



# EMPLOYMENT FRAMEWORK FOR JOB SEEKERS WITH DISABILITIES AND EMPLOYERS

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFD) extends its heartfelt gratitude to Sightsavers for their invaluable support, without which the development of this Employment Equity Framework would not have been feasible. This support has significantly empowered GFD's members and individuals with disabilities, enabling them to sustain their advocacy efforts and promote effective inclusion within the Ghanaian business landscape, spanning both formal and informal sectors.

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We extend our sincere appreciation to each member of the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, the Trades Union Congress, the National Labour Commission, and the Employment, Technologies, and Innovations Committee of GFD for their extensive professional guidance, knowledge sharing, and contributions, which have significantly enriched the framework.

GFD encourages its members and stakeholders to utilize the Employment Equity Framework to advance their advocacy efforts for disability inclusion within Ghanaian society, as well as to enhance the representation of persons with disabilities within the labor market.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Development of Employment Framework for Job Seekers with Disabilities and Employers" is a comprehensive guide aimed at promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities in the workforce. This framework outlines key principles and practices to support individuals with disabilities in securing meaningful employment.

Key components of the framework include guidelines for mandatory open competition in advertising vacancies, contract renewals, standardized job descriptions, and a recruitment model focused on transparency and objective criteria. The document also emphasizes the importance of skills training, CV development, and tailored vocational programs for job seekers with disabilities, particularly in the informal sector.

Furthermore, the framework highlights the significance of setting realistic business targets, maintaining good record-keeping practices, and fostering partnerships and mentorship opportunities for self-employed individuals. It also addresses the need for regulatory compliance, competency development, and effective termination processes to ensure a supportive and inclusive work environment for all.

By promoting accessibility, capacity building, and collaboration with stakeholders, this framework aims to empower individuals with disabilities to enhance their employability skills, pursue career growth, and contribute meaningfully to the workforce. Through a holistic approach that addresses various aspects of employment, the framework seeks to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for job seekers with disabilities in Ghana.

Finally, this document encourages a significant shift from traditional and menial jobs to technologically driven ones since they are the key determinants of more sustainable jobs into the future. The use of Artificial Intelligence and related field should be the highest priority for skills training from 2023 to 2027. Analytical Thinking is set to account for 10% of training initiatives on average, and the second priority for workforce development is Creative Thinking. Skills in Artificial Intelligence and Big Data is the number three priority in company training strategies from now until 2027 and number one for companies with more than 50,000 employees. Artificial Intelligence and Big Data rank 15<sup>th</sup> as a core skill for mass employment. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to venture out of the status quo and take on more challenging tasks in the labour market and seek to develop entrepreneurial mindset as well.

It is also expected that employers will apprise themselves of the legal framework (local and international) that regulates employment of persons with disabilities. In this vein, the recommendation is that a stakeholders' forum is organised for employers (present and prospective) in order to synchronise the basic provisions of persons with disabilities as required.

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## **PREAMBLE**

This employment framework supports the goal of building and sustaining a disability friendly culture among organisations in Ghana. It is produced for GFD under the **Sightsavers Economic Empowerment Project**. The intention is to ultimately create more and quality opportunities for Persons with Disabilities with regards to jobs and employment.

The framework has been developed as a tool for best practice to facilitate the employment of Persons with Disabilities thereby increasing their rate of employment. Users of the framework are encouraged to review their existing structures and build upon them by incorporating the recommendations and other appropriate best practices to achieve the overall objectives.

The framework exists to enable Persons with Disabilities meaningfully contribute their quota in the growth of society. This will eventually ensure the existence of an avenue to give them confidence and assurance of employment and move away from other non-dignifying means of earning a living.

It sets out principles, policies and guidelines for the employment of women and men with disabilities to boost their employment rate. The framework covers recruitment, training, career development and employment including future employment opportunities.

This framework defines the relationship between employers and employees for the purpose of providing services and receiving reward by way of wages or salaries. It does not cover third party relationships which are considered as independent contractors where the employer will not have influence or direction over the task to be performed. It also prescribes some key factors to be considered for those who want to be self-employed and have business orientation in mind.

## a) INTRODUCTION

According to a survey conducted on the Future of Jobs 2023 report published by the World Economic Forum, majority of companies will prioritize women (79%), youth under 25 (68%), and those with disabilities (51%) as part of their DEI programmes.

The future of work is taking on a different dimension. According to Harvard Business Review, 90% of present jobs will be replaced and another 90% of tomorrow's activities will be enhanced by Artificial Intelligence (AI). The implication of this finding is that everybody - either in employment or seeking employment - will have to continually consider which aspects of their job will remain useful and upgrade or face irrelevance.

The skills required for many jobs have changed by 25% since 2015, and that number is expected to double by 2030. This brings to the fore the critical need for job seekers to reconsider their skill set and make it appropriate for any required job. As skills evolve, one needs continuous upskilling to keep pace.

At European Union (EU) level, only 50.6% of persons with disabilities are employed, compared with 74.8% of persons without disabilities (Nancy, 2017). Moreover, the last country report of the Academic Network of European Disability experts reveals that women with disabilities, young disabled persons, and persons with high support needs are more likely to be discriminated against and excluded from the labor market (Grammenos, 2017).

Paradoxically, recent studies underlined the positive consequences for organizations that hire Persons with Disabilities, in terms of productivity, loyalty, and lower turnover intentions. In particular, a study by Houtenville and Kalargyrou (2012) showed that organizations tend to recruit Persons with Disabilities to increase retention and productivity; similarly, Hernandez and McDonald (2010) argued that employees with disabilities seem to be more loyal to their own organization than employees without disabilities. Likewise, a study by Romano (2003) on turnover intention in a call center revealed a lower turnover rate (approximately 8%) among Persons with Disabilities than an average rate of 45%.

