

WORKABILITY ASIA

Collaborate to create jobs for PwDs



Employment for ALL!

People's Action for Inclusive Development (PAFID) firmly believes in the right to employment for all individuals. They have dedicated years to creating inclusive pathways to employment, particularly for youth with disabilities. A successful collaboration with the National Employment Agency (NEA) has yielded positive results.



On November 10-11, 2023, at the Koh Pich Convention Centre in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, the NEA, along with relevant institutions and agencies, hosted a two-day job fair showcasing over 20,000 job opportunities. More than 180 companies, manufacturing enterprises, banks, public institutions, and training establishments participated, offering employment prospects and insights into skill requirements.

PAFID ran an engaging booth at the fair, focused on connecting employers with job seekers with disabilities. David Curtis, PAFID International Director, stated, "We're working with job seekers from urban and rural areas to develop CVs, improve job interview skills, and prepare cover letters, linking them with employers."

The event saw a dynamic turnout, with numerous companies offering opportunities. PAFID's inclusive employment pathway operates on multiple fronts, including provincial forums, skills-building trainings, and workshops for job seekers.



They also collaborate with employers, providing disability awareness and inclusion training, and have developed a job coach program to bridge the gap between seekers and providers.



PAFID emphasizes the importance of collaboration across various levels, including personal, family, community, and employer engagement, to ensure access to the job market for persons with disabilities. "It's crucial to partner openly with stakeholders, including government counterparts, NGOs, OPDs, employers, and communities," said Virak Kheng, Cambodia Country Director at PAFID.

David Curtis
PAFID International Director

Reasonable Accommodation in Workplace: The Challenge of Amendment and the Experience of Practice in Taiwan

The United Nations' "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" (CRPD) stands as the inaugural human rights convention of the 21st century, explicitly stating that the denial of "reasonable accommodation" constitutes a form of disability-based discrimination.



CRPD International Review Committee experts have urged Taiwan to integrate reasonable accommodation into its laws, as highlighted in the Concluding Observations of the first and second CRPD reports in 2017 and 2022, respectively.

Unfortunately, laws have not been adjusted accordingly, leaving people with disabilities (PwD) without a legal foundation to request employers for reasonable accommodation in the workplace. However, employment service officers strive to facilitate PwD and employers in implementing reasonable accommodation through supportive services in competitive employment.



While the Employment Service Act in Taiwan serves as the primary legal foundation for regulating employers and protecting the right to work and employment, there has been no consensus reached between ministries and disabled people's organizations regarding the imposition of a legal obligation for reasonable accommodation over several years. Instead, the Ministry of Labor tends to compile Guidelines of Reasonable Accommodation.

In practice, over more than 30 years, supportive employment services in Taiwan have nurtured employment service officers as intermediaries between PwD and employers, fostering an awareness of the CRPD. Consequently, the Eden Social Welfare Foundation compiled cases of reasonable accommodation this year, revealing the experiences of employment service officers. Below are summaries of two such cases:

Case 1: Assistive devices and time adjustment A 42-year-old male with schizophrenia, initially placed in a full-time position at an outsourced janitorial company, faced challenges of getting lost in the workplace and lacking prior work experience. Employment service officers supported him in communicating with his employer, who provided clear working steps, along with a



cleaning route map and location markings. Responding to his request for adjusted work hours due to aging and reduced physical endurance, the officers and employer managed to shorten his work hours to half a day.

Case 2: Assistive devices and workflow adjustment An employee with bipolar disorder expressed anxiety about remembering how to package various types of bread for orders from multiple stores, along with a fear of greasiness. Following communication between the employee, the employer, and the employment service officer, they opted for visual cards with names and pictures of the bread and provided disposable gloves daily. They also adjusted his working mode from teamwork to independent work for a specific store.

Reasonable accommodation extends to adjustments in working hours, processes, and methods, as illustrated by the cases above. With the support of employment service officers, negotiations between PwD and employers can effectively facilitate reasonable accommodation without causing an excessive burden on the employers. However, without a legal obligation, not all employers are willing to shoulder such a duty.

Ultimately, the government, wielding legislative power, should prioritize imposing a legal obligation for reasonable accommodation to make the rights real.

Feng-Cheng KUO; Emity Kuan-Ju LIN,
**Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Center of CRPD Practice
and Research**

Going around the world: Incluzza Circle

Incluzza Circle, an initiative by the social enterprise arm of EnAble India- Incluzza, is a collaborative networking platform, aims to simplify and promote disability inclusion in the workplace. While existing platforms convene discussions, Incluzza Circle focuses on concrete actions, bridging the gap between intent and execution. It complements existing efforts by finding solution-oriented approaches to common challenges such as talent pipelines and career progression for persons with disabilities.

The inaugural meeting, held in December 2023, gathered influencers, corporate industry leaders, decision makers from diverse companies, organizations and entities, emphasizing equal participation both in-person and online. Engaging activities helped form meaningful connections and understanding among attendees. New leaders joined from global companies, enhancing the Circle's reach and impact. We are working on multiple themes including skilling, creating equal opportunities, focusing on accessible infra and systems, building more includable leaders.

Discussion points are centered on establishing foundational pillars, building a structured approach with a focus on collaboration, competency building, and creating a level playing field for persons with disabilities.

With each meeting, the Inluzza Circle strengthens its commitment to driving meaningful change, fostering inclusive work environments for all. For more information, visit www.inluzza.org or contact services@inluzza.org. Let's advance disability inclusion together!



From the Secretariat Team

Plan for the Next Conference: The Board discussed hosting the Workability Asia conference in Bangladesh in October 2024. Concerns and logistics were deliberated, with plans for a mini-event preceding the conference.

Action points from the last Board Meeting:

- Conduct a feasibility study on setting up a Workability Asia office.
- Explore outsourcing secretarial services, possibly to a provider in Singapore.
- Hold further discussions on proposed solutions and action steps.
- Seek legal advice on organizational structure and tax implications.
- Coordinate with Workability International regarding conference hosting. The conference could be held in India or Bangladesh. This was not concluded. One of the options was to hold a mini conference in July/ Aug only if the Conference happens in Bangladesh in October. No conclusions were reached.
- Schedule a mini-conference for July or August.
- Arrange dates for the next Board meeting in April.

Get featured in the next newsletter!

Workability Asia Newsletter would like to invite you to :

- Share your relevant information, knowledge, or experiences with WorkAbility Asia members and our network.
- Send your articles (1-2 pages) with some photos.
- Send your stories to WorkAbility Asia Secretariat Team at secretarygeneral@workabilityasia.org to be part of the next newsletter
- **The deadline for the next submission date is June 25th 2024.**