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People with disabilities: Pathways to decent work - Report of a tripartite workshop, Lilongwe, Malawi, 16-17 May 2006

Abstract
In recent decades, the exclusion of many people with disabilities from society has been recognized as a human rights issue, resulting from social barriers rather than the individual's inability to participate. This transition from a social welfare perspective to a rights-based approach has brought about a focus on improving access to education and skills training, reflected in legislation all over the world.

The Declaration on Employment and Poverty in Africa1, 2004 commits African Union (AU) members to ensure equal opportunities for disabled persons by implementing the African Decade of Disabled Persons and, to that end, developing policies and national programmes that favour full participation of persons with disabilities and their families in social, political and economic development. The Plan of Action for the implementation of the commitments made in this Declaration prioritizes the targeting and empowering of vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, through education, skills training entrepreneurship, among other recommended actions.

The move towards a human rights approach to disability issues and away from a social welfare or charity approach is also reflected in ILO's Convention concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons (No. 159) of 1983, now ratified by 78 countries. Convention No. 159 requires States to develop a national policy concerning vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities based on the principles of equality of opportunity and equal treatment, and to promote community involvement and mainstreaming where possible. Malawi ratified ILO Convention No. 159 in 1986 and is making progress in developing rights-based legislation concerning disabled persons by drafting (2004) a new Disability Bill to replace the Handicapped Persons Act of 1971.

The trend towards a rights-based approach and full inclusion of disabled persons in society has gained momentum worldwide with the decision by the United Nations General Assembly to develop a Convention to Protect and Promote the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, a process which is currently underway. Representatives of Malawi have also taken part in the negotiations of this Convention.

Given the emerging trend towards a rights-based approach to disability issues in Malawi, and the support provided to this by the AU Declaration in the broader context of Africa, it is timely to examine legal provisions concerning the training and employment of disabled persons and their implementation, and to identify steps which may be needed to improve opportunities for disabled persons seeking to acquire marketable skills, find a decent job or set up a viable business.

This workshop, "People with Disabilities: Pathways to Decent Work", 16-17 May 2006, provided the opportunity to commence such a review. The workshop was linked to two ILO projects in Malawi. One of these projects, Promoting the Employability and Employment of People with Disabilities through Effective Legislation, funded by the Government of Ireland, seeks to promote training and employment opportunities for disabled people by supporting selected national governments to enhance the effectiveness of existing laws and policies or to develop new laws reflecting a rights-based approach. As part of this project, a country profile

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has been prepared, describing the laws and policies in place in Malawi which set the framework for training and employment opportunities and examining available evidence on implementation measures and their impact. This country profile was one of the key background documents for the review to take place at the workshop.

The second project, Strategies for Skills Acquisition and Work for Persons with Disabilities in Southern Africa, funded by the Government of Flanders, aims to enhance skills acquisition by disabled persons by identifying effective strategies to provide vocational skills and real work opportunities to youth and adults with disabilities by governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), disabled persons' organizations (DPOs) and Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes. A national survey on skills acquisition by people with disabilities was conducted by the Malawi Federation of the Disabled (FEDOMA) and Platform for Disability and Development Cooperation (PHOS) as part of this project. A preliminary report on key issues in skills development for people with disabilities in Malawi, incorporating the main survey and case study findings, formed the second key document for the workshop.

Keywords
Malawi, disabilities, barriers, transition, disability, disabled, society, training, employment, rights-based

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International
Labour
Office

People with Disabilities: Pathways to Decent Work

REPORT OF A TRIPARTITE WORKSHOP

MALAWI

Lilongwe, 16-17 May 2006

Organized by the ILO Skills and Employability Department

Funded by the Government of Ireland and the Government of Flanders

Irish Aid
Department of Foreign Affairs
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

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1. Introduction

In recent decades, the exclusion of many people with disabilities from society has been recognized as a human rights issue, resulting from social barriers rather than the individual's inability to participate. This transition from a social welfare perspective to a rights-based approach has brought about a focus on improving access to education and skills training, reflected in legislation all over the world.

The Declaration on Employment and Poverty in Africa[1], 2004 commits African Union (AU) members to ensure equal opportunities for disabled persons by implementing the African Decade of Disabled Persons and, to that end, developing policies and national programmes that favour full participation of persons with disabilities and their families in social, political and economic development. The Plan of Action for the implementation of the commitments made in this Declaration prioritizes the targeting and empowering of vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, through education, skills training entrepreneurship, among other recommended actions.

The move towards a human rights approach to disability issues and away from a social welfare or charity approach is also reflected in ILO's Convention concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons (No. 159) of 1983, now ratified by 78 countries. Convention No. 159 requires States to develop a national policy concerning vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities based on the principles of equality of opportunity and equal treatment, and to promote community involvement and mainstreaming where possible. Malawi ratified ILO Convention No. 159 in 1986 and is making progress in developing rights-based legislation concerning disabled persons by drafting (2004) a new Disability Bill to replace the Handicapped Persons Act of 1971.

The trend towards a rights-based approach and full inclusion of disabled persons in society has gained momentum worldwide with the decision by the United Nations General Assembly to develop a Convention to Protect and Promote the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, a process which is currently underway. Representatives of Malawi have also taken part in the negotiations of this Convention.

Given the emerging trend towards a rights-based approach to disability issues in Malawi, and the support provided to this by the AU Declaration in the broader context of Africa, it is timely to examine legal provisions concerning the training and employment of disabled persons and their implementation, and to identify steps which may be needed to improve opportunities for disabled persons seeking to acquire marketable skills, find a decent job or set up a viable business.

[1] Declaration on Employment and Poverty in Africa, adopted at the African Union Third Extraordinary Session on Employment and Poverty Alleviation, Ouagadougou, Sept. 2004.

This workshop, *''People with Disabilities: Pathways to Decent Work"*, 16-17 May 2006, provided the opportunity to commence such a review. The workshop was linked to two ILO projects in Malawi. One of these projects, *Promoting the Employability and Employment of People with Disabilities through Effective Legislation*, funded by the Government of Ireland, seeks to promote training and employment opportunities for disabled people by supporting selected national governments to enhance the effectiveness of existing laws and policies or to develop new laws reflecting a rights-based approach. As part of this project, a country profile has been prepared, describing the laws and policies in place in Malawi which set the framework for training and employment opportunities and examining available evidence on implementation measures and their impact. This country profile was one of the key background documents for the review to take place at the workshop.

The second project, *Strategies for Skills Acquisition and Work for Persons with Disabilities in Southern Africa*, funded by the Government of Flanders, aims to enhance skills acquisition by disabled persons by identifying effective strategies to provide vocational skills and real work opportunities to youth and adults with disabilities by governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), disabled persons' organizations (DPOs) and Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes. A national survey on skills acquisition by people with disabilities was conducted by the Malawi Federation of the Disabled (FEDOMA) and Platform for Disability and Development Cooperation (PHOS) as part of this project. A preliminary report on key issues in skills development for people with disabilities in Malawi, incorporating the main survey and case study findings, formed the second key document for the workshop.

2. Overview

During the workshop, participants examined legislation and implementation mechanisms in place, identified steps required to improve the quality and impact of laws and policies, as well as the quality and relevance of skills training for persons with disabilities in Malawi. Participants were also sensitized to some effective mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating legislation: they examined examples of effective strategies and methods for skills acquisition for productive work; proposed policy recommendations for enhanced mainstream vocational training; considered ways to improve and increase skills development opportunities for persons with disabilities; and identified follow-up action to be taken by key stakeholders.

2.1 Themes

The workshop involved a combination of formal presentations, panel discussions and working group sessions, with the aim of encouraging a high level of participation.

Thematic presentations

- Enabling disabled persons to find decent work: What is required?
- Training and employing people with disabilities: The legal and policy framework in Malawi.
- Recent developments in law and policy concerning the training and employment of people with disabilities in Malawi.
- Pointing the way forward: International trends in legislation for persons with disabilities.
- Skills acquisition for persons with disabilities in Southern Africa
- Effective skills training: Examples of good practices - Building on experiences from Malawi and elsewhere

To complement the formal presentations, two disabled persons spoke of their experience in obtaining training and seeking decent work.

Working groups

Working groups comprising representatives of government, employers' and workers' organizations, DPOs, representatives from other NGOs, as well as training providers discussed the following questions:

- Improving the impact of laws and policies concerning the training and employment of people with disabilities: What needs to be done? Who should be involved? What are the first steps?
- Access to marketable skills by persons with disabilities: What policy approach should be adopted? What strategies are required? Who should be involved? What are the first steps?

Panel discussions

Panel discussions involving representatives of government, employers' and workers' organizations, DPOs, representatives from other NGOs, as well as training providers, addressed the following questions:

- Implementing the laws and policies: What needs to be done?
- Strategies for skills development in Malawi: What is the way forward?

2.2 Participants

The workshop was attended by 41 participants including government, employers' and workers' representatives, DPOs, parliamentarians, training and employment service providers and legal experts. In total, there were 22 women and 19 men. People with disabilities were represented by delegates of organizations advocating for their rights, including 11 disabled persons.

