Cornell University
ILR School

Cornell University ILR School
DigitalCommons@ILR

GLADNET Collection

Gladnet

1-1-2004

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003

Padmani Mendis
International Labour Office

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Gladnet at DigitalCommons@ILR. It has been accepted for inclusion in GLADNET Collection by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@ILR. For more information, please contact jdd10@cornell.edu.

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003

Abstract
[Excerpt] *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003* is descriptive in nature. When the ILO commissioned the researchers for the *Country Study Series*, each was asked to follow the comprehensive research protocol appended to this document. The resulting report therefore includes country background information, statistics about people with disabilities and their organizations, a description of relevant legislation and policies and their official implementing structures, as well as the education, training and employment options available to people with disabilities. While few countries have such information readily available, researchers were asked to note the existence or lack of specific data points and to report data when it did exist.

Keywords
disability, Sri Lanka, training, employment, public policy

Comments
http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect/469

This article is available at DigitalCommons@ILR: http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect/469

AbilityAsia Country Study Series

International Labour Office

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003

Padmani Mendis

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003

An *AbilityAsia* Country Study

Padmani Mendis

International Labour Office

Copyright © International Labour Organization 2004
First published 2004

Publications of the International Labour Office enjoy copyright under Protocol 2 of the Universal Copyright Convention. Nevertheless, short excerpts from them may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to the Publications Bureau (Rights and Permissions), International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. The International Labour Office welcomes such applications.

Libraries, institutions and other users registered in the United Kingdom with the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4LP [Fax: (+44) (0)20 7631 5500; email: cla@cla.co.uk], in the United States with the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923 [Fax: (+1) (978) 750 4470; email: info@copyright.com] or in other countries with associated Reproduction Rights Organizations, may make photocopies in accordance with the licences issued to them for this purpose.

ILO/Mendis, Padmani
Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003
Bangkok, International Labour Office, 2004

ISBN 92-2-115881-0 (Web pdf format)

The designations employed in ILO publications, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the International Labour Office concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed in them.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the International Labour Office, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

For information on how to obtain this publication, please write to the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, 11th Floor, United Nations Building, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand [Fax: +66 2 280 1735, 288 3062; E-mail: bangkok@ilo.org]. Catalogues and lists of recent and forthcoming ILO books are available free of charge from the same address. ILO publications can also be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or direct from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address, or by email: pubvente@ilo.org

Preface

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003 is part of the *AbilityAsia Country Study Series.* The series was designed as a contribution to the end of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, and to mark the 20th anniversary of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Convention No. 159 Concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons).

One of the primary objectives of the series is to contribute to the knowledge base on people with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. According to World Health Organization estimates, people with disabilities represent 10 per cent of the population of developing countries. Yet, in many countries people with disabilities are "invisible". Little reliable data exists about their numbers, needs and achievements. While they are recognized as among the poorest of the poor, people with disabilities typically face barriers to the very services that might lift them out of poverty, such as education, vocational training, and employment and business development services.

Another objective of the *Country Study Series* is to provide baseline data about the status of education, training and employment for people with disabilities. This takes on greater significance in light of the ESCAP proclamation to extend the Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, for another decade, 2003-2012. In October 2002, governments from across the region adopted the Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities as the regional policy guideline for the new Decade of Disabled Persons. The BMF includes targets and actions in several priority areas, including training and employment. With regard to the BMF, *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003* should prove useful as an evaluation tool since it provides a baseline description of the situation in Sri Lanka against which progress can be compared.

The BMF includes the ILO's principle of decent work − defined as, "productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity for women and men everywhere". Further, the BMF's employment and training targets call upon countries to mainstream (integrate) vocational training programmes, collect reliable employment and self-employment rates for people with disabilities and consider ratification of ILO Convention No.159. The Convention, among other things, requires a national policy of vocational rehabilitation and employment based on the principles of equal treatment and equal opportunity for workers with disabilities.

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003 is descriptive in nature. When the ILO commissioned the researchers for the *Country Study Series*, each was asked to follow the comprehensive research protocol appended to this document. The resulting report therefore includes country background information, statistics about people with disabilities and their organizations, a description of relevant legislation and policies and their official implementing structures, as well as the education, training and employment options available to people with disabilities. While few countries have such information readily available, researchers were asked to note the existence or lack of specific data points and to report data when it did exist.

Since the lack of information about people with disabilities contributes to their invisibility and social exclusion, the information itself is important. The protocol called for limited analysis and did not specifically ask for the researchers' recommendations. However, researchers were asked to report on existing plans and recommendations of significant national stakeholders.

Upon completion of the draft country studies in the series, they were shared with participants of the ILO/Japan Technical Consultation on Vocational Training and Employment of People with Disabilities, held in Bangkok in January 2003. The consultation was a regional meeting of governments and representatives of workers', employers' and disabled persons' organizations from across the region. Each country team was asked to review the country study reports and make comments with regard to accuracy, omissions and content of the report.

As noted, the main purpose of the series is to describe the employment and training situation of the country at a particular point in time. While most of the studies in the series are based on data collected in 2002, *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003* was updated to include some significant developments. These include policy initiatives, such as the National Policy on Disability for Sri Lanka, which was approved in July 2003, and further developments by the Employers' Network on Disability. This document therefore provides a fairly current description of the situation in Sri Lanka.

The ILO wishes to acknowledge Development Cooperation Ireland, whose resources contributed to the research project that resulted in the *AbilityAsia Country Study Series.* The ILO also wishes to acknowledge Debra A. Perry, the ILO's Senior Specialist in Vocational Rehabilitation for Asia and the Pacific, for her technical oversight and hard work in designing and coordinating the overall project. Dr. Padmani Mendis, the consultant who researched and wrote *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Sri Lanka 2003*, deserves special recognition. Dr. Mendis developed original surveys and conducted many interviews, in addition to consulting a wide range of research sources, including government reports and those published by other relevant organizations in order to compile an accurate and comprehensive study. Dr. Mendis kindly updated the report to reflect major developments in the Sri Lankan situation. Members of the ILO support staff also made significant contributions, in particular Sugunya Voradilokkul, who supported the project from its inception, Teerasak Siriratanothai, whose computer expertise made the Web publication a reality, and Taveevan Pinsuvan who prepared this final document for publication.

To the reader, whether you are an academic, researcher, policy maker, practitioner or an individual with a disability, we hope you will find the information you are looking for in these pages.

For more information about the *AbilityAsia Country Study Series* or to learn more about the ILO Convention No. 159 or other issues related to employment and training of people with disabilities in the region, please visit the AbilityAsia Web site: www.ilo.org/abilityasia.

For more information about the ESCAP Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, visit www.unescap.org/esid/psis/disability/index.asp.

Readers may also be interested in two recently published works by the ILO relating to employment and disability − *Moving Forward: Toward Decent Work for People with Disabilities − Examples of Good Practices in Vocational Training and Employment from Asia and the Pacific* and *Proceedings of the ILO/Japan Technical Consultation on Vocational Training and Employment of People with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific*. Copies of these and other ILO publications on disability in Asia and the Pacific can be ordered by contacting abilityasia@ilo.org.

Lin Lean Lim
Deputy Director
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Contents

Preface iii

Contents vi

Abbreviations viii

Part One : Country Overview 1

1.1 Introduction 1
1.2 Geography 2
1.3 Population 2
1.4 Government 3
1.5 Economy 4
1.6 Labour markets 5

Part Two : People with Disabilities---Definitions, Data and Situation 10

2.1 Definitions of disabilities 10
2.2 Disabilities classification systems 10
2.3 Sources of disabilities information and statistics 11
2.4 On-the-job injuries 12
2.5 Environmental factors affecting full participation 12
2.6 Social factors affecting full participation 13
2.7 Disabled persons' organizations 14

Part Three : Legislation, Policies and Institutional Structures 16

3.1 International policies adopted 16
3.2 National legislation 16
3.3 Disabilities policies and regulations 20
3.4 Evaluation and review of policies 21
3.5 Institutional structures 21
3.6 Other implementing organizations 24

Part Four : Education, Vocational Training, Self-employment and Employment Services for People with Disabilities 25

4.1 Education system 25
4.2 Educational opportunities for people with disabilities 26
4.3 Mainstream vocational training system 30
4.4 Mainstream vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities 33
4.5 Segregated vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities 33
4.6 Self-help and peer vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities 37
4.7 Mainstream employment services 37
4.8 Mainstream employment-services opportunities for people with disabilities 38
4.9 Special employment and employment support services for people with disabilities 39
4.10 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation 39
4.11 Mainstream support for self employment and income generation for people with disabilities 40
4.12 Self-employment and income generation support services for people with disabilities 40

4.13 Poverty alleviation 41
4.14 Staff training for vocational rehabilitation 42
4.15 Barriers and gaps 42

Part Five : Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities 44

5.1 Open employment opportunities for people with disabilities 44
5.2 Employment opportunities for people with disabilities in protected work environments 45
5.3 Self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities 46
5.4 Other segregated or protected employment opportunities 47
5.5 Barriers and gaps 47

Part Six : Employment-promotion Activities involving Social Partner 49

6.1 Government or ngo employment-promotion initiatives directed at employers 49
6.2 Government or ngo employment-promotion initiatives directed at trade unions or workers' organizations 49
6.3 Employer or trade union employment-promotion activities 49

Part Seven : Summary and Future Direction 51

7.1 Looking back over the past decade 1993-2002 51
7.2 Looking forward 51
7.3 In-country plans and recommendations 52

TBLES 54

Table I : Listing of primary advocacy organizations of disabled persons in sri lanka with type and number of membership, geographic scope, objectives and employment-related activities 54
Table II : Information on the total number of children who have disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools by educational level, type of disabilities and sex in the year 2000 55
Table III : Information on the total number of children who have disabilities enrolled in special education units attached to mainstream schools and in ngo-run special schools by province in the year 2000 56
Table IV : Information on children who have disabilities in special schools run by ngos registered with the ministry of education by province and by disabilities in the year 2000 57
Table V : Vocational training authority: statistics regarding completion of courses by trainees 58
Table VI : State institutions and those registered ngo institutions providing vocational training with capacity and output data 59
Table VII : Self-help groups, ngos and special schools - information regarding vocational training and follow-up employment provided 60

About the Author 62

Research Protocol 63

Abbreviations

ADB	Asia Development Bank
ADW	Association of Disabled Women (ADW)
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
CCODP	Central Council of Disabled Persons
CEFE	Competency Based Economies through Formation of Enterprises
CAMR	Ceylon Association for the Mentally Retarded
DPO	Disabled Peoples Organization
DTET	Department of Technical Education and Training
EFC	Employers' Federation of Ceylon
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
GCE-O	General Certificate of Education, Ordinary Level
GDP*	Gross Domestic Product
GN	Grama Niladari (Division)
GNP*	Gross National Product
GTZ	Aid Agency of the Government of Germany
HDI	Human Development Index
HRPO	Human Resource Placement Officer
HRPS	Human Resource Placement Service
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MA	Master of Arts
NAITA	National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NITE SL	National Institute of Technical Education of Sri Lanka
RVSA	Ranaviru Seva Authority
SHIA	The Swedish Organization of the Handicap International Aid Foundation
SDP	Skills Development Project
SLIATE	Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technology Education
SLCB	Sri Lanka Council for the Blind
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business
TEVC	Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
TEVT	Tertiary and Vocational Training
TMC	The Management Club
VTA	Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka
VTC	Vocational Training Centres
WUSC	World University Service of Canada
SLFRD	Sri Lanka Foundation for Rehabilitation of the Disabled
SLFVH	Sri Lanka Federation of the Visually Handicapped

* Note: Both GDP and GNP refer to the financial value of final goods and services produced by a nation during a specific time period, usually a year. GDP refers to production within national boundaries, while GNP refers the value of goods and services produced using productive resources owned by nationals both within and outside of the country.

Part One : Country Overview

1.1 Introduction

Brief history

Sri Lanka, a small island off the southern tip of India, has a history going back over 2,500 years. It was colonized in large part by Indo-Aryan tribes from northern India, and in much fewer numbers by Dravidians from southern India. Their descendants later came to be called the Sinhalese and Tamils respectively. Indigenous kings generally ruled the country until the advent of the Portuguese in the 16th century. The Portuguese conquered the coastal regions and were later replaced by the Dutch, who were in turn replaced by the British. In 1815 the British defeated the last Sri Lankan King, who ruled in the hill country, and brought the whole island under their rule. Independence was granted in 1948. Sri Lanka became a parliamentary democracy and has remained so since.

Current events impacting on the economy

Two decades of civil war and terrorist activity came to an end in early 2002. At that time, a cease-fire agreement was signed between the new Sri Lankan Government, in office since December 2001, and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a separatist group in the north and east of the country. The country is now in a state of peace for the first time in two decades. The peace initiative of the new government has received wide support from the people of the country and from the international community.

Level of development

Sri Lanka is ranked as a middle-income country with a GNP per capita of US$841. In 2000, the rate of growth of GDP in real terms was 6.0 per cent[1]. Since then, however, there was a significant downturn in the economy, and during the last quarter of 2001 it contracted to negative 1.3 per cent.[2] The economy is now recovering and a growth rate of 5.5% is projected for the year 2003.

With a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.741, Sri Lanka was ranked 89 out of 173 on the 2002 UNDP Human Development Index. In the four key indicators used to calculate the HDI, life expectancy was taken to be 72.1 years, adult literacy rate (percentage age15 and above) was 91.6, combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment rate was 70 per cent and GDP per capita was US$ 3,530.[3]

[1] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka*, 2002.
[2] *The Sunday Island* (Colombo), Business Review, 26 May 2002,
[3] UNDP: *Human Development Report 2002*, p.150.

1.2 Geography

Sri Lanka has a total land area of 62,705 square kilometers, with a maximum length of 435 kilometers and maximum width of 225 kilometers. The coastline is 1,340 kilometers. Mountain ranges in the south central regions of the island reach heights of over 2000 meters and are surrounded by a gently undulating and rolling plain leading to the coast. Forest covers 32.5 per cent of land area, 15.8 per cent is land under cultivation, 13.6 per cent is agricultural land, 7 per cent pasture and 2,905 square kilometers are inland waters. The island has a tropical climate with dry and wet seasons. While the average annual rainfall is 1,771 millimeters, there are regional variations. The south and west are wet, receiving sufficient rainfall. The north, north central and eastern regions are comparatively dry. Around 5,500 square kilometers of land is irrigated. Tank-fed irrigation systems in these dry areas date back to the first century AD. Mean temperature ranges from a minimum of 17.1 Celsius in the hill country to a maximum of 31.0 Celsius in the low country.

1.3 Population

Following the National Census, the total population in 2001 was estimated to be 18.73 million.[4] The ratio of males to females decreased from 103.9 to 100 in 1981 to 97.9 to 100 in 2001.[5] The annual population growth rate in the year 2000 was 1.3 per cent.[6] The annual growth rate of the urban population was 2.7 per cent.[7] The rate of natural increase per 1,000 population has decreased from 15.2 in 1991 to 13.0 in 2001.[8] The growth in population of working age has been estimated to be 1.8 per cent annually for the past five years.[9]

The population is 72.2 per cent rural, 21.5 per cent urban, and the estate population[10] comprises 6.3 per cent.[11] Considering that the urban sector represented 15.4 per cent of the population in 1946, and just 21.5 per cent in 1981,[12] rural-urban migration in Sri Lanka has not been significant. Population distribution varies widely between provinces. With an all-island population density of 299 per square kilometer, the western province has the highest density at 1,492 per square kilometer and the north-central province the lowest at 114 per square kilometer.[13]

The average literacy rate in 2001 was 91.6 per cent. This represents 94 per cent for males and 89 per cent for females.[14] Average life expectancy in the same year was 73 years, with 68 years the average for males and 75 years for females.[15]

---

[4] Department of Census and Statistics: Census of Population and Housing 2001.
[5] *The Island* (Colombo), 22 May 2002, Revealing Figures: Census 2001, Midweek Review, page IV.
[6] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka*, 2002.
[7] ESCAP: *2001 Population Data Sheet.*
[8] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka*, 2002.
[9] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Employment Policy*, May 2002.
[10] Workers and their families living on plantations.
[11] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Sri Lanka Socio-Economic Data*, 2003.
[12] Department of Health Services: *Annual Health Bulletin* 2000.
[13] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka*, 2002.
[14] ibid.
[15] ibid.

Almost a quarter of the population, or 25.1 per cent, came within the age group 0 to 13 years, 61.6 per cent were within the age group 14 to 55 years, and 13.3 per cent were above 55 years of age.[16] One of the most clearly visible features in the country's age composition is the reduction observed in the percentage of infants, children and youth (i.e. between 0-29), and the increasing proportion of older age groups. The population above 55 years increased from 8.9 per cent in 1981 and 1982 to 13.3 per cent in 1996 and 1997.

The population is composed of 69.3 per cent Buddhists, 15.5 per cent Hindus, 7.5 per cent Muslims, 7.6 per cent Christians, and 0.1 per cent comprise people of other faiths.[17]

1.4 Government

Sri Lanka is a Democratic Republic with a parliamentary system of government. Sovereignty of the people and legislative powers are vested in parliament. Executive authority is exercised by a Cabinet of Ministers presided over by the Executive President. The President and members of Parliament are elected directly by the people. There are 225 members of Parliament with 37 ministries of cabinet rank, and 20 ministries of non-cabinet rank.

Parliamentary, presidential and local government elections are held regularly, with most representative bodies running their full term contributing to political stability. The United States Department of State has described the country as "one of Asia's oldest and most stable democracies."[18]

For purposes of administration, Sri Lanka is divided into eight provinces, 25 districts and 315 Divisional Secretary areas. Provincial and district administration is vested in provincial and district councils respectively, composed of elected representatives and headed by a provincial governor nominated by the Executive President.

While the provincial administration's role is largely that of providing budgets and logistics, as well as programming and monitoring, detailed programming and implementation is undertaken at divisional level with support and monitoring from the district.

While matters related to policy and strategic planning remain with the central administration, responsibility for implementation has been devolved to provinces, districts and divisions with
few exceptions. One such exception is the Department of Labour, where functions were not devolved largely because of the need for central-level involvement and uniformity, as well as consistency in interpreting and dealing with labour agreements, disputes, legislation and other matters.

General Development Strategies

While no medium and long-term development plans have been formulated as yet by the new Government, the future strategies that will be the most relevant to people who have disabilities will be those that are defined in the National Disabilities Policy (3.3) and the National Employment Policy (3.3).

[16] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka*, 2001.
[17] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka*, 2002.
[18] United States Department of State: *www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/eap/*.

