

PROPEL Zambia

Decent work for disabled youth through skills development

Challenge

Technical vocational education and training (TVET) plays a central role in opening career opportunities for people with disabilities through acquiring a craft and developing practical experience and problem-solving skills. Training enhances peoples' earning potential, career progression and employability, and helps school leavers and unemployed persons find ways of earning a livelihood, either through self-employment, setting up a business or getting a job. By having recognized training qualifications young people are in a better position to tackle the discrimination they sometimes face in finding jobs. Yet, across Africa including in Zambia, access to vocational skills training is not available to many women and men with disabilities. When training is provided it is often in segregated settings and not of standards comparable to that offered in general TVET centres. Negative attitudes and public perceptions about persons with disabilities combined with physical barriers and a lack of adapted curricula and training materials present obstacles to accessing opportunities for vocational training open to the general population. The systematic exclusion of young disabled persons from mainstream skills training exacerbates their poverty and limits opportunities in life.

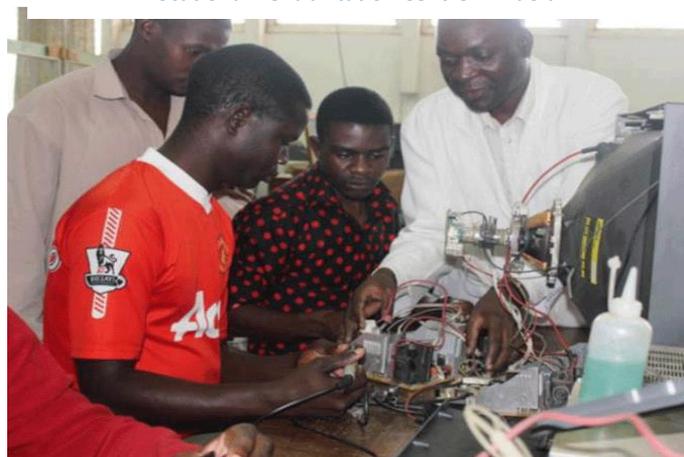
Response

During 2012-13, ILO work in Zambia has concentrated on cooperating with the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, which requested ILO support in the implementation of its Disability Policy adopted in 2007. Through the Irish Aid funded programme on *Promoting Rights and Opportunities for People with Disabilities in Employment through Legislation (PROPEL)*, selected training colleges are being supported to foster learning environments that enable the enrolment and training of persons with disabilities.

Five institutions are participating in the inclusive vocational training pilot initiative: Mansa Trades Training Institute, Kaoma Trades Training College, Lusaka Business and Technical College, Luanshya Technical and Business College, and the National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre in Ndola.

A first step in the process involves accessibility audits based on international standards to identify barriers, measure ease of use of premises as well as options for improving the accessibility of the built physical

Students receiving practical instructions at the National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre in Ndola



environment of the training colleges. In conjunction, the training courses and related materials are reviewed from a disability perspective, to consider the flexibility of the curricula and appropriateness of training materials and tools for students with disabilities. Following this, reports are provided with recommendations to be implemented by the participating colleges and the Technical Education Vocation and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA).

A second and equally important step includes disability awareness training for managers and staff of the training colleges, i.e., instructors, teachers and other training and support staff. ILO Disability Equality Training (ILO DET) is designed to give participants the opportunity to explore, in addition to the physical aspects of disability, how people are disabled by society's barriers and attitudes, and to identify ways in which these barriers can be overcome and attitudes can be positively influenced. A central pillar of this

Results

The colleges supported by the Irish Aid-ILO Partnership have developed their own strategies for ensuring vocational training that includes women and men with disabilities and are implementing the Government's policy on inclusive vocational training with support from the ILO.

Mansa Trades Training Institute had 44 learners with disabilities enrolled during the 2013 academic year (22 male and 14 female) – an increase of two per cent (from 9 to 11 per cent) since 2012 – despite limited resources to support equal opportunities for training. At the college, efforts to facilitate an inclusive learning environment are now visible and include the construction of new ramps in the administration building, and the installation of a new reception cabinet with a low counter to allow wheelchair users and persons of low stature to facilitate interactions with the receptionist and other staff.

At the **Luanshya Technical and Business College (LTBC)**, the ILO's DET has not only been timely and helpful in building knowledge and raising awareness levels among staff on disability and the rights of persons with disabilities, but has also led to the development of an enrolment strategy targeting persons with disabilities which includes advertising in the media, posters, community talks and discussions and strategic networking with individuals and other learning institutions. "Our goal is to be a fully inclusive vocational training institution within 3 to 5 years", says Samuel Moyo, Principal and Chief Executive of the LTBC.

awareness-raising is looking at disability from a human rights perspective.

In parallel to this, the project has cooperated with other agencies in supporting a legal process and policy review and revision, to bring provisions more into line with international standards. Support has been provided to the media in developing greater awareness of the capacities and rights of persons with disabilities through a series of workshop and events.

"To my friends with disabilities: Do not allow others to look down at you because of your condition; step out and interact with the world around you through education. That is how other people will respect us and our rights"

Iness Mwape

Tailoring and design student at Mansa Trades Institute

And finally, at the **National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (NVRC) in Ndola**, which previously catered only to persons with disabilities, has opened its doors to learners without disabilities. College management's decision to accept non-disabled students was based on the need to ensure that the school's learners with disabilities would have exposure to the real world. "When we began our enrolment of non-disabled learners, enrolment was at five per cent of the total enrolled student body but now stands at 10 per cent. With the technical support of the ILO, we now realize that the world has adopted a social model which entails that we need to include persons without disabilities in order to strike a balance," says Mary Kamanga Lungu, principal of the NVRC.

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