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**STRATEGIES FOR SKILLS ACQUISITION AND WORK
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

SYNTHESIS REPORT

MALAWI, SOUTH AFRICA AND ZAMBIA

February 2007

Prepared by the ILO Skills and Employability Department
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ABBREVIATIONS

CBR	Community-Based Rehabilitation
CRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Central Statistical Office (Zambia)
DEAFSA	Deaf Federation of South Africa
DPO	Disabled Persons' Organization
DPSA	Disabled People South Africa
ECAM	Employers' Confederation of Malawi
FEDOMA	The Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi
GPD	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
INDS	Integrated National Disability Strategy
LDCs	Least-Developed Countries
MACOHA	Malawi Council for the Handicapped
MAPD	Malawi Against Physical Disabilities
MOLVT	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training
MSDPWD	Ministry for Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (Malawi)
MSME	Micro- Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
NQF	National Qualification Framework
NVRC	National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre
OSDP	Office on the Status of Disabled Persons
PHOS	Platform for Disability and Development Cooperation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction and Strategy Paper
SDF	Skills Development Facilitators
SETA	Sectoral Educational and Training Authority
TEVET	Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training
TEVETA	Technical Education Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority
TMDTDP	Thabo Mbeki Development Trust for Disabled People
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
ZAFOD	Zambia Federation of the Disabled
ZAPD	Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities



Introduction

When persons with disabilities have access to training in skills which are relevant to the labour market, and suited to their abilities and interests, they can make a significant contribution in the workplace and to the living standards of their households, the community and wider society. This is increasingly recognized as opportunities have opened up, in recent decades, both in training centres and in the open labour market. Yet in many countries, the potential of many persons with disabilities remains untapped, as they frequently do not have equal access to training in employable skills, relevant to the labour market in which they seek to work, either in formal employment, in self-employment or small businesses in the informal economy.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) seeks to promote equal opportunities in training and employment for people with disabilities through its international labour standards, in particular the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159), and the Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace. It works to achieve this through its research on good practice, through advocacy work regionally and nationally, and through technical cooperation projects.

This synthesis report arises from a technical cooperation project carried out in Malawi, South Africa and Zambia, 2004-06. This project aimed to carry out an exploratory assessment of skills acquisition strategies introduced in the participating countries through technical cooperation in recent decades, with a view to identifying effective strategies, and promoting effective training policies and programmes for disabled persons. The report starts with a brief overview of the countries' socio-economic situation (Section 1) and their disability-related legislative and policy framework (Section 2). It then describes the approach taken in carrying out the studies in each country and presents the main findings of the surveys and case studies of people with disabilities who had different experiences of skills training and employment (Section 3). Following this, it summarizes the recommendations made following discussion of these study findings at tripartite-plus workshops in each of the countries in 2006 (Section 4) and steps planned to improve the training and employment opportunities for disabled people in the participating countries, arising from the studies and the consultative workshop.

The report draws on, but by no means seeks to replace, the national study reports and workshop reports which should be referred to for more detail (see Annex 1). Together with the national study reports, country profiles and the workshop reports, it will hopefully contribute to the effective implementation of legislation and policy concerning persons with disabilities in the three participating countries, and more broadly, as a contribution to the achievement of the targets set in the Plan of Action of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities. It can assist in continuing work to implement ILO Convention No. 159 in Malawi and Zambia, and in setting the scene in all three countries - Malawi, South Africa and Zambia - for the future implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), formally adopted in December 2006, if the Governments of Malawi, South Africa and Zambia decide to ratify this Convention.

1. Background

1.1 Population of people with disabilities

Malawi

In 1983, there were 190,000 people with disabilities in Malawi, comprising 2.9 per cent of the population, the majority living in rural areas.¹ There is some indication that the 1983 figure underestimated the actual incidence of disability, due to the overlooking of certain disability types such as heart and respiratory diseases, blood disorders, disabilities caused by drug or alcohol abuse and some forms of mental disorder. If the World Health Organization (WHO)'s disability prevalence estimate of 7 to 10 per cent were applied, the number of disabled people in Malawi would be far higher; at between 695,000 and 1 million persons in 2004.

South Africa

About 5 per cent of the population (2,255,982 persons) declared they had a disability in the 2001 census. This contrasts with the estimate of between 3.1 and 4.5 million, obtained by applying the WHO disability prevalence estimate 7 to 10 per cent of the population.

Zambia

There were 282,684 persons with disabilities in Zambia, comprising 2.9 per cent of the population according to the 2000 census.² This figure is significantly lower than the WHO disability prevalence estimate of 7 to 10 per cent, according to which the population of disabled persons lies between 690,000 and 1 million.

1.2 Social and economic context

The countries included in the study – Malawi, South Africa and Zambia – are at different levels of social and economic development as reflected in the key indicators of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI):

- life expectancy at birth;
- gross enrolment ratio (combined for primary, secondary and tertiary education);
- per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP); and
- adult literacy rate.

¹ Danish Organization of Disabled People: "Survey of National Statistical Office of Malawi (NSO), 1983," cited in *Malawi Country Strategy, 2003*.

² Zambia Federation of the Disabled (ZAFOD): *National Plan of Action on Disability in Zambia, 2003*.

1.2.1 Living standards

According to the HDI developed by the UNDP to measure and monitor living standards, two of the countries in this study (Malawi and Zambia) were among the world's 50 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in 2004, while the third - South Africa - was ranked as a country with a medium level of human development (see Table 1.1).³

1.2.2 Gross enrolment ratio

The gross enrolment ratio (combined for primary, secondary and tertiary education) was over 70 per cent in Malawi and South Africa, and at 45 per cent in Zambia (see Table 1.1). There was relatively little variation between the enrolment rates of females and males in any of the countries: in Malawi, the rate was 77 per cent among boys and 71 per cent among girls; in South Africa, it was 78 per cent among boys and 77 per cent among girls; and in Zambia, the rates were 47 per cent among boys and 43 per cent among girls.

1.2.3 Literacy rate

The countries varied in terms of the literacy rates in the adult population in 2002, which ranged from 61.8 per cent in Malawi to 86 per cent in South Africa. Considerable variation in the literacy rates of women and men was noted, with the rates for women (48.7 per cent) being significantly lower than that of men in Malawi (75.5 per cent) and somewhat lower in Zambia (73.8 per cent of adult women were literate compared to 86.3 per cent of adult men). In South Africa, the literacy rates of men and women are approximately equal (85.3 per cent among women, compared to 86.7 per cent among men).

1.2.4 Life expectancy

Table 1.3 shows that the lowest life expectancy among the participating countries was in Zambia, where a person could expect to live, on average, for almost 33 years, followed by Malawi with an average life expectancy of almost 38 years. In South Africa, in contrast, the average life expectancy was almost 49 years.

1.2.5 Annual average income

As would be expected from their HDI index ranking, the countries studied ranged very significantly in terms of annual GDP per head of the population in 2002, from US\$580 in Malawi to US\$10,070 in South Africa.

³ UNDP: *Human development report 2004* (Washington, 2004).

Table 1.1: Overall HDI ranking and key indicators

	Malawi	South Africa	Zambia
Living standard (HDI ranked position of 177 countries), 2004	165	119	164
Life expectancy (years), 2002	37.8	48.8	32.4 ⁴
Gross enrolment ratio, 2001/2002 (%)	74	77	45
Annual average income (US\$), 2002	580	10,070	840
Literacy rate, 2002 (%)	61.8	86	80

1.2.6 Income poverty

Malawi

The Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) states that nearly two-thirds of the population is living in poverty.⁵ Nine in ten (91 per cent) of the poor live in rural areas, and the southern region is more affected by poverty than the other two regions of the country.⁶ The situation is made worse by the fact that 25 per cent of the households in Malawi are headed by women, who have had less access to education and training in marketable skills and are thus more disadvantaged when it comes to earning a living.

South Africa

Income poverty in South Africa is much lower than in other sub-Saharan African countries. Seven per cent of the population live under \$1 per day, while 23 per cent live under \$2 per day.⁷

Zambia

Income poverty is extremely high and has increased over the past 15 years. Over 63 per cent of the population live with less than \$1 per day, while 87 per cent live with

⁴ Other sources estimate life expectancy to be higher. For example, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) estimates it at 40.5 years (cf. <http://www.unfpa.org/profile/zambia.cfm>). In all cases, figures are almost equal for men and women.

⁵ *ibid.*: the *Malawi PRSP* (2002) quotes a household survey conducted by the Government, p. 5. UNDP figures (GDP and income poverty) are calculated in purchasing-power parity (PPP).

⁶ *Malawi PRSP*, op. cit., p. 6.