1.5 Economy

Sri Lanka has a highly trade-dependent economy. Wholesale and retail trade is the largest single sector, accounting for 22 per cent of GDP. The combined services sector, which includes utilities, financial services and tourism, generates more than 50 per cent of GDP. Agriculture contributes 21 per cent and industry 27.4 per cent. Telecom is the most dynamic subsection, with growth in services averaging 5.8 per cent from 1996 to 2000.[19]

Manufacturing is growing and getting an increasing share of GDP. The private sector produces 81 per cent of manufacturing output compared to 12 per cent by tree crop processing[20] and 7 per cent by small industries.[21]

Table 1.1 : Employment by sector (percentage of the workforce) [22]

Ecnomic Sector	Percent
Agricultural	32.6
Personal services	18.5
Manufacturing	17.0
Trade and hotel	13.0
Construction	5.2
Transport, Storage And Communication	6.2
Insurance and real estate	2.3
Electricity, gas and water, mining and quarrying	1.8
Not defined	3.4

By employment status, public employees constituted 13.9 per cent, private employees 44.8 per cent, employers 2.3 per cent, own account workers (self-employed) 28.5 per cent and unpaid family workers (working in family enterprises) 10.5 per cent. [23]

The informal sector draws from the self-employed, private employees and unpaid family workers. It has not been estimated separately, although it would be a significant economic sector in itself.

Current annual GDP, GDP per capita, and annual growth rates

In the year 2001, GDP stood at US$15.7 billion. The service sector contributed over a half (52.5 per cent) to the GDP, followed by agriculture (20.1 per cent) and manufacturing (17.4 per cent). Construction contributed 7.0 per cent and mining and quarrying 1.7 per cent. Real GDP Growth in 2000 was 6.0 per cent.[24] Real Sector GNP at Market Prices stood at US$ 15.4 billion, while per capita GNP was US$ 823.[25]

[19] The Economist: *Economic Intelligence Unit*, www.economist.com/countries/ May 2002.
[20] Preparation of collected natural raw material (tea, rubber, coconut, spices etc) for the market.
[21] The Economist: *Economic Intelligence Unit*, www.economist.com/countries/ May 2002.
[22] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka*, 2002.
[23] ibid.
[24] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka*, 2002.
[25] ibid.

The latest figures available about people living below the international poverty level are for 1995.[26] Those living below the international poverty line at less than US$1 a day were 6.6 per cent, while the poverty gap[27] was 1.0. The population living below the international poverty line of US$ 2 a day was 45.3 per cent while the poverty gap was 13.5.

Impact of recent events on the economy

Two decades of civil war and terrorist activity, together with poor governance in the years between 1994 and 2001, have had disastrous effects on the development of the country and on all aspects of its economy. Education and training infrastructures have not been able to fully equip Sri Lankans with the skills demanded by industry at home and abroad. Poor industrial relations have hindered business and economic growth.[28] For the first time since independence, the country experienced a negative growth rate in the last quarter of 2001 (negative 1.3 per cent).

With a new Government in power, a cease-fire in place and peace talks underway, the country is now politically stable. Foreign investors are starting to show interest once again, and tourist arrivals are increasing. The international community has demonstrated significant support to the peace process and the development of the country through promised donor assistance. It is hoped that some of this assistance may be directed towards the implementation of projects and programmes that will uplift the quality of life for people with disabilities.

Economic Projections

GDP growth was 4.0 per cent in 2002[29] and is projected to be 5.5 per cent in 2003. This will depend largely on the export demand to stimulate growth in the manufacturing sector. Inflation, which was 9.75 to 10.75 per cent in 2001, is to be reduced to 7 to 8 per cent in 2003.[30] Labour costs were US$ 0.31 per hour.[31]
The Advisory Committee that drafted the National Employment Policy has predicted that a large percentage of future employment opportunities would arise from the small and medium enterprises and self-employment sectors. As such, it felt that that this segment needs to be carefully nurtured by providing entrepreneurs with business skills, affordable credit and other incentives.[32] The Committee was also of the view that in the short-term, opportunities for employment generation would come from the Government undertaking major infrastructure projects including road and highway construction, port and airport development and general construction as well as other sectors such as power, healthcare, tourism and education.

1.6 Labour markets

Table 1.2 describes the types of occupational groups and numbers of persons engaged in this type of work by gender.

[26] ILO Geneva: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 2001-2002.
[27] The poverty gap indicator measures how far away a population is from the poverty line.
[28] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Employment Policy*, May 2002.
[29] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Sri Lanka Socio-Economic Data* 2003.
[30] The Economist: *Economic Intelligence Unit*: www.economist.com/countries May 2002.
[31] ibid.
[32] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Employment Policy*, May 2002.

Table 1.2 : Occupational group by numbers and gender 1999[33] (thousands)

	Male	Female
Skilled Agricultural and Fishery workers	865	481
Elementary occupations	1,006	494
Craft and related workers	585	313
Sales and Service Workers	574	187
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	324	41
Professionals	142	191
Technicians and Associate Professionals	225	81
Clerks	129	124
Senior Officials and Managers	58	16
Not identified	199	46
Total	4 ,107	1,975

Labour force participation

The household population aged 10 years and above, which is considered the working age in Sri Lanka, was 13,870,000 at the end of the year 2002. The labour force was 7,218,931, which represented an economically active population (participation rate) of 50.6 per cent, 68.5 per cent of whom were males and 33.9 per cent of whom were females. Of those, 46.4 per cent were in the urban sector, and 51.2 per cent in the rural sector.[34]

Details of Labour Force Participation by age group in 2000 are given below.[35]

Table 1.3 : Labour force participation by age

10 – 14	Not available	40 – 44	71.6 per cent
15 – 19	25.7 per cent	45 – 49	69.0 per cent
20 – 24	67.7 per cent	50 – 54	62.5 per cent
25 – 29	70.5 per cent	55 – 59	54.2 per cent
30 – 34	72.7 per cent	60 and above	24.4 per cent
35 – 39	73.2 per cent		

In the year 2002 in the urban sector, the economically active population was 47.5 per cent, with 66.8 per cent males and 28.6 per cent females. In the rural sector, it was 49.8 per cent, with 67.2 per cent males and 33.1 per cent females.[36]

[33] International Labour Organization Geneva: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 2001-2002.
[34] Department of Census and Statistics: *Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, Quarterly Report*. Fourth Quarter 2002.
[35] Dept of Census and Statistics: *Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, Quarterly Report.* Third Quarter 2000.
[36] Dept of Census and Statistics: *Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, Quarterly Report.* Second Quarter 2002.

Estimates of child labour vary from 25,000 – 600,000, depending on the definition used. In the context of religious and cultural attitudes towards disabilities (see Section 2.5), it is not likely that there is a relationship between child labour and disabilities. A minor degree of the exploitation of disabilities for begging occurs with both children and adults, but this appears to be decreasing.

The Labour Force Survey indicates the numbers of persons not in the labour force according to gender, and analyses reasons to explain this. There was a total of 395,724 persons unemployed, with 35,067 (8.9 per cent) in the urban sector and 360,657 (91.1 per cent) in the rural sector.[37] Data related to those who cited disabilities as the cause of their not being employed is given below.

Table 1.4 : Labour Force Survey—Percentage of persons indicating disabilities as a reason for not working

	Urban and Rural	Urban	Rural
Total	2.5	1.8	2.7
Male	4.6	2.9	4.8
Female	1.6	1.2	1.6

Unemployment and Underemployment

Unemployment[38], as a percentage of the labour force in 2002 was 7.5 per cent. The highest was in the age group of 15-19 year-olds at 28.9 per cent, while the next highest was the 20-24 year-old group at 24.3 per cent. Graduate and youth (school-leavers) unemployment is a major problem. Unemployment was 5.6 per cent among males and 11.1 per cent among females.[39]

In the year 2002, the unemployment rate for both sexes was 7.5 per cent, with 5.6 per cent for males and 11.1 per cent for females, and with 7.1 per cent being urban and 7.6 per cent being rural.

A statistical profile of the unemployed revealed clearly the predominance of youth, females and the educated. It revealed in detail that 49 per cent were female and 51 per cent male. In addition, 67 per cent were between the ages of 20-29, 50 per cent had attained educational levels of GCE"O" levels[40] (General Certificate of Eduction, Ordinary Level) and above and 77 per cent had been unemployed for over one year. One third were reported to be in the western province and one fifth in the southern province. Most aspired to be white-collar workers.[41]

[37] Dept of Census and Statistics: *Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, Quarterly Report.* Third Quarter 2000.

[38] Assessed as those who have not worked even one hour in the reference week according to the Ministry of Employment and Labour Draft National Employment Policy.

[39] Dept of Census and Statistics: *Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey, Quarterly Report.* Fourth Quarter 2002.

[40] The first public examination, the "General Certificate of Education, Ordinary Level' (GCE "O" level) is taken after grade 11 at the age of 15 years.

[41] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Employment Policy,* May 2002.

In the year 2001, 2 per cent of the employed were working below 8 hours per week, and those working between 9 to 17 hours per week was stated to be 5.7 per cent.[42]

Relative levels of open employment and self-employment

While there is no distinct categorization of this available, employment is described within four groups. See Table 1.5 below for details. Employees form 56.9 per cent and employers 2.7 per cent.

"Own account workers" (who are self-employed) constitute 28.6 per cent, and "unpaid family workers" 11.9 per cent.

Within these four categories, males comprise 56 per cent, 3.6 per cent, 34.3 per cent and 5.7 per cent respectively, while females comprise 57.7 per cent, 0.8 per cent, 16.8 per cent and 24.7 per cent respectively.

Of the "own account workers," 43.0 per cent are in the agricultural sector and 20.9 in the non-agricultural sector. Of unpaid family workers, 24.7 are in the agricultural sector and 5.1 per cent in the non-agricultural sector.

Table 1.5 : Percentage distribution of currently employed persons by employment status, gender and major industrial sector[43]

	Total	Gender		Sector	
		Male	Female	Agricultural	Non-agricultural
Employee	56.9	56.5	57.7	31.2	70.5
Employer	2.7	3.6	0.8	1.1	3.6
Own account worker	28.6	34.3	16.8	43.0	20.9
Unpaid family worker	11.9	5.7	24.7	24.7	5.1

Wage levels for the primary occupations in the formal and informal sectors

Wages are governed by The Wages Ordinance and revised periodically by notifications published in the Government Gazette. There are 42 different wage structures for different categories of workers/trades in the formal and informal sectors. For workers in the tea packaging industry, monthly wages in grade IV start at US$ 26.6, and in grade I at US$28.7. In the security service, security officers have the wage scale US$29.4 reaching US$34 after 25 increments; administrators in the same service start at US$33 and go up to US$38 over the same number of increments. These are basic emoluments.[44] [45]

[42] ibid.
[43] ibid.
[44] I US$ = Sri Lankan Rupees (SLR) 95.00 as at 01 June 2002.
[45] Department of Labour: Information obtained from Wages Board.

Special issues that impact on the labour markets

Agriculture is the largest economic sector, and the largest proportion of the human capital is engaged in this sector. There has, however, been a gradual decline in job creation in this sector. Also, due to the traditional outdated methods adopted, agriculture has not been a favourite sector among educated job-seeking youth. Persistent long-term unemployment among the educated youth is considered to be a serious concern, indicating the inability of the education system to match the skill requirement.[46] (See also Section 1.3 under heading "Unusual demographic patterns.")

In summary, the picture that emerges from this island country is a stable democracy that is nevertheless one torn by years of civil conflict. Now in peace, Sri Lanka remains predominantly a rural country with an agricultural economic base, and is considered a middle-income country. Sixty per cent of the population is between the ages of 14 and 55, with a declining youth and increasing 55 plus age groups. Literacy rates are high, though youth unemployment is troublesome. Men are significantly more likely than women to be in the labour force and employed. Although policy is set at national levels, programmes are administered at the provincial level and implemented at district and divisional levels.

[46] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Employment Policy*, May 2002.

Part Two : People with Disabilities---Definitions, Data and Situation

2.1 Definitions of disabilities

The legal definition of disabilities is described in the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act as follows: "A person with disabilities means one who, as a result of any deficiency in his physical or mental capabilities, whether congenital or not, is unable by himself to ensure for himself, wholly or partly, the necessities of life." [47]

The definition used in the National Census 2001 is that a disabled person is "a person who is limited in the kind or amount of activities that he or she can do because of ongoing difficulties due to a long-term physical condition, mental condition or health problem. Short-term disabilities due to temporary conditions such as broken legs and illness are excluded. Only disabilities lasting for more than six months should be included."[48]

2.2 Disabilities classification systems

The Ministry of Social Welfare follows the legal definition and uses the following disabilities classifications:

- visually handicapped;
- hearing handicapped;
- physically handicapped;
- speech handicapped ;
- mentally disabled;
- mentally ill; and
- mentally retarded.[49]

For the National Census 2001, the classification system used included:

- visual disabilities;
- hearing/speech disabilities;
- disabilities in the hands;
- disabilities in the legs;
- other physical disabilities; and
- mental disabilities (includes mental retardation and disabilities arising from mental illness).

[47] Parliament of Sri Lanka: *Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No 28 of 1996.*
[48]"Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses" - *no further information.*
[49] Ministry of Social Welfare: *Activities of the Ministry of Social Welfare,* 2002.

2.3 Sources of disabilities information and statistics

National Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programme

This is the primary and regular source of disabilities information for the Ministry of Social Welfare.

People who have disabilities are identified by community volunteers. No specific definitions are used. Rather, they are identified according to the community's own perception of disabilities and its classification.

Community volunteers use pre-tested forms based on those in the manual, Training in the Community for People with Disabilities.[50] All members of all ages of all households in a given area are covered.

The basic geographical (area) unit used in the CBR programme is the smallest administrative unit called the Grama Niladhari (GN) Division. A number of GN divisions make up a Divisional Secretariat Area that is, in fact, a sub-district. The Ministry of Social Welfare decides how many GN divisions within a sub-district will be given support at any one time to develop programmes, and each community gathers information in their area at that time.

Statistics from CBR programmes have been collated for the period 1994 – 1998, and are said to be as follows:[51] In a total population of 4,750,781, covered by the programme during this period, 78,802 disabled persons were located, of which 37,401 were male and 41, 401 were female. Age-wise distribution was as follows: 0-5 years 5,295 persons, 6-18 years 17,758 persons, 19-35 years 24,425 persons 36 – 70 years 21, 594 persons, and over 70 years 9,725 persons.

Data related to types of disabilities, principal causes of disabilities, literacy levels, education, employment status and income levels are not available centrally. Much of this information is collected by community volunteers, but this has not been collected and collated.

Since identification of disabled persons is done in a way that is relevant to each community, definitions used have a local/cultural interpretation and may not suitable for international comparative studies.

National Census

The National Census carried out in 1981 and 2001 both included data on disabled persons. In 1981, no overall disabilities prevalence rate was estimated. The types of disabilities looked for were the "blind, deaf and dumb, deaf-mute, disabilities in legs, disabilities in hands, and crippled in both legs." Figures obtained in 1981 for each of these groups were very low, and hardly acceptable. The major reason attributed to this was the fact that census planners and enumerators had no orientation about disabilities or its identification. There was no census in 1991.

[50] Helander et al: *Training in the Community for People with Disabilities*, WHO Geneva, 1986.
[51] National Secretariat for Disabled Persons: *Statistics on persons with disabilities in Sri Lanka under the CBR project.* CP/01/1/4.

The census in 2001 included a planning committee on the disabilities component with representation from the National Council for Disabled Persons. See 2.1 and 2.2 above for definition and classification system used. Questions used in the disabilities schedule will elicit information regarding sex, age, age at onset, cause of disabilities, body part affected, educational level attained, present residence, whether vocational training was obtained and current employment, if any.[52]

Information released to date indicates that overall disabilities prevalence per 10,000 was 162.9, with 189.9 for males and 136.4 for females. The percentage of disabilities represented is as follows: 41.0 for seeing, 43.5 for hearing/speaking 28.5 for disabilities in the hands, 53.7 for disabilities in the legs, 7.9 for other physical disabilities and 40.9 for mental disabilities.[53]

The above data regarding prevalence obtained through the National Census is perceived by the disabilities movement to be a gross under-estimate, associated with the usual problems regarding surveys of this nature.

Other data is yet to be analyzed.

Training of enumerators was carried out by the Senior Statistician of the Census Division.

2.4 On-the-job injuries

The Industrial Safety Division of the Ministry of Employment and Labour, to which all accidents must be reported, maintains statistics related to the number of people who have had accidents at work in factories. These statistics do not indicate whether the injury has caused any temporary or permanent disabilities, and there is no information on return to work rates.

2.5 Environmental factors affecting full participation[54]

Environmental and Transportation accessibility/barriers

The majority of public buildings are inaccessible to wheelchair users and other physically disabled persons using walking aids. Most urban workplaces, vocational training institutions and public buildings have steps at the entrance, are often multistoried and do not always have lifts. Because of this, public transport cannot be used by people in wheelchairs. In rural areas many roads are not tarred and often have very uneven surfaces. Bus services are scarce. Some rural villages can only be accessed by footpaths through fields or forests. All these barriers severely limit employment opportunities for this group of individuals.

---

[52] Department of Census and Statistics*:* Information obtained from Senior Statistician, Census Division, June 2002.

[53] Department of Census and Statistics: Census on Population and Housing – 2001. Information on Disabled Persons, Summary Results.

[54] Information in this section is a collation of that obtained in response to a questionnaire sent to major disabilities and disabilities-related organizations, May 2002.

Among inaccessible places that people who have disabilities need to use are banks and places of religious worship. Toilets in most public buildings, hotels, rest houses, cinemas, theaters and schools are inaccessible due to narrow entrances and the arrangement of fittings.

Communication accessibility barriers

Mainstream vocational training and employment are denied to people who use sign language for communication, as staff members do not know basic signing. People who have visual disabilities are excluded because of employers' perceptions that having no sight suggests they are helpless.

There are very few people competent enough to teach sign language or to interpret it in the country. Problems have occurred in the past in the courts with questionable judgments being given due to misinterpretation. Even when sign language is taught to children in special schools, family members and neighbours have little knowledge of it, so individuals remain isolated even in their own home and community. Sign language interpretation is not used on television, so access to news and other topical issues are not available to those with hearing loss. The situation with recreational and cultural activities is similar.

Although visually impaired persons learn the use of Braille at school, they are unable to use it later due to the shortage of Braille equipment and the unavailability of written material in Braille. Vocational training materials and instructions are not available in Braille.

