

ALWARE!

ASIAN WORKPLACE APPROACH
THAT RESPECTS EQUALITY

A collaborative five-year project to increase employment for men and women with disabilities in India, Nepal and Bangladesh by working with employers and job seekers with disabilities

LESSONS LEARNED



DRPI Vision

▶ **KEY STRATEGIES:**

- Building Knowledge: Employer Workshops
- Bridging the Gap: Training and Job Placements
- Bolstering Success Stories: Celebrating Leaders

▶ **CREATE SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION**

- Employment practices related to disability
- Improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities



Why Include People with Disabilities?

▶ Legal

- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- National regulations and requirements

▶ Economic

- Efficiency and effectiveness of individual businesses
- Growth in consumer demand
- Reduced income inequality
- Workforce Trends and Opportunities

▶ Social

- Benefits of an inclusive society
- Corporate citizenship

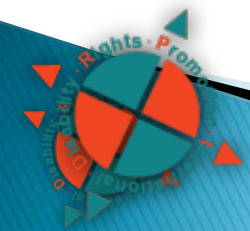


Legal Reasons: The Right to Work – and National Commitments

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

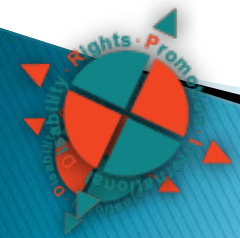
Article 27

“prohibit discrimination in job-related matters, promote self-employment, entrepreneurship and starting one’s own business, employ persons with disabilities in the public sector, promote their employment in the private sector...”



ECONOMIC RATIONALE: The Business Case

- Hiring people with disabilities creates an edge over the competition
- Participation of disabled people in the labour force creates revenue
- Hiring expands marketing and sales
- Engagement of people with disabilities promotes innovation in business



Cost of Exclusion

- Exclusion from labour market results in a total loss of US\$891 million/year in Bangladesh and that income losses among adult caregivers add an additional loss of US\$234 million/year (estimate from World Bank,)
- High losses to GDP.
- Limits diversity in the workplace
- Reduces labour pool
- Innovative disadvantage – product and service development
- Magnifies impact of the loss of labour market because of out-migration – 1500 people per day in Nepal
- Discourages a large body of customers
- Competitive disadvantage
- Reduction of country health status due to economic disparity (OECD figures)
- Increases social unrest



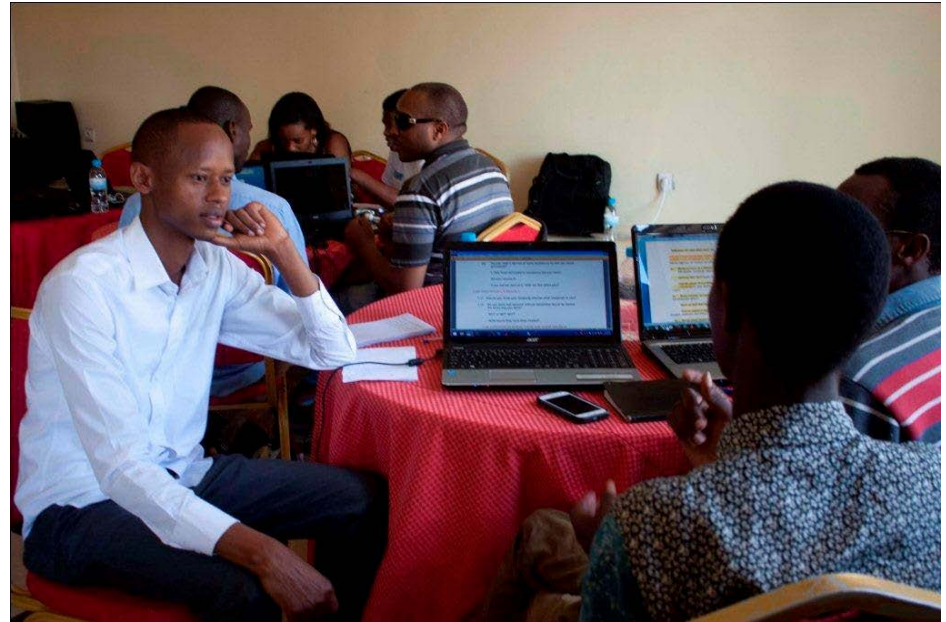
Societal Barriers

- ▶ Presumption that people with disabilities cannot work or do not have skills needed to do the job
- ▶ Lack of accessible public transportation
- ▶ Workplace accommodations not addressed
- ▶ Work times, especially for women and risk if working night hours
- ▶ Letting go of old mindsets
- ▶ Failing to match the skills of the employee and the skills needed on the job - the key to addressing the social barriers



Social Benefits

- Benefits of an inclusive society
- Corporate citizenship
 - Need to move beyond Corporate Social responsibility initiatives to inclusion



Employers Have Told Us

- ▶ They do on-the-job training following their own their training processes & models
- ▶ CVs important but not necessarily a deciding factor
- ▶ Job Fairs have a down-side
- ▶ Fairs set high expectations without always needed follow-up and interviews
- ▶ CVs collected for review often leads to screening out applicants due to misperceptions of disabilities
- ▶ A sustainable and viable hiring model needed
- ▶ Ongoing Relationships are key to meeting challenges as they arise



DRPI: A Focus on Skills

- ▶ A sustainable, viable model markets skills, not disability
- ▶ Move from advocacy to business model
- ▶ Worker is not screened out based on disability
- ▶ Process is the same for high skilled and lower skilled jobs



FOCUS ON Employers

Employer workshops – The HOW?