Moreover, job inclusion of Persons with Disabilities seems to be a strategic decision also in terms of Employer Branding because it is able to improve the image of the company, as well as of the business. A positive work environment is often associated with a more fruitful commitment of workers (Friso and Scollo, 2018). Therefore, the need to support and encourage a social and cultural inclusion-oriented approach that is able to promote autonomy and participation of Persons with Disabilities in the work world is evident.

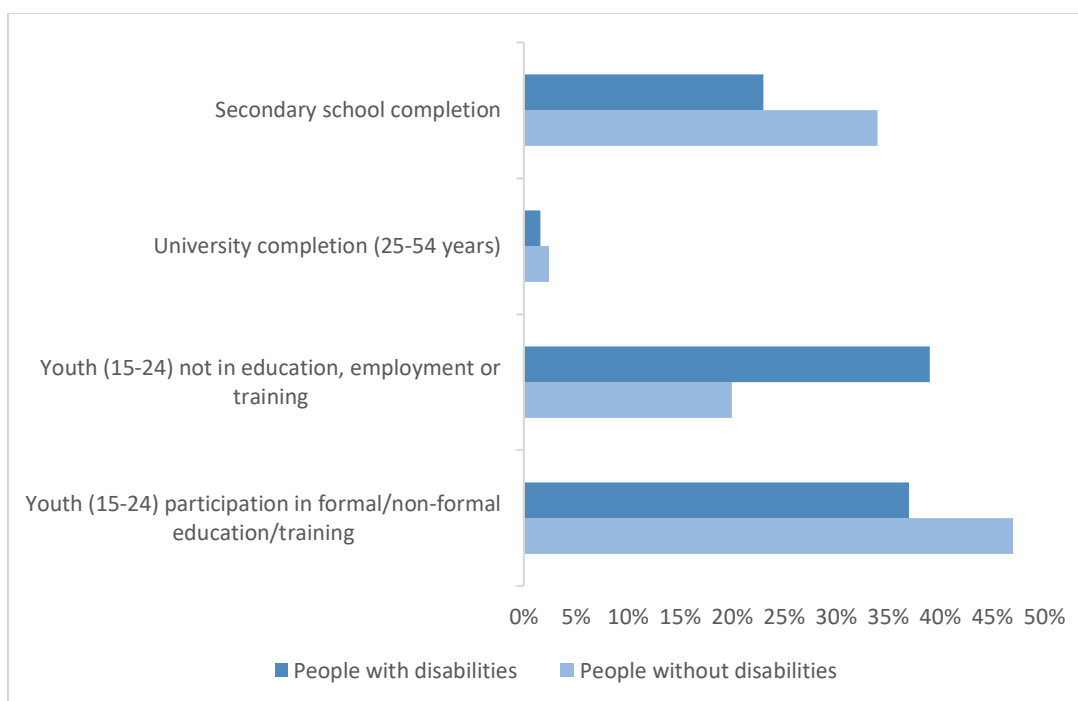
However, progress toward comprehensive inclusive employment is hampered by numerous barriers. The first one is represented by the substantial differences in perceptions of the employers and employees regarding the positive benefits of employing Persons with Disabilities. According to Ramachandra et al. (2017), some of the barriers faced by the employees with disabilities included lack of physical access to the worksite and within the worksite; communication and information barriers; and lack of training opportunities. A study by Saunders and Nedelec (2014) underlined that Persons with Disabilities view employment as a means of expressing their worth in a society, which places barriers in their path both for education as well as for employment opportunities.

## **b) BACKGROUND AND GAP ANALYSIS**

Studies conducted in African nations indicate that individuals with disabilities can attain economic success when provided with appropriate support. Consequently, integrating investments in education and employment opportunities for people with disabilities should be considered an integral aspect of broader development initiatives. This approach is justified both economically and ethically, aligning with principles of social justice.

Persons with disabilities in Ghana face significant barriers to employment, resulting in lower employment rates compared to the general population. Many individuals with disabilities struggle to secure stable and decent employment opportunities. Some persons with disabilities who are employed may face underemployment, where their skills and qualifications are not fully utilized.

The 2021 Population and Housing census estimated prevalence of disability to be 1.8%. Evidence suggests that inclusive education is not widely implemented in Ghana. People with disabilities, particularly women, face many barriers to employment. The national policy framework is supportive and aligns with the UNCPRD, though implementation has been reported as challenging.



*Figure 1: Data on education for people with and without disabilities in Ghana*

Discrimination and stigma against persons with disabilities remain prevalent in the workplace. Negative attitudes and misconceptions about disability can limit employment prospects and opportunities for career advancement. The lack of access to quality education and vocational training programs can hinder the acquisition of necessary skills for competitive employment. Insufficient accommodations in educational institutions further exacerbate these challenges. Many persons with disabilities in Ghana are engaged in the informal labor sector, where employment conditions are often unstable and unprotected. Informal labor can lead to limited access to social protection and benefits.

Below are findings regarding gaps identified on engagement of Persons with Disabilities in addition to some suggestions and recommendations.

#### **a. Priority 1: Education and Skills Development**

Findings:

- Limited access to quality education and skills training for persons with disabilities.
- Insufficient accommodations in educational institutions

Gaps:

- Disparities in educational opportunities hinder skill development.
- Lack of accessible educational facilities creates barriers.



