaired to find employment. At the same time, the organization works with companies to become more inclusive. From 2009 to 2020, 703 people were hired through the programme.

Problem targeted

Few services in Guatemala support jobseekers with a hearing or visual impairment to find employment.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Through its labour inclusion programme, the Committee supports jobseekers and entrepreneurs who have completed its education and rehabilitation programmes. Training is offered in soft skills, vocational skills, interview training, etc. Training is co-delivered with sign language interpreters and instructors specialized in orientation, Braille, and assistive technology. Trainees are advised on their career options based on their education, experience, and interests.

“Thanks to the Committee I developed working skills to contribute to my family and to society.”

Juan Carlos Rangel Gamas, Quality Control Analyst

Prospective employers are offered training in topics such as sign language and orientation, and are supported to make workplace accommodations such as installing screen readers. To connect employers and jobseekers, the Committee supports the recruitment and hiring process, maintains a database of jobseekers for contract or freelance roles, and organizes job fairs. It also promotes industry-specific vocational training delivered by employers. In addition, the Committee manages a network of 43 inclusive companies in Guatemala. In 2018, 68 persons were hired; and in 2019 the number rose to 112.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

All the Committee's work is funded through sales for the Santa Lucía Lottery, one of the largest lotteries



A job counsellor works with a jobseeker to fill out paperwork before an interview.

in Guatemala. Fourteen per cent of the proceeds go towards funding the programme, which is free for all participants.

Future plans aim to increase the number of people hired, to provide seed capital to small businesses, and to expand the network of inclusive companies and organizations.

The programme is unique in the region but could be replicated with the necessary training and funding.

The Committee has been received several awards for its activities in Guatemala.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2000

- The programme has grown from supporting 60 people into employment in 2009 to 112 in 2019.
- 43 employers comprise a network of inclusive companies, and 70 more companies have been trained.
- 17 job fairs and career exhibitions have been organized.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

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Two restaurants run by persons with disabilities

HUNGARY/KÉK MADÁR ALAPÍTVÁNY – ÍZLELŐ RESTAURANTS

Kék Madár Alapítvány is a Hungarian NGO that creates employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups. The organization runs two restaurants, in Szekszárd and Budapest, which employ people with physical and intellectual disabilities. These staff members receive regular employment contracts and the same salary as other employees in the open labour market. As of 2020, 39 people with disabilities are employed across a workforce of 48, and the organization plans further expansion.

Problem targeted

In Hungary only a third of persons with disabilities find work. Two-thirds are segregated, performing simple manual minimum-wage work.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Ízlelő restaurants are adjusted to the employees' needs, for example, through height-adjustable preparation tables, order pickup iPad applications for waiters, redesigned cash registers to support the severely visually impaired, and a multimedia tool to support employees with autism. In addition, the workflow is divided into steps so it can be learned and performed easily.

The restaurants were opened to provide suitable employment for people with disabilities while also providing an opportunity for beneficiaries to meet each other and customers on a daily basis. People with disabilities are provided with continuous on-the-job training and personal development to enable them to carry out their roles.


“I really like working here as it was my dream to work in a restaurant.”

Klára Mogony, a kitchen helper

As of 2020, the organization employs 16 people with disabilities at the restaurant in Szekszárd, and an additional 23 people with disabilities in a restaurant opened in Budapest in June 2019. The employees have provided feedback, demonstrating that their satisfaction of working conditions is 4.92 out of 5.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The restaurants are designed to be self-sustaining,

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Two colleagues prepare food for delivery.

with more than 50 per cent of income coming from the daily menu, 25 per cent from events, and 17 per cent from catering. Development and expansion costs are usually provided by applications for EU funding. A bank loan and previous profits were used to finance the opening of the restaurant in Budapest.

The aim for the next to two years is to stabilize the restaurant in Budapest by increasing the number of daily meals sold and by increasing the number of guests served from the newly introduced a la carte menu.

The organization has a social franchise handbook for further expansion.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2007

- Employees receive salaries that are 8 per cent higher than the average for the same job in the region.
- The organization is planning further growth by implementing a social franchise model.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

Smart Inclusion Centres in universities that connect students with employers

INDIA/YOUTH4JOBS FOUNDATION - COLLEGE CONNECT

Youth4Jobs Foundation is an NGO based in Hyderabad, India, focused on employment and education opportunities for students with disabilities. Its College Connect programme has set up Smart Inclusion Centres in 21 colleges and universities, connecting students, educators, employers, and government. The centres offer training and job placement to students, and also support educators and potential employers. Since the programme's start in 2018, 900 students have been trained and 550 have found jobs.

Problem targeted

Young people with disabilities are often excluded from higher education and graduate employment opportunities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Smart Inclusion Centres are based in specialist as well as inclusive colleges and universities in 11 cities and six Indian states. The programme is targeted towards students with physical disabilities as well as those with hearing and visual impairments.

The programme creates an ecosystem that supports inclusive higher education and employment. Students receive training, such as in English and digital skills, and they are also provided with job fairs

“I was not expecting a job with Capgemini. Youth4Jobs made it happen with their outreach.”

Anand Sankaran, consultant at Capgemini

and site visits. The programme connects students to employers in multiple sectors, including IT, manufacturing, and retail. Youth4Jobs has a network of over 500 employers, such as Accenture, Capgemini, and Foxconn, which also work with them to ensure their training focuses on real market needs. In addition, Youth4Jobs promotes inclusive employment through offering disability awareness training. To that end, it trains college educators on accessible online teaching methods and other technical skills to support inclusive higher education settings. To date, 800 educators have been trained.



Youth4Jobs digital literacy training interventions include computer skills, typing, and MS Office.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The College Connect programme is funded by companies paying Youth4Jobs a hiring fee for graduates, and from the sensitization workshops and technical assistance they provide.

The programme has expanded from four to eleven cities in six Indian states, and from seven to 21 colleges. Partnerships with colleges are reached following initial research and shortlisting. This is then followed by engagement with management and students and a signed memorandum of understanding.

Goals for the next five years are partnering with 100 colleges and bringing 1,500 graduates into employment. Youth4Jobs is customizing its model to replicate it.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- The College Connect programme grew from seven colleges in 2018 to 21 in 2019.
- To date, 754 students with disabilities have been connected to jobs.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Inclusive job preparation and placement in the media & entertainment sector

INDIA/AIMS MEDIA – ABILITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

Aims Media is an Indian advisory and consultancy company based in New Delhi that is supporting schools, colleges, and special schools with inclusive learning materials. The Ability Enhancement Multimedia Programme (AEMP) offers a range of courses on the subjects of technology, multimedia, and art, with the aim of placing graduates in the media & entertainment industry. From 2012 to 2020 some 5,000 persons with disabilities have been trained or have undertaken ability tests.

Problem targeted

The media & entertainment industry in India is huge, with a great many employment opportunities, but they are rarely open to persons with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

AEMP's educational efforts are focussed on the media & entertainment industry, which outsources many tasks to freelancers. It aims to empower people with disabilities to build sustainable and independent livelihoods through a range of vocational programmes that teach digital and creative skills. Trainings are delivered at educational facilities, at one of AEMP's learning centres, or online. Students learn to develop their 'thinking skills', e.g., by drawing and graphic design. The project also supports and trains parents and professionals, while also offering Multimedia Workstations – a support system to connect with potential employers or clients.



A student works at creating a stop-motion animation.

“In the era of a digital world the use of AEMP will go a long way in providing sustainable livelihoods.”

Dr. Hemlata Tomar, Centre for Disability Studies

Training is delivered largely to people with intellectual or learning disabilities, but also those with physical disabilities and hearing impairments. AEMP has an in-house team of academics and other experts that design the training programmes. AEMP is geared towards the open labour market, and alumni find jobs in media and IT. From 2017 to 2020, AEMP has partnered with 120 educational organizations and trained more than 100 professionals.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

AEMP is funded through the profits made selling services to schools and other establishments. The 200 association schools or institutions pay a monthly fee, and students are charged on a monthly or quarterly basis. In the coming years AEMP is aiming to deliver an art-based therapeutic programme to around 1,800 to 3,000 professionals and students to practice art as a tool for overcoming professional challenges. In addition, the project is working on a touch-screen device that will sync educational content for people with different abilities.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- Approximately 1,500 parents and rehabilitation workers have been trained.
- AEMP is available in nine Indian cities as well as in the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Bhutan.
- A project of the Business Sector.

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Fast-growing café chain with a majority of employees with disabilities

INDIA – KARNATAKA, WEST BENGAL, ORISSA/MITTI CAFÉ

MITTI is an Indian social enterprise that provides hospitality and catering training as well as employment opportunities for adults with disabilities. It runs accessible cafés established on the premises of educational institutions and private sector companies in Karnataka, West Bengal, and Orissa states. As of 2020 there were 13 MITTI Cafés managed and staffed by 116 employees with various disabilities. The organization is constantly looking for partners to open up new cafés.

Problem targeted

Persons with disabilities in India have limited employment prospects and few opportunities for social inclusion.

Solution, innovation, and impact

In MITTI Cafés employees acquire hospitality skills such as food handling, billing, and customer service. Employees, who are usually the sole earners in low-income households, are paid more than the minimum wage, receive workers' insurance, and are provided with accommodation, food, medical care, and assistive devices as needed. In addition to its 116 current employees, from 2017 to 2019 a total of 318 people were trained and supported to find positions in the hospitality sector.

“Development is inclusive when people have sustainable livelihoods and a life with dignity.”

Alina Alam, Founder, MITTI Café

Cafés are accessible and designed to facilitate interaction between employees and customers with and without disabilities. There are tills with audio features and menus in Braille for employees with visual impairments, and flicker lights alert employees with hearing impairments to customers' needs.

MITTI only opens cafés on the premises of educational institutions and private sector companies that commit to an active and long-term partnership to promote inclusion.



The team at one of the 13 MITTI Café locations.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

MITTI's partners provide space for the cafés rent-free or at a reduced rate and cover the set-up costs. Cafés are only opened where there is high customer traffic to ensure an attractive location and economic viability. Generally, cafés become financially self-sustaining within a month of opening.

This model has been used to set up 13 cafés and can be further replicated. Once a memorandum of understanding is signed with a host organization, MITTI has a standardized process for setting up a café, informed by its experiences to date. MITTI is looking to expand further, and in the next five years plans to employ 1,000 adults with disabilities.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- From 2017 to 2020, MITTI has grown from one café to 13 cafés.
- 318 adults have found work within the hospitality sector following training with MITTI.
- *A project of the Business Sector.*

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Training volunteers to teach entrepreneurship development

INDIA/NAMAN SEVA SAMITI – UJJAWAL

Naman Seva Samiti is an NGO focusing on supporting socially excluded groups in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. Its 'Ujjawal' (light) project promotes disability-inclusive income-generation programmes so that people with disabilities can become economically independent. Volunteers in rural communities are identified and trained to lead community-driven income-generating initiatives. From 2015 to 2020, nearly 26,000 people had received support, some 7,000 of whom were people with disabilities.

Problem targeted

Persons with disabilities living in rural communities face significant financial difficulties.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Ujjawal is a structured, multi-step process. First, Naman Seva Samiti undertakes a survey and stakeholder mapping in a village to identify barriers and local resources. It then develops an action plan outlining possible income-generating activities. Potential local volunteers (known as Naman Prerak) are identified to drive the project. Volunteers are trained in leadership skills, developing business plans, and in practical skills, such as farming and gardening, so they can also train others. Training materials are available in Braille and sign language. The physical training centres follow Universal Design guidelines, and 431 volunteers with disabilities have been trained to date.

“I started an inclusive organic farming business, which is helping me build a future for my family.”

Dinesh Chadhokar, Ujjawal beneficiary

Volunteers lead Self-Help Groups (SHGs) whereby the community collectively decides the activities it wants to undertake, receives funding through Ujjawal. SHGs can undertake agricultural activities, developing farmer producer companies to sell goods; and/or they can set up a community credit cooperative to provide giving loans to entrepreneurs and small businesses. The practice has helped raise the average monthly income for persons with disabilities from \$12 to \$257 in three years.



Dinesh is harvesting his organic vegetables.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Ujjawal is funded by CBM International (\$0.92 million), government institutions (\$0.11 million), funding from Naman Seva Samiti itself, and community fundraising (\$0.58 million).

The practice has been replicated and scaled up in two Indian states by Naman Seva Samiti. Twelve NGOs from five other states have also adapted this practice. Naman Seva Samiti has become a technical assistance organization that helps NGOs in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka to adapt this practice.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- 471 people with disabilities have been trained as volunteers.
- Average monthly income rose from \$12 to \$257 within three years.
- A project of Civil Society.

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Vocational training and seed capital to support entrepreneurs with deafblindness

INDIA/SENSE INTERNATIONAL INDIA

Sense India, a national NGO, provides vocational training and seed capital to adults with deafblindness to launch micro-enterprises in their community. It also adapts vocational training curriculum and trains vocational instructors to better respond to the needs of persons with deafblindness. Since 2014, 600 adults have been trained and 130 have received seed capital to start their own ventures.

Problem targeted

There are limited opportunities for persons with deafblindness to acquire vocational skills or to launch their own enterprises.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Sense International India trains participants in various trades, such as rearing cattle or retail, to help them find work or set up their own micro-enterprise. The organization works with government training agencies to adapt 12 vocational courses, and has trained 150 vocational instructors to teach adapted curricula. Adaptations include alternative communication formats, such as Braille, large print, or tactile drawings, and ensuring that assistants are available for industry visits. Trainers are informed about nonverbal communication methods, accessible learning environments, and teaching strategies.

“I am delighted that my son has been employed, which has brought him excitement and satisfaction.”

Ramesh Kharote, parent of a child with deafblindness

From 2014 to 2020, Sense International India has provided 130 people with seed funding, 60 per cent of whom have turned their micro-enterprises into successful ventures. It also trains families and communities to support these new businesses. Entrepreneurs report they have gained confidence and strengthened their skills.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project is funded through grants from trusts, foundations, and corporations.



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Ashish Kumar from Bihar welcomes a member of the Sense International India project team in his shop.

To date, Sense International India has implemented the practice in 23 of India's 28 states. It has also been replicated in Bangladesh, and the feasibility of launching in Nepal is being explored.

Sense International India wants to increase the number of women with deafblindness accessing training and seed capital. It plans to offer financial management training to adults with deafblindness and their families and to train more vocational instructors. It will also conduct a market assessment to better understand what opportunities exist for persons with deafblindness to be competitive in the open labour market to ensure training remains demand driven.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- 60 per cent of people provided with seed capital are running successful ventures.
- Sense India is working in 23 of India's 28 states.
- 150 vocational instructors have been trained to support people with deafblindness.
- A project of Civil Society.



See corresponding Life Story on page 64.

Assigning job coaches for young job-seekers with intellectual disabilities

IRELAND/COPE FOUNDATION – ABILITY@WORK

The Cope Foundation supports people with intellectual disabilities and/or autism across Cork City and County, Ireland. In 2018 it launched the Ability@Work initiative to offer individualized employment support and job matching for young people with intellectual disabilities by assigning each of them a job coach. In 2020, 70 people were registered for the programme and another 44 had already been supported to find paid employment.

Problem targeted

There is a lack of targeted employment support for young people with intellectual disabilities at key transition points.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Ability@Work works with young jobseekers aged 18 to 29 with autism or intellectual disabilities. Each jobseeker is assigned a job coach, who then works with the person to develop an individual employment plan including vocational profiling, to complete a job task analysis, to connect them to local employers, and to apply for relevant jobs that match their profile. The programme also includes weekly job clubs for participants, internships, and paid employment. All documentation is available in Easy Read format. Jobs are in hospitality, tourism, office support, retail, The Arts, factories, childcare and transport to name but a few.

“I work on the Cork City Bus Tour. I never thought I would get this job, but I am proud that I did!”

Dale O’Sullivan, an Ability@Work participant

Ability@Work offers disability awareness training to employers (co-delivered with people supported by the Cope Foundation), support with recruitment, adaptations, and ongoing monitoring and support.

Between 2018 and 2020, 44 people found work through Ability@Work – ranging from four to 20 hours a week – all at minimum wage or above. Twenty more participants are in work experience placements.



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Dale O’Sullivan poses in his uniform as a tour guide assistant for Cork City Tours.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Ability@work received €614,000 over three years from the National Ability Programme, co-financed by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund. Ability@Work is funded until July 2021, and is one of 28 Ability programmes across Ireland working with various cohorts.

The Cope Foundation wants to secure further funding to expand the programme to the 400 people they support in other programmes who are ready to work. It plans to introduce a certified qualification to train more staff to become job coaches, and an app is being developed to provide remote support to participants as they enter and retain work.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- 26 participants are undertaking work experience placements in 2020.
- Paid jobs found range from four to over 20 hours a week. All are paid at least minimum wage (€10.10 an hour)
- A project of Civil Society.

Internships for people with intellectual disabilities at a leading consultancy

IRELAND/TCPID – GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) is part of the School of Education at Trinity College, Dublin. It offers a higher education programme and supported transition pathway to employment for people with intellectual disabilities. In 2017 it started a Graduate Internship Programme with international consulting firm Ernst & Young (EY), one of TCPID's core partners. Six TCPID graduates have completed paid internships with EY, four of whom had a permanent job in 2020.

Problem targeted

People with intellectual disabilities are often excluded from higher education and meaningful paid employment.

Solution, innovation, and impact

TCPID works with a network of business and philanthropic partners to secure access to meaningful paid jobs for their graduates with intellectual disabilities. As part of this work, EY and TCPID developed a trial internship in 2017 with one paid intern. Between 2017 and 2020 the programme has developed, and six graduates have undertaken multiple paid internships, resulting in four permanent positions. Interns are carefully matched to roles in business-critical departments in EY, such as tax and strategy. They are assigned a dedicated mentor who offers support and guidance to prepare them for the specific tasks needed, and helps to integrate them into their new team.

“My mind has been opened up by Margaret. She had a very positive impact on our wider team and on E&Y.”

Colin Farquharson, EY Director

Through the internship programme, EY has developed policies and procedures to support employees with intellectual disabilities. These have now been fully embedded in the EY Human Resources team, enabling them to be rolled out globally throughout the organization. Feedback from EY staff is positive and there is a commitment to further recruitment.



TCPID graduate Margaret Turley outside the Ernst & Young offices with her team.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

TCPID runs a structured Business Partners Programme where corporate partners sign up for a three-year period, committing €5,000 to €10,000 annually. As of 2020, TCPID has over 30 corporate partners committed for the next three years.

The Graduate Internship Programme has been replicated with other business partners and in other parts of Ireland. EY has increased its support to become a flagship partner, and will work with TCPID to develop a toolkit for other companies. TCPID also provides advice on how to replicate the programme to other academic institutions through the Inclusive National Higher Education Forum.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Four graduates of the TCPID internship programme have been offered permanent employment with EY.
- More than 30 organizations are partners in TCPID's Business Partner Programme.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Training people with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities for ICT jobs

ISRAEL/ITWORKS – TECHNOLOGY ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM

itworks is an NGO based in Netanya, Israel, focusing on inclusive job-creation in the ICT-sector. It has developed the Technology Accessibility Program (TAP) for people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. This consists of technological education, soft skills training, and job placement in quality assurance (QA), helpdesks, and similar positions. From its launch in 2011 to 2020, itworks has trained more than 230 people with disabilities, 74 per cent of whom have found work.

Problem targeted

In Israel many people with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities only have access to unskilled jobs with lower pay.

Solution, innovation, and impact

itworks trains people with and without disabilities for roles in Israel's high-tech industry. TAP participants receive training in the skills needed for the tech sector, such as quality assurance and helpdesk services, as well as training in such soft skills as self-presentation and interview techniques.

Itworks has grown a network of IT companies that are keen on fulfilling their CSR criteria and are willing to hire persons with disabilities. Each training cohort is supported by personal coaches and an occupational psychologist from training through to employment. These professionals can connect with the person's existing support network of social workers or psychiatrists, if required. Trainees also receive personalized job placement assistance from itworks to connect them to employers. Graduates from the programme earn an average monthly wage of \$1,754 in tech jobs.

“I graduated from the itworks programme and now work for a subsidiary of IBM!”

Yariv, 40, a TAP graduate

itworks runs one or two courses per year with 25 to 50 participants focussing on QA topics, since these do not require a post-secondary educational degree. The employment retention rate within one year of completing the programme is 70 per cent.



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TAP participants take part in a quality assurance training workshop.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Since 2018 the National Insurance Institute, Israel's social security agency, has been supporting the programme both financially and with implementation. itworks fundraises for the remaining funds for the programme's staff, soft skills portion, and employment services.

