

Submission of inputs from the International Labour Organization (ILO) to Australia's new International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy

- A. What are the most important things we should work on for disability equity and rights?
1. Right to work and labour rights
 2. Gender and social inclusion
 3. Social protection for persons with disabilities
 4. Decent working conditions and employment equity for persons with disabilities.
 5. Policies, strategies, and mechanisms to engage employers, workers, and the government for disability inclusion
 6. Public and private investment/financing (in the form of incentives to employers and social protection)
 7. Supporting employment aspects for persons with disabilities and not only focus on standard pathways but encourage other means as well such as entrepreneurship
 8. Physical and digital accessibility, including accessible infrastructure, transportation, public spaces, and digital platforms to enable full participation of persons with disabilities in society
 9. Education and employment: Promote inclusive education systems that cater to the diverse needs of students with disabilities; advocate for equal employment opportunities, reasonable accommodations, and workplace accessibility to enable persons with disabilities to secure meaningful employment.
 10. Promote equality of treatment and opportunities for persons with disabilities in the labour market.
 11. Address discrimination, stigma, violence and harassment on the basis of disability.
 12. Ensure that communications are inclusive and respectful of persons with disabilities, and are available in accessible formats
 13. Provide incentives for persons with disabilities to enter and stay in the labour market.
 14. Ensure the participation and protection of persons with disabilities in the labour mobility schemes.
 15. Promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the transition to the green economy through, among others, access to required green skills.

B. What are the best ways we can do this?

Investigating and learning from good practices:

ILO Global Business and Disability Network shares the goal of creating a work culture that is welcoming and inclusive of persons with disabilities. Through a recent report, 30 multinational enterprises presented their single best practice regarding disability inclusion, with the aim to inspire and encourage other companies to learn from these practices and to improve the inclusion of persons with disabilities in their specific corporate setting.

1. Social Dialogues, National Dialogues, and Technical Dialogues for : Engage employers' and workers' organizations, chambers, ministries, enterprises, CSOs, and the private sector to raise awareness and discuss disability inclusion in workplaces and in labor market.
2. Partnership Development with the Pacific Disability Forum to develop a disability inclusion strategy for achieving social justice through decent work in the Pacific Regions. The Pacific Disability Forum is strongly working on the human rights, disaster and climate risks elements for disability inclusion. What would be really great and unique for ILO is to help them as a technical agency to formulate and implement strategies/policies focusing on disability inclusion in the labour market, decent work, and employment.
3. Major targeted activities: (Borrowed from the ILO GBDN report 2023 on Disability Inclusion in SMEs) :
 - 3.1 Conduct awareness-raising initiatives on the value and business case of hiring and employing people with disabilities, including through media campaigns.
 - 3.2 Incentivise the employment of persons with disabilities in medium-sized enterprises through specific requirements stipulated by buyers in global supply chains those medium-sized enterprises are already or want to become part of.
 - 3.3 Provide capacity building to SME-relevant employers' associations to enable them to provide disability inclusion guidance to SMEs, including through supporting existing or launching new (National Business and Disability Networks) NBDNs.
4. Collect data, conduct surveys on Disability Inclusion status and assess the needs to formulate evidence based policy and strategy.
5. Awareness and Sensitization: Conduct awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes, reduce stigma, and promote a better understanding of disability rights and issues. Sensitize

communities, government officials, and stakeholders to foster a more inclusive and accepting society.

6. Promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in skills development initiatives with a particular focus on the digital and green economies.

C. How can we support organisations working with people with disabilities to do this work?

1. Ensure that adequate financial and human resources are made available (including topping up existing development cooperation funding for disability strategy development and monitoring and within new funding)
2. Invest in capacity building initiatives.
3. Equip these organisations with the relevant technologies.
4. Promote their involvement in all relevant decision making processes (social protection, employment, just transition, etc)

D. What could stop us from improving disability equity and rights?

1. Lack of understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities and not consulting them on key decisions which affect their lives
2. Limited resources and initiatives that enables inclusion
3. Disability benefits/allowances that are incompatible with wages from formal employment
4. Low expectations in terms of what persons with disabilities can do
5. Paying particular attention to youth with disabilities and women with disabilities who are facing even more challenges

E. What could help us to improve disability equity and rights?

Major goals to promote: (2 of them are adapted from ILO's disability inclusion policy and strategy 2020-23):

1. Persons with disabilities, can fully contribute, on an equal basis with others, to the work of the Organization, and benefit equally from all policies, programs, projects, and operations.

2. Governments, Employers' and Workers' Organizations through tripartite social dialogues, can fully contribute to disability inclusion in promoting a decent work agenda.
3. National Employment Policies, Active Labour Market Policies, Labour Rules, and Laws must contain a human rights-based, gender-responsive approach to disability inclusion to achieve social justice.
4. Social protection coverage for persons with disability and for employees with disability.
5. By having more partnerships with Private Sector to promote Disability inclusions.
6. Legislation and Policy: Advocate for the formulation and implementation of disability-inclusive legislation and policies. This includes laws that protect the rights of persons with disabilities, ensure their access to services and facilities, and promote their active participation in decision-making processes.
7. Providing startup capital for persons with disabilities who prefer to startup small businesses.
8. International Cooperation: Engage with international organizations and networks working on disability rights to share experiences, learn from best practices, and contribute to global efforts towards disability equity and rights.