#### Comments and Suggestions:

- Persons with Disabilities: Request accessible educational materials and inclusive curricular.
- Employers: Support inclusive educational initiatives that provide relevant skills.

#### Recommendations:

- Develop inclusive vocational training programs.
- Promote accessible educational materials and technologies.
- Encourage partnerships between educational institutions and employers for skills development.

### **b. Priority 2: Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodations**

#### Findings:

- Physical and digital accessibility barriers in workplaces and public spaces.
- Limited awareness of reasonable accommodation.

#### Gaps:

- Inadequate accessibility prevents equal participation.
- Employers lack guidance on providing accommodation.

#### Comments and Suggestions:

- Persons with Disabilities: Advocate for accessible environments.
- Employers: Seek support in implementing accommodations.

#### Recommendations:

- Conduct accessibility audits in workplaces and public spaces.
- Establish a national fund for reasonable accommodations.
- Develop guidelines for employers on implementing accommodations.

### **c. Priority 3: Awareness and Sensitization**

#### Findings:

- Prevalent discrimination, stereotypes, and stigma against persons with disabilities.
- Limited awareness and understanding of disability-related issues.

#### Gaps:

- Negative attitudes perpetuate employment discrimination.
- Insufficient awareness campaigns hinder progress.

#### Comments and Suggestions:

- Persons with Disabilities: Call for campaigns to challenge stereotypes.
- Government Agencies: Commit to promoting awareness.

#### Recommendations:

- Launch nationwide awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes.
- Incorporate disability awareness training into educational curricula.

#### d. **Priority 4: Legislation and Policy Reforms**

##### Findings:

- Inconsistent enforcement of existing disability-related laws.
- Gaps in the legal framework that hinder disability inclusion.

##### Gaps:

- Lack of enforcement undermines legal protections.
- Outdated policies do not address current challenges.

#### Comments and Suggestions:

- Government Agencies: Acknowledge the need for policy reforms.
- Employers: Seek incentives for hiring persons with disabilities.

### c) **OBJECTIVES**

The broad objectives for developing the employment framework with specific focus on women and men with disabilities are outlined below:

- Building the capacity of job seekers with disabilities.
- Building the disability-confidence of employers.
- Advocating for relevant inclusive labour laws that will be practiced.
- Connecting demand and supply of skills and labour.
- Support persons with disabilities to have skills in engaging private and public sectors for a greater disability inclusive policy ecosystem.
- Discovering persons with disabilities with passion to be entrepreneurs and encourage them.
- Increasing labour force participation.
- Removing systemic policy barriers to employing persons with disabilities

#### **d) METHODOLOGY**

In developing the framework, we used the following approach:

- Diagnosed economic growth and employment challenges in the country with specific on persons with disabilities.
- Analyzed the current structure of employment in a country with data, especially sectoral employment and output growth rates, as well as the structure of employment by type.
- Established a clear picture of employment challenges and opportunities of persons with disabilities.
- Designed appropriate interventions to promote employment opportunities to maximize effectiveness and reduce the need for future social assistance.

## e) RELEVANT LAWS

### **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD): Ghana ratified the UNCRPD in 2012, demonstrating its commitment to the rights of persons with disabilities. The UNCRPD has implications for employment as it calls for equal access to employment opportunities, reasonable accommodations, and the elimination of discrimination.

#### **Article 27 – Work and Employment**

1. 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 labour 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:
  - a) 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;
  - b) Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable 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;
  - c) Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;
  - d) Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training;
  - e) Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;
  - f) Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one's own business;
  - g) Employ persons with disabilities in the public sector;

- h) 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;
- i) Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;
- j) Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market;
- k) Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.

2. 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.

#### **Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715)**

The Persons with Disabilities Act is a comprehensive legal framework in Ghana that addresses the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities. It recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to work and calls for equal employment opportunities. The Act prohibits discrimination on the grounds of disability in various aspects of life, including employment.

#### **Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651)**

The Labour Act contains provisions that apply to all workers, including persons with disabilities. It outlines general employment standards, such as working conditions, hours of work, and termination of employment. Employers are required to provide safe working environments and reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities.

#### **National Disability Policy, 2000, Education Act, 2008**

Ghana's National Disability Policy outlines the government's commitment to promoting the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. It sets out strategies for increasing employment opportunities, access to education, and social integration.

#### **Exemptions Act, 2022, Section 10**

Disability-related items are exempt from payment of customs duties and customs taxes on books, publications, documents and vehicles specially designed for use of persons with disability. Other items specially designed for the education, scientific or cultural advancement of persons with disability imported by institution and approved by the Minister responsible for Social Welfare.

## f) FOCUS OF EMPLOYMENT TYPES

There are several categories of jobs or employment types such as full time, part-time, contract, permanent. However, this employment framework has two main categories of jobs viz those in waged/salaried employment and self-employed persons engaged in all types of jobs including business development activities.

### a. **Waged/Salaried Employment**

This category includes those in formal employment or the steady regular jobs in private firm or in the public sector and those in the informal sector who earn wage work on traditional production. Units such as farms, microenterprises, seasonal work on construction sites or in factories or wage work in households, such as security guards, housekeeping, or childcare constitute wage income.

### b. **Self-Employed Persons Including Business Development Activities**

This second category covers persons with disabilities who are vision bearers of business ideas and want to venture into their own businesses including those who have business development acumen. They may be engaged in businesses as employers with established entities or sole proprietors.

- i. **Self-employed Persons with Disabilities in the Formal Sector**
- ii. **Self-employed Persons with Disabilities in the Informal Sector**

## g) STAKEHOLDERS

There are six key broad stakeholders who will have to play their roles effectively in ensuring that the environment for prospective employees with disabilities are suitable aimed at boosting the employment rate among this marginalised population of the country.

