

Decent Work for People with Disabilities

Inclusion of People with Disabilities in the United Republic of Tanzania



International Labour Organization



FACT SHEET

Women and men with disabilities can and want to be productive members of society. In both developed and developing countries, promoting more inclusive societies and employment opportunities for people with disabilities requires improved access to basic education, vocational training relevant to labour market needs and jobs suited to their skills, interests and abilities, with adaptations as needed. Many societies are also recognizing the need to dismantle other barriers - making the physical environment more accessible, providing information in a variety of formats, and challenging attitudes and mistaken assumptions about people with disabilities.

Current Situation

More than three million women and men in Tanzania, or approximately 9 per cent of the population, have a disability.¹

People with disabilities are among the most vulnerable groups in society. They are often undereducated, untrained, often unemployed or underemployed and poor – especially women, youth and those living in rural areas.

In Tanzania, the disability movement is quite well-established. Different disabled persons' organizations and the umbrella organization regularly take part in discussions with the government on issues affecting the lives of people with disabilities.

Governmental support for people with disabilities

Tanzania has adopted and implemented a number of laws, policies and standards pertaining to people with disabilities, including their right to productive and decent work, vocational training and basic services. The 1977 Constitution and its amendments prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities. The main laws, policies, standards and initiatives are listed below.

¹ 2009 National Bureau of Statistics.

Tanzania Mainland:

- **Vocational Education and Training Act 1994 (No. 1)**, provides a legal framework for the implementation of a flexible vocational education and training system that responds to the labour market.
- **Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1982 (No. 2)**. Establishes a quota system which stipulates that 2 per cent of the workforce in companies with over 50 employees must be persons with disabilities. Also establishes the National Advisory Council which advises the minister responsible for social welfare of disabled persons.
- **Disabled Persons (Employment) Regulations 1985**, defines the eligibility and registration requirements for disabled persons under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1982.
- **Disabled Persons (Care and Maintenance) Act 1982 (No. 3)**, provides and designates responsibilities of caring for disabled persons to families, relatives, local government, central government and non-governmental organizations. Also establishes a National Fund for Disabled Persons.
- **National Policy on Disability 2004**, aims at providing a conducive environment for people with disabilities to engage in productive work for their development and the utilization of available resources for improved service delivery.
- **National Employment Promotion Service Act 1999 (No. 9)**, provides or makes arrangements for the registration, employment, counselling, vocational rehabilitation and placement of persons with disabilities.
- **Employment and Labour Relations Act, 2004 (No. 6)**, forbids direct and indirect discrimination in any employment policy, including discrimination based on disability.
- **National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA), 2005 to 2010**, which recognizes disability as a cause of poverty.

Zanzibar:

- **Disability Policy (2004)**, views disability as a human rights issue.
- **Zanzibar Labour Act 1997 (No. 3)**, lays down fundamental rights concerning the employment of people with disabilities.
- **Labour Relations Act 2005 (No. 1)**, bars discrimination based on disability in the context of Trades Unions' constitution or activities.
- **The Persons with Disabilities (Rights and Privileges) Act No. 9, 2006.**
- **Workmen's Compensation Act 1986 (No. 15).**
- **The Zanzibar Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUZA), 2006-2010.**
- **The Zanzibar Education Policy** and its **Education Development Program**, finalized in late 2007, focuses on improving access to education for children with disabilities.
- **Zanzibar Vision 2020** envisions, among other aims, equal opportunities for orphans, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups in every aspect of social, economic and cultural life.

Key ministries and agencies responsible for people with disabilities

Tanzania Mainland

The Ministries of Education, Justice, and Labour are responsible for enforcing the protection of rights of persons with disabilities for education, legal claims, and labour rights, respectively. The Department of Social Welfare has responsibility for coordinating disabilities matters.

- The Ministry of Labour and Youth Development and Sports.
- The Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) is the Government's official agency tasked with providing and promoting vocational education and training.

Zanzibar

Since 2004, the Prime Minister's Office is responsible for matters on disability, with every ministry to include disability considerations in their policies, programmes and services.

Organizations of and for people with disabilities

There are a number of organizations of and for people with disabilities in Tanzania. At the federal level, Shivyawata is an umbrella organization of six disabled persons' organizations (DPOs). Other significant organizations in Dar es Salaam are the Disabled Organization for Legal Affairs and Social Economic Development (DOLASED) and the Information Centre on Disability (ICD). In Zanzibar, the Association of Disabled Persons (UWZ) represents persons with all types of disabilities and has played a central role in shaping policy and legislation, including the Persons with Disabilities (Rights and Privileges) Act 2006. Also in Zanzibar is the recently established Zanzibar Center for Disability and Inclusive Development (ZACDID), which works to bring together people with expertise in disability and development and to improve the lives of children, youth and adults with disabilities.

Key international standards and their status

- International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, 1958, (No. 111). *Status: ratified, 26 February 2002.*
- ILO Convention concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons), 1983, (No. 159). *Status: not ratified.*
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and Optional Protocol. *Status: Tanzania became a signatory to the Convention on 30 March 2007 and is soon expected to ratify it. Optional Protocol signed on 29 September 2008.*

Tanzania works to implement the Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities. It also follows the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

The role of the ILO

The primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for everyone, including people with disabilities, to obtain decent and productive work, based on the principles of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. The ILO works to achieve its goals of decent work for all through promoting labour standards, advocacy, knowledge building and technical cooperation services and partnerships, both within the ILO and externally. The Tanzania Decent Work Country Programme establishes the framework for delivery of ILO action.

In Tanzania, current ILO technical cooperation projects on disability are:
the Project “Promoting the Employability and Employment of People with Disabilities through Effective Legislation” (PEPDEL). Earlier phases of PEPDEL included the compilation of a country report on legislation, policy and implementation mechanisms on the training and employment of persons with disabilities to build a knowledge base on people with disabilities; identification of priority and needs in consultation with government, representatives of workers’ and employers’ groups and disabled persons’ organizations; support to the development and enactment of the Persons with Disabilities (Rights and Privileges) Act in Zanzibar, and the development of the Bill on Persons with Disabilities in Tanzania Mainland; and, pilot testing of a training curriculum on disability legislation and policies with the aim of incorporating aspects of the curriculum into existing university courses.

the Project “Promoting Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities through a Disability Inclusion Support Service” (INCLUDE). This project aims to build capacity at regional and national levels to effectively support the full participation of persons with disabilities in mainstream programmes and services focussing on vocational training, entrepreneurship development, employment, and micro-finance. INCLUDE also involves advocacy and awareness-raising activities to promote decent work for persons with disabilities.

The way forward

Productive and decent work enables people with disabilities to realize their aspirations, improve their living conditions and participate more actively in society.

Ensuring a disability perspective in all aspects of policy and labour legislation, effective implementation and enforcement of existing disability laws and policies and providing for equal employment opportunities and training are among the factors that contribute to the reduction of poverty and to the social and economic inclusion of people with disabilities in Tanzania.

Further information:

Pia Korpinen
Regional Technical Officer on Disability
ILO/Irish Aid Partnership Programme
PEPDEL and INCLUDE Projects Ethiopia
korpinen@ilo.org; disability@ilo.org

