



# Manual for Employability of Persons with Disabilities in Ethiopia



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# **Manual for Employability of Persons with Disabilities in Ethiopia**

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## **Preface**

The Manual on the “Employability of Persons with Disability in Ethiopia “ is part of the Sub-project on the Employability of Graduate Students With Disability in Ethiopia which is Main Project entitled “ Responding to Poverty and Disability through Higher Education and Research (RESPOND-HER). There is also another ongoing component of main project entitled “ The Creation of Inclusive Environment in Institutions of Higher Education in Ethiopia”. They are all financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation whereby the contract is signed between the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation and Research (OeAD) and the University Vienna. We have been closely working in consultation with Professor Dr. Gottfried Biewer of the University of Vienna and his Research Team in the design and development of this Manual. Indeed, the RESPOND-HER Project is a joint venture between Addis Ababa University and University of Vienna.

The Local Research Team Members would like to seize this opportunity and extend their appreciation for the professional input and the commitment the Vienna Research Team has thus far demonstrated to get the whole project in motion and realize its objectives.

Tirussew Teferra, Professor

Local Project Leader

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

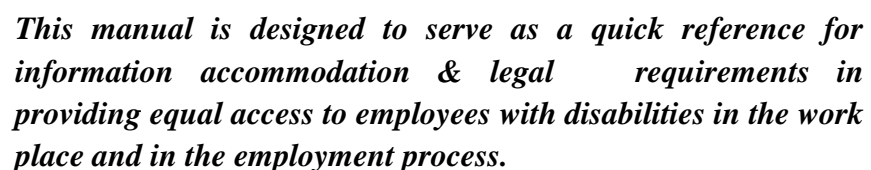
According to the World Health Organization estimates, 10 percent of a developing country's population has some type of disability, and 80 per cent of the world's persons with disabilities live in the developing world. Given Ethiopia's total population figure which is 73,750,932, the number of persons with disabilities (PwDs) that live in the country based on WHO's 10 per cent estimate is more than 7.37 million of which about 5.9 million of them live in rural areas and the remaining about 1.47 million live in cities (CSA, 2007).

These citizens are excluded from most walks of life in all sectors including employment and education. Misconceptions about disabilities combined with lack of knowledge about their potentials of persons with disabilities has contributed a lot to the limitation of employment opportunities (Tirussew, 2005), and women with disabilities are at a further disadvantage because of gender role stereotyping which leads to double discrimination.

Graduates with disabilities in Ethiopia tend to face serious labor market barriers and are at risk unemployment. There are fragmented evidences showing that university graduates with hearing, motor and visual disabilities are not served on equal basis to secure jobs, despite having the required qualifications due to attitudinal and other related factors. The situation seems even worse to female graduates with disabilities than male graduates with disability.

Source: The RESPOND-HER Project research

## 1.2 About the Employability Manual



*This manual is designed to serve as a quick reference for information accommodation & legal requirements in providing equal access to employees with disabilities in the work place and in the employment process.*

This Employability Manual is the child of a research conducted by Addis Ababa University College of Education and Behavioral Studies Special Needs Education Department and Vienna University RESPOND-HER Project team. The research was conducted nation-wide on Employment of graduates with disabilities in Ethiopia.

Many employers who want to hire persons with disabilities have expressed difficulty in finding disability information and sources of job seekers with disabilities tailored to their

needs. While the situation and resources vary in the different countries of the world, this manual can help employers. It lists organizations and sources of information to help employers who value diverse personnel that includes persons with disabilities.

This employability manual encompasses information to support businesses and organizations that want to benefit from recruiting, hiring and retaining people with disabilities as employees. It presents a collection of resources and examples of good practice. Its intention is to help employers learn more about workers with disabilities and the opportunities for hiring them.

Employability includes the following information:

- Information on how to access publications covering the area of employment and disability, many of which are available free and are accessible online;
- A list of web sites that are specific to employer needs or that provide general disability information;
- Examples of company policies and good practices related to employment of people with disabilities;
- A list of national organizations or government offices that provide direct assistance to employers who want to find job seekers with disabilities.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The Manual aims to:

- provide opportunities of productive employment to persons with disabilities and improve their employment prospects in the mutual interest of the employee, the organization and the society in general by facilitating recruitment, return to work, job retention and job opportunities for advancement.
- promote a safe, accessible and healthy workplace.
- ensure that the work environment and working practices do not present prejudices and unreasonable barriers, which may prevent disabled people participating fully in work for which they are suitably qualified within the organization.
- maximize the contribution that employees with disabilities can make to the organization