⁷ UNDP: *Human development report 2004*, op. cit.. UNDP uses purchasing-power parity (PPP) USD to calculate income poverty.

less than \$2 per day.⁸ Extreme poverty is largely a rural phenomenon, with high levels of poverty in particular in the Northern, North Western, Eastern and Luapula provinces. The majority of rural households depend on consumption of own produce.⁹ Persons with disabilities are considered to be among the poorest groups in society, according to the Zambia PRSP.

1.2.7 Employment and unemployment

Malawi

Formal employment possibilities are limited in Malawi. Of 300,000 students leaving school every year, mainly during or after primary school, only 30,000 (10 per cent) find employment in the formal economy.¹⁰ A recent study of living conditions of disabled persons in Malawi¹¹ reports the unemployment rate among persons in the economically active age of 15-65 years as 54 per cent. The unemployment rate appears to be slightly higher among people with disabilities as compared to those without disabilities (57.7 per cent versus 53.2 per cent).

In 2002, Malawi had an estimated 747,363 micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) generally (91 per cent) employing under five workers. Eighty-three per cent of the MSMEs were located in rural areas; 75 per cent were in the non-agricultural sector, mainly in manufacturing, trade and services; and 34 per cent of MSMEs were owned by women.¹²

South Africa

The official unemployment rate was 30.5 per cent in 2002, with higher figures for women (34.7 per cent) and extreme differences for different racial groups: as high as 50 per cent for Africans and as low as 6 per cent for White people.¹³ Official labour market participation rates were 63 per cent for men and 50.7 per cent for women. According to the National Human Development Report, access to jobs and level of income vary significantly with race, gender, age, and disability factors.¹⁴

⁸ UNDP: *Human development report 2004*, op. cit. GDP and income poverty are measured in purchasing-power parity (PPP) US dollars.

⁹ Zambia Ministry of Finance and National Planning: *Second PRSP implementation progress report*, (2004), p. 20.

¹⁰ *Malawi PRSP*, p. 56.

¹¹ M.E. Loeb and A.H. Edie: *Living conditions among people with disabilities in Malawi* (SINTEF Health Research, 2004), p. 151.

¹² *Malawi PRSP*, p. 32.

¹³ Data disaggregated by race corresponds to the expanded definition of employment and not the official one, in which the global unemployment rate is 41.6 per cent. See UNDP: *South Africa human development report, 2003*, p.145.

¹⁴ *ibid.*: p.20.

It is estimated that people with disabilities represent 1 per cent of the total workforce.¹⁵ In the census of 2001, 18.6 per cent of disabled persons were in employment; a proportion much lower than the 35 per cent for the total population. The situation is much worse for women with disabilities than for men with disabilities, as it is much worse for non-disabled women than for non-disabled men.¹⁶

Zambia

In Zambia, of 6,184,000 people in the labour force, only about 700,000 (11.3 per cent) are formally employed, and the remainder is either engaged in the informal economy or unemployed.¹⁷

The economy has been steadily moving from the formal economy to the informal sector, with informal employment now estimated to account for 64 per cent of the country's non-agricultural employment. Almost 75 per cent of the informal economy is found in urban areas, mostly in Lusaka and the Copperbelt region. Most of the employment in the non-agricultural informal economy is found in trading; the rest being in manufacturing.¹⁸

Unemployment is estimated at 16 per cent in 2005,¹⁹ with a slightly higher rate among females (17 per cent) than among males (14 per cent).

¹⁵ Commission for Employment Equity: *Annual Report 2002-2003*, p. viii.

¹⁶ ILO: *Promoting the employability and employment of people with disabilities through effective legislation (Southern Africa) – South Africa Country Profile* (ILO/Irish Aid, Geneva, June 2006).

¹⁷ Zambia Central Statistical Office (CSO): *Zambia labour force survey: Preliminary results* (Lusaka, 2006).

¹⁸ Hans Christiaan Haan: *Training for work in the informal sector: New evidence from Eastern and Southern Africa* (ILO-ITC Occasional Papers, Turin, 2001), p. 119.

¹⁹ Zambia CSO: *Zambia Labour Force Survey 2005* (Lusaka).

2. Legal and policy provisions

The findings from the exploratory surveys are set against the backdrop of the relevant disability related laws and policies in place in each of the countries. These are described below and summarized in Table 2.1.

2.1 Legislation concerning vocational training and employment of disabled persons

While the participant countries have markedly different socio-economic characteristics, the legislative frameworks in place in two of them (South Africa and Zambia) prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities, while in Malawi, the introduction of an anti-discrimination act is under discussion, and a bill has been drafted, to replace the older welfare-oriented legislation in place since 1971. The laws are described in the country study reports mentioned earlier.²⁰

There is some provision for people with disabilities in general legislation in Malawi, where the Employment Act of 2000 makes it illegal to discriminate against any employee on the basis of disability in access to training, and the Technical Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Act of 1999 provides for the representation of persons with disabilities on the Board of the TVET Authority. In South Africa, the approach is to include provisions for persons with disabilities in the general legislation rather than in disability-specific laws. Thus, for example, the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998, the framework for improving the skills of the workforce, offers different forms of assistance to people with disabilities, including an expanded number and range of learnerships, while several other pieces of general legislation provide the basis for affirmative action to equalize opportunities for disabled persons and other historically disadvantaged groups. Zambia to date does not yet provide for people with disabilities in the framework of its general employment and training legislation.

²⁰ ILO: *Promoting the employability and employment of people with disabilities through effective legislation (Southern Africa) - Country Profiles for Malawi, South Africa and Zambia* (ILO/Irish Aid, Geneva, 2006).

Table 2.1: Legislation and policies concerning persons with disabilities

Country	Legislation and policies
Malawi	The Handicapped Persons' Act, 1971 Employment Act, 2000 Technical Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Act, 1999 Draft Disability Bill, 2004 <i>Policy</i> The National Policy on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, 2004
South Africa	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa No. 108, 1996 The Employment Equity Act, 1998 The Skills Development Act No.97, 1998 Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, No. 4, 2000 The Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act, No. 5, 2000 <i>Policy</i> The Integrated National Disability Strategy National Skills Development Strategy 2001-2005 and 2005-2010
Zambia	The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1996 The Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) Act, 1998 <i>Policy</i> National Policy on Disability of 2002 National Policy on Education, 1996 The Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) Policy

2.2 Policy

Each of the countries has recent policies concerning the promotion of equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. In Malawi, the National Policy on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (2004) aims at fully integrating people with disabilities in all aspects of life and at providing for equal opportunities, enhanced dignity and well being so that people with disabilities have the essentials of life. The policy recognizes the importance of equal access to education and training as well as employment and other aspects of life to disabled persons, if they are to be enabled to compete favourably in society. One of the objectives is to increase access to technical, vocational and entrepreneurial training opportunities for people with disabilities through provision of access to training in marketable skills, and through support to organizations of and for persons with disabilities engaged in vocational training. In South Africa, the Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS) aims to facilitate the inclusion of disability related issues into every aspect of governance, among other goals. In terms of unemployment, the INDS lists the following policy objectives:

- narrowing of the unemployment gap between disabled and non-disabled employment seekers must be narrowed;
- broadening of the range of employment options for people with disabilities must be broadened in order to provide occupational choice; and
- facilitating the vocational integration of people with disabilities regardless of the origin, nature and/or degree of disability.

Zambia's National Policy on Disability of 2002 aims at integrating people with disabilities into the mainstream of society. The integration of people with disabilities into the vocational training system is given high priority, along with the development of programmes for the equalization and integration into mainstream society, the provision of devices to promote the inclusion of disabled persons in the workplace and in the education system, the development of mandatory standards of physical accessibility, and gender mainstreaming in the provision of services to persons with disabilities. The plan of action sets out to address the issues of gender and HIV/AIDS. The Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) Policy aims to *"improve the technical education and vocational training and link it to the requirements of the employment sector"* and states that the *"special needs of people with disabilities will be taken into consideration."* People with disabilities are not one of the explicitly-mentioned target groups, although the Zambia PRSP identifies disability as a cross-cutting issue in the TEVET system.²¹

²¹ Zambia PRSP, p. 80.

3. Studies of skills acquisition among disabled persons in Malawi, South Africa and Zambia

What strategies have been successful in assisting some disabled persons in finding decent jobs? What obstacles stand in the way of others? What policy measures are required to dismantle these barriers? These and related questions require attention in every country around the world. The ILO project, “*Skills acquisition and work for persons with disabilities in Southern Africa*” funded by the Government of Flanders, has sought to contribute to this debate through an exploratory assessment of skills acquisition strategies which have been introduced in certain African countries through technical cooperation projects over the past two decades. Working in collaboration with disabled persons’ organizations (DPOs) in Malawi, South Africa and Zambia, the project involved exploratory surveys of the experience of disabled persons in acquiring skills formally and informally, and in gaining employment on completion of training. It also involved case studies of some respondents who had attended training and gone on to get jobs or become self-employed.

