



Organization

## THE GLOBAL BUSINESS AND 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.

At the same time, 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 account for 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”.

However, many companies face challenges when they try to employ and retain persons with disabilities. They are obliged to comply with relevant legislation, make their workplaces accessible, and raise awareness among staff in order to create a disability-inclusive environment. Many could benefit from the knowledge and best practices of other companies and the ILO.

### FACTS AND FIGURES

**Partners:**

Multinational enterprises, employers’ organizations and global and regional disabled people’s organizations – The full list is available at the the website link below

**Beneficiary countries:**  
Global

**Timeframe:**  
2010 – present

**Budget:**  
USD 289,000

### THE RESPONSE

**The ILO Global Business and Disability Network** was established in 2010. It is comprised of 15 multinational enterprises, as well as more than 20 employers’ organizations and national business and disability networks.

It was formed to help companies manage disability at their workplace; implement their strategic business plans on disability inclusion; promote good practices in the wider business community through business-to-business knowledge sharing; and develop products and services that respond to specific 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. This and various other issues are raised through knowledge sharing, joint action, measures to improve the technical skills of members and their networks or staff, and through corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities. It also helps companies to adapt products and services to the needs of people with disabilities.

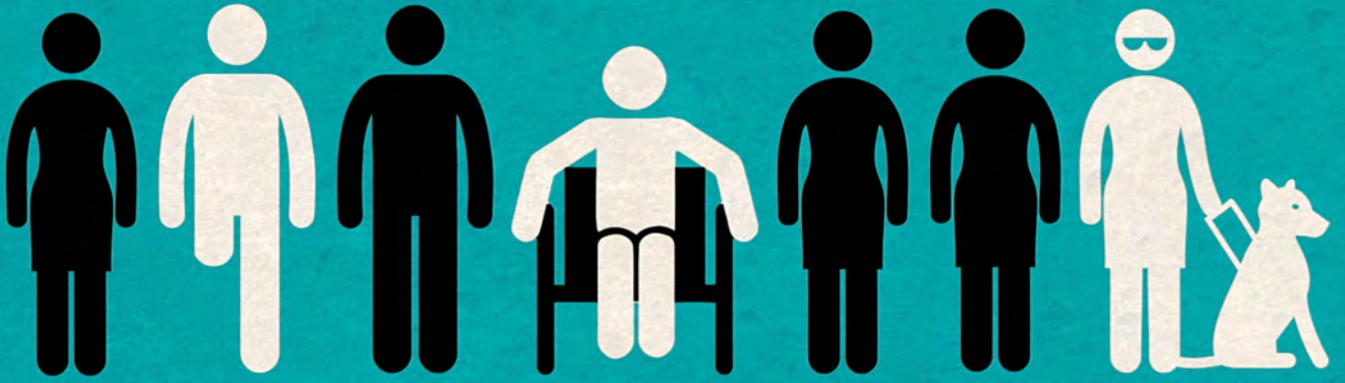
The Network wishes to foster the development of a workforce culture that is respectful and inclusive – and to promote the hiring, retention and professional development of people with disabilities. With this objective in mind, the Network drives strategic business awareness about the positive relationship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

### RESULTS

The Network’s key achievements to-date have been to:

- Facilitate the exchange of knowledge and tools between Network members, the ILO, and the most representative disability network organization – International Disability

Alliance (IDA). This has been achieved through a combination of regional and national 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;



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

*People with disabilities have something else, another look at what we are able to do within companies. People with disabilities bring creativity, ideas, experience and humility. We are really keen on that.*

Bruce Roch,  
Corporate Social  
Responsibility &  
Solidarity Manager,  
Adecco France Group



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- Support 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 help employers overcome the obstacles they face 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, China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia Sri Lanka, Peru and Zambia;

- Communicate and disseminate effectively 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 communications material – including the Network website, working papers, newsletters, public Network activities at the global, regional, and national level, and seminars;

- Provide support to businesses to benchmark internally the alignment of branches and subsidiaries with company disability-inclusive initiatives. The Network has also developed a self-assessment tool.

- Introduce the concept of disability-equality training (developed by the ILO) among employers and Network member companies in Bangalore in 2014. Thanks to this good experience, the Network further conducted this training for employers in China, Egypt and Indonesia in 2015.

- Request the ILO to develop a Business Charter on disability inclusion, with ten principles covering a wide range of areas – from protecting staff with disabilities from any kind of discrimination to making the company premises and communication to staff progressively accessible to all employees with disabilities.

For further information please visit our website: [www.businessanddisability.org](http://www.businessanddisability.org)

**BENEFITS OF PARTNERING**

Opportunities to exchange knowledge with other Network members on ways to become 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.