The stakeholders are government, employers, job seekers with disabilities, private recruitment agencies and organizations of persons with disabilities.

### a) **Government**

It is incumbent that the government ensures all prescribed and applicable laws that champion the cause of persons with disabilities are rightly enforced. This will make the various workplaces more accommodating and dignifying.

**b) Employers (Public and Private)**

In designing the employment framework focused on persons with disabilities, the cooperation of prospective employers is key. They are largely responsible for ensuring that job seekers are properly accommodated and equipped with the right skills and working environment so they can deliver their optimum.

**c) Employees (Job Seekers With Disabilities)**

Job seekers who have some form of disability must not stay on the fence with the hope that they will automatically be considered for employment. Similar to all other job seekers, they must be active job seekers and develop themselves in fitting into the job space. This type of involvement boosts their confidence and ensures that they excel on the job because they would have earned the place on merit.

**d) Private Recruitment Agencies**

There are several private recruitment agencies who provide services tailored to the needs of job seekers aimed at securing them jobs. These agencies remain extremely relevant because of their ability to properly match employees with employers. In the space of persons with disabilities, these agencies must be oriented to understand the peculiarities of this category of job seekers and liaise to meet such need.

**e) Business Development Service Providers**

There is a very important stakeholder in the self-employment and entrepreneurship space, and this is Business Development Service Providers. They mostly source for grants to train MSMEs. They will need to be educated and trained on disability issues and get their buy-in onto the agenda.

**f) Persons with Disabilities Organisations and Civil Society Organisations**

Several organizations in Ghana work to represent and support the work of persons with disabilities. These organizations serve as important stakeholders due to their unique roles, expertise, and advocacy efforts.

The Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations (GFD) is a prominent umbrella organization that brings together various disability-specific organizations in Ghana. It serves as a primary stakeholder because of its extensive reach and influence in the disability community. GFD advocates for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in various aspects of life, including

employment. In order for any prescribed policy that concerns the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities in Ghana, GFD and all its affiliate members must work together to provide advocacy and expertise required for inclusive workplace practices job seekers.

Additionally, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) help champion important national discourses such as the rights of Persons with Disabilities and must be roped into the development of employment policy.

## **h) EMPLOYMENT FRAMEWORK/GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

It is recommended that this framework be duly considered and adopted as a useful guide by all the identified stakeholders in order to realise the objectives as outlined.

Below are some specific roles, responsibilities and requirements from each of the four stakeholder groups.

### **A. Government**

The government is responsible for policy development and enforcement of prescribed laws. It must also ensure the implementation of UNCRPD compliant employment legislation/policy and facilitate incentives for inclusive employment. The backing of the government through its agencies will ultimately bring tremendous advantages to persons with disability who have peculiar challenges.

- i. As an Employer  
Since government is also an employer, the guidelines recommended under Employer (private and public sector) are also applicable to it.
- ii. Funding for skills training  
Provide funding for skills training as an effective intervention available to governments seeking to connect talent to employment. Funding for skills training of persons with disabilities is crucial in making them more relevant to modern demands.
- iii. Establishment of Employment Centres  
It is imperative to connect the demand and supply of skills and labour of persons with disabilities. Refreshingly, the current employment law makes provision for employment centers in all districts across the country. However, this seems to have found



space only in our statute books in the face of the large unemployment situation. We recommend enforcement of the law in establishing employment centres in all the districts. Additionally, these centers must be well resourced to be able to function as envisaged. They are to be bridges and the first point of call for people seeking employment.

The various centers are supposed to have a comprehensive database, amongst others, of all job categories, industries requiring personnel, location of firms and contacts, etc.

#### **A. Employers (private and public organizations)**

Organizations have the onerous responsibilities to be fair minded in their approach to employing persons with disability rather than marginalizing them.

##### **i. Vacancies and Attractions:**

It is important that any vacancies for which applications will be sought should be accessible by all persons for inclusivity especially for persons with disabilities. There is evidence to suggest that persons with disabilities may struggle to access certain recruitment platforms. Considering these challenges when designing and creating any vacancies will help extend the diversity of application.

- Details of roles must be broadly inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Organisation reviews each vacancy, reviewing both the job description and person specifications, and ensuring that it is open to recognising talents and does not exclude Persons with Disabilities unnecessarily.
- Organisation should consider how some persons with disabilities may need support to be able to access the opportunity.

##### **ii. Sense of Belonging.**

Employees, especially persons with disabilities need some form of conviction that they will be accepted at the prospective

workplace and that the organisation is the right place for them. This implies also that the work atmosphere must be devoid of discrimination.

iii. **Raise Awareness:**

Ensure non-discriminatory approach from recruitment through evaluation to promotion of employees. Integration into employment by educating staff to accept persons with disabilities and offer assistance when required.

iv. **Levelling Exercise:**

Identifying what roles exist and matching them with employees. Develop a Handbook that clearly outlines how employees with disabilities will be treated in terms of career development and personal development. Organisations are encouraged to develop an internal policy document that outlines the strategy for persons with disabilities including clear career path and building an inclusive culture.

v. **Training Opportunities.**

Creation of mentorship programs that pair employees with experienced colleagues who can provide guidance and support.

vi. **Right Tools for the Job.**

Provision of adaptive technology and tools that enable them to perform their job or educational tasks better.

vii. **Operate Open Lines Of Communication.**

Create an environment where workers feel comfortable providing feedback, suggestions and opinions. Both positive and constructive feedback should be seen as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

viii. **Flexible Work Arrangements.**

Offer work arrangements that accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities, such as modified work schedules or remote work options.

