



Disability inclusion in Public Employment Services in Asia-Pacific

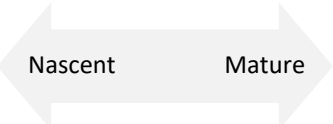
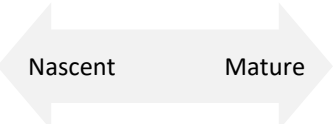
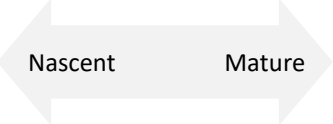
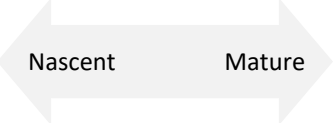
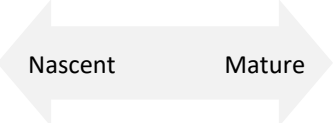
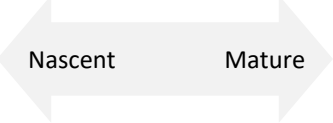
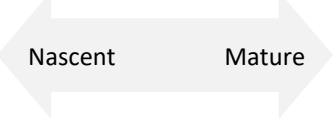
Current practices and way forward

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What are disability-inclusive practices in Public Employment Services?

<i>Dimension of disability-inclusion</i>		<i>Key question of interest</i>	<i>Level of maturity</i>
	PES Strategy & Governance	Does the PES have a policy/strategy that commits to the inclusion of persons with disabilities ?	
	Internal structures and policies (for PES staff)	Does the PES have an inclusive recruitment policy and hiring practices, and does the PES implement measures to support staff with disabilities?	
	Accessibility	Are the premises, information and services provided by the PES accessible to job seekers with disabilities?	
	Employment services	Does the PES have specialized offices/units/staff dealing with job seekers with disabilities?	
	Active Labour Market Programmes	Do persons with disabilities have access and to what extent are existing programs adapted to the specific needs of persons with disabilities?	
	Service delivery	Are there targeted outreach initiatives for persons with disabilities and does the PES collaborate with other stakeholders to provide services?	
	Monitoring, Evaluation and Results	How does the PES collect information on disability status and is there any evidence on positive employment outcomes for persons with disabilities?	

Goals and methodology



How do Public Employment Services (PES) in different Asia-Pacific countries provide support to persons with disabilities?



Three focus countries

Case studies on China, Viet Nam, and Philippines



Short (self-administered) survey with PES

Following the 7 dimensions of disability-inclusion



Overview of existing PES practices related to disability-inclusion



Key informant interviews (10)

with representatives of Ministry, PES, and civil society



Enrich and triangulate findings, and identify concrete challenges and promising practices



Desk review



Collect additional background information (e.g., legal framework, policy context, PES structure)

Key finding 1: Disability inclusion depends on the general maturity of Public Employment Services and the broader institutional setup

Public Employment Service' functions and services vary across countries in the Asia Pacific region

- Different mandates in terms of employment services, administration of unemployment benefits, etc.
- Some PES rely on narrow set of job matching activities

Significant in-country differences of PES

- Stronger employment services in economic hubs
- Weaker structures outside the main cities (e.g., lack of counselors, “empty” job portals, etc.)



Where PES struggle with basic functions, their ability to serve hard-to-employ groups, including persons with disabilities, is more limited

High level of decentralization of PES in the region

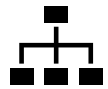
- Managed and funded at the provincial/local level, potential lack of national standards
- Disability-inclusion dependent on the political will of regional or local leaders
- Regional differences in level of coordination
 - ✓ **China:** Provincial government translates national policies and action plans on disability into concrete guiding principles for the PES
 - ✓ **Philippines:** National legal framework exists (the Institutionalization Act), and the Department of Labour and Employment seeks to ensure coordination
 - ✓ **Viet Nam:** Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs seeks to play a guiding function to local PES



Disability inclusion depends on the extent of “centralized” support

Key findings 2: There are many promising practices across the region

Examples



Internal structures and policies (for PES staff)



- Accommodations for staff with disabilities (e.g., workstation, flexible hours),
- A mentor for staff with hearing impairments,
- Diversity and inclusion officer to better accommodate employees with diverse backgrounds
- Temporary (4-month) employment opportunities for jobseekers with disabilities