2.3 Resource persons

The workshop was organized and conducted by ILO:

- Ms Barbara Murray, Senior Disability Specialist, Skills and Employability Department (EMP/SKILLS), ILO Geneva
- Ms Pia Korpinen, Associate Expert, Skills and Employability Department (EMP/SKILLS), ILO Geneva
- Ms Heather Labanya, Programme Assistant, Skills and Employability Department (EMP/SKILLS), ILO Geneva
- Ms Monty Tembo, ILO Lusaka

2.4 Resource materials

The following documents were provided to participants in hard copy or electronic format:

- ILO: Draft: *Promoting the Employability and Employment of People with Disabilities through Effective Legislation (Southern Africa), Malawi Country Profile,* ILO/Irish Aid (Geneva, April 2006).
- ILO: *Employment of People with Disabilities: A Human Rights Approach (East and Southern Africa), Report of a Tripartite Technical Consultation, Addis Ababa, 23-25 September 2005,* ILO/Development Cooperation Ireland (Geneva, 2006).
- ILO: *Skills Acquisition for People with Disabilities: Key Issues - Malawi,* Background Document for National Workshop, "People with Disabilities – Pathways to Decent Work", Lilongwe, 16-17 May, 2006 (Geneva, 2006).

3. Official opening

The workshop was officially opened by Ms Heather Labanya, ILO/Irish Aid Programme Assistant, on behalf of Mr Gerry Finnegan, the Director of ILO Lusaka and Representative for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. Introductory statements were also made by Ms Susan Chitimbe, Special Adviser to the President on Disability Affairs; Mr Mussa Chiwaula, Executive Director of the Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi (FEDOMA); and Mr Elias Ngongondo, Secretary, Ministry for Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD).

Speaking on behalf of Mr Finnegan, Ms Labanya said that the ILO's commitment to promoting opportunities for persons with disabilities in training and employment dates back eighty years to the early days of the Organization, a specialized agency of the United Nations, set up in 1919, before the UN came into being. She pointed out that it differs from other UN agencies in that it is a tripartite organization, involving governments, as well as our social partners – employers' and workers' organizations. The involvement of the social partners ensures that issues affecting people at every level of society are brought to attention – particularly in relation to the world of work.

The principles of equal opportunity, equal treatment and non-discrimination underlie all ILO activities, which involve:

- Rights at work and the adoption of international labour standards – international treaties which are binding on the States which ratify them;
- Knowledge development - building knowledge on good practice in skill development, employment, enterprise development and social security;
- Advocacy – conferences, seminars, workshops like this one, training programmes and policy advice; and
- Technical Cooperation projects.

The ILO is convinced that poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere. Without the inclusion of disabled women and men in initiatives to reduce poverty, inequality will continue and Malawian society will not prosper as it could. The Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) focuses on the improvement of the quality of life of the most vulnerable groups in society, including people with disabilities.

The AU Declaration on Employment and Poverty in Africa adopted in Ouagadougou, September 2004, commits AU members to ensure equal opportunities for disabled persons by implementing the African Decade of Disabled Persons. This requires the development of policies and national programmes that favour full participation of persons with disabilities and their families in social, political and economic development. The Plan of Action for the implementation of the commitments made in this Declaration prioritizes the targeting and empowering of vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities,

through education and skills training entrepreneurship, among other recommended actions.

Empowerment of persons with disabilities is central to enabling men and women with every type of disability to take their place in the wider society. Consulting DPOs, as well as the social and service providers, in planning the implementation of laws and policies is a key requirement of ILO Convention No. 159, and is reflected in the ILO's approach to technical cooperation activities, including those in Malawi. The ILO supports and promotes the slogan of the international disability movement, 'Nothing about us, without us'.

Empowerment brings with it new opportunities. As DPOs grow stronger, they can take their place as activists, along with the social partners and civil society groups, influencing the shape of laws, policies, programmes and services in their countries. The right to take part at this level brings with it new responsibilities. As influential lobby groups in society, DPOs need to ensure that they live up to these responsibilities, and collaborate together to ensure that they speak with a strong and unified voice on policy and service issues before coming to the negotiating table or undertaking new projects.

As people with disabilities have been taking their place in society around the world – it has become clear that people with disabilities can contribute, once they have improved access to education and skills training and find jobs which are suited to their skills, interests and abilities. This is reflected in the case studies of individual women and men in Malawi, carried out recently as part of an ILO project. Most of the individuals featured in these case studies have got to where they are today, against the odds, with the support of their families, others in their communities, or by chance association with NGOs. For every successful case study, Ms Labanya said there must be at least a hundred persons who have not received support and assistance, who remain invisible in our society. She invited participants to imagine what it would be like if all disabled people had the opportunities reflected in these stories!

Ms Labanya concluded by expressing the hope that the workshop would contribute to making all of these things possible.

Ms Susan Chitimbe, Special Adviser to the President on Disability Affairs, emphasized that persons with disabilities should enjoy equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of access to retention and advancement in employment, which wherever possible, should correspond to the individual choice of the employment. As the representative of the President of Malawi, His Excellency Dr Bingu Wa Mutharika, she assured the participants about the President's commitment to *ensuring equal opportunities* for persons with disabilities in Malawi. She also informed the participants that the President would like to like to see more companies and government institutions employing persons with disabilities. Ms Chitimbe hoped that the workshop would strengthen the cooperation between human rights organizations in Malawi in their work to promote decent work for persons with disabilities.

Mr Elias Ngongondo, Secretary, Ministry for Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD), focused in his opening speech on the challenges faced by people with disabilities working in the informal economy as a result of their limited access to education and training opportunities as well as the demands of the labour market. He emphasized the need to adopt measures that would ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to the skills training they require. He noted that the formal TVET system would need to be made more flexible in order to reach out to workers with disabilities in the informal economy and that ways of complementing formal training opportunities with existing non-formal training opportunities would need to be explored.

Mr Mussa Chiwaula, Executive Director of the Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi (FEDOMA), thanked participants for attending this important workshop, which came at an opportune time, in light of a number of significant developments that have taken place in the history of disability in Malawi:

- the development of the National Policy on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities which has been absent for the last three decades;
- the formulation of the draft Disability Bill which is meant to protect the rights of persons with disabilities by combating discrimination based on disability; and
- the creation of the Ministry responsible for persons with disabilities; and the recognition of disability by Government as one of the cross-cutting issues in its National Growth Strategy Paper.

Mr Chiwaula felt that these gains would provide a useful basis for discussions at the workshop which could culminate in the design of effective strategies that would enhance work opportunities for persons with disabilities in Malawi. More effective implementation of policies is needed, as studies carried out so far indicate that training and work opportunities for people with disabilities are still not available to the extent required. Mr Chiwaula also called upon the Government to speed up the enactment of the disability legislation which would be instrumental in improving the living standard and quality of life of disabled people in Malawi.

Finally, Mr Chiwaula thanked the ILO for cooperating with FEDOMA and hoped that the continuing partnership would enable FEDOMA to promote the development of legal and policy provisions based on the principles of equal opportunity and non discrimination that are effective and will help in the full participation with equality of persons with disabilities.

4. Thematic presentations

4.1 Enabling disabled persons to find decent work: What is required?

Barbara Murray, Senior Disability Specialist, ILO Geneva

Introducing the workshop, Ms Murray said that certain conditions need to be fulfilled if people with disabilities are to be enabled to obtain decent work – productive work in which rights are protected, which generates an adequate income, with adequate social protection. The legal and policy framework must set the environment for this, reflecting the social model of disability in which the barriers to participation are recognized to lie in barriers in the social and physical environment. People with disabilities must have access to training in skills which are relevant to labour market opportunities locally, regionally or nationally. They should be able to choose courses which are in line with their own interests and aptitudes. Employment services must assist in ensuring that disabled job-seekers find jobs which are matched to their skills, interests and abilities. If required, technical aids should be made available and adaptations made to the workplace. And finally, employers must be willing to give individuals with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to work, through recruitment, offering work experience, on-the-job training placements or other means.

Ms Murray gave an overview of the two ILO projects which address these themes, and which provide the framework for the workshop. The first of these projects *Promoting the Employability and Employment of Persons with Disabilities through Effective Legislation*, funded by the Government of Ireland, focuses on the ways of improving the effectiveness of laws concerning the training and employment of persons with disabilities. The second project, *Strategies for Skills Acquisition for People with Disabilities in Southern Africa*, funded by the Government of Flanders, focuses on identifying effective skills development strategies which have enabled disabled persons to get decent work. Over the two days of the workshop, the findings of these two projects would form the backdrop to thematic presentations, working group sessions and panel discussions.

4.2 Training and employing people with disabilities: The legal and policy framework in Malawi

Heather Labanya, Skills and Employability Department, ILO Geneva

In her presentation, Ms Labanya outlined the legislation in place to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in Malawi and the role played by different Ministries, before focusing on the ways in which laws and policies are being implemented in practice.

Legislative framework

Discrimination on the grounds of disability is explicitly prohibited under the **Constitution of Malawi, 1995**, underlying their right to equal remuneration for work of equal value. Like other Malawians, disabled people have the right to fair

and safe labour practices, and to form or join trade unions. The Constitution also includes a provision that obliges the State to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in society through greater access to public places, fair opportunities in employment and the fullest possible participation in all spheres of Malawian society.

The **Handicapped Persons Act of 1971** establishes the Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA), giving it the responsibility of promoting the welfare of disabled persons. MACOHA's main task is to advise the Minister on matters relating to people with disabilities and to administer the vocational and special training centres and the rehabilitation and welfare services for disabled persons in Malawi. All organizations promoting the welfare of disabled persons in Malawi are required to register with the Council and submit an annual report on their activities under the Act.

In the Act, persons with a disability, "*the handicapped*", are defined as:

"…persons who, by reason of any defect or impairment of the mind, senses or body, congenital or acquired, are unable to take part in normal education, occupation and recreation, or who, by reason of any such defect or impairment, require special assistance or training to enable them to take part in normal education, occupation or recreation".

The **Draft Disability Bill,** developed in 2004 to replace the Handicapped Persons Act, seeks to combat discrimination on the grounds of disability.

Under the Act, discrimination is defined as *"limiting, segregating or classifying a job applicant or employee in a way that adversely affects the opportunity or status of such an applicant or employee."* Discrimination includes *"not making reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitation of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or employee unless such covered entity can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the business of such covered entity"*.