## 2. Legal and Policy Issues Regarding Employment of Persons with Disabilities

### 2.1 . International Legal and Policy Issues

#### *International Legal and Policy Issues*

- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)'s,*
- *International Labor Organization (ILO) .....*

### United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

#### Article 27 - Work and Employment

- States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labor market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia:
  - Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;
  - Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favorable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment, and the redress of grievances;
  - Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labor and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;
  - Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training;

- Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labor market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;
  - Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one's own business;
  - Employ persons with disabilities in the public sector;
  - Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programmes, incentives and other measures;
  - Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;
  - Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market;
  - Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.
- States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.

Source: International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, 1958, (No. 111).

## 2.2. National Legal and Policy Issues

*National Legal and Policy Issues*

- *The Constitution*
- *Proclamations*






### Key international standards on persons with disabilities and their status

- International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, 1958, (No. 111). Status: ratified, 11 June 1966.
- ILO Convention concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons), 1983, (No. 159). Status: ratified, 28 January 1991.



- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and Optional Protocol. Status: signed on 30 March 2007, ratified.
- Ethiopia also works to implement the Action Plan established for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, extended to December 2019.
- Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, adopted in 1995. Article 41(5) of the Constitution sets out the State's responsibility for the provision of necessary rehabilitation and support services for people with disabilities.
- Proclamation concerning the Rights to Employment for Persons with Disabilities, No. 568/2008, makes null and void any law, practice, custom, attitude and other discriminatory situations that limit equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. It also requires employers to provide appropriate working and training conditions; take all reasonable accommodation measures and affirmative actions, particularly when employing women with disabilities; and assign an assistant to enable a person with disability to perform their work or follow training.
- The Federal Civil Servant Proclamation No. 515/2007 provides for special preference in the recruitment, promotion, and deployment, among others, of qualified candidates with disabilities. This provision is applicable to government offices only.
- Labour Proclamation, No. 377/2003, amended by Labor Proclamation No. 494/2006.
- Developmental Social Welfare Policy 1997, specifically targets people with disabilities and sets out to safeguard their rights and to promote opportunities for vocational rehabilitation.
- National Programme of Action for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, 1999. Aims to take disability preventive measures by promoting community participation; enable persons with disabilities and promote a better standard of living by building their capacity; and ensure their equal rights and full participation in society.
- National Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) provides the framework for national poverty-reduction programmes for 2006-2010 and includes the provision of a safety net for persons in vulnerable situations who cannot work, including persons with disabilities.
- The National Program of Action for Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities (1999) aims to enable persons with disabilities and promote a better standard of living by building their capacity and ensures their equal rights and full participation in society.

These all are few examples. In a nut shell, however, these all are not put in place and are not yet made use of.

Source: Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Ethiopia. ILO/ Irish Aid Partnership Programme, 2009 and Report of RESPOND-HER Research Project

### 3. Disability Awareness for Employers

*A “Person with a Disability” is defined as:*

An individual whose prospects of securing, returning to, retaining and advancing in suitable employment are substantially reduced as a result of a duly recognized physical, sensory, intellectual or mental impairment.

#### 3.1 Persons with disability are:

*Potentials of persons with disability .....*

**“Persons with Disabilities are good workers, try one!”**

#### 3.2 Persons with disability are not:

*Misconceptions about persons with disability .....*

**“Persons with Disabilities are not good workers, do not try one!”**

### 3.3 The Dos and Don'ts of Hiring Persons with Disabilities

Do!	Don't!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand that access includes not only environmental access but also making vacancy announcements accessible to people with visual or hearing problems and alarms/signals accessible to people with hearing loss.</li> <li>• train supervisors on making reasonable workplace accommodations.</li> <li>• learn where to find and recruit people with disabilities.</li> <li>• learn how to communicate with people who have disabilities.</li> <li>• consider having written job descriptions that identify the essential functions of the job.</li> <li>• relax and make the applicant with disability feel comfortable.</li> <li>• provide reasonable workplace accommodations that the qualified applicant with disability will need to compete for the job.</li> <li>• treat an individual with a disability the same way you would treat any applicant or employee, with dignity and respect.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assume that the work environment will be unsafe if an employee has a disability.</li> <li>• assume that reasonable workplace accommodations are expensive.</li> <li>• assume that you don't have any jobs that a person with a disability can do.</li> <li>• assume that a person with a disability can't do a job due to apparent and non-apparent disabilities.</li> <li>• assume that persons with disabilities are unemployable.</li> <li>• assume that persons with disabilities lack the necessary education and training for employment.</li> <li>• assume that persons with disabilities do not want to work.</li> </ul>

