

Good Practices in Economic Empowerment Programmes for Persons with Disabilities



Anita Ahmad

United Nations Development Programme



Empowerment

Empowerment of persons with disabilities refers to giving them a variety of opportunities to discover themselves, understand their environment, be aware of their rights and take control of their lives and partake in important decisions that lead to their destiny.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Why Economic Empowerment

- WHO, UNESCO, ILO (2004) observe that, "there is a strong correlation between disability and poverty. Poverty leads to increased disability and disability, in turn leads to increased poverty. "
- Poverty violates the fundamental human rights of PWDs, depriving them of the basic necessities of life including, health, education, safe water, food, shelter and clothing including means of livelihood.
- Unemployment/lack of access to employment or income generation opportunities for PWDs will lead to the lack of stable income and a dependency on the mercy of family members, well-wishers and charity groups for handouts to sustain their livelihood.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Education and income, women

- Level of education is highly correlated with the level of income among PWDs (UNESCAP, 2009)
- Female PWDs, like other women, are also at a further disadvantage



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Barriers to Economic Empowerment

- Attitudinal and environmental
- Barriers: access to employment, access to credit/financial services, obtaining appropriate work, retaining work, receiving appropriate wages, discriminating attitude, appropriate skills, lack of educational qualification, inaccessible environment and transport systems etc



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

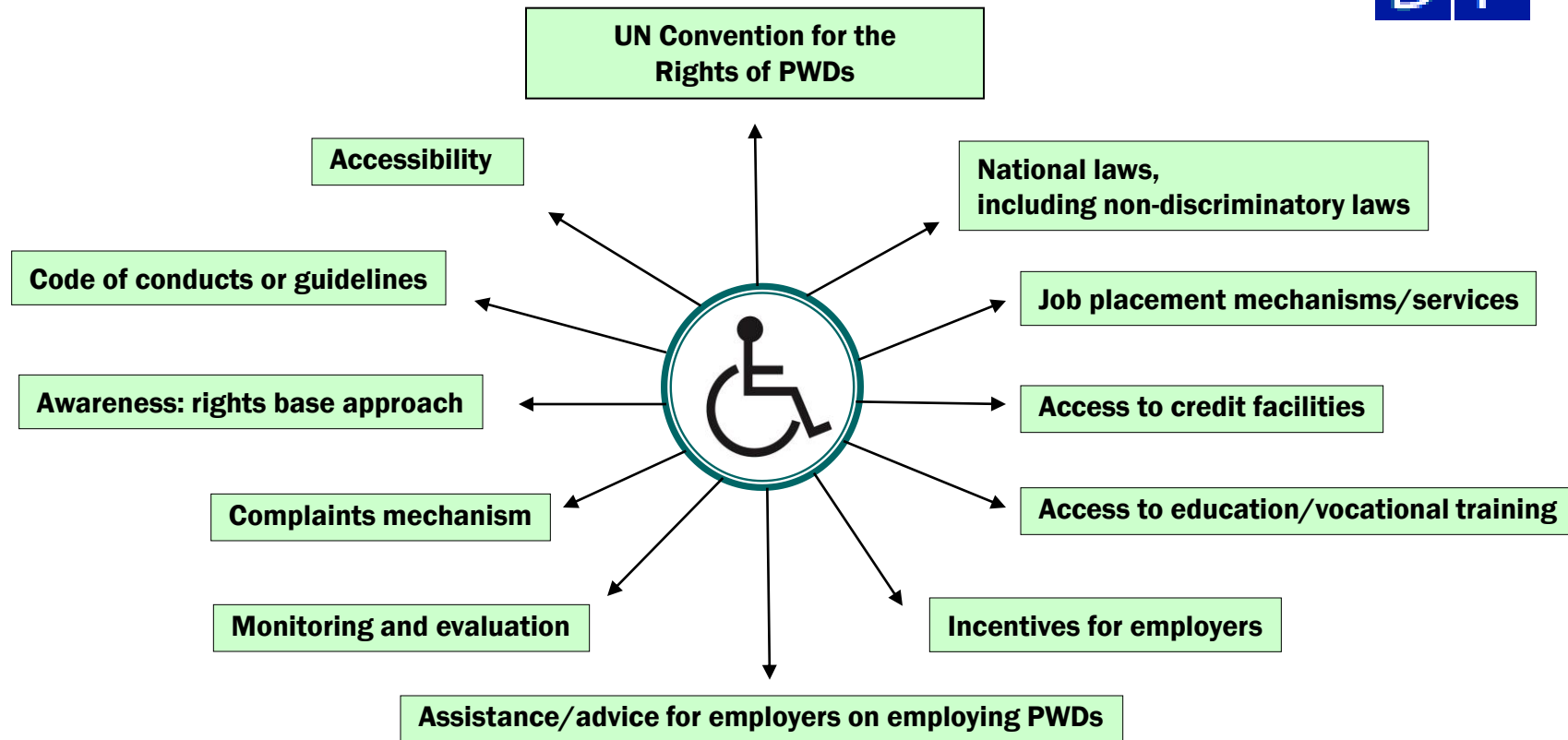
Independent Economic Empowerment

The ability of PWDs to earn a living for themselves, rather than depending on others for a living, is a cornerstone for their economic empowerment.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Enabling environment



Attitudes are the Real Disability

Examples of Codes/Guidelines

- Advertising
- Induction and initial training
- Supervisor and Peer support
- Adjusting work practices/spaces
- Team building and nurturing good working relationships
- Assisted and adjusted appraisal and performance monitoring