The specific aims of the study were:

- to identify effective strategies for vocational skills acquisition by persons with disabilities leading to productive work;
- to promote training policies and effective methods of training and employment services delivery for individuals with different types of disabilities, particularly in mainstream training institutions.

The main results of the exploratory surveys and case studies in each of the three countries are presented below. This section starts by describing how the studies were carried out in the three countries - Malawi, South Africa and Zambia - followed by an overview of the study population, a description of the results concerning skills development and employment, and concludes with a summary of the main points. The policy implications highlighted and recommendations formulated at tripartite-plus meetings organized to discuss the findings in each country are summarized in Section 4.

3.1 Methodology

The study was designed to be exploratory in nature, so as to highlight good practice as well as key issues relating to skills development and employment of persons with disabilities, which require the attention of legislators, policymakers and service providers. While the findings cannot be generalized to the overall populations, they provide a means to explore the main trends in skills development and employment observed across the countries that could be investigated in further studies with population-based samples, if considered necessary.

Disabled persons’ organizations in each of the three countries were commissioned to carry out the study. In Malawi, the study was carried out by the Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi (FEDOMA), and in Zambia by the Zambia Federation of the Disabled (ZAFOD). In South Africa, a consortium consisting of

representatives from the Thabo Mbeki Development Trust for Disabled People (TMDTDP), Disabled People South Africa (DPSA) and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) undertook the South African component of the study. The Platform for Disability and Development Cooperation (PHOS), a Belgian Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) offering services to organizations and individuals who want to give attention to persons with disabilities and to improve their living conditions, was contracted to provide backup support to the DPOs, in collaboration with the ILO.

The approach taken in the implementation of this project reflects the ILO strategy to work in partnership with DPOs and provide the opportunity for them to build their capacity to advocate and lobby on their own behalf. By involving them in conducting a systematic review of skills training and employment of people with disabilities in their countries, and by setting up Project Working Groups representative of the different disability groups to advise on the study, it was hoped that the DPOs would further develop their organizational skills and capacity to engage in survey activities, as well as gain insight into the current situation regarding skills development and employment and identify policy challenges.

The studies included two components:

- an exploratory survey in each country of approximately 300 men and women with different types of disability (hearing, vision, physical and intellectual), in four categories: skilled, unskilled, employed and unemployed.
- individual case studies of people with different disabilities selected from survey respondents. The participants selected for the case studies provided a range of experiences and included people with the different disabilities.

3.2 Survey population

The survey participants were purposively selected on the basis of their training and employment experience, in consultation with DPOs. The sample was to include respondents who were skilled and employed; some who were skilled and unemployed; others who were unskilled and unemployed; and yet others who were unskilled but employed. An equal balance of men and women was sought. Representation was also sought of four different disability types: hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical disability and intellectual disability. It was intended that respondents in both rural and urban areas would be included.

A standard questionnaire, developed principally by PHOS, was used in each country, with additional questions added in some cases. The survey interviews were carried out by teams of people who were disabled or who worked with disabled persons.

In **Malawi**, the survey was conducted in five districts: Blantyre, Machinga, Mzimba, Nkhotakhota and Salima. The districts were chosen to represent the areas in which a Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programme is being implemented by Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA), as it was felt that the structures of the organization would be helpful in locating respondents. A total of 248 respondents took part; of whom 55 per cent (137) were male and 45 per cent (111) female. A majority of respondents (56 per cent) lived in rural areas rather

than towns and cities (44 per cent). More than half (55 per cent) were aged 25 to 46 years, with a quarter aged under 25 and one in five aged over 46. The breakdown by disability type was: physical disability (52 per cent); visual disability (20 per cent); hearing impairment (16 per cent); intellectual disability (8 per cent); other (4 per cent). A quarter of the respondents had no formal education; one in five had attended primary school; a further 21 per cent had completed secondary school and 4 per cent had gone on to tertiary education. Slightly under half of the respondents (48 per cent) had attended skills training, while 52 per cent had not. Over a third of respondents (39 per cent) were employed, while 61 per cent were unemployed.

In **South Africa**, the survey respondents came from five of the nine provinces, namely Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu/Natal, Gauteng and North West Provinces. A total of 318 respondents took part, of whom 57 per cent were male and 43 per cent female. A minority of respondents (37 per cent) lived in rural areas rather than towns and cities (63 per cent). Two-thirds of respondents (66 per cent) were aged 25 to 46 years, with 22 per cent aged under 25 and one in ten (12 per cent) aged over 46. Almost a third of respondents reported having two or more types of impairment, 69 per cent had a physical disability; 45 per cent had a visual impairment; 53 per cent reported a hearing impairment; 39 per cent had an intellectual disability; and 47 per cent said they had some other form of impairment. Over a third of respondents (37 per cent) had a congenital disability; over a quarter (27 per cent) acquired their disability through infections of illnesses, such as polio; while a fifth (21 per cent) became disabled as a result of an accident. Almost half of the respondents had attended secondary school, with 25 per cent having completed primary school only; one in five (20 per cent) having attended tertiary education and under one in ten (7 per cent) not having received formal education. Over three-quarters of the respondents (211 - 66 per cent) had attended skills training, while 92 (29 per cent) had not. Slightly less than half (146 - 48 per cent) were employed while 52 per cent (156) were unemployed.

In **Zambia**, the survey was conducted in three districts: Chipata, Copperbelt and Lusaka. In each province, activities were limited to the main urban centres. A total of 279 respondents took part, of whom 48 per cent (132) were male and 52 per cent (144) female. Virtually no respondents from rural areas were interviewed (1 per cent), with the survey population predominantly concentrated in towns or cities (99 per cent). Approximately 43 per cent of respondents were aged 25 to 39 years, with 30 per cent aged under 25 and 27 per cent aged over 40. Almost a third of respondents reported having two or more types of impairment. The breakdown by disability type was: physical disability (45 per cent); visual disability (30 per cent); hearing impairment (20 per cent); intellectual disability (4 per cent); and other (1 per cent). The most common cause of disability was reported to be polio (29 per cent); followed by accidents (12 per cent); genetic causes (11 per cent); and illness such as malaria or meningitis (8 per cent). A high percentage of Zambian respondents (44 per cent) had attended tertiary education; a quarter (26 per cent) had attended secondary school; one in five (20 per cent) had completed primary school only; while one in ten (9 per cent) had not received a formal education. Almost two-thirds of the respondents (63 per cent) had attended skills training, while 37 per cent had not. Over half of the respondents (53 per cent) were employed, while 47 per cent were unemployed.

Table 3.1 below presents the percentages of male and female respondents in the three countries who had attended skills training and those who had not, while Table 3.2 indicates the distribution of respondents by skills and employment status. It should be recalled that these characteristics are a feature of the sample selected, rather than representing general trends. They are summarized here as a backdrop to the opinions expressed by the respondents in each country, reported in the following section.

Table 3.1: Survey respondents skilled and unskilled in Malawi, South Africa and Zambia, by sex

Country	Men		Women		Total	
	Skilled	Unskilled	Skilled	Unskilled	Skilled	Unskilled
Malawi	68 (50%)	69 (50%)	50 (46%)	61 (55%)	118 (48%)	130 (52%)
South Africa	125 (73%)	46 (27%)	85 (66%)	43 (33%)	211 (66%)	92 (29 %)
Zambia	92 (70%)	40 (30%)	80 (56%)	64 (44%)	172 (63%)	104 (37%)

Table 3.2: Survey respondents employed and unemployed, by country

Country	Employed	Unemployed	Total
Malawi	97 (39%)	151(61%)	248
South Africa	146 (48%)	156 (52%)	302
Zambia	148 (53%)	131 (47%)	279

Half of the skilled respondents (50 per cent) in Malawi were employed and half unemployed. In South Africa, one in three was skilled and employed, and a further one in three were skilled and unemployed. In Zambia, a majority of those who had attended training (70 per cent), were employed while 51 (30 per cent) were unemployed. This is a pattern which would require further examination in a population-based sample, to establish the extent to which it can be generally applied.

3.3 Case studies

In all three countries, case studies were conducted of individuals who had attended skills training and who were presently working. In these case studies, individuals with disabilities described their experience in attending training and in finding jobs. The total number of case studies completed varied between 17 and 24 across the four countries. The case studies provided additional insight into topics raised in the survey.

In South Africa, an additional four case studies of various types of training institutions were undertaken. The selection was made by the Project Working Group to reflect different types of training institutions. These were as follows:

- In North West province, a rural agricultural training programme including people with disabilities;
- In KwaZulu/Natal, a rural coffin-making business employing people with disabilities, amongst others;
- In Mthata, in the Eastern Cape, a town-based training and employment centre for people with disabilities;
- In Durban, KwaZulu/Natal, a college that is making efforts to attract and integrate students with disabilities.