The telephone is another useful communication tool, especially for persons who have difficulty getting about because of mobility disabilities. High costs prevent the use of telecom services and of Internet facilities.

2.6 Social factors affecting full participation

Religious beliefs

The Buddhist belief in *Karma* (or fate) impacts significantly on individuals who have disabilities. The belief is that one's present life is a result of the merits and demerits of one's previous life. This has two effects, one retrospective and the other prospective. In the retrospective perception, one who is born with or acquires a disabilities is paying for sins committed in a past life. This fate must therefore be accepted. In the prospective perception, the good one does in this life will gain merit in the next.

In true Buddhist philosophy there is acceptance of people who have disabilities and therefore no place for rejection or stigmatization. In reality, however, communities do stigmatize and reject those who, they believe, have committed sins in a past life. At the same time, there is a belief that one can gain merit by showing charity towards people who have disabilities (and thus who are considered to have sinned in the past). This charity is, however, often practiced in the belief that the giver is more fortunate than the recipient, which reinforces negative attitudes of the inferiority of people who have disabilities and excludes them from the social mainstream.

Cultural attitudes

Many superstitious beliefs stigmatize individuals who have disabilities, and sometimes even their families. Some believe that seeing a person who has disabilities when one starts on a journey, for example, will bring bad luck. People who have disabilities are not welcome at weddings because of the belief that they may bring misfortune. Marriage prospects for those who have disabilities are very poor, and they must find partners who have disabilities. Even siblings, especially sisters, of individuals who have disabilities have difficulty finding marriage partners because of the association of disabilities and misfortune.

Females encounter a greater degree of negative attitudes. Families tend to protect their female members who have disabilities from a society that rejects and stigmatizes them. As well as social abuse, females need also to be protected against sexual abuse. Families and authorities responsible for the well-being of females with disabilities tend to "protect" them from the male sex. The protection quite easily leads to over-protection, and sometimes to what some may consider as oppressive. As women who have disabilities say, "We have no opportunities for education, no chance of doing a job and no prospects of marriage. So what is our future?"

Societal and family expectations for people with disabilities

Family and society often perceive individuals who have disabilities as being helpless, or as persons who should be helped. Services for people who have disabilities are carried out as acts of charity so that the providers will gain merit in the next life. The effect of these beliefs and attitudes on disabled children and adults is that they are deprived of stimulation and have few opportunities to develop their self-reliance and potential. Adults are maintained at home. It is seldom that the need is perceived that adults with disabilities may wish to be like other adults, work, and contribute to the family income, or that they could get married and have their own family.

2.7 Disabled Persons' Organizations[55]

Six major organizations said to have island-wide coverage are the Central Organization of the Deaf, Central Council of Disabled Persons, Spinal Injuries Association, Sri Lanka Council for the Blind, Sri Lanka Federation of the Visually Handicapped and the Sri Lanka Foundation for

Rehabilitation of the Disabled (Rehab Lanka). Information about their membership, objectives and employment-related activities are in Table I. Advocacy, if any, is in interaction with the Ministry of Social Welfare

Two other district organizations do a significant amount of advocacy work in their own districts, lobbying with other NGOs and with the state sector. They are the Association of Disabled Women in Anuradhapura and the Organization of People who have Disabilities (*Swashakthi*) in Kandy.

[55] ibid.

Some of these organizations, together with others not listed above, have come together recently to set up an umbrella organization calling themselves the Joint Front of Disabilities Organizations (with a membership of 15 organizations). Their vision is to represent people who have disabilities in the country and ensure the protection and promotion of their rights.

Part Three : Legislation, Policies and Institutional Structures

3.1 International policies adopted

Sri Lanka ratified the Asia Pacific Decade Declaration on 01 April 1993. It has not yet ratified International Labour Organization Convention No. 159. However, in view of representations made by disabled persons organizations (DPOs), the Ministry of Employment and Labour is presently reviewing the matter.[56]

3.2 National legislation

Reference to equal rights in the Constitution

Under Article 12 of the Sri Lankan Constitution that deals with fundamental rights, in the anti-discrimination Clauses (2) and (3), people with disabilities are not mentioned as a separate group. They are recognized as being within clause (1), which states that "All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to the equal protection of the Law."[57]

In addition, Clause (4) allows for "special provision being made by law, subordinate legislation or executive action, for the advancement of women, children or disabled persons."

National disabilities specific legislation

The Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act

An Act called the "The Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 28 1996" was certified in October 1996.[58] The Act established the National Council for Persons with Disabilities and provided for the establishment of a National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities to assist the Council in the discharge of its functions.

The only rights mentioned specifically in the Act are related to non-discrimination in employment and education, and access to the built environment. The Act therefore does not truly reflect the protection of all rights. There is no particular mention of other economic rights and of civil, social, cultural and political rights.

The Act contains a non-discrimination clause with a provision for its enforcement through the court system. Clause 23 (1) of the Act refers to employment-related provisions, stating that,

[56] Ministry of Employment and Labour: Information obtained from the Department of Foreign Relations, May 2002.
[57] Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, 1978.
[58] Parliament of Sri Lanka: *Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 28 1996.*

"…No person with a disability shall be discriminated against on the ground of such disability in recruitment for any employment or office or admission to any educational institution." This is extended in Clause 23 (2) to include "(…) any liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to, or use of, any building or place which any other member of the public has access to or is entitled to use, whether on the payment of any fee or not." In the event of a contravention of the above provision, the provision can be enforced by a written petition to the High Court which may grant relief as it deems "… just and equitable in the circumstances." [59]

Among the functions of the Council, two clauses refer specifically to education and vocational training. Clause 13 refers to these conditions as "to establish and maintain institutions…" and "to encourage the establishment by the State and by private individuals of institutions to accommodate persons with disabilities and the provision of educational and vocational training to such persons." [60]

See "Impending Legislation, Draft National Employment Policy" below for further measures related to vocational training, employment and human resource development.

Rana Viru Seva Act[61]

The Rana Viru Seva Act No. 54 of 1999 was enacted by Parliament, through which the Rana Viru Seva Authority (RVSA) was set up to provide for the after care and rehabilitation of members of the armed forces and police who have been disabled in action. It also provides for the RVSA to look after the welfare of the families of those killed or missing in action. One of the main activities of the RVSA is assisting disabled ex-combatants to secure gainful employment through facilitating vocational training, micro finance and job placement.

The Visually Handicapped Trust Fund Act[62]

This Act established the Trust Fund for the Visually Handicapped. The functions of the Trust Fund are to provide educational and vocational training opportunities for the visually handicapped, to create employment opportunities for poverty reduction, provide financial assistance and guidance for self-employment, and to support the marketing of products made by visually handicapped persons. Other functions are to give assistance for housing, to implement schemes for the welfare of the visually handicapped, assist projects undertaken by registered NGOs working for visually handicapped persons and to take action to eliminate conditions that prevent visually handicapped persons gaining equal rights and opportunities.

The Compulsory Education Ordinance[63]

By the Compulsory Education Ordinance, education is compulsory for all 5-14 year-olds. See also 4.1

[59] ibid.
[60] ibid.
[61] Parliament of Sri Lanka: Ranaviru Seva Act No. 54 of 1999.
[62] Parliament of Sri Lanka; The Visually Handicapped Trust Fund Act No. 09 of 1992.
[63] Parliament of Sri Lanka: Compulsory Education Ordinance No. 1003/5 of 1997.

Quotas[64]

The Government, according to Public Administration Circular No.27/88 dated 18 August 1988, instructed all ministries, departments and corporations to allocate 3 per cent of the job opportunities in the public sector to persons with disabilities who have the requisite qualifications and, "whose disabilities would not be a hindrance to the performance of his duties". The effectiveness of this was poor.[65] It was re-issued in August 1998, still with no apparent impact.

Regulations regarding Accessibility[66]

Regulations providing accessibility to the built environment (including building codes), to transportation and to communication were drafted and approved by the legal draftsman and are awaiting further procedures. There is no separate legislation related to housing and to assistive devices.

Legislation that discriminates against disabled persons

There is no known legislation that discriminates against disabled persons.

Impending legislation that influences vocational training and employment opportunities for disabled persons

There is no draft or impending legislation at this time.

Legislation related to conditions at the workplace and employment, wage, and labour issues Laws Related to Injury at the Workplace - Factories Ordinance[67], the Shop and Office Employees Act[68], Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act[69] and Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act[70]

Under the Factory Ordinance, when any accident occurs in a factory the Occupier (owner/employer) must refer it to the Industrial Safety Division of the Ministry of Employment and Labour. It will hold an inquiry and give a report to the Occupier, with particular reference as to how similar accidents could be prevented in the future. Where an accident disables a worker for more than 3 days from earning full wages, the law provides for the Minister to direct that a formal investigation be made. The employee can take the matter to Court, and if there has been a direct contravention of the Act, the Occupier can be fined, the amount of which will be decided by Court.

---

[64] Ministry of Public Administration: *Public Administration Circular of 27/88*, 08 August 1988.
[65] G.Wanniarachchi: *The NGO Perspectives in Employment of Persons with Disabilities*, in Report on the Symposium for Promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities (Dept. of Social Services, December 1998).
[66] National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities: Information obtained from Director, May 2002.
[67] Parliament of Sri Lanka: Factories Ordinance Law No. 45 of 1942 and No.12 of 1976, Part IV.
[68] The Shop and Office Employees Act No. 19 of 1954.
[69] Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act No 47 of 1956.
[70] Parliament of Sri Lanka: Workemen's Compensation (Amendment) Act No.15 of 1990.
[71] Parliament of Sri Lanka: Employees Provident Fund Act No.15 of 1958.

The Shop and Office Employees Act and the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act also provide for worker safety and welfare, but there is no reference to disabilities and related issues.

The Department of Workmen's Compensation of the Ministry deals with compensation matters. When an accident occurs to a workman arising out of, and in the course of employment, the employer is liable to pay compensation either in the event of death, or if the injury causes more than 3 days loss of work. Sri Lanka has no compulsory worker's compensation insurance, therefore employers may or may not have insurance coverage. (The armed forces and police have their own compensation schemes.) If there is no insurance, the employer has to pay the compensation decided by the Commissioner, Workmen's Compensation according to scheduled charges, or as decided by a Medical Board. Employers who have coverage can claim it from their insurance.

In the case of temporary disabilities the minimum qualifying period for work-injury benefits is three days. This is 50 per cent of wages after the 3-day waiting period from the date of disablement, for up to 5 years, with a maximum benefit of US$ 526. Permanent disabilities benefits take the form of a grant. The minimum is US$ 223, and the maximum is US$ 263. In the case of partial disabilities, a lump sum payment is made that ranges from 30 per cent to 100 per cent of compensation. There are no restorative or rehabilitation clauses in legislation pertaining to worker's compensation and employment injury, only compensation.

The Wages Ordinance (see Section 1.5)

Law Related to Provident Funds – Employees Provident Fund Act[71]

The Employees Provident Fund Act was enacted in 1958 and is administered by the Ministry of Employment and Labour through its District Offices. It gives lump sum benefits only and covers employed persons in private sector and corporations. (Public employees and local government employees have a special pension scheme instead.) Individuals pay 8 per cent of earnings (or more voluntarily) and employer pays 12 per cent. The "Old Age Grant" is paid at the age of 55 for men or 50 years for women at retirement from covered employment and under some other special conditions. The disabilities grant is paid on medical confirmation of permanent and total incapacity for work. The lump sum paid is equivalent to the total employee and employer contributions plus interest.

Social Security Board Act No.17 of 1996[72]

This Act provided for the establishment of a Social Security Board for the management of a Social Security Benefit scheme for people who are self-employed. People who have disabilities who are self-employed can contribute to this scheme. Benefits include compensation for accidents at work and pension on retirement from work.

There is no law on vocational training.

[72] Parliament of Sri Lanka: Social Security Board Act No. 17 of 1996.

3.3 Disabilities policies and regulations

National Policy on Disabilities

The Cabinet of Ministers approved a National Policy on Disabilities in July 2003.[73] It was drafted by a committee appointed by the Minister of Social Welfare. In response to the wishes of the disability movement that the national policy would enable them to exercise their rights and responsibilities, guarantee for them an equitable share of available resources and include them in the socio-economic mainstream, the committee of 12 had a very wide cross-section of members representing all the major disabilities groups, all age groups, Government and NGOs. They also had expertise in the areas of law and of human rights and gender. The strength of the policy lies in the process adopted for its development. This was essentially participatory, with the Ministry of Social Welfare seeking collaboration from other Government ministries, NGOs, the private sector, United Nations and other international agencies for a consultative process. Individuals who have disabilities and their organizations were given the opportunity to participate, as was civil society and the general public through numerous notices and announcements in both the print and electronic media.

The policy is based on five principles. They are Equity as Citizens of Sri Lanka, Inclusion as a Democratic Right, the Responsibility of Government, Empowerment of People who have Disabilities and their Organizations and Parents Organizations, and the Participation of Civil Society. The Policy itself consists of 26 separate (sectoral) policy areas. The most relevant areas to the subject of this study are Employment, Vocational Training and Skills Development, Poverty Alleviation, School Education, Non-Formal Education and Higher Education. For each sectoral area, policy statements have been formulated and broad strategies listed.

While each sector has responsibility for implementing, monitoring and evaluating those areas that come within its own mandate, the policy delegates to the National Council for Disabled Persons function to coordinate policy implementation by all the partners listed, and for monitoring and evaluation of the policy as a whole. Relevant legislation, standards and regulations are yet to be drafted and plans of action for all these areas are yet to be formulated.

Draft National Employment Policy for Sri Lanka[74]

A Draft National Employment Policy for Sri Lanka was presented to the public on 1 May 2002 by the Minister of Employment and Labour and was open for discussion.

In the draft policy, seven initiatives were formulated for the development of the country's human capital. Initiative Five calls for "Fulfilling Social Obligations" and makes special mention of providing opportunities to all sectors of society without any form of discrimination. Four marginalized groups are to have particular attention, and disabled persons have been identified as one of these four marginalized groups. Their issues will be addressed in policy and strategy formulation and in recommendations.

[73] Ministry of Social Welfare: *National Policy on Disabilities* July 2003.

[74] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Employment Policy for Sri Lanka*, 01 May 2002.

It states that "the Government would provide opportunities for the disabled to upgrade their knowledge and skills to facilitate them in securing, retraining and advancing in suitable employment thus enabling them to integrate into the community or society and enter active economic and social life".

Key strategies for persons with disabilities that have been listed in the draft policy are:

vocational training and guidance will be provided to upgrade skills and enhance employability to be engaged in self-employment, etc.,
placement and employment services will be provided to the disabled persons through the proposed Employment Sourcing and Delivery System (ESDS) to facilitate suitable employment,
image and public perceptions regarding persons with disabilities will be uplifted through awareness and other programmes, and employers will be encouraged to employ appropriately trained and skilled workers with disabilities by recognition of "best practices" by the Ministry of Employment and Labour.

People who have disabilities will have full access to the countrywide Human Resource Placement Service (HRPS) operated by the Ministry of Employment and Labour. They will also have equal access to online Internet-based services as well as Centre-based Delivery Networks to link up with potential employers. See also Section 4.8.

These proposed strategies could realistically enhance the employability of people with disabilities. The main thrust of the proposal for these persons "is on upgrading of skills through skills training and retraining to enhance employability."

3.4 Evaluation and review of policies

See Section 3.3 above.

3.5 Institutional structures

Historical evolution of vocational rehabilitation to foster the employment of people with disabilities.

Christian missionaries introduced the concept of establishing special schools for people who have disabilities in the early twentieth century. The first such school was set up in 1912 as the "School for the Deaf and Blind." As children in these schools grew older, they were taught skills that would help them earn a living. In 1952 the teaching of vocational skills was moved to a separate site. This became the first special vocational training institution for people with disabilities. It continued to be run by the Church until it was taken over by the State.[75] The State now runs six segregated centres for vocational training through the Department of Social Services, and these are referred to in Section 4.5. Since the early 1970s a few vocational training centres have been started by the NGO sector, most of which however have relatively small outputs (see Section 4.5 and Table VI for further information). Some disability organizations now also offer vocational training to their members (4.6 and Table VII).

[75]Department of Social Services: Information obtained, May 2002.

Following recent global trends, and under the influence of the International Labour Organization and other international agencies, there has been a growing realization in Sri Lanka that the rights of persons with disabilities calls for them to be included in mainstream development processes. During the last few years, therefore, the disability movement and other forces have succeeded in persuading some mainstream vocational training centres to open their doors to disabled persons. A few employers have been persuaded that the performance of disabled persons could be equal to or sometimes be better than, other employees. The pattern is slowly changing from isolation and segregation to integration and inclusion.

The civil conflict that has just come to an end after two decades resulted in the disablement of large numbers of Sri Lankans. Most were combatants, and by far the larger proportion were in he Sri Lankan armed forces. The Sri Lankan Government has therefore taken steps to facilitate the rehabilitation and social re-integration of disabled ex-servicemen. The Rana Viru Seva Act was passed by Parliament (see Section 3.2) and the Rana Viru Seva Authority (RVSA) established. One of the main functions of the RVSA is to provide for the after care and rehabilitation of members of the armed forces and police who have been disabled in action. Large numbers of these were landmine survivors with amputations. One of its main activities is assisting disabled ex-servicemen to secure gainful employment through facilitating vocational training, micro finance and job placement. In all its activities, RVSA has used the inclusive approach.

All these events over the past few years have helped to raise the awareness of the general public about disabilities and the rights of people with disabilities. Their issues are very slowly being included in general systems (see Sections 4.2 Education and 3.2 Draft National mployment Policy). The presence of people who have disabilities in public places, in mainstream vocational training and in places of employment is increasing, but at a very slow pace.

Key government ministries involved in implementing policies and overseeing the services related to the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons

Ministry of Social Welfare

This Ministry is the main body responsible for supporting the National Council for Persons with Disabilities in the formulation of policies, legislation, regulations and work programmes. It has tasks in monitoring and in assisting service provisions and development activities of both the governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Vocational training programmes for people who have disabilities are implemented through the Department of Social Services that comes under the purview of this Ministry.

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities and the National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities have responsibility for disability policies and programmes in Sri Lanka. Both these bodies come within the framework of the Ministry of Social Welfare.