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Open/competitive Employment, including Self-Employment



- Broad definition: Jobs in the open labor market that are subject to individual choice and/or suitability
- Generally low due to lack of education and access
- Way forward: mainstream PWDs into training and employment services;
 - increase involvement of employers;
 - improve employment support services; and
 - provide incentives to participate in educational, training and work initiatives.
- Self employment: through co-ops or group business enterprises



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Sheltered Employment

- History: based on the need to provide occupational activities for severely disabled persons who could not compete on equal terms with other workers in the open labor market. Usually needed heavy subsidies from public funds
- Now, emphasis is placed on the production of saleable articles of much wider variety, its operation is carried out on commercial lines, and the employees generally include many categories of persons with disabilities and, sometimes, able-bodied workers as well.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Work/Employment Trial

- Japan: The work/employment trial process is part of a job search and pre-employment process that allows a PWD to undertake a trial employment for a 3 month period of time where a fixed term contract with an employer is signed and the individual's performance is monitored and evaluated during a three month period of time. During the work/employment trial, a job coach is present at the job site to provide direct, specialized support to the person with disability who is undertaking the trial. Purpose: for employers who are hesitant to hire PWDs
- Australia: the work/employment trial model is comprised of three different types of trial arrangements:
 - (a) job sampling – for people who want to sample a job as a learning experience;
 - (b) job training – for people who want a job to develop their skills; and
 - (c) job auditioning – for people who are ready to work at capacity but need an opportunity to demonstrate their ability when the necessary adaptations and supports are in place.



On-the-Job Training

- A training process that takes place in a work environment and involves a well defined structure, procedures and outcomes.
- The critical characteristics of a well-defined on-the-job training (OJT) training program are:
 - learning takes place at the work site;
 - detailed training plans including tasks analyses on how the job is performed guide the training process are developed;
 - an instructor and/or job coach who is knowledgeable on how to perform the job and all of its corresponding tasks guides the training process is present;
 - support materials, i.e., tools, equipment, etc., are available during the training process; and
 - the entire process is integrated and well structured so that trial-and-error with corrective feedback are included. In other words, it is a comprehensive, unified system.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

On-the-Job Training

- Benefits to providing on-the-job training vis-à-vis the successful transition to gainful employment for PWDs:
 - (a) reduced learning time;
 - (b) reduced training costs;
 - (c) acquisition of work-site specific skills;
 - (d) higher learning rate on job specific tasks;
 - (e) heightened new worker job confidence; and
 - (f) the building of positive relationships between new and experienced workers at the work site.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Supported Employment

- Defined as competitive work in an integrated setting for individuals who, because of their disabilities, need on-going support services to perform that work.
- Current focus is on integration, paid employment, individualized services and ongoing support
- Conceived and implemented as a mechanism to provide employment support to persons with severe disabilities.
- Focused on “place-train” rather than a “train-place” model.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Types of Supported Employment

- “Individualized placement”: one person is integrated into the open labor market and is provided with on-going on-site support.
- “Enclave”: comprises a group of individuals with disabilities who are responsible for one “job”. This “job” is sub-divided into tasks and distributed amongst the individual group members (may consist of 3-5 individuals).
- “Mobile work crew”: Also a group or collective entity of persons with disabilities who perform a “job” in different settings many times on different days. Often involved in lawn or grounds maintenance activities where they work at a different site every day.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Features of Supported Employment

- Important feature: emphasis is placed on providing appropriate levels of support.
- Nevertheless, plans for fading support, where possible, should be an integral part of the intervention strategy.
- Different labels such as “job coach, job trainer or co-worker” have been assigned to persons fulfilling this supportive role.
- The role of the “job coach” is that of trainer, advocate and facilitator in providing and coordinating the abovementioned phases of the model.
- The job coach addresses issues at and away from the job site such as transportation, case management, social security, interpersonal relationships, skills training, grooming, lunch and breaks, supervision and career advancement.
- Particularly shown to be successful for “individualized” placements.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

International Experiences with Supported Employment



Studies on the supported employment “Place and Train” Model when compared to other vocational rehabilitation models across six European countries found the following:

- a) supported employment participants were likelier to gain employment;
- b) the total cost of the supported employment model “place and train” was less than traditional “train and place” models; and
- c) individuals who had previous work experience had better job retention rates.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

Components to Supported Employment

- Internationally, the supported employment “model” is comprised of several common components/phases:
 - Assessment – Identification of an individual’s skills and interests; vocational guidance and orientation.
 - Job Development – Marketing; job search and job profiling; and job matching.
 - Job Placement - Make necessary start-up arrangements; introducing the trainee to the work environment and responsibilities.
 - Job Training - Teach the person how to do the job and provision of job coaching responsibilities.
 - Follow-up and Follow-along Services – Provision of on-going support for as long as the worker is employed.
 - Promotion and Service Evaluation – Promoting supported employment initiatives amongst family members, businesses and communities; continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the supported employment model.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

The business case for employing people with learning disabilities

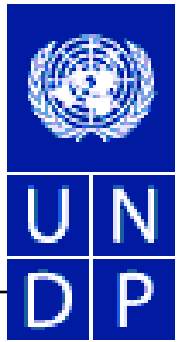


- Research has found that disabled employees generally stay in the job for longer than their non-disabled counterparts. They have a strong commitment to work, as well as good punctuality records and low absentee rates
- Most companies want to be perceived as good employers
- Employers recognise that having a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community they serve is good public relations.



Attitudes
are the Real
Disability

END



Thank you



**Attitudes
are the Real
Disability**