TAP is based on itworks's successful Job Training to Employment Model, which was previously implemented for five years by itworks with other target groups. itworks hopes to develop the programme in the future by offering internships and mentoring to participants.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2011

- itworks trains 25–50 participants annually.
- The employment rate within one year of programme completion is 70 per cent.
- The usual age of participants ranges from 22 to 45.
- *A project of Civil Society.*



A work coach model for persons with intellectual disabilities

JORDAN/SANA – SANA WORK PROGRAM

Sana for Special Individuals (Sana) is an Amman-based NGO supporting people with intellectual disabilities and their families. In 2015 it started the Sana Work Program, based on a Japanese model, to support the employment of young people with intellectual disabilities. The central element of the programme is continuous support once someone is employed, in addition to ongoing assessment, job-matching services, and employer support. In 2020 there were 150 participants, 80 of whom have found employment.

Problem targeted

People with intellectual disabilities in Jordan do not have many opportunities to find work and have a stable income.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Sana's Work Program has four stages: 1) Evaluation of a participant's health, education, and support needs; 2) Negotiation with employers and evaluation of the proposed work environment; 3) Job-matching and reasonable adjustments; and 4) Intensive workplace training from a work coach until the new employee can work independently. The work coach accompanies the person until training is complete. This support is critical to engaging employers, as the work coach takes on the responsibility of training. Employers were originally identified through Sana's existing partners, with more becoming involved as the programme has grown. There is no fee for employers, but they sign a memorandum of understanding with Sana outlining expectations and support.

In 2020, Sana employs five work coaches.

“Rami got a job through Sana and his confidence and self-esteem have now changed for the better.”

Sumia Abu Jafar, mother of Rami, a Sana Work Program participant

Originally working with one hotel in Amman, Sana has expanded to other hotels and sectors in the city, including factories, security companies, schools, and advertising companies. Employees earn minimum wage or higher, although earnings may be lower during the initial training period.



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Malak Al Khateeb, a Sana Work Program participant, enjoys her work in a restaurant.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In 2019 the Swedish Organization for Individual Relief granted Sana \$65,420 for two projects: the Work Program and its Family Support Circles Program.

The Work Program replicates a model originally developed in Japan and implemented in Jordan with the support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, which arranged for a volunteer from Japan to join Sana as a work coach from 2018 to 2020.

By 2025, Sana aims to increase the number of women and work coaches and to expand to other industries. The programme is transferable, and has already been expanded to other regions in Jordan.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2010

- Sana has grown from employing one work coach in 2015 to five in 2020.
- In 2019, 47 participants found work, 11 of whom were women.
- A project of Civil Society.

An app that connects jobseekers with disabilities with job opportunities

KENYA/RIZIKI SOURCE APP

Riziki Source is a social enterprise based in Nairobi, Kenya. Launched in 2015, the Riziki Source App facilitates access to information about job opportunities in Kenya for people with disabilities. Offering a variety of accessible formats, anyone can register on the database and provide the various attributes of the job seeker. For companies, the platform offers direct access to people with disabilities as employees. From 2017 to 2020, 150 job seekers found employment through the app.

Problem targeted

People with disabilities in Kenya often have difficulty accessing information about job opportunities and connecting with employers.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Users of the Riziki Source App register either via the web application, an Android download application, or via a text message, where they specify various attributes of the applicant, such as education level or type of disability. Once registered, jobseekers use the app to check if their personal information is matched with the requirements of job offers from likewise registered companies. Through data analyses, the app also identifies what training its users need and links them to suitable offers or organizes the appropriate courses. In addition, jobseekers can exchange information with each other. The service enables a nationwide job search and reduces the costs associated with finding employment.

“Riziki is Swahili and means ‘livelihood’. Riziki Source therefore means ‘source of livelihood’.”

Fredrick Ouko, Founder, Riziki Source

From 2015 to 2020, 435 candidates were registered and 12 companies offered internships as part-time and full-time positions. Partnerships were also established with organizations to provide on-the-job training for candidates who do not have the qualifications required for certain jobs.



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Two women meet at the Riziki offices, where they share thoughts during their training.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The Riziki social business model is currently available for free, but there are plans to charge a small administrative fee for persons with disabilities who successfully get connected to jobs. However, they would only pay after receiving their first month's salary. Employers recruiting through the app pay 50 per cent of the total annual salary for the position. In 2020 the organization is using grant money to create visibility and build its brand. In 2021, Riziki plans to further expand its services nationwide and to enlist more employers. The organization also offers counselling services for the integration of people with disabilities into the workplace.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- In 2020, 320 persons with disabilities were using the app.
- In 2020, the app had 435 registered jobseekers and 15 registered companies.
- A project of the Business Sector.

Vocational training and micro-financing for young people with disabilities

LEBANON/LEBANESE UNION FOR PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

The Lebanese Union for People with Physical Disabilities (LUPD) is an advocacy organization run for and by people with physical disabilities. Since 2018, LUPD has been running a project to empower young people with disabilities to access employment or self-employment in rural areas of Bekaa and south Lebanon. The project offers vocational training, management courses, mentorship, and access to micro-finance. As of 2020, 200 people have found employment and 23 small businesses have been created.

Problem targeted

People with disabilities can face difficulties finding employment due to a lack of physically accessible workplaces and infrastructure.

Solution, innovation, and impact

LUPD provides vocational training and courses in marketing and management as well as mentoring to prepare people for employment. Training is provided at accessible locations using easy language, sensory objects, and sign language when required.

In addition, the project offers loans through microfinance organizations for those individuals who want to open or expand their own business. People have found work in sectors such as tourism, industry, and media, or have established their own businesses in agriculture, tailoring, and carpentry.

“I can’t express my feelings when I got my first salary and could buy anything I wanted.”

Zeinab, a LUPD beneficiary

The Ministry of Social Affairs has provided training locations and supported networking with local authorities. The Chamber of Commerce has also supported LUPD by connecting them to local employers. Between 2018 and 2020 the project ran over 50 training courses for 400 attendees. Moreover, LUPD has convinced 49 companies to create internal policies promoting diversity and inclusion and to improving workplace accessibility.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

LUPD received \$250,000 from the US Agency for



LUPD conducts a training session for young jobseekers with disabilities.

International Development in 2018 via the Palladium Group, one of USAID’s private-sector partners. In 2019 and 2020, LUPD received \$115,000 and \$162,000, respectively, in grants from Diakonia, a Swedish development-financing NGO.

In 2020 it signed multiple employment protocols with organizations to support them to implement Lebanon’s 3 per cent employment quota for persons with disabilities.

The project started in Bekaa and south Lebanon and has gradually expanded to other areas of the country. In the coming years the project aims to steadily increase the number of project beneficiaries.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- 200 people have gained employment, with 30 full-time.
- 23 small businesses have been started and 50 training courses were attended by 400 people.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

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Life Stories from Bangladesh, India, and Spain



THE STORY OF SUMAIYA: A WHEELCHAIR USER AND TRAINEE OF PFDA

Setting up a successful tea-stall

Bangladesh

Sumaiya, age 26, has physical disabilities, as do her two younger brothers. Her home infrastructure does not support wheelchair access, and thus she has always been dependent on her hands for any movement. Her father is a poor farmer who doesn't own his own land, and her mother is a homemaker. As a family, they lacked any fixed income when Sumaiya attended training on shop keeping and food service.

After the training, the Vocational Training Center PFDA provided about \$150 in seed money for a small tea stall located close to a busy garment factory in Gazipur. VTC helped to build the shop, and they also spoke to the local commissioner to ensure that no one would bother her for a bribe or with any harassment.

Every morning Sumaiya's father carries her to the shop, and the whole day she sells tea to her customers, who say they are happy with the quality of the tea and of the service. As a result, Sumaiya is now earning enough money to help her family and to send her brothers to school.

i See also Factsheet on page 27.

THE STORY OF SANA MANYAR: ENTREPRENEUR AND ROLE MODEL

A deafblind girl starts a beauty parlour business

India

Loved by everyone, 19-year-old Sana Javid Khan Manyar has become a role model for the girls within her community, and is providing the services of her beauty parlour at a reasonable cost to women and girls.

Sana is deafblind with a partial hearing impairment. Among all her siblings, she was best at drawing, and as a child she would often make paper lanterns and decorative items for her home. She would also practice drawing henna designs on the back pages of her school notebook.

Though initially it was difficult for the vocational trainers to communicate with Sana because of her dual sensory impairment, it was Sana's determination and keen observation that allowed her to follow the instructions, complete the course work, and receive a certificate upon completion of the training. Seeing a girl with disability completing the course not only inspired other girls, community members, and trainers but it also gave them the confidence to work with other candidates with multiple disabilities.

In 2019, after setting up her beauty parlour, Sana soon received her first booking for bridal makeup. She is also happy that she can support her family financially, and is now looking forward to expanding her work by offering costume jewellery for sale.

i See also Factsheet on page 57.



THE STORY OF THE MITTI CAFÉ, INDIA

“Have courage and be kind. For where there is kindness there is goodness, and where there is goodness there is magic”

i See also Factsheet on page 55.



THE STORY OF LAURA PEDRAZA: A YOUTH WITH DISABILITY AND A ONE-ON-ONE USER

“This contract has changed my life.”

Spain

What I loved most about the One-on-One training programme was learning how to perform administration tasks and to use Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. I also enjoyed learning about a company, about the different departments: human resources, communication, production, logistics, etc. It was a joy to participate in an adapted training programme with on-the-job training in a company, and especially to receive the final surprise: my contract!

When I started my internship, although I was very nervous, people were very welcoming and treated me as part of the team. That left me speechless, and I loved it. I am so happy to be in a good company where people appreciate me for what I am. They are a big family, very friendly, and they help me all the time.

When, during the graduation ceremony, they told me they were going to hire me, I couldn't believe it. It was a dream come true. Getting a permanent contract is not easy, and I know it was because of the good job that I was doing and because they are happy with me.

i See also Factsheet on page 78.

NGO federation training and placing young adults with intellectual disabilities

MAURITIUS/INCLUSION MAURITIUS – SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Inclusion Mauritius is a federation of 13 NGOs promoting the social and professional inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities in Mauritius. Through its supported employment and training programme, and supported by companies, it ensures the successful hiring of candidates and an almost 100 per cent retention rate. Between 2018 and 2020, Inclusion Mauritius trained 162 young adults with intellectual disabilities, of whom almost 50 have found employment in the open labour market.

Problem targeted

There are few training and employment opportunities for young people with intellectual disabilities in Mauritius.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Inclusion Mauritius takes a dual approach to ensuring young people with intellectual disabilities obtain and retain employment. It offers training in life, employability, and technical skills using training materials in easy language and with pictograms. Modules include punctuality, teamwork, job applications, and employee rights. There is also hands-on work experience in such trades as hospitality and tourism.

“Following the training, I now work as a full-time sales assistant and help my parents financially.”

Emily Flit, 19, a programme participant

In parallel, the federation works with potential employers to build their understanding of inclusive employment, seeks their input on training content, and guides them in hiring and retention practices. As of 2020, 24 employers across Mauritius collaborate on the programme. Alongside vocational training, Inclusion Mauritius also offers young people self-advocacy training and consults them on all aspects of the programme. Since 2018, Inclusion Mauritius has trained 162 young adults with intellectual disabilities, 43 of whom have secured work. The programme has a 96 per cent retention rate among this group, all of whom are receiving at least minimum wage.



A young man employed through Inclusion Mauritius is engaged in the food service industry.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The programme is funded by the National Social Inclusion Foundation and a private sector company, at a cost of \$46,236 in 2019–2020.

Inclusion Mauritius works with employers nationally and has also trained NGOs on the autonomous island of Rodrigues on good practices. It is also a member of Inclusion International, a global network of people with intellectual disabilities and their families, and has shared its model through their channels.

In addition to continuing to facilitate employment, Inclusion Mauritius plans to support young people to become entrepreneurs through a training and coaching programme.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- The programme has made 43 work placements from 2018 to 2020.
- Employees have a 96 per cent retention rate.
- Inclusion Mauritius works in collaboration with 24 employers.
- A project of Civil Society.

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Labour inclusion index and job platform for disability-inclusive companies

MEXICO/ALIANZA ÉNTRALE

The Mexican Business Council (CMN) is an association of 59 businesses focused on economic and social development. Its Alianza Éntrale initiative promotes inclusive employment and provides resources and tools to companies to support them. Among the tools is a labour inclusion index, which includes assessment, training, and certification, as well as an open-source job platform. As of 2020, Alianza Éntrale had trained over 3,800 people and facilitated employment for 9,821 people with disabilities.

Problem targeted

In Mexico the employment of people with disabilities is often seen as more of a philanthropic than a strategic benefit.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Alianza Éntrale offers two key services to companies to promote labour inclusion: a labour inclusion index and a job platform.

The index is an internal assessment and improvement tool. Companies fill out a questionnaire on topics such as organizational culture, company policies, and reasonable adjustments. From these results, a work plan is designed and reviewed every two months. Based on identified training needs, companies can attend free monthly workshops provided by Alianza Éntrale. When a company reaches 80 per cent in the questionnaire, it is certified as an inclusive work environment. Companies must assess themselves annually to remain certified. As of October 2020, 110 companies were taking part in the index, of which 51 are certified. All assessment and training materials have been tested and are accessible.

“The support of Alianza Éntrale is very important so that objectives can be reached quickly.”

Gabriela Medina, Director at Fundación Manpower

The job platform, hosted on entrale.org, is open to all Mexican companies, and vacancies are posted free of charge. The platform also connects people to training opportunities with Éntrale’s partners. The platform hosts approximately 1,300 vacancies a month.

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Participants at the job fair.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

CMN finances the initiative, which costs \$225,000 per year. There is no charge to companies.

Alianza Éntrale is working with partners such as the Secretariat of Labour and Social Welfare and the Mexican Centre of Philanthropy to have its certification recognized by these organizations. In addition, it will support companies to generate inclusive commercial products by developing tools and protocols on topics such as participatory research and design thinking. Finally, it will create a professional training programme to support people with disabilities in finding and applying for jobs.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- To date, 51 companies have been certified.
- Company assessments increase an average of 20 per cent per year.
- A project of the Business Sector.

A catering service training and vocation programme

MOLDOVA/ECO-RAZENI ASSOCIATION – FLOARE DE CIREȘ

In 2012 the Eco-Razeni Association, an NGO based in Razeni, Moldova, founded a catering service called “Floare de Cireș” (“Cherry Blossom”). The aim is to give disadvantaged young people the chance to gain their first professional experience by working in a catering service. In 2015 the project was expanded to include a job training programme, which more than 100 people with disabilities had completed by 2020. Five organizations from other regions of Moldova are expected to adopt the model.

Problem targeted

There is a lack of employment opportunities in Moldova for youth at risk of poverty and social exclusion, including young persons with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Floare de Cireș is a social enterprise that gives young people with intellectual and physical disabilities, and from a diverse range of backgrounds and situations, the chance to find their first “real job” in a catering company. The concept was developed together with young people with disabilities, their family members, and representatives of the public administration.

The project started in 2012 with seven employees, and in 2020 Floare de Cireș has 25 employees, 16 of whom are young people with disabilities. In 2015, Floare de Cireș extended its support to a four-month work-based training and employment programme. In a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment young men and women with disabilities learn fundamental job skills, while simultaneously building their resumes and work experience. The programme includes a monthly survey of participants.

“Eco-Razeni provides support to young women and men, allowing them to redirect their lives.”

Ion Cretu, Mayor of Razeni village

The long-term financial situation improved for 79 per cent of the beneficiaries by finding employment after working at Floare de Cireș.

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Floare de Cireș staff present their bakery products.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Total cost for the training programme is €50,000 per year. Floare de Cireș is financed by public funds and national and international fundraising. About 25 per cent of programme costs are covered by income from the catering service.

Floare de Cireș is a simple model and the programme is easy to replicate. On the verge of scaling nationwide, the organization has found partner organizations to launch the programme in five regions of the country.

In 2017 the programme served as a case study to develop legal rules for state-subsidized job creation and adaptation for persons with disabilities.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2012

- Floare de Cireș has 25 employees, 16 of whom are young people with disabilities.
- From 2015 to 2020 more than 100 persons with disabilities completed the work-based training and employment programme.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

Ministry of Education organizing Individual Training Plans for transition to work

MONTENEGRO/MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – ITPS

In 2016, Montenegro's Ministry of Education launched a pilot project of Individual Transition Plans (ITPs) for students with special educational needs to support their progression through school and transition to the labour market. An ITP is designed with the input of the student, parents, teachers, and educational guidance and employment service providers for support tailored to the student's individual needs. Starting with 45 participants in 2016, 383 students found employment in 2019.

Problem targeted

Students with disabilities require personalized, well-planned, and coordinated support for their successful transition to employment or higher education.

Solution, innovation, and impact

A student typically will have two ITPs: the first (ITP-1) facilitates the transition from primary to secondary school, and the second facilitates the transition either to the labour market (ITP-2) or tertiary education (ITP-3). Each ITP includes an assessment of the student's capabilities and interests as well as what adjustments, such as devices or assessment methods, are necessary to meet their learning and working needs.



Students with disabilities participate in a class for Individual Training Plans.

“ITP helps students make choices according to their individual abilities and possibilities.”

Irena Bogićević, a teacher in Podgorica

The assessment is performed in schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the students, and the local school. ITPs are developed towards the end of the school year (May/June) and implemented after the summer holidays. Each ITP has a checklist whereby progress is monitored and evaluated. Potential employers are contacted by the local schools; and a dual education approach – part school/part practice in the workplace – has been introduced. From 2017 to 2019, the number of students in the programme climbed dramatically from 356 to 804.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

As part of the country's 2019–2025 Inclusive Education

Strategy, which aims to develop the potential of children with special needs in education and in society, the Ministry of Education plans to strengthen the collaboration between elementary and secondary schools for the successful progression of students with special educational needs through ITP-1.

Secondary schools are also being coached on involving employers in the formulation of the ITP-2. In 2016 the use of ITPs was piloted in three municipalities. By 2020 it was scaled to all schools in Montenegro and coaching was conducted in ten schools to build the capacity of school staff to implement the plans.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- In 2019, 383 students with disabilities found jobs.
- From three regions in 2016 the programme has now been scaled to all schools.
- Coaching has been conducted in ten schools.
- A project of the Public Sector.



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Providing vocational skills and career development to young adults with disabilities

NIGERIA/SPECIAL NEEDS INITIATIVE FOR GROWTH – TVET

Special Needs Initiative for Growth is an NGO based in Lagos supporting people with disabilities. Starting in 2017, the organization has worked with civil society and business partners to offer vocational and technical trainings covering digital, vocational, and career development skills, and it builds the capacity of special educators to teach these skills. It also offers mentorship, internships, and business grants. From 2017 to 2020 some 1,300 persons have been trained.

Problem targeted

Vocational training for people with disabilities in Nigeria often lacks appropriate materials, skilled educators, and career development support.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Special Needs Initiative for Growth offers accessible vocational training and career skills development workshops and bootcamps, with topics ranging from ICT entrepreneurship, robotics, and digital marketing to disability rights, journalism, and public speaking. These are often run in partnership with other NGOs, such as a two-year robotics and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) training programme partnership with Down Syndrome Foundation Nigeria. The project also aims to build the capacity of special educators to teach these skills and has trained 570 educators since 2017.



Abiodun Emmanuel Oyeniran uses 'text to speech' technology to teach Google Digital Marketing skills to trainees.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The practice is grant-funded from a group of corporate and non-profit partners that have contributed \$8,700.

Since March 2020, Special Needs Initiative for Growth has started to move its training online due to COVID-19. It will continue working with partners to support access to training and jobs, and is also calling for the adoption of the African Disability Rights Protocol in Nigeria. In 2021 it plans to explore how 'big data' could identify needs for employment of people with disabilities and to use this information to scale its practice across Africa.

“The career development programme opened my mind, and now I am a digital and media advocate.”

Abiodun Emmanuel Oyeniran, Technical Support Staff

After completing programmes, trainees' progress is monitored and evaluated to see what follow-up support is appropriate, such as mentoring, links to internship placements, or small grants for the trainee or his/her family to start a business.

From 2018 to 2020, 153 persons with disabilities accessed internship placements in roles such as data management, logistics, and journalism offered by local partner organizations, including a radio station, libraries, and a transport company.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Special Needs Initiative for Growth has facilitated 153 internship placements between 2018 and 2020.
- 570 special educators have been trained (2018: 112; 2019: 194; 2020: 219)
- A project of Civil Society.

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Sign language relay service with a successful scaling strategy

PAKISTAN/DEAFTAWK

DeafTawk is a for-profit start-up technology company based in Islamabad, Pakistan. It has developed a mobile application that connects deaf users with certified sign language interpreters in real time through video calling, used by individuals and businesses. Available on both IOS and Android platforms, DeafTawk has now been replicated in Singapore. Between 2018 and 2020 it has provided 94,000 hours of sign language interpretation to some 18,000 users across both countries.

