



Combating unemployment

A project from Rehabilitation International (RI) in co-operation with GLADNET, the World Association for Supported Employment (WASE), the Employment Affinity group of the International Association for the Scientific Studies of Intellectual Disabilities (IASSID) and other affiliates

Introduction

Many millions of people with disabilities around the world are excluded from society, are living in poor conditions and are unemployed. The total number of people with a disability is worldwide between 500 and 650 million, depending on legislation and registration.

General figures are: ¹

- 370 million in Asia
- 386 million of working-age worldwide
- 238 million in Asia are of working-age
- unemployment rates are double that of the general population and high as 80 percent
- disability and poverty are linked: 20 percent of the world's poor are disable.

Many people with disabilities had lack of opportunities for education and (vocational) training. Specific attention is needed to increase work and living condition of disabled people all over the world.

UN Human Rights Convention

The United Nations (UN) has set up an international human rights convention on the rights of disabled people.

What the convention will do for disabled people

A human rights convention is a piece of international law, which sets out the duty of countries to protect human rights. Once it comes into force, it will be legally binding for any country that ratifies it. The convention will come into force 30 days after 20 states have ratified.

The UN Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides a recognised international standard for disabled people's human rights in one document. This will help the international community to put pressure on countries whose work on disability rights could be improved. Countries that ratify the convention will also have to report regularly to the UN about the steps they're taking to protect and promote disabled people's rights.

¹ Presentation Debra A Percy, senior specialist in vocational rehabilitation, ILO, Bangkok, Thailand

General principles

Article 3:

The principles of the present Convention shall be:

- a. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons
- b. Non-discrimination
- c. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- d. Respect for difference and acceptance of disability as part of human diversity and humanity
- e. Equality of opportunity
- f. Accessibility
- g. Equality between men and women
- h. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities

Work & Employment

Related to employment the principles are:

Article 27:

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia:
 - 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 redressing of grievances;
 - c. Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;
 - 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 and 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;
 - h. Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programmes, incentives and other measures;
 - i. Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;
 - j. Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market;
 - k. Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.
2. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.

Contribution to create opportunities for employment

Many people with disabilities were seen as persons who couldn't work. The accent was on the disability and not on the ability. Related to work the approach on focusing on the ability of persons with a disability made a change. Supported employment was one of the methods through which many people could get and maintain a paid job in the open labour market.

People with disabilities were able to contribute to society, were able to participate and were earning a living. In many countries this is not the case. Even in developing countries many people with disabilities don't get an opportunity to be present in society and have opportunities to participate.

From a human rights point of view there is a responsibility for the civil society to create opportunities. People with disabilities have the same rights. Due to their disability a proper support structure might be needed so that they can carry out these rights. The paradigm we need to work with is the paradigm of citizenship, which includes people with disabilities into the society. This also means that we have to build bridges and must overcome barriers. It is time to act. We have learned lessons and can exchange our experiences through a coalition of all partners involved.

This project shall focus on creating employment opportunities by using supported employment, customized employment and self employment instruments.

Coalition on combating unemployment of disabled persons

Organizations with experience in Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment and organizations which objectives are to include persons with disabilities into the society, their networks and affiliates work together to create opportunities for people with disabilities for work.

These organizations are:

Rehabilitation International (RI) www.rehab-international.org

Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training (GLADNET) www.gladnet.org

Employment Affinity Group of the International Association for the Scientific Studies of Intellectual Disabilities (IASSID) www.iassid.org

World Association of Supported Employment (WASE) www.wase.net

All these organizations have networks and affiliated organizations all over the world. From here there is a broad spectrum of knowledge which is available to create opportunities for work for persons with disabilities.

On a joint meeting in Djerba, Tunisia on October 22, 2007 of the RI Work and Employment Commission and GLADNET an agreement is made to form a sub-committee with the tasks to explore the application of Supported Employment in developing countries.

Members of the sub-committee are:

Michael Kamp, co-ordinator, chair, Netherlands

Stig Larsson, Sweden, chair RI Employment Commission

Per Brannstein, Norway

Madan Kundu, USA

This paper is the result of the work of the sub-committee. Beside Supported Employment also Customized Employment and Self Employment are included for their relevance for persons with disabilities in developing countries. The idea is that the four organisations agree to form a coalition on combating unemployment. The first step is to sign a statement of co-operation in conjunction with the new UN Convention. This statement can give a clear signal worldwide and can open doors to get involvement of many people and organizations, including private multi national companies.