3.4 Timeframe

The studies were carried out between 2004 and 2006, with interviewing taking place in 2004 in Zambia, in 2005 in Malawi and in 2006 in South Africa.

3.5 Survey findings - Training

3.5.1 Types of training

Of those respondents in **Malawi** who had acquired skills, approximately a quarter (23 per cent) had trained in tailoring and a further quarter in weaving. Fifteen per cent were trained in agriculture in the form of farming cash crops, horticulture or fishing; 11 per cent in carpentry and a further 11 per cent in home economics. The remaining 17 per cent had trained in a variety of different skills. Many people reported having more than one skill.

In **South Africa**, the most commonly-mentioned formal skills included: boiler-making, carpentry, welding, cleaning, sewing, leatherwork, secretarial/general office work, telephone operation and computer skills. The most commonly-mentioned informal skills were: life skills, art and craft skills, sewing, cooking, cleaning, gardening, repairing cars, radios or cell phones.

In **Zambia**, respondents were most likely to have trained to become telephone operators (19 per cent) or tailors/clothes designers (18 per cent). More than one in ten (12 per cent) of trained respondents had trained as teachers and 10 per cent had trained in secretarial skills. With one exception, all secretaries were women, while men were more likely to have trained as teachers (14 per cent compared to 9 per cent of the women). Eight per cent of all trained respondents (nearly all men) had received skills in carpentry and joinery. Other types of skills training which respondents had received included accounting and business management; home economics and housekeeping; weaving and knitting; information technology and computing; and technical skills (radio technician).

3.5.2 Training providers

In Malawi, South Africa and Zambia, training was available to survey respondents in centres run by NGOs catering to persons with disabilities and also in public vocational training centres open to the general population (South Africa) and catering to disabled persons only (Malawi and Zambia).

In **Malawi**, respondents had most frequently acquired their skills at training centres: MACOHA, which up to recently, catered exclusively to people with disabilities; the TEVET Centres open to the general population; or at primary school where training in handicrafts was provided. Nearly a third of the respondents had trained through apprenticeship with local craftsmen and 17 per cent had acquired their skills at private training centres. Some acquired skills through the CBR Programmes and others at NGOs like Malawi Against Physical Disabilities (MAPD), or through an international NGO.

In the **South Africa** study, most respondents had obtained their vocational skills training in cities and towns, as compared to rural areas. Respondents in rural areas and cities indicated that their last training was provided by NGOs, while those in the towns had received their last training at government centres. This probably reflects the reach of government and NGO training within each of these geographical locations, as the NGOs do most of the training in rural areas and government in towns and cities in South Africa. The private sector tended to offer training for people with hearing impairments while government centres offered training to a greater extent to people with physical disabilities. This trend should be investigated further to determine its extent and validity.

In **Zambia**, vocational training was available to persons with disabilities in the National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (NVRC) at Ndola. The NVRC curriculum is approved by the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA). Some respondents attended training open to the general population, for example, teacher training.

3.5.3 Length and type of training by disability type in South Africa

Additional information was collected in South Africa on the type and length of skills acquired in comparison to the type of impairment the respondent had.

Respondents with visual disabilities had the highest access (75 per cent) to formal training, followed by people with physical impairment (72 per cent); hearing impairment (60 per cent); and learning impairment (63 per cent).

When considering informal skills training, 166 (52 per cent) said they had acquired skills informally. People with hearing impairments (67 per cent) had the highest access to informal training, followed by physical impairment (56 per cent), visual impairment (49 per cent) and learning impairment (46 per cent). People with learning and intellectual disabilities are the most disadvantaged group to access either formal or informal training.

The following trends in length of skills training by people with different impairment groups were noted in South Africa:

- intellectually- and hearing-impaired people seem to be more likely to go for training of two years or more;
- visually-impaired people seem to be more likely to go for training of six months to a year;

- physically-impaired people seem to be more likely to go for training of six months or less.

3.5.4 Problems encountered in trying to acquire vocational skills

In all three countries respondents were asked to identify the problems they faced in attending vocational skills training courses, whether or not they had actually attended training.

Table 3.3: Barriers to vocational training (per cent)

Barrier	Malawi	South Africa	Zambia
Training fees	31	40	5
Awareness of training providers	-	32	20
Accessibility – training centres	18	27	16
Transport	7	25	18
Communications	5	-	13
Lack of Information	5	37	-
Unwillingness to training	5	21	-
Family responsibilities	10	15	-
Other	-	14	-

Training fees

Many respondents experienced difficulties in paying training fees. In Malawi and in South Africa, this was the most frequently-reported barrier. In the South African survey, it was mentioned by two in five respondents (40 per cent), while in Malawi, approximately a third of the respondents mentioned this as a barrier. In Zambia, this was mentioned by a small minority of respondents (5 per cent). Several of the case study participants described the consequences of not having funds to pay for their training, leading them to drop out of school, or not attend the training course of their choice. A few were fortunate in having a family member to negotiate exemption from training fees, or in having an advocate to finance their training.

Awareness of training providers

Nearly one-third (32 per cent) of the South African respondents and one in five of the respondents in Zambia (20 per cent) mentioned the lack of awareness of training providers as a barrier to access training. South African respondents with a hearing impairment felt that there was an unwillingness to employ a person with a disability. In Zambia, although this was cited as a problem, nearly all who mentioned this had not been prevented from attending training because of it.

Accessibility of training centres

Both in Malawi and in Zambia, challenges arising from the lack of accessibility were mentioned by people with each type of disability represented in the survey – physical disability, hearing impairment, visual impairment and intellectual disability. It was the second most frequently-mentioned barrier in Malawi. In

Zambia it was mentioned as a problem by under one in five (16 per cent) of the respondents.

Transport

Travelling to and from the training centre was an issue for respondents in all countries, and was most prominent in South Africa. A quarter of South African respondents (25 per cent) and one in five of the Zambian respondents (18 per cent), mainly those with physical disabilities or visual impairments, had experienced problems in getting to and from the training centre, due to lack of transport. This problem was mentioned almost exclusively by respondents, male and female, who had attended training in Zambia, indicating that this had not prevented them from taking part in the courses; and more frequently by respondents with a physical disability than by those with other disability types in South Africa. In Malawi, those who had experienced problems in getting to and from the training centre, due to lack of transport, were more often urban than rural residents.

Communication

Communication was an issue, particularly in Zambia, where slightly more than one in ten respondents (13 per cent), all of whom had hearing impairments, had experienced such difficulties during their skills training. Nearly half (46 per cent) of the persons with hearing impairment who replied to this question reported difficulties in communicating while attending training. In Malawi, some respondents with hearing impairments reported communication difficulties as a significant barrier and several respondents said that the training provider had not been willing to train them, linked to this.

Lack of information

Knowing about courses that are available is an important element of choice. In South Africa, the lack of information on the training available was mentioned as a barrier by over a third of the respondents (37 per cent). A few Malawian respondents also identified the lack of information about the training centre as a fact that had made it difficult for them to attend skills training.

Other

A variety of other issues were mentioned by respondents in the different countries as having made it difficult or prevented respondents from attending skills training. In Malawi, some respondents, mainly people with visual or hearing impairments, mentioned other problems in accessing skills training, such as the lack of training materials in Braille and the lack of assistance in the form of special needs teachers; women were more likely to report family responsibilities as a barrier than men. In South Africa, the lack of basic education or poor quality education; lack of sign language interpreters; lack of suitably-trained teachers; and ill health were also mentioned as barriers. In Zambia, the lack of training materials in accessible format, discrimination, lack of education, unsuitable courses, and disability-related difficulties were mentioned as a problem by some respondents.

3.5.5 Barriers experienced by training centres in South Africa

In South Africa, an additional component of the study included case studies of four training institutions, which commented on barriers faced by disabled persons, in relation to vocational training. These were the Ikhwezi Lokusa project in the Eastern Cape that provides courses in pottery, sewing, arts/craft and leatherwork;. the Okhahlamba Area Development Project, a coffin-making project with people with disabilities; the Dynamic Training Centre, North West Province, that provides training in agriculture, sewing and hospitality; and the Oval International Computer Education College, KwaZuluNatal, that aims to provide quality education to the disadvantaged community in computer applications, administration and management.

Some of the more general barriers to effective skills training were reported by these institutions as being:

- lack of work opportunities after training;
- lack of job and in-service placement services for people with disabilities which makes it difficult for the people with disabilities to develop the practical component of their skills training;
- having to develop further skills, such as how to sell and market one's crafts, in addition to developing craft making skills;
- lack of funding for projects and training and especially paying for a trainer to do basic adult education. The lack of adult basic education skills in the trainees makes the acquisition of further skills much more difficult;
- the many regulations set out by government departments for providing funding for training and projects limits the access to these funds;
- the lack of willingness of people to share their skills leads to training that does not benefit from people's practical experiences;
- the cost of formal training;
- the problem of dependence on government grants in South Africa, which prevents people with disabilities from learning and being self-sufficient.