Problem targeted

The general public is largely unfamiliar with sign language and there are shortages of qualified sign language interpreters.


Solution, innovation, and impact

Through the DeafTawk app, users can either choose 'book now' for instant interpretation via a video call, or 'book later' to schedule a specific time. With this option, users can specify the purpose of the call and choose an interpreter with relevant expertise. The service is available 24/7 for individuals, businesses, and institutions (e.g., educational institutes and hospitals). Organizations can book interpreters online and are matched to subject experts. Between 2018 and 2020, DeafTawk provided approximately 94,000 hours of interpretation in Pakistan and Singapore. Through the service more than 500 deaf users have gained employment and 79 have been enrolled in higher education.

“Through DeafTawk I can now easily narrate my words and feel empowered to be part of society.”

Maria Zia, a DeafTawk user

DeafTawk employs over 1,100 interpreters and offers services in ten languages. To work with DeafTawk, interpreters must have at least two years' experience and undergo a three-day training workshop. Interpreters are based online and can work anytime, anywhere per their availability.

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A deaf woman uses DeafTawk to place her order at a coffee shop.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

DeafTawk's revenue from July 2019 to June 2020 was \$175,000. Of this, \$110,000 came from monthly subscriptions from businesses and institutions offering the service. The remaining \$65,000 was from on-demand services offered to individual users.

After expanding in Pakistan following a pilot, DeafTawk launched in Singapore in partnership with SG Enable and Enterprise SG, and with funding from Accelerating Asia. It aims to further expand in Asia, with a target of three additional countries in the next five years. DeafTawk is currently looking to launch an Artificial Intelligence feature to translate into 26 languages and is also improving the app's machine learning functionality.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- As of November 2020, DeafTawk employed 1,100 sign language interpreters, growing 35 per cent compared to 2019.
- Over 500 users found employment using DeafTawk in job interviews.
- *A project of the Business Sector.*

Training persons with disabilities in the Philippines to work as digital freelancers

PHILIPPINES/VIRTUALAHAN

Virtualahan is a social enterprise in the Philippines that trains and supports persons with disabilities to work as digital freelancers. The company offers a ten-week programme that includes demand-driven digital skills training, work-based learning, and employment support. Virtualahan also employs some of its own graduates to work as digital professionals. From 2015 to 2019 more than 500 people have graduated from the programme, 74 per cent of whom have secured employment.

Problem targeted

There is a lack of accessible training and employment support for persons with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Virtualahan offers five weeks of intensive online training in digital skills, such as digital marketing, website development, and administrative support. All training is delivered online and the training platform and curriculum follow Universal Design principles.

After training, participants are matched with a partner organization for a three-week apprenticeship, during which they are mentored by industry experts. They also receive individual job coaching for two weeks. Throughout the programme, participants attend weekly life-coaching sessions led by a psychologist, focused on self-advocacy and awareness. Graduates work for clients across the world as virtual assistants and digital freelancers, making on average 40 to 60 per cent more than the minimum wage. Virtualahan also educates employers on the benefits of employing persons with disabilities and how to build a more inclusive workplace.

“Virtualahan enabled me to dream and empowered me to get a job, and changed the direction of my life.”

Charina, Social Media Manager

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Some 65 per cent of Virtualahan’s revenue comes from training fees. The programme costs over \$500 per person, with fees covered upfront by sponsors and paid back by graduates within ten months of



The Virtualahan Team doing a jump shot with the iconic Davao City Hall in the background.

securing a job. The other 35 percent of revenue comes from Virtualahan by providing virtual assistant services to other organizations.

Virtualahan plans to scale its training to 1,000 persons with disabilities annually and maintain an employment rate of at least 70 per cent. It also intends to expand internationally through social franchising. The practice has already supported other groups facing exclusion from the workplace, such as single parents, people recovering from addiction, and former prisoners. Virtualahan has also supported a pilot in New Zealand for out-of-school Maori youth.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- The programme has over 400 graduates.
- There is a 98 per cent completion rate and 78 per cent employment rate.
- Average income is 40 to 60 per cent above the minimum wage.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Solving social issues to increase job opportunities

RUSSIA/INGKA GROUP (IKEA) – ABILYMPICS PROJECT

IKEA, the Sweden-based global furniture retailer, has launched a project with Abilympics – the Work Skill Olympics for People with Disabilities – to promote a disability-inclusive environment within the company and to support this international movement. The cooperation includes skills trainings for Abilympics participants, support in organizing events, and sharing of expertise. In 2019–2020 there was a 55 per cent increase (134 persons) in employment of people with disabilities at IKEA Russia.

Problem targeted

There are more than 12 million people with disabilities in Russia, and only 8 per cent of them have a job.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The IKEA Abilympics project is focused on three outcomes: 1) advocacy activities to remove barriers to the employment of people with disabilities in Russia; 2) training employees on understanding disabilities, engaging them in Abilympics; and 3) supporting Abilympics participants in developing soft skills, such as how to pass job interviews and present themselves.

IKEA Russia invested 1,500 hours in building the skills of managers and employees to raise awareness and to accommodate their disabled peers. Externally, IKEA became main partner of Abilympics (Olympics of Abilities), which are international vocational skills competitions specifically designed for persons with disabilities to enable them to expose their unique talents. IKEA's involvement includes conducting workshops, creating recreation spots, working as experts and volunteers at events, and sharing examples how inclusion can succeed in the workplace.

“Our joint skills for employment programmes enable thousands of people with disabilities to find jobs.”

Dina Makeeva, Head of Abilympics National Centre

In 2020, IKEA and Abilympics started online courses on employment skills, such as team work and conflict resolution. To date, 251 students from 78 Russian provinces have signed up for this ten-week programme.



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Participants attend a workshop for Abilympics.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The costs of the programme are fully covered by the operational budgets of IKEA Russia.

After the successful introduction of online courses in 2020 in response to COVID-19, IKEA is committed to keep its relationship with Abilympics participants. By 2023, IKEA Russia aims to increase the employment of people with disabilities within the company by another 20 per cent.

Other objectives are recognition of people with disabilities in government structures and society, and a strengthening of the understanding of inclusion among employees.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- In 2020, IKEA Russia had more than 11,000 employees, of whom 139 were persons with disabilities.
- Employment of persons with disabilities is planned to increase by another 20 per cent by 2023.
- *A project of the Business Sector.*

Expanding a chain of coffee shops run by deaf young people

SOUTH AFRICA – CAPE TOWN, JOHANNESBURG/I LOVE COFFEE

I Love Coffee is a social enterprise based in Cape Town, South Africa, that is building a chain of coffee shops and operates a coffee roastery run by deaf young people. Employees receive barista and hospitality training, along with support for accessing other services, such as banking and social services. There are ten locations across Cape Town and Johannesburg, including both public and in-office locations. In 2020, I Love Coffee had 26 employees, and it plans to operate 40 cafés soon.

Problem targeted

There are very few employment opportunities for young Deaf persons in South Africa.

Solution, innovation, and impact

I Love Coffee is geared towards the employment of Deaf young people by providing training in health and safety, coffee production, and customer service. All hearing staff are also trained in sign language. There is a defined career pathway within the organization for employees identified for promotion, including accredited facilitation training, trainer development, and management training.

I Love Coffee opened its first café in 2016 employing three staff; in 2020 there were 26 people working for the company, 80 per cent of whom are deaf. Between 2016 and 2020, I Love Coffee has opened ten outlets.

“Receiving training in sign language made me want to be a trainer and create jobs in my community.”

Sisipho Dumse, barista and future accredited trainer

I Love Coffee is in the process of accrediting its training programme and has partnered with industry leaders to ensure that its programme fulfils the specific needs of the hospitality industry. While training and operating practices are deaf-specific, the organization ensures that its training is in accordance with industry norms so that staff can work in the general hospitality industry as well.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

I Love Coffee aims to be self-sufficient and is



Two happy members of the I Love Coffee staff.

supported by the SAB Foundation and the Branson Centre of Entrepreneurship. Equipment is funded through Enterprise Development grants or loans; and income from the coffee shops covers salaries, utilities, and operating expenses.

In 2020, I Love Coffee completed the construction of a new operational facility hosting a coffee roastery, central kitchen, and training infrastructure. As a social enterprise, I Love Coffee plans to reinvest all profits into the growth of the organization.

From 2015 to 2020 the company has scaled from one to ten locations and is now looking to scale further both nationally and internationally through a social franchise model.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- I Love Coffee has grown from one to ten locations in four years.
- In 2020, I Love Coffee employed 26 people, 80 per cent of whom are deaf.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Transforming sheltered workshops to offer vocational training and employment support

SOUTH KOREA/SOHWA ARAM VR CENTRE – JOB PLUS

The Sohwa Aram Centre is a vocational rehabilitation service and social enterprise based in Gwangju. In 2017 it launched Job Plus to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It focuses on transforming sheltered workshops into vocational rehabilitation agencies that can support people from high school into employment. The project provides internships, short term work experience, and support services. From 2018 to 2020, 34 participants found employment through the project.

Problem targeted

Many people with intellectual and developmental disabilities work in sheltered workshops, with a lack of training and support to move into the open labour market.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Job Plus provides people with personalized training and support to enter the open labour market. It works with (privately organized) sheltered workshops as well as businesses and government agencies to provide vocational training and employment support through existing sheltered workshop structures. Businesses also offer on-site training in their premises.

Job Plus's J-TURN service is a model of training, employment, retraining, and reemployment so people know they can re-enter vocational rehabilitation if a job does not work out. It provides personalized post-employment adaptation and support services to increase the job retention rate of its participants. After three years it has a job retention rate of 85 per cent. Participants who secure work earn at least

“If businesses, schools, and vocational services play their role, people with disabilities find work.”

Mi-sun Ko, Project Partner and Teacher at Gwangju Seonu Special School

minimum wage. In May 2020 the centre was working with 1,300 people in 100 sheltered workshops. It cooperates with specialist schools to provide internships and short-term work experience placements so students are better prepared to enter the job market upon graduating.



Employment promotion programmes help trainees gain work experience.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In 2019, Job Plus received \$82,237 from the Asan Foundation for Developmental Disability Support, established by Hyundai Engineering & Construction. Sohwa Aram Centre contributed \$3,682 of its own funds.

Job Plus expanded to 40 specialist schools in the second half of 2020 and aims to reach 100 schools in 2021. By 2025 it aims to develop a post-school employment programme for students with customized vocational training and focused on transition. It also wants to develop programmes to support jobs in the public sector and continue to work to transform the function of sheltered workshops.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Since 2017, 34 people have found employment.
- Programme participants have an 85 per cent job retention rate.
- As of May 2020 the centre is working with 100 sheltered workshops.
- A project of Civil Society.

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Vocational support for people with intellectual disabilities in the penal system

SPAIN – ALICANTE/APSA PENITENTIARY PROGRAMME

Asociación APSA is a Spanish NGO based in Alicante that supports people with intellectual disabilities and their families. Its Penitentiary Programme provides individualized vocational support for people with intellectual disabilities serving sentences in the criminal justice system. It offers training and transition support, including through its sheltered employment centres in the community. In 2020, APSA supports 65 persons with intellectual disabilities.

Problem targeted

There are few services to support people with intellectual disabilities to enter employment once they have left the penal system.

Solution, innovation, and impact

APSA supports everyone with intellectual disabilities in Alicante's prison and the adjoining penitentiary hospital, as well as those serving community sentences (2020: 65 persons). An individualized rehabilitation programme is developed for each person, focused on the skills they need to access work and live independently. Participants receive social and vocational training in workshops within the prison or hospital or, where possible, in APSA's sheltered employment centres in the community. The training is designed to support social reintegration once an individual leaves prison or hospital. All training materials are available in easy language, and trainers are experienced in supporting people with intellectual disabilities. Ten people



A graduate of the APSA's Penitentiary Programme now works as a carpenter.

“APSA's support was crucial. Following release from prison, Paco now has a stable job.”

Clarisa Ramos, social worker

left imprisonment in 2019, half of them returned to their original provinces, and three were able to secure a job in gardening or production. The ones who did not continue their vocational training.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The programme is funded by the national and regional Ministries of Social Affairs, which respectively

contributed €54,736 and €59,739 in 2020.

At its start the APSA model, with vocational training and the possibility of going out of the prison to work, was unique in Spain, but in 2020 similar programmes are being developed in more than 12 penal institutions.

APSA's goal is to find work for four participants annually. In 2021 the Ministry will establish a centre in Alicante prison dedicated to supporting people with intellectual disabilities, with APSA running the service. APSA will also start supporting the children of women in prison who might have intellectual or developmental disabilities.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 1995

- Over 600 persons with intellectual disabilities have been supported since 1995.
- Three participants have obtained a job after leaving the penal system in 2019.
- A project of Civil Society.



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DPO federation running a business sector-encouragement programme

SPAIN/COCEMFE – MAKING BUSINESSES INCLUSIVE

The Spanish Confederation of People with Physical and Organic Disabilities (COCEMFE) is an umbrella organization of 91 Spanish disability organizations based in Madrid. COCEMFE and its members run 81 employment services in Spain. In 2018 the organization started an inclusive business initiative, raising awareness, providing support to companies to become more inclusive, and connecting them to jobseekers with disabilities. By 2020, 161 companies had committed to adopt inclusive business practices.

Problem targeted

Private-sector companies often lack the knowledge, confidence, and guidance to comprehensively implement inclusive business practices.

Solution, innovation, and impact

COCEMFE encourages companies to engage with persons with disabilities as suppliers, customers, and employees. Its employment services have set up 'employment antennae' in ten regions to work directly with companies to provide consultancy and advice on inclusion, and to link them to qualified jobseekers. They also work with companies to create an 'inclusion potential report', which analyses a company's policies, technology, workplace, etc., and they support the company to implement an inclusion action plan.

COCEMFE has produced guides for inclusive businesses on topics such as inclusive recruitment, diversity management, developing disability-inclusive corporate social responsibility, and sustainability action plans. From 2018 to 2020 more than 8,100 companies have been reached through this work.

“Access to inclusive employment is essential, and the collaboration of companies is necessary.”

Anxo Queiruga, President, COCEMFE

To date, 161 companies have signed a cooperation agreement with COCEMFE, and 38 inclusion potential reports have been produced. Employment services have supported 4,399 people with disabilities to secure a job.



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An administrator discusses work with a colleague at Formavigo, one of COCEMFE's partner companies.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In 2019 the project budget was €64,250, with 70 per cent funded by the Ministry of Labour and 30 per cent self-financed by COCEMFE.

COCEMFE wants to create a network of at least 1,000 companies committed to inclusion. It plans to scale with partners in Europe through Disabled Persons' International (DPI) Europe, and in Latin America through the Ibero-American Network of Organisations for People with Physical Disabilities (La RED).

Inclusive employment service providers in other countries could easily replicate the practice, as long as materials and tools are adapted to the local language and social and legal contexts.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- 8,100 companies have been contacted through the campaign.
- 4,399 people with disabilities have secured employment from 2018 to 2020.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

Moving inactive people with disabilities from social services to employment

SPAIN/FUNDACIÓN ONCE – ONE-ON-ONE

Fundación ONCE is a leading Spanish foundation supporting people with disabilities. Starting in 2014, ONCE runs a programme to bring inactive youth (not economically active) with disabilities into employment. In collaboration with local DPOs, potential employers are engaged and the trainings are tailored to the specific job requirements. Candidates find employment mostly in catering, tourism, retail, and administration. From 2017 to 2019, One-on-One supported 2,054 people with disabilities.

Problem targeted

Although 83 per cent of students with special education needs in Spain are integrated into mainstream centres, 35 per cent become inactive.

Solution, innovation, and impact

One-on-One is a program that engages DPO's and employers to deliver training courses tailored to specific job requirements, following a proven methodology, co-created and tested with DPO's and persons with disabilities.

Theoretical and practical training of a minimum of 160 hours, together with on-the-job training, equips the participants with the skills and competencies for specific jobs.

The programme is oriented to paid employment (at least minimum wage), either in special employment centres (sheltered employment, that in Spain ensures all labour rights), or in the open labour market.

The project began as a pilot in 2015 with 15 participants and in 2019 the number had grown to 959 trainees across 122 projects. Of those partici-



Two project participants work on electrical installation at a building site.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The projects are co-financed by Fundación ONCE and the European Social Fund (ESF) through the Operational Programme for Youth Employment and the Operational Programme for Social Inclusion. Funding is secured until 2023.

Depending on the availability of ESF funds beyond 2023, Fundación ONCE may look for new funding sources to support this methodology (which has proven to be very successful) both at the national and regional/local level. The project has demonstrated its replicability and been scaled up across Spain since 2015.

“The project has given me training, and has taught me how to handle myself in a job.”

Luis M. Palazón, participant in a masonry training programme

pating in 2018, 36 per cent have successfully gained employment in such areas as hospitality, retail, and maintenance. Also in 2018, 36 per cent of internships were in the open labour market, rising to 60 per cent in 2019.



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FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- A total of 2,054 individuals participated in the project in 2018 and 2019.
- 20 per cent of projects take place in rural areas.
- As of 2019 almost 60 per cent of internships are in the open labour market.
- A project of Civil Society.

Making civil service positions accessible for people with intellectual disabilities

SPAIN/PLENA INCLUSIÓN – PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

Plena inclusión España is a national Spanish NGO with regional federations that supports people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In 2011 it was mandated by the Ministry of Territorial Policy and Public Function to develop a recruitment process in the public sector for people with intellectual disabilities. Through a targeted call for employment and adapted registration, training, and examination materials, 448 people secured jobs at the national level between 2012 and 2020.

Problem targeted

Public sector bodies do not always have the expertise in-house to make their employment processes accessible.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Plena Inclusión España works with public administrations at the national, regional, and local level to make their recruitment accessible. It has designed a new targeted process that considers the education opportunities, support needs, and employment experiences of people with intellectual disabilities. The focus is on improving cognitive accessibility. Calls for applications and accompanying information are in an easy-to-read format. Accessible online exam preparation is offered, and the registration form includes specific guidance to complete it. Increased funding from 2018 to 2020 has allowed Plena Inclusión to also offer applicants in-person training.

“I feel happy because I got the job with my own effort. It’s permanent and I learn things every day.”

Angel Diez, a public sector employee

The first targeted public employment call was made in 2012, at which time some 2,500 people applied for 54 places. From 2011 to 2020, 448 people with intellectual disabilities have secured a job in the public sector at the national level alone.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project is financed through grants and subsidies. Funding has grown from €10,000 (2011) to €300,000



Two young men arrive to take the public sector examinations.

(2018–2020), including funding from the European Social Fund, the Spanish Ministry of Health and Social Services and Fundación Universia.

The practice has been replicated in Spain’s autonomous communities, provincial councils, and municipalities. Plena Inclusión has a working group composed of employment professionals from its regional federations who share learning and progress. It offers advice to public administrations and holds events to bring public administrations together to share experiences and recognize achievements. Going forward, Plena Inclusión is planning work on making internal promotion processes within public administrations accessible.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2011

- In 2020, 16 autonomous communities in Spain opened targeted regional calls for employment for people with intellectual disabilities.
- Funding for the project has increased from €10,000 in 2011 to €300,000 in 2018–2020.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Training and online job-matching for students and graduates with disabilities

TANZANIA/EMPLOYABLE AFRICA – ENVISION AFRICA

Employable Africa is a social enterprise launched in 2016 and headquartered in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Focused on supporting graduates and students with physical and sensory disabilities, it has developed a transition to employment curriculum called Envision Africa and offers an online job platform, training, and job-matching services. It works with families and teachers and provides consultancy services to companies and universities. In 2019 it made 290 successful matches, up from 80 in 2017.

Problem targeted

Students and graduates with disabilities often do not have access to support and resources to transition into employment.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Employable Africa focuses on the transition from school or college to employment. Its online training curriculum, Envision Africa, prepares students and graduates for their transition to work. It covers digital skills such as coding, Artificial Intelligence, financial literacy, and career planning. Employable Africa organizes career fairs and offers career guidance. It also provides services to universities and colleges to better support their students with disabilities, through campus visits, workshops, and customized curriculum.

“Employable Africa is the solution to labour market exclusion. It educates, empowers, and enables.”

Hussein Kiranga, Human Resources, Employable Africa

Jobseekers can use Employable Africa’s online platform to apply for internships and positions. Employable Africa matches the information provided by candidates with the needs of the employer and their capacity to support the particular person. In 2019, Employable Africa matched 290 positions in the open labour market, with a retention rate of 71 per cent. Employable Africa makes sure employers assign experienced supervisors to support employees or interns, and it shares best practices, techniques, and a training manual to support employers.