Ministry of Employment and Labour

The Ministry of Employment and Labour has an increasing role in ensuring mainstream employment of people with disabilities. It is preparing for the implementation of a new National Employment Policy that will include people who have disabilities in mainstream training and employment systems. The Department of Labour has, through their district and sub-district offices, started collecting data on numbers, personal information and employment-related needs of disabled job seekers. The data so collected will assist the department in detailed planning and programming. Particular emphasis is to be placed on influencing private sector enterprises to employ disabled job seekers, and to promoting the public sector to fulfil its responsibility and implement the 3 per cent quota system.[76]

Under a separate programme that the department is planning to implement for the socio-economic re-integration of ex-combatants with International Labour Organization support, Human Resource Placement Officers will be given more training to increase their capacity for vocational guidance and counseling. Under this programme the Human Resource Placement Service is to have a fully computerized and comprehensive data bank.

National coordinating bodies in support of employment and training activities for disabled persons

National Council for Persons with Disabilities

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities was set up under the Act called "The Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 28 1996".[77] The Act specifies that the Council should consist of 20 members appointed by the President. At least 11 members should be from among representatives of disability organizations and disability-related organizations. Others may be appointed by the President to represent relevant ministries, departments, professionals and NGOs. The role of the Council is to promote, advance and protect the rights of disabled persons in the country. Its primary tasks are policy formulation, strategic planning and programme implementation.

National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities

The Secretariat was established in 1995 to implement the decisions of the Council. One of the tasks of the Secretariat is to develop a national data bank for collecting and disseminating information. Detailed planning of the data bank is yet to be done.

The Swedish Organization of the Handicap International Aid Foundation (SHIA)

SHIA Sri Lanka performs a coordinating function working in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Welfare and government officials from other Ministries/Departments. One of its primary functions is to support disability organizations. It brings all these sectors together at a Forum that occurs twice a year called the "Project Review Committee" at which general issues are discussed. SHIA is presently phasing out its activities in Sri Lanka, and this is due to be complete by the end of 2004.

---

[76] Department of Labour: Information obtained from the Commissioner Human Resource Placement Services, 31 May 2002.

[77] Parliament of Sri Lanka: *Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 28 1996.*

Role of local Government in implementing disabilities policy

Responsibility for matters related to vocational training and employment for people who have disabilities is delegated at Provincial Council level to the Provincial Ministry of Social Services. The Secretary of the Ministry is the Chief Accounting Officer, and a Director of Social Services is responsible for programme management. To assist the Director in this task there is a Provincial Assistant Director of Social Services and field officers called Social Service Officers (SSOs) in every division (sub-district) of the province.

The main activities related to vocational training and employment carried out by this local administration are the following: provision of grants for self-employment (see 4.11), provision of grants and other support to vocational training centres (discussed further in 3.6), provision of assistive devices such as hearing aids, wheelchairs, tricycles and other mobility equipment and eye glasses to those below a certain income level, and administering financial disability benefits to destitute disabled persons.

Other activities include support to NGOs and homes for people who have disabilities and running preschools and day centres for children who have disabilities. In the Central Province, as a result of the CBR programme, disabled persons have been included in housing programmes and receive grants to improve accessibility within their homes.

3.6 Other implementing organizations

Relationship between the Government and the NGO community regarding the implementation of disabilities policy and vocational rehabilitation services.

The relationship between Government and NGO sectors is a financial one. The Government, through the Department of Social Services, provides grants to NGOs registered with them (including organizations of disabled persons) to run special schools and to provide vocational training.

Special schools registered with the Department are given a grant of US$ 3.2 per month per child.
NGOs doing vocational training are given a grant of US$ 13 per month per trainee. NGOs are also given ad hoc grants for maintenance on request.[78]

There is no particular relationship between Government and private sector training institutions. There is no involvement of trade unions in disabilities-related employment matters, nor have trade unions and employers associations been involved in activities of the National Council and the National Secretariat for Disabled Persons, including policymaking.

Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC)

The Employers' Federation of Ceylon is the largest employers' organization in Sri Lanka. It has recently set up an "Employer Network on Disabilities" to promote the employment of job seekers who have disabilities among its membership. This is discussed further in Sections 6.3 and 7.2.

[78]Department of Social Services: Information obtained May 2002.

Part Four : Education, Vocational Training, Self-employment and Employment Services for People with Disabilities

4.1 Education System

School Education

By the Compulsory Education Ordinance,[79] education is compulsory for all 5-14 year- olds.

Education starts when children are 5 years old. Primary education takes children up to the completion of grade 5, when they would be 9 years old. Secondary education takes them through grades 6 to 11, when they would have completed their first public examination, the "General Certificate of Education, Ordinary Level" (GCE "O" level), and they would be 15 years old. Continued secondary education in grades 12 and 13 culminates in the second public examination, GCE "A" level, success at which enables them to compete for university education.

Primary, secondary and post-secondary (tertiary) education has been provided free of cost since 1945.[80] In addition, textbooks (since 1981), and school uniforms (since 1993) are provided free of cost at all levels of schooling.

In the year 2001, 9,887 government schools had a total of 4,184,957 pupils and 194,102 teachers. Seventy-eight private schools had 96,155 pupils, while 583 *Pirivena* (Buddhist Temple-run schools) had enrolled 52,906 pupils and both these together had 8,887 teachers. Overall, the ratio of pupils per teacher was 21.4.[81]

Primary and secondary net enrolment ratio in 1999 was 92 per cent, with 94.7 for males and 95 per cent for females.[82] Gross secondary school enrolment ratio (1995-1997) was 71 males to 78 females.[83] There have been more girls then boys in senior secondary classes for two decades, around 51 per cent in grades 9-10 and 58 per cent in grades 12 and 13.[84]

University (post-secondary) or higher education

The first university was established in 1942. Now, 13 universities are spread evenly throughout the country. In the year 2001, 48,661 students were enrolled, with 11,962 new admissions. There were 3,110 university teachers. Of the 8,484 students who graduated in 2001, the largest number, 3,214, had followed Arts and Oriental Studies. The

[79] Parliament of Sri Lanka: *Compulsory Education Ordinance No. 1003/5 of 1997.*
[80] S. Jayaweera: *Education in Sri Lanka – Fifty Years Since Independence*, in 50 Years of Sri Lankan Independence: a socioeconomic review, ed. by A.D.V.S.Indraratne (Sri Lankan Institute of Social and Economic Studies, Colombo 1998).
[81] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Social and Economic Statistics of Sri Lanka 2002*.
[82] JICA: *Country (Sri Lanka) Profile Study of Persons with Disabilities* (Colombo, undated).
[83] ESCAP: *Population Data Sheet*, 2001.
[84] S. Jayaweera: op cit.

total number of graduates in Science, Commerce and Management Studies and in Medicine equaled the number of graduates in Arts and Oriental Studies. The smallest numbers were in Veterinary Surgery, Dental Surgery and Law.[85]

Overall, less than 3 per cent of the relevant age group are in universities in Sri Lanka. Government expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure was 9.2 per cent, and as a percentage of GDP was 2.3 per cent.[86]

Differences in urban/rural educational systems and opportunities

A former Professor of Education at the University of Colombo states[87] that, "While urban and rural participation rates have minimal differences, only 23.2 per cent of urban schools and only 3.5 per cent rural schools had senior secondary education with a science curriculum, while 22.9 per cent of urban schools and 45.9 per cent of rural schools were primary schools or schools with only 8 grades in 1991. Only 5 per cent of the nation's schools have senior secondary level science education."

Rural schools are generally under-resourced when compared with urban schools. One of the main areas is in the availability of teachers, with teachers being reluctant to serve in rural areas. This problem is compounded by greater numbers of children attending rural schools, which increases teacher-pupil ratios.[88]

4.2 Educational opportunities for people with disabilities

Educational opportunities for disabled persons in the country's mainstream educational systems

The Compulsory Education Ordinance[89] applies equally to all children. The experience of community-based programmers, however, is that many children who have disabilities do not go to school.[90] Table II (tables are appended to this document) indicates that there are many female children with disabilities who do not go to school.

General educational reforms were introduced at grade 1 in 1999 and will be complete through all levels of schooling by 2003. These general educational reforms envisage not only changes in classroom teaching to be learner-centered, but also reforms a variety of other activities.

These include the strengthening of English, developing of practical and technical skills of students, co-curricular activities, counseling and career guidance, school-based management and teacher education. Moreover, the reforms make particular mention of meeting the special needs of children with disabilities in the school system.[91]

---

[85] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka* 2002.
[86] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Sri Lanka Socio-Economic Data* 2003.
[87] S.Jayaweera: *Education in Sri Lanka – Fifty Years Since Independence*, in 50 Years of Sri Lankan Independence: a socioeconomic review, ed. by A.D.V.S.Indrartne (Sri Lankan Institute of Social and Economic Studies, Colombo, 1998).
[88] Ministry of Education and Higher Education: *Information supplied by Dept. of Non-Formal, Continuing and Special Education*, May 2002.
[89] Parliament of Sri Lanka: *Compulsory Education Ordinance No. 1003/5 of 1997.*
[90] FRIDSRO CBR: *Information supplied by G. Galekotuwa, Programme Manager*, June 2002.
[91] Central Bank of Sri Lanka: *Annual Report 2000.*

The Ministry of Education has been following an implicit policy of mainstreaming children who have disabilities for over two decades, first as integrated education[92] and now as inclusive education.[93] The Special Education Unit of the Ministry of Education, Provincial Special Education Coordinators and District Assistant Directors of Education (Special Education) have the special responsibility of seeing that children who have disabilities do have an education.

If a child who has disabilities is not ready to join the mainstream classroom, she will first have the opportunity to go into a special classroom called the "Special Education Unit" attached to mainstream schools. When she is considered to be ready, she will join the ordinary classroom.

Children identified by CBR and other field programmes are referred to the Department of Education and enrolled in a government school. They are included in the data provided for mainstream schools, and are not identified separately.

Most children who have disabilities attend state-run schools. There are, however, a few NGO-run special schools, most of which were started several decades ago. Metts refers to a UNICEF Report made in 1999[94] that states there were 12 special schools for blind children, 20 special schools for deaf children, 60 for mentally disabled children and three for physically disabled children. These are run by NGOs registered with the Department of Social Services at central or provincial levels. Registered schools receive grants according to the number of children attending. Also see Section 3.5. No data is available about the children in these schools. However, 24 of these schools run by NGOs are presently registered with the Ministry of Education.[95] The Ministry of Education pays the salaries of the teachers in these schools calculated on the basis of one teacher per eight children with full-time attendance.

Table II provides data on the total number of children that have disabilities and are enrolled in mainstream schools by educational level, type of disabilities and gender in the year 2000. Many children who have learned to cope with their disabilities attend mainstream schools and are not registered in this category. They are not reflected in these numbers.[96]

Table III (tables are appended to this document) provides information on the children enrolled in special education units attached to mainstream schools and in NGO-run schools by province in the year 2000 with data on the number of schools, teachers and pupils.

---

[92] Integrated Education: *placement of children who have disabilities in ordinary school settings with, perhaps, special adaptations to meet the general needs of that disabilities group , for example Braille system for those with loss of sight.*

[93] Inclusive Education: *recognizes and responds to the diversity of each child's special needs and abilities within one school system by using child-centred teaching methods, adapted curricula and teaching-learning materials etc. A child who has disabilities is viewed not as a "disabled child" but as a child who has special needs, as do many other children in the same classroom.*

[94] R.L. Metts: *Disabilities Issues, Trends and Recommendations for the World Bank,* February 2000.

[95] Ministry of Education: Information supplied by Dept. of Non-Formal, Continuing and Special Education, May 2002.

[96] ibid.

Table IV provides information on children that have disabilities in schools run by NGOs and registered with the Ministry of Education by province and by disabilities in the year 2000.

With reference to data in Tables II and III, identification of disability is included in the school census from where these statistics are derived. Mild disabilities and limitations in structures and functions are often included in the data. The number of children described as having "slow development" is surely exaggerated. Many teachers tend to include in this category those with any special educational needs that inhibit their academic performance.

Another feature that stands out with all these statistics is that the numbers of female children with disabilities are far less than male children. The enrollment data given above for all children in school illustrates clearly that data for females is higher than that for males. This indicates that many female children who have disabilities are not being sent to school. This applies across all disabilities groups and all ages.

People who have disabilities are participating in the nationwide non-formal education system initiated in 1981. Staff members have recently been instructed to make a special effort to locate and enroll disabled youth that have not been to school. No data is yet available.

In 1998, the Ministry of Education carried out a survey of non-school-attending children.[97] Of the total 61,587 children found, 6,309 (10.2 per cent) gave their disabilities as the reason for not going to school. Other reasons given were economic, dislike, doing a job, doing household tasks and family reasons.

Appropriate teaching aids, assistive devices and facilities for promoting successful educational outcomes for persons with disabilities

The Ministry of Education provides teaching aids and assistive devices free of cost to National Schools, i.e. those run centrally by the Ministry. Schools run by Provincial Councils obtain their requirements from each Council, also free of cost.[98]

Requirements are obtained annually from schools. Only recurrent cost allocations permit can be purchased, and this is never adequate. Distribution is made on criteria decided by the Ministry on an equitable basis.

Among the teaching aids and assistive devices distributed annually are the following:

For children with communication disabilities:
Classroom education sets,[99] group hearing aids and individual hearing aids.

[97] Ministry of Education: Information supplied by Dept. of Non-Formal, Continuing and Special Education May 2002.
[98] ibid.
[99] including group hearing aids, appropriate furniture, speakers, microphones and other required hearing devices.

For children with visual disabilities:
Mathematics sets, Braille supplies such as writers, paper, slates, and textbooks, abacus, spectacles and white canes. The Ministry runs its own Braille press and prints all necessary textbooks as well as reading materials for the children.

For children who have intellectual disabilities:
Classroom education sets and motor skills development teaching aids.

The establishment of the undergraduate and post-graduate courses in special education has served to attract more teachers to the field (see below). This should have an impact on an improved outcome for the education of children who have disabilities.

Simple pre-vocational skills that are a part of school curricula can be of value to children who have disabilities.

Disability related teacher training for teachers in the mainstream and special educational systems

Teacher-training programmes run by the Ministry of Education are open to teachers in state-run and NGO-run schools and are as follows;[100]

Long-term:A 2-year course in special education is conducted at the main Teacher Training College at Maharagama, a suburb of Colombo. Entry is given to teachers who are already
teaching in mainstream schools, and content focuses on the special needs of children with the various types of disabilities. Demand for this course is poor, and annual intake has dropped to 10 to 15 trainees. Not many teachers choose to go into special education.

A second venue for the same course is at a Teacher Training College at Hapitigama, not far from Colombo. Entry is for those successful at GCE "A" level. Annual intake is 30, and there is a greater demand for this course.

Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree course: This is conducted at the National Institute of Education. Entry is for those who have followed the 2-year Teacher Training Course above. There is a good demand for this course, and over 100 teachers have obtained their degrees. Most teachers go back to teaching in mainstream or special schools, while some go into local (regional, provincial and district) administrative posts under the Ministry.

Master of Arts (MA) Special Education: This is also conducted by the National Institute of Education, which has awarded the MA to six people so far. A course is also conducted in collaboration with the University of Gothenburg, Sweden and 20 have obtained an MA through this course to date.

[100] Ministry of Education: Information supplied by Dept. of Non-Formal, Continuing and Special Education, May 2002.

In addition, the National Institute of Education implemented a programme over the last few years under which mainstream teachers were given short (2 week) courses in meeting the special educational needs of children who have disabilities in the ordinary classroom. This was an island-wide programme carried out through the training of Master Trainers in each province. At least one teacher in each major school has been trained in this way.[101]

Availability and quality of educational services related to urban and rural areas

The geographical spread of primary schools is excellent, but travelling to and from school can sometimes be a problem for children who have mobility disabilities.

Inadequate knowledge and skills that teachers have about special needs is sometimes a constraint. This, together with the fact that teacher's advancement depends on the success-rates she obtains with her students, leads to the occasional teacher asking a child with disabilities to stay away from school.[102] There is no data available, however, on retention rates of children with disabilities.

Gender differences in enrollment is indicated in Table II, (tables are appended to this document) and has been discussed above. There is a significant difference in enrollment rates for girls and boys, which is greatest for children with communication disabilities. This is difficult to explain.

The number of children who have visual disabilities appears to be relatively greater because teachers also include those with refraction impairments in this category. The gender difference
is least for children with visual disabilities, perhaps for the same reason. In actual fact the number of children who are totally without sight is generally said to have shown a marked decrease.[103]

4.3 Mainstream vocational training system

The formal vocational training system

The Ministry of Tertiary Education and Training has the responsibility for vocational training. It carries out this function through six institutions and one special project listed and described briefly below.[104]

Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission

[101] National Institute of Education: Information obtained from the Department of Primary Education, September 2001.

[102] Report of a Review of the Child-Focussed Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme, Embilipitiya: Save the Children (UK) Sri Lanka, August 2000.

[103] Ministry of Education: Information supplied by Dept. of Non-Formal, Continuing and Special Education May 2002.

[104] P. Mendis: Report on the current capacities of service providers in Sri Lanka with focus on services related to job placement, (ILO Area Office, Colombo, April 2002).

The TEVC is the policymaking and planning body for the vocational training sector in the country. It also carries out quality assurance and labour market reviews and has published a "Directory of Tertiary and Vocational Training (TEVT) Institutions"[105] listing 920 vocational training institutions island-wide. These include 556 in the public sector, 252 in the private sector and 112 in the NGO sector.

Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka (VTA)

With a total of 245 training centres distributed island-wide, it is the largest organization in the vocational-training sector. A variety of courses are offered, ranging from 3 month courses in light or heavy vehicle driving to 2-year courses for Electronic Appliances Technicians.[106]

Data related to completion of courses for the year 2001 are given in Table V (tables are appended to this document). No data is kept on students with disabilities.

National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA)

This is the largest institution doing apprenticeship training, with 20,000 trainees at any one time and an annual output and input in the region of 10,000. Over 145 types of training, some enterprise-based and others in the form of institutional training, are provided.

A tracer study reported in July 2001 states that the overall employability of those who complete training was found to be 71.8 per cent. In addition, 62.2 per cent were engaged in
wage employment and 9.6 per cent in self-employment. Thirty per cent found employment immediately, 60 per cent within one year and others in the study within a period of 2 years. In terms of gender, 80 per cent of males were employed, as were 58 per cent of females.[107]

Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET)

Responsibility for the management of all 36 technical colleges distributed throughout the country lies with the DTET. It offers over 84 types of courses.

Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technology Education (SLIATE)

SLIATE conducts higher-level courses to produce associate professionals and supervisors.

National Institute of Technical Education of Sri Lanka (NITE SL)

NITE SL supports all other institutions in public, private and NGO sectors through training of instructors, development of curricula, researching training needs for industry etc.