Additionally, employers must take care of the six (6) key stages of the employee life cycle, as follows;

## 1. **Pre-Recruitment**

The process of formally establishing, describing and advertising a research position are necessary prerequisites to the recruitment process, and are set out in this section.

### 1.1 **Position Approval**

As vacancies become available, positions must be formally established within the relevant units through job requisition process, which will include;

- appropriate sign off by the delegated authority, and
- considered decision making in relation to the level/grade of the role.

In limited circumstances approval may be sought for contract renewals. These circumstances will be set out in strict institutional guidelines, example, to complete a level on the framework.

### 1.2 **Job Descriptions**

The organization is encouraged to develop a set of common general job descriptions for all positions. The job descriptions are template based, and set out the job purpose and position summary, along with the principal duties and responsibilities, and a generalised person specification upon which recruitment and selection decisions will be based.

It is envisaged, that in practice, the standard job description will adequately cover approximately 90% of the required content, which may be supplemented by the organisation, as required, through the addition of role-specific content.

### 1.3 **Advertising of Vacancies**

One of the core principles of ensuring equity is open competition. On that basis, and to maximise equality of opportunity, advertising of positions for open competition is mandatory. Advertised positions will remain open for applications normally for 2 weeks, and at a minimum, for a period of one week in duration. (In certain situations, where further vacancies are anticipated in the short term, a panel may be formed which may be drawn down when a suitable vacancy becomes available). Job advertisements should be placed on websites. In addition, institutions may elect to advertise vacancies in additional sites and/or publications as appropriate.

## 2. **Recruitment**

The recruitment model should be designed in furtherance of the objectives of generally accepted practices. Overall, the organization should notify candidates of the details of the recruitment competition as part of the advertised documentation.

Typically, the methods listed hereunder will be utilised, with the integrity of the process underpinned by the use of objective criteria and the recording of the basis of any decisions.

2.1 Pre-screening to check eligibility.

2.2. Shortlisting of candidates for interviews

2.3 Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by the appropriately constituted Selection Committee.

a) **Selection Committees**

The selection committee will be independent and objective, make best practicable use of the expertise of external members and its composition should be appropriately diverse and include disability right advocate.

b) **Selection Criteria**

Evaluation criteria will be consistent with the requirements of the position and in accordance with laws guiding employment of persons with disabilities.

c) **Outcomes**

The basis of the selection decision and any supporting evidence must be documented.

Interviewed applicants may receive feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their application.

## 3. **Pre-Employment And Contracting**

### 3.1 **Pre-Employment Checks**

Appointment of candidates who have been recommended for appointment following interview, will be subject to a number of standard pre-employment checks in line with institutional HR practice. These may include medical screening, as well as reference and qualifications checks.

### **3.2 Contracts of Employment**

Appointment will be to fixed term specific purpose contracts in accordance with the level of the position in the Salary and Grading Structure.

The objective grounds for the offer of fixed term appointments, which will be reflected in contracts of employment, is as follows;

This is a professional training and development role relevant to this position and will be completed within the contract period. The objective grounds for this must be for a legitimate cause.

### **3.3 Salary**

#### **a) Starting Pay**

Appointment of persons with disability will be on to the salary scale applicable to their grade, as set out in the organisation's conditions of service. In relation to starting pay for researchers, appointment to the minimum point on the relevant scale range is the default policy position, in line with government policy.

#### **b) Pay Progression**

Annual pay progression will be subject to satisfactory performance and in line with organizational policy, which will incorporate the basis of progression.

### **3.4 Formal Appointment**

Following acceptance of appointment by the successful candidate, the employee is formally appointed onto the staff of the organization in line with standard nomination and appointment processes.

## **4. Orientation**

As soon as a staff is engaged, the organization should facilitate a clear and structured orientation programme so that they are enabled to contribute effectively to the department, and to maximise their professional and career development from the employment opportunity as early as possible in their appointment.

This is to ensure that there is a seamless progression from day one, welcome and settling in, through to delivering on project objectives, and on to short-, medium- and long-term career development planning.

## **5. Professional and Career Development**

In the context of this framework, the employer should be committed to creating an environment that supports and facilitates work progressing their own professional and career development as part of a structured continuum of development.

Accordingly, as early as possible after their appointment, the staff is provided with the relevant information and tools which are designed to;

- Outline and explain the details of the career development framework and process;
- Introduce the staff to the Core Competencies which are a foundation for Development Planning;
- Outline the career development planning process, their role;
- Provide template documentation for self-assessment, objective setting, and planning;
- Outline the development opportunities that will be made available, and;
- Clarify the level of development goals expected to be achieved, and how these will be documented.

### **5.1 Competencies**

There is increasing recognition of the importance of employees developing a portfolio of transferable skills so that they have the flexibility to pursue successful careers beyond academia, in industry, the community and voluntary sector, public administration, or elsewhere. Employees with one form of disability or the other are no exception. They must be able to align their set of competencies to underpin all phases of the career development program from recruitment through to career planning.

### **5.2 Probation**

Employees will fulfil a probationary period within the first year of appointment with the organisation, and in this time the employee will be required to demonstrate their suitability for continued employment under the terms of their contract.

## **6. Termination**

It is important that the termination process is handled clearly and positively. The termination process will include;

- Interaction between Human Resource and the Head of Unit to confirm contract end date and to arrange communication with the employee.
- Timely communication to employee of contract end date, and support options available to the employee.

### 3. Employees (Job Seekers with Disabilities)

The Employment Framework for job seekers caters for those who will be on waged or salaried and self-employed persons and business development oriented.