Creating Inclusive Workplaces

- Importance of corporate leadership to drive culture change
- Confronting myths and stereotypes
- Economic model vs. Charity model
- Accessibility and Accommodation
- Aligning with HR Practices
- Taking Action
- Share success

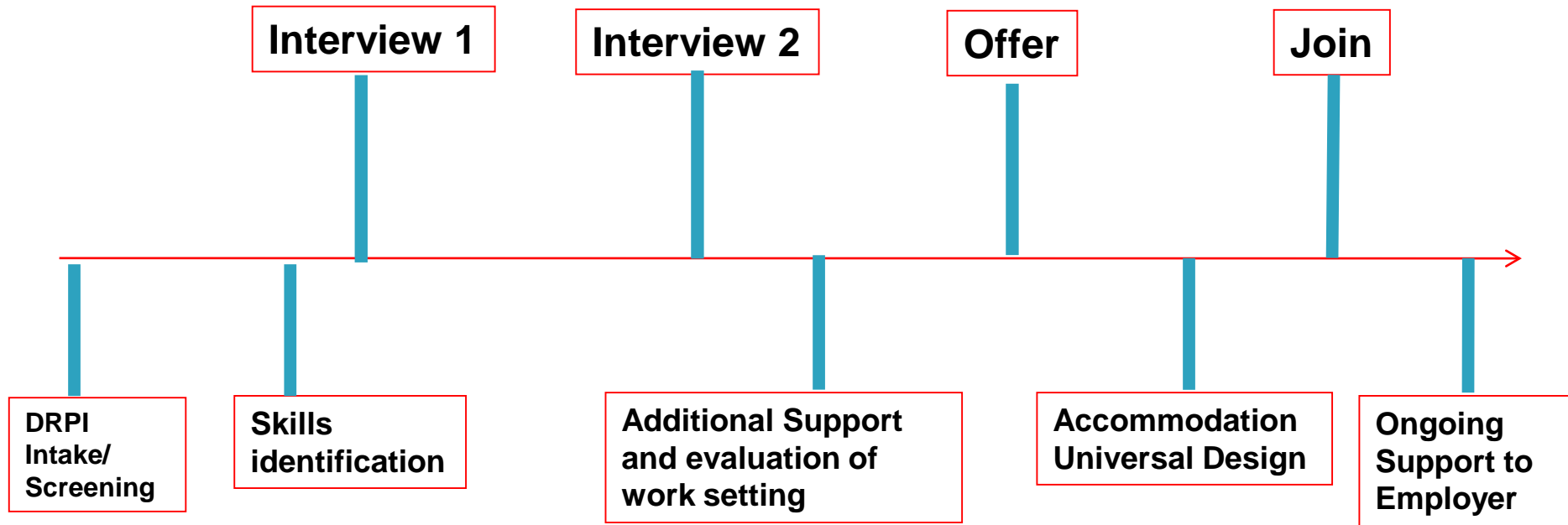


Work Placement Co-ordinators

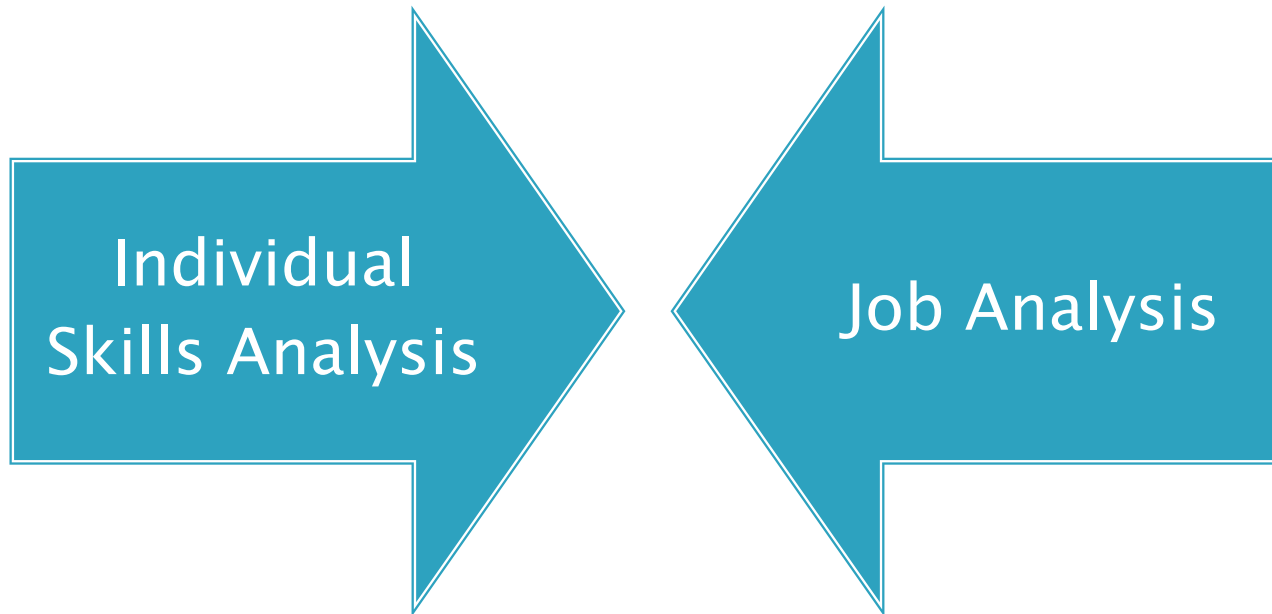
- ▶ **A new approach** – Defining roles and responsibilities.
 - Employment Facilitation vs. Pre-employment training
- ▶ **Responsible to:**
 - Develop and maintain relationships with local employers to develop meaningful, paid employment opportunities for people with disabilities;
 - Work with persons with disabilities to assist with identifying job opportunities that match their skills and work interests and facilitate a successful transition into employment;
- ▶ DRPI provides regular Support and Capacity Building and encourages cross-country dialog



The DRPI Model to Support Process



Sustainable, Viable Model Means a Win–Win



The Process: DRPI Intake – Job Matching

- ▶ Identification of job seekers & skills
- ▶ Work with employers on understanding skills needed for job
- ▶ Match employers and employees
- ▶ Employer satisfaction with work productivity
- ▶ More workers with disabilities employed



Job Seeker's Skills Identified

- ▶ Skill Identification Process is digging deeper into the transferable skills of the job seeker
- ▶ Work Placement Coordinator matches these skills to engaged employers in the business community
- ▶ Allows for the Work Placement Coordinator to match the “skills” without making disability a criterion



The Interview Process

- ▶ Is organic in practice but focused on skills
- ▶ Develops a professional relationship with job seeker
- ▶ Identifies relevant skill information
- ▶ Takes transferable skills into account
- ▶ Determines which jobs people want
- ▶ Determines which jobs people do not want



Job Task Analysis

- ▶ Understand the hidden tasks of the job
- ▶ Job descriptions key to good matching process but works best with on site familiarity
 - Review job description
 - Meet with employer to understand job requirements
 - Site visits to understand environmental issues (transportation, workspace,)
 - Job Process – Production Requirements
 - Develop accommodation plans



Right Candidate for the Job