However, where the nature of the impairment is a necessary consideration to the specific job requirements, decisions based on the impairment shall not be considered discriminatory. Similarly, medical examinations are not discriminatory if it can be *"shown to be job-related and consistent with business necessity"* and if *"all entering employees are subjected to such an examination regardless of disability"*.

The Bill includes far-reaching provisions on employment (Article 15) and education (Article 14), in addition to attending to accessibility, transport and health requirements.

In terms of employment, discrimination on the basis of disability is prohibited in both recruitment and advancement of people with disabilities, as well as the demotion or dismissal of people who acquire a disability. A quota system established under the Bill requires that *"5 per cent of all positions in public and private establishments…be reserved for people with disabilities"*.

The Bill contains an anti-discrimination clause concerning education, requiring the State to *"ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with adequate access to quality education and ample opportunities to develop their skills [and] take appropriate steps to make such education accessible… It shall be unlawful for any learning institution to deny persons with disabilities admission to any course it offers by reason of handicap or disability."* In addition, a minimum of 5 per cent allocation of the student financial assistance programmes are to be reserved for people with disabilities. Furthermore the Bill includes special education provisions for visually- and mentally-impaired persons in all regions, as well as requiring the establishment of special education units in public schools. In addition, at least one integrated public vocational and technical school is mandatory for every region of the country under the Bill.

Article 19 of the Bill deals with *"access to secure land tenure, housing, finance and property rights"*, whilst under Article 21, the State is obliged to recognize and promote the formation of DPOs; particularly supporting DPOs in their advisory role as well as with rehabilitation services and programmes (Article 21).

Discrimination on several grounds, including disability, is prohibited under the **Employment Act 2000**, in respect of recruitment, training, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, termination of employment or other matters arising out of the employment relationship (Article 5).

The Act contains provisions of equal pay for work of equal value, without discrimination and prohibitions against dismissal of an employee because of disability, or any other form of discrimination. In addition, the Act requires that burden of proof on the person alleged to have committed a discriminatory act - generally, employers.

The Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) Act, No. 6 of 1999 created the Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA) which implements the TEVET system. There are five main objectives of the TEVET system which are: to promote demand-driven, competency-based modular training systems; monitor gaps between supply and demand for skills; promote managerial skills; foster an entrepreneurial spirit *"with regard to both wage and self-employment";* and facilitate sound and sustainable financing for the training system.

The Act imposes a training levy of an amount equivalent to 2 per cent of the payroll of the employer on all employers. This levy is used to finance a TEVET Fund administered by TEVETA. The fund is to provide financial support for technical education and vocational training through providing scholarships, grants and loans, for example.

Implementation: Institutional framework

Previously called the Office of the Minister of State Responsible for Persons with Disabilities, the **Ministry of Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD)**, established in 1998, seeks to *"formulate and provide policy direction and coordinate sectoral programmes and services through the monitoring of service providers so that persons with disabilities have equal access*

to essentials of life and participate fully in all areas of social economic development in order to make Malawi an inclusive society for all".

The Ministry is responsible for rehabilitation services and will be in charge of implementing and administering the new Disability Bill, once the Bill is passed by Parliament, as well as the National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

Under the Policy the Ministry can set up committees, commissions or institutions and should *"ensure that disability issues are mainstreamed in all sectors".*

Once the new Disability Bill has passed though Parliament, the Ministry will be in charge of its implementation, along with that of the National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. The Ministry, therefore, has the power to set up set up committees, commissions or institutions to facilitate the administration of the proposed Bill and the Policy.

The Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA), established by the Handicapped Persons Act, 1971, is the main advisory and implementing governmental agency on disability and is currently part of the MSDPWD. MACOHA's mission involves the implementation of *"government policies by providing rehabilitation programmes and services and promoting public interest for the empowerment and integration of people with disabilities in order to achieve an inclusive society."* MACOHA does this though providing counselling services, placement services for open employment, medical rehabilitation services, vocational training, education sponsorship to disabled persons, as well as to encourage community participation in Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes. MACOHA is also responsible for a production unit, the Bangwe Factory, located in Limbe, which offers on-the-job training and provides employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

MACOHA has been in the process of restructuring its training centres and diversifying the courses it offers. Since 2001, it has added information technology, secretarial skills, motor vehicle mechanics, bricklaying, technical installation and refrigeration to its course list. The centres plan to include non-disabled persons amongst their students who will pay fees, while people with disabilities will receive scholarships.

Headed by the Minister of Social Development and Persons with Disabilities, the **National Coordinating Committee on Disability Issues (NACCODI)** is a networking forum for all stakeholders concerned with issues impacting on the lives of disabled persons. The network includes DPOs, NGOs and line ministries.

The **Ministry of Health and Population**, under the new Disability Bill, will establish medical rehabilitation centres in government hospitals, which provide services to people with disabilities free of charge. In addition, the Ministry is to provide mobility aids and appliances.

Responsibility for implementing the special needs education element of the Education Policy is given to the **Ministry of Education, Science and Technology**, through its Special Education Unit.

Once the Disability Bill is adopted, the Ministry will be responsible for implementing the educational provisions contained in the Bill, such as establishing a governmental vocational training centre in every region of the country, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training.

The **Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT)** is responsible for the technical education and vocational training in Malawi, and implements and administers the Employment Act.

As indicated before, the **Technical, Entrepreneurial, Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA)** is responsible for developing and supervising TEVET policies in Malawi and for administering the TEVET Fund. The three main functions it is charged with are to: foster and promote entrepreneurial skills; promote vocational training for *"disadvantaged groups"* (without naming them); and ensure that the TEVET system is demand-driven and responsive to the needs of the labour market, in both the formal and informal economy.

The TEVETA Board is made up of 14 members, who are all appointed by the Minister. Significantly, the Board includes one person representing persons with disabilities.

The draft Disability Bill will require the **Ministry of Sports, Youth and Culture** to develop guidelines for the development of sports for people with disabilities in consultation with DPOs and the Ministry of Social Development and Persons with Disabilities.

The Parliamentary Committee on Gender and Disability includes five members of Parliament whose task it is to review programmes and services for women and persons with disabilities.

Implementation - Policy

Malawi's comprehensive **National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities**, the **Malawi PRSP** and the **Malawi Social Action Fund** are the main policy frameworks which focus on promoting opportunities for people with disabilities in a practical way.

The objective of the **National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities** is *"to integrate fully people with disabilities in all aspects of life thereby to equalize their opportunities in order to enhance their dignity and well-being so that they have essentials of life"*. Furthermore, the Policy states that *"to compete favourably, people with disabilities should have equal access to education, training, employment, health and other aspects of life"*.

Thirteen priority areas for action are identified in the National Strategy, including: education and training, economic empowerment, rehabilitation, participation and representation and social welfare/protection.

Education and training objectives include the promotion of equal access and inclusion in education and training programmes. Some of the strategies to achieve this objective include:

- reviewing of the national curriculum to include the needs of people with disabilities; providing of free technology and equipment to assist disabled persons; encouraging inclusive education; and
- incorporating special needs education in the teacher-training curriculum; training specialist educators; and establishing accessible specialist education resource centres throughout the country.

Policy on *economic empowerment* focuses on: improving equal access to open employment opportunities; improving access to loans and credit facilities for income-generating activities; and increasing access to technical, vocational and entrepreneurial training opportunities for persons with disabilities. Some of the strategies to meet this end are through the provision of access to loans and training in marketable skills; support to DPOs engaged in vocational training or sheltered employment; the promotion of an inclusive work environment; and the removal of barriers and adaptation of the work premises by employers to make them accessible to people with disabilities.

The *rehabilitation* objective aims to increase access and availability of rehabilitation facilities, personnel and assistive devices.

Strategies to improve *participation and representation* include: supporting and promoting the work of DPOs, as well as improving the representation of people with disabilities in leadership structures and in the provision of services.

Concerning *social welfare/protection*, the Policy requires the provision of a security system to meet the basic needs of persons with disabilities.

The **Malawi PRSP** seeks an *"improvement of the quality of life of the most vulnerable by the provision of safety nets"*, including a Targeted Input Programme (TIP) which provides seed and fertilizer to poor farmers; a public works programme that will generate employment; targeted nutrition programmes; and direct welfare transfers to the most vulnerable persons who cannot benefit from one of the first three programmes.

The goal set under the PRSP is to reduce poverty in Malawi by six percentage points by 2005.

In addition, the PRSP calls for improvement of special needs education at the primary level, particularly by establishing learning centres with adequate accommodation and also by training specialist teachers, as well as integrating *"students with mild disabilities"* into the mainstream education system.

The PRSP highlights skills development initiatives in rural areas and training of trainers for entrepreneurship development in the informal economy, the inclusion of entrepreneurship development in the training and secondary school curricula, as well as providing support to micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

The **Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF)** is a World Bank-funded development project set to complement the third pillar of the PRSP. One of its components comprises the Social Support Projects (SSP) that target vulnerable

groups, including people with disabilities. Funding of this component is used to strengthen capacity of NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) working with the vulnerable groups. TEVETA, MACOHA and some DPOs have benefited from the project component. For example, community-based vocational training projects were financed by MASAF.[2]

4.3 Recent developments in law and policy concerning the training and employment of people with disabilities in Malawi

Elias U. Ngongondo, Secretary for Social Development and Persons with Disabilities

People with disabilities in Malawi face numerous challenges that result in their exclusion from the mainstream of society. Contributing factors include poverty, low education and training, unemployment, social isolation, environmental, institutional, attitudinal, and economic barriers. These challenges make it extremely difficult for people with disabilities to obtain decent work.

