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World Vision  
Georgia

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# Employment of People with Disabilities

## Toolkit





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International Organization World Vision Georgia has been working in Georgia since 1994. Its goal is to enhance children’s well-being by supporting local resources. World Vision Georgia has been mainstreaming disability in all projects and programs since 2013.

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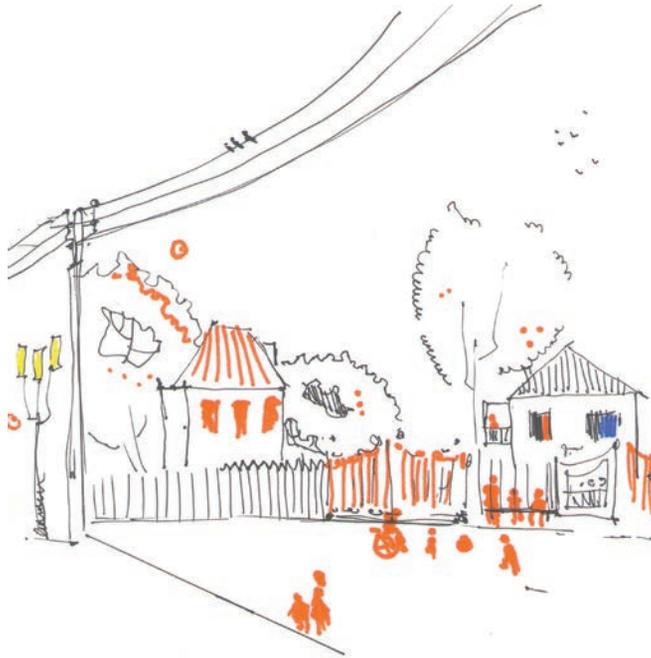
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### **Project Background:**

*The LIFE Georgia project has aimed to contribute to poverty reduction among conflict affected / displaced persons and their host communities in Georgia by facilitating their socioeconomic integration and inclusive participation in broader economic development processes. Specifically, the project facilitated increased sustainable livelihoods opportunities of internally displaced women, men, youth (comprising people with disabilities) and their host communities in Samegrelo and Shida Kartli through enhanced access to employability, entrepreneurship and professional development; and promotion of inclusive and gender sensitive policies in collaboration with duty bearers, service providers and civil society actors. The project has been implemented by the Consortium of organizations led by ACF in partnership with Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG), ATINATI, Education For Democracy (EFD), Social Programs Foundation (SPF) / Legal Aid Georgia (LAG) and World Vision Georgia in 6 municipalities of Samegrelo and Shida Kartli within the period of January 2015 to September 2016.*

*This project has been implemented with the financial support of the EU.*



*The following toolkit conveys the process of supporting employment and livelihood of persons with disabilities. Specifically, it covers information on inclusive approaches, describes local and international legislature, experience and steps undertaken within the scope of the project "Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia - LIFE Georgia".*

*The toolkit is based on several international and local researches and publications. We hope that it will serve a dual purpose: firstly, the disability expert team attempted to collect all the relevant legislations, models, approaches and practical examples in one publication. Secondly, we described the process, strategies and success stories undertaken within the scope of the "LIFE Georgia" project, to present a pilot toolkit for the parties interested in commencement of similar projects.*

**Viktorija Midelauri**  
Disability Inclusion Officer  
World Vision Georgia



## Success Story:

### Mr. Beso

*Mr. Beso wanted to attend a business training and expand his business. Consequently, he participated in the business training provided within the scope of the "LIFE Georgia" project. He overcame mobility challenges (Mr. Beso is a wheelchair user) and inaccessible environment. Relatives assisted him with transportation and he was able to participate in every training session. Trainers emphasized his motivation and active participation. Before the training started, the trainer organised training space to make Mr. Rezo feel comfortable. Training format was very flexible, interactive and included every individual participant. Hence, Mr. Beso did not require special material adaptation. In the end, the trainer and the expert team decided to hold training sessions on the first floor of a public school; Mr. Beso could reach it easily. His enthusiasm motivated other participants. After business plan evaluation, his project received funding. Mr. Rezo successfully leads a diner; in scope of the project, he will open a café by the diner and thus expand his business.*

## Chapter I. Difference Is a Norm - Why Is it Important to Include all Members of Community?

*“Inclusion is the realization that everyone has essential dignity and everyone has something to contribute.”<sup>1</sup>*

### 1.1. Inclusive Society

Imagine a society where each person acts and thinks the same way, where everything is predictable and homogenous. To what extent would you want to be part of that society? People differ from each other – with possibilities, values, and interests – and the society develops. Diversity affects progress.

Being different is a norm<sup>2</sup> and society’s behavioral patterns should be adjusted to acceptance and acknowledgment of this difference. Imagine a following situation - you are attending an interesting training, the presenter is active, she is giving the necessary information and is highly flexible. It could be that you have established a positive attitude towards her. In the end of the training she says that she is diagnosed with a mental illness. What is your predisposition at this moment? Does your attitude change towards the trainer? The responses could be different, though in most cases they are associated with pity, worry; the perception of the person is damaged and it is triggered by a person’s diagnosis or a status. Specific part of the society has to fight and put significant daily effort to get education, employment, or just to take part in public activities just because their needs and abilities are not the same as average majority. Vulnerable groups are significantly under the risk of being isolated from the society.

*Specific part of the society has to fight and put significant daily effort to get education, employment, or just to take part in public activities because their needs and abilities are not the same as average majority.*

There is no single definition of vulnerable groups, however this term, typically, considers the groups that are threatened to be marginalized from labor market as well as from the society.<sup>3</sup> Persons

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- 1 Therborn, G. (2009) Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration. DESA, 12. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/>
  - 2 Johnsen, B. and Skjørten, M (2001) Education – Special Needs Education. Unipub Forlag. Oslo.
  - 3 Kitiashvili, A. & Sumbadze, N. & Makharadze, T. (2015). Accessibility to Vocational Education in Georgia for Vulnerable Groups – Case Analysis. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

with disability and special needs belong to the vulnerable group. The concept of vulnerability is associated with such issues as: regional and economic factors, local labor market, enterprise management, individual or social characteristics. Vulnerable groups are classified based on social characteristics<sup>4</sup>: age, sex, ethnicity, disability or marital status.

Generally, social and economic changes have a significant influence on the vulnerable groups; they increase production of social risks, and evidently, create new vulnerable groups, according to the research. Despite social security and diverse safety schemes, these vulnerable groups are expanding and now consist of elder people, single families, people who are socially unprotected, IDPs, long-term unemployed people, veterans, and ethnic minorities<sup>5</sup>. From such wide list of vulnerable groups, this toolkit will emphasize social integration issues of persons with disability and special needs.

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4 Kitiashvili, A. & Sumbadze, N. & Makharadze, T. (2015). Accessibility to Vocational Education in Georgia for Vulnerable Groups – Case Analysis. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

5 Kitiashvili, A. & Sumbadze, N. & Makharadze, T. (2015). Accessibility to Vocational Education in Georgia for Vulnerable Groups – Case Analysis. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

## 1.2 Projects for Empowering Vulnerable Groups

Since January, 2015 an international organization “Action Contre La Faim” (ACF Spain) has been leading the consortium of five member organizations (Association Rural Development for Future Georgia, Association “Atinati”, LAG Consortium, organization “Education for Democracy”) and implementing a project **Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia (LIFE Georgia)**. The project is funded by the European Union (EU) and aims to contribute to poverty reduction among conflict affected/displaced persons and their host communities in Georgia, by facilitating their socioeconomic integration and inclusive participation in broader economic development processes. In particular, the LIFE Georgia project will increase opportunities for sustainable livelihoods of conflict affected/displaced persons and host communities in Samegrelo and Shida Kartli through support in professional development, access to employment and fostering inclusive and gender sensitive policies, in tight collaboration with government and civil society actors. Organization “World Vision Georgia” conducts trainings, gives consultations, carries out monitoring, and arranges meetings to implement inclusive approach in this project. This organization has working experience with vulnerable groups. World Vision works with children, their families, and community across the



world to unveil children's potential. Its main objective is to eradicate the reasons of poverty and inequality. World Vision is implementing 4 regional development programs in Georgia (in Gldani-Nadzaladevi district, Tbilisi, in the regions of Kakheti, Imereti, and Akhaltsikhe), reaches 52 communities, and 92000 beneficiaries. In 2013 organization "World Vision Georgia" launched a project, funded by Australia, to include persons with disability in communal activities (education, social inclusion, access to services) in the targeted communities. Hence, it is one of the priorities of the organization to execute each activity, program, or project with inclusive approach.

Within the framework of the given project, the beneficiaries of "World Vision Georgia" are internally displaced persons with disabilities/special needs. In case when beneficiary is child or has intellectual disability, and has difficulty to engage in project activities, the guardian represents the beneficiary to support family well-being. During project implementation, emphasis was placed on double vulnerable group: IDPs with disability or special needs, or a family member with same challenges.



### 1.3. Who Are Persons with Disability and Special Needs?

Every person can have a challenge in different areas, however if it causes significant difficulties in functioning, is time-consuming, and hinders person's full participation, this person presumably has a disability or/and special need. Based on UN Convention of 2006, the concept disability is expanded and attention is drawn from personal weakness to difficulties related with overcoming external barriers.



Disability is an official status given to a person by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs in Georgia. Many conditions, like behavioral-emotional, learning, and communication barriers that are not considered under the status of disability, create significant barriers for people in education, employment or in social integration. These two terms overlap each other, however they are not identical.

*“Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”.*

Here is an example for illustrating the aforementioned diagram. In “Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia (LIFE Georgia)” project, business trainings are held to develop the basic skills for livelihood provision of IDPs. In one of the regions a person using a wheelchair joined the process; he could not leave the house for years as the venue for trainings were not wheelchair accessible. Trainer visited this person at home and they worked together on elaborating his business ideas. Consequently, the beneficiary created a business plan that was easy for him to implement, and could be done from home. Does this person have a disability and correspondingly, special need, and why is it so important to identify this issue? According to UN convention of 2006 “persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others<sup>6</sup>”. This criterion corresponds to illustrated case and beneficiary has the status of disability. Educational need, on the other hand, that can become a barrier in education, employment, and integration in the society, complies a barrier caused by any reason to perceive and comprehend information and/or knowledge in a way that is common for other population. Persons with special needs need adaptation of the material to fully adjust their individual needs while taking into consideration their strengths. Thus, this beneficiary had a disability, however he did not have special needs. It is relevant that trainers ensure physical environment accessibility for



6 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) Article 1. <http://disability.ge/images/stories/pdfs/konvencia.doc.pdf> retrieved on 28.11.2015

that person; there is no need to adapt the material. There can be cases where both components (disability and special educational need) should be considered in the planning and implementing trainings. For example, a person with hearing impairment had a desire to take part in one of the trainings. At the same time difficulties in perceiving and comprehending information manifested, this person could not read and write. After meeting with the beneficiary it was clear that the problems with participation was caused by not knowing the sign language and inability to read and write. Modification of training materials was needed. In such case the trainer should take into consideration the ways to include this person, and how to deliver information. Generally, labeling a person according to her status is not justified – the only reason the discussion is still held whether a person has a disability or special educational need is elicited by the attempt to maximally adjust provided services and processes to the needs of that person.

When working with persons with disability and special educational needs following should be considered:

- *Including the person in the planning stage*
- *Ensuring activities that contribute to person's full participation in the training/learning process*
- *Giving permanent feedback when implementing processes*
- *Creating methodology for assessing person's progress*

Overall, we have to provide individual program based on individual assessment.

**Main goal of inclusion:** *Every person has to be able to equally participate in the process, and experience the progress. Presumably, society, on a higher level of development, will give up labeling specific conditions (person with disability, person with educational needs) completely, as the processes will become individual-centered with regards to any person. Pragmatic purposes, as well as moral aspects affect such decision, so that every person's potential is used at its maximum in order to minimize poverty, crime, and to encourage progress. Nations development is founded on individuals' development and social inclusion forms its basis.*

### 1.4. From Extreme Segregation – to Inclusive society<sup>7</sup>

1. Historically, persons with disability were isolated for a long period of time; their participation in social life were not even considered. The reason was a stereotypical approach that disability could be cured or “improved”. Such approach was based on extremely **medical concept** in education or in everyday social life<sup>8</sup>.