#### i. Waged or Salaried

Generally, job seekers with disabilities should increase their employability skills through:

##### ➤ Personal Fit

This will help determine whether the prospective job seeker will excel in the chosen area being considered and ultimately deliver his or her utmost. This is considered by weighing the person's strengths and interests which makes the person more than likely to succeed in the envisaged role.

##### ➤ Possess Career Capital

The skills and output an employee brings to bear in meeting the overall objectives are relevant and worthy of consideration. Prospective job seekers must possess the right skill that match the anticipated job role in order to make them feel more connected.

##### ➤ Employee Confidence Building

The ecosystem in the labour market is such that employers are more inclined to engage prospective employees who possess enormous amount of confidence. Confidence building is a sought-out trait that must be pursued as part of positioning and pitching. Generally, persons with disabilities automatically assume they are in a disadvantaged position as a result of existing stigmatisation, and this invariably lowers their confidence level. There have been several cases where Persons with Disabilities were unable to cross the line after attending interviews mainly because they could not articulate their points due to lack of self-confidence.

Persons with disabilities should not sell their disability in the hope that they will be given preferential treatment. Certainly, disability is not inability! Persons with disabilities must prove that they are equally capable staff with equal abilities. It all starts and ends in the mind.

➤ **Personal Grooming And Confidence**

A key impression one can carry is to conduct himself or herself in a manner that will sell properly and send the appropriate message. The need for personal grooming cannot be overemphasized. Mentorship initiatives whereby, creating mentorship programs that pair experienced employees with disabilities with newcomers, providing guidance, encouragement, and career advice. Facilitate peer support groups where employees with disabilities can share experiences and offer mutual support, this will consider their mental health and serve as support as part of their personal grooming.

➤ **Right Mindset**

Have the right mindset of being an ambassador of the organisation rather than just a employee.

➤ **Training And Career Development Opportunities**

Maximise any existing opportunities for self-development because it has future benefits with its competitive advantages.

➤ **Develop Leadership Skills**

Leadership skills do not come by chance but has to be nurtured and consciously developed. Amidst the volatile, uncertain and complexities associated with work, a successful leader needs to be adept.

ii. **Self-employment and Business Development Activities (Microentrepreneurs)**

There are women and men with varied entrepreneurship acumen, and they must be supported and admonished to set up their own businesses. This category of people are blessed with entrepreneurial skills to own and run their businesses, and this could be either in selling of goods, manufacturing or providing services.

However, there are certain critical success factors and some sound principles that entrepreneurs are encouraged to be guided by in order to thrive. These are equally applicable to persons with disabilities who are entrepreneurially minded.



The following are recommended practices that can help self-employed persons grow their businesses organically and make them more enduring. Persons with disabilities and prospective entrepreneurs are encouraged to adopt them.

➤ **Carrying out unbiased feasibility**

The mere fact that one has a business idea may not automatically translate into a sound business venture, hence the need to conduct professional evaluation devoid of any prejudices. If the results of the survey work prove negative, it is advisable to stay put and reconsider the dynamics rather than being bent on getting into the business at all cost. It is always necessary to test the market and ascertain all the fundamental issues including demand before venturing into the business on a full-scale dimension.

➤ **Right Business Model**

Every business has its own dynamic model that makes it thrive and must be sought for and applied appropriately.

➤ **Financial Goals And Milestones**

The set up of the business must have financial goals and key milestones that will serve as a guide in steering its direction. For instance, the start-up enterprise is likely to witness losses within the first two years and possibly start breaking even and subsequently realise profit. Without setting up realistic targets, the entrepreneur may be disappointed.

➤ **Business Entity Concept**

One common bane of most self-employed persons is their inability to distinguish between their interest and that of the business. They tend to assume that business owner has automatic right to the assets and resources of the entity, thereby co-mingling their personal affairs with that of the business which invariably results in improper accountability and ends stifling the growth of the business.

➤ **Networking and Partnerships**

Networking in business is very essential. It is an ecosystem that has vast opportunities once it is utilized properly. It has been proven that

familiarity makes people very comfortable to open and share ideas without inhibitions. Business development entities or self-employed should not shy away from collaborating with like-minded people and take advantage of any synergies that exist. However, it is important to draw a charter that will guide the relationship in ensuring that everybody is on the same wavelength.

➤ **Growth Mindset**

It is important to build on the various talents of the business owner and employees with one of four mission critical soft skills - communication, teamwork, problem-solving and leadership – in order to drive business growth.

➤ **Guidance And Mentorship**

It is always recommended that one finds a good mentor to guide the direction of the business, especially those who have succeeded in that endeavour. This type of arrangement is a priceless resource. Nothing feels better than a warm and welcoming hand.

➤ **Regulatory Compliance**

Depending on the type of business one engages in, there are several regulatory and local agencies that must be respected such as being compliant with regulatory bodies such as Office of the Registrar-General, Ghana Revenue Authority, SSNIT, etc.

➤ **Good Record Keeping And Producing Financial Reports**

Certain critical decisions are required at every stage of the business, and this is made with the keeping of good books of accounts which results in the generation of reliable financial report. Additionally, good record keeping helps to meet all regulatory issues and challenges that come up.

➤ **Human Resources**

One key strategy in running an effective business is the recruitment of the right people. All employees must have contracts in place, have an operating manual or conditions of service that clearly spells out matters such as leave days, benefits, incentives, when work starts and closes, etc.

➤ **Customer Service**

Customer service must not be taken for granted. The customers of the business are key stakeholders who generate revenue for the organization. It is pivotal to recognize the importance of an organization's customers and accord them with preferred services and products.