Current developments in law and policy concerning the training and employment of persons with disabilities

The disability-related policies in Malawi seek to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and to create an environment where persons with disabilities can have equal opportunities, and are allowed to participate fully in all activities of society.

The National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities represents the most far-reaching and comprehensive government commitment towards meeting the challenges and aspirations of people with disabilities. The Policy aims at the full integration of people with disabilities in all aspects of life and at equalization of opportunities. The Policy includes 13 priority areas for action; four of which directly concern the training and employment of persons with disabilities: education and training, economic empowerment, rehabilitation and access to built-in environment.

The Government recognizes disability as one of the five cross-cutting issues that concerns all Ministries. The others are HIV/AIDS, environment, gender, science and technology. Ministries and Departments are requested to mainstream disability in their plans, projects and programmes. The mainstreaming approach also provides for increased resource allocations to the Ministries dealing with employment, education and training. From 2006/07, Ministries and Departments have been called upon to allocate a portion of their budgetary resources for the implementation of disability issues of concern to their organizations. The disability sector has announced that it will lobby Government for a fixed percentage of the budget to be allocated for disability, as is done with HIV/AIDS.

[2] MACOHA, Annual Report 2000, p. 11 and Jones Chafa, *Informal Sector Programmes in TEVETA.* Paper presented at the Training for Survival and Development in Southern Africa Seminar, Nordic Network of UNEVOC Centres, Oslo, 14-15 Nov. 2002, pp. 7-8.

The Government has also made a commitment in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) to ensure that women, youth and persons with disabilities fully participate in the productive economy. The MGDS also sets to improve the capacity of the Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA) and other institutions delivering services to people with disabilities. To strengthen the capacity to coordinate disability issues nationally, the Government aims at the inclusion of private sector employers, trade unions and other civil society organizations in the NACCODI.

In order to facilitate/ensure the implementation of the National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, a National Plan of Action will be developed.

Providing training opportunities for people with disabilities

The policy objective is to increase access of persons with disabilities to technical, vocational and entrepreneurial training opportunities.

As part of a pilot project implemented at Soche Hill Technical College, the infrastructure and the learning environment of the training centre has been adapted to make the environment accessible and friendly to students with disabilities. The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT) has undertaken to encourage disability-friendly school environments in public technical colleges in general in order to facilitate learning. The Ministry has committed itself to provide a budgetary allocation for the replication of the physical adaptations of Soche Hill Technical College in the other public technical colleges under its control. The Ministry has also championed the development of a quota system for the intake of youths with disabilities under which 30 places at the College are allocated or reserved for students with disabilities.

At the Lilongwe Vocational Training Centre and Kamuzu Vocational Rehabilitation and Training Centre, non-disabled students are introduced as fee-paying students and money is used to increase the enrolment of students with disabilities. More market-relevant short courses are introduced, such as information technology, accounting, tailoring and design, refrigeration and secretarial, in order to attract more fee-paying students and to provide training for students with disabilities in marketable skills. The income of production workshops introduced at Kamuzu Vocational Rehabilitation and Training Centre are used for increasing the enrolment of students with disabilities.

The Government has adopted CBR as a national strategy of ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the mainstream society. A new CBR model is being implemented in selected districts of Machinga, Balaka and Blantyre with a view to empowering persons with disabilities. One of the strategic objectives of the CBR programme is to improve access to education, vocational training, employment, business credit and basic medical rehabilitation.

Several initiatives have been introduced to strengthen the community-based vocational skills training. TEVETA aims at strengthening its training programme in Small Enterprise Development which is targeting furniture-producing small enterprises in the informal economy. Vocational skills training using local artisans

at community level has been adopted and championed by TEVETA. The Skills Development Initiative programme aims at providing training opportunities for micro-entrepreneurs, apprentices and unemployed youth in areas such as carpentry, bakery, bricklaying, electrical installation or tailoring. A multidisciplinary programme of action for vocational guidance, training and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities has been established involving MACOHA, MOLVT, TEVETA, FEDOMA, National Youth Council (NYC) and MSDPWD, within a National Steering Committee.

TEVETA is also working on integration of national norms and standards for the training, testing and certification of persons with disabilities into the National Trade Testing.

Legal environment for providing open employment opportunities

The laws concerning training and employment of persons with disabilities include:

- Malawi Constitution
- Handicapped Persons Act
- Draft Malawi Council for Disability Affairs (MACODA) Bill
- Draft National Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Bill
- Employment Act
- Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) Act

A National Bill on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities has been developed, but is yet to be enacted by Parliament. The Bill will protect job-seekers and workers with disabilities against discrimination as well as promote their employment through a quota scheme. The Bill proposes a quota system for employment and for financial assistance to students and fixes a minimum of 5 per cent of the student financial assistance programme to be strictly allocated to people with disabilities. The Bill also provides for *"…5 per cent of all positions in public and private establishments to be reserved for people with disabilities"*. There are however, important issues that need to be discussed. Those include, for example, defining the target group of the quota scheme; deciding on whether they be binding and enforceable; what employers should be covered; to which employers should the quota system apply; and whether the Bill has adequate enforcement mechanisms.

The Employment Act ensures that no employer discriminates against any employee or prospective employee on the grounds of disability in respect of recruitment, training, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, termination of employment or other matters arising out of the employment relationship. The National Bill on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities raises questions that need to be addressed regarding the implementation of the Employment Act. For example; are non-discriminatory provisions enforced in favour of persons with disabilities? What activities amount to discrimination? When does one know that one has been a victim of discrimination? And finally, why is it that up to now there has been no case of

discrimination lodged with the courts or with the Ombudsman by any person with a disability?

Self-directed employment is an option of increasing interest to people with disabilities in Malawi. Disabled persons who have successfully graduated from vocational training and have not been able to secure wage-earning jobs should be supported to set up suitable income-generating activities, in order to earn a living. To achieve this objective, several strategies have been adopted. MACOHA has continued to support persons with disabilities who have graduated from its vocational training and rehabilitation centres with grants, loans, material and equipment as starter packs for their own small businesses. MSDPWD has promoted access to business loans for people with disabilities by linking aspiring entrepreneurs to soft loan financial institutions such as the Malawi Rural Development Fund (MARDEF) and other loans schemes. Presently MSDPWD is exploring the possibility of engaging the Malawi Entrepreneurial Development Institute (MEDI) to provide technical support to aspiring entrepreneurs with disabilities in such areas as preparing business plans, basic bookkeeping, monitoring business progress, evaluating execution process, cultivating the habit of saving, and advising on other areas that need to be improved upon.

Conclusion

Malawi has made considerable strides in the development and implementation of laws and policies concerning persons with disabilities. It has adopted laws and policies that reflect a shift in paradigm from a charity-based approach to a human rights–based perspective of disability. However, a number of challenges still remain to make the inclusive training and employment of persons with disabilities a reality. The following issues need to be addressed and the means of implementing them identified and put into practice:

- Training and employment of persons with disabilities need to be integrated into mainstream government wealth creation and other related programmes.
- Viable business groups and clubs involving persons with disabilities need to be established.
- Financial support for vocational training and rehabilitation activities for persons with disabilities is needed.
- Public awareness of the capabilities and possibilities of persons with disabilities needs to be increased.
- Capacity building of DPOs and service providers dealing with the training and employment of persons with disabilities is needed.
- Persons with disabilities should be encouraged to enrol at vocational training centres.
- Civil society organizations need to be encouraged to participate as partners in development, in the formulation and implementation of government training and employment laws and policies.

4.4 Pointing the way forward: International trends in legislation for persons with disabilities

Barbara Murray, Senior Disability Specialist, ILO Geneva

Starting from a recognition of the diversity of persons with disabilities, Ms Murray gave a brief overview of trends in how disability is understood, going on to describe recent developments in policy and laws concerning the training and employment of disabled persons. She highlighted the key elements of modern disability-related legislation and the questions that need to be addressed, if this legislation is to make a difference in practice.

Diversity of disabled persons

In developing policies and laws, decision-makers need to bear in mind that people with disabilities are by no means a homogenous group. The barriers to full participation vary depending on whether people have a physical, sensory, or intellectual disability, or a mental health difficulty. Their situation will also vary depending on whether they have had a disability from birth, childhood, teenage, or adult years, as this generally affects their access to education, skills development, and employment opportunities, as well as to the social, political, and cultural life of society. Women with disabilities tend to face greater disadvantages and barriers than disabled men, and this also should be reflected in policy and legal provisions.

Trends in definitions of disability

Definitions of disability have evolved from a moral approach, in which disability is regarded as a result of wrongdoing or sin, through a medical approach, in which the focus is on the disabled person's impairment, to a social and rights-based approach, in which the spotlight is placed on the obstacles to full participation in society arising from physical and societal barriers. While each of these approaches may coexist in any society, there has been a definite shift towards social and rights-based approaches in policies and laws around the world.

Associated with the moral approach, people with disabilities face the problems of shame and guilt, and may be kept at home or hidden away as a result. Solutions to these problems are frequently sought by making merit by doing good deeds, through charitable donations or other means. Insofar as services are made available to disabled persons under this approach, they are generally in the form of care by family or in religious organizations.

When disability is considered primarily a medical matter, the focus is on the disabled person's impairment and their inability to function like non-disabled persons. Solutions in this case involve individual rehabilitation to enable a person to live life as normally as possible – in other words, to change the way in which the person functions. The associated policy approach involves care, and service provision in separate institutions. This has at times been described as a custodial approach or a way of "*protecting*" society.