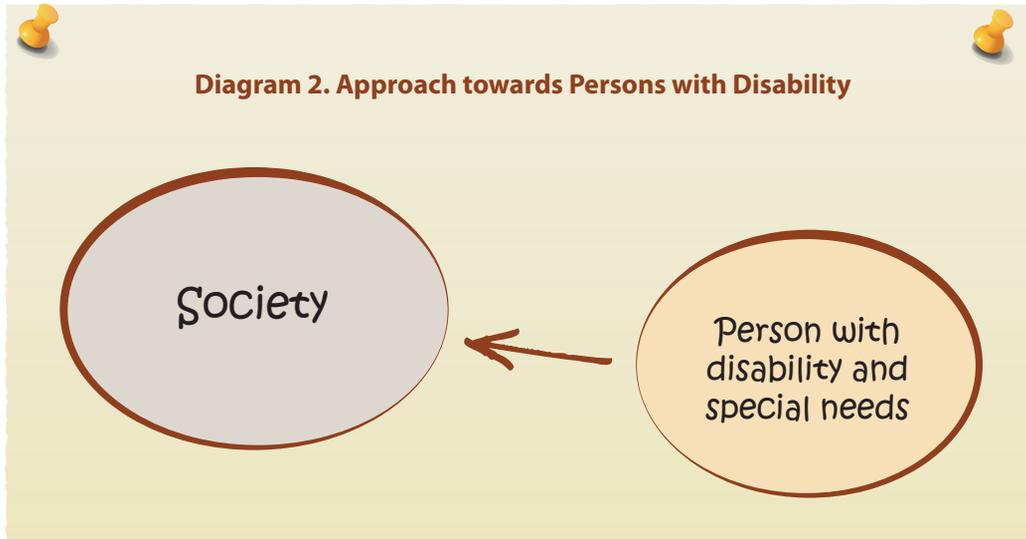


Diagram 2 shows that the goal of society was represented through extreme homogeneity and persons with disabilities were perceived as segregated individual groups<sup>9</sup>. For some countries this situation could be from far past, however we still come across the same perspective in Georgia. There are families who think that persons with disabilities should stay at home, that it is shameful to show them to the outside world. Within the project framework, when working with the community, we often would encounter family members of the person with disability who wished to participate in business trainings. Based on the individual interviews of beneficiaries held by the “World Vision Georgia” experts of disability area, family members of the persons with

7 For additional information please watch the following videofile <https://www.facebook.com/paola.carinelli/videos/740071846088305/?pnref=story>

8 Cou, S. and Wapling, L. (2010). Travelling Together. How to Include Persons with Disabilities on the Main Road of Development. World Vision UK

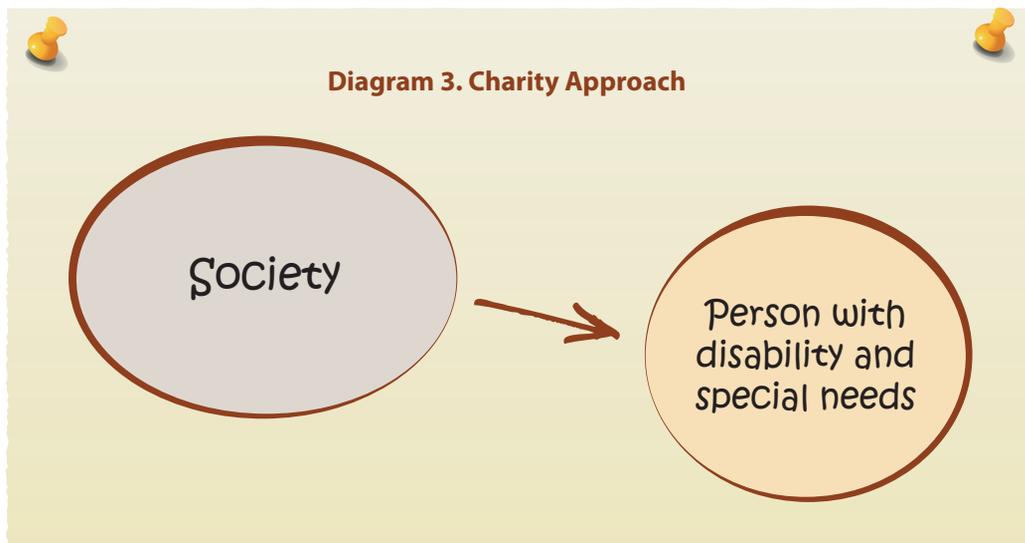
9 Cou, S. and Wapling, L. (2010). Travelling Together. How to Include Persons with Disabilities on the Main Road of Development. World Vision UK

disabilities could not even imagine how the persons with special needs could be participants of the process themselves. After talking with them, however, the number of beneficiaries increased in the trainings.

Medical model should always be presented when meeting with trainers/persons working with the communities as a model that promotes extreme segregation of a person with disability and leads her to the closed circuit - **no education, no income - permanent dependence on others**. Considering this issue is important because the process of supporting livelihood the perception of a person with disability as a passive consumer should be abolished. She should become a member of society as a person who delivers a product or participates in economic wealth creation.

*Family members of the persons with disabilities could not even imagine how the persons with special needs could be participants of the process themselves.*

2. The next historic stage, after segregation and total neglect, turned to be an **excessive care and charity** from society to provide wellbeing of persons with disabilities<sup>10</sup>.



10 Cou, S. and Wapling, L. (2010). Travelling Together. How to Include Persons with Disabilities on the Main Road of Development. World Vision UK

Charity model is entirely built on the principle - society is obliged to assist persons with disability and provide their welfare. This model regards a person with disability as a passive object, where others perform for her, somebody who needs pity and sympathy.

Significant discussions had emerged while discussing this paradigm on the trainings during project implementation. A question is often raised - "Why is helping a poor person with disability economically or with other sources regarded as bad? Why is charity so unacceptable?" Based on an international experience the most contradictory part of this model is that people with disabilities are perceived as "handicapped", which develops consumerism psychology that itself creates significant barrier in the process of economic strengthening of community or society.

**Highest efforts should be provided to the person with disability, as for participant, entrepreneur, in the livelihood supporting programs.** The process is improbable when one person is obliged to permanently help other. Empathy is one of the most humane forms of people interaction, however it does not imply pity. Working with communities should aim to empower vulnerable groups and not merely provide aid, which does not include the empowerment process in the future.



*A question is often raised - "Why is helping a poor person with disability economically or with other sources regarded as bad? Why is charity so unacceptable?" Based on an international experience, the most contradictory part of this model is that people with disabilities are perceived as "handicapped", which develops consumerism psychology that itself creates significant barrier in the process of economic strengthening of community or society.*

**3.** A social model is the most effective model that is accepted in the whole world. It focuses on inclusion of persons with disability in education or employment<sup>11</sup>.

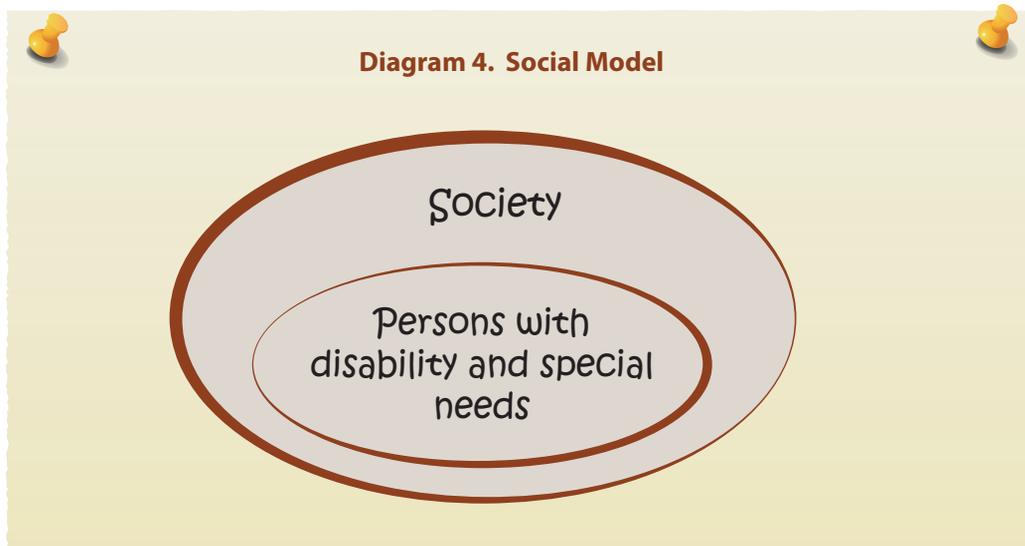


Diagram 4 illustrates an approach where persons with disability and special needs are part of the society, and share the same responsibilities that others have. The concept of inclusive society is founded on social model and is based on the following principles:

- Everyone is different and this is acceptable

<sup>11</sup> Cou, S. and Wapling, L. (2010). Travelling Together. How to Include Persons with Disabilities on the Main Road of Development. World Vision UK

- In any process planning, environment should be adapted to the needs of a person, and not vice versa
- Every person can be successful and independent when the approach and services are differentiated

Each event or training that mobilizes communities should be based on social approach, where every activity is planned with equal participation of the person with disabilities, and appropriate methodological or physical environment is provided. For example, if a person struggles with establishing communication due to hearing problems, we have to use alternative forms of communication (written, sign, visual materials). **Creating inclusive setting is largely associated with constant analysis, and tendency to provide change in the environment.**

### 1.5. Important Variables for Making Changes

Building an inclusive society is accompanied by ongoing changes. This is a well-planned systemic process - innovation, where people’s perspectives, skills, and resources play significant role. One of the main goals for the experts of organization “World Vision Georgia” in the framework of “**Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia (LIFE Georgia)**” project is to establish adequate perspective in the involved parties about persons with disability. Likewise, planning business trainings by considering each individual’s specific needs and organizing the needed resources were key factors for including persons with disabilities and special needs in the process and providing success.

**Table 1. Important Variables for Creating Inclusive Environment<sup>12</sup>**

Perspective	Skill	Stimulus	Resources	Action Plan	Change
.....	Skill	Stimulus	Resources	Action Plan	Confusion
Perspective	.....	Stimulus	Resources	Action Plan	Fear, Panic
Perspective	Skill	.....	Resources	Action Plan	Resistance
Perspective	Skill	Stimulus	.....	Action Plan	Disappointment
Perspective	Skill	Stimulus	Resources	.....	Not progressing

According to Table 1, if the training space or employment venue for persons with disability and special needs are organized with **inclusive perspective**, additionally, **the staff has**

<sup>12</sup> Bagrationi, M., Zakareishvili, M., Kvachadze, Z., Pilauri, K. (2014). Individual Educational Plan – Toolkit for Teachers. pg. 5. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, Tbilisi

**corresponding competence**, administration has an experience of using **appraisal and positive reinforcement** for work and an **action plan** of planning and implementing inclusive activities, process execution becomes real and changes are visible. When one of the relevant variables are missing, it becomes harder to achieve desired outcomes. For example, trainer/organization might have specific action plan for creating inclusive environment, but no resources. According to the aforementioned matrix, this will lead to disappointment feeling. On the other hand, if there is no adequate perspective, the process becomes chaotic and less effective despite having all other variables<sup>13</sup>.

International experience showed that significant processes were performed to form inclusive society from total segregation. Society should take more effective steps towards the normalization process in Georgia. Normalization signifies that difference is perceived as norm; to create society in a way, where every person has the possibility to be economically active, pay bills, and function as a full member. For example, project participant with significant difficulties in mobility recalls: “PE lessons were very hard, because I could not participate in the activities.” He is a teacher at school now, actively works on business idea, and tries to increase his income<sup>14</sup>.

*Normalization signifies that difference is perceived as a norm; to create society in a way, where every person has the possibility to be economically active, pay bills, and function as a full member.*

Concepts of social inclusion and equal participation are not just void phrases. These concepts are connected to important issues of gender equality, decreasing the number of children’s death, quality education, improvement of health conditions, and widely, achieving well-being. Social inclusion implies the presence of “society for all”, each person is different, but they are still in the same conditions.

Social inclusion vector apprehends combating poverty, employment and sustainable development. Poverty is one of the most important challenges of modern times. UNDP report shows the connection between poverty and social exclusion on Ghana’s case that indirectly is connected to crime and marginalization. It does not mean that every poor person is socially excluded. It just gives evidence that increased poverty index is directly connected to the increased social exclusion index. Consequently, “Integration in all its forms may simply imply the existence of a stable community in which people can find a niche.”<sup>15</sup>

13 Bagrationi, M., Zakareishvili, M., Kvachadze, Z., Pilauri, K. (2014). Individual Educational Plan – Toolkit for Teachers. pg. 5. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, Tbilisi

14 Kochlashvili, N. (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.

15 Taylor, G. (2009) Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration. DESA, 3. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/>

# Chapter II. How to Plan Inclusive Projects and Programs

This section summarizes the project - **Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia - “LIFE Georgia”**- experience in project planning and implementation of inclusive employment and livelihood, one year after implementation.

## 2.1. The Consortium Experience Before the Project

In the beginning, out of five consortium members, represented by five non-governmental organizations, only one had the experience of working with disability and special needs. In particular, the organization EfD offered professional vocational courses to students, including those with disabilities. Their partner, vocational college «Jvari” helped them with professional experience in inclusive education. The college has received training cycle conducted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and consequently, it considered educational needs of all students. Other partners, in spite of many years of experience in the field of employment, had minimal systematic experience of working with beneficiaries with disabilities. However, they expressed interest and high motivation to work in this field. Hence, the consortium contracted an experienced partner, «World Vision Georgia», who uses mainstream approach to implement programs in Georgia. Therefore, a meeting was held at the concept development stage, partners shared expectations and gradually started considering how to plan an inclusive employment activities.

Thus, the initiative will be especially interesting for organizations that have yet to implement inclusive projects. In fact, the consortium piloted the inclusive approach, with the support of «World Vision Georgia” and is now able to share experiences in the field.

## 2.2. Requirements to Plan and Implement an Inclusive Project

### 1. Will and Motivation

For the most part, engagement, education and employment projects carried out by non-governmental projects and programs are designed specifically for the target group of people with disabilities. Moreover, often they focus on particular needs exclusively, for example, social

entrepreneurship projects for blind or for persons with physical disabilities, as well as projects for persons with hearing difficulties, etc. These projects are mainly conducted by experts or Disabled Peoples Organization – DPOs.

However, mainstreaming, a relatively new approach in this field, offers a different vision. In particular, it offers an inclusive vision of programming in any organization or institution, which means that each project or program provides equal participation for people with disabilities. In order to reach this goal, organization takes into account the special needs and the adaptation of activities, necessary to make involvement of people with disabilities.