3.5.6 Relevance of training to job opportunities

Respondents in Malawi and Zambia were asked whether the skills they had acquired enabled them to find work, and those who were in employment asked whether they were using the skills acquired in their current jobs.

Did the skills training help in getting work?

In Zambia, the majority of the respondents who answered the question (62 per cent) said that the skills training they had received proved to be useful and made it easier to find work. In contrast, slightly over a quarter of those who replied to this question in Malawi said that the skills training they had acquired had assisted them in finding work.

Both in Malawi and Zambia, male respondents were more likely than female respondents to have found their skills training to be relevant. In Zambia, 70 per cent of the male respondents expressed this view, compared to 51 per cent of the female respondents; while in Malawi, 35 per cent of the male respondents had this view as compared to 21 per cent of female respondents.

Looking at the responses to these questions from a different direction – focusing on respondents for whom the training had not been relevant - a striking picture emerges. In Malawi, almost three-quarters (71 per cent) of the 142 respondents who answered this question said that the skills they had acquired had not been useful in finding work, and even among those who were skilled and employed, approximately a third said that their skills had not made their job search easier. In Zambia, more than one-third (38 per cent) of the 164 respondents who replied to this question said that the skills they had acquired had not been useful in finding work; relatively more women respondents (50 per cent) felt this, compared to 30 per cent of the male respondents.

Questions about the relevance of skills also arose in the case studies. For some case study participants, the link between the skills training they attended and the world of work was clear – they found jobs or started small businesses using the skills they acquired. Others were not so fortunate, however; they were not making use of the skills they had acquired, and in some cases, did not seem to have had the benefit of career guidance or information about accommodation and assistive devices, when they were deciding on what course to take. Often, these respondents were working in occupations in which they had learnt their skills informally, and had not explicitly benefited from the training courses they attended.

Was training considered beneficial overall?

While the experience of the survey respondents varied, appropriate skills training was generally viewed by respondents in both countries as beneficial. This is reflected in the views of respondents on barriers to employment. In Malawi, nearly a third (28 per cent) said that the lack of skills training was a major problem and in Zambia, over one in ten (13 per cent) had the same view (see Section 3.6.8 below). Sixty-nine per cent of South Africa respondents regarded skills training as a factor that would improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

This view was also reflected in the individual case studies of respondents in all countries who had been successful in gaining skills and employment. There was no doubt in most of the case study participants' minds that vocational training had been beneficial to them and had improved their opportunities in life, whether or not it lead to employment.

3.6 Survey findings - Employment

As indicated in Table 3.2, over a third of Malawian respondents (39 per cent) were in employment, compared to approximately half of the South African and Zambian respondents (48 per cent and 53 per cent respectively).

There was evidence of gender difference in the rates of employment – in Zambia, for example, men were at work to a greater extent (61 per cent) than women (49 per

cent). This pattern was found across all disability types and would merit further investigation to establish whether the finding can be applied to the population of persons with disabilities more generally.

In all three countries, employed respondents were asked about the type of work in which they were currently engaged. As in the case of the findings on skills training, the results highlight issues and trends in an exploratory way, pointing to areas in need of attention on the part of policy-makers and service providers, rather than being nationally representative.

3.6.1 Type of work

It was clear from the findings in each country that the respondents were engaged in a wide range of different occupations, some of which were in line with traditional assumptions of 'work disabled people can do' and many others clearly indicating that such stereotypes are both mistaken and misleading. In South Africa, for example, work done included: sign language instruction, TV presentation, directing, script writing, acting, camera controlling, development work, public relations, housekeeping, car-wash attending, and fund raising. In Zambia, a similarly wide range of occupations was reported: in addition to tailoring, housekeeping, cooking, cleaning, shoe polishing and street vending, respondents worked as projects managers, development workers, technicians, store keepers, information technologists, store keepers, clerics and secretaries. In Malawi, bookkeeping, administration and screen printing, featured along with tailoring, vending, bicycle and radio repair, telephone operation, carpentry, leather work, shop keeping, machine knitting and hand sewing in respondents' occupations.

3.6.2 Self-employment

The proportion of employed respondents who were self employed ranged from 11 per cent in South Africa and 16 per cent in Zambia to 39 per cent in Malawi. Self-employment in Malawi was widespread among all respondents, regardless of disability type, sex or urban/rural location; it was more common among those who had not attended training (49 per cent) than among those who had attended a training course (28 per cent). Most commonly, the self-employed respondents there were involved in bicycle or radio repairing, food selling business, tailoring, selling clothes, machine knitting and hand sewing.

3.6.3 Formal employment

The proportion of respondents in formal employment was highest in South Africa; 52 per cent of employed respondents. Among the employed respondents in Malawi, one in five (18 per cent) was working in formal employment. They held a range of positions as teachers, ward attendants, bookkeepers, administrative personnel, telephone operators and screen printers, and factory work (weaving and spinning). Formal jobs were more frequent among women than among men, and among respondents who lived in urban areas. In Zambia, 16 per cent of the respondents worked as telephone operators, about one in ten (11 per cent) were teachers and 7 per cent worked as carpenters or craft workers. Working as a telephone-operator was also fairly common in South Africa (9 per cent).

3.6.4 Disability type and gender

Data regarding employment in terms of disability types or gender of the respondents was only available in Zambia, where respondents with hearing impairments or a physical disability were more likely to be employed than respondents with other types of disabilities. Of the persons with hearing impairments, 63 per cent were employed, and of those with a physical disability, 60 per cent were currently working, while about half of the respondents with visual impairments and those with an intellectual disability had jobs.

Men were more likely to be at work (61 per cent) than women (48.9 per cent). This pattern was found across all disability types, and merits further investigation to establish whether this finding can be generalized to the whole population of disabled persons.

These apparent differences by disability type and gender may give an indication of trends, but would need to be further investigated in a representative survey before definite conclusions can be drawn.

3.6.5 Were respondents using the skills learned, in current jobs?

In Malawi, 61 per cent of the skilled and employed respondents (44) who replied said they were using the skills they had acquired in their present work. The proportion of skilled and employed respondents who were using vocational skills they acquired in their jobs or small businesses was higher in rural areas (84 per cent) than in urban areas (58 per cent), possibly indicating a better match between the training courses offered in rural areas and the local labour market opportunities (mainly weaving, tailoring and agriculture or fishing). Further investigation is required to determine whether this is a general trend and to establish the underlying reasons.

In Zambia, some skills had been more relevant to the labour market than others. Those who had trained in accounts and business management or to become radio technicians, for example, had found their skills training very useful for finding work. Similarly, the vast majority of those who had trained in carpentry and joinery or to become teachers replied that their skills training had been useful for finding a job. On the other hand, nearly one-quarter of those who had trained as telephone operators (37 per cent) or in home economics and housekeeping (38 per cent) did not find these skills useful for the job market. Among those who had trained as tailors, perceived usefulness of the skills training was even lower, with over half of these respondents (57 per cent) stating that the skills training they had acquired did not make it easier to find a job.

Some of the case study respondents also commented that their skills were traditional and not marketable. Some said that they did not have the chance to choose skills in which they were interested, adding that there is a limited range of training courses available. The result for many was that they were working in activities for which they had not been trained, having learned the necessary skills largely through on-the-job training. Others managed to make use of their skills by becoming self-employed.

The case studies reinforce the point arising from the survey findings: that there is an urgent need to review the labour market relevance of existing skills training courses open to people with disabilities in Malawi and Zambia, and to pay particular attention to courses offered to women with disabilities. They also point to the need to improve the vocational assessment and career guidance services provided.

3.6.6 Finding jobs

The majority of the employed respondents in Malawi (68 per cent) said that they had found their job on their own, while in Zambia, one in ten (20 per cent) had found the job through their own efforts. Relatives and friends had been helpful in assisting respondents in each country to find work: in South Africa, 25 per cent of respondents found their jobs in this way, compared to 13 per cent in Malawi and Zambia. It was also common to find work with the help on an NGO - in South Africa, 23 per cent and in Zambia, 19 per cent of respondents reported this as the way in which they had got their jobs. Some respondents in Malawi (14 per cent) and Zambia (15 per cent) had found their jobs through the training centre. The 'other' ways in which South African respondents had found work were through 'door to door' calls, starting off with doing voluntary work, internal transfer, as well as school or service provider referrals. In Zambia, other channels were via public employment services, via public authorities or by sending in an application. Some respondents said they got their current job through a chance encounter or occurrence.