In the social/rights-based definition, people with disabilities are seen as being prevented from participating fully in society because of barriers in laws and

policies; inaccessible buildings (schools, training centres, workplaces); inaccessible public transport; poor information; and mistaken ideas and assumptions about what disabled people can do and achieve. Solutions to these problems are sought though the removal of these barriers, with a view to changing society and making it more inclusive. The predominant policy approach in this understanding of disability is centred around community-based care and services, and it fosters integration and inclusion.

Trends in legislation

Different types of legislation are associated with each of these approaches. Where a moral approach prevails, legislative provisions that may benefit persons with disabilities are generally in the form of charity law, and they provide for relief in the case of destitution, usually involving care in institutions or asylums. Associated with the medical model of disability, legislation may deal with some or all of social security and social protection, health and medical rehabilitation, employment quotas, and employee compensation. Such laws focus on providing compensation for impairment, and frequently envisage service provision in segregated settings, rather than in services available to the general population. Legislation associated with the social and rights-based approaches to disability includes anti-discrimination law, employment equity law, and laws concerning job-retention and return to work. The focus here is on integration and inclusion, and the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability.

In summary, the changes that have taken place in recent decades represent a shift from *"Rehabilitation of disabled persons"* involving charity, adjustment to the norm, and exclusion, to *"Rehabilitation of society"* with an emphasis on rights, acceptance of differences, inclusion, participation, and citizenship.

National laws

At the national level, legal frameworks to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities include: quota obligations, employment equity/non-discrimination and job retention laws, and related regulation.

Quota obligations

Quota obligations comprise legislation or regulations that require employers to reserve a certain proportion of jobs for people with recognized disabilities – generally referred to as quota legislation. If employers do not fulfil this obligation, many countries require them to pay a contribution into a central fund to be used to promote the accessibility of workplaces or for vocational rehabilitation purposes. Countries with this type of legislation include many European countries, such as France, Germany, and Italy, and several Asian countries, such as China, Japan, and Thailand. Most quota laws make no provision for training of people with disabilities, with the exception of the quota law in France. Originally introduced to promote employment for people disabled due to industrial accidents, and in particular to promote employment for disabled war veterans after the First and Second World Wars, quotas have frequently been described as a form of compensation to individuals, based on the assumption that they were lower prospect workers, with lower productivity than expected by employers. The

enforcement mechanisms in place have been criticized that they give the impression that people with disabilities could not be employed on merit, or that not to meet the quota obligation was a criminal offence. More recently, taking into account the need to improve the effectiveness of quotas in promoting employment for disabled persons, some countries (for example, France) have introduced reforms that focus on the removal of barriers in the workplace, and offer a wider range of options for employers, including the option of providing for on-the-job training like apprenticeships.

Employment equity/Anti-discrimination

Other countries have introduced anti-discrimination or employment equity laws that make it unlawful for employers to discriminate on the basis of disability in recruitment, promotion, dismissal, and other aspects of employment. Countries with this type of legislation include Australia, Canada, Namibia, New Zealand, the Scandinavian countries, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Following the adoption of the European Union Directive on Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation (2000/78/EC) which outlaws discrimination on basis of disability, among other criteria, the 25 EU member States will be obliged to introduce such laws at the national level by 2006 at the latest. An action plan to give effect to the legal provisions is also required. These laws recognize that disability is a human rights issue

A key legal concept in anti-discrimination legislation is *Reasonable Accommodation.* This involves adaptation of the job, including adjustment and modification of machinery, equipment and/or modification of job content, working time and work organization, and adaptation of the work environment to provide access to the place of work, to facilitate the employment of individuals with disabilities.

Frequently, such laws require the development of affirmative action plans, to tackle the disadvantages targeted by introducing special positive measures aimed at effective equality of opportunity and treatment between disabled workers and other workers. Such measures are not regarded as discrimination against non-disabled workers.

Another useful policy tool is to also include provision for *Contract Compliance* – a provision which makes legal compliance a precondition of government tenders. Companies providing goods or services to the public authorities must be in conformity with the law regarding the employment of disabled persons. This provision was first used in the U.S. Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which required that a contractor to government and public agencies should maintain non-discriminatory hiring and employment practices and take affirmative action to ensure equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities.

Job retention

Job retention laws oblige employers to retain workers who acquire a disability and be involved in their rehabilitation. They also require employers to adapt the jobs to enable the persons to continue, or find new jobs for them if this is not possible. Under these laws, workers are encouraged to go back to work and to retrain if

necessary. Such laws also make provisions for the return to work of disabled workers who withdrew from the active labour market after acquiring their disability.

Consultation

In developing and revising laws, consultations are important, because laws that reflect views of multiple stakeholders are likely to be more effective than laws that only reflect the view of the government. It is also important to consult with stakeholders when planning for the implementation of laws. During consultations, the government benefits from the widespread expertise both within the country and from international organizations. In planning consultations on disability-specific legislation, it is very important that the government involve representative of persons with disabilities, as well as employer and trade union representatives and relevant service providers.

Consultation may be organized through existing bodies set up to facilitate social dialogue. As an alternative, it may be decided to set up a task force representing the key stakeholders to work on the task of developing the law or policy. Such a task force should involve the social partners as well as DPOs and relevant government ministries. In some countries, the ministries responsible for developing or revising the law or policy may initiate direct contact with the social partners, and with the disabled persons' representatives, to ensure that their views are made known. Another option is for national-level meetings to be organized, involving the key stakeholders, at which the drafts can be discussed.

In preparation for the consultation, it is useful to prepare a public position paper, to serve as the basis for discussion. This can be discussed at public meetings, held at every level in the society – centrally, regionally and locally - ensuring that people at village level also have the opportunity to express their views. Radio chat shows and other media can be a good means of informing the population at large of the proposed law or policy and the issues which these seek to address.

Implementation

It is not enough to have laws on the books. Policy measures are required to make sure these laws are implemented. Financial incentives (including grants, tax rebates and social insurance subsidies) are often put in place, but these do not always have the desired effect on employers, who are at times reluctant to hire disabled workers. Many governments now also arrange for advisory services to support employers in making accommodations and introducing technical aids. Job and work analysis services can assist employers in adapting job duties so that people with disabilities can apply to and perform them. Job placement and employment services are also important, although they frequently do not cater to job-seekers with disabilities.

Enforcement mechanisms

Enforcement is essential to effective implementation. This may be foreseen through the Labour Inspectorate; through an administrative monitoring system, such as a National Disability Council or an Equality Commission which caters to

the population at large; or through the judicial system, either in the criminal courts, civil courts (dealing with a variety of cases) or labour law courts (dealing specifically with labour-related topics). Some countries have established an Ombudsman institution to promote good State practices towards citizens, and to investigate complaints from individuals.

4.5 Skills acquisition for persons with disabilities in Southern Africa

Lyness Manduwa, FEDOMA

Ms Manduwa gave an overview of the Malawi survey and case studies of persons with disabilities carried out in the framework of the ILO/Flanders project *"Skills Acquisition and Work for Persons with Disabilities in Southern Africa"*.

The purpose of the study was to identify, though a survey and case studies, examples of effective strategies and methods being used to provide vocational skills and opportunities to youths and adults with disabilities by governments, NGOs, DPOs and CBR programmes in Malawi. Ultimately, the project findings could serve to strengthen the capacity of governments to provide effective policy and legal frameworks, and of public and private training providers and other organizations in the project countries to effectively assist persons with disabilities to acquire skills and work opportunities via mainstream training institutions, special programmes or through other methods.

The exploratory survey targeted women and men with disabilities in selected districts in Malawi. It set out to establish how these persons had acquired their skills; what obstacles were faced and how these were overcome; and whether the skills training they received had enabled them to get decent jobs or set up viable small businesses. A total of 248 respondents (137 men and 111 female, in the age ranges of 18 to 55 years) were interviewed in five districts - Mzimba, Machinga, Nkhotakota, Salima and Blantyre. The sample was stratified according to skills and employment status. Of the total sample, 59 respondents were skilled and employed; 59 were skilled but unemployed; 37 were unskilled and employed; and 93 were unskilled and unemployed. People with disabilities were involved in conducting the interviews. While not a representative study, the survey highlights key issues which need to be taken into account by policy makers and service providers. In addition, 16 individuals were interviewed for in-depth case study interviews. Comments made in both the survey and case studies highlight issues which require attention in planning or reviewing policies and services.

Preliminary results

While the analysis of the survey findings was not yet completed, Ms Manduwa presented some preliminary findings, to give a flavour of the emerging issues.

Formal training

Of respondents who had received some form of skills training, half had received formal training through the MACOHA institutions, technical education, TEVETA sponsored training at government institutions, on-job training, CBR programme, and NGO courses. Nearly one-third of the respondents had obtained their skills

from apprenticeship with a local craftsperson, and just under one-fifth from private institutions. Some of the training graduates who intended to set up a small business on completing their training were referred to the Development of Malawian Traders Trust (DEMATT) for training in business skills.

The most common type of skills training respondents had attended was training in tailoring and weaving. This was followed by work in agriculture in the form of farming cash crops, horticulture and fishing; and by carpentry and home economics. Almost half of the women were trained in hand knitting and in home economics skills, neither of which is in much demand in the open labour market.

Of those who received formal training, slightly over half were employed either in formal jobs – including teaching, weaving, spinning, telephone operation and screen printing – or in self employment - farming, bicycle repair, radio repair, food sales, tailoring, machine knitting, hand sewing and clothes sales. Of those who trained at MACOHA, half found employment at the MACOHA weaving factory after training, and some got starter packs for self employment. The remaining graduates described themselves as unemployed, mentioning that they had not received starter packs to assist them to set up a small business.

When asked whether they would like to take part in further vocational training, almost all respondents said they would.

When asked about future aspirations regarding training and work, 45 per cent of the respondents said that they would like to go for further education or vocational training, while 43 per cent mentioned their wish to have a loan and/or equipment to start their own business.