In combination with this statement supported employment, customized and self employment projects starts in different part of the world. Those projects must have a multiplier effect in the countries and regions.

Collection of information and data. Dissemination of information and data is a specific aspect of the activities. Information includes research findings, information on training materials adapted to the needs in a country or region, examples of good practices etc. etc.

Structure of the project

An overall coordination structure of the project is needed. The sub committee can fulfil this role. Other specialist and representatives can be invited to join. The committee is the link to the operational projects and the partners in the coalition. The committee is also mentoring operational project when they are approved. Each project can have its own specific rules related to the criteria of the funding agencies/organizations and specific situation in a country or region.

Role of the coalition partners

A main role of the partners is dissemination of information and intermediation by using their different networks.

Each partners has also a specific role:

- RI: Initiator of the project.
- GLADNET: Collecting information and data and dissemination through the GLADNET data base.
- WASE: Specific role on supported employment and customized employment. Making links with professionals in the field. Also a role in contacting multinational companies for their involvement in creating opportunities for persons with a disability.
- Employment Affinity group of
- IASSID: Specific attention on persons with intellectual disabilities. Using knowledge of researchers and practitioners with specific knowledge in the field of intellectual disability.

Supported Employment, customized employment and self employment

Supported employment, customized employment and self employment starts with the individual and takes into account opportunities for work in the direct environment of the persons involved.

The method of supported employment and customized employment includes vocational training and individual tailored support. Vocational training can take place on the job site, but also outside, depending of the individual needs of the persons and the circumstances. Self employment includes the same type of training and support, but also takes into account the requirements to fulfil for starting a business.

The phases of an operational project are:

Phase 1 – *Spreading the idea*

The first phase involves contacting people who are attracted to the Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment approach. Those interested can form a committee or a task force. It is important that all relevant players are involved (persons with disabilities/ relatives, service providers, employers, public sector representatives).

This group of people can start e.g. by collecting and spreading information about Supported Employment. Through this more people can become involved and local, regional and national meetings can be organized.

Phase 2 – *Forming associations*

As a result of the first phase local, regional and national associations or groups for Supported Employment can be established.

These organizations spread information on the developments on Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment through conferences and workshops. The meetings also facilitate the exchange of practical information among persons who were involved in the implementation process.

Phase 3 – *Start-up activities*

The most important phase is starting activities by using the various steps of the Supported Employment model – assessment, job finding, job analysis, matching, job coaching, including systematic training/vocational training and ongoing support, and depending on the focus steps linked to Customized Employment and/or Self Employment.

Supported employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment usually begins on a small scale. It is best to start with one person and make for example Supported Employment a success story for this individual. This success becomes an example for others to follow. Through these small steps Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment can be implemented and extended.

In a developing country with a lack of service provision, Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment services can be started by volunteers. Family and friends can play an integral role, carrying out job finding and other activities to support the person with a disability.

Networks of family and friends can assist in identifying suitable jobs. The town or village can provide a meeting place for the organization. In concrete terms it means the use of all available resources in the local community, including employers.

Phase 4 – ‘Growing’ supported employment

When Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment is growing, there is also a need to look at the organizational structure of the organization itself. As numbers increase and more people with disabilities are successfully working in Supported Employment, Customized Employment and attention must be given to management aspects, administration and the development of the organization and its staff.

Evaluation is needed – of the Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment services and, linked to this, of the training and development needs of those providing these services.

Once the success of Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment is demonstrated, it will generate interest. All players will respond positively when they perceive how they can benefit. Employers will share their experiences with other employers. Parents will talk about their child’s personal growth and development through Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment. People in public administration will spread the word that the policy to promote Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Self Employment is a success. Most importantly, people with disabilities will gain from their independence and from their employment status, and will become powerful advocates.

Basic conditions

This includes the condition that projects can only start when basics are arranged, such as involvement of local and regional people and organization who can carry out the activities with support from the project coordination group. Funding for development of the project is available. This does not mean just sending money to a project. The money is only meant for additional costs. The implementation of supported employment must be arranged within the context of available resources (in kind or in money) of the country/region. Otherwise when the funding is finished the supported employment activities could be finished also.