Accessibility



- Provides services on the ground floor, accessible parking, and sign language interpretation on demand
- Home services as well as digital services through the WeChat instant messenger to address mobility restrictions



Employment services



- Resident psychologist and one specialized case worker for persons with disabilities in branch offices
- Trained caseworkers who specialize in working with persons with disabilities to facilitate the matchmaking between clients with disabilities and employers
- Some materials available in adapted formats such as accessible PDFs and easy language



Service delivery



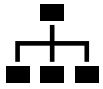
- Job fairs for persons with disabilities organized jointly with OPDs
- PES offices collaborate with the China Disabled Person's Federation and other OPDs and NGOs to make services more accessible
- PES gives funding to selected OPDs/NGOs to provide services to jobseekers with disabilities, including specialized counselling, vocational assessment and training

Key findings 3: However, many efforts remain ad-hoc and are not yet systematic



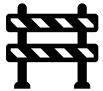
PES Strategy & Governance

- Concrete objectives, indicators and targets for strengthening the employment of persons with disability often do not exist (due to the decentralized nature of many PES)



Internal structures and policies (for PES staff)

- While PES may follow/exceed hiring quotas (where they exist), the lack of an internal inclusive recruitment policies and hiring practices can lead to “artificial hiring” and jeopardize the recruitment of staff on an equal basis



Accessibility

- Accessibility assessments tend to not be carried out systematically
- Efforts to improve accessibility tend to focus more on physical access to premises, with less emphasis on making services more accessible



Employment services

- Personalized services and specialized caseworkers not widely available across PES offices
- Development of accessible information materials is challenging for local PES offices



Active Labour Market Programmes

- Adaptations of programs are often limited to eligibility criteria rather than in terms of design and delivery
- Focus on jobseekers, with limited assistance and incentives for employers to facilitate the hiring of PWD
- Typical lack of post-hiring assistance to workers and employers



Service delivery

- PES not always proactive about collaborations with external partners (burden to reach out lies with OPDs)
- Funding to OPDs/NGOs to deliver services for persons with disabilities on behalf of PES still the exception



Monitoring, Evaluation and Results

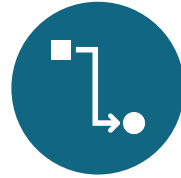
- Typically, only basic information collected on disability status (does not reflect specific impairments, incl. less visible ones)
- Limited analysis to understand differences in participation and employment outcomes of PWD

Implications for strengthening disability-inclusive practices in the Asia Pacific region



Prioritization of key practices

- **Self-assessment of disability-inclusion** (identify gaps and maturity across different dimensions; entry points for improvement)
- **Channel limited resources** (time and financial) into a few selected improvements (not all at once)
 - Low-hanging fruits (feasible, not too complex to implement)
 - Biggest “return” (e.g. strengthen partnerships with OPDs/NGOs)



Sequencing of PES assistance

- **Disability-inclusive practices require strong foundation** of quality core employment service functions
- **Building overall PES capacity is prerequisite** for effective and sustainable specialized services
- **Support on disability inclusion must often be embedded** in larger package of support to PES
- **Pursue incremental improvements** of disability inclusion (not copy “best practice” of high-capacity PES)



Multipronged approach

- **Central level:** Strengthen the provision of general standards, guidelines, and tools that are made available to local PES
- **Provincial/local level:** Engage selected PES where political will is strong; create local champions; foster peer learning and exchange
- **Ecosystem of non-public providers:** Strengthen OPDs/NGOs’ inst. capacity and ability to provide employment services to develop more and better partners for PES

Key takeaways

- ▶ **Disability-inclusion requires a wide range of practices across PES functions and services, which cannot be taken for granted**
Just focusing on one dimension (e.g., strategy, accessibility) is not enough. It takes time to build the necessary systems and structures.
- ▶ **Recognize existing capacity and resources of many (local) PES in the region**
Serving persons with disabilities requires additional efforts and resources. We need to be realistic about what (local) PES (who may already struggle serving other jobseekers) can effectively and sustainably deliver.
- ▶ **Need to find pragmatic and “easy to implement” strategies and tools to foster disability-inclusion**
For example, strengthening partnerships with OPDs/NGOs can help strengthen multiple dimensions of disability inclusion, without having to build all the capacity “in-house”