Barriers to training

For a third of respondents, attending training was difficult, as they lacked funds to pay the training fees. For some respondents living in rural areas, transport difficulties were the major obstacles, as there was a lack of accessible transport. This was more frequently mentioned among participants from the rural areas. Eighteen per cent of the disabled persons who took part in the survey said that they were prevented from attending training due to the lack of accessible buildings.

Family responsibilities were mentioned as an obstacle by around one in ten respondents. They were more frequently mentioned by women than by men and were linked to the financial considerations of taking time off to attend training, but were also reported to include pregnancy, refusal by spouses to allow them to be trained and jealousy from spouses.

Other problems reported included: communication barriers, lack of knowledge and lack of disability awareness on the part of the training providers.

Finding jobs after training

Half of those who attended formal training said that the training led to a job, usually self-employment. Two-thirds of the men who had received training felt

that the skills had assisted them to find work. This contrasts with approximately a quarter of the women who had attended training.

Some of the training graduates commented that their skills were traditional and not marketable. Others pointed out that they were working in activities for which they had not been trained, having learned the necessary skills largely through on-job training – weaving, spinning, screen-printing, tie dying, and radio and bicycle repair. Some respondents said that they did not have the chance to choose skills in which they were interested, adding that there is a limited range of training courses available.

Mobility impairment was mentioned mostly by self-employed persons as a barrier to reaching markets where higher prices are offered. Lack of awareness among employers was considered an obstacle by one in ten respondents. Family problems, the negative attitude of the employers, as well as stigma and discrimination were also mentioned. A few respondents reported that they were not interested in finding work or training.

The most frequently-cited barrier to finding work was the lack of skills training, mentioned by over one in four respondents. When asked what would assist them to find jobs or to improve their work, half of the respondents mentioned training in machine knitting, tailoring, bricklaying, welding, hairdressing, refrigeration, accounting and secretarial skills, among other things.

Forty-three per cent mentioned that support in the form of materials, machinery, loans and moral support would be of help when looking for work.

Preliminary conclusions

While it was premature to draw conclusions from the findings of the survey and it was important to bear in mind that the findings were tentative, since the survey was exploratory and not representative, one main point seemed to be emerging. Clearly, if people with disabilities were given a chance to train in marketable skills, in training where special needs trainers and accessible infrastructure is available, they are capable of performing. Examples of the good practices can be found in the case studies compiled during the study, which really shows the capability of persons with disabilities.

Once the final analysis of survey findings is completed and the report is available, it will be possible to point to other possible trends and issues which require attention, and to make preliminary recommendations, directed at policy makers and service providers.

4.6 Skills training and work: Individual stories

The ILO project, *"Strategies for Skills Acquisition and Work for Persons with Disabilities in Southern Africa"*, sought to identify existing effective ways of skills training for people with disabilities. Information was gathered through a survey, of which the initial results are described above, and from case studies that were commissioned of individuals who had benefited from training they had received. Most of the individuals featured in the case studies have faced several

challenges in their quest to acquire employable skills and decent work. Often only with the support of their families, others in their communities or by chance association with NGOs interviewees, have they been able to acquire skills that has led to employment. Two of the persons who were interviewed for the case studies were invited to the workshop to give a presentation on their experience in training and employment. Their stories are quoted below.

4.6.1 Jowowo Kamaliza, Tinsmith

Jowowo Kamaliza is a young single man with two dependants. He comes from the village of Molipa in traditional authority Msanama, in Machinga District. Jowowo described how he acquired this disability when he was 11 years old. He was coming home from visiting a friend at night and felt something like a sting on his leg. After realizing that the pain was becoming too great, he checked, only to realize that it was a snake bite. His parents took him to the hospital, but this did not improve the situation. His leg gradually started getting short and thin.

Jowowo has a Junior Certificate and is now a tinsmith by profession, after being trained by MACOHA. There was no problem for him to get the training itself as it was identified by the CBR officer working in the area. Training lasted for 21 months. He had no problems at the training college since they had enough materials. Also, after training he was assessed by the MACOHA and was sent for a Business Management course where he undertook training by DEMAT on how to manage his own business. He was then given tools like a hammer, a tape, three flat sheets, snapes and other equipment, which helped him to become self-employed.

Jowowo said that he is now living a happy life because he is able to be self-sufficient and provide for his dependents. His business is at the Molipa Trading Centre and his customers come from within the village of Molipa. He sells his tins for around Mk 450 each. In a good month he sells about 6 tins; and half that in a bad month.

Jowowo commented also on the type of the training he received. He said that it is not possible for anyone to get a job as a tinsmith after training as there are none available. In addition, materials for this kind of work are also becoming too expensive to afford. To be self employed one needs capital, he explained. In addition, the Government needs to plan carefully to produce other courses that provide marketable skills so that people with disabilities can access better jobs.

4.6.2 Joyce Sichale, The Kanyika Club for Disabled People

Joyce Sichale is the founder of the Kanyika Club for Disabled People. She lives in Muzu in the northern part of Malawi. After completing her secondary education, she was unable to find a job. She felt that the reason was that she was disabled and unskilled; therefore she enrolled herself in the Magomero College of the Disabled where she trained in home management and knitting skills. Upon completion of this training, she again tried to find a job, but without success.

She then decided to start a small-scale knitting business. However, due to the lack of funds to buy necessities for the business, it took an additional two years of

unemployment before Joyce could set up her business. Her mother eventually managed to buy her a sewing machine. With the income of her small business, she was able to take care of her sisters and brothers.

After seeing that there were a lot of disabled people with training, but who could not find employment, she got together a few fellow disabled persons and formed a club where they would each contribute money and buy sweater knitting materials. Initially, the Club gathered in Joyce's house to knit sweaters to sell and then share the income. When the number of members increased to 15, they asked for a grant from the Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) in order to build their office. In 2002, the MASAF gave them two sewing machines. So far, Joyce has taught seven disabled women to knit quality jerseys on their own.

The Club meets from Monday to Friday and everyone participates in the activities according to the skills they have obtained. The Club has a Constitution to which members must adhere. Pay is determined by the sales that month. When sales are good, they share almost MK3,000 each; and MK500 each when sales are less good. They have a bank account and deduct MK100 a month from each member to pay for other Club administrative costs.

The group said that most of the training they do is imposed on them, and most of the training does not offer them jobs. They also said that employers in Malawi are not sensitized on disability issues - they think a disabled person's brain does not work properly and cannot deliver. They also felt that most of the training offered is for self-employment which requires one to have enough capital to start on once trained.

Club members said that after being trained they should be given tools or soft loans so that they can easily become self-employed. There should also be an agent to look for employment for the disabled since disability issues seem not to be clear to most employers, and there should be awareness raising for employers.

4.7 Effective skills training – Examples of good practices: Building on experiences from Malawi and elsewhere

4.7.1 Special needs education and training in Finland: An overview

Pia Korpinen, Skills and Employability Department, ILO Geneva

In Finland, special needs education and training is provided for students who need special support to assist them with their studies. For example, a special needs student may be someone with a disability, or a late developer, or have an emotional disorder. Special needs education and training is available for students in basic education and in vocational training.

The majority of students in Finland (95.5 per cent) who complete the basic education continue their studies, either in additional voluntary basic education (2.5 per cent), upper secondary schools (54.4 per cent) or in initial vocational training (38.5 per cent). Of those who continue at the secondary level, around 12 per cent are entitled to special needs education. The criteria for who is entitled to vocational special needs education and training are defined in the Act on Vocational Education (1998).

The aim of vocational special needs education and training is the same as for any other certified training: to obtain a vocational qualification; to gain employment; and to support the development of the students to become well-balanced individuals and members of society. Special needs education and training is available for both adolescents and adults.

Students with disabilities study mainly in mainstream vocational training centres. Vocational special education centres are available for students with the most severe disabilities. The special education centres also function as development and resource centres, developing and distributing information and materials on specific questions regarding disability and training.

The students within the special needs training programme are entitled to get the support services they need in order to fully participate in the training. For example, the supports can consist of a special needs assistant, an interpreter, special computer software and/or different visual or mobility aids. Students in special needs education also have the possibility to attend studies where on-the-job training is the primary environment for their studies. Furthermore, additional welfare services are available to meet the needs of students within the special needs training programme. All training centres get a subsidy for each student they train. To cater for the costs of special needs education, the subsidy for each special needs education student is 50 per cent higher than for the other students.

An Individual Education Plan is drawn up for each special needs student. It is a tool for supporting the studies. The plan sets the objectives of the studies; defines the individual support measures; and sets out the follow-up process during the studies. The objectives may be adjusted according to the abilities of each student. If objectives are adjusted, it will be noted on the final certificate. The Individual Education Plan is drawn up by the teacher and student together and it may also include input from parents, basic education teachers, study counsellors, representatives of social services or other persons who are familiar with and important to the student. Each education provider is responsible for organizing special education and training and services for students in special education and training.

Preparatory and rehabilitative education is available for students with disabilities who need practice in basic skills. There are two different forms of this training. One is preparing the student for upper secondary vocational education and training and the other is a programme intended for severely-disabled students which aims at preparing and rehabilitating them for work and independent living.

An important objective of vocational training is finding employment. All students receive training in looking for jobs, and on-the-job learning is a compulsory part of the studies. The period of on-the-job learning makes up a minimum one-sixth of the studies in all vocational training. After having completed their studies, students can turn to special needs employment counsellors who are available to assist in job seeking.