Accordingly, the mainstream views and approach introduction to each organization or agency's specific disability-oriented projects and programs can further accelerate and facilitate the integration of persons with disabilities in the community, in much more natural conditions. The will and the readiness of an organization to mainstream and inclusively plan projects and programs may depend on several factors:

- The organization upholds to major human rights regulatory documents, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- The organization had a successful track record in inclusive project management
- The organization operates under donor priorities and requirements
- The introduction of a disability component gives added value to the project in order to increase its chances of funding
- Inclusive programming is defined from the very beginning by the organization's strategy
- The organization's main target is the most vulnerable groups
- The organization's main target group is persons with disability
- Partner organization has experience of working in the area

Thus, a variety of motivating factors push organizations towards mainstreaming. However, it is important to understand each organization or agency mechanism on how to consider this area and bring real changes.

## **2. The Knowledge and Expertise**

Mainstreaming programs and projects in the planning and implementation requires some experience and, also, knowledge and expertise in the field of disability. Organization that does not have experience in this regard has three alternative ways to fill the gap:

- the organization can hire an expert or group of experts

or

- select partner organizations (experienced in executing specific projects or mainstream approach)

or

- select partner DPO

In any case, it is important to have a competent person or the expert group, who will be able to: define the main strategic directions and activities necessary to make changes and adjust to beneficiary's needs; consider any individual cases to determine the intervention plan and the need for additional services; competently consult the project or program team, inform the employees and partners to increase disability awareness and deliberately plan to gradually increase their knowledge and experience in this regard; finally, the expert will accumulate knowledge and use it for the following activities or projects.

### 3. Budget Planning

Additional costs, such as adapted for space meetings, Braille printing (business cards, brochures and information materials), an additional specialists (trainers, occupational therapist, sign language interpreter, etc.) have to be budgeted in the beginning of the project. Budget planning involves three possible approach:

- Each program or project activity includes subactivity with extra funds for adaptation
- A separate activity placed between project or program activities under each objective is determined
- The participation of people with disabilities is separately into a major activity with corresponding subactivities, including all additional costs

The given project uses third approach, it has an additional activity, named Disability Mainstreaming, with 5-6 sub activities. The activity budget comprises only 2.8% of the project's total budget, is allocated for two years and covers the following basic expenses: administrative expenses, awareness training for partner organizations, training costs (5 annual trainings), expert services (current monthly consultations and regional visits), creation and print of this manual, research costs, conference costs, and funding for accessible environment and sign language subtitles.

#### 4. Joint Partner Work

Mainstream approach involves including persons with disabilities into the existing activities, vs. specially planned activities. The project team plans these activities. In the initial stages it may have insignificant or no experience of working in the field of disability. Consequently, an expert's or a team of experts' work in the project features different responsibilities. For example, a trainer prepares a training modules and training space. An expert has to introduce the basic inclusion principles to adapt the training module to the trainer, and learn the module and, at the same time, study the needs of the beneficiaries. Finally, determine with the trainer the necessary changes to customize the module according to the beneficiary's needs: content of changes, material changes or additional materials, environment adjustment, sign language interpreters, etc. At the same time, each consultation should carry educational value to gradually increase the project team members' skills; after a while the team will be able to modify the same module and the environment in case of different needs. Another example: project beneficiaries are being informed in the beginning of the project and the organization commences variety of different strategies: community mobilization and dissemination of information through radio and television. Consequently, it is imperative to ensure that this information reaches persons with disabilities. Typically, if the message contains general information, like: «The submission of applications for business trainings begins now” or «We announce a competition for ideas», persons with disabilities may not consider themselves relevant to the project. Therefore, it is important for the project team to develop a strategy for the provision of the information. Hence, the informational messages should be inclusive, and incentives that encourage participation should be explicitly stated. Outreach to promote the involvement of people with disabilities was carried out in scope of the mentioned project. Community mobilizers and trainers provided information to the families by visiting their homes. Also, the project allowed for indirect benefit of people with disabilities: parents of children with disabilities got involved in the business trainings and applicants that included persons with disabilities in their business plans were awarded more points. This way it motivated any applicant to employ a person with disabilities.

Thus, the expert team delivers information, and in the ideas, while the final strategy is determined jointly, in some cases via voting. Some of the ideas proposed by the expert team were not approved by the project team, for example quotas for the people with disabilities. Despite the fact that this is a fairly common approach, the team decided to give priority to the assessment of ideas in a competitive environment. However, as noted above, the project proposed by/including the employment of persons with disabilities was named as a priority and granted additional points compared to the project of similar value.

Hence, the inclusion expert acts as a consultant, adviser to define strategies, decision-making and management process concerning people with disabilities. Therefore, an expert must:

- Be familiar with the project, all of the current and planned activities, to define the kind of actions that will contribute to inclusion of persons with disabilities in the process into these activities.

- Cooperate with the project team: create a space for discussion and debate, for the promotion of joint decision-making, offering the most comfortable solutions to the project team, in accordance to the teams experience, abilities; consultations must be ongoing.

### SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT FRAMEWORK

#### **1. Development of inclusive concept; sharing the idea of mainstreaming**

- **Introduction of partners and the project team introductions**
- **Introduction of project, program goals, objectives and activities**
- **Defining Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan**
- **Introducing outlook to the partners**
- **Determining budget activities**

Inclusive project will only be possible when the inclusive project concept is considered at an early stage and people with disabilities are involved from the start. Therefore, a timely inclusion of an expert/ person with disability is important. Thus, the inclusion expert is the member of a project team who is familiar with the project objectives, activities and defines the goals and the strategy of inclusion. Also, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, it is important to allow budget for additional resources and a rationally calculate accessibility funds.

#### **2. Preparation of the Project before the Active Phase**

- **Awareness training for the partners and the project team**
- **Meetings with professionals that work with the beneficiaries (community mobilizers, trainers, etc.)**

If the project team is new to the mainstreaming concept, conducting the awareness training is important in the initial stage. The training helps form expectations, gain understanding of inclusion, and realize what kind of support will inclusion expert provide and what will the roles of various team members be. One or two-day meeting is sufficient for this purpose, however, it is necessary to plan further workshops or training sessions for various team members. For example, if a team is comprised of community mobilizers, trainers, marketing, HR department, PR-department, etc. each working link will require a different kind of thematic meeting. Preferably, the meetings should be planned in accordance with their role and functions. For example, community mobilizers carry the function of providing information to beneficiaries involved in the project. Accordingly, the meeting will focus on the communication with persons with disabilities

or their family members, and personal data gathering. The meeting will also help determine their additional needs including creation, preparation, supplying different documents for easy interviews. Marketing and Communications unit deals with sharing information to the audience, and needs to learn about the correct use of terminology, ethical issues and the rights of persons with disabilities regarding the topic. Thus, the training modules have to be assembled based on the audience needs.

### **3. The Situation Analysis**

- **Gathering Basic information from the partners**
- **Research**
- **Regular visits to the community**
- **Sharing the results of the constant adjustment of the activities and needs**

It is important to study the situation in the target regions, before starting any project. Partner organizations that are familiar with the local beneficiaries can be primary sources. More information will be gathered by directly visiting beneficiaries and getting to know them personally. That's when the ideas occur, in many cases, because researcher is directly observing beneficiaries' needs. Researcher will validate your findings, given the financial needs. Research demonstrates attitudes towards disabilities, including self-perception of people with disabilities, as well as the community's, the family's and employers' perception of them. Additionally, researching locally available resources and experiences and international practices will help you plan out the steps and strategy. The given project has assessed the attitudes of project team as well. The assessment revealed a number of target groups that needed intensive work, including parents of children with disabilities, employers, HR and PR departments, etc. Thus, despite the fact that the main project directions are determined at the outset, some activities (for example, training content) are determined at the time of the visit and are tailored to the specific needs.

### **4. Constant Consultation and Participation during the Project Implementation**

- **Creating team of specialists**
- **Analyzing and adapting the project activities**
- **Analyzing and adapting the basic documents**
- **Providing access for beneficiaries**
- **Promoting and implementing individual approaches**
- **Database creation and monitoring interventions, progress and challenges**

Inclusion expert has a lead role in the process. In addition, based on the content of the project and specific needs, a team of specialists is formed. The trainers who have experience working with people with disabilities and employment issues, as well as the trainers who work with the local authorities and corporate sensitive budgeting topics, have been selected in frames of this project. Trainers who have worked with parents were also hired, because parents needed time management and emotional management workshops. As the project progressed, it became apparent that an occupational therapist had to be included for the needs assessment and environment accessibility. Specialists like sign language interpreters were hired to subtitle videos for the beneficiaries with hearing difficulties. Thus, a team of specialists gradually formed during the project implementation. Some specialists provided services only once or several times, based on the task at hand. This is also part of the inclusive outlook, which implies an individual approach to each person, according to her needs. Individual approach is needed at information delivery, activity implementation and participation stages. Consequently, individual cases and tracking mechanism is an important part of the project; these duties are managed by the inclusion expert.

### **5. Identifying Various Target Groups and Planning Needs-oriented Training**

- **Identifying training target groups (people with disabilities, parents, local authorities, potential employers and other companies); discovering and understanding their needs**
- **Selecting trainers**
- **Preparing and training module and conducting the training**

Additional training is often required to ensure inclusion, including awareness training or information sharing trainings. Planning additional training for people with disabilities to enhance their motivation, self-esteem and advocacy skills is an option. Also, involving local government in inclusive programming (including infrastructure, employment, etc.), planning and budgeting issues is imperative. Each project has to determine target groups based on the analysis of the situation and training needs. This is often revealed during the project implementation.

### **6. Collecting and Exchanging Experiences**

- **Presenting Reports**
- **Participating in project team meetings**
- **Sharing research results**
- **Establishing mechanisms to review cases**

The research carried out in scope of the given project reveals that different partners in different regions have different types of experience. Moreover, the same specialists (such as trainers) that

work in different organizations have radically different experiences and approaches. Consequently, the information has to be constantly exchanged. Inclusion expert is the person who collects experiences and creating sharing opportunities. This can take various forms, for example, monthly reports and information letters to partners, regular meetings with the team, sharing materials issued during the project (publications, research, video, etc.), detailing interesting individual cases (reports, records, databases, questionnaires, portfolio and so on) and implementation of the monitoring mechanisms (internal discussions, involvement of various specialists, participation in the panel sessions and so on).

### **7. Sharing Experience with the Interested Parties**

- **Conducting success story conference**
- **Documenting the experiences and / or preparing publications**
- **Documenting success stories (including video stories) and distribution on media and social networks**
- **Ensuring inclusive communication**

Sharing experience of inclusion implementation may be accomplished in several ways. Conducting a conference specifically geared towards these issues is one option. If the project includes TV or radio broadcast, appropriate time should be allocated for explaining inclusion concept and the sharing experience in this area. Public is more receptive of experiences that are backed up by concrete examples. Materials created in scope of the project should be inclusive as well (whether it is printed material, videos, and TV programs), for example, Braille publications or videos with sign language subtitles.

Considering this issue at the planning stage of the project will largely determine success of your inclusive employment project.

# Chapter III. Existing Barriers in Integrating the Vulnerable Groups

*“Only 2% of persons with disability in developing countries have access to basic services and rehabilitation. 98% of children with disability don’t attend school in developing countries.”<sup>16</sup>*

Gender, ethnicity, disability or marital status - there is no common definition of vulnerable groups. However, this concept is related to groups that are under the risk of marginalization from the labor market, as well as from society<sup>17</sup>. The concept incorporates different groups, however this chapter will accentuate on persons with disability and special needs. Persons with disability and special needs face barriers in accessing education, employment, and social integration that itself creates significant challenge for their economic well-being.

### 3.1 Access to Education for Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs

Based on the research “Inclusive Education Indices in Georgia”, conducted in 2014, there is a positive tendency associated with access to general education in Georgia, similar to several top European countries. One of the main factors affecting the outcome is free general education in Georgia. Referring to findings of 2015, there are 4000 people with special educational needs studying in Georgian mainstream schools<sup>18</sup>. The number of children with special educational needs has significantly increased compared to 2008 year when pilot inclusive education program was completed and only 300 persons were studying in schools across Tbilisi.

In a research<sup>19</sup> conducted by the “World Vision Georgia”, a girl was identified with intellectual disability. Most of the time she is at home watching soap operas. She has not received education and is demotivated to participate in any offered activity. Her mother says: “ We wanted to enroll

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16 Cou, S. and Wapling, L. (2010). Travelling Together. How to Include Persons with Disabilities on the Main Road of Development. World Vision UK

17 Atkinson (2002) Access to Employment for Vulnerable Groups. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 6. Retrieved from <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>

18 Education Management Information System. <https://www.emis.ge/> visited on 22.10.2015

19 Kochlashvili, N. (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.



her in school years ago, director of mainstream school refused and referred us to special school that was in Tbilisi. How could I enroll her there? She was such a nice child.”<sup>20</sup> This example clearly describes how important accessibility to education is, because education is directly connected to self-actualization, and issues of economic independence.

Educational system in modern world relies on possibility of getting continuous education. Developing skills appropriate to the demands of the labor market are necessary for economic strengthening and for operating in open labor market. Vocational educational system gives an excellent chance for this. There are 34 vocational colleges and institutes in Georgia that offer vocational programs<sup>21</sup>.

