



International
Labour
Organization

ILO Global Business & Disability Network

Many persons with disabilities - an estimated 785 million persons of working age worldwide - suffer from discrimination. They remain excluded from employment due to a lack of awareness on disability issues, social stigma, inaccessible environments, and insufficient or ineffective laws and policies.

Concurrently, multinational companies and employers of all kinds are seeking to attract the most talented and reliable employees in order to make their businesses competitive. People with disabilities make-up an estimated 15 per cent of the world's population and thus comprise a vast and often untapped talent pool. Indeed, many employers are increasingly voicing the benefits of being disability inclusive.

Within this context, many companies are facing challenges in employing and retaining persons with disabilities. They are confronted with complying with related laws, making their workplaces accessible, and raising awareness among staff in order to collectively create a disability inclusive environment. Many could benefit from the knowledge and best practices other companies and the ILO.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Partners:

Multinational enterprises, employers' organizations and global and regional disabled people's organizations – full list is available on the website linked below

Beneficiary Countries:

Global

Timeframe:

2010 - present

THE RESPONSE

The ILO Global Business and Disability Network was established in 2010 and is comprised of: 39 multinational enterprises employing well in excess of 2 million workers; 19 employers organizations and networks representing over 470,000 members; and, 11 disabled persons' organizations and networks. It was formed to assist companies to manage disability in the workplaces and implement their strategic business plans on disability inclusion; to promote good practices in the wider business community through business-to-business knowledge sharing; and, to develop products and services that respond to expressed demands from the Network members. It is the only global business network focusing on the promotion of disability inclusion at the workplace.

The Network addresses disability as a diversity issue from a global, private-sector perspective. These issues are raised through knowledge sharing, joint action, improving technical skills of members and their networks or staff, and

through corporate social responsibility activities, as well as through assisting companies to adapt products and services to the needs of people with disabilities.

The network wishes to foster the development of a workforce culture that is respectful and inclusive; promoting the hiring, retention and professional development of people with disabilities. With this ambition in mind the Network drives strategic business awareness about the positive relationship between the inclusion of people with disabilities and business success.

Partnerships and Field Support Department (PARDEV)

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"My job gives me structure and purpose in my day to day life"

"Joining the Network presents a unique opportunity for us to exchange knowledge and become a disability inclusive employer"

- *Frédérique Poggi, Director of Diversity, Accor Hotels, France*



RESULTS

The Network's key achievements to-date are:

- The facilitation of knowledge and tools exchange between Network members, the ILO, and the most representative disability network organization (International Disability Alliance). This has taken place through a combination of regional and national face to face meetings to promote the business case, peer to peer support among Network members, and webinars. Examples of tools include country information profiles on disability related issues;
- Building capacity of national employers' organizations and business networks on disability inclusion. The Network supports the establishment and development of national employer-led initiatives on business and disability in order to facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge among national employers, and contribute to addressing the barriers that employers find when recruiting persons with disabilities. So far, the Network has provided technical support for the establishment and development of national business networks on disability in Brazil, Sri Lanka and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia;
- The effective communication and dissemination of the successes and achievements of the Network and its members to a broad and relevant audience. This has been achieved in multiple forums and through a range of media and communication material, including the Network website, working papers, newsletters, public Network activities at the global, regional, and national level, and seminars;
- The provision of support to businesses to internally benchmark the alignment of branches and subsidiaries with company disability inclusive initiatives. A self-assessment tool was developed by the Network.

For further information please visit our web page:

www.businessanddisability.org

BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

Opportunities to exchange knowledge with other Network members on how to be more disability inclusive in an effective and sustainable manner.

Presence on a globally renowned stage from which to communicate achievements on disability inclusion to a wide audience.

Tools and technical advice with regard to internally benchmarking and harmonizing disability-inclusive initiatives throughout company branches and subsidiaries.

Possibilities to propose and be involved in the Network's product development and other activities.

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