During the last few years, the group of students within special needs vocational training in Finland has grown and become more diverse. In 2003, there were a total of 13,300 students in special needs vocational training. In order to develop

the strategies for special needs education and training, the Ministry of Education has set up an Advisory Committee on Vocational Special Needs Training. The Committee consists of representatives of different sectoral authorities, training providers and organizations. The task of the Committee is to follow-up, evaluate, report, and take initiatives on the implementation of the special needs education and training strategy, as well as develop the strategy and work for a closer cooperation between special needs education and training and employers.

4.7.2 Inclusion of non-disabled persons at Lilongwe Vocational Training Centre for the Disabled

Naomi Kamanga, Centre Manager, Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA)

Introduction

The Lilongwe Vocational Training Centre is one of MACOHA's vocational training institutions, established by the Rotary Club of Lilongwe in 1989. It has a capacity to train 48 students with disabilities per intake, for two intakes per year. Initially the Centre focused on traditional courses like domestic skills, tailoring, woodwork and metal work. The courses offered were selected on the basis of the fact that most students with disabilities lack basic education. However, the advocacy for education over the years has increased the number of people with disabilities acquiring secondary education and consequently, the demand for courses that would accord an opportunity for white collar jobs for people with disabilities has increased. In response to this demand, the Centre, with support from the Norwegian Association of the Disabled (NAD), and other partners, introduced courses in financial accounting, information technology and secretarial studies.

Background to the inclusive approach

Recognizing that their students continued to be segregated and discriminated against both in their own communities and at the workplace even after graduation, the Training Centre decided in recent years to make its courses available also for students without disabilities. The idea was to create an environment where disabled students would interact with their non-disabled counterparts. It was hoped that by creating a setting similar to a real life situation, students with disabilities would be enabled to compete and mix well in the communities and workplace afterwards. The inclusive training environment was also considered to increase the self-confidence of students with disabilities and prepare them better for an independent life.

As part of the new approach, an information base was created including information on rights and other issues relevant to disabled persons in the sphere of vocational training. The Centre also sought to raise community awareness on the needs, rights and capabilities of disabled persons.

Activities carried out to facilitate integration/inclusion

The inclusive approach has in practice been implemented by including both students with and without disabilities in the classroom environment and sport

activities. The dining facilities as well as club and student union membership are open to all students.

Merits of the programme

The introduction of the inclusive training programme has enhanced the social and academic interaction between the non-disabled and disabled students. Working alongside peers with diverse skills and abilities is helping all students learn and develop skills necessary to live and work in the real world. The training environment has encouraged equal competitiveness in all spheres regardless of disability, and it has increased the self confidence of students with disabilities. Non-disabled students have gained skills in basic sign language, and have also become more accepting of disabled persons.

A growth in social tolerance is also noted in the surrounding communities, as they come to understand the causes of various disabilities and the fact that they are not exempted.

In general, the programme has increased awareness on the capabilities and the potential of people with disabilities and increased publicity of the Centre's activities.

Challenges

Despite the success of the programme, there are also challenges that need to be addressed in order to improve its effectiveness. It has been difficult to achieve total inclusion due to the fact that everybody involved has to deal with new situations, develop new attitudes and become used to new cultures. Despite the introduction of sports and games, there has been a low patronage by non-disabled students.

More training needs to be offered to the trainers in order for them to acquire skills on how to support the slow learners without jeopardizing training for those who learn quickly. The resettlement packages have so far been available for disabled students only on graduation and it has made the non-disabled students feel that they are left out. The industrial attachment has only been available for disabled students. The lack of boarding facilities for the disabled students has limited the time for social interaction.

The way forward

In order to develop and improve the programme, a number of measures have been introduced. To provide increased opportunities for mixing, a social weekend will be organized once a month and excursions will be arranged. Non-disabled students will be considered for industrial attachments as well, and a centre to facilitate loans as resettlement kits for non-disabled students will be established. As part of the orientation programme, sensitization campaigns for both categories of students will be introduced.

4.7.3 Inclusion in technical and vocational training at Soche Technical College

Guy A. Kawange, Principal

Historical background

Soche Technical College was established in 1956 as the first Government technical institution. At the beginning it functioned as an Artisan Training Centre at the present Police Training School in Kanjedza. In 1959, it was closed and turned into a detention camp for political detainees as a result of the Declaration of the State of Emergency in the country. In 1961, it opened again, now as Soche Trade School offering training in bricklaying, carpentry and joinery. A few years later the name of the school was changed and it became Soche Technical School. It became part of the then newly-established Apprenticeship system in Malawi and jointly with the Malawi Polytechnic it started offering City and Guilds of London Institute Advanced Craft and Technician courses. In the 1980s, the Commercial Department was introduced offering secretarial studies and studies in bookkeeping and accounts. Training in plumbing, painting and decoration was introduced and the school was elevated to college status. In 1998, all five technical colleges under the Ministry of Education and Culture, together with two from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, were transferred to the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT).

Disability situation in public technical colleges - Positive intervention

The technical colleges have, up until now, had very few students with disabilities attending their training programmes. The previous Technical Training Policy even barred people with physical disabilities from enrolling in certain courses like plumbing, carpentry and joinery.

The project, *"Vocational Skills Development for Youths with Disabilities"* was prepared jointly by MACOHA, FEDOMA, Ministry Responsible for People with Disabilities (MRPWD), Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT) and TEVETA submitted as a proposal to the Norwegian Association of the Disabled (NAD/OD) for funding. The three following project strategies were outlined:

- integration of youth with disabilities into mainstream technical colleges;
- upgrading existing MACOHA vocational training centres; and
- vocational training at community level through apprenticeship with local artisans.

Expected outputs for Soche Technical College

Soche Technical College was chosen to be the pilot college in the integration of youth with disabilities into mainstream technical colleges. At Soche, the project aimed at the following outputs:

- well-adapted premises capable of hosting persons with disabilities;
- a well-developed curriculum to suit the interests of youths with disabilities;

- a minimum of 30 trainees with disabilities enrolled at Soche Technical College annually; and
- improved levels of livelihoods among the youth with disabilities after graduating from the College.

Activities carried out

The College is satisfied with the results of the adaptation. Pavements and ramps have been constructed and the hostels, workshops, classrooms, dining hall and toilet block have been reconstructed to make the College accessible. The Ministry's training and recruitment policy has been reviewed, as well as the curriculum of the College. Course manuals and materials have been designed and developed to suit trainees with disabilities, for example in Braille. Specialized teaching and training aids have been purchased to meet the needs of students with disabilities at the College. Sensitization courses on disability have been carried out both for College staff and for students. The teachers at the College have also received training on special needs education in general, sign language interpretation and Braille.

The impact of the project

The activities have brought along a positive change in the mindset of most non-disabled students and staff. The College is now ready for the integration of persons with disabilities.

Most buildings are now accessible to persons with disabilities and with a well-constructed network of pavements there is free mobility to all sections of the College by students with disabilities. The curriculum delivery to students with disabilities has been improved, after the teachers underwent training in special needs education, and the current curriculum was adapted as needed. Four out of five students with disabilities who attended the final exam in 2005 passed it and got their certificate. The College has now the capacity to enroll over 30 students with disabilities every year in most of its training programmes.

Activities for sustainability of the programme - Conclusion

This is a pilot project for the MOLVT which has a total of seven technical colleges. The integration of persons with disabilities into mainstream technical colleges will be extended to the other six public technical colleges. If the other technical institutions can enroll the same number of students, it means that a minimum of 210 places for persons with disabilities will be available in these institutions every year.

However, college entrance examinations conducted by TEVETA recently revealed that the anticipated numbers may be hard to get, as TEVETA managed to recruit only 15 students with disabilities (12 male; 3 female) country-wide; of which 11 were sent to Soche Technical College.

5. Drawing the strings together: Making a difference for people with disabilities through laws and policies and programmes in Malawi

During the workshop, in working group sessions and panel discussions, participants discussed and debated the following questions:

- What actions need to be taken in order improve the impact of laws and policies concerning the training and employment of people with disabilities?
- What kind of policy approaches should be adopted in order to enhance the access to marketable skills for persons with disabilities, and what strategies are required to achieve it?

In each case, participants were asked to identify the different actors who need to be involved in the process, and to prioritize the steps which should be taken.

All groups agreed that a wide variety of stakeholders should be involved in the process of developing the policies and strategies to ensure the access of training in marketable skills for people with disabilities. The involvement of the following stakeholders is essential:

- service providers, local artisans, training institutions, testing institutions, recruiting institutions;
- persons with disabilities, DPOs, NGOs, politicians, religious groups and the communities;
- employers' and workers' organizations, the private sector;
- MOLVT, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Commerce, MSDPWD, and TEVETA

The recommendations arising from these debates were presented at the final session. These are summarized below.

General recommendations

Government

- Steps should be taken to appoint a Minister of Persons with Disabilities following the departure of the former Minister some seven months previously.
- The MSDPWD should engage in awareness raising within the other Ministries. Even though the provision of policy exists, the other Ministries might not be fully aware of it.
- A Government paper on disability should be issued informing the Cabinet, Parliamentary Committees and other Ministries about the existing provisions in policies regarding disability.
- The Ministry should take a leading role in directing the way on disability issues by increased information sharing and by developing model projects.

- The Government should specify the allocation to be made by each Ministry in its budget to cater to persons with disabilities to a fixed percentage of the budget (for example, to 5 per cent).
- To ensure adequate resources are available for policy implementation, the Ministry of Finance should be involved, and the Government should approach donors.
- There should be commitment from the highest level of Government to ensure the involvement of persons with disabilities in all activities.
- The active involvement of the President would also be beneficial in promoting the rights of disabled persons.

Parliament

- The Parliamentary Committee on Disabilities should be more active and check on and meet with the stakeholders themselves – for example, by visiting service providers, hospitals, etc., where persons with disabilities are, and listen to them to find out about the problems they face.