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Credit: IAE-2016 Deo Snura at Temoke District Dar es Salaam Tanzania

An Employable Africa workshop participant provides feedback during a discussion in her breakout group.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Employable Africa charges a \$15 fee for each of its online courses. It organizes paid teacher-training programmes to customize curricula to their students’ needs. For recruitment support, Employable Africa charges companies between \$100 and \$200. It also generates income through paid research, consultancy, workshops, and a real-time transcription service.

Employable Africa is looking to integrate machine learning and Artificial Intelligence into its online platform to improve the quality of its matchmaking. It also hopes to expand its services to other countries in Africa.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Number of students trained: 560 (2019); 240 (2018); and 135 (2017)
- Employable Africa’s job matches have a 71 per cent retention rate.
- *A project of the Business Sector.*

Entrepreneurship training programme for women with disabilities

TANZANIA/FUWAVITA

Furaha Ya Wanawake Wajasiriamali Kwa Viziwi Tanzania (FUWAVITA) is an NGO based in Dar es Salaam, the capital city. Running since 2011, it trains women with disabilities, predominantly women who are deaf, to produce and market handicrafts and food that they can sell to generate income. By 2020, 500 women had completed the entrepreneurship training, 327 of whom had also received a low-interest loan and are running their own small businesses.

Problem targeted

There are limited employment opportunities for women with disabilities in Tanzania and a lack of resources to start their own business.

Solution, innovation, and impact

FUWAVITA organizes training to teach women the skills needed to run their own business. The training is divided into three parts: (1) training on business management skills, such as maintaining a budget, business planning, marketing, etc.; (2) practical training focusing on making goods to sell, such as fruit, peanut butter, mango pickle, and soap using Tanzania's natural resources, and thus easy for women to source the necessary materials; and

(3) leadership training, designed to support women to handle their business confidently. Sign language interpreters are available at training sessions, which are held in physically accessible locations.

“Push yourself forward no matter what. Disability should not hinder you to reach your mission!”

Aneth Gerana, Founder and Director, FUWAVITA

FUWAVITA collaborates with the Small Industries Development Organization, a Tanzanian Government agency supporting small businesses, on training content. It is also supported by the Dar es Salaam City Council, which has provided loans for 327 women to start their own businesses, now earning between \$50 and \$200 a month.



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A FUWAVITA workshop on entrepreneurship is being conducted.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

FUWAVITA has an annual operating budget of \$50,000, mainly funded by donors and partners like Voice Global, Global Peace Foundation, Dar es Salaam City Council, and The Open Society for Eastern Africa.

With funding from the Global Peace Foundation, FUWAVITA has also delivered training in Morogoro, Tanzania, and believes the training could be further expanded. It is currently working to digitalize its training materials and use ICT to reach more women with disabilities, and has already had some success delivering training remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2011

- Women who have started their own businesses through the programme are earning \$50 to \$200 a month.
- The programme started with 15 trainees, and now has about 500.
- A project of Civil Society.



See corresponding Life Story on page 39.

Young people trained as Disability Inclusion Facilitators to motivate employers

UGANDA/LIGHT FOR THE WORLD – 12.4% WORK-INITIATIVE

Light for the World, the global disability and development NGO, has developed the 'Make 12.4% Work-Initiative' for Uganda that encourages member organizations to open employment opportunities and livelihood programmes for persons with disabilities. The initiative is led by young Disability Inclusion Facilitators, who train these organizations in inclusion. From 2018 to 2020, 124 organizations have become members, and 5,700 people have been included in the livelihood programmes.

Problem targeted

12.4% stands for the percentage of the Ugandan population with a disability. Of these, only 15 per cent of persons of working age are employed.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Make 12.4% Work initiative partners with public, private, and development sector organizations. Prospective partners perform a disability inclusion assessment and create an inclusion action plan as part of their commitment to their membership in the project. The number of members has grown from 12 in 2018 to 124 in 2020, and 15 young people with disabilities have been trained as Disability Inclusion Facilitators to lead the initiative. They recruit member organizations, run disability awareness training, and provide technical guidance on making livelihood programmes inclusive. From 2018 to 2020, the initiative has created over 5,700 work opportunities for young people with disabilities in either paid or self-employment positions.

“It’s exhilarating each time I realize my message is bringing about positive change.”

Fiona Akullu, a Disability Inclusion Facilitator

In 2020, 231 persons with disabilities have also been directly supported with skills training, work placements, and 'incubator' projects in addition to the 12.4% initiative. These incubator projects support people to become peer educators, community health experts, or are trained to develop advanced ICT skills.



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Robert, a Disability Inclusion Facilitator, conducts a basic sign language session.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The National Community Lottery Fund, a leading UK foundation, financed a pilot of the initiative in 2017, and it secured an additional €600,000 by 2018.

By 2024, Light of the World plans to scale the programme across Uganda by growing its Disability Inclusion Facilitator network. It seeks to partner with vocational training centres, expand funding to entrepreneurs with disabilities, and develop an online portal for peer support and community exchange.

Light for the World has already used the model in other countries, including Mozambique, South Sudan, and Tanzania, with future plans for Kenya.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- In 2020 the initiative has 124 members, compared to 47 in 2019 and 12 in 2018.
- 165 youth have benefitted from soft skills training, which prepares them for the workplace.
- A project of Civil Society.

Providing income-generating activities to refugees with disabilities

UGANDA/WORLD VISION – INCLUSIVE LIVELIHOOD

World Vision is an international development organization based in the United States. In 2017 it added inclusive employment activities into its existing work on inclusive water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions for refugees with disabilities. Working in Uganda’s Omugo and Palorinya refugee settlement areas, it offers seeds, tools, and training to support income-generating activities such as baking and soap making. From 2017 to 2020 it has supported 3,215 persons with disabilities.

Problem targeted

Refugees in Uganda often live in rural areas with limited access to water and few income-generating opportunities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

World Vision’s WASH interventions connect a water supply to water points that can be accessed by people with disabilities. It then provides vocational training, tools, seeds, and support to groups of people with disabilities so they can use the water in entrepreneurial activities, such as growing vegetables, liquid soap-making, and baking. It also supports other activities, such as weaving and sewing.

People are mainly supported in co-operative structures and community groups, rather than working as single entrepreneurs. These groups offer peer support and increase both individual and collective agency for refugees with disability. The relevant income-generation activities are decided based on the local economy and the skills and interests of people in the group.

“My life has never been the same again after the training. It helped me discover my potential.”

Imelda Aate, 22, a refugee from South Sudan

World Vision holds quarterly review meetings with programme participants to assess the programme and identify changes. As a result of feedback, World Vision now provides assistive devices to programme participants and provides market connections for people to sell their goods.



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Imelda at work crocheting goods for sale.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The project is funded by World Vision’s Finland office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. The income-generating activity is self-sustaining for refugees with disabilities through the goods they produce.

In three years, World Vision has replicated the project in three humanitarian relief sites in Uganda. It plans to include inclusive income-generating activities in all its development programmes in Uganda, and is working on expanding the project to Rwanda and Burundi, funded by both government and private donors. It also plans a full evaluation of the project, which has been delayed due to COVID-19.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- In three years since launch, the project has expanded to three refugee sites in Uganda.
- 3,215 persons with disabilities have been supported (2018: 660; 2019: 1670; mid-2020: 880)
- *A project of Civil Society.*

Service package for companies, substantially reducing cost of workplace adaption

UNITED KINGDOM/MICROLINK PC (UK) LTD. – MICASE

Microlink PC (UK) Ltd. is a company based in Hampshire and specializing in workplace adjustments. In 2010 it developed MiCase, a management service that recommends and implements cost-effective workplace adaptations for companies employing people with disabilities. Microlink provides training and monitoring and well-designed work environments to improve productivity and job retention. In 2020, Microlink had 36 corporate and public sector clients using MiCase, serving more than 1.4 million people.

Problem targeted

Employers do not always know how to make adequate workplace adjustments for employees with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

MiCase offers comprehensive services to companies, starting with an initial consultation and assessment either on-site or remotely. The resulting report recommends the most cost-effective workplace adjustments, such as ergonomic provisions or assistive technology solutions, all of which can be supplied by Microlink.

The proposed adjustments are implemented with Microlink's support, and the employee is trained on how to make best use of them, after which changes in his or her productivity are monitored and reported. The entire process typically takes approximately 20 days.

“Microlink is equipping our employees for success, supporting inclusion and improving accessibility.”

Andy Garrett, Workplace Adjustments Lead at GSK

MiCase was developed out of the experience of providing adjustment services to one major UK bank in 2010. In 2020, 36 corporate and public sector clients used the service, which has benefitted more than 250,000 employees since 2010. According to a customer survey, MiCase has the potential to reduce the cost of adjustments by 56 per cent and to help over 80 per cent of employees remain in their jobs, as well as reducing absences due to condition-related sick leave.



A young women works at an adjustable desk.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Microlink is a for-profit company and MiCase is a modular solution consisting of assessment, consultation, training, and monitoring. The initial package costs €770, but actual implementation costs vary from case to case.

MiCase is currently offered in the UK and in the US, with joint ventures being set up in Canada and India for launch in 2021. The service can be modified to meet any country's legislative requirements for reasonable accommodations in the workplace.

Microlink's expertise is used by the Steering Committee for the Global Business Coalition for Education, as well as by the International Labour Organization, among others.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2010

- From 2017 to 2020 the number of public and corporate clients grew by 33 per cent.
- From 2010 to 2020 more than 250,000 employees with disabilities have benefitted from the services.
- *A project of the Business Sector.*

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A cross-sector partnership promoting accessible technology in employment

UNITED STATES/DEPARTMENT OF LABOR – PEAT

The Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology (PEAT) is a policy initiative from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). ODEP funds the Wheelhouse Group, a tech consulting firm, to manage PEAT and work with cross-sector partners to develop policy resources and technical assistance to make technologies accessible. From 2013 to 2020, over 525,000 people have visited PEAT’s website and more than 200 companies have used TechCheck, its benchmarking tool.

Problem targeted

In the United States unemployment for people with disabilities is double that of people without disabilities, often due to a lack of inclusive and accessible workplaces.

Solution, innovation, and impact

PEAT promotes the employment and retention of people with disabilities through the development and adoption of accessible technology. PEAT’s work is steered by its Think Tank, an invitation-only forum of technology leaders, advocacy groups, government agencies, and Fortune500 companies such as Microsoft, Google, and Adobe – all of which work together to identify problems and solutions related to accessible technology.

“PEAT is key in assuring that technologies are designed by and for people with disabilities.”

Larry Goldberg, Head of Accessibility, Verizon Media

[Peatworks.org](https://peatworks.org) is an online collection of resources, podcasts, and videos for use by businesses, developers, and people with disabilities, including policy toolkits, an accessibility staff training guide, an ICT procurement guide, and the TechCheck benchmarking tool. PEAT hosts events, such as accessibility hackathons, and is a founder of XR Access, a global community working to make extended reality accessible. PEAT also supports other accessibility consortia like the XR Access and Teach Access programmes. Teach Access promotes the teaching of accessibility in undergraduate computer science and design curricula, and they awarded 19 faculty grants in 2019



Participants attend a 2019 PEAT Think Tank event.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

ODEP has funded PEAT since 2013, which is managed by Wheelhouse Group. Due to the programme’s success, ODEP increased PEAT’s funding in 2020 by 130% and has committed funding through 2022 to grow the programme’s efforts on accessible emerging technologies.

PEAT continues to expand into new areas. It is partnering with the American Association of People with Disabilities and Verizon Foundation to educate start-ups on incorporating accessibility into their products. In the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI), PEAT will work with researchers and advocates to explore the potential and bias of AI in the workplace and will educate employers about inclusive AI.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- Visits to [Peatworks.org](https://peatworks.org) increased almost 40 per cent between 2014 and 2019.
- PEAT’s podcasts had 3,500 downloads in the first month.
- Funding increased 30% in 2020.
- *A project of the Public Sector.*



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Government-level initiative to promote inclusive employment policies

UNITED STATES/DEPARTMENT OF LABOR – SEED

In 2015 the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) launched the State Exchange on Employment & Disability (SEED), an initiative supporting state and local governments to adopt and implement disability-inclusive employment policies. SEED provides policy assistance, tools, and resources to policy makers designed to meet states’ and municipalities’ distinct needs. From 2015 to 2020 over 300 inclusive policies have been adopted in 42 states and two territories.

Problem targeted

A more inclusive US workforce requires state-level policies that account for states’ specific needs and that align with federal equality legislation.

Solution, innovation, and impact

SEED partners with key intermediary bodies, such as the Council of State Governments and the US Conference of Mayors, and works with their members to develop resources and provide assistance to support inclusive policies at the state and local level. A key resource is the Work Matters framework, which offers customizable disability employment policy options, strategies, and model programmes that state and local governments can adapt to their needs. SEED uses this framework to track the development and implementation of policies at the state and local level, analyse trends, share case studies, and publish an annual summary. Policy enforcement is the responsibility of state and local governments, but SEED has advised some states on enforcement options.



Bobby Silverstein of SEED (left) highlights inclusive workforce policies in Pennsylvania.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

SEED is funded by the US Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy. The budget has increased from \$1.1 million in 2015–2016 to more than \$2.7 million in 2019–2020 to cater to more state and local- requests for policy assistance.

The Department of Labor has recognized SEED as a model for replication for other government agencies, and other Federal departments have adopted its model of state- and local- level cooperation. Given the changing nature of work and the impact of COVID-19, the current priority issue areas for SEED include career readiness, employee retention following illness/injury, telework, and emerging technologies.

“The technical assistance we received from SEED to move these policies forward has been imperative.”

Kristin Vandagriff, Alaska Governor’s Council

Since 2015 over 300 policies benefiting people with disabilities have been implemented in 48 states and two territories, such as Iowa’s assistive device tax credit and New Jersey’s state-wide taskforce to diversify apprenticeships.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- In 2019, 39 US states adopted 120 bills affecting over 30 million people with disabilities.
- The SEED budget has grown from \$1.1 million (2015–2016) to more than \$2.7 million (2019–2020) due to demand.
- *A project of the Public Sector.*

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Consultancy developing and implementing quality standards in Customized Employment

UNITED STATES/GRIFFIN-HAMMIS ASSOCIATES

Griffin-Hammis Associates (GHA) is a consulting firm based in Atlanta, Georgia, that provides training and technical assistance on 'Customized Employment' approaches to employment services providers. This builds the capacity of employment services to support persons with disabilities into full employment and match them with employers. GHA also develops evidence-based standards and policies on the subject. From 2017 to 2019, GHA has trained more than 350 employment service agencies.

Problem targeted

Although the provision of Customised Employment has been law since 2014, there is a lack of standards, policies, and training.

Solution, innovation, and impact

'Customized Employment' is a specific person-centred approach developed in the United States that has been found to be effective for people with multiple, complex barriers to work. It is seen as a way for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to obtain employment.

GHA trains and mentors employment service staff to undertake 'discovery' activities to understand a jobseeker's skills, interests, community, and supportive relationships. Employment services develop a vocational profile and work with employers to create or customize job opportunities that benefit both the individual and the employer. GHA teaches these services to create job-training plans to ensure the match is successful.

“Through an employment provider offering Customized Employment, Andrew found his perfect job.”

Steve and Janet Raineri, proud parents of Andrew

GHA has developed evidence-based standards and tools to assess the quality of their Customized Employment-provision, including a Discovery Fidelity Scale and Job Development Fidelity Scale.

With GHA's support, employment service providers have helped more than 500 persons with disabilities to find work or start small businesses.



A young man works in a customized position decomposing mattresses.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

On average, each year GHA secures contracts worth \$1 million from state-level systems (such as Medicaid), vocational rehabilitation agencies, and some federally funded projects. GHA has worked in over 40 US states and has supported projects in Australia, Canada, and Spain.

GHA has created accessible guidance documents to support the virtual delivery of Customized Employment services.

Over the next 3–5 years, GHA will continue to support state transformation efforts and expand the capacity of service providers to deliver matchmaking services. Moreover, GHA advocates for the abolition of a sub-minimum wage.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2000

- 163 comprehensive 40-hour Customized Employment trainings have been provided, completed by 3,658 employment specialists.
- Over 500 persons with disabilities have found work or started a small businesses.
- A project of Civil Society.



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Individualized support helps adults with autism find jobs

UNITED STATES/KEYSTONE – ADULT AUTISM PROJECT

Keystone Human Services is a US-based NGO supporting people with disabilities. Starting in 2010, Keystone’s Adult Community Autism Project (ACAP) is a government-funded project working across four counties in the state of Pennsylvania, offering a range of individualized services to support adults. ACAP maintains strong relationships with local employers.

Problem targeted

In the United States adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder lose the support of government services once they turn 21.

Solution, innovation, and impact

ACAP’s individualized support brings together a variety of professionals, such as physicians, psychologists, behavioural health specialists, community support workers, and support coordinators, to deliver tailored plans to support people on the Autism Spectrum. The organization works with the participants and their company network to locate employment opportunities.

“ACAP helped me all the way. With their support, I found a job I wanted. Well, I did and so can you!”

Mike Chabanik, an ACAP participant

ACAP supports last as long as the individual is a participant in the programme, and can be increased or decreased at any time. The programme prioritizes transitioning people from subminimum-wage or sheltered workshop settings into the open labour market. It facilitates this inclusion by offering job coaching to candidates and on-site support to companies in accommodating jobseekers. Participants find jobs mostly in the service sector, such as sales and food preparation, as well as maintenance and production.

In 2020 there were 180 participants, 95 of whom found employment. The average retention rate is 4.25 years.



Mike Bomberger, an ACAP participant, working at Green Leaf Plants in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

ACAP operates as a Managed Care Organization, which receives a per-member per-month rate from the government, which is recalculated every year. Seventy-three per cent of the expenses is for disability-related services provided directly by ACAP, 8 per cent is for services provided by a network of health care providers, and 19 per cent is for the administrative costs.

Keystone has been promoting the success of the programme, including with national workgroups in the US, so that when additional funding becomes available it will be ready to grow and develop. Seven to ten other states are already actively looking at implementing the managed care models.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2010

- From 2010 to 2019 the number of participants grew from 37 to 180 per year.
- In 2020 there were 180 participants, 95 of whom found employment. The average retention rate is 4.25 years.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

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Public-private partnership connecting jobseekers with disabilities to employers

UNITED STATES – NEW YORK CITY/MOPD – NYC: ATWORK

The New York City Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) has been running the NYC: ATWORK programme since 2015. It is a private-public partnership connecting jobseekers with disabilities to employers. It provides training, organizes internships and apprenticeships suited to the applicants’ needs, and supports employers with disability training and recruitment. From 2018 to 2020, 350 people got work and internships in public and private entities in fields such as retail and hospitality.

Problem targeted

People with disabilities in New York City have an unemployment rate of 79 per cent and a poverty rate of 35 per cent.

Solution, innovation, and impact

NYC: ATWORK connects to jobseekers with disabilities via its ‘Talent Coalition’, comprised of local non-profit organizations, jobseekers, public and private colleges, workforce development agencies, and state funded vocational rehabilitation agencies. NYC: ATWORK disseminates tools and resources among Talent Coalition members to ensure job readiness and runs an online job board for jobseekers.

The programme connects with employers through its Business Development Council to learn about needs and trends within high growth industries. Two thirds of the jobseekers have found work in private companies doing jobs in finance, tech, and business services. Most public-sector work is in the fields of hospitality, arts and culture, and health care. In addition, 77 persons have qualified for the city’s



Dirk Hohenkirk meets with his supervisor.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Initial funding came from the Poses Family Foundation, Kessler Foundation, Craig H. Neilson Foundation, Institute for Career Development, and the NY State Education Department, totalling \$1.6 million over three years. Once this funding ended, all staff were converted to permanent positions through the NYC Mayor’s Office for Workforce Development.

In the future the aim is to become sustainable and to attract more funds from the private sector. Steps have already been taken to provide new options to jobseekers, including providing free certification in various sectors like health care and emergency management.

“NYC: ATWORK introduced me to employers who understood my skills and were in need of my services.”

NYC: ATWORK participant Dirk Hohenkirk

55-a Program, which allows a qualified person to be hired into competitive civil service positions without having to take an exam. As of 2020, participants earn on average \$55,000 per annum.

From 2018 to 2020, NYC: ATWORK has engaged with 1,200 jobseekers.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- The project has connected 2,100 people to information, guidance, or employment since 2015.
- Average salary for participants is \$55,000 per annum. Some 3,500 people have attended MOPD’s training for businesses.
- *A project of the Public Sector.*



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Government-led training and hiring services for people with intellectual disabilities

UNITED STATES – VERMONT/TRANSITION PROGRAM

The State of Vermont Post-Secondary Education (PSE) Initiative promotes college education and industry-based career training for transition-age youth with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities, and access to lifelong learning. The policy aim is to enhance the employment options in the open labour market. In 2019 over 200 young people and adults participated across 19 transition, education, or life-long learning programmes. PSE graduates have an 84 per cent employment rate.