➤ **Online Presence**

All entrepreneurs must build an online presence by having a website and social media handles and manage them regularly. Having an online presence helps to stimulate interest and promotes businesses.

➤ **Governance**

It is strongly recommended that all self-employed have a good board in place. This adds value to the business with their expertise.

➤ **Work Location**

The advent of COVID-19 brought in its wake the huge possibility of working from home and achieving equal results with tremendous benefits. One may decide from home and or get a reasonable priced office depending on the type of business.

➤ **Maximise provision in Income Tax Act**

The Income Tax Act makes provision for disability relief, and it is important these benefits are explored and exploited. According to the Ghana Revenue Authority, persons who satisfy the Commissioner-General that they are disabled enjoy disability tax relief. The relief is 25% of the disabled person's income from business or employment which is an approved deductible allowance intended to lessen the individual's tax burden (Internal Revenue Act, 2000 (Act 592).

➤ **Pension/Retirement**

Entrepreneurs, especially those in the informal sector, invariably tend to not factor retirement planning in their businesses and this becomes a toll on their future sustenance. The 3-Tier Pension scheme allows self-employed persons to contribute under the various schemes aimed at securing their future. Presently, SSNIT has the Self-Employed Enrolment

Drive where self-employed persons can join and enjoy the benefits of a secure future. This scheme will boost the success rate of entrepreneurs and serve as a major catalyst for employment.

**iii. Understanding the Context for Persons with Disabilities in the Informal Sector:**

**1. Accessible Information Dissemination**

Ensure that information about available resources, training, and support services reaches the informal sector, using multiple communication channels. This includes community radios, local meetings, and information centers in their vicinity.

**2. Customized Training Programs**

Develop vocational training programs specifically designed for Persons with Disabilities in the informal sector, considering their abilities and needs. These programs should focus on relevant skills and business knowledge tailored to various disabilities.

**3. Mobile Disability Resource Centers**

Establish mobile centers equipped to provide guidance, counseling, and support specifically for Persons with Disabilities in informal settings. These units can travel to remote areas, offering information and services closer to their communities.

**4. Collaboration with Disability-Focused NGOs**

Partner with disability-focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs) already working within informal communities. These organizations often have the trust of Persons with Disabilities and can facilitate engagement and support services.

**5. Financial Assistance Programs**

Introduce financial assistance schemes or grants aimed at supporting Persons with Disabilities in the informal sector to start or enhance their businesses. These funds can cover equipment costs, accessibility improvements, or business development.

## 6. **Peer Support Networks**

Foster networks among Persons with Disabilities in the informal sector to share experiences, knowledge, and solutions. Peer support can offer valuable insights and encouragement for others facing similar challenges.

## 7. **Customized Business Support Services**

Offer tailored business guidance, such as mentorship and business management training, addressing the specific challenges faced by Persons with Disabilities in operating within the informal sector.

## 8. **Advocacy for Inclusion**

Advocate for the inclusion of disability considerations within broader policies affecting the informal sector. This includes advocating for accessibility standards, fair treatment, and opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

## 9. **Sensitization and Awareness Campaigns**

Conduct awareness programs within informal communities to dispel myths and misconceptions about disabilities. This can encourage more inclusive attitudes and opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

## 10. **Legal Assistance and Rights Education**

Provide legal guidance and education on the rights of Persons with Disabilities in the workplace and society. This empowers individuals to assert their rights and seek recourse in cases of discrimination or unfair treatment.

## **I. EMPOWERMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

The highest priority for skills training from 2023 to 2027 is: Analytical Thinking, which is set to account for 10% of training initiatives on average, and the second priority for workforce development is Creative Thinking. Skills in Artificial Intelligence and Big Data is the number three priority in company training strategies from now until 2027 and number one for companies with more than 50,000 employees. Artificial Intelligence and Big Data rank 15<sup>th</sup> as a core skill for mass employment. AI and Big Data is also the most strongly prioritized skill in:

- Insurance and Pensions
- Management
- Media, Entertainment and Sports;
- Information and Technology Services

- Telecommunications
- Business Support
- Premises Maintenance Services
- Electronics industries

### 1. **Capacity Building of Persons with Disabilities**

There are many persons with disabilities who have gone formal education and acquired relevant skills, knowledge insights and abilities that are useful at the workplace. We should be able to organise training sessions and seminars that will focus on the dynamic and changing environment in the workplace that makes employees as key assets.

Continuous professional development or training is a recommended approach to dealing with any shortcomings on the part of employees. It therefore follows that persons with disabilities seeking employment will be in a better stead to realise that objective once they build their knowledge base and are acquainted with recent developments rather than being satisfied with the status quo.

### 2. **Skills to Navigate the Labor Market and Work Environment**

Skills improve employment prospects, even though they do not generate jobs directly or guarantee an increase in earnings. They include cognitive, socio-emotional, technical or vocational, and firm-specific skills. Individuals entering the labor market, especially, need information about careers, employment opportunities, earnings in different jobs and occupations, and the behavior that is expected of them during the job search and on the job.

### 3. **Recommendations for skills**

- i. Ensure that all labor force entrants have foundational cognitive and socio-emotional skills.
- ii. Develop work-readiness behaviors and expose youth to workplaces, preferably while they are still in school.
- iii. Finance technical training only with demonstrable value and additionality.

#### 4. **Reserved Opportunities**

There are numerous job roles that require remote working. Most of such work should consciously be ceded to qualified persons with disabilities in order to reduce their mobility.