**Source:** *Employability a Resource Guide on Disability for Employers in Asia and Pacific, ILO, 2007.*

***Best employers avoid the “Don'ts” and stick to the “Dos”!!!***

#### 3.4 Language in the Workplace

The language with which we talk about disability and refer to people with disabilities is very important because poor choices lead to negative or stigmatizing perceptions that only reinforce false stereotypes and will hurt the morale of any workplace.

Language use can change over time and from person to person, so it is important to be open to input and individual preferences. If you are not sure of what words to use, you may ask the person how he or she refers to him/herself.

- Disabled is the proper term as opposed to “handicapped”. The key is to always identify people as a person or people, as in a disabled person or people with disabilities. Do not use non-personal phrases, such as “the disabled;” it is dehumanizing and seems to reduce people to their impairment.

- Avoid outdated terms such as “handicapped” and “crippled”. Many of these terms are considered derogatory. Although they may have once been common usage, they are no longer acceptable.
- With any disability, avoid negative, disempowering words that invite pity, such as “victim” or “sufferer” and phrases like “in spite of his/her disability.” For many people, their disability is simply a part of their life and not a tragedy.
- Avoid labels that lump people together as a homogeneous group. Labels such as “the disabled” or “the mentally ill” reinforce stereotypes that people with disability are exactly alike by nature of their impairment and are separate from society. They also reinforce stereotypes that people with disabilities are powerless patients.
- For deaf people, avoid the phrase “deaf and dumb”. This terminology is outdated and derogatory. In any case, many deaf people are not silent; they can speak and use sounds.
- The phrase “mentally retarded” is considered outdated and offensive by many. Instead, a person should be referred to as having an intellectual disability.
- Wheelchairs give people the freedom to move. So do not speak of them as if they are confined. Instead say, “he/she uses a wheelchair” rather than “he/she is wheelchair-bound” or “confined to a wheelchair”.
- When addressing someone with a disability, offer him or her same respect as anyone else in the same situation. Do not treat adults as if they were children.

#### 4 Accessibility of Vacancy Announcements

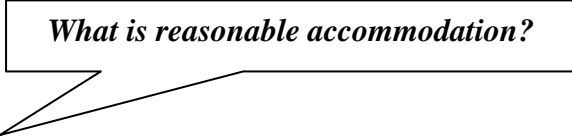
*Are you aware of managers’ responsibilities in recruitment?*

##### **Managers’ Responsibilities- Recruitment and Selection**

- To ensure advertisements, applications are publicized in a non-discriminatory manner through the inclusion of a statement that promotes diversity in employment, and encourages applications from candidates with disabilities.
- Job applicants with disabilities who possess the essential selection criteria should be granted the opportunity of an interview.
- The employer should accommodate adjustments to the recruitment process to enable candidates with disabilities to participate and perform on an equal basis with other candidates. For example, by permitting a sign language interpreter at the interview.

- The human resources division should be familiar with different methods of evacuation for employees with disabilities (wheelchair users or employees with mobility impairments).

## 5 Accessibility in the Work Place



*What is reasonable accommodation?*

### 5.1 Job adaptation

**Job adaptation:** refers to the adaptation or redesign of tools, machines, workstations and the work environment to an individual's needs. It may also include adjustments in work organization, work schedules, sequences of work and in breaking down work tasks to their basic elements.

Adaptations may be required to the workstation to enable the worker with a disability to perform the job effectively.

For some workers with disabilities, it may be necessary to review the job description and make changes- for example by deleting a part of the job which the person is unable to perform and replacing this with another task or tasks.

Flexibility of work schedules can be a significant factor in enabling some individuals with disabilities to perform a job satisfactorily.

The adaptations should be done in consultation with workers with disabilities and their representatives, particularly at an early stage after recruitment, or after an existing employee has acquired a disability.

### Accommodations in the Workplace

The majority of the research participant graduates with disabilities said that there were no modifications made for them in the work environment after they were employed.

The following were the major accommodations suggested by the research participants in their work place:

- Accessible physical environment which is barrier free by modifying path ways, building ramps and maintaining elevators,

- Adaptive technology such as JAWS software installed computers and internet access with essential maintenance,
- Assistive materials such as slate and stylus, Braille, white cane, hearing-aids, sign language interpreter, type writer, brace, wheelchair, crutch,
- Braille books and
- Transportation services.