Problem targeted

The state of Vermont offers a variety of educational and vocational training programmes, but differences among them are often confusing to participants.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The state of Vermont works with selected implementation partners in post-secondary education facilities ('provider agencies') that organize three services to support training and education for people with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities (DD/ID). The first two programmes target the employment of young persons, while the third provides life-long adult learning opportunities. Business contacts are organized through the Vermont Job Developers' Association, where job developers organize a unified approach to employers.

“Being in my English class and having a super great professor makes me happy and excited.”

Nicole, a student at the University of Vermont Think College programme

The Work Experience Program funds employers during the time of the job matching, which helps to motivate employers to offer new jobs without too much risk. The companies themselves do not receive direct financial incentives.

Graduates of the post-secondary education programmes have an 84 per cent employment rate. These results have led to Vermont having a 49 per cent employment rate of people with DD/ID.



A catering intern shares a happy moment with her mentor.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Funding of the three programmes is provided by the federal Medicaid Waiver, which allows states to provide care or support for certain groups.

All programme partners cooperate under the state umbrella, which guarantees financial stability for all organizations involved, enabling long-term planning. This is one of the pillars for the programme's success over the years.

In the coming years, the project will work to incorporate its post-secondary education support services into State Medicaid Rules as a reimbursable service.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- Employment rate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Vermont is 49 per cent compared to a national rate of 20 per cent.
- Each year over 200 people participate across 19 high schools.
- *A project of the Public Sector.*

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Innovative Policies and Practices in ICT

Factsheets

Factsheets from all 11 Innovative Policies 2020 listed by country of implementation.

Life Stories

Persons with disabilities or their peers explain how selected Innovative Policies have changed their life.

Online job recruitment platform for people with disabilities

BRAZIL/EGALITÉ INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

Egalité Inclusion & Diversity is a Brazilian social business that has developed an online recruitment platform, incorporating a behavioural profile evaluation tool and free e-learning courses adapted for persons with disabilities. The platform uses an algorithm to calculate the best opportunity for each candidate, based on location, education, salary, expertise, and behavioural profile. From 2015 to 2019, Egalité has helped to employ over 7,000 persons with disabilities in 19 states in Brazil.

Problem targeted

Brazilian law requires companies of a certain size to hire persons with disabilities, but stigma, lack of access, and poor hiring practices limit the number of people employed.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Egalité's online platform prepares, recruits, and evaluates candidates with disabilities. The platform offers free e-learning courses in interview skills, public speaking, and other skills. Candidates also complete a behavioural profile. This generates one of 3,125 possible profiles, which is then combined with the platform's job search algorithm, taking into account location, education, and other factors. Brazilian law requires companies with over 100 employees to include a percentage of people with disabilities in its workforce, and companies that do not comply with the law are required to pay a fine. Consequently, there is a significant demand for the matchmaking service offered by Egalité. The website has various accessibility features, such as compatible screen readers,

“Thanks to Egalite I have a job, was promoted, and I see myself as like everyone else.”

Roger Hafner, Egalite user

and also offers sign language. Candidates recruited through the Egalité platform have an average annual income 76 per cent higher than the minimum wage (120 per cent, when benefits are included). Egalité currently has 60,000 candidates in its database.

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A woman at work assembling technical equipment.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Egalité has an annual budget of \$250,000, fully funded by companies paying recruitment fees based on the salary of the job opportunity. There is no charge to jobseekers with disabilities.

Egalité has targets for growth over the next five years, and by 2025 it hopes to have 400,000 candidates in its database and 50,000 people hired.

The platform has been replicated in the United States as a pilot for jobseekers over 50. The implementation of the technology was a success, but funding was not continued. Egalité is now looking for other opportunities to replicate.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- The average wage of people recruited through the platform is 120 per cent higher than minimum wage when including benefits.
- Egalite currently has 60,000 candidate profiles in its database.
- A project related to ICT.

An accessibility testing platform, powered by people with disabilities

CANADA/FABLE – FABLE CROWDTESTING

Fable Tech Labs is a Canadian technology start-up launched in 2018, offering services worldwide. It employs people with motor and visual disabilities to offer digital accessibility testing, research, and quality assurance services to companies designing and developing digital products. The online platform for making and reviewing requests for support is fully accessible, allowing people to work flexibly and remotely. In 2020, Fable had 100 people with disabilities working as accessibility testers.

Problem targeted

Digital products are often inaccessible to people with disabilities, and there are few flexible, accessible job opportunities in the digital sector.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Fable's online platform offers companies research, testing, and quality assurance services for their digital products or technology. Companies submit requests to the platform and Fable has a community of testers with motor and visual disabilities, ranging from novice users to technology experts, who respond to the requests. Testers take part in user research interviews, provide feedback on prototypes, and test compatibility with assistive technology, among other services. Typical feedback time is two business days. Clients include Walmart, Slack, and Shopify. One client, Gatsby JS – an open-source website builder – used Fable to make changes that made 26,700 websites more compatible with screen readers.

“What makes Fable unique is that it is a diverse community of people living with disabilities.”

Samuel Proulx, Community Manager, Fable Tech Labs

Since 2018, Fable has facilitated flexible and remote working for many people with disabilities who earn, on average, more than double the minimum wage. Testers can work as much or little as they want, and Fable's platform is fully accessible for its testers and clients to use.



Five Fable team members enjoy a happy moment together.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Fable is a subscription-based platform and does not share revenue figures publicly. Companies pay a monthly fee, which allows them a maximum number of requests per month. The cost varies depending on the organization and its needs. Between 2019 and 2020, Fable's revenue increased 500 per cent. In July 2020, Fable announced it had raised \$1.5 million to enlarge its team and to develop new products.

By 2023, Fable aims to grow its product-based revenue exponentially and to have 150 clients. It also aims to expand the range of disabilities supported through its platform and to provide part-time employment to a workforce of 600 people with disabilities.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- Fable experiences a 500 per cent increase in revenue between December 2019 and June 2020.
- The company can offer compatibility testing with ten different assistive technologies.
- A project related to ICT.



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Business service offering video-based live interpretation in sign and other languages

CHILE/RED APIS – VI-SOR

Red Apis is a tech company based in Santiago de Chile that creates inclusive apps to allow people with disabilities to participate in a range of everyday situations. In 2016 the organization started Vi-Sor, a video interpretation system. It links users to interpreters who enable communication in various languages, including sign language. In 2020 the Vi-Sor system offered eleven languages and is used in classrooms, companies, and government services.

Problem targeted

Communication with services can be difficult to for those who do not speak the local language, like deaf people, migrants, or indigenous people.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Vi-Sor has four modes of operation. Installed as an app, a deaf or hard of hearing user can ask for sign language interpretation. Persons who have trouble expressing themselves or cannot speak Spanish are offered online translation services via the computer or over the smartphone. Another mode is in class environments, where a deaf or hard of hearing student can receive Vi-Sor support to follow the lectures. The fourth mode is when Vi-Sor is installed on company website as a button to be used by persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. Vi-Sor has been gradually expanding from the initial classroom support to federal and local justice departments, health institutions, and banks. Over time, the service has expanded to anyone with communication difficulties; and as of 2020 it is operating in 11 languages.

“Vi-Sor guarantees the human right of access to justice for those who have communication difficulties.”

Giuliano Pesce Heresmann, Department of Justice

The service is installed in more than 1,100 company and public offices in a range of services, and has supported more than 50,000 conversations. Around 60 per cent of the calls on Vi-Sor use the sign-language interpretation service.



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A deaf person is connected to a real-time sign language interpreter through Vi-Sor.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In 2019, Vi-sor had sales of \$400,000. Vi-Sor generates income through a B2B model that operates on a fixed monthly fee basis for companies and public offices. Its cost varies depending on the language, hours of operation, and days. Contracts are generally for one or two years and are adapted to increases or decreases of use at renewal. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Vi-Sor has been rolled out on a large scale as part of a project that allows deaf people to communicate with health professionals. Red Apis aims to expand Vi-Sor to other countries in Latin America, and started to do so in Uruguay in 2019.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Vi-Sor is active in over 1,100 companies and public offices across 20 services in Chile.
- The service is active in 476 courts in 11 languages.
- From 2016 to 2020, Vi-Sor has facilitated more than 50,000 conversations.
- A project related to ICT.

Free relay service with sign language interpreters, also on phone and Whatsapp

COLOMBIA/FENASCOL – RELAY CENTRE

Federacion Nacional de Sordos de Colombia (FENASCOL) is an NGO founded in 1984 and based in Bogota, Colombia. In 2001 it initiated a project called Centro de Relevo (Relay Centre), with the support and funding of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies, which enables a channel of communication between deaf and hearing people via Colombian sign language interpreters. It is free for users and available 24 hours. From 2009 to 2020 the relay centre has serviced 54,000 people.

Problem targeted

About 80 per cent of people with hearing disabilities in Colombia require an interpreter to communicate with hearing people.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Centro de Relevo is an interactive online platform that acts as a bridge between deaf and hearing people and helps them communicate via Colombian sign language interpreters. Deaf people can access the platform in three ways: a telephone call, a virtual online interpretation service, and a Whatsapp message box in Colombian sign language/voice. The interpreter completes the communication loop by converting the signed message into spoken word for the hearing person and signing back to the deaf user. Moreover, people with hearing disabilities can find an interpreter, either via a text message or the centre's website. Through this service, they can communicate with friends and relatives, and can also book appointments and meetings. Additionally, Colombian deaf people who live outside the country can also use this service without cost.

“Using the Relay Centre allowed me to become independent and to participate in job interviews.”

Julian Luango, a Relay Centre user

The project has won multiple awards and was recognized by the Colombian President in 2015. The relay service has approximately 40,000 communications per month in various contexts, such as work, personal/family, and health-related communications.



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Two young women enjoy using the FENASCOL service.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The annual budget of the Relay Centre is \$611,000, of which 95 per cent is financed by the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications and 5 per cent by FENASCOL.

In 2013, Paraguay replicated the Relay Service; and FENASCOL provided consultancy services to Ecuador, Guatemala, and Mexico in 2020.

The Relay Centre works with 60 interpreters scheduled to cover 24/7, and employs eight deaf people to constantly evaluate the service.

By 2025 the Relay Centre aims to increase the number of sign language interpreters to 80 and to offer more communication time.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2001

- In 2019 the Relay Centre facilitated more than 443,000 communications.
- In 2020 the Relay Centre worked with 60 Colombian sign language interpreters.
- A project related to ICT.

Life Stories from Colombia, Denmark, Israel, and Nigeria

THE STORY OF MATHIAS, MARIA, AND EMIL:
YOUTHS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES
AND BENEFICIARIES OF KLAPJOB

“The person I am now is different from when I first started.”

Denmark

KLAPjob helped Mathias to get a job as a service assistant in a local supermarket, where he has been for the past three years. Mathias likes his job because it gives him a feeling of being part of the ordinary labour market. “We can all do different things,” he notes. “The person I am now is different from when I first started. I like to feel I’m using my body – I can move many things within an hour. I’m also more disciplined and better at getting up in the morning.”

Maria got a job through KLAPjob as a stable assistant and works with horses at a riding club. “First I was an intern in the riding club. They wanted to test me and see what I could do,” she explains. “Then I was actually employed, and now I have worked here for almost two years. My tasks are to groom and saddle the horses, to tidy up and sweep, and to make sure that all the horses are well cared for. I like to work. I don’t like to sit still.”

Emil is sensitive to noise and not a very social guy. He prefers working alone, as he does at the bottle recycling room in the local supermarket. When Emil works he often listens to music with his headset. “I sort the bottles. And I can tell you that people really know how to drink. Especially after a football match! I like that my job is nice and quiet. When I first come into the room it can be full of bottles, but I can still manage to get it all done in time. I always know what to do. This really helps someone like me. It is just what I need.”

i See also Factsheet on page 44.



THE STORY OF ABIODUN: A VISUALLY IMPAIRED
YOUNG ADULT TEACHING SOCIAL MEDIA

“Mass communication opened up endless possibilities.”

Nigeria

The “Career Beyond Sight and Sound Project,” which was held on 4 August 2018 by the Special Needs Initiative for Growth, was one of the life-changing opportunities that the visually impaired Abiodun encountered as a young adult in Lagos State, Nigeria. As a result, Abiodun was trained in mass communications and also supported with a mentorship. This opened his mind to the endless possibilities available to him in the media work space.

Today, Abiodun is confident, astute, and technically savvy, and is using all of his training as a digital and media advocate for persons with disabilities. Currently, Abiodun is a staff member of the Special Needs Initiative for Growth, where he helps to provide assistive technology support to other visually impaired learners. Moreover, he has been engaged in a two-year leadership and technology bootcamp for visually impaired young adults across Nigeria, which offers technology and leadership resources so they can take up employment roles in society.

i See also Factsheet on page 70.

THE STORY OF DAVID, YARIV, AND YEHOShUA: THREE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHO ATTENDED THE TECHNOLOGY ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAMME OF IT-WORKS

“It’s no less than life-changing.”

Israel

Diagnosed during his schooling years, David, a Technology Accessibility Programme (TAP) participant, was unable to complete high school. With the help of programmes for individuals with disabilities, David served in the Israeli Army, where he gained technical skill in computers. Struggling to figure out a path in life, he found great success and fulfilment through his participation in TAP. Through the guidance and support of the programme’s psychologist, David was able to excel in the course and to have multiple opportunities for employment that are at once exciting, challenging, and providing financial independence.

Yariv, another TAP graduate, now works for a leading high-tech company. He mentions how the programme has changed his life, and that he now has a respectable livelihood, as do many in his community. He can confidently say what he works for, and he can explain what he does. He is especially proud of the fact that his job is empowering, unlike simply arranging books on a shelf. Yariv also mentions how proud his wife is of him now that he has meaningful employment.

Yehoshua was diagnosed as a teenager with bipolar disorder and struggled to find employment that was rewarding and fulfilling. Being confined to unskilled jobs for most of his life, Yehoshua’s moral was low. He felt he was worth so much more, and knew that with the right training and support he could find dignified and quality employment. Yehoshua came to TAP, where he underwent technological training, and today he is a loving father, a wonderful husband, and able to live a normal life and provide for his family like anyone else.

i See also Factsheet on page 60.



THE STORY OF ROSANA, SENCE, CHILE

“The word disability closes some doors for us, but Sence opens up those doors.”

i See also Factsheet on page 40.

THE STORY OF JOSE NIEBLES: AN ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE TECHNOLOGIST

Having a career with deafblindness

Colombia

Jose Niebles uses public transportation every day to get from his home to his job at the Delima Marsh insurance company, a place that opened its doors for him six years ago. Since joining, this deafblind young man continues to demonstrate his abilities in the same company, where he went from organizing correspondence to having greater responsibilities.

Jose continues to rely on his hearing aids and the other accommodations that have been made so that his equipment and workspace can better facilitate his performance. Being independent has allowed him to continue training as an administrative assistance technologist as well as to find a partner, with whom he has lived for a couple of years.

i See also Factsheet on page 43.

Open space to invent and make tailor-made technical aids for persons with disabilities

FRANCE/MY HUMAN KIT – HUMANLAB

My Human Kit is a private association and a pioneer in the manufacturing of low-cost technical aids using the open source method. These aids are individual solutions for persons with disabilities, made with low-cost materials and documented online to be affordable to the greatest number. Since its opening in the city of Rennes in 2016, the first 'Humanlab' has enabled the manufacturing of more than 100 technical aids and welcomed more than 1,500 people with and without disabilities.

Problem targeted

Generally, access to technical aids is difficult or too expensive, or the administrative barrier is too high for persons with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Humanlab ('FabLab dedicated to disabilities') is a space open to the public where all sorts of software tools and hardware machines are made available to design and make objects of whatever kind. The Humanlab offers these services for the manufacturing of tailor-made technical aids by, for, and with people with disabilities, and are made out of low-cost or recycled materials. All work is documented and made freely available online (Open Source) so that others can reproduce and improve these technical aids elsewhere. The site is fully accessible to persons with disabilities.



Three men construct an electronic tricycle in the Humanlab.

“The Humanlab helps me to become creative, learn about digital fabrication, and to develop new skills.”

Nicolas Huchet, Founder, My Human Kit

The Humanlab was opened in Rennes in 2016 and has been used by more than 1,500 people to date. More than 100 technical aids have been developed, among them Bionicohand, a bionic forearm prosthesis controlled by muscle sensors; and Trotti, electrical assistance devices for manual vehicles (wheelchairs, adapted bicycles, push bicycles, etc.), made from batteries and motors from recycled e-bikes.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

My Human Kit collects a small contribution from users and volunteers (€5 per year membership fee) and finances its activities through sponsorship from private foundations or companies, subsidies from the public administration, private services (such as presentations at conferences and fairs), and donations. My Human Kit plans moving to a larger site with extended opening hours. Moreover, the organization wants to concentrate on the development of technical aids related to mobility and connected objects (e.g., adapted video games and home automation) and the improved accessibility of digital tools for people with visual impairments.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- Between 2016 and 2020, more than 100 devices have been manufactured.
- According to an impact study, 75 per cent of the beneficiaries of Humanlab have acquired new skills.
- A project related to ICT.



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Remote sign language interpretation and transcription for professional users

FRANCE/TADEO

Tadeo is a for-profit company based in Paris. It offers a communication platform where trained operators provide simultaneous transcription and video sign language interpretation to support communication between people who are deaf and their non-deaf colleagues, customers, and partners – in meetings, video conferences, and phone calls. Tadeo is available as an annual subscription service. As of 2020, Tadeo had 120 employees providing services to nearly 400 public and private organizations.

Problem targeted

Communication between colleagues who are deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing can be difficult during meetings, conferences, and telephone calls.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Tadeo is a communication platform that offers on-demand sign language video interpretation, Cued Speech and Live Speech Transcription, both in French and English. It is targeted towards all professional communications, and can be used in telephone calls, interviews, meetings, video conferences, and conference calls. Tadeo is a proprietary software that can be combined with web conference services such as Zoom or WebEx. Users enjoy unlimited access to the service and are guaranteed immediate availability of operators, with a commitment of at least 95 per cent of calls answered within 30 seconds.

“Tadeo is a huge help to me. I can make calls, participate in meetings – it gives me full autonomy.”

Maurice Rambert, a user of Tadeo

Another key aspect is that Tadeo provides a very secure environment allowing to comply with every kind of IT and confidentiality requirements. To support this service, Tadeo employs 75 operators. Tadeo was founded in 2007 and has seen an average annual increase in volume of calls between 2017 and 2019 of 8 per cent. From 2015 to 2020, Tadeo doubled its number of employees.



A man who is deaf makes a phone call using a Tadeo video sign language interpreter.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Tadeo runs on an annual fee model for companies. There is a flat fee rate, which is dependent of the organization and is not correlated to frequency or the duration of the calls. Tadeo has a dedicated sales team in place and closely works with the personnel departments of future clients and their designated users. The organization is keen to ensure that client personnel do not hesitate to use the services. The annual subscriptions support the long-term planning of the transcribers and interpreters needed to guarantee the availability of the service to all users. Tadeo has users in Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2007

- Increase in hourly volume of calls: 2017: 11.5 per cent; 2018: 6.5 per cent; 2019: 5.5 per cent.
- Tadeo has 120 employees, 10 per cent of whom are persons with disabilities.
- A project related to ICT.



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Free learning tool for visually impaired persons to improve their computer skills

INDIA/ENABLE INDIA – EDUCATE YOURSELF EASILY TOOL

EnAble India is a large Indian NGO, headquartered in Bengaluru. Its Educate Yourself Easily (EYE) Tool is an open source self-learning platform that supports persons with visual impairments to learn job-critical computer skills. Users can choose from over 400 exercises to develop skills, take part in job simulations, and test their progress. From 2015 to 2020 the tool had over 10,000 users, 90 per cent of whom have reported that their computer efficiency has improved significantly.

Problem targeted

Computer skills are critical in the modern job market, and people with visual impairments in India often do not have accessible training tools.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The EYE Tool is a training platform offering exercises on job-relevant skills, such as editing, and data management. Exercises support people with visual impairments to increase the speed and confidence with which they use computers and understand the more visual aspects, such as common document layouts. It can be downloaded to a desktop or accessed via a server, and is compatible with screen readers and magnifiers. The tool has two modes: a 'Learning' mode gives instant feedback on errors so the user can make corrections; and a 'Test' mode allows users to test their progress. For those working with a trainer, trainers can also access their students' scores.



An instructor demonstrates the EYE Tool.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The EYE Tool is free and is an open source technology. Development is funded by donations from companies and foundations. The long-term strategy is to integrate the tool into existing software packages, for example, from Microsoft or Google, and to develop a licensing model for corporate customers.