---

[105] Tertiary Education and Vocational Training Commission: *Directory of Tertiary and Vocational Training (TEVT) Institutions*, 2001.
[106] Vocational Authority of Sri Lanka: *Training Plan 2002.*
[107] National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority: *Report on Tracer Study Survey Results for Monitoring and Evaluation of Vocational Training,*, July 2001.

Skills Development Project (SDP)

The SDP, supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), has the task of reforming the TEVT sector by addressing the issues of unemployment and skills mismatch among urban and rural youth. It aims to develop an efficient and sustainable TEVT system to produce competent employable manpower to meet the country's industry needs.

Many other ministries and government bodies offer various types of formal vocational-training. The major ones to be mentioned are the Industrial Development Board, National Institute of Fisheries and Nautical Engineering, National Institute of Business Management, Department of Animal Production and Health, the Department of Agriculture and Livestock and the Sri Lanka Handicrafts Board. A network of agricultural training centres is managed by Provincial Councils.

The TEVT sector has no distance-learning programmes.

The major NGOs offering formal vocational training are the World University Service of Canada (WUSC), Agromart and Sarvodaya. Vocational training provided by these NGOs and by the Ministry of Youth Affairs through the National Youth Services Council also includes other support (assistance to obtain micro finance for example) for self-employment.

Entrepreneurship training to promote self-employment and small enterprise development is made available by the International Labour Organization "Start and Improve Your Business" project, and by the Small Enterprise Division of the Ministry of Youth Affairs. (See 4.10 for further details)

The CEFE Programme (Competency Based Economies Through Formation of Enterprises) introduced to Sri Lanka by GTZ (Aid Agency of the Government of Germany) in 1995 also provides Entrepreneurship Training.

NGO and commercial vocational training and their importance to the overall human resource development system

Courses run by 252 training centres in the private sector and 112 in the NGO sector are registered with the Ministry of Tertiary Education and Training[108] and are generally in high demand. Registration, however, does not mean they are recognized, so there is no monitoring of the quality of these courses.

Courses run by these institutions are more market-oriented, and attract those who prefer more flexible schedules. They supplement, rather than compete with, opportunities provided by government centres. For instance, where, Government centres are constrained by the lack of resources to invest in computers and other equipment, an increasing number of these centres offer courses in Information Technology. These have a high demand, especially among students who have left school.

[108] Tertiary Education and Vocational Training Commission, *Directory of Tertiary and Vocational Training (TEVT) Institutions, 2001.*

4.4 Mainstream vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

A small number of people with disabilities apply for, and are accepted by, mainstream training centres. These are mostly those who have disabilities that will not pose a problem at the workplace to themselves and to others. They include, for example, those who can move easily by using walking aids, amputees, those who others (especially instructors) can communicate with in spite of their hearing loss and those who can get around even though they are partially sighted. They are enrolled as any other trainee. No special statistics of disabled trainees are maintained by mainstream training centres.

Special arrangements have been made by the Sri Lanka Army for disabled ex-servicemen to be given vocational training at mainstream centres run by the state. Numbers are as yet insignificant.

Mainstream vocational training centres are distributed island-wide. Many are situated in rural areas so that they are available to disadvantaged groups. No statistics are available related to people who have disabilities who avail of these courses. Since it is a cultural norm that disabled women are more protected by their families, it is probable that relatively few would contemplate mainstream vocational training.

4.5 Segregated vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

The Department of Social Services and Affiliated NGOs:

The Department of Social Services is the state body responsible for providing vocational training to persons who have disabilities. Services are provided in segregated situations. Six centres are run directly by the department. A further 11 are run by NGOs and have a close relationship (registered*)* with the department. Grants of US$ 13 per month, per trainee, are paid by the department to those NGOs listed in Table VI. The capacity and outputs (for the last two years) of state and NGO institutions is also indicated in Table VI (tables are appended to this document).

What is most obvious from these figures is that all these vocational training centres (VTCs) have low occupancy. While about two-thirds of places are filled in the state institutions, in the NGO run institutions it is less than 60 per cent. The chief reason attributed to this is that the pattern of disabilities is changing, and institutions have not responded to this. For instance, the number of young people who have had polio who formed a large proportion of trainees at these
institutions has fallen drastically with the elimination of that disease and disabilities due to it. Similarly a decrease in the number of young people who are totally without sight is said to be less, though there are no statistics available. On the other hand, there are greater numbers with intellectual disabilities and multiple disabilities as a result of cerebral palsy who are reaching the age at which they could use the facilities provided by these VTCs (18 – 35 year olds). Another reason given is that an increasing number of younger people with mild to moderate disabilities (particularly mobility disabilities) are using the mainstream VT system.[109]

[109] Department of Social Services: Information obtained May 2002.

In addition, the Department provides a small-scale job placement service for persons with disabilities. It also serves as a link between prospective job candidates and employers by maintaining a register of job seekers. The database is in the process of being set up.

With regard to self-employment, the Department provides tool kits and small-scale grants for starting up small businesses or cottage industries to those who complete courses at their VTCs and wish to establish themselves in self-employment.[110]

Gender

No statistics are available to assess gender equalities in opportunities for vocational training in these institutions. The view of women who have disabilities is that the training received at these centres does not help them to obtain employment, since the content does not provide what is needed by the current job market.[111]

Different disability groups

In the past, two groups, namely those who have mobility disabilities and those who have visual disabilities, occupied the larger proportion of places at the VTCs, but the pattern is now said to be changing.[112] Applications from these two groups is decreasing.[113] Now, their positions are largely being taken up by people who have intellectual disabilities, as selected VTCs courses are being started (agriculture, masonry) and targeted, especially for those who have intellectual disabilities. Overall, however, courses and teachers have not been prepared to meet the special needs of this group of individuals. There are no statistics about the number of persons with communication disabilities making use of these courses.

People who have disabilities as a result of mental illness have almost no opportunities in this sector. The only NGO working in this field is the "Sri Lanka Council for Mental Health (Sahanaya)." The department of social services makes a payment of US$ 13 per month per trainee to this NGO to provide skills training to 25 persons per year. More or less equal numbers of females and males attend the day centre where skills are taught, and they are 18–50 years old. Skills such as envelope making, sewing and embroidery, and soft-toy making are taught. Income derived goes towards the maintenance of the Day Centre. It serves people from Colombo and its suburbs.[114] Also see Section 4.9.

[110] ibid.
[111] N.G.Kamalawathie, *The Challenges and Experience in Employment* in Report on Symposium for Promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities, (Department of Social Services, 1998)
[112] Department of Social Services: Deputy Director, May 2002.
[113] this may be attributed to the elimination of polio in Sri Lanka and to the very low incidence of childhood blindness.
[114] National Council for Mental Health: Information obtained from Director, 05 June 2002.

Follow-up

Since of late some state-run VTCs employ a job placement officer to help trainees who complete training. Success is achieved largely with placement of those graduates of courses in industrial sewing and air-conditioning/refrigeration. With skills such as carpentry, textile weaving, agriculture and welding it is difficult to secure wage employment. For these individuals, self-employment is often the only option. Individuals who opt for self-employment are each given a toolkit to the value of US$ 105. The Social Service Officer closest to each individual's home is informed and is expected to provide follow-up support.

Occupational skills taught

Over 35 different skills training courses are offered by the segregated facilities run by the state and NGOs and listed in Table VI (tables are appended to this document). Duration of courses varies from 3 months to 2 years, and selection of trainees is made on the basis of the nature of the disabilities and the level of education.[115] Places are available to both sexes who are 18 - 35 years old. A certificate is issued on completion of the course.

Since residential facilities are provided, training is available equally to persons in both rural and urban areas. However, families are reluctant to send disabled women away to strange environments, even for skills training.

The courses offered are often not market-driven, resulting in a skills mismatch between the training given and employment opportunities. There are several difficulties faced by the Department of Social Services in changing the selection of skills for training. They include the concern that instructors of outdated courses will lose their jobs, the difficulty in attracting new instructors with knowledge of modern technologies to the state sector, and the cost of preparing and setting up new courses, including purchasing the equipment necessary for trainees.[116]

Courses with higher employability have been observed to be those in industrial sewing, electronics, repair of motor vehicles, watches and air conditioners, welding, and spray painting. The high demand for training in handloom weaving and cane work has decreased considerably
because they are no longer the very lucrative trades that they were for persons with visual impairments. The packaging industry has now provided opportunities to persons with this disability.[117]

[115] N.J. Pathirana, *Sri Lanka Experience in Vocational Training* in Report on the Symposium for Promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities, (Department of Social Services, December 1998).
[116] ibid.
[117] ibid.

Special Schools[118]

Four major special schools, the Schools for the Visually Handicapped and for the Hearing Impaired, Chitra Lane School for the Special Child and the Islamic Centre for the Physically Disabled provide pre-vocational and vocational skills training to senior students. The Ceylon Association for the Mentally Retarded runs a number of residential schools/homes and a day-centre which also provide similar training. These major special schools/centres are described briefly below. Statistics are tabulated in Table VII and VIII (tables are appended to this document).

School for the Visually Handicapped (previously for the Blind), Ratmalana.

The school has 150 pupils at any one time attending from all parts of the country. Approximately 25 senior students are given pre-vocational/vocational skills training for a period of two years (part-time). Different skills are included, from cane–work and envelope-making to poultry-keeping and typing. The principal herself acts as a job placement officer, has found employment in factories and other enterprises for over 150 pupils over the last 6 years, and keeps follow-up records of all these former students.

School for the Hearing Impaired (previously for the Deaf) Ratmalana

The school has 245 pupils on its register, of whom 50 are day pupils. The others are boarded, and come from all over the country. About 80 per cent have profound hearing loss. About 100 pupils begin prevocational or vocational training from grade 5 upward (11-19 year-olds). Skills given are different from those given at the School for the Visually Handicapped and
include, for instance, tailoring, carpentry, gem-cutting etc. for boys and hairdressing, making costume jewelry and toys for girls. There is no job placement service, but one is under consideration.

Islamic Centre for the Physically Handicapped

The school has 250 students. On completion of secondary schooling, vocational training is available for 18–24 year-olds, both males and females. For males, courses in gentleman's tailoring, gem cutting, printing, dental mechanics, carpentry, computer skills and baking range from 12 to 18 months. For females, courses in jewelry making, home science, industrial sewing and computer skills also range in length from 12 to 24 months.

The Chitra Lane School for the Special Child

This school accommodates about 255 children who have intellectual disabilities, which includes 150 who attend part-time. A vocational training unit provides skills training to 31 girls and 50 boys, all 16-22 year-olds. Most are past pupils of the school. Training is provided in carpentry, housekeeping, screen printing, cooking and sewing.

The school runs a sheltered workshop for a few past pupils at another venue. See (5) below in this same section.

[118] information documented is a collation of that obtained in response to questionnaires sent to these schools, May 2002.

Ceylon Association for the Mentally Retarded (CAMR)

The main function of this Association is running a day centre and a number of residential schools. The larger numbers of the membership of this association are parents of children and adults who have mental retardation. It is the only parents'organization related to this disability. The Day Centre, situated in a suburb of Colombo, admits 12 –25 year-olds who have intellectual disabilities. It provides skills training in sewing, carpentry and handicrafts. Some of the residential homes admit only boys and the others girls, and besides basic academic teaching of the 3-R's, they are taught similar skills.

There are no completion rates and outcome data from these programmes. There are no evaluation studies on quality and responsiveness of these programmes.

4.6 Self-help and peer vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

Of the six major self-help organizations working in this area, the Association of Disabled Women (ADW) covers one district, Anuradhapura, about 150 km from Colombo. The other five have island-wide coverage and are the Sri Lanka Council for the Blind (SLCB), the Sri Lanka Federation of the Visually Handicapped (SLFVH), Sri Lanka Foundation for Rehabilitation of the Disabled (SLFRD) and the Central Council of Disabled Persons (CCODP). The last named is based about 200 km from Colombo.

Information available about their activities related to vocational training are listed in Table VII, including the number of courses, number of persons given vocational training by gender and disabilities type and follow-up self or open employment facilitated.

The numbers served by these self-help organizations is relatively small. It should also be seen in the context that with most of these organizations, this is the major activity carried out. The choice of courses offered is rather limited, as well. Both organizations give priority to those with visual disabilities in the area of telephone operation. Other courses most commonly offered by these self-help organizations are the conventional cane work and coir work (coconut fibre weaving), sewing, carpentry and welding. Industrial sewing is offered by three organizations and it has good potential for open-employment. All six organizations have started offering courses in computer operating, a skill which is also in demand in the open job market.

4.7 Mainstream employment services

The Ministry mandated to implement the government's employment policy is the Ministry of Employment and Labour. The Draft National Employment Policy is discussed in 3.3 above, and the role of the Department of Labour and its job placement service is discussed in 3.5 above (key ministries) and in 4.8 below.

The Ministry of Tertiary Education and Training, through the Skills Development Project, the National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority, the Vocational Training Authority, the Department of Technical Education and Training (refer to Section 4.3, formal vocational training system) and the National Youth Services Council, which is under the purview of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, has developed a network of 52 career guidance and counseling centres distributed island-wide. The Ministry of Employment and Labour also has a network of 30 career guidance centres. All these state sector activities are for 18 to 29 year-olds.[119]

Very little is done in the area of vocational assessment. A project is in the pipeline, however, to be implemented with International Labour Organization support, pending commitment of donors, which will strengthen all the areas mentioned in this section. It aims at the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants.

Foreign employment (migrant labour) has, for the past several years, been one of the country's foremost sources of foreign exchange. This group is not counted in the labour force. If counted, they account for approximately 12 per cent of the national labour force.[120] Responsibility for all aspects of foreign employment has been delegated to the Foreign Employment Bureau under the Ministry of Employment and Labour. There is no restriction on age, and over 50 per cent of those going overseas for employment are females.

Current government employment programmes place emphasis on reaching rural areas, and target youth. Many NGO programmes place emphasis on reaching women.
NGO-sponsored employment programmes are linked to vocational training programmes. (See Section 4.3, mainstream vocational training system.)

4.8 Mainstream employment-services opportunities for people with disabilities

Ministry of Employment and Labour

As a step in the implementation of the National Policy on Employment (see Section 3.3), the Ministry of Employment and Labour launched the National Employment Sourcing and Delivery System (ESDS) in January this year. This is a fully computerized national job referral system backed up by a network of 17 service (JobsNet) centres distributed island-wide.[121] Along with other job seekers, those who have disabilities can also register at a JobsNet Centre.[122] The registration will guide them through a process of assessment, guidance for skills development, if necessary, and then to open or to self-employment. Those selecting self-employment can choose to have guidance to secure financial and technological facilities and for the development of self-employment projects. The National JobsNet Scheme is being implemented as a partnership between the Ministry and the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce with the latter (Private Sector) responsible for management.

---

[119] P.Mendis: Report on the current capacities of service providers in Sri Lanka with focus on services related to job placement, (ILO Area Office, Colombo, April 2002)
[120] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Employment Policy*, May 2002.
[121] The Sunday Times: January 12 2003. *Advertisement "JobsNet"*
[122] Information obtained from the Commissioner, Research, Ministry of Employment and Labour, Jan. 2003

4.9 Special employment and employment support services for people with disabilities

The Department of Social Services has a job bank and placement service. This is, however, insignificant in terms of demand. Only 150 persons were placed in the year 2000, and 167 in 2001. A database is currently being prepared but no statistics can be made available as yet.

At divisional (sub-district) levels, social service officers carry out tasks of placing individuals who have disabilities in open employment. No further data is accessible.

Some of the vocational training centres run by the state and NGOs have job placement officers. Some successful trainees have found placements, but there is no regular follow-up.

NGOs[123]

NGOs that run CBR and other field programmes for people who have disabilities are Sarvodaya, Navajeevana and FRIDSRO CBR. They also do placement in mainstream services, albeit on a very small scale. Information about this is in Table VIII

In terms of the demand for income generation on the part of people who have disabilities, the numbers reached by NGOs is significantly low.

4.10 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation

Department of Labour (Ministry of Employment and Labour)

Some job seekers registering in the Human Resource Placement Service of the Department of Labour express a preference for self-employment. Assessing their suitability for this, Human Resource Placement Officers arrange skills training and facilitate micro finance. Also see Section 3.5.

Samurdhi Poverty Alleviation Programme (Ministry of Samurdhi)

See 4.13 in this same section.

Small Enterprise Development Programme (Ministry of Youth Affairs)[124]

This institution serves both new candidates and existing entrepreneurs to develop entrepreneurship skills, and is a partner organization of the Start and Improve your Business (SIYB) programme described below. On its own, it has expanded its activities to 16 districts. It has its own Master Trainers, and uses SIYB materials for training. After training, entrepreneurs are referred for micro finance, and follow-up support is given to establish enterprises and ensure sustainability.

[123] Information documented is a collation of that obtained in response to questionnaires sent to these organizations, May 2002.

[124] Small Enterprise Development Programme, Ministry of Youth Affairs: Information obtained from Assistant Directors, March 2002.

In the years 2000 and 2001, 706 training courses were conducted with the participation of 21,232 beneficiaries. Over one thousand (1,385) entrepreneurs were referred for micro finance.

"Start and Improve Your Business" (SIYB) Project[125]

This International Labour Organization-implemented project focuses on the management training of entrepreneurs, both existing ones and others with potential, and has been ongoing for two years. Training consists of three materials-based modules, at the end of which entrepreneurs would have selected an enterprise, learned how to manage it, and produced a business plan. Until the middle of 2002, SIYB worked through eight partners, and had conducted 56 courses and trained 1,050 entrepreneurs during its first 2-year project phase. It has now begun its second phase, increasing the number of partners to 20.

4.11 Mainstream support for self employment and income generation for people with disabilities

Samurdhi Poverty Alleviation Programme (Ministry of Samurdhi)

See Section 4.13.

4.12 Self-employment and income generation support services for people with disabilities

Department of Social Services (Ministry of Social Welfare)

With regard to self-employment, the Department provides tool kits to the value of US$ 105 for starting up small businesses or cottage industries to those who complete courses at their VTCs and wish to set up in self-employment.[126] No further data is available.

Provincial Councils

Through Social Service Officers based at sub-district level, Provincial Councils provide small-scale grants for self-employment. The amount varies between the provinces, and is in the range US$ 53 to 106. Annual Provincial Council allocations for this purpose generally allow for about 50 individuals to be given such grants. Also see Section 4.9.

The National Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme

This is managed centrally by the Ministry of Social Welfare, while implementation is devolved to the community with the support of the divisional, district and provincial administrations. Employment opportunities are found that make it possible for the individual to continue to live at home. These have largely been in self-employment because of the difficulty in finding open-employment in peripheral areas.