The responses from all three countries highlight the importance of networks in helping find work. As people with disabilities may not always be able to access these networks due to social exclusion, the policy implications of this should be teased out. Placement agencies and answering advertisements seem to play little role as yet in any of the countries.

3.6.7 Why were some respondents unemployed?

Respondents who had previously been employed, but were presently out of work, were asked about the reason for their current unemployment. In Malawi, this question was answered by 32 respondents (13 per cent), in South Africa by 86 respondents (27 per cent) and in Zambia by 28 respondents (10 per cent) of the total of survey respondents.

Employers' economic problems

In Malawi and Zambia, the respondents most commonly reported that they had lost their job due to employers' economic problems. This was also mentioned as a reason by a third of the South African respondents.

Reasons related to disability

In South Africa, the most frequently-mentioned reason for currently being unemployed was related to the respondent's disability (38 per cent). In Zambia, this was also one of the most commonly-mentioned reasons, and in Malawi, it was reported by some male respondents.

Other reasons

Other reasons mentioned in South Africa included: termination of contracts, retrenchment, difficult working conditions and negative attitudes of co-workers, closing down of the business or restructuring, as well as having one's own reasons or not liking the job. In Malawi, some male respondents also reported seasonal work as a reason for their current unemployment and a few women respondents said they could not work for family reasons. In Zambia, other reasons mentioned included an accident or ill health, limited skills and discrimination.

3.6.8 Barriers in finding work

Respondents were asked to identify the most important barrier they had experienced when looking for work. Discrimination was mentioned as an important barrier in Zambia (31 per cent), and a related problem of employer awareness was mentioned in South Africa (38 per cent) and Malawi (10 per cent). The lack of skills training was mentioned by respondents in each country as hindering their search for work. About 35 per cent of South African respondents cited this as a reason, compared to 28 per cent of respondents in Malawi, and 13 per cent of Zambian respondents. Lack of jobs, or lack of information on jobs, was another frequent barrier, mentioned by 31 per cent of respondents in South Africa; in Malawi, 21 per cent; and 7 per cent of Zambian respondents. Lack of access to credit, or lack of funds to start a business, were problems for respondents in South Africa (30 per cent), and Malawi (12 per cent). Inaccessibility of buildings was an issue in the South Africa survey (27 per cent of respondents), while lack of transport/mobility problems were issues for 22 per cent of South African respondents and 9 per cent of those in Malawi.

In Zambia, the 107 respondents (39 per cent of all survey respondents) who answered this question most frequently reported discrimination and the lack of skills as a barrier.

Discrimination/Employer awareness

Nearly a third of the respondents (31 per cent) in Zambia were of the opinion that discrimination had been the major reason for not finding employment. Men were more likely than women to report that they had been discriminated against: over a third of the males (36 per cent) were of the opinion that discrimination hindered them from getting jobs, while slightly more than a quarter (27 per cent) of women thought so. Respondents with hearing impairments (35 per cent) or physical disabilities (35 per cent) more often reported that discrimination was a barrier to employment than respondents with visual impairments (16 per cent).

While discrimination was not mentioned as an issue by South African and Malawian respondents, the problem of employer awareness was frequently cited as a barrier to finding jobs. One in ten in South Africa (38 per cent of all survey respondents), identified the lack of awareness of employers as a problem and one in ten of the Malawian respondents who replied to the question felt that the lack of awareness among employers about the rights of persons with disabilities was an important obstacle to be overcome in securing employment. Many of the South African respondents who answered the open-ended questions said that they had

experienced negative attitudes from employers who see people with disabilities as less productive and costly in terms of assistive devices and reasonable accommodation.

Skills training

In all three countries, lack of skills training was among the most frequently mentioned barriers respondents had experienced when looking for a job. Irrespective of whether they were currently working or not, over a quarter of the Malawian respondents (28 per cent) were of the opinion that the lack of skills training was the major reason why they could not find employment. In Zambia, about one in ten of the respondents (13 per cent) were of the opinion that lack of skills training was the major cause for not finding employment, and in South Africa, it was mentioned by 35 per cent of all survey respondents.

In Zambia, lack of skills was clearly more often a barrier for women to finding employment than for men. Nearly one in five (17 per cent) of the women who replied to this question thought they would need more education or skills training in order to make access to employment easier. Among male respondents, the lack of skills was mentioned by one in ten (9 per cent). In Zambia, respondents with physical disabilities were more likely to report a lack of skills as being a barrier than those with hearing or visual impairments. Further research would be necessary to explore the underlying reasons for this finding - whether this is due to less training availability for people with physical disability, or to greater access to information on available skills training among this group than among people with other disability types.

In Malawi, this response was particularly frequent among unskilled and unemployed respondents, nearly half of whom (46 per cent) saw it as a major reason for not finding work. Respondents in the rural areas mentioned the lack of skills training more frequently (32 per cent) than respondents in the urban areas (24 per cent).

Case study respondents also mentioned the lack of training in marketable skills as a problem in seeking employment. In addition to the limited and partly out-dated skills training offered to persons with disabilities, some case study respondents also referred to the low level of qualifications offered in courses catering to people with disabilities, and called for upgrading of the courses.

Lack of jobs

The lack of jobs was also mentioned in all three countries. In Malawi, the lack of jobs was the second most frequently-cited barrier mentioned by 21 per cent of the respondents, both men and women. This is not surprising, given that there are not many jobs available within formal employment and most Malawians have to earn their living through self-employment. It was reported more frequently by the rural residents (25 per cent) than by the urban residents (15 per cent). In South Africa, the lack of information about jobs available was reported by nearly a third of the respondents (31 per cent). In Zambia, 7 per cent of respondents mentioned this as a barrier.

In Malawi and in Zambia, persons with visual impairments mentioned this problem more frequently than respondents with other types of disabilities. In Malawi, it was also cited by respondents with a learning or intellectual disability.

Access to credit

In South Africa, nearly a third of all survey respondents mentioned the lack of credit for self-employment as a barrier to employment. In Malawi, where self-employment was frequent, about one in ten respondents (12 per cent) was of the opinion that the lack of access to credit to start a business was an important barrier they faced in seeking to earn a living. This was mentioned both by rural and urban residents. Given the predominance of self-employment among disabled people in the survey, this barrier would merit further investigation to establish the extent of the problem, and identify possible solutions.

Transport

Mobility problems were cited by one in ten respondents (9 per cent) of the Malawian respondents as being a barrier to getting a job. Self-employed respondents also said that they were constrained by lack of transport in travelling to markets where higher prices are offered. Also, several Zambian respondents mentioned transport as a factor that made it difficult to get work.

Other challenges

In Malawi, family problems were mentioned by 6 per cent of the respondents, both male and female. Some women respondents stated that their partners did not want them to work or that they were unemployed due to pregnancy. Respondents with an intellectual disability mentioned family and other problems more often than respondents with other types of disabilities.

Both in Malawi (3 per cent) and Zambia (8 per cent), problems in communication were mentioned as a barrier by 8 per cent of respondents, all of whom were persons with hearing impairments.

In South Africa, the open-ended questions identified some further themes that respondents felt made it more difficult for them to get jobs:

- lack of formal qualifications;
- additional costs of having a disability which uses a large part of the person's income;
- having a disability grant, which means that a person may earn less to not overstep the limit allowed while remaining on the grant;
- people with physical impairments were less mobile and so were not as fast in completing tasks requiring mobility;
- fewer opportunities for training and employment available to people with disabilities, and associated with this less opportunity to build up their skills and experience.

3.6.9 What would help to find work

Respondents in Malawi and South Africa were asked what they thought would help them to find work or how they could improve their work performance. The facilitator that was mentioned clearly more frequently than any other was good skills training. It was followed by job availability and awareness of employers.

Skills training

Good skills training was mentioned frequently by respondents in Malawi and South Africa as being something which would assist them in finding jobs. In Malawi, half of the survey participants (49 per cent) mentioned skills training as a factor to improve employment opportunities, compared to over two in three respondents (69 per cent) in South Africa. While this question was not directly posed in Zambia, answers to the question on barrier to employment indicate that at least one in ten of Zambian respondents agreed with this view.

In Malawi, a clear majority of the 130 unskilled participants (61 per cent) and over a third of the skilled participants (36 per cent) had this opinion. Over half of the unemployed participants (57 per cent) would like to attend training as compared to a third of the employed participants (35 per cent). Women were more likely to aspire to attend training (54 per cent) than men (44 per cent), and younger respondents aged under 25 (64 per cent) were more likely to do so than respondents over 25 years of age (44 per cent).