Strategically, scaling to date has focused on India, with over 500 trainers trained in using the tool. EnAble India already has users in 15 countries and plans to scale further internationally. Next steps are upgrading the web tool, developing an Android app, and exploring opportunities for Artificial Intelligence features within the tool.

“By practicing scenarios, I handle situations in real time and manage people’s perceptions.”

Rajeshwari, digital literacy training student

The EYE tool is targeted at individual users with visual impairments, trainers of people with visual impairments, as well as parents, employers, and volunteers. It is available in English, Hindi, Tamil, and Kannada, and content can be easily added. About 95 per cent of EnAble India's trainers have visual impairments and are involved in its design.

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FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- 95 per cent of EnAble India's trainers have a visual impairment.
- Over 500 trainers have been trained in how to use the EYE Tool with their students.
- The EYE Tool has users in 15 countries.
- A project related to ICT.

Accessible online library provided for free as a corporate social initiative

INDIA/TCS – ACCESIBLE ONLINE LIBRARY

In 2016, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), a multinational IT company, launched Access Infinity in India, an online platform that enables the conversion of published materials to accessible versions. Backed by the Government of India as a part of the Accessible India mission and with Daisy Forum of India, Access Infinity introduced an online accessible library for people with blindness, low vision, or print disabilities.

Problem targeted

Often, blind or visually impaired persons have difficulty accessing printed educational material due to the lack of accessible formats.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The TCS Access Infinity platform allows publishers to generate real-time accessible content with one-click conversion methodology into multiple formats. It is supported by two patents: one for digital watermarking of audio streams, the other for a service delivery model.

The online library also serves as a national repository of accessible books, and supports libraries and publishers seeking to digitize their content into accessible formats. The library is a primary source of content for persons with disabilities preparing for competitive exams, and thus includes educational content from 13 educational boards and institutions.

“Before, I had to get books recorded myself. Now, I’ve found huge collections for instant downloading.”

Sweety, a B.A. Political Science student, Delhi University

The library is easy to use and includes content in 17 languages. It is accessible from any device, and titles are available in nine accessible formats, such as DAISY text, audio, Braille, Braille Tactile, and more. The system complies with national and international copyright laws, including the Marrakesh Visually Impaired Treaty.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

TCS runs the online library as a social initiative of the company. It makes the technology available to



A user accesses the online library platform through his Refreshable Braille Display (an assistive device).

the Daisy Forum India consortium of 190+ entities, including government bodies, educational boards, publishers, and NGOs with a zero-cost license. The online library is available free of charge to persons with disabilities. TCS in collaboration with WIPO Accessible Books Consortium (UN) – plans to extend the platform to create similar ecosystems in countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, South Africa, and Sri Lanka.

By 2025, TCS aims to provide 1 million accessible e-books along with various partner organizations (DFI members) through the ‘See a Million’ campaign.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2016

- The number of registered users increased from 25,539 in 2018 to 32,346 in 2020.
- From 2016 to 2020, the library has had 55,000+ downloads with 70 per cent educational content.
- Seven newspapers and eight magazines are available in real-time.
- A project related to ICT.



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Accessible phone calls for the deaf for private and professional needs

ITALY AND OTHERS/PEDIUS – PEDIUS WORK INCLUSION

Pedius is a social business based in Rome. In 2013, Pedius introduced an app that enables the deaf and hard of hearing to make phone calls, 24/7, and without a sign interpreter. Users are able to read the response of their contact on their device in real-time, and may respond using text or their own voice. If a user responds to their contact with text, it will be read to their contact in an automated voice. From 2013 until today Pedius has gained over 35,000 users and supports seven languages.

Problem targeted

Phones are inaccessible by nature and interpreters require a specialized workforce for Deaf communication.

Solution, innovation, and impact


Deaf people or people with a hearing impairment use the Pedius app to make a phone call to any phone number. Users type or speak their message into their device and Pedius sends it to the contact they have chosen, using either the user's own voice or an automated voice. The answer is translated into writing in real time.

Pedius' software uses a combination of technologies that makes even more complex conversations possible, such as those held in a professional environment. Pedius can also be easily integrated into most existing hardware, such as smartphones, tablets, and PCs supporting both Android and Apple systems. Each activated employee gets access to a personal number with unlimited incoming and outgoing calls, web access, availability for conference calls, a special notification system for incoming calls, and the possibility to request an interpreter.

“Pedius supports communication between colleagues as well as employees and customers.”

Lorenzo Di Ciaccio, Pedius CEO

The Pedius app was launched in 2013, and in 2020 has over 35,000 users in 13 countries and offers seven languages. Via the telecommunications provider TIM Italia, the Pedius Work Inclusion services have been activated throughout Italy.

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A Pedius user is about to participate in a conference call.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Pedius uses two models to generate revenues. Private customers can download the Pedius app for free and receive 20 minutes of free conversation per month. Premium subscriptions are offered for more minutes. For companies, Pedius offers the Pedius Work Inclusion service for \$30 per month. This includes subtitled conference call capabilities and unlimited incoming and outgoing calls. Discounts are available depending on the number of licences to be activated per company.

Pedius is dedicated to expanding to more countries soon.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2013

- Pedius Work Inclusion costs from \$30 per month.
- Pedius employs 45 people with a hearing impairment.
- A project related to ICT.

Teaching sign language with videos, Artificial Intelligence, and gamification

NORWAY/SIGNLAB – TOLEIO

SignLab is a Norwegian social business that has developed a digital sign language learning platform to make learning more accessible and affordable. Available both online and offline, it uses videos, Artificial Intelligence, and gamification to make learning more effective and responsive. Launched in Norway as Toleio in 2018, the platform is the most-used resource for learning Norwegian sign language, with over 12,000 users in November 2020. SignLab plans to expand to South-East Asia by 2022.

Problem targeted

For families of deaf and hard of hearing children, learning sign language can be expensive and inaccessible.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Toleio's lessons can be accessed online and offline through a smartphone app or desktop site. Lessons are organized around everyday topics, such as household objects, food, and school. Videos convey the three-dimensional nature of each sign, and gamification makes learning engaging. Artificial Intelligence adapts learning sessions to address weak spots and review signs at risk of being forgotten. All of SignLab's sign language teachers are native speakers, and the Norwegian Association of the Deaf sits on the board that guides development of the platform.

“I had not been able to learn sign language before using this app. It is very easy to use.”

A Toleio user

Signlab's platforms are aimed at parents and families of children who are deaf, and are also used by sign language teachers and students in classroom settings, with friends, and with other learners. User engagement has increased threefold since the Toleio app version was launched in 2019; and the number of users has grown from 3,000 in November 2019 to over 12,000 in November 2020.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

In Norway, SignLab is mainly government funded and



A child learns Norwegian sign language on a tablet.

offered free to users. Different financing approaches are planned in other countries depending on country income level, such as via subscription services, a free-mium option whereby people pay extra for additional content, or by partnering with foundations to offer it for free in low-income countries.

By 2022, SignLab will offer Chinese, Indonesian, and Indian sign languages through a project with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, projected to reach more than 4.1 million people. British sign language is also currently in development. For each new language, SignLab partners with local sign language organizations and teachers to develop a curriculum that meets national needs.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2018

- 60,000 new signs are taught every month.
- There has been a threefold increase in user engagement since launching as an app in 2019.
- A project related to ICT.



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App facilitating citizen reporting of accessibility barriers

SPAIN/COCEMFE – ACCESSIBILITY APP

In 2014, La Confederación Española de Personas con Discapacidad Física y Orgánica (COCEMFE), a Spanish non-governmental umbrella organization, and Vodafone Foundation developed AccesibilidApp, a mobile app enabling citizens to report accessibility barriers in any built environment to COCEMFE, and COCEMFE then mediates with the entities responsible for its management and maintenance. From 2019 and 2020 a total of 2,331 incidents have been reported by 1,355 users across Spain.

Problem targeted

Despite a 2017 law requiring all public spaces in Spain to be accessible, compliance is low and there is no system to report barriers.

Solution, innovation, and impact

AccesibilidApp is free and fully accessible through any computer or mobile device. To report an outdoor incident in a public area the user registers its location and postcode, classifies the type of barrier that has been encountered by using a predefined list (e.g., damaged pavement, poor lighting, faulty traffic lights), and adds a photo and description.

Accessibility barriers can be reported across Spain. All incidents are received by COCEMFE, and a local COCEMFE organization mediates with the city council or other entity responsible for resolving the issue. Notably, the reporting person is kept informed about the process.



A woman in a wheelchair faces a flight of inaccessible stairs at Retiro Park in Madrid.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The Vodafone Foundation financed the initial design and development of the app, which is now managed and maintained entirely by COCEMFE. Cooperation agreements have been signed with the city councils of Alcañiz (Teruel), Pamplona, Soria, Caspe (Zaragoza), and León. COCEMFE aims to establish more cooperation agreements with local authorities and COCEMFE-affiliated organizations across Spain for incident management. In response to COVID-19, COCEMFE adapted the app in April 2020 to be used to report accessibility barriers related to new public health measures, such as test station accessibility.

“Mobility must follow accessibility criteria, highlighting the importance of removing barriers.”

Anxo Queiruga, President, COCEMFE

A prototype was created in 2014, which was re-designed for better accessibility and usability in 2019. It is in use throughout Spain, and COCEMFE has cooperation agreements on the local, regional, and provincial level for the management, mediation, and resolution of incidents. In 2019 and 2020, 1,355 users reported 2,331 incidents. Only 15 have been resolved.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- After the relaunch in 2019 reported incidents increased substantially – to 1,740 compared to 458 during 2014–2018.
- Cooperation agreements have been signed with five city councils and one university.
- A project related to ICT.



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App with hands-on information on rehabilitation to fieldworkers in low-income countries

THE NETHERLANDS/ENABLEMENT B.V. – REHAPP

Enablement B.V. is a Dutch non-profit company specializing in community-based rehabilitation. In 2017 it developed RehApp, a freely available mobile app that enhances the capacity of fieldworkers in low-income countries to offer effective rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities. The app provides information about disabilities and options for rehabilitation interventions, collaboratively developed by over 70 disability experts. In 2020 there are 345 active users of RehApp.

Problem targeted

Fieldworkers often are very minimally trained and have limited access to practical information to carry out their work.

Solution, innovation, and impact

RehApp was developed for use in low- and middle-income countries by rehabilitation fieldworkers with a limited educational background and little training. It contains chapters on a range of disabilities, such as cerebral palsy and leprosy. Each chapter provides information on possible causes, signs, and symptoms as well as practical intervention options at the personal, relational, and societal level. All chapters are also available in a flashcard format.

RehApp is open source and thus can be downloaded for free and can be used offline. Consequently, fieldworkers always have relevant and practical information at hand, even in remote or rural settings with limited connectivity.

“RehApp helped me to be on top of my game when encountering questions in the field.”

Andrew Maina, Occupational Therapist

The layout of the app follows the Digital Accessibility Toolkit developed by CBM, an international NGO, as well as other guidelines for inclusive apps. In 2017, Enablement B.V. started the app with a chapter on spinal cord injury, and has since been gradually adding more chapters and refining the content and design as it is field-tested. From 2018 to 2019 the number of active users grew from 211 to 345.



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A physiotherapist in Bahir-Dar, Ethiopia, introduces RehApp to a group of rehabilitation fieldworkers.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

RehApp is funded by 13 international NGOs, eleven of which are part of the International Disability and Development consortium, a group of civil society organizations promoting inclusive international development.

Over the next years Enablement B.V. plans to add 15 new chapters, create a dedicated website, and make the app available in Amharic, Arabic, Burmese, Chinese, French, Khmer, Nepali, Portuguese, Tajik, and Vietnamese, among other languages.

The organization estimates that the app will be used by 25,000 fieldworkers in 50 low-income countries once it has been translated into local languages.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- In 2019 more than 2,000 persons with disabilities were direct beneficiaries of the app.
- RehApp will soon have a video feature and will be available in 11 more languages.
- A project related to ICT.

An indoor navigation system for the blind and visually impaired

TURKEY/POILABS – INDOOR NAVIGATION

In 2014, PoiLabs, a tech start-up based in Istanbul, launched an indoor navigation system to make large and complex spaces such as shopping malls, universities, airports, and museums accessible for users who are blind or visually impaired. The system uses a combination of beacon devices, algorithms, and real time voice-guided navigation on a mobile application, such as phones and tablets, to support users. From 2014 to 2020, PoiLabs has introduced the navigation system in 12 Turkish cities.

Problem targeted

Navigation in large indoor spaces is a challenge for people with visual impairments or who are blind.

Solution, innovation, and impact

To start, PoiLabs and the building management agree on plan of cooperation, and PoiLabs then installs iBeacon sensors throughout an indoor venue, which are connected to the mobile application to provide voice-guided navigation to a user. The beacons do not require any cabling, are easy to install, and have a battery life of four years.

A user needs only to download the mobile app (available both in Android and Apple-iOS) on their smartphone and can choose from three functions. “Poi List” gives information about all points of interest in the building. With “Free Move” users get information about nearby points with directions, e.g., “Meeting Room 2, on the left.” In “Navigation” mode users get navigation to the nearest bathroom or to a selected point, including a route briefing.

“With our indoor navigation people feel safe, are confident, and enjoy themselves.”

Ersin Guray, Founder and CEO, PoiLabs

PoiLabs developed this service with the support of the NGO Young Guru Academy, which works with people with visual impairments. From 2014 to 2020, PoiLabs has made more than 4.5 million square meters accessible in 12 cities of Turkey.

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Two women enjoy exploring a shopping mall thanks to PoiLabs.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

From 2017 to 2020, PoiLabs partnered with Turkcell, a major Turkish telecom, which was crucial in scaling up the distribution of the technology. Turkcell not only promoted PoiLabs, the company took over the monthly charges of the different venues. With this business model, PoiLabs had an annual growth rate of 85 per cent.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Turkcell cooperation ended and PoiLabs continued to provide the service by launching a new mobile application called ‘Blindoors’. This application is self-funded by PoiLabs, which is currently looking for sponsors of the service. By 2025, PoiLabs aims to increase the number of accessible venues globally to 500.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2014

- The navigation system has had 150,000+ app downloads since 2014.
- PoiLabs has worked with 28 malls and two museums, covering more than 4.5 million square meters.
- A project related to ICT.

Talking camera app for people who are blind using AI and augmented reality

UNITED STATES/MICROSOFT – SEEING AI

Microsoft Inc., the ICT-multinational company, developed Seeing AI, a free mobile talking camera app using Artificial Intelligence and augmented reality. The app helps people who are blind or have low vision to know more about who and what is around them. It assists users to perform daily tasks, such as reading a document, recognizing people, or identifying products. Seeing AI is available in 70 countries and nine languages and has assisted with over 20 million tasks.

Problem targeted

There are few free tools available to convert visual information into audio in multiple languages.

Solution, innovation, and impact

The Seeing AI app is available on iPhones and iPads. Users download the free app and can select a variety of functions to support them to complete tasks, such as reading text and handwriting, recognizing known people, distinguishing between currencies, and detecting colours and light. Users just hold up their phone or take a photo to hear a description of what is captured by the camera.

The app was developed with academic researchers and the blind community, being continually tested with a diverse user-base around the world with the help of NGOs.

Seeing AI is fully compatible with screen readers, and it supports higher contrast colours and larger font sizes for increased legibility. It is currently available on iPhones and iPads in nine languages: English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Turkish, Spanish, and (Brazilian) Portuguese.

“At Seeing AI we are always talking to people with visual impairments to understand their challenges.”

Saqib Shaikh, Founder and Lead for Seeing AI

Seeing AI was originally created for people who are blind or have low vision, but it is also benefitting people with learning differences and English language learners. An estimated 20 million tasks have been completed with Seeing AI in 70 countries from 2017 to 2020.



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Microsoft Seeing AI Engineer Saqib Shaikh photographed at Studio C on the Microsoft campus.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The app was developed by the Tech-for-Good team, which is part of Microsoft's AI Ethics & Society group. The group combines emerging technologies with human-centred experience to design and build ICT solutions. The team considers disability to be a driver of innovation, believing that solutions using inclusive design for persons with disabilities will eventually become mainstream for all customers.

The Tech-for-Good team will continue to work with the blind community to develop and refine solutions that leverage the latest technologies to support independent living.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Seeing AI is available in 70 countries.
- The app added seven new languages in 2020, which brings the total to 16.
- A project related to ICT.

Blind programmers developing free software for blind users

VIET NAM/SAO MAI TECHNOLOGY CENTER FOR THE BLIND

The Sao Mai Vocational & Assistive Technology Center for the Blind (SM) is a Vietnamese NGO, based in Ho Chi Minh City. More than half of the team of 29 employees are blind or have poor vision. In 2015, Sao Mai started developing software for blind users: SM Braille, a Braille transcription tool; software in Burmese language; and the SM Music Reader that enables blind musicians to read music scores. In 2020 there were more than 13,000 downloads of the three software solutions combined.

Problem targeted

Most commercial software is not accessible for the majority of blind users in low income countries.

Solution, innovation, and impact

At SM, blind software engineers lead the development teams. This ensures that all software products are user-friendly and fully accessible with screen readers for different platforms. Some programmes also have voice output support so that they can be used without a screen reader, e.g., SM Braille.

In 2020 there are three products available at no cost for users: (1) SM Braille to quickly format and translate popular document types to Braille; (2) the Burmese TTS engine, which enables blind Burmese citizens to use a computer in their own language, and which is currently being used by virtually every blind computer user in Myanmar; and (3) the SM Music Reader, which enables sighted and visually impaired musicians to read the same music scores.

The Burmese product had more than 10,000 downloads, followed by the music reader with more than 2,000 and the Braille software with more than 700.

“Independence in reading and writing one’s own language is possible with the birth of SM Myanmar TTS.”

Ms. Kwai Nan, founder of Living Dignity for the Blind

From 2017 to 2020, SM doubled its staff and now employs 17 blind or visually impaired persons in positions such as engineers and project managers. Notably, all staff members work under the same salary and benefit scheme.

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Using the SM Music Reader app, a blind student plays electronic piano with his sighted teacher.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Sao Mai is supported by the Nippon Foundation and its partners ON-NET and ICEVI. In addition, Sao Mai generates income from contract programming for local companies and from performing web accessibility work. The aim is to continue to offer products for blind users free of charge. SM is also planning a premium model, with a free ‘standard’ product supported by sales of the ‘premium’ product.

SM intends to continue to hire persons with disabilities and expects that in the near future the workforce will consist of 45 per cent women.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- SM employs 17 people who are blind or visually impaired out of 29 total staff.
- All software is free of charge.
- In 2020 there were more than 10,000 downloads for the Burmese language software.
- A project related to ICT.

SECTION 3:

Zero Project Impact–Transfer

**10 new
Fellows**

Portraits and strategies

**Background
and impact**

10 new scaling models

Get to know our 10 Impact-Transfer Fellows

This year's participants in the Zero Project Impact-Transfer programme offer inspiring ideas to make work spaces and employment more accessible and inclusive.



DeafTawk, Pakistan

Sign language app expanding in Asia

DeafTawk, a for-profit start-up technology company based in Islamabad, Pakistan, has developed a mobile application that connects deaf users with certified sign language interpreters in real time through video calling. Used by individuals and businesses and available on both IOS and Android platforms, DeafTawk has now been replicated in Singapore. Between 2018 and 2020 it provided 70,000 hours of sign language interpretation to some 14,600 users across both countries.

Through the DeafTawk app, users can either choose 'book now' for instant interpretation via a video call, or 'book later' to schedule a specific time. With this option, users can specify the purpose of the call and choose an interpreter with relevant expertise. DeafTawk, which is available 24/7, employs over 1,100 interpreters and offers services in 10 languages. Interpreters are based online and can work anytime, anywhere as per their availability. Having expanded in Pakistan and launched in Singapore, the company now aims to further expand in Asia.

"By having quick access to sign language interpreters, DeafTawk has ensured that individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can now be more independent when accessing public services. This simple yet distinctive tool empowers individuals to communicate and connect with the world around them." Ali Shabbar, DeafTawk



Seco Chile Carwash

Looking for franchisees and partners

The Seco Chile Carwash is a social enterprise that provides ecological car-washing services to businesses, hospitals, and institutions throughout Chile, through a network of franchisees. Individual clients book the services in advance, so schedules for the day can then be planned. A supervisor oversees each location and is responsible for contact with clients, scheduling, and quality control. Seco Chile has also developed its own cleaning product, which is ISO 9001 certified and biodegradable. No water or electrical equipment is needed.