An accommodation is a modification or adjustment that makes it possible for a person with disability to have an equal opportunity. It may include computer assistive devices, Braille, sign language interpreter services, work schedule modifications, or adjusting or modifying examinations.

Making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; and job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials or policies, the provision of qualified readers and interpreters, and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

## **5.2 Reasonable Accommodation**

All designated employers should reasonably accommodate the needs of people with disabilities which is both non-discrimination and an affirmative action requirement. The aim of this accommodation is to enable the person to perform the essential functions of the job.

### **What is Reasonable Accommodation?**

1. Modification or adjustment to a job application process that enables a qualified applicant with a disability to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires;
2. Modifications or adjustments to the work environment, or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enables qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of that position; or
3. Modifications or adjustments that enable employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations for workers with disabilities can range from simple to complex and cheap to expensive. Accommodations allow the worker with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the job and hence depend on the worker's disability and its effect on performance of essential job functions. Accommodations may include providing written, step-by-step instructions for job tasks; flexible work and leave schedules; rearrangement of work stations for accessibility; alternative key boards, voice recognition software, and mobility or ergonomic assistive devices (Wonacott, 2003).

**Reasonable accommodation measures may also include:**

- Making the workplace more accessible according to the person's needs, for example the removal of physical barriers. Existing facilities can be adapted to make them accessible e.g. building a ramp to ensure wheelchair access and making toilets accessible. Lifts must be equipped with special numbering for blind persons.
- Access to information and technology is very important. This includes adapting existing or acquiring new equipment, e.g. computer hardware and software. Visually impaired persons may require voice input/output (Jaws) software or magnifying software.
- If the job requires action to be taken in response to a signal or sign and the relevant sense is impaired, for example vision, the signal may be converted for another sense and a bell sound may be used instead. Likewise, in the case of hearing impaired persons, a bell sound can be replaced with a signal light flasher.
- Re-organizing workstations to ensure that people with disabilities can work effectively and efficiently for example adjusting work schedules, if necessary.
- Changing training and assessment materials and processes e.g. providing training materials on request in electronic format, Braille or on tape for people with visual disabilities.

**6 Managing Disability in the Work Place**



*What is Managing Disability in the Work Place?*

**Disability Management:** generally refers to a process in the workplace designed to facilitate the employment of persons with a disability through a coordinated effort addressing individual needs, work environment, enterprise needs and legal responsibilities.

**Workplace:** refers to all the places where people in employment need to be or to go to carry out their work and which are under the direct or indirect control of the employer. Examples include offices, factories, plantations, construction sites, ships and private residences.

### **Developing a strategy on disability management in the workplace**

- Employers should consider the management of disability issues in the workplace a priority task which contributes to business success, and regard it as an integral part of the workplace human resource development strategy.
- The disability management strategy should be formulated in accordance with national legislation, policy and practice, taking account of national institutions and organizations in the field.
- In formulating a strategy for managing disability issues in the workplace, employers should collaborate with worker representatives and consult workers with disabilities or their representatives.
- The strategy at workplace level should complement the human resource development strategy in its aim to maximize the contributions and abilities of all staff, including those with disabilities and support adherence to occupational safety and health standards and related early intervention and referral procedures in accordance with the principles of this code.
- The disability management strategy could consider provision for workers with disability who hold family responsibility.
- The disability management strategy in the workplace should include provision for consultation from the employment service or other specialist agencies, where necessary, to ensure that the individual with a disability is well-matched to the job in terms of ability, work capacity and interest, as is usual in recruitment procedures.

## **7 Opportunities of Employing Persons with Disabilities**

*There are opportunities in employing persons with disabilities*

Hiring workers with disabilities can positively impact a company's bottom line. Here's why:

- People with disabilities make good, dependable employees



- Employers of workers with disabilities consistently report that, as a group, people with disabilities perform on par or better than their peers without disability on measures such as productivity, safety and attendance.
- People with disabilities are more likely to stay on the job. The costs of job turnover, such as lost productivity and expenses related to recruitment and training, are well known to most employers.
- Hiring people with disabilities increases workforce morale.
- Many employers report that teamwork and morale improves when workers with disability become part of the staff.
- People with disabilities are an untapped resource of skills and talents
- People with disabilities have skills that businesses/ organizations need both technical job skills and transferable problem-solving skills developed in daily life.