In Malawi, respondents with hearing impairments (58 per cent) and respondents with intellectual disabilities (63 per cent), mentioned their wish for further training more frequently than respondents with other types of disabilities. In South Africa, respondents with hearing impairments (75 per cent of all respondents with a hearing impairment who replied to the question) mentioned the need for training more frequently than the others. Some case study respondents pointed out the lack of opportunities provided to advance in their jobs – one felt that by obtaining a higher level qualification, this problem would be overcome.

The high frequency of respondents who mentioned skills training as a facilitator to employment is notable in light of the large number of respondents who reported that the skills training they attended in the past did not lead to decent work. In spite of their negative experience in some cases, respondents apparently still feel that skills are crucial to improving their living standards. The problem seems to lie in the type of courses that are offered. Further research is required to establish whether this finding of the exploratory survey can be generalized to the population as a whole.

Support services

Of all survey respondents in Malawi, more than a third (42 per cent) said support would help them to find work or improve at work. In South Africa, more than half of the survey respondents (56 per cent) thought the same.

A clear majority (74 per cent) of the 105 Malawian respondents who cited the need for support services said that they would need a loan or some other kind of financial assistance to set up their own business. Others (18 per cent) wished for support in

the form of equipment, like sewing machines, and a few mentioned the need for moral support. Over half of those who had attended skills training, (57 per cent), mentioned the need for support as a service that would help in finding work.

In Malawi, the proportion of participants mentioning the need of support services increased with age. Sixty-seven per cent of participants aged over 45 mentioned this need, compared to 40 per cent of those aged 25-46, and 26 per cent of those under 25. Women were more likely to mention the need of support (47 per cent) than men (37 per cent).

In South Africa, respondents with intellectual disabilities (70 per cent of respondents with an intellectual disability who replied to the question) mentioned the need for assistive devices clearly more often than respondents with other types of disabilities, without specifying what type of assistive devices were required.

Additional comments on what would help them to find work were made by some South African respondents:

- having assistance in finding work and in completing application forms;
- self-employment;
- good communication skills;
- good skills and a certificate;
- job availability;
- personal factors such as a positive attitudes.

3.7 Future aspirations

At the end of the survey interview, respondents in Malawi and South Africa were asked about their future aspirations. In both countries, the desire for further education or skills training emerged clearly. Many respondents also expressed their wish to have a loan or equipment to start their own business.

The other issues that were important to South African respondents were:

- to be independent and be able to support their families;
- to be married and have a family of their own;
- to have permanent employment and to advance in their career or a part-time position which did not demand too much and provided close supervision and support;
- to stay positive;
- to be involved in self-help projects;
- a change in the technological environment and attitudes of others;
- to take part in sports, movies, play music;
- to help other people with disabilities accept themselves;
- to be accepted by the community;
- to have a centre for quick service with sign language interpreters; and
- to train others, especially other deaf people.

3.8 Summary

The studies in each country set out to explore the effectiveness of skills acquisition strategies for people with disabilities through exploratory surveys and case studies. A major aim was to identify examples of good practice which could be used to improve the effectiveness policy and programmes in the future.

A clear distinction emerged between the study findings for Malawi and Zambia, on one hand and those for South Africa, on the other. In the former two countries, training provision was more in the traditional mode of separate training for persons with disabilities with relatively limited access to mainstream vocational training, when the survey and case study participants were attending training, than in South Africa, where a practice of integration was more in evidence.

In Malawi and Zambia, the findings indicated that training available to people with disabilities did not correspond to the current or emerging opportunities in the labour market or in enterprise, and in some cases involved skills which were both low-level and outdated. The training courses offered to disabled persons in special training centres in particular, often reflected erroneous, stereotypical thinking about their capabilities. Lack of funding to pay training fees was an issue in both countries. The findings indicated that general vocational education and training centres were poorly prepared to accommodate trainees with different disabilities – in terms of preparedness of trainers; accessibility of buildings; accessibility of information; availability of sign language interpretation; accessible transport; vocational assessment and career guidance. It was felt that the standard of training in specialist centres in Zambia was also lower than that in mainstream centres, leaving graduates with disabilities at a comparative disadvantage in their search for jobs. There was some evidence that women with disabilities benefited less than men with disabilities in terms of the relevance of the skills training they attend – further investigation of this indicative trend is required.

In South Africa, participants indicated that there were a number of organizational strategies that give rise to barriers that affect people with disabilities. These included negative attitudes; inflexible training programmes; lack of assistance to find work after training; lack of support in accessing assistive devices; communication breakdown; and lack of access to bridging finance. It was felt that a number of government strategies create barriers for people with disabilities. These included: the method of disseminating information about policy and methods of accessing finance for assistive devices; lack of progress in making the environment accessible; and an education system that is unable to cater to the requirements of people with disabilities. Other unsuccessful strategies included negative attitudes of employers, poor dissemination of information by government and organizational policies that create barriers for people with disabilities, such as inflexible training and employment practices.

When it came to seeking work, the majority of the employed respondents in both Malawi and Zambia had found their job through informal networks while some had found it through the training centres they attended. Few availed of public employment services. The lack of support in the form of access to credit or equipment to start a business was also identified as a constraint. In South Africa, participants commented on their lack of training on how to apply for jobs and how

to manage issues such as disclosure of their disability status when applying for a job.

The findings for Malawi and Zambia point to the need to review existing training provisions and related career guidance and job placement services for people with disabilities, and for the introduction of policy and programme measures to improve opportunities for disabled women and men to have access to training in marketable skills, so that they can obtain decent work. In South Africa, the need to review the effectiveness of the inclusion policy in the Sector Education Training Authorities (SETAs) was emphasized. In all countries, the findings pointed to the need to improve the effectiveness of career guidance and preparation for school to work transition.

Some elements of good practice were identified in the course of the studies. In Malawi and Zambia, the availability of business skills training to disabled persons who completed basic technical skills training and wanted to set up a small business was clearly successful, especially when combined with the provision of some start-up supporting the form of a tool kit or other resources. There was some evidence of willingness of training centre management to waive fees to enable some disabled people to attend training and for some agencies to sponsor education and training for disabled persons who would otherwise not be in a position to attend; these practices could form the basis of a more widespread public policy of scholarships, training allowances and bursaries, so that more disabled persons could benefit.

In South Africa, the study indicated that an adult basic education and training strategy facilitated the progression of deaf persons in accessing training. Distance education institutions' marketing strategies were shown to be effective and attractive to people with physical disabilities in that distance learning has no environmental access barriers. For people with intellectual disabilities, the customizing of training to the individual's impairment, aspirations and interests was found to be effective in leading to a successful outcome. Regarding employment, the study indicated that structured support in the working situation helps the individual. A supported employment approach involving a job coach working with people with intellectual disabilities was highlighted as a positive strategy. The study data indicated that disabled people benefited from the policies in place, in obtaining different positions. It appeared from the findings that training of official staff in government service was starting to have benefits in terms of improving access to employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

While the participating countries varied in terms of the study findings, they all had challenges to face in improving the effectiveness the policies and programmes in place to promote training and employment opportunities for disabled persons. This was reflected in the discussions which took place and the recommendations for further action which were made at national level workshops organized to enable government, employer, worker and disabled persons representatives to meet and debate the findings. These are summarized in the following section.

4. Improving skills development opportunities – What is required?

In each of the countries, a tripartite-plus workshop was organized in 2006, to discuss the study results and make recommendations for future action to improve skills development and employment opportunities for people with disabilities there. This section summarizes the main recommendations made by participants, arising from working group sessions and panel discussions held to discuss the questions:

- What actions need to be taken in order improve the impact of laws and policies concerning the training and employment of people with disabilities?
- What kind of policy approaches should be adopted in order to enhance the access to marketable skills for persons with disabilities, and what strategies are required to achieve it?

4.1 General recommendations

There was remarkable consensus across the countries, at a general level, on the steps which needed to be taken to improve training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. In each of the countries, it was recognized that effective improvement in opportunities open to disabled persons would be possible only if all sectors of government were catered to the requirements of people with disabilities in their areas of responsibility, and if social partners and civil society were also actively involved. In South Africa, it was suggested that the introduction of targets for government officials in relation to implementation might be considered, to ensure that all Departments are more actively involved.

Coordination was essential, though - in South Africa, the Office on the Status of Disabled Persons (OSDP) required strengthening to play a stronger coordination and dissemination role.

There was an emphasis in each case on the need for active partnerships to promote awareness of the abilities of disabled persons and dismantle stereotypes, with the involvement of the media seen as crucial. In Malawi, it was felt that many stakeholders should be involved in order for the developments to be sustainable, and in South Africa, the involvement of employers in such partnerships was seen as a key priority.