*Educational system in modern world relies on possibility of getting lifelong education. Developing skills appropriate to the demands of the labor market are necessary for economic strengthening and for operating in open labor market.*

20 Kochlashvili, N. (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia

21 [www.vet.ge](http://www.vet.ge), visited on 22.10.201

Accessibility to vocational education for vulnerable groups is part of significant discussions in educational system. Persons with disabilities and special needs have joined vocational education in 2013. Government provided 100% funding and additional services for high quality learning processes. Despite the progress, a research on barriers of accessing vocational education, conducted in 2015, revealed several characteristics that are universal for all vulnerable groups, but are more sensitive when they are related to persons with disabilities and special needs. The target groups of a study included:

1. **People who are socially unprotected** - based on findings of 2014, 36.3% of the population are registered as socially unprotected and 9.4% receives social assistance.
2. **Persons with disabilities and special educational needs** - according to social service agency (2014), there are approximately 141 000 people with disability in Georgia.
3. **Ethnic minorities** - 15.8% of Georgian population are ethnic minorities with 6.5% Azerbaijanis and 5.7% Armenians among them.<sup>22</sup>
4. **Internally displaced people** - there are 259 247 IDPS and 86 283 families registered in Georgia.<sup>23</sup>
5. **Children living and working in streets** - based on unofficial data approximately 1500-1600 children are living and working in the streets nowadays in Georgia.
6. **Repatriated Meskhs** - 1533 Muslim Meskhs have received Georgian citizenship and 1/3 of them are underage.
7. **Veterans** – there are total number of 73 067 people representing veterans, persons with corresponding rights and status, and their family members (data of 2014).<sup>24</sup>

General factors were found that hinder representatives of vulnerable groups in choosing vocational education. These are: hard economic conditions (if the vocational college is far from the house, and transportation or lunch is needed), no appropriate documentation (certificate of basic general education, birth license, citizenship), lack of motivation to study, value system, family prejudices and beliefs, not adapted environment, lack of information, few employability perspectives after graduating educational institutions. One of the beneficiaries of “Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia

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22 Based on description of 2002

23 Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia. 17.09.2014

24 Kitiashvili, A. & Sumbadze, N. & Makharadze, T. (2015). Accessibility to Vocational Education in Georgia for Vulnerable Groups – Case Analysis. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

(LIFE Georgia)” project told that there are many people with disabilities in his community who have internal conflicts about appearing in society, that they do not believe any more that change is possible. Often, it is hard to predict how strong barriers related to personal factors can be. They are interconnected to systemic challenges that cannot offer appropriate assistance to the vulnerable group representatives.<sup>25</sup>

**Table 2. The ratio of socially unprotected, refugees, and persons with special need population among registered and enrolled students in mainstream vocational colleges**

Year	Total Number of Registered Students	Socially Unprotected	Refugees	Special Educational Needs
2014	16219	671 (4.1%)	144 (0.9%)	152 (0.9%)
2013	13036	2050 (15.7%)	443 (3.4%)	58 (0.4%)
2012	5127	1945 (37.9%)	60 (1.2%)	3 (0.2%)

Based on Table 2, vulnerable groups inclusion in vocational educational system has decreased compared to 2013. Based on findings done in 2014, only 5.1% of vocational students are from socially unprotected families, while this index was 20.9% in 2013; 1.2% are refugees (2013 – 4.3%); however the number of students with special educational needs have increased with 1.5% (in 2013 – 0.5%). Positive changes have been observed since 2010 for persons with special educational needs. In 2012, 22 students with special needs and/or disability were studying in vocational colleges. In 2014, this number increased to 203. Yet, due to a small number of persons with disability (for example, age range of 15-70), difficulties with access to education are still present in Georgia.<sup>26</sup>

In order to create a sustainable system for fostering livelihood initiatives for vulnerable groups, especially for persons with disability and special needs, access to education should be enhanced, so people have skills relevant to market demands. Thus, it is recommended that:

25 Kitiashvili, A. & Sumbadze, N. & Makharadze, T. (2015). Accessibility to Vocational Education in Georgia for Vulnerable Groups – Case Analysis. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

26 Kitiashvili, A. & Sumbadze, N. & Makharadze, T. (2015). Accessibility to Vocational Education in Georgia for Vulnerable Groups – Case Analysis. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

- Self-governing institutions create mechanism of registering people with disabilities and special educational needs across Georgia. “World vision Georgia” has created a form for collecting primary information about these groups (see attachment), that can be used for registration and identification of needs.
- Self-governing institutions propose various mechanisms for including vulnerable groups in the educational processes across Georgia. For example, governmental scholarships for vocational students from socially vulnerable groups, sign language courses, hiring the mobility and orientation specialists. Also, to have active collaboration between Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs, and Ministry of Education and Science for implementing innovative projects for empowerment of vulnerable groups.
- Ministry of Education and Science introduces assessment mechanisms of inclusive education on political and practical level. It is important to include people without general education in the system, and to develop differentiated services for persons with disabilities.

### 3.2. Barriers in Employment of Vulnerable Groups

80% of persons with disability are beyond poverty level in the developmental countries.<sup>27</sup> In the report of European Education Fund published in 2014, index youth who are not employed and at the same time are not included in the educational processes (NEET) in Georgia are described.

**Table 3. Index of young people who are not in employment and education (NEET) in Georgia<sup>28</sup>**

Year 2014	Sum	Male	Female
Index of Employment (15+)	33.4	55.1	11.2
<b>NEET Indices (15-24)</b>	<b>30.2</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>35.0</b>
<b>NEET Indices (15-29)</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>48.9</b>

27 Cou, S. and Wapling, L. (2010). Travelling Together. How to Include Persons with Disabilities on the Main Road of Development. World Vision UK

28 Ummuhan, Bardak, & Martino Rubai Maseda & Francesca Rosso (2015). Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training. European Training Foundation. Pg. 45

Information provided in Table 3 demonstrates that the percentage of young people who are neither studying nor working in Georgia is quite high – 36.4%, and that “Female” is the most vulnerable category among them (48.9). A tendency was captured in the report that more representatives of vulnerable groups are from socially unprotected families. Moreover, being placed in this category is often correlated with the failure and marginalization in the next stage of life.<sup>29</sup> This indicates how important it is to empower people with needed skills to find jobs and be in employment, that, in fact, is the only chance for their re-socialization. **In order to reach this goal it is recommended to find the most marginalized groups in the community, to inform them about any new initiatives, to reveal their abilities, and to promote their participation in the related activities.**

*Respondents experienced in employing persons with disabilities and special educational needs noted that compared to other employees they adjust faster to the working environment.*

The research was conducted in 2014 to analyze employers’ attitudes towards employing people with disabilities and special educational needs. Employers with and without experience of employing persons with disabilities and special needs participated in the research. Respondents experienced in employing persons with disabilities and special educational needs noted that compared to other employees these people adjust faster to the working environment. The main challenge appeared to be the absence of service that connects employer and people with disabilities and special needs with each other. First meeting of employer and persons with disabilities/special needs is often brought by random factors, like by having acquaintances, a request from a friend, being from the same neighborhood, ties of connections. The research proved that vocational or other institutions’ role in this process is minimal. One of the motives of meeting/first contact can be a high competency of persons with disabilities/special needs. The main difference between the attitudes of experienced and inexperienced employees are presented in the following chart<sup>30</sup>:

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29 Ummuhan, Bardak, & Martino Rubai Maseda & Francesca Rosso (2015). Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training. European Training Foundation. Pg. 45

30 IPM-Research (2014) – Survey on an Employer Attitude towards Employment of People with Disabilities/Special Educational Needs. Retrieved from <http://vet.ge/>

Attitude of employer with experience of employing persons with disabilities and special needs:	Attitude of employer without an experience of employing persons with disabilities and special needs:
It is an organization's advantage to have an employee with disability and special needs, her job performance, interaction with staff, and level of adaptation.	It is a very complicated issue to employ a person with disability/special needs.
Persons with disabilities and special needs can perform their job well.	It will be hard for the persons with disabilities and special needs to perform quality work.
When employing persons with disabilities and special needs, their competencies should be considered.	Employing persons with disabilities is more like a charity, and empathy.

The research affirmed that many external factors also create barriers in employing persons with disability and special needs. In particular:

- Absence of employment enhancement mechanisms from state level
- Not adapted environment
- Transportation; Aspects related to mobility<sup>31</sup>

Same barriers were reported in a study conducted by “World Vision Georgia” that describes best international and domestic practices on employing persons with disabilities and special needs. Based on the interviews with Georgian employers large companies have motivation to employ people with disabilities and special educational needs, have thought about this issue, and some of them even did some work. Despite the positive attitudes, it is still a challenge for an employer to give extra human and financial resources for creating adaptive (physically and methodologically) environment.<sup>32</sup> For example, one of the insurance companies stated that they are motivated to employ people with disabilities and special needs, though, when they actually started to discuss this issue, their office infrastructure and accessibility came out to be significant barriers.<sup>33</sup>

31 IPM-Research (2014) – Survey on an Employer Attitude towards Employment of People with Disabilities/Special Educational Needs. Retrieved from <http://vet.ge/>

32 Kochlashvili, N. (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.

33 Kochlashvili, N. (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia



*Based on the interviews with Georgian employers, large companies have motivation to employ people with disabilities and special educational needs, have thought about this issue, and some of them even did some work. Despite the positive attitudes, it is still a challenge for an employer to give extra human and financial resources for creating adaptive (physically and methodologically) environment.*

Thus, collaboration with employers has emerged as one of the priority issues of the “Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia (LIFE Georgia)” project. In the framework of research, done by “World Vision Georgia”, special attention is shifted on the need of working with HR managers and decision-makers of the companies that had significant positive outcomes in different countries (Great Britain, Austria, Ethiopia). Within the project context recommendations were shared and workshops were held with the regions’ large companies “Liberty Bank”, “Coca-Cola Bottlers Georgia”, “Geocell”, “CREDO Microfinance Organization”, “Goodwill”, “Georgian Railway”, “Georgian Post”. The main goal of meeting with HR managers and marketing officers was to fully give information about the abilities, competencies, and strengths of persons with disabilities and special needs; to reduce their fears and stereotypes, and to show the profitable side of the issue for the companies. The key message was that **employing persons with disabilities and special needs is not a charity, it is a profitable acquisition of organized, motivated, and maximally engaged staff for the employer.**

In 2015 the conference was held with common initiative of Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs of Georgia, Social Service Agency Employability Department, and Ministry of Education and Science in which the employers, themselves, described the best practices in Georgia of employing people with disabilities and special needs. One of the employers was confidently talking about his contribution to employ 10 representatives of vulnerable group with criminal backgrounds. Such action helped their re-socialization, and changed the attitudes of the community as before they were respected as criminal authorities. After employment they became motivators to other members of community to engage in the social appropriate activities.

According to one of the persons with disability, he never thought he would ever have income, but he studied cooking, and got employed in an international class hotel in Tbilisi. These examples are not major for Georgian reality at this point, but the tendency is positive. Persons with disabilities and special needs are employed on the open labor market that is an actual move towards economic independence.

*According to one of the persons with disability, he never thought he would ever have income, but he studied cooking, and got employed in an international class hotel in Tbilisi.*



Special attention is drawn to enhancing self-employment possibilities in livelihood fostering, so trainings in business entrepreneurship and funding the best projects serve this purpose. Consequently, it is important to recruit persons with disabilities and special needs to participate in trainings. “World Vision Georgia” inclusion experts constantly consulted community mobilisers so that they could give detailed information about business trainings to the persons with disability and special needs. Practical experience shows the importance of transmitting correct information - what each training implies, and what goal it serves, and why it is important, by community mobilisers, trainers or project administrators. Such approach minimizes the risk of beneficiaries’ false expectations about the process.

The first group of business training attendees in Zugdidi included 9 persons with disabilities/guardians/family members. 5 out of 9 members got funding. In the first group of business training attendees in Gori 7 persons with disabilities/guardians/family members were participating. In the end, 2 persons got funding, and 01 beneficiary moved up to the second phase of selection. Respectively, other members of training were also supporting employment of persons with disabilities in Gori, not only beneficiaries or their guardians only. For example, seven training participants presented business plans that considered employment of persons with disabilities, and two plans were funded. One of the successful cases is about a person with disability from Zugdidi municipality who is a carpenter. For a long time he lived in a hard economic condition. In the framework of “Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia (LIFE Georgia)” project, he participated in business training. The trainer recalls beneficiary’s low motivation and low self-confidence in the beginning. After a hard work, this man put huge effort in preparing business application and received funding. He was able to buy equipment to make different kinds of wooden crafts and sell them.<sup>34</sup>

Implemented intervention of “World Vision Georgia” in “Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia (LIFE Georgia)” project context and international experience indicate that it is of utmost importance to have conjoint state politics and services for economic strengthening of people with disabilities and special needs. To be specific:

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34 Kochlashvili, N. (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia

- Legislative changes should be carried out (Georgian Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities; Georgian Labor Code; Georgian Law on Public Office)
- An employers' support system should be established, when employers are employing persons with disability and special needs
- Supportive mechanisms to employ persons with disability people in open labor market should be established
- Consistent communicative mechanisms should be developed to increase awareness of employers about employment of persons with disabilities and special needs
- Collaborative net between institutes should be introduced that organizes and controls the pilot processes of services and implements assessment of their effectiveness related to employment of people with disabilities and special educational needs

If we analyze research outcomes with the existing reality, a general but rather significant recommendation can be given - social participation of persons with disability and special needs should be considered as an organic part of the process. The needs of people with various abilities should be taken into consideration during the planning phase - when laws are created, new regulations are determined, environment is organized, and new buildings are built. International practice shows that right planning that also implies adaptive environment only minimally increases the expenses and is an investment directed towards the well-being of every member of society.