[125] SIYB Project: Information obtained from National Expert on Monitoring and Evaluation, March 2002

[126] Department of Social Services Information obtained, May 2002.

Being an agrarian economy, the most common avenue of employment has been in the agricultural sector. Where individuals may have been isolated and idle at home (mostly through over-protection and only seldom through neglect or indifference), the CBR programme has enabled them to set up on their own, or to participate in the family's agricultural income-generating activity in some way. Some have been assisted to set up agro-based enterprises such as mushroom cultivation and bee-keeping. Other areas for self-employment have been in the service sector (dress-making, carpentry, repair of bicycles, radio/TVs) and in small enterprises (welding, keeping poultry and goats etc.)[127] Skills training is arranged and grants obtained when necessary through the Provincial Ministry of Social Services.

The NGOs FRIDSRO CBR, Navajeevana and Sarvodaya also provide some employment support services. This was discussed in 4.7 and available data is in Tables VII and VIII. (Tables are appended to this document.)

4.13 Poverty alleviation

The Samurdhi Movement, implemented by the Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka, is the major poverty alleviation programme in the country, with the vision of the empowerment of the poorer segments of society. All persons who have disabilities with monthly family incomes of less than US$ 10.50 are entitled to benefit from this programme, just as any other citizen. No separate statistics are kept about the participation of persons who have disabilities. No measures are in place to meet any special needs they may have. It is likely, therefore, that generally only people who can use existing infrastructures and facilities (with no adaptations) are included in this programme.

Programme implementation uses three basic approaches.[128] The first is the welfare approach, in which all beneficiaries are provided with a monthly relief allowance. The second is the rural development approach, which focuses on the development of rural infrastructure such as clearing of waterways, tanks and irrigation systems and building of roads and such works that will support income-generation activities of beneficiaries. The third and perhaps most important is the Samurdhi Bank Union Approach, which facilitates savings and supports income-generating activity in the form of small enterprises and self-employment. The latter provides opportunities for skills and entrepreneurship training, for micro finance and avenues for marketing. At the end of the year 2000, the number of shareholders in the Samurdhi Banks stood at 1,571,200. This would include a number of disabled persons and their families.

ADB Project: Sri Lanka is one of four countries selected for the ADB Disabilities and Poverty Reduction Project, which is as yet in the information-gathering stage. The project will no doubt address issues related to employment.

---

[127] P.Mendis, *Vocational Training and Employment for People who have Disabilities – Sri Lanka's Community-Based Rehabilitation Experience*, in Report on Symposium for the Promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities, (Department of Social Services, December 1998).

[128] Sri Lanka Samurdhi Authority: *Triple Development Approach of the Samurdhi Programme,* W.G. Mithraratne, 2000.

4.14 Staff training for vocational rehabilitation

The only training programmes carried out regularly for instructors providing vocational training programmes in the institutions run by the Department of Social Services are in sign language, in those institutions which provide opportunities for those who can communicate only through the use of signing. No other training programmes are carried out on a regular basis either in the State or NGO sector.[129]

Staff members who are recruited to vocational training institutions must have ability in the skills that they will be required to teach. They have not had any particular training regarding disabilities. Increasingly, institutions have identified the need for job placement officers and are recruiting them. Rehabilitation counselors, vocational assessors and vocational counselors are not used.[130]

4.15 Barriers and gaps

Educational Opportunities in Schools

Many children who have a mobility disability face problems of transportation and accessibility in schools. Children who have communication disabilities have problems interacting with others. Children who have intellectual disabilities are looked upon as being very different. Children who are subject to these problems are isolated in school and tend to drop out early (see Table III for differences between primary and secondary school enrolment). All these negative manifestations are a result of attitudinal barriers on the part of parents, school principals, teachers and other children. It can be overcome by increasing the knowledge of all these groups about disabilities and children who have disabilities.

It needs also to be emphasized that female children who have disabilities are not being sent to school to a far greater extent than male children who have disabilities. Also see Table II and 4.1.

At the same time, increasing numbers of children are completing schooling successfully and go on to university. There are now over 250 graduates who have no sight. About 75 of them are said to be teaching in mainstream schools, another 50 in special schools, while most others remain unemployed[131]. Students in wheelchairs can also increasingly be seen on campuses. Unfortunately, no statistics are available about them. In the context of the probable extent of disablement, one could say, however, that opportunities for higher education for youth who have disabilities are as yet quite inadequate. This is due not only to physical barriers but also to the communication, cultural and religious barriers, and family and community expectations described in 2.5

[129] Department of Social Services Information obtained, May 2002.
[130] ibid.
[131] Sri Lanka Council for the Blind: obtained from General Secretary, September 2001.

Vocational Training

Although a wide variety of skills training is available to people who have disabilities in the segregated environment, opportunities are not all availed of. The reasons for this need to be determined. One reason could well be that many skills made available are not those that are demanded by current markets. Another could be the demand for inclusion in the mainstream.

Mainstream centres face constraints in opening their doors to individuals who have disabilities. Those individuals who do not require adaptations to be made at training facilities and can be integrated with no problems to management and fellow workers are generally accepted. Other individuals with special needs seldom are. This is largely due to lack of knowledge and skills in the relevant areas of special needs. Since this is a time of cutting down of public financing, special project funding for training of instructors, adaptation of training facilities and preparation of training materials will be no doubt motivate the mainstream vocational training sector to include more trainees who have disabilities. In fact, in many instances VTC instructors and management have requested training such as sign language so that they can then accommodate special trainees.

Staff Training

Staff of skills training centres and employment-related services, both segregated and mainstream, do not have any training to enhance their ability to meet the special needs of persons who have various disabilities.

Employment

While some inroads have been made into the area of open employment, the gap is still very wide. Implementation of the new National Employment Policy and the action taken by the Employers Federation of Ceylon will impact on this situation.

DPO and NGO Vocational Training and Employment Services

Coverage of services in these areas by the DPO and NGO sectors, even taken together is very small (see Tables VII and VIII appended to this document). Due however to their size and coverage, it is ultimately state services that could have the greater impact on the inclusion of people who have disabilities in the mainstream and in the protection of their economic rights. DPOs and NGOs could still play a larger role in developing inclusive, appropriate and innovative approaches that will give state services required direction and assistance, and they need to be supported in this.

Example set by international agencies

Employment-related projects supported by international partners have yet to include people who have disabilities as target beneficiaries. The International Labour Organization - implemented SIYB project and the ADB-supported Skills Development Project could set good examples of inclusion in this respect.

Part Five : Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities

5.1 Open employment opportunities for people with disabilities

A few enterprises have been employing people who have disabilities for the past several decades, but this is very much on an individual basis. The disability group that has most opportunities in open employment is made up of employees with visual disabilities. The Sri Lanka Federation of the Visually Handicapped maintains a list of members who are in open employment. As of June 2002, it lists 113 individuals employed in 57 companies.[132] This includes 30 females. When three or more persons are employed in one enterprise, it is usually in the packaging industry, often in tea packaging, and sometimes tea sorting. One group of companies is known to employ 36 visually handicapped persons in its packaging and paper-sack making sections in three factories.[133]

Other private sector companies very occasionally employ as many as six people who have other disabilities. One such example is a private commercial bank, which employs a group of six young people (5 males and 1 female) who have communication disabilities and use sign language. Since they were employed 12 years ago, the group carries out the task of sorting currency notes to detect those that should be discarded, sitting together at a table in an area of very high security. Their supervisors, who have changed over the years to be promoted to higher posts, learned to use sign language so as to be able to communicate with them.

The company that has moved furthest towards providing employment to persons who have disabilities on the basis of equal rights is one which manufactures plastic molded products. Forty of the total of 320 employees in the workforce (12.5 per cent) are those who have disabilities, and they have been distributed throughout the factory. They represent all the major types of disabilities (including a wheelchair user and sign language users) and are employed under the very same conditions as other workers.

Tables VII and VIII, which are appended to this document, provide information about individuals that have been placed in open employment after being given vocational training by NGOs and DPOs or directly without vocational training. There are no teleworking, home-based or other non-traditional employment structures in the open market, nor are there any that have developed as a result of advances in information technology and the Internet. Training courses in the use of computers have recently been started by the six DPOs mentioned in Section 4.6. No data is available about numbers trained or placed thereafter.

These few examples described above are all situated in and around Colombo, except for one DPO in Bandarawela and another in Anuradhapura. People who have disabilities in the periphery have even fewer opportunities for open employment. People who use wheelchairs

[132] Sri Lanka Federation of the Visually Handicapped: *Visually Handicapped Persons Presently in Employment, Mimeo Communication 2002.*

[133] Sri Lanka School for the Visually Impaired: Information obtained from Principal, June 2002.

are seldom to be seen in any place of work. In spite of the 3 per cent quota system introduced into the public sector (See 3.2 Quotas) people who have disabilities are seldom to be seen in state sector facilities.

With the introduction of a new employment policy, the establishment of the Employer's Network on Disabilities and the expected resurgence in the economy as a result of the state of peace in the country, it is hoped that open employment opportunities for people who have disabilities will receive the necessary stimuli for expansion, including in the Information Technology sector.

5.2 Employment opportunities for people with disabilities in protected work environments

The practice of using protected work environments has not developed very much in Sri Lanka. Neither are there set-aside programmes, enclaves and supported employment programmes.

Sheltered Employment

The only three known sheltered environments have been described earlier and are the following:

Sri Lanka Foundation for Rehabilitation of the Disabled
Chitra Lane School for the Special Child
Sri Lanka Council for Mental Health (Sahanaya)

Additional data available from these sheltered workshops is shown in Tables VII and VIII.

Sri Lanka Foundation for Rehabilitation of the Disabled

The Foundation manages "Rehab Lanka," which is a workshop providing employment for persons with disabilities and earning some income for the organization. The workshop has three sections: tailoring, welding and carpentry. People with disabilities manage it and a percentage of the profits are distributed among the employees. Employment is usually given to youth that have completed training at VTCs run by the Department of Social Services. They remain at this workshop for some time to gain experience in practical skills as apprentices, and then move into self-employment or, occasionally, into open employment. Statistics regarding these activities are given in Table VIII. Further information about this organization is in Table I.

Chitra Lane School for the Special Child

The school accommodates seven girls and six boys, all past pupils, at a sheltered workshop (Table VIII). They carry out such activities as screen-printing and adding decorative accessories to garments and making bakery products. Profits are shared, and each individual earns about US$ 15.80 monthly.

Sri Lanka Council for Mental Health (Sahanaya)

The Day Centre run by Sahanaya for people who have disabilities as a result of mental illness serves both as a skills training centre and a sheltered workplace, in that individuals continue to attend this centre for long periods. They continue carrying out the same production activities even after becoming proficient in their manufacture. This is the only NGO doing any kind of vocational activity for people with this disability. Also see Section 4.5.

Work centres

Two work centres are known and are described below:

Nylander Producers Co-operative Society Ltd.[134]

Four families live together with two unmarried persons, and two others attend daily. Both sets of parents and all four others have mobility disabilities. Four are male and four are female. They have lived together in one compound as members of a Cooperative Society since 1988. Very occasionally, when a member leaves for one reason or another, a new member is selected by group consensus. Members get together to produce toys for export to Germany and Sweden, and also manufacture special wheelchairs-to-order for the local market. Orders for toys are received via e-mail through contacts in those countries. The Trust in the name of the Swedish founder of the home that first brought the members together in 1983, called the Nylander Trust, is based in Sweden. This trust provides sustained financial support to the group, especially to support them in economically bad times. The group is currently going through one such bad period due to the decrease in orders for toys from Europe.

Production Centre for Visually Disabled Women[135]

This centre accommodates ten destitute women who have visual disabilities aged between 25 to 35 years. It was set up 2 years ago in Seeduwa, not far from Colombo, and is supported financially by the Visually Handicapped Trust Fund (refer 3.2 Visually Handicapped Trust Fund Act). Textile-based products produced by centre workers are marketed through the sales outlet of the Department of Social Services VTC at Seeduwa. Also see Section 4.5.

5.3 Self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities

Through the provision of tool kits and grants, both the Department of Social Services and Provincial Councils provide self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Also see Sections 4.5 and 4.9. So does the Samurdhi Poverty Alleviation Programme, as discussed in Section 4.13. No data is available, however, about numbers served or their resulting incomes.

[134] Nylander Producers Cooperative Society: Information obtained through interview, June 2002.
[135] Sri Lanka Council for the Blind: Information obtained from General Secretary, July 2002.

Disability-related NGOs and DPOs have facilitated self-employment, and all information available about this is in Tables VII and VIII (appended to this document). It is very likely that persons who have disabilities are employed in the informal sector, but the extent of it cannot be projected since no information has been collected about them. There are no special government or NGO programmes such as special marketing schemes and tax breaks.

5.4 Other segregated or protected employment opportunities

None other that those referred to in 5.2 above.

5.5 Barriers and gaps

The Right to Choose one's Mode of Livelihood

With limited opportunities in open employment, self-employment is often the only option available to disabled persons in Sri Lanka. Some do not even have this option and everything that goes with it (family life, social interaction). Placements are also limited in sheltered or protected employment.

Self-employment

Even for those who choose self-employment, most do not have opportunities for vocational training. Observations in the community-based programmes reveal that those already in self-employment have used their innate abilities and skills, or used skills learned from family members and neighbors to generate an income. For those with natural entrepreneurial skills self-employment is a success, for others it is not. The biggest constraints they face are lack of managerial skills and the inability to plan ahead and to use savings judiciously for improving one's enterprise. No knowledge of market demand leading to poor selection of activity, inaccessibility and increasing costs of raw materials, poor access to credit and difficulties in marketing in a deteriorating economic environment also contributed to failure.[136]

Open Employment

The Swedish Handicap Foundation, International Aid Foundation (SHIA) has, in the past made a significant contribution to the placement of disabled persons in mainstream employment. It reported that the attitudinal barriers posed by employers were the most difficult to overcome.[137] Their job placement officer often had to make five to ten visits before he could persuade an employer to take on an individual who had disabilities as an employee, or even as an apprentice. They believe that successful placement achieved the best publicity to win the confidence of employers. (SHIA no longer operates this job placement service.)

---

[136] P.Mendis, *Situation of People who have Disabilities in Sri Lanka*, International Comparative Study on Disabilities Policies and Programmes in the 21st Century in Asia and the Pacific, Social Work Research Institute, (Tokyo, November 2001).

[137] G.Wanniarachchi, *The NGO Perspective in Employment of Persons with Disabilities*, in Report on the Symposium for promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities, (Department of Social Services, December 1998).

Placing individuals from rural areas in urban mainstream employment was, in SHIAs' experience, not a success. High costs of urban living, relatively low wages, difficulty in finding accommodation and problems of adjusting to urban life-styles all contributed to this. A follow-up survey many years later of people placed by SHIA revealed that nearly 50 per cent had left their original places of work either in search of more remuneration or had gone back to their rural homes.[138] For the majority of people with disabilities living in rural areas, the introduction of the Protection of the Rights of Disabled Persons Act has not yet had any significant improvement on their standard of living.

Gender

Females who have disabilities state that they have inadequate opportunities for economic independence, both in the area of acquisition of skills and in income generation.[139]

Severity of disability

From the perspective of the severity of disability, most persons who have obtained placement in open employment are by and large those who have mild to moderate degrees of disabilities, with the exception of individuals who have no sight at all. One could describe them as those who can be quite independent in the workplace, have no particular special needs, and who can interact well with others in the workplace. On the other hand, people who use wheelchairs, have intellectual disabilities or disabilities as a result of mental illness, as well as those who use sign language, are seldom seen in open workplaces.

Policy and legislative support

Lack of policy and legislative support impacts severely on the economic situation of people who have disabilities and on the range of their economic choices. For the majority of people with disabilities living in rural areas, the introduction of the Protection of the Rights of Disabled Persons Act has not yet had any significant improvement on their standard of living.

Assistive devices

For individuals who depend on assistive devices, this need is preeminent, even before vocational training and employment. With those who have mobility disabilities, initial problems are related to the inadequate supply and distribution of appropriate tricycles, and of the relatively high costs of wheelchairs. For those amputees who have prostheses, and those who have profound deafness and use hearing aids, initial problems faced are the difficulty in repairing and replacing these. Procurement of these devices has become a little easier over the last few years to most people.

[138] ibid.
[139] Association of Disabled Women, Anuradhapura: Information obtained May 2002.

Part Six : Employment-promotion Activities Involving Social Partners

6.1 Government or NGO employment-promotion initiatives directed at employers

The Management Club (TMC) is an association (NGO) of management professionals in the private sector with a current membership of over 400. As a manifestation of social accountability, it has selected to implement a project named and directed towards "Making Sri Lanka a Disabled-Friendly Nation," promoting the acceptance of people who have disabilities in communities, in society and in employment. As the initial activity of this project, the TMC is carrying out an employment promotion exercise, bringing job seekers that have disabilities and employers together. Events are organized at divisional (sub-district) level so that people who have disabilities could find employment close to their homes.[140] The first such even was organized very recently in Kurunegala, a town about 90 km. from Colombo with a vibrant economy. No outcome results are available as yet.

6.2 Government or NGO employment-promotion initiatives directed at trade unions or workers' organizations

No such initiatives exist to date.

6.3 Employer or trade union employment-promotion activities

The Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC)

The Employers' Federation of Ceylon, the largest Employers Forum in Sri Lanka with a membership of 457 companies, set up an "Employer Network on Disabilities" in 1999 to promote the employment of disabled job seekers among its membership. The Employer Network on Disabilities was set up to act as a link between the business community, disabled people's organizations and various other bodies in employment-related services including government and NGO vocational training and employment providers and Funding Agencies. In this respect, the EFC took the initial step of forming a Steering Committee with 15 member companies that represent the hotel, plantation, manufacturing and banking sectors. A preliminary survey was carried out at about this time among the EFC membership. The survey revealed that, among the 200 members who responded, 74 companies employed 174 individuals who have disabilities.141 The Steering Committee recommended that awareness among employers should be increased so as to dispel negative attitudes about the recruitment of persons with disabilities and so create and expand job/career opportunities in the competitive labour market. This was also the primary objective of the workshop held in May 2001 that was attended by employer representatives, government officials, and representatives of institutions involved in disabilities issues and NGOs.[142]

---

[140] *Ceylon Daily News,* 12 August 2003.

[141] Employers Federation of Ceylon: *Convenor, Employer Network on Disabilities,* August 2003.

[142] ILO: *Employment of People with Disabilities – the impact of Legislation (Asia and Pacific Region), Country – Sri Lanka, draft,* (Geneva May 2002).