## 8 Tips for Employers of Persons with Disabilities

*Important Tips for Employers (in relation to the findings of the RESPOND-HER project research).....*

### Research Participants Reflections on the Way Forward

There is a need for:

- creating awareness raising programs, on equal job opportunities, establishing organization who work for the rights of persons with disability, establishing guiding principles.
- implementation of conventions, policies, proclamation should be done.
- teaching the society about people with disabilities through different medias that they can be good workers.
- advocacy work by government concerned bodies.
- employers to know legislations related to employment of person with disabilities.
- legislations and proclamations to be distributed to employers.
- the government to make managers have positive attitude.
- a practical policy should be made by involving scholars with disability.
- more focused policies are needed in addition to the existing legislation.
- special employment policy with protocols must be designed.
- revised policy and procedures and making employers and PwDs aware.

- providing guidance, counseling and orientation through training.
- distributing the legislation to employers and training them on how to implement it.
- providing affirmative action; put special and visible affirmative action of employment opportunity for persons with disabilities.
- fulfilling facilities & providing modifications.
- expansion and use of technology.
- awarding organization that employ PwDs by reducing tax.
- empowering national associations to collaborate with employers.
- fulfilling braille, computers, etc.

### **8.1 Suggestions to improve the employment conditions**

- Empowering persons with disabilities through education.
- Introducing affirmative action, announcement encouragements, etc.
- Mainstreaming disability issues and creating barrier free environment in the work place.
- Sensitizing employers.

*Source: The RESPOND-HER Project Research*

#### **Listed are some more examples of adjustments:**

- Making adjustments in access to premises/work stations.
- Acquisition of appropriate equipment or modification of equipment as required.
- The grant of leave from work as reasonable for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment.
- Provision of training and retraining as reasonably required.
- Provision of special safety features as reasonably required.
- Ensuring appropriate supervision/mentoring.

### **8.2 General Tips for Communicating with People with Disabilities**

- When introduced to a person with a disability, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands. People with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb can usually shake hands. (Shaking hands with the left hand is unacceptable greeting.)
- If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions.
- Treat adults as adults. Address people who have disabilities by their first names only when extending the same familiarity to all others.

- Relax. Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions such as "See you later," or "Did you hear about that?" that seem to relate to a person's disability.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure of what to do.

### **8.3 Tips for Communicating with Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired**

- Speak to the individual when you approach him or her.
- State clearly who you are; speak in a normal tone of voice.
- When conversing in a group, remember to identify yourself and the person to whom you are speaking.
- Never touch or distract a service dog without first asking the owner.
- Tell the individual when you are leaving.
- Do not attempt to lead the individual without first asking; allow the person to hold your arm and control her or his own movements.
- Be descriptive when giving directions; verbally give the person information that is visually obvious to individuals who can see. For example, if you are approaching steps, mention how many steps.

If you are offering a seat, gently place the individual's hand on the back or arm of the chair so that the person can locate the seat.

### **8.4 Tips for Communicating with Individuals who are Deaf or Hard- of- Hearing**

- Gain the person's attention before starting a conversation (i.e., tap the person gently on the shoulder or arm).
- Look directly at the individual, face the light, speak clearly, in a normal tone of voice, and keep your hands away from your face. Use short, simple sentences. Avoid smoking or chewing gum.
- If the individual uses a sign language interpreter, speak directly to the person, not the interpreter.

### **8.5 Tips for Communicating with Individuals with Mobility Impairments**

- If possible, put yourself at the wheelchair user's eye level.
- Do not lean on a wheelchair or any other assistive device.
- Never patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder.
- Do not assume the individual wants to be pushed- ask first.
- Offer assistance if the individual appears to be having difficulty opening a door.

- If you telephone the individual, allow the phone to ring longer than usual to allow extra time for the person to reach the telephone.

### **8.6 Tips for Communicating with Individuals with Speech Impairments**

- If you do not understand something the individual says, do not pretend that you do. Ask the individual to repeat what he or she said and then repeat it back.
- Have patience. Take as much time as necessary.
- Try to ask questions which require only short answers or a nod of the head.
- Concentrate on what the individual is saying.
- Do not speak for the individual or attempt to finish her or his sentences.
- If you are having difficulty understanding the individual, consider writing as an alternative means of communicating, but first ask the individual if this is acceptable.