## Chapter IV. Livelihood – International Experience and Best Practice

*“I never leave home... very seldom...  
I try to do something that helps me to work at home.”  
(Beneficiary with disability from Zugdidi municipality).*

*“I have a child with Down Syndrome ... I quit everything to take care of her... I don't have anyone... my economic condition worsened... I was working... I had a career... Now I have nothing.”  
(Beneficiary from Zugdidi municipality).*

### 4.1 General Context

Technological development and progress is 21<sup>st</sup> century achievement, though the number of population increases and livelihood decreases too. Based on 1989-2005 prognosis, low income and middle income countries' populations will rise by 3/4ths. If we consider low-income countries alone, population will increase to 2.3 billion – from 2.9 to 5.2 billion, and in 2025 these numbers will still be increasing.<sup>35</sup>

The prospects for future of cities in developing countries are significantly increased population. The growth rates of population equals to 8-9% annually and soon more cities with 20 million may



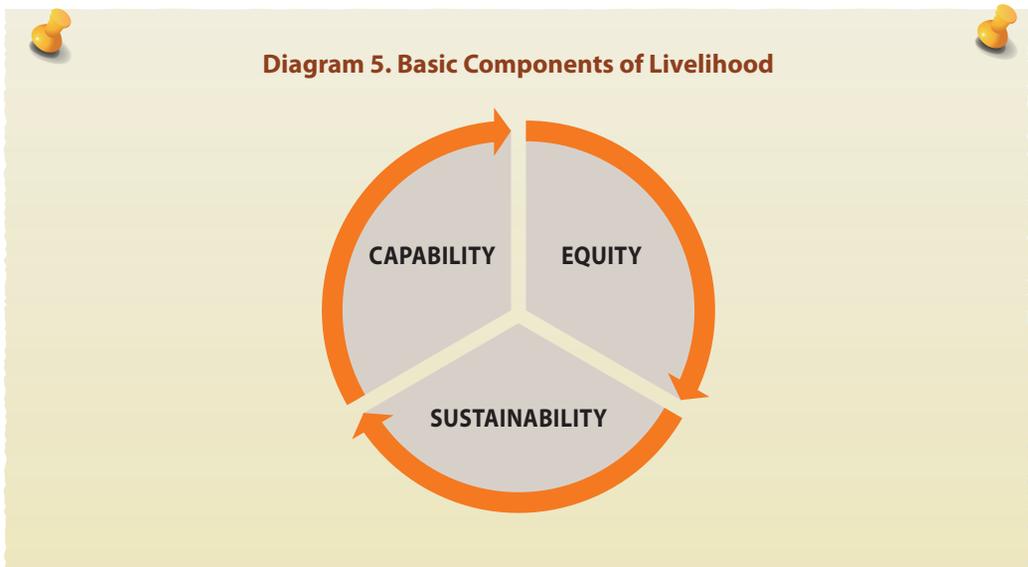
35 Chambers, R., Conway, G. R. (1991). Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concept for the 21st Century. IDS Discussion Paper, 296. Retrieved from: <https://www.ids.ac.uk>

become common. The term “mega-city” is replaced by “hyper-city”. By 2025, the inhabitants of cities in developing countries will total 4 billion.<sup>36</sup>

Negative prospects are seen for rural population too. While the urban population will increase five times by 2025 – from 130 million to 650 million, the rural population will double too – from 330 to 650 million.

Increase of population is associated with significant developmental strategies. When millions of people live in extreme poverty, it will get more difficult to provide adequate and decent level of living for them. When anticipated increased population gets real, this objective will get unattainable. The posed challenge is practical and analytical. So the question is posed – “how can we, humanity, deal with this challenge?”

Robert Chamber and Gordon Conway try to answer this question in their publication. As authors suggest solution could be fostering livelihoods that is linked to three important elements: capability, equity, and sustainability (Diagram 5).



The term “capability” has a wide use when referring to vulnerable groups and includes access to services and information, experiment and innovation, competition and collaboration with

<sup>36</sup> Chambers, R., Conway, G. R. (1991). Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concept for the 21st Century. IDS Discussion Paper, 296. Retrieved from: <https://www.ids.ac.uk>

others, and exploiting new conditions and resources. Equity principle is an important livelihood component. It implies an end to discrimination against women, persons with disabilities, and to all vulnerable groups of society and to provide equal opportunities to them. Sustainability is an inevitable part of the livelihood. Some authors think that “sustainable” replaced the term “integrated” and turned into synonym for “positive”. Everyone agrees that development should be sustainable. Though, there are many definitions and meanings of this term. With regards to environmental protection, sustainability refers to new global concerns with pollution, global warming, deforestation, excessive use of non-renewable resources and physical degradation. The same term socially, in livelihood context, is used in a more focused manner to mean the ability to maintain and improve livelihoods while maintaining or improving the capabilities of livelihoods.<sup>37</sup>

## 4.2 What Is a Livelihood?

Sustainable rural livelihoods model focuses on enhancing capabilities to develop basic skills and capacities. These capacities will enable a person to free oneself of poverty. Sustainable rural livelihoods are described as the adequate amount of current and stocked food and cash to meet



37 Chambers, R., Conway, G. R. (1991). Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concept for the 21st Century. IDS Discussion Paper, 296. Retrieved from: <https://www.ids.ac.uk>

the minimum level of basic needs. It implies accessibility to saved reserves and assets to cope with and recover from risks and shock. Usually a family has several ways to gain sustainable livelihoods – through land, livestock or tree ownership; the rights to fish, hunt or gather plants; through stable employment with relevant income; or through varied activities. Sustainable livelihood is a precondition for a stable population, prerequisite of sustainable management, and a means of changing or stopping destabilization.<sup>38</sup>

Obviously, people in poverty need support to overcome stress, enhance capabilities; their activities should serve achieving long-term goals, they should not be short-term and solve specific small problems. **One of the most important issues is to achieve long-term welfare.**

*Sustainable rural livelihoods are described as the adequate amount of current and stocked food and cash to meet the minimum level of basic needs. It implies accessibility to saved reserves and assets to cope with and recover from risks and shock.*

One of the most successful models of sustainable rural livelihoods was established by British Department of International Development and was adapted in different countries. It is a holistic approach that attempts to comprehend concept of poverty and work maximally to end it. This model tries to look at complex components, hence this flexible approach can be used on different levels: for creating general conceptual frame or for practical tool. Assets that represent bricks in this system build sustainable livelihoods and are built by beneficiary to deal with challenges. Enhancing such capability actually creates an opportunity to make a sustainable system to eliminate poverty.<sup>39</sup>

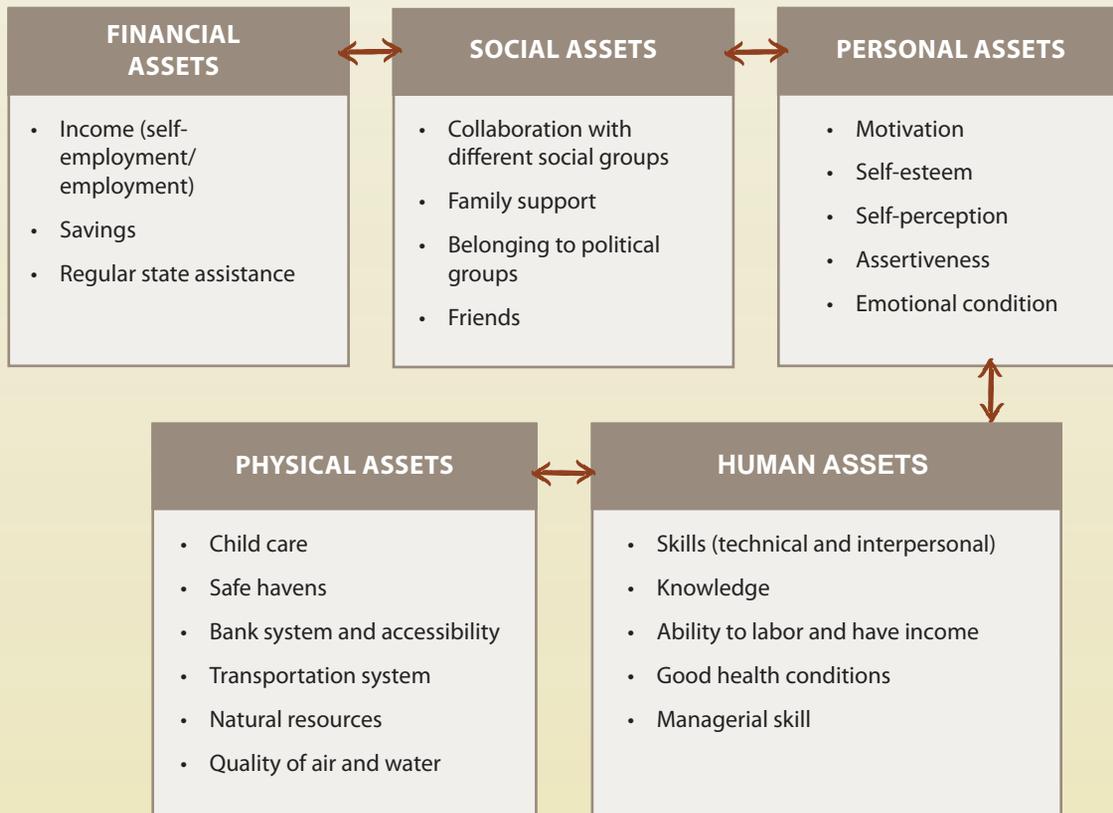
There are five general categories of the assets that contribute to livelihood sustainability and the main factors are built on many small relationships between them (Diagram 6).

For example, all the activities in the context of “Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia (LIFE Georgia)” project are directed towards creating almost all discussed assets. Through business trainings and development of job seeking skills the human, personal and social resources are developed on individual level in the community. However, there are assets that are centralized connected to political will, like child care services, and natural resources management. Because of that English model of supporting livelihoods indicates vulnerability context factors and discusses poverty in two dimensions: a. **individuals and the circumstances related to their personal issues** and b. **individuals and large context**. The English model framework emphasizes on contextual and systemic factors that

38 Chambers, R., Conway, G. R. (1991). Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concept for the 21st Century. IDS Discussion Paper, 296. Retrieved from: <https://www.ids.ac.uk>

39 Department for International Development (1999). Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheet: Introduction. Retrieved from <http://www.librarything.com>

Diagram 6. Five Assets and Their Classification



cause poverty. For example, in the framework of livelihood fostering projects where the objective is to develop business skills and work is done on individual level, the regional or rural needs, resources, and political situation should be considered too.<sup>40</sup>

*Through business trainings and development of job seeking skills the human, personal and social resources are developed on individual level in the community.*

40 Department for International Development (1999). Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheet: Introduction. Retrieved from <http://www.librarything.com>

Proposed framework describes two basic forms of intervention that can be used for poverty elimination in the communities. 1. "Practical Intervention" aims to empower low-income families. It includes consulting programs, education, trainings about employment, education about economic issues, support for small business development. 2. "Strategic interventions" imply working on reversing economic and social systems, or to work on vulnerability context. Community strengthening, alliance establishment, policy determination and advocacy are one of the used approaches in this type of intervention.

**Diagram 7. Role of Intervention**

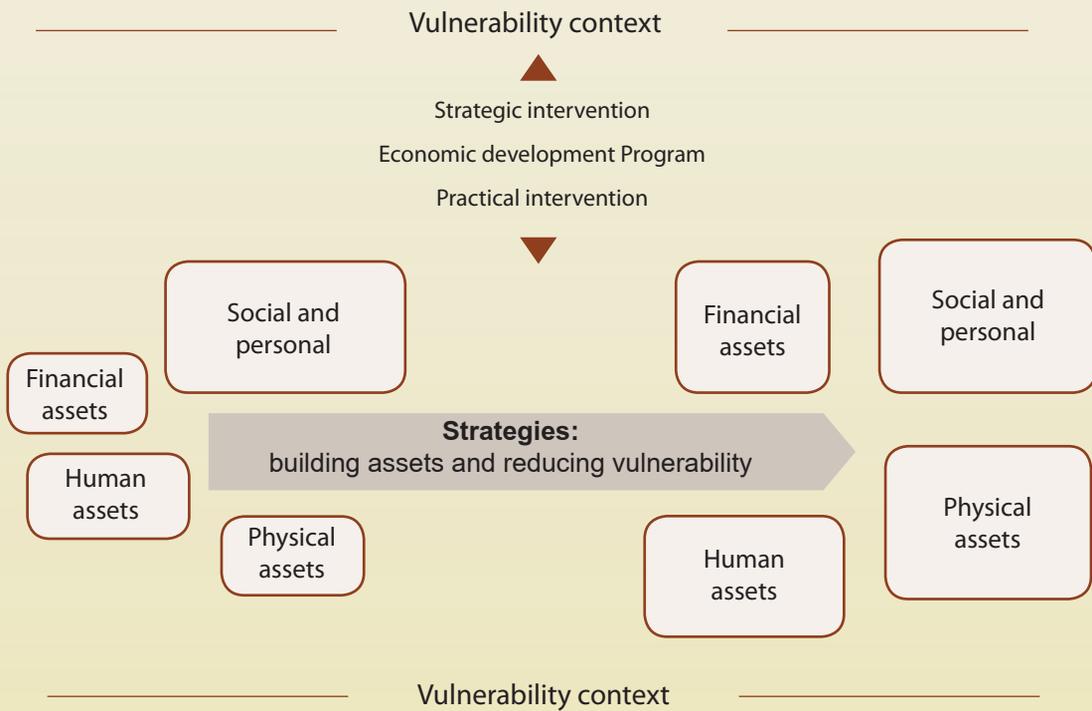


Diagram 7 illustrates the livelihood framework showing assets and the meaning of intervention. While before intervention, only personal and social assets were represented and only minimally the physical, human and financial assets, then after the intervention the activities performed in the context of supporting livelihoods become sustainable if they are built on human, physical and social assets that significantly increase financial assets.<sup>41</sup> Planning the right interventions is important for livelihood sustainability.