4.2 Improving the implementation of laws and policies

The implementation of existing disability-related laws and policies needed to be improved and ongoing monitoring was required to ensure that this happened. In Malawi, participants recommended that the Draft Disability Bill should be enacted into law. In South Africa, participants called for the development of clear guidelines for applying the laws, giving advice on reasonable accommodation, as well as the application of incentives and punitive measures, and for the introduction of a range of additional incentives such as tax rebates to encourage companies to employ persons with disabilities, along with punitive measures for non-compliance with the provisions of the law. In Zambia, it was recommended that incentives and quotas should be considered, as measures to increase training and employment

opportunities of people with disabilities in the country, by encouraging the private sector to employ people with disabilities.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of laws and policies was required. In South Africa, there was a call for the establishment of a structure which includes representatives of the Departments of Education and Labour, the SETAs, DPOs and civil society representatives.

There was also agreement across countries that legislation and policies currently in place needed to be audited from a disability perspective to ensure that existing provisions did not discriminate against disabled people advertently or inadvertently. In Malawi, it was recommended that all policies should be reviewed to ensure that they include a disability perspective. In South Africa, it was recommended that the relevant legislation, including the Constitution (Chapter 2, Section 9), should be reviewed from a disability perspective, involving representatives of disabled persons in this process. In Zambia, it was recommended that all laws and policies, particularly those relating to training and employment, should be effectively reviewed so that they are more relevant to the interests of disabled people and take all pertinent issues into account, making specific reference to disability issues, so as to ensure the inclusion of disabled people. Zambian participants called for consultation on matters concerning people with disabilities as a key element in reviewing legislation and policies to ensure that they address the interests of people with disabilities.

An important aspect of implementation was the allocation of adequate resources. In Malawi, it was felt that government should allocate more resources for the implementation of disability-related initiatives and services, and to the Ministry for Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD) and increase its capacity in general. In Zambia, specific budgets should be allocated for disability issues.

4.3 Skills development policies and programmes

In Malawi, it was recommended that the Plan of Action to implement the National Policy on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities should be disseminated to grassroots level and stakeholders starting from the Permanent Secretary, and Directors should receive sensitization on the implementation of the Plan of Action. The formation of an Inter-Ministerial Task Force to monitor the implementation of the Plan of Action was also suggested. All training providers and especially the mainstream training institutions should be involved in developing equal training opportunities for people with disabilities. In order to facilitate the participation of people with disabilities, clear guidelines should be drawn up on the specific requirements of people with different types of disability.

In South Africa, workshop participants called for skills programmes, learnerships, bridging and life skills courses, and vocational rehabilitation to be accessible to disabled persons, providing them with training opportunities in multiple skills. They also recommended that opportunities should be provided for disabled persons to acquire core skills so as to allow them to perform better in employment; that more short courses should be financed by the National Skills Fund and that more tailored learnerships geared to persons with National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels

1, 2 and 3 should be developed, along with pre-learnership programmes enabling learners to progress into formal learnerships. Steps should be taken to ensure that all training providers are accredited.

The impact of the SETAs' interventions in terms of the number of disabled persons trained who move on to meaningful employment should be reviewed. In particular, improvements should be made to the learnership programme to facilitate that more learnership graduates with disabilities are employed/accessing employment. The SETA communications structures should be reviewed because disabled persons' representatives on SETA boards are not actively spearheading the disability agenda. More SETAs should work closely with disability sector and on training programmes for disabled persons, building, for example, on the successful examples of the Deaf Federation of South Africa (DEAFSA) collaboration with several SETAs. Participants also suggested a conference to review the SETAs and their contribution to skills development for people with disabilities.

In Zambia, opportunities for people with disabilities to have access to as wide a range of skills as non-disabled people should be recognized as central to their economic and social development, enabling them to compete for the few jobs available. Finances should be allocated to the training institutions, to ensure that modern machinery and equipment can be available in training persons with disabilities.

In each country, the need to review entry criteria for training courses was highlighted, so that they do not inadvertently exclude people with disabilities. In South Africa, for example, a review of entry criteria for learnerships was called for, as these are often at NQF level 4, and effectively exclude persons with disabilities with lower levels of education.

4.3.1 Relevance of skills training

In Malawi, there was a strong need to identify marketable skills and to take the requirements of industry into account in designing training courses. The link between training providers and industry should be intensified in order to identify and to provide the skills that the industry needs. Workshop participants felt that training institutions, TEVETA and the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT) should cooperate in designing modules for training courses. Training courses need to be designed and implemented not only by training institutions, but also by local artisans or individual trainers who can provide training in marketable skills. Information about the availability of training in such skills should be disseminated to DPOs and persons with disabilities.

In South Africa, existing SETA skills audits should be used to guide the disability sector, and training and learning institutions, to ensure that training provided by primary, secondary and tertiary level institutions correspond with market needs. A skills development committee will be established including representatives from the disability sector and other key stakeholders.

In Zambia, there should be a policy focus on the introduction of marketable skills. Research should be conducted to determine which skills are marketable in the economy and the National Skills Development Plan should identify the current

demand and future growth areas as well as priority sectors in developing the national skills development strategies. Access to training in these skills should be monitored and evaluated, involving TEVETA and Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD), among other stakeholders.

4.3.2 Affirmative action measures

In Malawi, workshop participants felt that measures of affirmative action should be put in place, to ensure access to skills training and employment. For example, companies should be mandated to employ and train persons with disabilities. There was a suggestion that all the technical colleges should have a quota of at least 10 per cent for trainees with disabilities. Another suggestion was that the Government should put up a new institution to train persons with disabilities in various skills.

In South Africa, it was recommended that workplace audits should be carried out to combat barriers to participation and develop strategies that convince employers' organizations of the contributions disabled people can make to business. Guidelines should be developed assist Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) in accessing assistive devices, provided for under the National Skills Development Strategy (Principle 3).

In Zambia, workshop participants recommended that training centres should be made accessible to all people with disabilities, by removing all infrastructural barriers and making information available in accessible formats, such as Braille and large print. Training institutions should design application forms that indicate a person's ability and disability. Special training should be introduced (for example, Sign language and Braille). A percentage of places in colleges should be reserved for persons with disabilities. Bursaries should be offered to disabled students or trainees in need.

4.3.3 NGO and private sector involvement

In Malawi, it was recommended that NGOs providing services to people with disabilities should also be part of the process of implementing disability laws and policies.

In South Africa, workshop participants placed an emphasis on private sector involvement in collaboration with the SETAs, government departments and the disability sector. It was felt that these stakeholders should be key partners in skills development for disabled persons. Agreements on skills development should be drawn up with employers and other stakeholders, with a view to building capacity to meet employers' needs. Employers, skills training providers and the disability sector should be involved in the designing and approval of learnerships. Incentives should be considered to encourage more companies to engage in on-the-job training and job coaching for people with disabilities, along the lines, for example, of Ireland's successful job coaching projects, especially for people with Down's Syndrome.

In Zambia, participants recommended that employers should be consulted on what skills they require for the jobs they are offering.

4.3.4 Education

In each of the countries, there was recognition of the importance of basic and continuing education and that many disabled persons had not attended school to the same extent as non-disabled children. In Malawi, it was recommended that basic education for children with disabilities should be compulsory. Similar recommendations were made in the workshops in South Africa and Zambia, with an emphasis of access to life-long learning as well as basic education.

4.3.5 Prepare teachers and training environment

In South Africa, it was recommended that training institutions, tutors, courses, admission staff and processes should be assessed to establish how disability-friendly they are and, where relevant, modified to ensure that they are non-discriminatory to disabled persons. SETAs should provide bursary funds to organizations to train coaches and mentors.

In Zambia, it was felt that trainers should be sensitized on support options in training of people with different disabilities.

4.3.6 Training to work transition

In Malawi, it was recommended that effective career counselling and vocational guidance for persons with disabilities should be put in place.

In South Africa, workshop participants agreed that coaches and mentors should be sensitized in how to facilitate persons with different disabilities as they proceed to assist them in advancing within the labour market.

In Zambia, it was recognized that employers play an important role in advising job placement officers about labour market needs, and that this should be encouraged.

4.4 Moving forward

In each of the countries, participants were in agreement that the issues discussed and recommendations made should lead to action.

In Malawi, it was agreed that the Employers' Confederation of Malawi (ECAM) would explore the development of services for people with disabilities, and that training authorities would create closer partnerships with employers in order to be able to design training that meets the needs of the demand on the labour market.

In South Africa, it was felt that recommendations from the workshop report should be taken forward through a committee composed of the participants of the workshop under the lead of the Office of the Status of Disabled Persons (OSDP). A skills audit of disabled persons would be carried out by the OSDP, the Department of Labour and the Thabo Mbeki Development Trust for Disabled People (TMDTDP) to identify skills gaps and develop a ten-year skills development plan.

In Zambia, a review of the Disability Policy was initiated soon after the workshop and is ongoing, with ILO support.

Annex 1: References

Malawi

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