Discussions at the seminar revealed the dearth of information both about disabled job seekers and their prospective employers. In order to remedy this and to plan an effective course of action, a consultancy firm was contracted to carry out the following tasks:

- Report on the current status pertaining to the employment of disabled individuals
- Report on the skills gap in the private sector between those needed by employers and those possessed by disabled job seekers
- Establish a computer-based database of disabled persons possessing skills required by employers, those who can be trained in skills required, private sector employees willing to employ disabled workers and training institutions possessing adequate facilities for providing the training required
- Create a website with information related to the above
- Report on the legislative framework needed to promote open employment of disabled persons

Following this, job seekers that have disabilities are registered in the EFC disability data bank. As of mid-2002, there were 1,482 disabled persons registered in the database, of which 1,024 are males and 458 are females. A programme is now underway to find employment for those registered in the data bank through the conduct of job fairs. The first such job fair was held in Colombo in July 2003, in collaboration with an international NGO, Motivation, and with assistance from staff of the Department of Social Services. The job fair brought together approximately 75 job seekers and 24 employers. Thirty- seven job seekers (including 15 males and 17 males) found employment either following the first interview during the Fair or following a second interview held soon thereafter and arranged by each prospective employer. Arrangements are underway to hold the second job fair in Kandy, the second largest town in Sri Lanka.[143]

Before the job fair, job seekers participate in a one-day workshop to prepare them for interviews. International Labour Organization documents[144] translated into local languages are used as tools for interview training. To assist them in this Job Fair programme, the EFC has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a local NGO. The project is implemented with the cooperation and technical guidance of the International Labour Organization.

Future EFC plans include making a counseling programme available for employees who have disabilities and their employers (Human Resource Managers), offering courses in Business English for job seekers and building a coalition of NGOs that can provide support to the EFC project. There are also plans to train Human Resource Managers on issues surrounding disabilities, including special interview techniques and sign language. The EFC is also implementing a strategy to build and sustain the Employers' Network.

[143] Employers Federation of Ceylon: *Convenor, Employer Network on Disabilities,* August 2003.

[144] "Getting Hired: A Training Manual for conducting interviews for job seekers who face barriers to employment" and "Getting Hired: A Guide for interviews for job seekers who face barriers to employment": ILO Geneva, 1995.

Part Seven : Summary and Future Directions

7.1 Looking back over the past decade 1993-2002

The establishment of the National Council for Disabled Persons has had a positive impact on some aspects of disabilities-related practice. The improved coordination between various groups and organizations involved in the multiple aspects of disabilities work, however, can be attributed to the greater social consciousness of disabilities in the country, probably as a result of the civil conflict. The general public appears to take a greater interest in, and take some share of responsibility towards, improving the quality of life for people with disabilities.

7.2 Looking forward

The National Policy on Disabilities, the inclusive National Employment Policy and the activities being undertaken by the EFC with its partner and International Labour Organization support will have a significant impact on mainstreaming employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Mainstream employment of people with disabilities calls for the removal of attitudinal and physical barriers in work environments. The attitudes of employers vary from the enlightened and enthusiastic to the biased and disinterested. There is a perception among them that employing people with disabilities would incur additional costs. Employers' organizations have a role to play in promoting disability awareness and on advising members about measures that could be taken at the workplace to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities, particularly females. There is also a need to make more information available regarding the abilities of people with disabilities, especially in terms of the skills acquired by those who have undergone vocational training.[145] Positive attitudes in the workplace could be brought about through relevant modules in worker education programmes.[146]

Mainstream vocational training centres require a certain level of literacy for entry. Although some courses have entry requirements that are as low as Grade VIII (primary level), many people who have disabilities lack even basic education. Lack of skills in reading, writing and mathematics are a major barrier to their acceptance.[147] With the increasing numbers of people who have disabilities in formal education and non-formal education systems, this should be less of a problem in the future.

---

[145] M. Aluvihare, *Employment for Persons with Disabilities – Private Sector Perspectives*, Report on Symposium for Promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities, (Department of Social Services, December 1998.

[146] R.A. Sirisena, *Developing Vocational Training and Employment for Persons with Disabilities*, Op cit.

[147] G. Wanniarachchi, *The NGO Perspective in the Employment of Persons with Disabilities*, Op cit.

The civil conflict in the past two decades has highlighted the need for programmes to deal with its effects on ex-combatants. Two projects are awaiting donor support. One is for the "Economic and Social Reintegration of Disabled Ex-Service Personnel and Ex-Policemen" and the other is for the "Socio-Economic Reintegration of Ex-Combatants." While awaiting the implementation of these, inclusion of disabled in-service and ex-service personnel in mainstream employment-related services has begun, albeit in a small way. It is hoped that these activities will impact on service providers and institutions and have an effect on increasing opportunities in these areas for people who have disabilities in general.

7.3 In-country plans and recommendations

Since there is no current official rehabilitation plan, the researcher suggests some of the following directions based on this country study.

Policy needs to be translated into practice within the state vocational training sector to recognize and accept the equal rights of people who have disabilities to formal mainstream training, and to make necessary adaptations in training institutions to meet their special needs. This includes vocational instructor upgrading training on "special needs" to enable them to accommodate trainees with disabilities. Also see Section 4.15.

The Department of Social Services is aware of the need to change the courses offered at their VTCs to be market-driven. Action on this is called for without further delay. Also see Sections 4.5 and 4.14.

The Industrial Safety Division of the Ministry of Labour should begin to record the temporary/permanent disabilities caused by occupational accidents and the return to work rate after work injuries. Information so obtained will indicate whether restorative and rehabilitation clauses should be included in legislation related to conditions at the workplace. Also see Sections 2.4 and 3.2.

An Interministerial Technical Committee on the Provision of Employment for Disabled Persons was appointed by the Minister of Social Welfare in 1992. Among their recommendations was one stating that, "Suitable incentives should be given to the private sector to promote the employment of disabled persons." [148] It is still, however, very valid for Sri Lanka, because no change is as yet apparent in this aspect. The National Policy on Disabilities also recommends this strategy. Mainstream employment of disabled persons has yet to be taken seriously (see Section 4.15).

The information technology industry has shown significant growth over the past few years, and this is expected to increase in the immediate future.[149] There will undoubtedly be a role for people who have disabilities as this sector expands, and this should be exploited to the fullest to create employment opportunities for them.

[148] G. Wanniarachchi op cit.
[149] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Policy on Employment*, 01 May 2001.

- Priority should be given to instituting a legislative framework that will provide equality of employment opportunities and appropriate conditions in the workplace for people who have disabilities, particularly emphasizing women who have disabilities, based on the National Policy on Disabilities and the National Employment Policy. Also see Sections 2.5 and 4.15.

- When UN Agencies support employment-related and poverty alleviation projects, a clause which calls for the inclusion of people (particularly women) who have disabilities as target beneficiaries should, as a rule, be included. This will have a positive impact on other state and NGO sectors working in this area. Also see Section 4.15.

The National Employment Policy,[150] together with the National Policy on Disabilities,[151] bring with them formal government policies and strategies for the mainstreaming of training and employment opportunities for disabled persons, and the fulfillment in large part, of their economic rights. Standards, regulations and plans of action to ensure their translation into practice are urgently called for.

Translating these policies and strategies into practice will call for major changes in peoples, structures and systems. This will require the maximum support of all sectors of society and of international partners. People who have disabilities and those who have not will have to learn to accept each other and work side by side towards reaching common goals and targets. People who have disabilities will have to be ready to move away from sheltered and protected lifestyles and out into the real world. Workplaces will need to be adapted to meet special needs of ordinary citizens. Training and employment systems will need to demonstrate flexibility and their social conscience to give all citizens of this country the equal right to contribute to its economic development. This will be Sri Lanka's challenge.

[150] Ministry of Employment and Labour: *Draft National Policy on Employment*, 01 May 2001.
[151] Ministry of Social Welfare: *National Policy on Disabilities*, July 2003.

Tables

Table I : Listing of primary advocacy organizations of disabled persons in Sri Lanka with type and number of membership, geographic scope, objectives and employment-related activities (with reference to 2.6)

	Name of organization	Representation	No. of members	Geographic scope	Objectives	Employment-related services
1	Central Council for the Deaf	Hearing impaired	1,300 +	Island-wide	Development and use of sign language, legislation, etc.	Not available (n.a.)
2	Central Council of Disabled Persons	All types	20,000	Island-wide	Encourage setting up of self-help groups and assist them, promote CBR, etc.	Vocational training, facilitate self and open employment..
3	Spinal Injuries Association	Wheelchair users	n.a.	Island-wide	n.a.	Computer skills training to wheelchair users at rehabilitation hospital
4	Sri Lanka Council for the Blind	Visually handicapped	100	Island-wide	Collaborate with the government, affiliate with other organizations working for the blind, etc.	Skills training in telephone switchboard operating, computer operating
5	Sri Lanka Federation of the Visually Handicapped	Visually handicapped	3,000	Island-wide	Meet the needs and aspirations of the visually handicapped community and improve their quality of life	Telephone operators, computer operators.
6	Sri Lanka Foundation for Rehabilitation of the Disabled (Rehab Lanka)	All types	n.a.	Island-wide	n.a.	Vocational training, , facilitate self and open employment.
7	Association of Disabled Women, Anuradhapura	Various	800	Anuradhapura district	Organize and empower women with disabilities	Vocational training, placement, self-employment, micro finance
8	Association of People who have Disabilities, Kandy	Various		Central Province	Promote and protect the rights of disabled persons	Assist CBR activities in these areas.

Source: Responses obtained to questionnaire circulated, May 2002
n.a. = not available

Table II : Information on the total number of children who have disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools by educational level, type of disabilities and sex in the year 2000 (with reference to 4.2)

	Type of School/ Level	Type of Disabilities																
		Hearing		Visual		Speaking		Mobility		Slow development		Multiple		Others		Total		
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	Primary	1,980	1,520	2,511	1,907	4 225	2,063	986	599	17,562	12,111	1,942	1,192	1,440	750	30,646	20,142	50,788
2	Secondary	1,152	832	4 ,055	4,177	1 791	625	683	390	7,352	4,900	693	451	697	437	16,423	11,812	28,235
3	Collegiate	63	28	432	398	44	12	49	31	89	74	6	5	34	12	717	560	1,277
		3,195	2,380	6,998	6 482	6,060	2,700	1,718	1,020	25,003	17,085	2,641	1,648	2,171	1,199	47,786	32,514	80,300

Source: Ministry of Education, Department of Non-Formal, Continuing and Special Education, May 2002

Table III : Information on the total number of children who have disabilities enrolled in special education units attached to mainstream schools and in NGO-run special schools by province in the year 2000 (with reference to 4.2)

	Province	Mainstream schools – special education units						Special schools			Govt. officers with responsibility for Special Education			
		National Schools			Schools under Provincial Councils			NGO-run schools registered with Ministry/Education			Deputy Director	Deputy Director/ Acting	Other	Resource teachers
		Schools	Teachers	Pupils	Schools	Teachers	Pupils	Schools	Teachers	Pupils				
1	Western	14	25	228	91	135	1,547	10	186	1,151	05	01	-	22
2	Central	15	15	101	218	218	1,438	02	31	193	-	02	01	06
3	Southern	11	13	99	63	63	525	04	87	415	01	01	-	06
4	North-Eastern*	04	04	60	07	07	57	01	15	165	01	-	-	05
5	North-Western	09	09	131	214	217	2,207	02	47	244	05	02	-	16
6	North-Central	06	06	71	72	76	1,210	01	15	113	-	02	05	09
7	Sabaragamuwa	11	21	171	74	74	1,041	02	17	90	02	-	-	05
8	Uva	12	13	105	31	35	266	02	21	212	01	02	-	09
	Total	82	106	966	770	825	8,291	24	419	2,583	15	10	06	78

Note: *Statistics regarding pupils may be incomplete because these were areas affected directly by the conflict. Also, a number of schools were closed down and others were occupied by the Sri Lankan Armed Forces.

Source: Ministry of Education, Department of Non-Formal, Continuing and Special Education, May 2002

Table IV : Information on children who have disabilities in Special Schools run by NGOs registered with the Ministry of Education by province and by disabilities in the year 2000 (with reference to 4.2)

	Province	Number of school	Number of pupils by disabilities									Number of Teachers		Other staff
			Visual		Hearing		Slow development		Other		Total			
			M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		M	F	
1	Western	10	109	100	354	247	141	168	17	15	1,151	18	121	139
2	Central	02	04	09	95	85	-	-	-	-	193	05	18	23
3	Southern	04	57	42	110	95	64	40	04	03	415	17	66	30
4	North-Eastern	01	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a.	165	n.a	n.a	n.a
5	North-Western	02	22	14	108	100	-	-	-	-	244	13	38	51
6	North-Central	01	12	16	43	42	-	-	-	-	113	06	11	17
7	Sabaragamuuwa	02	-	-	-	-	45	44	-	01	90	-	07	07
8	Uva	02	29	13	88	82	-	-	-	-	212	11	16	27
	Total	24	233	194	798	651	250	252	21	19	2,583	70	277	294

Source: Ministry of Education, Department of Non-Formal, Continuing and Special Education, May 2002

Table V : Vocational Training Authority: Statistics regarding completion of courses by trainees (with reference to 4.3)

	Type of Institution	Number	Enrolment	Completed	Drop-outs	In training as of December 2001	Drop-out rate
1	National Vocational Training Centres	04	1 879	1,879	263	356	12%
2	District Vocational Training Centres	14	3 050	2,425	631	118	20%
3	Special Vocational Training Centres	08	509	409	47	-	9%
4	Rural Vocational Training Centres	219	21,806	20,013	3,971	511	18%
	Total	245	27,406	24,726	4,912	985	17.9%

Source: Vocational Training Authority, Training Plan, 2002

Table VI : State Institutions and those Registered NGO Institutions Providing Vocational Training with Capacity and Output data (with reference to 4.5)

	Name and Location	Number of places available	Intake 2002	Output 2001	Output 2000
Run by the Department of Social Services					
1	VTC Seeduwa	159	112	110	115
2	VTC Angunakolapelessa	85	60	61	64
3	VTC Ketawala, Kandy	105	70	51	72
4	VTC Wattegama	120	77	64	66
5	VTC for the Mentally Retarded. Waturugama	50	50	47	50
6	Rehabilitation Hospital, Ragama	40	10	07	10
Sub-total		559	379	340	377
As %		100%	67.7	60.8	67.4
Run by NGOs, registered with the Department of Social services					
7	Sukhitha VTC, Horana	60	44	44	59
8	Sarvodaya Suwasetha, Kalutara	15	10	06	10
9	Sarvodaya Suwasetha, Moratuwa	30	18	13	18
10	Islamic Centre, Thihariya	71	34	32	25
11	VTC Balangoda	45	28	27	22
12	St Joseph TC for the Deaf, Wattala	20	10	11	06
13	St Joseph TC for the Deaf, Weralugama	25	25	23	20
14	VTC for Women, Thalawa	30	26	18	15
15	VTC Bandarawela	45	-	31	-
16	Sawiya VTC Weligama	20	17	15	16
17	Rehab Lanka, Colombo	05	05	05	-
Sub-total		366	217	225	191
As %		100%	59.2	61.4	52.1
Total		925	596	565	568
%		100%	64.4	61.0	61.4

Source: Department of Social Services, May 2002

Table VII : Self-help groups, NGOs and Special Schools - information regarding vocational training and follow-up employment provided (with reference to 4.6)

Name of Organization	Types of courses offered (number)	Disabilities-types included	Number given training for the years 2000 and 2001			Follow up employment			
						self		open	
DPOs			M	F	Total	M	F	M	F
Sri Lanka Council for the Blind	02	Visual	11	6	17	n.a.	n.a.	04	04
Sri Lanka Federation of the Visually Handicapped	02	Visual	08	02	10	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Sri Lanka Foundation for Rehabilitation of Disabled	04	Physical, hearing	27	10	37	-	-	-	10
Central Council of Disabled Persons	05	Various	135	50	185	57	09	74	45
Association of Disabled Women, Anuradhapura	02	Various	-	31	31	-	08	-	12
Sub-total			181	99	280	57	17	78	71
NGOs									
Sarvodaya	04	Physical, hearing.	-	90	90	-	86	-	-
Navajeevana	07	Various	92	77	169	61	53	10	09
Fridsro CBR	12	Various	32	33	65	4	4	-	-
Sub-total			124	200	324	65	143	10	09
Special Schools									
School for the Blind	08	Visual	n.a.	n.a.	50	n.a.	n.a.		25
School for the Deaf	12	Hearing	n.a.	n.a.	200	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
The Chitra Lane School for the Special Child	05	Intellectual	50	31	81				
School for Physically Handicapped Children, Thihariya	11	Physical, visual, hearing	Listed in Table VI						
Ceylon Association for the Mentally Retarded	n.a.	Intellectual	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Sub-total			50	31	331				
TOTAL									

Source: Statistics obtained from collation of information sent in response to questionnaire circulated May 2002

Table VIII : Self-help groups, NGOs and Special Schools - information regarding numbers given self and open employment provided for the years 2000 and 2001 (with reference to 4.7)

Name of Organization	Disabilities-types included	Mainstream training or sheltered employment				Self-employment			Open employment		
DPOs		C Course	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Sri Lanka Council for the Blind	Visual	-	-	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	29	01	02	03
Sri Lanka Federation of the Visually Handicapped with grants as microfinance	Visual	-	-	-	-	21	15	36			
Sri Lanka Foundation for Rehabilitation of Disabled	Various	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	16	76
Sheltered workshop			17	15	32						
Central Council of Disabled Persons	Various	-	-	-	-	42	50	92	-	-	-
Association of Disabled Women (with loans as microfinance)	Various	-	-	-	-	48	29	77	-	-	-
Sub-total						111	94	234	61	18	79
NGOs											
Sarvodaya (mainstream training)	Various	-	48	24	72	-	20	20	-	60	60
Navajeevana	Various	-	-	-	-	11	23	34	09	10	19
Fridsro CBR	Various	-	-	-	-	01	04	05	-	03	03
Sub-total mainstream training			48	24	72						
Sub-total self and wage employment		-				12	47	59	09	73	82
Special Schools											
School for the Blind	Visual	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
School for the Deaf	Hearing impaired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Chitra Lane School for the Special Child, (sheltered workshop)	Intellectual		06	07	13						
School for Physically Handicapped Children, Thihariya	Physical, visual, hearing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ceylon Association for the Mentally Retarded	Intellectual	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub-total (sheltred workshop)			23	22	45						

Source: Statistics obtained from collation of information sent in response to questionnaire circulated May 2002

About the Author

Padmani Mendis

Dr Padmani Mendis, a physiotherapist by background, was awarded Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) Honoris Causa by Uppsala University Sweden in 1990 in recognition of her pioneering role and contribution to the global development of Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR). She was responsible for the establishment of the Disabilities Studies Unit of the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka and was its Course Director and Head from 1993 – 1998. Dr. Mendis has been a Member of the WHO Expert Advisory Panel on Rehabilitation since 1980. For the last 24 years, she has served as a consultant in disabilities to the World Health Organization, the United Nations and other international agencies, and has visited over 50 countries during the course of her international career. Most recently she chaired the Committee which prepared the National Policy on Disabilities for Sri Lanka.