Based on international experience, states trying to introduce the mechanisms of sustainable livelihoods need to answer these questions when planning<sup>42</sup>:

1. The meaning of livelihood: approach, strategy, or goal?
2. Where should the process start? What is the reference point?
3. Are all strategies of fostering livelihood equally reflected in projects, programs on the state level?
4. What are the tools for assessing livelihood-fostering process? When should be the assessments done?
5. What are the relationships between other important disciplines when fostering livelihood? Consequently, it is interesting to know how should this component be regulated?
6. What resources are invested and are the total expenses worth investment?
7. What ensures that implemented activities actually help to achieve the goal?
8. How can the general impact of fostering livelihood be evaluated?

All the aforementioned factors and processes indicate that livelihood organization is a wide range issue and requires versatile understanding. Hence, following should be considered in the planning stage:

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41 Department for International Development (1999). Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheet: Introduction. Retrieved from <http://www.librarything.co>

42 Norton, A., Foster, M. (2001). The Potential of Using Livelihoods Approaches in Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Overseas Development Institute. London.

- In the changing environment the livelihood should be adaptive, versatile and flexible. People should be able to acquire distinct, complex and changing resources and abilities
- The ongoing process of skill development should be provided
- Transportation, communication and information services should be arranged
- Flexible service should be provided for new small initiatives
- The interests and resources of each individual should be considered
- Ecological components with profit and outcomes should be acknowledged when choosing livelihoods

### 4.3. Employment and Fostering Sustainable Livelihood for Persons with Disabilities

Equity, sustainability and capability are one of the important issues that lay basis for fostering livelihood. Hence, special attention is drawn to these components in economic strengthening of persons with disabilities. Studies and experience of different countries showed that organizing employment through various means and mechanisms is one of the most effective ways to provide livelihood for persons with disabilities.

*Studies and experience of different countries showed that organizing employment through various means and mechanisms is one of the most effective ways to provide livelihood for persons with disabilities.*

Reduced employment index in the working age persons with disabilities poses a significant challenge to European countries, during the past 20 years.<sup>43</sup> Experts in this field suggest that designing flexible employment policy for persons with disabilities is important to get the utmost effect and reduce the index of unemployment. State employment service is responsible for employment of persons with disabilities in the European countries. According to statistics, the working-age population with disabilities without a job is about twice as large as the unemployed population in the European and partner countries and majority of them are not even actively looking for jobs.<sup>44</sup>

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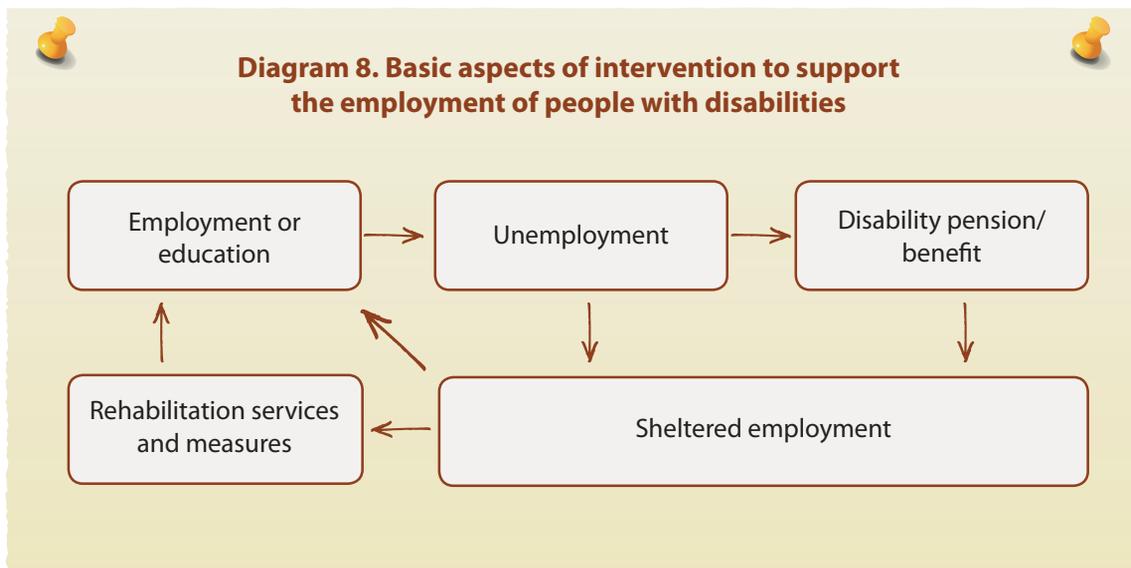
43 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. European Commission.

44 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. European Commission.

So, significant resources are spent for the social benefits of persons with disabilities and the employment rate is still low.

To foster sustainable livelihood it is important to achieve stable employment outcomes; employment policy should imply all the stages of accessing the existing labor market, the accessibility to high quality rehabilitation programs should be enhanced, and the benefit payment in a way that is done nowadays should decline too.

**Diagram 8** describes the basic interventions for supporting employment. The blue arrows indicate the actions that hinder beneficiaries from labor market and white arrows indicate the ways towards entering the labor market.<sup>45</sup>



In fostering livelihood of persons with disabilities, supporting employment is the key and sustainable component. Individual-centered services, such as supported employment is much more effective than large scale programs, like specialized employment places based on the researches done in the United States of America and Europe. The supported employment model enables transition into the open market.<sup>46</sup>

45 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. European Commission.

46 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. Pg 9. European Commission.

Sara Serrano, the owner of international private consulting center, notes that persons with disabilities face the same challenges as the rest of society when starting to work and foster livelihood. Challenges include accessibility to capital, technologies, technical skills and management skills, proper product packing before considering entering the market. Several additional factors, like accessible workplace, transportation, difficulties in communication, need for and availability of personal assistance, right assessment of person's skills and potential, could also challenge persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities bring special skills that are important for organizations during negotiations, creating alliances, or making inclusive decisions.<sup>47</sup>

*Persons with disabilities face the same challenges as the rest of society when starting to work and foster livelihood. Challenges include accessibility to capital, technologies, technical skills and management skills, proper product packing before considering entering the market.*

Sara Serrano notes three important components for including persons with disabilities in the economic context. The first one considers giving them equal accessibility to create projects. The second component refers to ongoing consultations of state with organizations working on disability issues, and the third one considers inclusion of persons with disabilities while discussing issues on economic development by the United Nations.



47 <http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/promote-sustainable-development/index.html>. visited on 28.11.2015

Several experts focus on the importance of increasing employers' awareness and supporting the issues of accessibility to microcredits on regional level in the context of fostering livelihood for persons with disabilities. Such approach turned to be effective in West Africa where the term microcredit was not well known. Likewise, the seminars and conference on these topics with specific objective – support microcredit lending to persons with disabilities – seemed to be efficient.

### General Recommendations<sup>48</sup>:

Designing adequate employment mechanisms are important to foster sustainable livelihood for persons with disabilities. In particular:

- A shift of resources from sheltered work to supported employment to include persons with disabilities in an open labor market.
- To review social policy and a bolder move towards considering disability benefit.
- Systematic data collection, analysis, and monitoring of employment of persons with disabilities.

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48 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. Pg 9. European Commission.

### 4.4. Best Experiences of Various European Countries on Employment of Persons with Disabilities

Different services and mechanisms exist across Europe; they represent the best practices on employment of people with disabilities. Here are several examples that could be interesting to establish in Georgian reality.

#### **Germany – Vocational Training and Handling Disability as Strength**

The recent initiative launched in Germany is known as “Discovering Hands”. This activity is mostly for people with visual impairments. Due to their visual challenges highly tactile senses are used for early detection of specific diseases. The training for this job lasts 9 months and is held in qualified vocational centers for persons with disabilities and special needs. In the end the beneficiaries take an exam in the North Rhine Medical Association to have the right to work.

There are 28 vocational training centers for people with disabilities throughout Germany, offering services such as information, evaluation, training, and assistance in finding a job.<sup>49</sup>

#### **Spain – Supported Employment**

Public State Employment Service is responsible for supporting people with disabilities to find jobs in Spain. After specific assessment, job seeker with disability is likely to receive pension in the State Employment Service, so that this person decides which package to choose. Persons with disabilities can request to be included in the supported employment service.

Generally, Supported employment service can be done by State Employment Service, however it is often delivered by private companies in Spain, still addressing the state for funding. Currently there are about 200-300 private companies that work on supported employment component and have employed between 400-500 job coaches who assist 5000 people with disabilities. The job coaches, based on regulations, should have a university degree, so Spanish national supported employment association offers online courses in supported employment. During the period 1995-2008, 14 159 people with disabilities found jobs through supported employment service and 32% of those continued their jobs in the same company in 2008.<sup>50</sup>

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49 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. Pg 9. European Commission.

50 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. Pg 9. European Commission.

### **Netherlands – Outcome-based Funding**

Supported employment process is moved from state employment service to private companies in Netherlands, though they still have employed several job coaches. The services are called trajectories and include case management, extended work trial and/or support on workplace.

These services are implemented by local municipalities via tenders. The salary of service providers depends on outcomes. At the start of the process the service provider is paid 20%, after six months – 30%, and the last 50% of the agreed fee will be paid after the person retains the job.<sup>51</sup>

### **Sweden – Combating Stereotypes on Employment Persons with Disabilities Campaign**

In 2010, Swedish State Employment Service launched a massive campaign, so that society and employers could identify skills of persons with disabilities and to be less focused on their challenges. The key message of the event was that people with disabilities could make a valuable contribution in the workplace. Activities for increasing awareness included all the means of information: television, radio, Internet, press. Thousands of people with disabilities were participating in this campaign. Trainings for different target groups – employers, healthcare staff, and police - were also covered through this campaign.<sup>52</sup>

Experience of different countries showed that various mechanisms, such as specific skill trainings, change of global systems, introducing supported employment approaches in open labor market - exist in fostering employment of people with disabilities. Obviously, the need for massive campaigns to raise awareness in developed countries directed towards convincing employers to perceive people with disabilities as equal staff in their companies still exists. Employability was and still stays as the most sustainable and effective component in fostering livelihood of vulnerable groups that should be considered for Georgian context too.

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51 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. Pg 9. European Commission.

52 Scharle A. (2013). Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion PES approaches for sustainable activation of people with disabilities. Pg 9. European Commission.

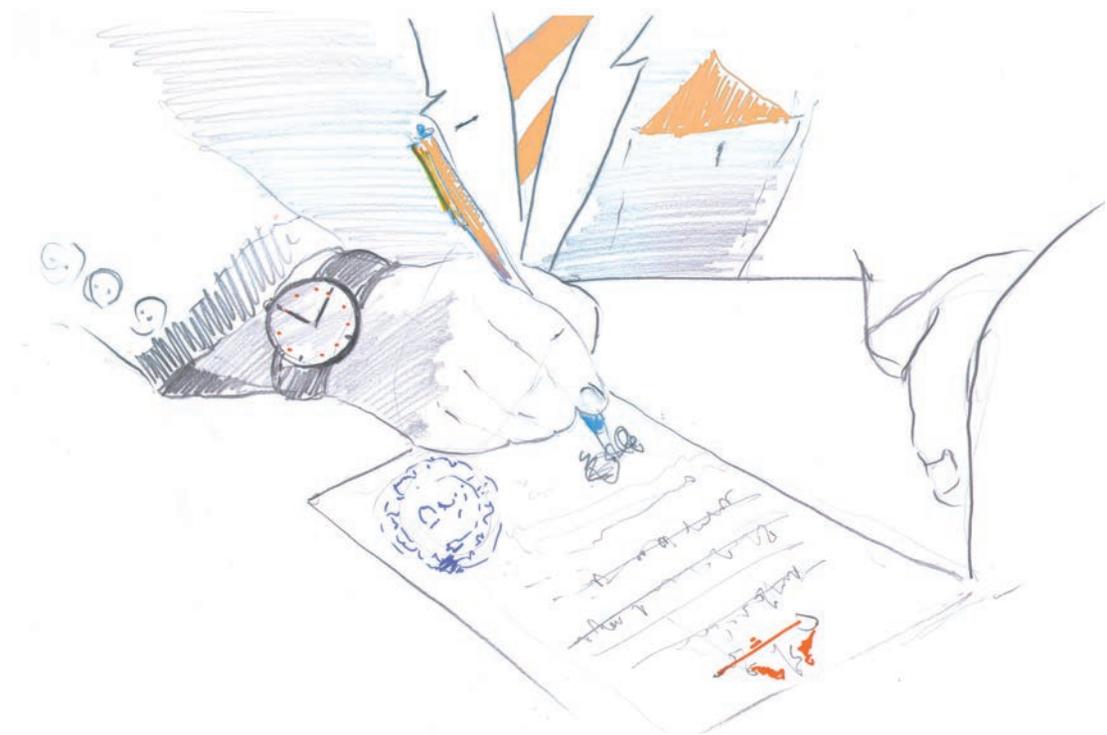
### Final Recommendations:

- Country should have a unified strategy and action plan for fostering livelihood that considers the priorities, and personal and cultural characteristics of poor population. Additionally, programme implementation monitoring mechanism should be created that precisely describes the processes and outcomes that are brought by implemented activities for poor population.
- Evaluation of international experience showed that the central issue in fostering livelihood for persons with disabilities is regarded the skill development services that should be diversely presented in Georgia. Also, employment fostering services should be developed on self-governing level that will develop proper entrepreneurship skills. Supported employment mechanisms with trained job coaches should be taken into consideration too. Based on European and American experience and research, supported employment system is regarded as an efficient and cost-effective compared to sheltered work. Hence, it is recommended that central and local government of Georgia starts building the same mechanism.
- Considering European experience, the policy of social benefit should be revised as this implies dependence on benefits of people with disabilities. Consequently, it is recommended to create a system where funding is directed towards activation of persons with disabilities and not only delivering aid to them.