#### 5. **Employability Skills**

In order to secure a job or be a successful business owner, six core skills are paramount. These essential theme skills, in order of importance, are:

- i. Digital skills
- ii. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills
- iii. Interpersonal skills
- iv. Marketing skills
- v. Practical skills
- vi. Writing skills.

In ensuring the employability skills of persons with disabilities, there should be a Career Transition Program (CTP) for students with disabilities (SWDs) to prepare and train them for the job market. Skills training in the field of employment is provided to SWDs in the implementation of CTP. Basic academic skills, emotional management skills, communication skills, and self-management skills are essential traits to ensure a successful CTP training output.

#### 6. **Developing CV**

It is reported that there are thousands of résumé resources available to college-level job seekers, combining a skill-focused résumé with a self-marketing plan can help stand out from other similarly qualified graduates while minimalizing job gaps or sparse work history. Persons with disabilities must endeavor to produce CVs that are relevant to jobs being sought.

## J. RECOMMENDATIONS

There is the need to:

- Strengthen enforcement mechanisms for anti-discrimination laws.
- Review and amend existing policies to enhance disability inclusion.
- Introduce incentives for employers who hire persons with disabilities.
- Launch nationwide awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and promote inclusivity.
- Incorporate disability awareness training into the curriculum for educational institutions.
- Develop vocational training programs tailored to the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Promote the use of accessible technologies and facilities in education and workplaces.
- Establish disability resource centers to provide guidance and support to employers.
- Conduct regular accessibility audits in workplaces and public spaces.
- Establish a national fund to support reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities.
- Access to education must be compulsory for all TV stations to make provision for sign language interpreters.
- Subsidise braille acquisition to schools for the blind in ensuring that they are well educated.
- Call for greater awareness of the capabilities of persons with disabilities.



## **K. CONSEQUENCES OF NEGLECT**

It is imperative that women and men with disabilities who are seeking jobs are encouraged to obtain meaningful ones and not neglected for reasons including the following:

- not breaching human right record provisions
- living a decent and dignified lifestyle
- empowering marginalized and often neglected people in society to have good economic livelihood
- sustaining their families without societal burden
- economic and human capital development

## **L. DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND RECOVERY PLAN**

Considering that disasters are sometimes inevitable and can have very dire and unintended consequences, it is imperative to have some form fall back. The effect is normally on persons with disabilities who are naturally disadvantaged. A disaster recovery plan is recommended to be followed through aimed at mitigating any negative consequences.

Creating a disaster recovery readiness plan for persons with disabilities in the event of a disaster is crucial to ensure their safety and well-being. Such a plan should address the unique needs and challenges faced by persons with disabilities. Here's a general outline for a disaster recovery readiness plan for persons with disabilities:

By implementing a comprehensive disaster recovery readiness plan tailored to the needs of persons with disabilities, organizations, communities, and government agencies can better ensure the safety, well-being, and inclusion of all individuals during and after a disaster.

### **1. Pre-Disaster Preparedness**

Identify potential disasters relevant to your geographic location and assess the specific risks, challenges and impact on persons with disabilities. Maintain a registry of employees, residents, or community members with disabilities. Assess their specific needs and requirements for evacuation and support. Establish accessible and alternative means of communication for persons with disabilities to receive emergency alerts and information. Ensure these alerts

are available in multiple formats including braille, large print and accessible digital formats.

## **2. Evacuation Plans**

Identify accessible evacuation routes, which should include ramps, elevators, and accessible transportation options. Assign trained staff or volunteers to assist persons with disabilities during evacuation. Identify accessible evacuation centers equipped with necessary facilities and resources, including accessible restrooms, power outlets for medical devices, and accessible sleeping areas.

## **3. Support Services**

Ensure that there is access to medical personnel, medications, and medical equipment for persons with disabilities, especially those with specific health needs. Provide emotional support services for persons with disabilities, recognizing the stress and anxiety that may result from a disaster.

## **4. Shelter and Housing**

Ensure that emergency shelters are fully accessible and meet the needs of persons with disabilities, including those with mobility, sensory, or cognitive impairments.

## **5. Transportation**

Ensure that accessible transportation is available for evacuation and provide sign language interpreters and other communication support for persons with disabilities who may have difficulty communicating.

## **6. Reunification and Recovery**

Develop a plan for reuniting persons with disabilities with their families or caregivers in the aftermath of a disaster. Establish support services and resources to help persons with disabilities recover from the impact of the disaster.

## **7. Training and Drills**

Train staff, first responders, and volunteers on how to assist and communicate with persons with disabilities in emergency situations. Conduct regular emergency evacuation drills involving persons with disabilities to ensure readiness.

## **8. Evaluation and Improvement**

After each disaster, review the effectiveness of the plan and identify areas for improvement. Seek feedback from persons with disabilities to understand their experiences and needs during and after a disaster.

## **M. CONCLUSION**

Addressing the key priorities identified in this report requires a concerted effort from government agencies, employers, disability organizations, and civil society. Implementing the recommended actions will pave the way for a more inclusive labor market in Ghana, fostering diversity, economic growth, and improved quality of life for persons with disabilities. It is imperative to prioritize these actions to create lasting change and promote the full participation of persons with disabilities in the workforce.

The tide of alarming rate of unemployment amongst persons with disabilities must be stemmed otherwise they may be forced to join their peers on the street. In developing an employment framework targeted at persons with disabilities, there must be an atmosphere of purposeful engagement, so they are not left behind. There is an urgent need for enforcement of the prescribed laws so the inclusive agenda can be duly realised on otherwise the little gains made will be eroded resulting in avoidable consequences.

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