Training

Training of professionals and others who are working with persons with disabilities is very important. The training is on the different aspects of supported employment and is practical. Existing training methods can be used and adapted to the specific situation on then country or region. It is important that persons from universities and other education sectors are involved, so that they can implement the training in their education programs. The professionals and others who work with persons with disabilities shall receive a training how to train practical skills to persons with a disability.

Research

Involvement of researchers is also very important. At national and regional level reports can be produced about the outcomes of supported employment ca. For decisionmakers these reports are important.

The information of research must also become available for the coalitionpartners. GLADNET can have a specific role through the database and otherwise in coordination in this field.

Costs

For the project are different levels of costs.

1. overall coordination costs
2. project costs
3. training development
4. evaluation/research costs
5. dissemination costs

Overall coordination costs

The Combating Unemployment project must start on an ongoing base.

The work which must be carried out especially for developing countries gives a workload for at least one decade.

Combining resources has the advantage of efficient use of means and knowledge and can prevent to invent the wheel again.

As a taskforce the sub committee annex coordination group can carry out the general tasks.

The costs includes:

- coordination costs (days of coordination work)
 - orientation, preparation and coordination
- travel and lodging expences
- organization costs

Project costs

The project costs include:

- information meetings
- travel and lodging costs
- project preparation
- project advisory
 - helping starting a project
 - helping building a project structure
 - monitoring help
 - feed back
- project support
 - coaching activities: training staff, training persons with a disability

- information to family
- information and help to employers
- organization costs
- dissemination costs

The costs are here mainly the costs of external specialists. It is not the intention to subsidize projects with an amount of money. Starting costs or additional costs for the project can be paid. It is the intention to use existing resources to build the structure and carry out the necessary activities. This is to prevent a situation that when money is no longer available the project stops. Project must be implemented from the beginning.

This means also that in the orientation phase implementation possibilities must be explored and some preparations must be made on beforehand. Commitment by key players must exist.

The duration of a project is for two till three years. The function of the dissemination is to provide successful examples which can be used to start new projects in a country or region, so that a multiplier effect can start.

The focus of the Combating Unemployment project should be from the start on 10 projects worldwide, which must be carried out on different continents.

Training development

Specific attention is needed to design specific training programs for professionals in this work field.

It is favorable to design or adapt the training materials in cooperation with colleges or universities in the country.

The costs of the development of training materials depends on the availability of university people and specialist.

Cost includes:

Design assessment training module
 Job coaching training module
 Supported Employment, Customized
 Employment and Self-Employment module

Evaluation and research costs

The evaluation and research costs for one project are indicated as a maximum of 20% of the total costs of a project with a minimum of \$ 25.000.

Dissemination costs

The dissemination costs are here the costs of the overall dissemination. Part of the campaign is to provide excellent information of the projects, good examples, documents, research reports etc. GLADNET has a key role in this field. Specific provision is needed on the GLADNET website. Indication of total costs for a period of five years \$ 100.000. The other organization can also disseminate information on their websites.

Funding

The Combating Unemployment project need funding from different resources. A funding campaign must be started. And is needed on an ongoing base.

Overall coordination costs:

From subsidy and sponsoring, also a part depending on the type of the subsidy of operational projects from project money.

Project costs

The finances from the operational projects should be financed from existing funding programs from EU and otherwise. Each program have its own regulation. It also means that depending on specific criteria different organization must apply for those programs e.g. EU organization for EU funded programs. There is also often the situation that co-financing is needed.

For the continuation of the project it is also needed to have enough finances available for the projects which might be extended when projects are developing well.

Training development

Cost for the development of training programs can partly be financed from the operational programs depending of the type of the program. There are also specific programs for the design of training programs from Universities. Otherwise subsidy from other sources, including private funds is also an option.

Evaluation/research costs

Cost for evaluation and research can partly be financed from the operational programs depending of the type of the program. There are also specific programs for research activities e.g. from Universities. Otherwise subsidy from other sources, including private funds is also an option.

Dissemination costs

These costs also includes the GLADNET database. A part of the costs can be financed from operational programs depending of the type of the program. Sponsoring is also an option.

Used resources of information

Customized Employment information from the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor

Self-Employment & Supported Self-Employment Handbook, State of Florida, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DOE/DVR), February 6, 2006

Handbook Supported Employment, WASE 2003, Michael Kamp, Christy Lynch