### **8.7 Tips for Communicating with Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities**

- If you are in a public area with many distractions, consider moving to a quiet or private location.
- Be prepared to repeat what you say, orally or in writing.
- Offer assistance completing forms or understanding written instructions and provide extra time for decision-making. Wait for the individual to accept the offer of assistance; do not “over-assist” or be patronizing.
- Be patient, flexible and supportive. Take time to understand the individual and make sure the individual understands you.

#### **Remember:**

- *Relax.*
- *Treat the individual with dignity, respect and courtesy.*
- *Listen to the individual.*
- *Offer assistance but do not insist or be offended if your offer is not accepted.*

## **9. The Way Forward/ Future Directions**

To achieve real progress, a concerted and well-coordinated effort must be made on the part of governments and the community sector, working in partnership with employers to achieve the following key goals:

1. Eliminating aspects of social and industrial policies that create disincentives for people with disabilities to take up employment;

2. Examining the reasons for the growth in welfare reliance among people with disabilities and the factors that need to be addressed to stem unacceptable exit rates from the labor force;
3. Providing enhanced employment opportunities for people with disabilities through training, workplace support and community education;
4. Providing consistency and ease of transition between programmes that aim to assist people with disabilities in education, training, pre-employment, employment and return to work;
5. Improving community awareness of the benefits of increased employment for people with disabilities and recognizing employers who make a commitment to employ workers with disabilities;
6. Ensuring that employers are not liable for the costs of adjustment where government measures lead to significant change in the composition of labour markets.

## 10. Questions to ponder

- *Is the organization inclusive of persons with disabilities?*
- *What is the opportunity for hiring people with disabilities?*

The following questions are intended as an aid in assessing an organization's ability to accommodate employees and trainees with disabilities. Your answers to these questions will be helpful information for prospective applicants as well for your own periodic internal monitoring purposes.

1. Does your company have a disability policy and an action plan, as an integral part of a general plan, to safeguard equal access for customers, employees and trainees with disabilities regarding premises, operations, products and services?
2. Does your company have a budget for the action plan, a coordinating office and/or designated officer in charge of its implementation throughout the company system?
3. Does your company have a budget for making additional adaptations, over and above the general measures, for individual employees and trainees with disabilities? Are there state subsidies available for this purpose? Would foreign trainees have to contribute towards these costs?
4. When advertising job vacancies, internships and traineeships, do you state that qualified people with disabilities are welcome to apply?
5. Is your company web site fully accessible to people with different disabilities?

6. Is printed material available in alternative formats?
7. Are there any “way-finding” aids (tactile markers, etc.) on the company’s premises?
8. Do the lighting conditions in the various parts of the premises take into account the needs of persons with sight impairments?
9. Do the acoustic conditions in the various parts of the premises take into account the needs of persons with hearing impairments? Are there optical equivalent solutions for acoustic signals, such as emergency sirens?
10. Are qualified sign language interpreters for Deaf persons available or can they be recruited? Are they available for foreign trainees who might need these services?
11. Can employees and trainees with learning disabilities request that routines, instructions and supervision be adapted to their needs?
12. Is the air quality in the various parts of the premises suitable for persons with allergies, asthma and substance sensitivities?
13. In what way does the company’s physical environment take into account the needs of persons with physical disabilities, such as wheelchair users regarding parking, outdoor pathways, entrances, moving between different floors, hallways, offices, meeting rooms, production and storage facilities, cafeterias, Gyms, toilets?
14. Do geographical distances between different parts of the company require transportation for persons with ambulatory limitations, and how is this need solved?
15. What are the possibilities for trainees with disabilities to obtain suitable housing near their place of work?

## **11. List of Websites and Institutions that can Provide Graduates with Disabilities in Different Fields of Study**

- Addis Ababa University Special Needs Support Office (AAU SNSO),  
Tel. office: 0025111222737    email: sewalemtsega@yahoo.com
- Ethiopian Center for Disability Development (ECDD), Mob. : 00251911165996  
Web: [www.ecdd-ethiopia.org](http://www.ecdd-ethiopia.org).

## **12. Best Practices: Organizations which benefited a lot by Employing Persons with Disabilities**

- Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ethiopia: has employed highly competent blind lawyers and as to the interview made in the RESPOND-HER project, they indicated that they are very proud of them and they do not want to miss them.
- Ethiopian Center for Disability Development (ECDD): were also very proud of responding that more than 60% of the employees are persons with different disabilities and diverse university level qualifications.