## Chapter V. International Obligations to Implement Inclusive Principles in Georgia

Building a society that promotes equal opportunities to every person is not only a humane act. This issue is regulated by law in Georgia and internationally. Every person has right to education, health, safety, fundamental freedom and these rights should be upheld. Accordingly, the states construct documents that protect persons with disabilities and special educational needs from discrimination.

As for Georgia, various documents oblige the country to create dignified conditions for living and development for persons with disabilities and special needs. One of the international documents worthwhile for Georgian context is the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. Currently, Georgia is facing important objectives to ensure and realize international obligations determined by this agreement. Association Agreement is based on democratic principles recognizing human rights and fundamental freedom that are acknowledged by Universal Declaration of Human Rights



of 1948, the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950, The Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and Charter of Paris of 1990.<sup>53</sup>

Promoting employment (especially of young people) is mentioned several times in the association agreement.<sup>54</sup> The parties agree to cooperate in the field of youth to provide non-formal education of youth workers, and determine youth policy. An exceptional consideration should be given to the article that regulates the issues of decent working conditions, social cohesion, and creation of unified employment policy for persons with disabilities.<sup>55</sup> Also, the statement on anti-discrimination and promotion of better jobs should be emphasized too.<sup>56</sup>

One of the systemic documents in regulating the rights of people with disabilities and special needs in Georgia currently is the UN **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that is ratified by the Georgian Government.**

It's legitimate to ask why is this convention special compared to other documents that focus on the rights of people with disabilities? The answer is given in the objective of the convention itself, for it considers sensory, mental, physical, and other disorders a disability if a person's full functioning in the environment is hindered. Such vector accentuates on external factors to put emphasis for inclusion on society rather than on person with disability. For instance, external factors include mechanisms that assist in early identification of the needs of persons with disabilities, implementing intervention, and providing appropriate education and employment services. Creating such environment enables persons with disabilities to be fully included in the processes that make them equal with other citizens. The state parties are obliged to provide this opportunity. **Though, for such to be accomplished interdepartmental coordination, organized monitoring of processes, and rational division of financial resources are vital.**

*In particular, article 24 applies to right to education and emphasizes that:*

*d. Persons with disabilities should receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education*

*e. Effective individualized support measures should be provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion*

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53 <http://www.eu-nato.gov.ge/ge/eu/association-agreement>. Visited on 28.11.2015

54 Section 6, article 360, Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part. <http://www.eu-nato.gov.ge/ge/eu/association-agreement>

55 Section 6, chapter 14, article 348, Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part. <http://www.eu-nato.gov.ge/ge/eu/association-agreement>

56 Section 6, article 349 (a), Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part. <http://www.eu-nato.gov.ge/ge/eu/association-agreement>

Additionally, Article 19 regulates the right of living independently and being included in the community – b. Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community.

It is important that each person, including persons with disabilities knows that inclusion and social cohesion is their right **and not somebody's kind will**. Consequently they should be aware of their rights and how to protect themselves in case the rights are violated.

It is interesting that Convention highlights the employment possibility in open labor market: “States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labor market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.”<sup>57</sup> Further, it indicates the importance of self-employment, entrepreneurship, development of cooperatives and starting one’s own business.<sup>58</sup> Fostering self-employment in persons with disabilities constituted the key element in the “Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia (LIFE Georgia)” project. For efficient outcomes strengths of persons with disabilities were evaluated that enabled their participation in business trainings and development of skills for business plan preparations. We may ascertain that LIFE project activities contribute to carrying out Convention obligations and sets a precedent in self-employment of persons with disabilities and special needs in Georgia, no matter the size of extent.

*It is important that each person, including persons with disabilities knows that inclusion and social cohesion is their right **and not somebody's kind will**.*

European Convention on Human Rights stresses on one of the most fundamental point, that “the enjoyment of the rights and freedom set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination”<sup>59</sup>, accordingly the states have the obligation to create safe, accessible efficient mechanisms that maximally reduces possibility of each individual’s discrimination.

57 Article 27, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol. source: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>

58 Article 27, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol. source: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>

59 European Convention on Human Rights. European Court of Human Rights. Council of Europe F-670775. pg 12. Retrieved from: [www.echr.coe.int](http://www.echr.coe.int)

### Recommendations related to implementation of international obligations

- The mechanisms of interdepartmental collaboration need to be developed to plan joint programmes between the ministries that regulate early development, education, health, social, and employment issues. Intersection between them and stakeholders' role and contribution should be well considered.
- Non-governmental organizations (human rights defenders, humanitarian, development oriented) should activate consistent, coherent, and systemic monitoring mechanisms that will control how the obligations imposed by international regulations are being implemented.
- The main goal is to empower persons with disabilities and special educational needs, and their parents to be aware of and act on their own rights and responsibilities.
- Activities related to advocacy of rights of persons with disabilities should be provided through their empowerment.

## Chapter VI. Local Policy and Practice to Implement Inclusive Principles

A question about domestic policy is often voiced when we mention international experience. Do we have legislative accountabilities that we have to follow or is disability employment merely a social responsibility? Is working with the vulnerable population a luxury or is it the government's duty?

Several legislative acts define disability employment in Georgia. We will discuss them in detail.

### The Main Disability Employment Legislation

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- Georgian Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities
  - Georgian Organic Law: the Labor Code
- 
- Law of Georgia on Public Service
  - Action Plan of the Government for Providing Equal Opportunities to Persons with Disabilities (2014–2016)
- 
- Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia Strategy
- 

### 6.1 Georgian Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities

This legislation<sup>60</sup> provides employment of persons with disabilities and stresses inadmissibility of discrimination. Discrimination is unfair treatment of certain group of people, while inadmissibility of employment discrimination entails that an employer cannot refuse labor contract or job promotion to a person with disability, to dismiss them from the office without the consent of a person with disability on the grounds of administration's initiative, or to move them to another job on the motives of disability.

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<sup>60</sup> Georgian Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities, articles 21 and 22

Additionally, in businesses, institutions, and organizations, proper work conditions should comply with the individual needs of persons with disabilities. Thus, the employers are breaking the law if they are approached by a qualified person with disabilities and they cannot hire the person due to the un-accessible environment.

Such practices are not yet implemented, posing the significant challenge. For example, despite the fact that the legislation demands that the employers provide accessible environment, no practical and executive mechanisms are in place to ensure fulfillment of these obligations. Therefore, employees with disability still face discrimination.

Thus, the execution of the legislation is the main challenge. Hence, the political will to employ people with disabilities in a fair manner is not enough; active guarantees should be included in the documents.

*The execution of the legislation is the main challenge.*

Thus, it is important that the legislative organ improves the “inactive” norms, on the one hand, and creates new legal regulations regarding mandatory employment of people with disabilities, on the other hand – regulations recognized in the main state document on social protection.

### 6.2 Georgian Organic Law: the Labor Code

Protection of labor rights, fair labor compensation, and safe, healthy work conditions are defined by the organic law.<sup>61</sup> It comprises Labor Code of Georgia where the stated obligations are defined in more details<sup>62</sup>.

Just like the above-mentioned document, the Labor Code also emphasizes inadmissibility of disability discrimination.

Additionally, the changes made in the Labor Code provide more specified definition of discrimination<sup>63</sup>:

*“Direct or indirect oppression of a person aimed at creating or provoking frightening, hostile, humiliating, or abusive climate for the person, or creating the conditions that can directly or indirectly worsen their situation in comparison to another person in similar circumstances, will be regarded as discrimination.”*

Definition of discrimination as such fully complies with the definitions recognized by the United Nation’s (UN) declarations and the conventions of International Labor Organization (ILO).

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61 Article 30 of the Constitution of Georgia

62 Third paragraph of the Article 2 the Labor Code

63 Fourth paragraph of the Article 2 the Labor Code

## Different types of Unfair Treatment at the Place of Employment

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**Direct Discrimination:** Direct Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favorably than another person because of a certain characteristic.

**Perceptive Discrimination:** Direct discrimination against an individual because others think he/she possess a particular characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess the characteristic.

**Associative Discrimination:** Direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic (for example, a parent of the person with disability).

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**Indirect Discrimination:** Indirect Discrimination can occur when an organization has a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a particular characteristic.

**Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to certain characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

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**Third Party Harassment:** Harassment of employees by people (third parties) who are not employees of the company, such as customers or clients.

**Victimization:** Victimization occurs when an employee with certain characteristic is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance.<sup>64</sup>

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Executing the named legislature is once again the main challenge – no monitoring mechanisms are introduced in the private business to ensure no discrimination at the workplace.

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64 <http://www.equality-law.co.uk/> Retrieved on: 14.09.2015



### 6.3. Law of Georgia on Public Service

Law of Georgia on Public Service does not recognize nor distinguish between the specific norms regarding the strengthening of disability rights, such as the regulations on affirmative action as proposed by the Labor Code discussed above.

Disability, as a status, is mentioned in a single article<sup>65</sup> ; this norm regulates the state aid in cases when a public office worker acquires a disability as a result of performing job-related obligations, and it recognizes only one-time compensation.

Despite the absence of norms, 24 people with disabilities are employed at the public office<sup>66</sup>, 5 of them working at ministries, 18 – at local governments, and 1 – at other state agency.<sup>67</sup> Their activities and environment is accessible.

Thus, positive changes take place in practice, despite the fact that many challenges are still in place: the state faces difficulties in offering changes to the private sector, hence the change should originate at the public service level. Their success then becomes a model for the rest of the employers.

65 Law of Georgia on Public Service, Article 49, paragraphs 2-4

66 2013/2014 report of the Bureau of Public Office

67 <http://www.geostat.ge>, 19.09.2015

As we have mentioned in the previous chapter, disability employment may be supported by internationally-tested means, such as: mandatory quotas, subsidizing, tax exemption and supporting employment services. The final goal is to use reward mechanisms to give everybody chance to get employed on the open job market, free of discrimination and limitations. Changes in legislature should reflect this notion.

#### 6.4. Action Plan of the Government for Providing Equal Opportunities to Persons with Disabilities (2014–2016)

Action Plan of the Government is a document created on the premises of the concept of social integration that is based upon the priorities defined by the concept, and aims to carry them out successfully<sup>68</sup>. Prior to undertaking the new Action Plan, the state programs and goals were subject to the old, 2010–2012, action plan. The major flaws of this plan included its general character, weak indicators for the performed objectives, and the vagueness of the source of material resources required for implementing the Plan<sup>69</sup>.

The 2014-2016 Action Plan of the Government for Providing Equal Opportunities to Persons with Disabilities examines five objectives in the employment paragraph; specifically, the state aims to fulfill the following steps in regard to the disability employment:

1. Providing equal rights to work and employment to persons with disabilities
2. Supporting disability employment
3. Increasing the ability to compete at the labor market among job seekers with disabilities
4. Supporting self-employment
5. Providing dignified, safe, and healthy work environment<sup>70</sup>

In line with the action plan, working teams had framed out the Action Plan to support the employment of persons with disabilities (in line with the state strategy). At that stage, the stakeholders from the public sector include the following: Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Welfare of Georgia; Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia; and Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia. Monitoring will be carried out by an expert team whose

68 Action Plan of the Government for Providing Equal Opportunities to Persons with Disabilities (2014–2016)

69 Kochlashvili N (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.

70 Kochlashvili N (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.

members consist of the representatives of various public and private sectors, non-governmental organizations (NGOS), and civil society. The role of each stakeholder is significant during the process of carrying out various activities, and their high involvement provides the rationale to suppose that by and large, the process will be effective<sup>71</sup>.

The Action Plan sets forth two main goals: to enhance the ability of a job seeker to compete at the labor market, and to facilitate their employment.

In order to increase job seekers' skills, professional orientation system for persons with disabilities is in place, through which the job seekers with disabilities requiring development of professional skills are being trained. This is a constant, recurring process.

As for the self-employment support plan, major emphasis is made in terms of developing the social enterprises. Supporting social enterprises at a transient stage, prior to achieving the inclusiveness of the labor market, is an important mechanism for disability employment. Following the specific nature of social enterprises, this mechanism needs a legal base that will be flexible and oriented at its specifics. Hence, while the process has already began, as a result of analysis of the international experiences and practices, it will be possible to create far more refined legal base that will be suited to the rights of persons with disabilities.

Hereafter, disability employment-related issues are viewed and comprehended quite extensively by the new Action Plan. It can be regarded as a positive event that the Action Plan is not limited to the enhancement of inclusiveness of an employment realm; rather it emphasizes the need for improvement of the job seekers ability to compete at the labor market which is undoubtedly one of the key challenges. However, similar to the previous Action Plan, the standing one is also subject to flaws. In single cases, the tasks to be completed are quite broad, and act more like objectives, rather than the tasks, lacking the specificity. In several cases, the part concerned with the indicators is also vague so that it might complicate the relevant monitoring of the Action Plan and preparing fair and objective evaluation at the later stages<sup>72</sup>.

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71 Kochlashvili N (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.

72 Kochlashvili N (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.

## 6.5 Labor Market Formation Strategy and Action Plan for 2013-2014

Georgian Ministry of health formulated “Georgian Labor Market Formation Strategy and Action Plan for 2013-2014”<sup>73</sup>. Based on this document, social service agency territories were divided into “Employment Assistance Centers” - the main aim of the center is to inform, consult, register and assist with employment, including vocational training/retraining.