General awareness raising

- More publicity and sensitization on disability issues among all stakeholders, ranging from the DPOs to training providers, employers and Ministries and in the society in general is needed in order to raise awareness of both stakeholders and the general public.
- Awareness raising is needed for different stakeholders, but also for people with disabilities themselves, to encourage them to review their self-representation in light of the increasingly-competitive world.
- Drama and story telling should be used as they have proved to be effective in getting messages across to the general public.

Disability movement

- The disability movement should be proactive in demanding their rights and lobby the policy makers and the Government.
- The capacity of DPOs should be enhanced with a view to the disability movement speaking with one voice.
- Women with disabilities should get involved and speak up about the gender perspective in disability issues.

Implementing the laws and policies – What needs to be done?

Government

- The draft Disability Bill should be enacted into law, so as to facilitate the implementation of policies.
- All policies should be reviewed to ensure that they include a disability perspective.
- Government should allocate more resources for the implementation of disability-related initiatives and services, and to the MSDPWD and increase its capacity in general.

- A monitoring mechanism needs to be put in place to help the implementation of the policy.
- The involvement of all Government Ministries in the implementation of policies concerning disability issues was considered essential.
- The Plan of Action to implement the National Policy on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities should be disseminated to grassroots level and stakeholders starting from the Permanent Secretary, and Directors should receive sensitization on the implementation of the Plan of Action. The formation of an Inter-Ministerial Task Force to monitor the implementation of the Plan of Action was also suggested.
- Measures of affirmative action should be put in place, both regarding training and employment of people with disabilities.
- The Government should publicize the Malawi Rural Development Fund, (MARDEF), specifically targeting persons with disabilities, and a percentage of MARDEF should be allocated to FEDOMA.
- Knowledge of the policies and laws should be "*distributed*" among persons with disabilities, DPOs and other stakeholders.
- The fact that a large number of people with disabilities in working age will find jobs in the informal economy must be taken into account. Therefore, it is important to reach out to the communities, as legislation cannot always reach to protect workers within the informal sector.

Disability movement

- The disability movement should also be active in following the effectiveness of law and policy implementation.
- DPOs and individuals with disabilities should be empowered to be able to effectively lobby and to do advocacy work in the Ministries regarding the policies, legislation and other disability issues.
- The capacity of DPOs needs to be strengthened and the organizations need to cooperate more closely to be able to speak with a unified voice.

Social partners

- Workers' and employers' organizations should take an active role in advocating for the employment of persons with disabilities. MACOHA was considered a key player.

Service providers

- Other NGOs providing services to people with disabilities should also be part of the implementation process.
- All training providers and especially the mainstream training institutions should be involved in developing equal training opportunities for people with disabilities.

Community leaders

- Parents of children and students with disabilities should have the chance to have their say, and communities and community leaders should support the

inclusion of people with disabilities into society in general. The example of civic and religious leaders in raising awareness about disability was considered important.

Media

- The role of media in raising awareness about disability issues is very significant.
- Publicity is needed at all levels and DPOs need to take the initiative to do this via different media including TV, radio, etc. (MACOHA).
- Media is a powerful means to change existing negative attitudes or prejudices against people with disabilities. It is the real key for promoting equality of opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Training for media personnel should be organized on a continuous basis, for example, in the form of workshops for journalists informing about disability and developments within the field both nationally and globally, so as to overcome negative attitudes and prejudices.

Partnerships and strategic alliances

- The creation of partnerships is very important and it is essential that many stakeholders are involved in order for the developments to be sustainable.
- Adequate resources need to be mobilized and, for instance, the Government should provide funding for those NGOs who produce appliances for persons with disabilities.

Strategies for skills development in Malawi – What is the way forward?

- Basic education for children with disabilities should be compulsory.
- Marketable skills need to be identified and the requirements of industry taken into account. (In order to provide training in marketable skills, the industrial requirements need to be established and marketable skills identified). The link between training providers and industry should be intensified in order to identify and to provide the skills that the industry needs.
- Training institutions, TEVETA and the MOLVT should cooperate to come up with modules for training courses. Training courses need to be designed and implemented by training institutions, but also local artisans or individual trainers who can provide training in marketable skills need to be identified.
- Information about the availability of training in marketable skills should be disseminated to DPOs and persons with disabilities.
- The entry requirements to attend skills training at the institutions should ensure the selection of qualified candidates.
- Measures for positive discrimination should be implemented in order to ensure the access for people with disabilities to skills training and employment. For example, companies should be mandated to employ and train persons with disabilities. One of the working groups suggested that all the technical colleges should have a quota of at least 10 per cent for trainees with disabilities. Another suggestion was that the Government should put up a new institution to train persons with disabilities in various skills.

- In order to facilitate the participation of people with disabilities, clear guidelines should be drawn up on the specific requirements of people with different types of disability.

Career guidance

- Effective career counselling and vocational guidance for persons with disabilities needs to be put in place.
- Financial mobilization for the training institutions is required, and modern machinery and equipment should be available also to persons with disabilities.

Credit for entrepreneurs with disabilities

- Lending institutions should create an environment conducive to persons with disabilities in order to provide for start-up funding for those who want to set up their own business.
- To facilitate the participation of people with disabilities, clear guidelines should be drawn up on the specific requirements of people with different types of disability.
- A follow-up mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure the effective implementation of the initiatives.

Commitments made by the Government and social partners

The final panel discussion comprised of representatives from the Ministry of Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD), Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT), Congress of Malawi Trade Unions (CMTU), Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU), Employers' Confederation of Malawi (ECAM) Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA), Malawi Human Rights Commission (MHRC), and The Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi (FEDOMA).

Panellists made the following commitments, arising from the workshop:

- Existing partnerships with the MLOVT, TVET and trade unions will be strengthened (MACOHA).
- The MHRC will set up a committee to investigate/look at the rights of people with disabilities.
- University of Malawi will be requested to analyze the industry requirements in order to identify which skills are marketable.
- CMTU will take the disability perspective in its involvement in the Tripartite Labour Advisory Council and propose that a representative of people with disabilities be included in the Council.
- ECAM will work with Government and trade unions regarding placement of people with disabilities.
- Employment Services will explore the development of services for people with disabilities (ECAM).

- The training authorities will create closer partnerships with employers in order to be able to design training that meets the needs of the demand on the labour market.

Annex 1. List of Participants

ILO Tripartite National Workshop
People with Disabilities: Pathways to Decent Work
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Annex 2. Programme

People with Disabilities: Pathways to Decent Work
16–17 May 2006, Lilongwe, Malawi
Venue: Lilongwe Hotel

Tuesday, 16 May

8:00-9:30	**Registration**
9:30-10:00	**Opening Session** *Moderator: Barbara Murray, ILO* Speakers: *ILO Representative* *Representative of the Government of Malawi* *Representative of the Government of Flanders* *Representative of Malawi Federation of the Disabled (FEDOMA)*
10:00-10:30	**Coffee/Tea Break**
10:30-10:45	**Introduction** **Enabling disabled persons to find decent work – What is required? *Barbara Murray, ILO***
10:45-11:45	Training and employing people with disabilities: The legal and policy framework in Malawi. *Chairperson – B. Murray, ILO* Overview. *Heather Labanya, ILO* Recent Developments *Elias U. Ngongondo, Ministry of Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD)* *Discussion*

11:45-13:00	**Working Group 1:** Improving the impact of laws and policies concerning the training and employment of people with disabilities: What needs to be done? Who should be involved? What are the first steps? Introduction to Working Group Session. *Barbara Murray* Working Group Session
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	Implementing the laws and policies – What needs to be done? Feedback from Working Groups Panel Discussion – Ministry of Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD), Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT), ECAM, MCTU and FEDOMA representatives Open Discussion
15:30-16:00	Coffee/Tea Break
16:00-17:15	Pointing the way forward: International trends in legislation for persons with disabilities. *Barbara Murray, ILO* Discussion
17:30	Reception

Wednesday, 17 May

9:00-9:15	Review of Day 1. *Participants; Moderator*
9:15-9:30	Introduction to Day 2. *Barbara Murray, ILO*
9:30-10:30	Skills acquisition for persons with disabilities in Southern Africa Introduction. *Pia Korpinen, ILO* Project findings, Malawi. *Lyness Manduwa, FEDOMA Representative* Individual experiences: Two disabled people tell how they acquired their skills and got decent work *- Joyce Sichale, The Kanyika Club for Disabled People* *- Jowowo Kamaliza, Tinsmith*
10:30-11:00	Coffee/Tea break
11:00-11:30	Effective skills training – Examples of good practices: Building on experiences from Malawi and elsewhere. Two training providers from Malawi *- Naomi Kamanga, Centre Manager, MACOHA* *- Guy A. Kawanga, Principal, Soche Technical College* Special needs education and training in Finland: An overview *- Pia Korpinen, ILO*
11:30–12:45	Working Group 2: Access to marketable skills by persons with disabilities: What policy approach should be adopted? What strategies are required? Who should be involved? What are the first steps? Introduction to Working Group Session. *Barbara Murray* Working Group Session

12:45–14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	Strategies for skills development in Malawi – What is the way forward? Feedback from Working Groups Panel Discussion – Ministry of Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD), Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT), ECAM, COMATU and FEDOMA representatives. Moderator. *Barbara Murray, ILO*
15:30-16:00	Coffee/Tea Break
16:00-17:30	Drawing the strings together: Making a difference for people with disabilities through laws and policies and programmes in Malawi Moderator. *Barbara Murray, ILO* Final Panel Discussion - Proposed National Action Plan Ministry of Social Development and Persons with Disabilities (MSDPWD), Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT), ECAM, MCTU, COMATU and FEDOMA representatives
17:30	Concluding remarks and Closing