Research protocol

PART ONE: COUNTRY OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction
- Brief history and current events
- Brief introduction to level of development and UNDP Human Development Index

1.2 Geography
- Area in square kilometers
- Topography and climate
- Rural/urban configuration

1.3 Population
- Total population
- Geographic distribution, including rural/urban
- Annual growth rate (total and by gender)
- Life expectancy (total and by gender)
- Age composition (total and by gender)
- Literacy levels (total and by gender)
- Unusual demographic patterns (e.g. declining birth rate affecting workforce, etc.)
- Primary religious groupings

1.4 Government and general development plans
- Form of government
- Political system and stability
- Structure of government, including number of ministries
- Administrative structures (i.e., central and local, including number of provinces/states and description of local government structures)
- Influence of central government vis a vis local structures and influence
- Socio-economic/development objectives and strategies (e.g. 5-10 year plans), especially in relation to training and employment and/or people with disabilities

1.5 Economic composition and status
- Economic sectors such as the size and significance of the country's primary agricultural, manufacturing and service industries
- Relative sizes of the formal and informal sectors of the economy
- Current annual GDP, GDP per capita, and annual growth rates
- Percentage of people below the international poverty level
- Impact of recent current events on0 economy, if appropriate (e.g., impact of the Asian economic crisis, political instability, etc.)
- Economic projections

1.6 Labour markets
- Labour force participation (total and by age and gender)
- Unemployment rates (total and by age and gender)

- Underemployment rates defined as less than 35 hours per week (total and by age and gender)
- Relative levels of open employment, multiple employment (individuals holding more than one job), and self-employment (total and by age and gender)
- Levels of employment in the formal and informal sectors (total and by age and gender)
- Wage levels for the primary occupations in the formal and informal sectors
- Identify and describe any special issues that impact the country labour markets (e.g. importing labour, high rates of youth unemployment, ageing workforce, etc.)

PART TWO: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIESES---DEFINITIONS, DATA AND SITUATION

2.1 Identify and describe the most common definition(s) of disability used, especially the legal definition(s). If multiple definitions exist, describe them and reference their sources.

2.2 Identify and describe the primary disability classification system(s) used for official government purposes. If multiple classification systems exist, cite their sources, describe them and explain how they are used.

2.3 Identify and describe the major sources of disability information. For each, specify the

- Nature of the source (e.g., Census, national database, survey, registration for services, study, etc.)
- Definition of disability and classification system
- Data gathering procedures
- Scope (e.g., aimed at all disabled persons, a disability subgroup, a geographic part of the country, etc.)
- Primary demographics and findings to include, as available, the number of and types of disabled persons, principle causes of disability, gender, literacy level, education, employment status, and income levels
- Problems that may have existed in collecting information or that affect the validity of the available data (e.g., unclear definitions, etc.).

2.4 Cite and describe national data sources and statistics related to the number of people disabled by on the job injuries and cite return to work rates, if available.

2.5 Describe the environmental factors affecting the full social participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life, especially their direct participation in training and employment. Note those specific to certain disability groups. For example:
- Environmental accessibility/barriers
- Communication accessibility barriers (e.g., sign language development/use, signage, use of Braille, etc.)
- Transportation accessibility/barriers
- Others.

2.6 Describe social factors that may also affect participation including

- Prevailing cultural attitudes toward disability (including religious beliefs)
- Negative attitudes or misconceptions (note disability specific attitudes)
- Societal and family expectations for people with disabilities by gender, if appropriate.

2.7 *Identify and describe the primary advocacy organizations of (not for) disabled persons and their advocates. In particular, note*
- If the organizations represent a single disability group or all types of disabilities
- Number of members and geographic scope
- Objectives, influence and services, especially those related to employment and training.

PART THREE: LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

3.1 International policies adopted
- Has the country ratified the Asia Pacific Decade Declaration? If so, when?
- Has the country ratified ILO Convention No. 159? If so, when? Describe any supervisory comments.

3.2 National legislation, official decrees, etc.
- Describe reference to equal rights, especially of disabled persons in the Constitution.
- Cite and describe any global disability rights or disability-specific legislation.
- Cite and describe legislation that currently influences persons with disabilities in relation to (include name, date, purpose, and disability provisions or lack thereof):
  - Education, vocational training and/or human resource development
  - Employment, wage, and labour issues
  - Income generation, self-employment and enterprise development
  - Transportation, housing and building codes, assistive devices, other.
- Cite and describe in detail any employment promotion legislation or provisions to promote employment of people with disabilities, such as quotas, levies, employer incentives, laws protecting employment rights, etc.
- Cite and describe any national legislation that discriminates against disabled persons, for example, with regard to employment in certain professions, etc.
- Cite and describe vocational rehabilitation provisions contained in the country's workers' compensation, social security and/or employment injury laws.
- Cite any other legislation that promotes or hinders the training and employment of people with disabilities.
- Describe any draft or impending legislation that deals with disabled persons.

3.3 Disability policies and regulations
- Cite and describe the national development plan as it relates to training and employment or includes the mention of people with disabilities.
- Cite and describe significant existing regulations or policy statements to implement the legislation described in 3.2.
- Cite and describe the national plan regarding vocational rehabilitation, training and

employment for disabled persons, or a general rehabilitation/disability plan that includes these issues. Include the date developed, when and how the plan was developed, who was involved in its development and if workers' and employers' organizations and people with disabilities were included, the process for developing the plan, and its significant contents.

- Cite and describe any policies and/or regulations related to the availability of vocational rehabilitation staff and their competency and training.
- Cite and describe any policies and/or regulations related to vocational rehabilitation research activities.
- Cite and describe any other policies and regulations that relate to the training and employment of people with disabilities, their equal treatment, and their access to support services to enable them to secure employment and training.

3.4 Evaluation and review of policies

- Are there measurable targets with regard to the training and employment of people with disabilities? If yes, describe these targets, including gender dimensions and requirements for joint action by all ministries (such as those responsible for employment, training, small enterprise or rural development).
- Describe methods of reviewing and evaluating national plans or policies.

3.5 Institutional structure for policy and service implementation

- Briefly describe the historical evolution of vocational rehabilitation and other strategies to foster the employment of people with disabilities.
- Identify and describe the activities of the key government ministries or semi-autonomous organizations involved in implementing the policies and overseeing the services related to the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons.
- Identify and describe any national coordinating body [ies] in support of employment and training activities for disabled persons, including the composition, structure and functions.
- Identify and describe any inter-ministerial groups or committees in support of employment and training activities for disabled persons.
- Describe the role of local (state/provincial) government in implementing disability policy.

3.6 Other implementing organizations

- Describe the relationship between the government, the private sector and the NGO community regarding the implementation of disability policies and vocational rehabilitation services. In particular, note the funding relationship between government and NGOs, including organizations of/for disabled persons, and how they cooperate to implement policies or deliver services in response to policies (e.g., funding arrangements, policy implementing roles, partnerships, collaborations, etc.).
- Describe any policy implementation or service provider roles for employers' groups and trade unions.

PART FOUR: EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING PRACTICE AND EMPLOYMENT

4.1 General education system

- Describe the structures of the primary, secondary and post-secondary education systems.
- Is schooling compulsory, and if so, to what level?
- Are fees charged, and if so, how much and to what level?
- Provide enrolment data for each level of schooling (total and by gender).
- Describe any urban/rural differences in educational systems and opportunities.

4.2 Educational opportunities for persons with disabilities

- Cite data or estimate the proportions of the disabled population that receive primary, secondary and post-secondary education (by gender and disability type).
- Identify and describe the educational opportunities for disabled persons in the country's mainstream educational systems, and estimate the numbers of disabled persons enrolled at each level (by gender and disability type).
- Identify and describe NGO-sponsored educational opportunities for disabled persons, and estimate the numbers enrolled (by gender and disability type).
- Identify and describe the educational opportunities for disabled persons in other systems that may exist (e.g., community based rehabilitation programmes) and estimate the numbers enrolled (by gender and disability type).
- Estimate the retention rates for persons with disabilities in each of the above systems.
- Describe the availability of appropriate teaching aids, assistive devices and facilities for promoting successful educational outcomes for persons with disabilities.
- Describe the nature and extent of disability related teacher-training programmes for teachers in the mainstream and special educational systems.
- Describe differences in availability and/or quality of educational services related to urban and rural areas, type of disability or gender variables.
- Cite data, evaluation studies or other authoritative sources to describe the quality of education services for students with disabilities.

4.3 The mainstream vocational training system

- Describe the formal vocational training system (i.e., certificate, diploma or qualification based), including oversight bodies, ministry or ministries involved, institutional structures, and types of training courses offered.
- Describe the informal vocational training system (i.e., provides skills training that does not result in formal qualifications), including ministries involved, institutional structures and types of training courses offered.
- Identify and describe programme[s] to provide vocational training through distance learning.
- Identify and describe work-based and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Identify completion rates (total and by gender) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
- Describe the availability of NGO or commercial vocational training programmes and their importance to the overall human resource development system.

4.4 Mainstream vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

- Identify and describe any existing opportunities for mainstreaming and/or special support services for disabled trainees in the mainstream formal and informal vocational training systems.
- Identify disabled persons enrolment and completion rates (by gender and disability type) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
- Discuss differences in availability and/or quality of mainstream vocational training related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.

4.5 Segregated vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

- Identify and describe any existing segregated government and NGO-sponsored vocational training systems and programmes for persons with disabilities, including those providing formal and informal vocational training and any distance learning or apprenticeship opportunities.
- Describe special accommodations or special support services offered to students, including follow-up.
- Describe prevocational, remedial or other specialized training that may be offered.
- Describe the types of occupational skills taught, and discuss their relevance to labour market and self-employment opportunities.
- Describe the nature and extent of disability related instructor-training programmes for those in mainstream and segregated systems.
- Identify (or estimate) completion rates (total and by gender) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
- Discuss differences in availability and/or quality of mainstream vocational services related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.
- Cite evaluation studies or other authoritative sources to describe the quality and responsiveness of the vocational training system to people with disabilities.

4.6 Self-help and peer vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

- Identify and describe any existing self-help or peer vocational training programmes.
- Estimate the number of disabled persons enrolled, graduated and employed as a result of their participation by gender and by disability type.
- Discuss any differences in availability and/or types of self-help and peer vocational training related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.

4.7 Mainstream employment services

- Identify and describe the government sponsored employment services system (i.e., providing assessment, vocational guidance and job placement services), the responsible ministry or ministries involved and particular groups targeted.
- Describe the institutional service delivery structures (e.g., schools, employment offices, and outsourcing to NGOs) and nature and extent of services provided.
- Identify significant NGO-sponsored employment programmes, the services that are offered, and the target groups (e.g. youth or women) served.
- Discuss any differences in availability and/or types of employment services based on urban/rural or gender dimensions.

4.8 Opportunities for people with disabilities in mainstream systems

- Identify and describe any existing opportunities for mainstreaming and/or special support services for disabled job seekers in the mainstream employment services.
- If mainstreaming occurs, provide data or estimate the proportion of disabled persons who use the mainstream system (s) and their success rate in terms of employment outcomes.

4.9 Special employment and employment support services for people with disabilities

- Identify and describe special employment and employment support services available to people with disabilities through government agencies, NGOs, schools or other sponsoring institutions.
- Describe the structures for delivering employment and employment support services (e.g., employment offices, work oriented rehabilitation centres or sheltered workshops, special vocational schools, etc.).
- Describe the services offered, especially disability specific employment support services (e.g., vocational assessment, peer group counseling, work experience or adjustment services, supported employment, job analysis, selective placement, etc.).
- Note if these services focus entirely on open employment, or include placement in sheltered employment, enclaves or other protected environments.
- Identify the number of persons served by gender and disability type and the number placed in employment (open employment, protected employment or self-employment) by gender and by disability type.

4.10 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation

- Identify any government sponsored self-employment and income generation services and the responsible ministries.
- Describe the services offered (e.g., business planning, business development training, access to credit. etc.) and target groups.
- Identify any NGO sponsored self-employment and income generation programmes.
- Describe the services offered (e.g., business planning, business development training, access to credit, etc.) and target groups.

4.11 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation for disabled persons

- Describe opportunities for inclusion of people with disabilities in self-employment programmes by identifying mainstreaming policies and special outreach and support services.
- Describe the extent to which people with disabilities are included in such programmes by citing or estimating participation and outcome rates.

4.12 Self-employment and income generation support services for people with disabilities

- Identify support programmes for self-employment and income generation for people with disabilities sponsored by governments, NGOs or special schools and training facilities.
- Describe the services offered and target groups.
- Identify the participation and outcome data (number starting businesses) by gender and by disability type.

4.13 Poverty alleviation programmes

- Describe any major poverty alleviation programmes and their sponsors and related

ministries (if not identified in 4.11 or 4.12).

- Identify policies and practices related to the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Identify or estimate the participation rates of people with disabilities in such programmes.

4.14 Staff training for vocational rehabilitation

- Identify and describe training programmes for professionals providing vocational rehabilitation and training and employment services for people with disabilities.
- Describe the availability of competent trained personnel related to vocational rehabilitation practice (e.g. trained rehabilitation counselors, vocational assessors, vocational counselors, job placement specialists, etc.). Cite data, if available, and estimate the proportion of disabled persons.

4.15 Barriers/gaps related to services

- Identify specific barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing or benefiting from educational, vocational training, employment and self-employment and income generation services, both mainstream and segregated (e.g., related to accessibility, transportation, support services, availability of assistive devices, trained instructors, policy support, etc.).
- Note gaps in services that may exist (e.g., such as for those with certain types of disabilities, age, ethnic or gender groups, those residing in certain geographic areas, etc.).
- Whenever possible, identify data or a rationale to support the identification of these barriers or gaps.

PART FIVE: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 Open employment

- Identify and describe open employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the public, for profit and not for profit sub sectors.
- Estimate or provide data related to the number employed (by gender and by disability type) especially in relation to the types of jobs, wages, benefits, and career advancement potentials in the open labour market.
- Identify and describe any teleworking, home-based or other non-traditional employment structures in the open market.
- Identify and describe employment opportunities that have developed because of advances in information technology, the Internet and the computer industry.
- Identify and describe any decreases in open employment opportunities, especially related to employment of disabled persons, such job loss due to technology, trade or globalization issues, the impact of transition economies, etc.

5.2 Employment opportunities for people with disabilities in protected work environments

- Describe the available employment opportunities in protected work environments designed for people with disabilities including the following:
- Government set-aside job programmes (i.e., jobs that are set aside or give priority to people with disabilities, such as sale of lottery tickets in Thailand)
- Sheltered workshops and work centres for people with disabilities.
- Supported employment programmes

- Enclaves (segregated work setting for people with disabilities within larger companies)
- Other.
- For each type of protected job opportunity, provide data or estimate the number of people employed (by gender and by disability type), especially in relation to the types of jobs, wages, benefits and rehabilitation services that are available to participants in these protected work programmes.
- Explain and describe opportunities and specific services for transitioning workers with disabilities from protected employment to open employment.
- Cite data or estimate the numbers or proportions of people with disabilities who transition from protected to open employment.

5.3 Self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities

- Identify and describe self-employment opportunities for disabled persons in the formal sector, and estimate the numbers of people employed and the incomes of self-employed people with disabilities in the formal sector.
- Identify and describe self-employment opportunities for disabled persons in the informal sector, and estimate the numbers of people employed and the incomes of self-employed people with disabilities in the informal sector.
- Identify any special government or NGO programmes to support or assist people with disabilities in self-employment, such as special marketing schemes, tax breaks, etc.

5.4 Identify and describe other segregated or protected employment opportunities that may exist, such as disabled persons cooperatives, welfare enterprises, etc. and estimate the number of persons employed, types of job opportunities, wages, and number and types of disabled persons served.

5.5 Barriers and Gaps

- Identify specific barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing or benefiting from employment opportunities including those in open, formal, informal and protected environments (e.g., related to accessibility, transportation, support services, availability of assistive devices, discriminatory practices, lack of policy support, etc.).
- Note specific gaps to accessing employment opportunities that may exist (e.g., such as for those with certain types of disabilities, age, ethnic or gender groups, those residing in certain geographic areas, etc.).
- Whenever possible, identify data or a rationale to support the identification of these barriers or gaps.

PART SIX: ACTIVITIES INVOLVING SOCIAL PARTNERS

6.1 Identify and describe any government or NGO initiatives specifically designed to educate, raise awareness in, or provide supports and encouragement to, employers who are involved in the training or employment of people with disabilities.

6.2 Identify and describe any government or NGO initiatives specifically designed to educate, raise awareness or provide supports and encouragement to trade unions or workers' organizations that are involved in the training or employment of people with disabilities.

6.3 Describe any employer or trade union initiated activities, partnerships, or liaisons with government or NGOs that are specifically designed to promote the training and employment of people with disabilities.

PART SEVEN: SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

7.1 Looking back over the past decade 1992-2002

- Describe significant changes in policy and practice over the past decade.
- Describe specific progress or lack of progress.

7.2 Looking forward

- Describe major barrier needs related to policies and practices for equal opportunity and treatment of people with disabilities in regard to training and employment.
- Describe major strengths or opportunities related to policies or practices in regard to training and employment of people with disabilities.

7.3 Plans and recommendations from in-country

- Cite and describe goals, directions, and targets from official government planning documents related to training and employment policies and practices and specify time frames.
- Cite and describe any current recommendations made by advocacy or disability organizations related to the future of employment and training policies and practices.
- Cite and describe any other recommendations, studies or analyses within the country that pose specific recommendations about the future of policies and practices for the training and employment of people with disabilities.

International Labour Office
10th Floor, UN Building
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue
P.O. Box 2-349, Rajdamnern
Bangkok 10200, Thailand
Tel: 662-288-1792
Fax: 662-288-3060
E-mail: abilityasia@ilo.org
Web site: http://ilo.org/abilityasia