- ▶ When a job becomes available:
 - *Work Placement Coordinator* reviews job seeker database for available candidates
 - Employer is sent reviewed applications that clearly and closely match the job and the job skills required
 - Potential challenges related to the job are identified before job seekers application is forwarded to employer



Ongoing Relationships are Key

- ▶ *Work Placement Coordinator* plays key role:
- ▶ Individual relationships of employer and *Work Placement Coordinators* allow for open conversations about any workplace challenges
- ▶ People want to do business with people they know



Work Placement Coordinator

- ▶ Stays in contact with employer and new employee
- ▶ Is present in community and business sector providing education and information for future jobs
- ▶ Has ongoing relationships with employer groups, Chamber of Commerce, Industry Associations to access hidden job market
- ▶ Can help ensure work place issues with the new employee can be dealt with.



Lessons Learned

- ▶ Top down management initiatives are needed to encourage equal opportunities
- ▶ Management should have a statement of diversity inclusion
- ▶ Develop company wide inclusion efforts
- ▶ Use the same standards of employment for all employees
- ▶ Determine company wide budget allocations for accommodation costs (usually less than \$US50)
- ▶ Take a proactive approach with other employees when a worker with a disability is hired



More Lessons Learned

- ▶ Let employees identify their needs
- ▶ Transferable skills often undervalued
- ▶ Candidates often reluctant to accept entry level positions
- ▶ Continual reinforcement that building employment experience is key to ongoing success
- ▶ Sign language training gives employees an edge
- ▶ Community Engagement is key: Organize employee & family events



Conclusion

- ▶ Hiring workers with disabilities makes good business sense and it meets human rights commitments
- ▶ Creative, innovative employers and business make the difference and are the ones who make diversity in the workplace happen



Thank you for your attention!

Radoš Keravica

Regional Coordinator for Europe

Disability Rights Promotion International – DRPI

Email: radoskeravica@gmail.com

<http://drpi.research.yorku.ca/welcome-drpi/>

<http://drpittraining.research.yorku.ca/>