Currently, Seco Chile is looking for entrepreneurs willing to become franchise partners and organizations with parking lots. The organization has been awarded several national and international recognitions, and has been presented at the ILO Business and Disability Network in Geneva. Between 2017 and 2020, Seco Chile has grown from 95 to over 300 employees, 55 per cent of whom are persons with disabilities, though employment is open to all.

"In creating a world without barriers, we believe that access to education should also include access to gainful employment. Seco Chile's innovative franchising model ensures that persons with disabilities are able to gain employment, as well as to potentially own their own business."
Rodrigo Carvajal, Seco Chile



EnAble India – Educate Yourself Easily (EYE) Tool Ready for international expansion

EnAble India is a large NGO headquartered in Bangalore. Its Educate Yourself Easily (EYE) Tool is an open-source self-learning platform that supports persons with visual impairments to learn job-critical computer skills. Users can choose from over 400 exercises, such as filing, editing, and data management; take part in job simulations; and test their progress. Exercises focus on supporting people with visual impairments to increase the speed and confidence with which they use computers and to understand the more visual aspects of computer work, such as common document layouts. The tool can be downloaded to a desktop or accessed via a server, and is compatible with screen readers and magnifiers.

EYE tool is targeted at individual users with visual impairments as well as their trainers, parents, employers, and volunteers. It is available in English, Hindi, Tamil, and Kannada, and content can be easily added. EnAble India currently has users in 15 countries and is looking for partners interested in using EYE tool within their own local communities.

“This unique open source self-learning platform helps persons with visual impairments develop and practice their skills in order to gain confidence when working with computers. With its multi-language adaptability, EYE Tool is definitely one that has broken the barriers to employment.”
Moses Chowdari, EnAble India



Egalité Inclusion & Diversity, Brazil Towards a database of 400,000 candidates

Egalité Inclusion & Diversity is a Brazilian social business that has developed an accessible online recruitment platform, incorporating a behavioural profile evaluation tool and free e-learning courses adapted for persons with disabilities. The platform uses an algorithm to calculate the best opportunity for each candidate based on geolocation, education, salary requirements, expertise, and behavioural profile. From 2015 to 2019, Egalité helped to employ over 7,000 persons with disabilities in 19 states in Brazil.

Candidates recruited through the Egalité platform have an average annual income 76 per cent higher than the minimum wage (120 per cent higher when benefits are included). While Egalité currently has 60,000 candidates in its database, by 2025 it hopes to have 400,000 candidates in its database and to have facilitated the hiring of 50,000. Egalité is looking for organizations active in the field of inclusive employment, willing to expand their impact by licensing and using this online recruitment technology.

“Over a span of just four years Egalité has helped to employ over 7,000 persons with disabilities across Brazil. This project’s innovative use of Artificial Intelligence and algorithms is one of the reasons for its incredible success.”
Guilherme Braga, Egalité



myAbility Talent Programme, Austria

Expanding in the German-speaking world

Based in Vienna, myAbility is an Austrian social enterprise offering consultancy services on disability inclusion to companies across Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. The myAbility Talent Programme is a career programme that aims to bring together companies with students and graduates who have a disability or chronic illness. Students receive coaching and exposure to companies through networking opportunities, and the participating companies get the opportunity to know their potential future employees. Participants receive training on important skills through presentation training, one-on-one career coaching, expert subject input, and career workshops.

Simultaneously, myAbility meets with partner companies, offering advice and inclusion training as well as preparing existing staff to provide job support for the incoming employees. Matching events are then held whereby companies and job seekers engage in short interviews, and job support provisions are discussed. From 2016 to 2020, myAbility arranged 1,620 coaching hours and 720 job support days. Of the 130 individuals who have completed the programme, 52 have begun work or received offers from participating companies.

“With its unique approach to tackling unconscious biases, myAbility employees receive personalized and curated training programmes to prepare them for employment. With its innovative approach to connecting companies and potential employees, this project has already been replicated in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland.”

Katharina Schweiger, myAbility



Helm’s Workplace Inclusive Solutions, Egypt

On the Middle East and North Africa

In the effort to make workplaces more inclusive, Helm’s “Workplace Inclusive Solutions” collaborates with an independent company to design disability hiring and recruitment strategies. Helm also offers accessibility consulting, and undertakes detailed field surveys to evaluate accessibility and suggest improvements, including specifications and potential costs. Based in Egypt, the project is currently funded through both grants and fees paid for services rendered.

Helm’s model is currently implemented in approximately 200 organizations throughout Egypt, and over the last four years it has completed 1,063 accessibility audits. It also seeks to replicate the inclusive workplace model in other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. To this end, Helm is looking to connect with non-profit disability organizations and government agencies as well as employers, businesses, and human resource networks in the MENA region.

“With its recruitment analysis tool as well as its review of a company’s employment policies, Helm ensures that there can be a cost-effective method to adapt workspaces for persons with disabilities. Its unique software has the potential to transform the future of accessibility consulting.”

Amena El-Saie, Helm



I Love Coffee, South Africa

Franchise model-to-go in Africa

I Love Coffee is a social enterprise based in Cape Town, South Africa, that is building a chain of coffee shops and operates a coffee roaster, all run by deaf young people. Employees receive barista and hospitality training as well as in health and safety, and they are also provided with personal support such as accessing banking and social services. The enterprise opened its first café in 2016 with three staff members, and in 2020 it employed 26 people – 80 per cent of whom are deaf.

I Love Coffee has partnered with the Marriott Hotel group to ensure that its programme fulfils the specific needs of the hospitality industry. While training and operating practices are deaf-specific, the organization ensures that its training is in accordance with industry norms so that staff can work in the general hospitality industry as well. Now with 10 locations in South Africa, I love Coffee is looking to scale further both nationally and internationally through a social franchise model.

“I Love Coffee addresses the unique challenge of addressing gaps in the hospitality industry in South Africa. By providing accredited training for the deaf and hard of hearing, our exclusive approach to employment sets us apart from the many other disability programmes in the country.”

Gary Hopkins, I Love Coffee



PFDA Vocational Training Centre, Bangladesh

Expanding in Bangladesh and beyond

Based in Dhaka, the PFDA-Vocational Training Centre (PFDA-VTC) promotes employment opportunities for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, offering personalized vocational training programmes ranging from general communication skills to trade-specific training. Every student at PFDA-VTC receives an Individual Target Plan with specified vocational training outcomes based on his or her industry interests, support needs, and stage of learning. When a student is ready for an internship or employment in the open labour market, PFDA-VTC matches the individual to a specific employer in a process involving the student, employer, family members, and educators. Alongside vocational training, therapeutic interventions and training for families and care givers are also offered.

PFDA-VTC plans to replicate this model in seven cities in Bangladesh to support persons with disabilities in rural areas, with donor support. The use of technology is also being explored. From 2014 to 2019, PFDA-VTC has trained more than 450 persons with disabilities and has supported 217 into full employment, 21 into self-employment, and 96 into sheltered employment.

“The project’s incredible journey to ensure that work-spaces are inclusive for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, often an ignored demographic, is a key factor in its selection for the programme.”

Sajida Rahman Danny, PFDA



JAMBA Career for All, Bulgaria

Replicate in five European countries

JAMBA is a Bulgarian NGO and a social enterprise supporting job seekers with disabilities and assisting companies with recruitment and inclusion. Alongside an online job-matching platform, JAMBA trains job seekers in such areas as CV writing, interview preparation, business English, computer literacy, graphic design, accounting, and many others. The organization also works with employers to ensure that they can provide accessible work environments; and it offers companies diversity and inclusion training as well as advice on legal frameworks, including tax and other incentives, for employing people with disabilities.

From 2017 to 2020 more than 2,000 people registered on the JAMBA online platform, and to date the organization has supported the recruitment of over 300 people. In 2020, during the COVID pandemic, JAMBA focused on IT jobs that can also be done remotely and in rural areas. JAMBA is looking for partners willing to replicate their approach in European countries through a social franchise model.

“Moving away from traditional job roles and providing training for persons with disabilities in programming, graphic design, social media marketing, and many others areas has been JAMBA’s innovative approach to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. In just two years more than 60 organizations have hired candidates via our recruitment programme.”

Iva Tsolova, JAMBA



Youth4Jobs Foundation, College Connect, India

Smart Inclusion Centres in higher education

Based in Hyderabad, India, the Youth4Jobs Foundation is focused on employment and education opportunities for students with disabilities. Its College Connect programme has set up Smart Inclusion Centres in 21 colleges and universities, connecting students, educators, employers, and government agencies. These centres offer trainings and job placement opportunities to students with disabilities, and they also support educators and potential employers. Since the launch of the programme in 2018, some 900 students have been trained and 550 have found employment.

The success of this programme is in its aim to create an ecosystem that supports inclusive higher education and employment. Students receive training in English and digital skills, and are given the opportunity to attend job fairs and company site visits. Youth4Jobs has a network of over 500 employers, who work on ensuring that their training focuses on real market needs. It also promotes inclusive employment by offering disability awareness training, which allows for college educators to utilize accessible online teaching methods and other technical skills to create an inclusive higher education environment. To date, 800 educators have been trained. They wish to share their know-how and support partners in implementing Smart Inclusion centres.

“The College Connect programme ensures that by building an ecosystem of support, students with disabilities have the tools they need in order to succeed.”

Meera Shenoy, Youth4Jobs

SECTION 4:

Zero Project Conference 2021

Virtual

Pictures from the virtual #ZeroCon21

Backstage

Behind the scenes – impressions

Impressions from the Zero Project Conference 2021

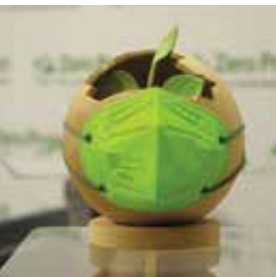
The Zero Project Conference 2021 was held 10–12 February 2021 as a virtual event, graciously hosted by Unicredit Bank Austria, and began with a formal pre-opening event at the Austrian Houses of Parliament. A collection of visual impressions appears below.



Martin Essl delivers his keynote address.



Caroline Casey has served as the moderator of the Zero Project Conferences since 2012. Regardless of the virtual separation, she was able to convey her unique energy and spirit to several #ZeroCon21 Sessions, while making a solemn promise to be back in Vienna – in person – for #ZeroCon22 in February 2022.



The symbol of #ZeroCon21.



The director's desk, where all video and sound streams came together.



The Conference from the camera's perspective.



Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian Parliament, during his keynote address at the pre-opening event, where three innovations were presented. Presentations were selected by the Zero Project team based on their high potential to be replicated in Austria, and thus improving the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Austrian labour market.



Martin Essl speaks at the Conference's pre-opening event in the Austrian Houses of Parliament.



The International Labour Organization (ILO) organized a session on the challenges of machine learning-based job assessments for persons with disabilities, with Stefan Trömel (ILO) and Susan Scott Parker (Business Disability International).



Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo of the World Bank during her keynote address.



Petra Plicka, graphic facilitator of the Zero Project, gives a lesson in how to use drawings for better communication.



One of the 82 Awardee videos that were shown over a period of six hours throughout the Conference (Griffin-Hammis Associates of the United States).



Find the whole Zero Project Conference on streaming.zeroproject.org, sorted by Day and Channel, and fully searchable by keyword. You can copy and share the individual links of all videos, and use all the features of YouTube such as auto-captioning or downloading the full script.



All Sessions of #ZeroCon21 can be streamed on the Zero Project Video Portal and searched by keywords, names of sessions, and names of speakers. Just go to streaming.zeroproject.org or simply start at www.zeroproject.org.



Martin Essl with members of the Zero Project Austria team, including Michael Pichler, Karin Praniess, Katharina Praniess, and Andreas Onea, moderator of #ZeroCon21 and many "Unternehmensdialoge" events in Austria.



Catalina Saieh, President of Fundación Desúbreme, during her address to the Conference on Friday.



Wilfried Kainz (left) of the Zero Project team discusses the Awardee videos with Franz Wolfmayr, founder of Chance B, an Austrian DPO, and the former president of the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD).



Michael Pichler (left), head of the Zero Project Austria team, in discussion with Alexander Miklantz from the Austrian Ministry of Social Welfare on the National Action Plan of Austria and the consequences of the pandemic.

Accessibility was at the heart of #ZeroCon21, including the provision of sign language and captioning for most of the sessions.





The Zero Project team gathers in the Conference studio.



Backstage!



Zero Project Director Michael Fembek in the studio room, checking registration and participant numbers.



A look from above at the main room of the Conference studio during the opening address by Martin Essl.



The sign language interpreter team at work.



Nicolas Schmit, Commissioner of the European Union (DG Employment), during his video presentation at the Friday session organized by EASPD, a Zero Project partner.



Many sessions were organized by partners of the Zero Project, such as Perspektiva (Russia).



“Accessible Gaming” – a trend in inclusion and a highlight session from Wednesday.



Members of the “Arts and Museums” Solutions Community presented their work and joint activities, with easy language as one of the key instruments towards accessibility and inclusion.



“Accessible Maps and Orientation Systems,” a Zero Project Solutions Community started in 2020, presented the innovative tools and apps of several start-ups. Pictured here is Lazarillo, an app development from Chile.



The TFA Group, a U.S.-based video-production company with a focus on disability-related content, produced “Seeing AI”– a documentary on Amy Dixon, a U.S. Paralympic, and the potential of Seeing AI, a 2021 Zero Project Awardee.



More than 50 people and organizations, with and without disabilities, joined the Zero Dance Project and are featured in this wonderful 4-minute dance video!



Sila Karabulut, a blind student from Austria, talks about her expectations and job perspectives.



Martin Essl (right) and Michael Fembek (left) welcome Ghada Fathi Waly, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and UN Office on Drugs and Crime, before her opening address.

Seema Mundackal of the Zero Project team, one of the two Conference anchors.



Martin Essl (left) with Cristina Fraile Jiménez de Muñana, Ambassador of Spain to Austria, and Robin Tim Weis (right) head of the Zero Project's Ambassador initiative.

Backstage with the Zero Project team.



SECTION 5:

Employment Situation in Latin America

Legal background

Anti-discrimination legislation, quotas, and more

Case studies

From Chile, Colombia, and Spain

Inclusive Employment in the Spanish-speaking World

This section addresses the main solutions that governments have implemented in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain to guarantee the right to the inclusive employment of persons with disabilities, with case studies from Chile, Colombia, and Spain.

by *Fundación Descúbreme, Chile*

It has been estimated that around 15 per cent of the world's population is living with disability. In Latin America and the Caribbean this figure varies greatly between countries, depending on the methodology chosen to measure – for example, Costa Rica, 18.2 per cent; México, 6.7 per cent; Brazil, 24 per cent; and Argentina, 10.2 per cent – but the barriers that persons with disabilities face are quite similar regardless of the country.

A key element of Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is that it provides a set of appropriate steps that State Parties can follow to foster inclusion in work and employment. Some of these steps are (a) the prohibition of discrimination based on disability in the workplace; (b) the employers' obligation to provide reasonable accommodations, if required; and (c) the promotion of the employment of persons with disabilities through affirmative action measures, such as legislations and policies.

There are some countries where the public administration is encouraged to prefer companies who employ people with disabilities.

The importance of the SDGs and ILO Conventions

Another United Nations resolution of great importance to ensure the right to work and inclusive employment is the 2030 Agenda, which presents the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that address environment, economic, and social issues.

Specifically, SDG 8 seeks to foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including persons with disabilities.

It is worth mentioning that the indicators associated with Target 8.5 include the average hourly earnings and the unemployment rate of this group. Taking this into account, the measures provided in Article 27 can help to achieve this SDG.

In addition, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has promoted the employment of persons with disabilities through the adoption of conventions and recommendations that are based on the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination. In this sense, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention was established in 1983 to ensure that all ILO members formulate and implement policies that support the inclusion of this collective in the open labour market and guarantee their access to services that facilitate this process.

Measures to promote the inclusive employment of persons with disabilities

Based on these international guidelines and commitments, the countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain have developed and implemented different legal instruments and policy initiatives to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to inclusive employment opportunities. In this way, the measures presented in this section aim to promote the participation of this collective in the open or competitive labour market, the development of self-employment strategies, and the implementation of the supported employment methodology.

The promulgation of legislation has been a very important tool for promoting the productive role of persons with disabilities. The main regulations in this regard are the following:

Quotas can come in three different forms: a binding quota with effective sanctions, a binding quota without sanctions, and quotas that are only recommendations.

- **Anti-discrimination legislation:** The aim of these laws is to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of disability in employment or work settings. There are a variety of approaches to this matter, such as laws that apply to the population as a whole and those that address disability-specific dispositions.
- **Quota systems:** These schemes are introduced through the enactment of laws or through specific regulations. In general terms, a quota system is put in place to reserve an established percentage of available job positions for persons with disabilities in the private or public sector. There is considerable variation among the different systems implemented in each country, but they can be divided into three main groups: (1) a binding quota with an effective sanction or enforcement mechanism; (2) a binding quota without an effective sanction; and (3) a non-binding quota with no sanction based on a legislative recommendation.

Some of the other measures that can be used by governments designed to achieve this purpose are described below:

- **Employment services and job orientation:** These services support persons with disabilities through the provision of vocational guidance, vocational training, and job placement. Also, they can work with employers by analysing the requirements of each job position offered, selecting the candidate that matches these requirements, and advising them in the provision of reasonable accommodations. Finally, employment services can be a link to the initiatives carried out by civil society organizations that enhances the employability of this collective.
- **Supported employment:** This consists of a set of actions and services that are aimed to support persons with disabilities so that they can access, maintain, and advance in open labour market jobs. Some of the actions involved are employment guidance and advice, development of a personal plan for the person with disability wanting to work, on-the-job accompaniment and training, and technical or legal advice for employers.

- **Training for employment:** Training for employment is incorporated into courses and programmes designed to develop abilities and skills that are required in the labour market. It has been noted that in all Iberoamerican countries persons with disabilities have been incorporated into training systems, but in many cases these initiatives do not respond to the actual demands of the labour market.
- **Incentives for employing workers with disabilities:** Some countries promote the recruitment of persons with disabilities by providing certain benefits to employers, such as tax deductions, reductions in social security payments, subsidies for each worker hired, benefits in kind, financial support to pay for reasonable accommodations or accessibility features, and the provision of information about disability inclusion in the workplace, among others.
- **Public procurement:** Notably, there are some countries where the public administration is encouraged to prefer companies who employ people with disabilities.
- **Disability pensions:** It has been shown that the benefits granted on the basis of disability should be structured in a way that encourages persons with disability to work. Several countries in the Iberoamerican community have adopted regulations that make the disability pension system compatible with employment or the development of a remunerated productive activity.
- **Self-employment initiatives:** Governments have been implementing entrepreneurship training programmes and providing financial support to start and develop these initiatives.

Selected case studies from Iberoamerican countries

Inclusive employment policies from Chile

In Chile it has been estimated that 16.7 per cent of the population has a disability. This collective faces significant gaps in access to work and employment opportunities, which is illustrated by the fact that in 2015 only 39.3 per cent of persons with disabilities were employed, compared to 63.9 per cent of those without disabilities. This is largely due to the lack of Inclusive Education and training, awareness of the benefits of diversity in the workplace, and clear guidelines on how to effectively include persons with disability in the open labour market.

After the ratification of the CRPD in 2008, Chile responded to the commitments of the Convention

through the enactment of Law N° 20.442, which aims to ensure the right to equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and to promote their full social inclusion. This regulation is based on the principles of independent living, universal accessibility, Universal Design, intersectionality, and social participation.

Regarding the employment of persons with disabilities, Article 43 of Law N° 20.442 indicates that the State is obligated to implement affirmative action measures that promote the inclusion and non-discrimination of this collective. Specifically, it should disseminate best practices to foster inclusion in the workplace; create and implement employment programmes for persons with disabilities; and encourage the creation of accessible technologies, products, and services.

A key affirmative action measure developed in Chile is the elaboration of an employment quota system through the promulgation in April 2018 of Law N° 21.015, commonly referred to as the Labour Inclusion Law. This regulation addresses both the public and private sector, and establishes that at least 1 per cent of the workforce of all institutions and companies with 100 or more employees must be persons with disabilities.

In cases where companies do not meet the required quota, they can comply with the law through two alternative measures: (a) by entering into contracts with service providers that have hired workers with disabilities, or (b) by making monetary donations to projects or programmes implemented by associations, corporations, and foundations that promote the inclusive employment of this collective. On the other hand, the public organizations that do not reach the quota must send a report justifying this situation to the Civil Service and the National Disability Services.

Companies that do not fulfil the obligations established in this law are sanctioned with fines that range roughly between \$2,700 and \$4,100, depending on the size of the organization.

Law N° 21.015 has been a key measure to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, and it has helped to raise awareness of the importance of ensuring their right to work. Despite the progress made, however, various actors involved in the matter point out that a policy that establishes standards on how to conduct effective and sustainable inclusion processes is still needed.

In order to continue encouraging the employment of persons with disabilities, in October 2020 Law N° 21.275 was promulgated, establishing that companies with 100 or more employees must adopt measures to

facilitate the inclusion of this collective. One of these measures is that the human resources departments of these organizations must have an employee with specific knowledge regarding the labour inclusion of persons with disabilities, and they should have a certification that endorses their expertise. These companies should also elaborate diversity and inclusion policies, and develop training programmes in this area. It should be mentioned that this law will enter into force in November 2022.

In addition to these measures, the Chilean Government promotes the inclusive employment of persons with disabilities through a training programme directed exclusively to this collective as well as an entrepreneurship programme, among other actions.

From November 2022, companies in Chile with 100 or more employees must have an employee with specific knowledge regarding the labour inclusion of persons with disabilities, and they should have a certification that endorses their expertise.

Inclusive employment policies from Colombia

Unlike Chile, Colombia does not have a specific survey to quantify this collective, but a census conducted in 2005 indicated that 6.1 per cent of the population had a disability. There is also a national registry of persons with disabilities, which gathers the administrative information generated during the disability certification procedure. According to the data of 2019, 11.4 per cent of registered persons were working and 4.0 per cent were searching for a job.

Law N° 1.145 was enacted in 2007 with the purpose of creating and organizing the National System of Disability (SND), among other dispositions. The SND defines public policies such as rules, resources, programmes, and institutions about disability in Colombia. With the ratification in 2011 of the CRPD, Law N° 1.618 was promulgated two years later in order to ensure the effective exercise of the rights of this collective by adopting affirmative measures, reasonable accommodations, and eliminating all forms of discrimination on the basis of disability.

In particular, Article 13 of this law addresses the right to work of this collective through the adoption of the

Colombia has not established a quota system, but instead it has opted to implement legal provisions that encourage the participation of this collective in regular employment. But in 2017 a decree was issued to establish an obligation to employ a percentage of persons with disabilities in the public sector.

following measures: (a) guaranteeing training for employment to persons with disabilities and their families; (b) strengthening the job placement programme for persons with disabilities through promotion strategies aimed at the private sector; (c) encouraging the development of inclusive business and entrepreneurship; and (d) providing advice and accompaniment to employers who wish to hire workers with disabilities, among others.

In contrast to Chile, Colombia has not established a quota system, but instead it has opted to implement legal provisions that encourage the participation of this collective in regular employment. Specifically, Article 24 of Law N° 361, enacted in 1991, establishes that employers that hire persons with disabilities shall have several guarantees, such as preference in the processes of bidding, adjudication, and contract celebration in the private and public sector, and priority in the provision of credits and subsidies from state agencies. The law also provides that the government sets the tariff rates for the import of adapted equipment for persons with disabilities.

It should be mentioned that in 2017 a decree was issued to establish an obligation to employ a percentage of persons with disabilities in the public sector. The calculation of this percentage depends on the number of workers that each state entity has, and it is required that these figures increase over the years. In this way, at the end of December of 2023 it is expected that entities with 1,000 employees or fewer will have a workforce consisting of at least 3 per cent of persons with disabilities, while entities with 3,000 employees or more must have a quota of 2 per cent.

Another key actor in the labour inclusion ecosystem in Colombia is the National Learning Service (SENA), which has the mission to promote the social and technical development of workers through the provision of training and preparation programmes. Colombian law states that SENA must ensure the effective access

of persons with disabilities to all its services and initiatives, and the commitment to labour inclusion and diversity is supported by a 2014 institutional policy for the benefit of persons with disabilities.

The elaboration of this institutional policy received technical assistance from the Pacto de Productividad (Productivity Pact) programme, and it addresses vocational guidance, job competencies certification, entrepreneurship development, and labour intermediation processes through the Public Employment Agency, among other actions. The Pacto de Productividad is supported by the Inter-American Development Bank, private companies, and the Ministry of Labour through SENA. This initiative is designed to provide labour intermediation processes for persons with disabilities that result in successful and sustainable inclusion.

Inclusive employment policies from Spain

The most recent survey in Spain specifically designed to identify and characterize persons with disabilities was conducted in 2008. The results indicated that 4.1 million people have a disability, which is approximately 9 per cent of the population. The employment situation was also addressed, revealing that only 28.3 per cent of this collective was working, while the figure was 67.2 per cent for persons without disabilities. Although this data is outdated, it clearly shows the significant gap between those with and without a disability.

In 2013 the General Law of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and their Social Inclusion was enacted to consolidate and harmonize the main legislative instruments since the 1980s about disability in light of the CRPD. The main objective of this law is to guarantee the right to equal opportunities and treatment, as well as the real and effective exercise of the rights of this collective through the promotion of personal autonomy, universal accessibility, access to employment, participation in the community, independent living, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination based on disability.

Chapter Five of this law recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to work in equal conditions to the rest of the population and to be free of discrimination. Article 37 specifically establishes that the public administration has the role of promoting the productive role of this collective, and it recognizes that they can exercise this right through the following types of employment: regular employment in businesses or state entities, protected employment in centres and labour enclaves, and independent employment.

Regarding the promotion of inclusive or regular employment of persons with disabilities, Article 40 contains several measures, such as:

- the obligation for employers to adopt all the appropriate measures to ensure the accessibility of the company and that the adaptations to the job position are in place;
- the provision of supported employment services to businesses that want to hire persons with disabilities;
- the reserve of a percentage of job positions for persons with disabilities in the public and private businesses; and
- in public employment, where job vacancies will be reserved for persons with disabilities.

This law also considers the provision of different types of aid, such as subsidies, loans, the adaptation of the workplace environment, and the elimination of barriers that limit productive activities to promote all types of employment for persons with disabilities.

The characteristics and implementation of the main measures to foster the inclusive employment of persons with disabilities in Spain are as follows:

- **Mandatory employment quota system:** Since 1982, Spain has adopted this measure to encourage the participation of persons with disabilities in regular employment. This scheme establishes that companies with 50 or more workers must comply with a quota of 2 per cent or more of employees with disabilities. In cases where the quota cannot be met, this regulation can be satisfied through alternative measures, such as hiring an employment centre for persons with disabilities or independent workers with disabilities to provide a service, donating money to promote the labour inclusion of this collective, and the constitution of a 'labour enclave' by entering into a contract with a labour centre. In this contract it is stipulated that a certain number of the workers of the centre will develop their productive activities in the company's workplace. In addition, the public sector must reserve 7 per cent of their job positions for persons with disabilities, and specifically 2 per cent of this figure must be reserved for persons with intellectual or cognitive disabilities.
- **Incentives for employers:** Another strategy that Spain has used to encourage employers to hire persons with disabilities is providing economic incentives, including:
 - Granting bonuses on social security contributions that vary depending on the degree of disability, sex, and age of the worker employed, and the type of contract.
 - Allowing tax deductions for each person with a disability hired that represents an increase in the number of workers with disabilities employed in the previous year.

- The provision of subsidies for each full-time contract with a person with a disability. Also, companies can request a subsidy to perform reasonable accommodations to the job position, acquire protective equipment to prevent work-related accidents, and to finance the removal of barriers in the workplace.
- It has also been established that companies that have 2 per cent or more persons with disabilities employed will be preferred over others when being awarded public contracts.

Supported employment

In Spain some services are regulated through legislation (Royal Decree 870/2007) to establish the beneficiaries, the actions that must be carried out by programmes based on this methodology, the length of the support provided, and the institutions that can carry out these initiatives. This regulation indicates that supported employment involves guidance, advice, accompaniment, elaboration of an adaptation plan for the offered position, support for the development of social skills, on-the-job training, and the monitoring of the employee's performance.

In Spain, companies that have 2 per cent or more persons with disabilities employed will be preferred over others when being awarded public contracts.

Conclusion

Different countries from Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Spanish-speaking community have developed different solutions to promote the inclusive employment of persons with disabilities. Some of the key measures in this regard are the development of a quota system, the provision of incentives for employers, and access to inclusive training and labour intermediation services.

Despite the implementation of these measures, however, significant gaps remain in the participation of persons with disabilities in the open labour market among these countries. Taking this into account, the different actors involved in the labour inclusion of this collective must continue working to ensure that the right to work and employment is guaranteed and fulfilled.

Summary in Easy Language

What is Zero Project?

In 2008 the Essl Foundation founded the Zero Project.

The motto of Zero Project is: “A world without barriers.”

Zero means: there should be zero barriers.

Zero Project wants to improve the rights of people with disabilities all over the world.

The basis for this is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations.

People with disabilities are often disadvantaged.

However, there are always new and useful solutions to eliminate such disadvantages.

These solutions are the focus of Zero Project.

Zero Project seeks, collects, and shares with others the solutions and ideas.

How does Zero Project work?

Every year Zero Project describes its work in a report.

The report is called the Zero Project Report.

The Zero Project Report 2021 is about the years 2020 and 2021.

Zero Project also organizes a big conference every year.

It is called the Zero Project Conference.

The conference is attended by experts from all over the world.

They talk about good solutions for a barrier-free world and they exchange experiences.

In March 2020 the largest conference to date took place.

In 2021, due to COVID-19, the conference

had to take place over the Internet for the first time.

The process of having a conference online was new and difficult, but the conference was a great success.

About 4,000 people from 145 countries participated,

and all the contributions added up to 85 hours of online activity.

There were lectures, discussions, and video films.

Zero Project on the Internet

The Zero Project Conference 2021 has also shown that many people are interested in accessible solutions, even when there is no conference taking place.

That is why there is now a collection of presentations on the Internet, as well as photos and video films.

The collection is called Zero Project Video Portal.

The Internet site is: <https://zeroproject.org/>

Everyone can inform themselves about the projects of Zero Project at any time.

Of course, this information should be barrier-free.

Therefore all videos are available:

- with spoken picture descriptions
- with sign language
- with subtitles.

The videos from the Zero Project Conference 2021 are just the beginning.

Zero Project will soon upload all projects since 2014.

Zero Project will also upload all future work here.

On the Zero Project website you can also download the Zero Project Almanac 2021, covering the years 2013 to 2021.

Themes of Zero Project

Every year Zero Project focuses on a specific theme.

The themes repeat themselves every 4 years:

- 2013, 2017, and 2021: Work and Employment
- 2014, 2018, and 2022: Accessibility
- 2015 and 2019: Self-determination and political participation
- 2016 and 2020: Education

From 2021 onwards, however, each year will also focus on information and communication technologies (ICT).

Because technology is important in many different ways.

For work and employment, Zero Project is about:

- Support through people or technology
- Vocational training
- Transitions between sheltered workshops and the labour market
- Promoting entrepreneurship through small loans
- Creating transitions between education and work
- Establishing contacts between employers and employees
- Higher education.

Information and communication technology for Zero Project is about:

- Mobile services and apps
- Artificial Intelligence, adaptive machines, data processing
- Social media
- 3D printing, smart products, robotics, and automation.

Every year Zero Project selects

the best solutions and ideas for greater accessibility.

In 2021 there were 475 nominations of solutions (called Policies and Practices) from 93 countries.

Never before have there been so many!

A group of experts reviews the submissions.

The projects must meet 3 conditions:

- The idea must be new.
- The idea must do something better.
- It must be possible to implement the idea in other areas or places.

At the Zero Project Conference there were awards for the 82 best solutions from 46 countries.

Zero Project and its partners

Ashoka is a worldwide network of entrepreneurs in the social sector.

Together with Ashoka, Zero Project launched the Zero Project Impact-Transfer programme in 2017.

The Impact-Transfer programme supports accessible solutions through training, mentoring, and contacts.

Because particularly good solutions should be used all over the world.

A particularly important partner for Zero Project is also the organization Fundación Descúbreme in Chile.

Fundación Descúbreme works to help people with disabilities find work more easily and better.

Together with Fundación Descúbreme, Zero Project also reaches many people in South America.

Zero Project in Austria

In Austria, Zero Project deals a lot with the topic of employment.

Companies should experience and understand that there are many advantages to employing people with disabilities.

To help them to understand, Zero Project:

- offers information to companies and organizations
- produces a supplement every year in the daily newspaper “Die Presse”
- gives awards to companies that employ people with disabilities
- maintains close contact with Parliament, ministries, authorities, and organizations.

Annex

Network 2020–2021 Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements

The Zero Project would not exist without the broad and continuous support of many individuals and organizations over the last five years. It is difficult to highlight only a few individuals out of a network of more than 5,000, but some have been of particular help to us last year.

We are especially grateful to the following individuals for their contributions to the nomination, shortlisting, and selection process of this year's Innovative Policies and Practices, with Zero Project Ambassadors in the lead: Klaus Hoeckner, Michal Rimon, Susan Scott-Parker, Caroline Casey, Rupert Roniger, Carola Rubia, Luk Zelderloo, and – new since 2021 – Nevgül Bilsel Safkan.

Our partners at Fundación Descúbreme have become a pillar of the Zero Project in such a short time, organizing the Zero Project Latin America Conference, contributing to and developing the Zero Project Impact-Transfer programme, and adding a fantastic new prize, the ICT for Inclusion Award. Our warm thanks to Carola Rubia, Maria Ignacia Rodríguez, Andrés Beroggi, and the whole Fundación Descúbreme team.

In this exceptional year, we had to build a virtual conference almost from scratch. We found great partners in Anton Kolarik and Klaudia Wallner, who provided and organized our conference venue, Bank Austria Kaiserwasser. Further, the highly complex technology employed during the Zero Project Conference would not have been possible without the teams of TV-Salon am Naschmarkt in Vienna with Ladislaus Helbig, Katharina Schuh, and Amy Kempel; Martin Maier Media in Austria; and Crowdcomms in the UK.

There are also those partners and friends that support us in our day-to-day business. Like Nora Wolloch and Kordian Bruck who provided incredible support in establishing the IT-platform for the nomination and selection processes. Or our web-partners from gugler* MarkenSinn, with Mario Paumann in the lead.

We are, from our very early beginnings, indebted to Caroline Casey, as always, for her incredible energy and inspiration for the Zero Project, this year “only” as remote Conference moderator. Andres Onea, Conference anchor of the virtual Zero Project Conference in Vienna, did a great job in guiding us and the whole audience through the three days of the Conference; and the Sign Language teams as well as Petra Plicka, our graphic facilitator, provided quality-based accessibility to the Conference.

It is also an honour and pleasure to be part of the Disability Thematic Network of the European Foundation Centre, and to work with all its members, coordinated by Letizia Manconi in Brussels. A special thanks in this regard to Jaroslaw Ponder, Roxana Widmer-Iliescu, and many others at the International Telecommunication Union, with whom we have started a promising cooperation to jointly develop an ecosystem of ICT innovators.

In Austria we are thankful to Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian Parliament, for his continuous support, and for co-organizing a pre-Conference event in the Austrian Parliament. We are proud of our growing network and all partners who join us in producing the Unternehmensdialoge, and supplements in *Die Presse*, as well as organizing the Special Award of the Austrian Leading Companies Award.

The successful continuation of the Zero Project Impact-Transfer programme would not have been possible without the strong support of Ashoka, especially Loic van Cutsem and Georg Schön, as well as the mentors supporting the 2020–2021 participants: David Banes, Ian Calvert, Valeria Dufлот, Philipp Haydn, Helmut Maukner, Susan Scott-Parker, Rainer Reich, Maria Ignacia Rodriguez, and Rizwan Tayabali.

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Finally, new to the Zero Project are the Solution Communities, and they would not work without our Community managers: Sander Shot, Martin Morandell, Elmar Fuerst, Klaus Hoeckner, Doris Rothauer, Ricardo Bahamonde, Matthijs Nederveen, Susan Scott-Parker, and Maria Ignacia Rodriguez.

Zero Project Research Network 2020–2021

List by country of all peer-reviewers, voters, nominators, jurors, and people with active roles in this year's research cycle, from May 2020 to November 2020. More than 800 experts with and without disabilities from appx. 100 countries contributed.

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The Zero Project Research Network 2020–2021 (continued)

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The Zero Project Research Network 2020–2021 (continued)


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List of Acronyms

Contact	ISO.....International Organization for Standardization
ADA.....	Americans with Disabilities Act	IT.....Information & Technology (see ICT)
ADHD.....	Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder	ITU.....International Telecommunication Union
AI.....	Artificial Intelligence	LFTW.....Light for the World
Android.....	Operation system of smartphones	LLC.....Limited Liability Company
ANED.....	Academic Network of European Disability	Ltd.....Limited (registered company)
ASD.....	Autism Spectrum Disorder	MEP.....Member of the European Parliament
ASEAN.....	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	MP.....Member of Parliament
ASL.....	American Sign Language	NFC.....Near-Field Communication (a technology)
AT.....	Assistive Technology	NGO.....Non-governmental organization
CBM.....	Christoffel Blind Mission	NYC.....New York City
CBR.....	Community-based rehabilitation	OAS.....Organization of American States
CBS.....	Community-based services	OECD.....Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CEO.....	Chief Executive Officer	OHCHR.....Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
CRPD.....	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	ONLUS.....Organizzazione Non Lucrativa Di Utilità Sociale (Non-Profit Organization, Italy)
CSR.....	Corporate Social Responsibility	PhD.....Doctor of Philosophy
CV.....	Curriculum Vitae (resumé)	PSE.....Post-secondary education
DAISY.....	Digital Accessible Information System	QA.....Quality Assurance
DPO.....	Disabled people's organization	QR Code.....Barcode for Scanning (Quick Response Code)
DRC.....	DR Congo, Democratic Republic of Kongo	SDG.....Sustainable Development Goal
€.....	Euro	STEM.....Science, technology, engineering, mathematics
e.V.....	eingetragener Verein (registered Association)	TVET.....Technical, vocational, and educational training
EAA.....	European Accessibility Act	UAE.....United Arab Emirates
EASPD.....	European Association of Service Providers	UD.....Universal Design
EC.....	European Commission (part of the EU)	UEB.....Unified English Braille Code
ECI.....	Early childhood intervention	UK.....United Kingdom
EEA.....	European Economic Area	UN.....United Nations
EFC.....	European Foundation Centre	UN CRPD.....see CRPD
ENIL.....	European Network for Independent Living	UN DESA.....United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Erasmus+.....	EU grant-funding programme	UNDP.....United Nations Development Programme
ESF.....	European Social Fund	UNESCO.....United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
EU.....	European Union	UNHCR.....United Nations Refugee Agency
G3ICT.....	Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs	UNICEF.....United Nations Children's Fund
GIZ.....	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	US, U.S.....United States of America
GPS.....	Global Positioning System	US\$.....US-Dollar
HI.....	Humanity & Inclusion	USAID.....United States Agency for International Development
Horizon2020.....	EU grant-funding programme	VAT.....Value Added Tax
HR.....	Human Resources	VET.....Vocational and educational training
HTML.....	Hypertext Marker Language (Computer language used for websites)	W3C.....World Wide Web Consortium
ICT.....	Information and communication technologies	WBU.....World Blind Union
IDA.....	International Disability Alliance	WCAG.....Accessibility Standard for Web applications
IL.....	Independent Living	WHO.....World Health Organization
ILO.....	International Labour Organization	WIPO.....World Intellectual Property Organization
Inc.....	Incorporated (for-profit organization in US, UK and other countries)	
INEE.....	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies	
IOS.....	Operating System of Apple smartphones	
iPad.....	Tablet Computer, Trademark of Apple Computers	
IS.....	International Sign (Language)	

**Zero Project –
for a world with zero barriers.**



QUOTES AND FINDINGS FROM THIS REPORT

Countries with the most Innovative Practices and Policies in this Report: Austria, United States, Israel, Chile, India, Spain, Germany, Uganda, Brazil, Mexico, and Turkey

See page 12.

“PEAT is key in assuring that technologies are designed by and for people with disabilities.”

Larry Goldberg, Head of Accessibility, Verizon Media, on the Innovative Policy of the US Department of Labor, page 85.

“My life has never been the same again after the training. It helped me discover my potential.”

Imelda Aate, 22, a refugee from South Sudan and beneficiary of the World Vision programme in Uganda, page 83.

To date, 41 projects have had the opportunity to work with mentors, get feedback on their replication model, and receive support from a network of peers.

See page 109 for more about the Zero Project Impact-Transfer programme.

From 2015 to 2019, Egalite helped to employ over 7,000 persons with disabilities in 19 states in Brazil.

See page 92.

“Have courage and be kind. For where there is kindness there is goodness, and where there is goodness there is magic.”

An employee at Mitti Café from India, page 55.

Facts & Figures

More than 5,000 experts from all sectors of society are part of the Zero Project Network.

662 Innovative Policies and Practices have been awarded from 2013 to 2021.

More than 4,000 people registered for the virtual Zero Project Conference 2021.

Join the Zero Project Network!

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