69 regional centers of the social service agency got involved in the process. Hence, any citizen, including citizens with disability, may approach social service centers that will help them put their personal information into the system.

Social service agency also offers job market information portal [www.worknet.ge](http://www.worknet.ge) which aims to develop job market infrastructure, decrease unemployment and reveal trends of the job market.

*Hence, any citizen, including citizens with disability, may approach social service centers that will help them put their personal information into the system.*

## 6.6. Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia Strategy

265,109 IDPs – 88,499 families – live in Georgia. The strategy includes two mentions of discrimination:

- Right to avoid discrimination and lead adequate life
- Rights-approach model (participation, age, gender and other differences).

None mention disability discrimination specifically.

Strategy implements three phases: 1. providing IDPs with livelihood sources 2. Protecting livelihood sources. 3. Developing livelihood sources. The first phase aids the most vulnerable population, the second helps IDPs that have means of generating small income but also have potential for economic growth, while the third phase deals with business development and sustainability.

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<sup>73</sup> “Georgian Labor Market Formation State Strategy and Action Plan for 2013-2014”, approved by the #199, August 2, 2013 decree of Georgian Government

We are most interested in the first phase. Despite the facts that persons with disability are not specifically mentioned, this phase is based upon individual approach. According to the definition, the first phase serves IDPs that have no ability or motivation to create livelihood source and ensure its sustainability due to physical or psychological circumstances. Thus, they may be people with disabilities or special needs.

The mentioned phase includes work with two categories: 1. vulnerable people with psychological challenges 2. Vulnerable people that have no potential for economic activity (due to chronic medical condition, etc.)

Those beneficiaries require the following interventions:

- growth of opportunities (social and human resources)
- support of agricultural activity
- increasing financial resources, such as micro grants (often of a non-momentary type, such as tools, equipment, etc.)
- improvement of infrastructure

The second phase – protection phase- includes IDPs that have minimal livelihood source that is not sustainable. At the same time, these beneficiaries have potential that needs to be enhanced. Special needs are not mentioned in this phase, nevertheless, it is not exclusive per se.

This phase considers the following interventions:

- vocational education and training
- availability of financial resources (subsidized credits, grants)
- non- monetary grants, equipment, farm animals
- enhancing social and human resources (networking)
- supporting agricultural activity
- creating jobs on the local municipality level

The third phase – development phase – deals with IDPs that already have a livelihood source but are interested in alternative sources to make it more sustainable. Disability is not mentioned here either, though the activities are not exclusive.

The following interventions take place in the third phase:

- availability of financial resources
- enhancing social and human resources

- creation of business hubs
- creation of social enterprise
- supporting agricultural activity (agricultural credits/grants; farms, etc.)
- analyzing local market dynamic
- evaluation of private sector (business and private), encouraging them to start economic activities with IDPs

The following institutions are involved in the implementation and monitoring: Ministry of Agriculture, Stat Statistics Department, State Investment Agency, and Ministry of Health.

In addition to the activities discussed in the strategy, apartments given to IDPs in frames of the long-term place of living program are accessible and equipped with a ramp<sup>74</sup>.

## 6.7. Education for Employment

Inclusive education is available on vocational level since 2013. More than 600 people with disabilities have been involved in vocational education since then. They now have the opportunity to learn a vocation via individually adapted program, activities and environment.

The ministry of education and science of Georgia has implemented the following steps in this direction:

- amendments that support inclusive education were made to the vocational institution regulations
- inclusive education support teams were created in 10 vocational education institutions
- Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia allocated funds for services for students with special educational needs: sign language interpreter, mobility and orientation trainer, transportation, individual assistance, etc.
- vocational education teachers are trained
- inclusive vocational education guidebook was created for teachers
- physical environment of vocational education colleges is adapted and accessible in

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74 Placing IDPs in rehabilitated and newly-built buildings; Purchasing houses and apartments for IDPs; Purchasing IDP living quarters form private individuals. <http://www.mra.gov.ge/geo/static/3189>. Published on: 10. 04. 2014. Visited on: 21. 09. 2015

accordance to 41st decree<sup>75</sup>; 5 vocational education colleges are adapted according to the universal design principles.

- supported employment model is to be piloted in partnership with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Care of Georgia, including selection, training and employment job coaching.

Many challenges are present despite this achievements. For example, students with special needs do not make informed decision when selecting a vocation – it is often based on parents' wishes. Professional orientation model has to be established. Vocational education is the only option for students with special educational needs, hence students with severe intellectual needs and multiple disorders cannot choose alternative, while it is hard to include them into the existing system.

Specialists in surdo-pedagogy and other specialties have to be taught in the university. Georgian universities do not provide education in these fields, thus, deaf, hard of hearing, blind and visually impaired persons are supported not by the specialists, but by a professional from a related field (for example, psychologist, teacher, etc.). As a result, they do not receive the best education and hence, cannot achieve their full potential.

### 6.8 Attitudes of Employers

Employer research shows that different companies have varying attitudes towards disability employment issues<sup>76</sup>. Large companies support employment and internships of people with disabilities, while smaller companies are less interested in positive company image and are thus less interested in this field. Also, large companies have more funds for environment adaptation.

Company interviews reveal that they would employ people with disabilities in case of governmental incentives. They would also appreciate ministerial support – presently employers are responsible to work out a disability employment model.

Cases of these companies shows that most of large business companies have willingness to employee persons with disabilities. Initiative can be coming from the outside (NGO/DPO advocacy). Despite their willingness, often the companies do not have money to invest in adapting environment.

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<sup>75</sup> 41st decree of Georgian Government, passed on January 6, 2014, on technical reglament of architectural and planning elements of space for people with disabilities gov. ge Visited on: 24.09.2015

<sup>76</sup> Kochlashvili N (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.

## 6.9. Conclusion

Particular cases of disability employment take place in Georgia. Most of them are practical cases that are not depicted in the legislature, or vice versa: some relative documents have implementation and monitoring challenges.

Hence, Georgia faces the following task: the country has to implement systematic policy in social and professional integration of people with disabilities and employment has to be integral part of policy. Therefore, the main policy documentation has to be amended in line with the modern tendencies<sup>77</sup>.

Public interest is pivotal for establishment of research-based state policy and legislative initiatives. Beneficiaries should get involved in this process in addition to the stakeholders. They understand the problems in-depth and are in position to provide the government with valuable recommendations.

Consequently, the answer to the question – is disability employment charity or responsibility? – is the following: it is a responsibility, despite the fact that it is not yet properly defined.

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<sup>77</sup> Kochlashvili N (2015). Disability Resource Mapping. Project Name: Livelihood Initiatives to Foster Employability and Entrepreneurship of IDPs and host populations in Georgia – LIFE Georgia. World Vision National Office: Georgia.

## Success Stories

Respondent: Ana Nazgaidze

1. Please tell us about your position and job responsibilities.

I am working at the Ministry of Internal Affairs as information center operator. I provide information for people who want to study in the academy and the students. It is my responsibility to thoroughly answer questions; if I am unsure of the information, I check it and get back to the caller.

2. Do you need an adapted environment to perform your duties?

Yes, I need the accessible environment, I need a ramp, accessible lavatory, and transportation, since I am a wheelchair user.

3. What adaptations are available at your workplace (elevator, ramps, lavatories, etc.)?

My needs were discussed before I started working at the academy and the environment was fully adapted accordingly. Hence, I have a comfortable workplace, since the environment is fully adjusted. The building is one-story high, with ramp and accessible lavatories. I also have an assistant and a driver.

4. What is the biggest challenge that you face in your everyday life?

I believe attitude of the society is the biggest challenge, despite the fact that government has done a lot for including people with disabilities into the society. Specifically, I am aware that the Ministry also employs people with disabilities. Emergency service "112" has a special adapted system for the deaf, while police.ge has voice option and is adapted for the blind.

5. What would you change to make your everyday life more comfortable?

Firstly, I would adapt the environment and then deal with other fields, such as education, healthcare, insurance, and public awareness. I believe that all of these issues are important for development of people with disabilities and those around us.

6. Where do you notice improvement?

I have noticed improvements in almost every field: state and private companies care more and more about employment of people with disabilities. Also, representatives of the disability community are more active, as are the people around them.

7. What is necessary to increase employment of people with disabilities?

Accessible infrastructure, adapted transportation and programs that promote involvement of people with disabilities in everyday activities. This will ensure quality education and qualification for job seekers who would be able to compete on the job market.

8. What does employment mean for you?

Working at the academy is a great responsibility. I am employee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and I hold a position of a public servant. I am accountable to the government, and my nation. The work in Academy also helped me improve my financial status, I am more independent. I am very proud that my country needs me and I use my resources for the good of my country. I also believe that the Ministry provides example of integration of people with disabilities.

Respondent: Nikoloz Donjashvili

1. Please tell us about your position and job responsibilities.

My specialty is public relations. Now I work in the Revenue Service, as an officer. My duties involves database creation. My work requires using a computer.

2. Do you work from home or do you go to work?

I go to work. However, similar projects have been implemented in the Public Registry, and some employees worked from home. Revenue Service employees with disabilities work on the ground, in the office.

3. What adaptations are necessary to make you feel comfortable at work?

I personally require a ramp and elevator; if we consider the subject broadly, our building has a ramp, elevator and positive attitude. Wheelchair accessible lavatory is located on the first floor.

4. What is the biggest challenge for your everyday and work life?

The first and most important is the attitude of the society, the belief people with disabilities cannot work; people judge their intellectual ability, while some may only require accessible physical environment. Besides this (inaccessible environment) is an additional expense for the employer- he/she cannot or will not adapt the environment and prefer other employees. These are the two main problems.

5. What would you change at work and outside the work to make your life more comfortable?

Attitude is the biggest barrier. Many give up. Many people cannot tolerate this compassion, humiliation. Some issues will be considered when the consciousness changes. The main thing is for others to stop claiming that a person with disabilities can do nothing. This will affect policy, employers and people with disabilities as well. Right now, they (people with disabilities) may prefer to live in a calm, isolated life and may not adequately assess their capabilities.

6. Where do you notice improvement?

There is a shift in the policy level, for example the ratification of the United Nations Convention; the implementation is the issue. The conversation and discussions have started, the environment is changing; the new generation believes that people with disabilities are not aliens, they know that this condition is not contagious. Generations change and we achieve a positive outcome. We come from the communist system, it takes time to move on. Of course, everything has not changed 100%. Yesterday, for example, a "compassionate" person made a cross sign at me. I was surprised, why would he/she do that and pour a holy water on me? This was an elderly person.

7. What emotions expressed did him /her express?

Empathy and compassion perhaps. People do want to be kind, caring, and this is how he/she expressed it.

8. What is employment for you?

Confidence, financial support, and pleasant emotions. This is an opportunity to live a normal life. I cannot answer this question, as a person with disabilities, but I will tell you why my job is important for me as a person.

9. Maybe each job gains greater importance since the adapted employment is so rare...

Yes, overall the job market is challenging and the problems double if you have disabilities, while positive emotions from being employed also double.

## Chapter VII. Cooperation and Assistance in the Social Integration of People with Disabilities



### 1. BEFORE THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

#### 7.1. Forming Support Team

It is impossible to plan vulnerable community support, without clearly picturing the daily challenges of this community. Often, office workers are familiar with the disability strategy, they analyze the various international documents, but do not understand «normal», everyday problems that people with disabilities experience. This is not surprising - in order to emphasize, we need to have a similar experience, which in many cases proves to be impossible. Accordingly, it is necessary to employ support expert so that the expert (or the team) ensures maximum involvement of persons with disabilities and conveys their perspective throughout the project.



Ideally, a team of specialists must include at least one member with a disability. The given project is supported by the «World Vision Georgia», represented by the three experts.

### 7.2. Project Management Workshop

Decision-makers who are responsible for the implementation of the initiatives have to attend an awareness raising training, not only informative, but also - emotional. «World Vision Georgia» uses «Traveling Together» manual, published by «World Vision UK». One goal of the training is creating a positive, empathic attitude; any activity without it is only a formality. A workshop held once in the beginning of the project affects the progress of the project for years.

### 7.3. Identifying Persons with Disabilities

The next step involves locating persons with disabilities within their communities. In this case, the most effective use of human resources is the community itself, because the community members are aware of the situation in the neighborhood – let's conventionally call them community mobilizers. Additionally, it is imperative to obtain official statistics from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia (an official request will grant you information about the number of registered persons with disabilities). Cooperation with local authorities assists in collecting statistical data held by the municipalities.

Identification stage is the time for formation of a partnership with the community mobilizers and the support team. Jointly developed questionnaires should be constantly revised, according to the ideas born at any stage of the project. For example, when Zugdidi local government expressed a desire to collect information on people with disabilities, the support team revised the questionnaire to include a simpler vocabulary, added fields of education and employment and allocated the questions relating to local government activities (eg . what program / service is available to the beneficiary). The questionnaire was designed to help local authorities better examine the number of beneficiaries, the status, and the need to offer appropriate services.

The questionnaire was revised for another reason as well. After talking to the community mobilizers, it turned out that the original questionnaire was difficult to administer and that it did not include information on both beneficiary and the guardian; specifically, it do not allow us to establish who was involved in the project activities directly. Accordingly, the original questionnaire is different from what we use today, and is will be probably modified as the project progresses (see. Appendix 1 and 2).



The following issues need to be addressed while developing the questionnaire and conducting interviews. According to the some interview experts, face to face meetings and information gathering can pose several challenges: 1. Forming an answer (which may be related to such factors as low self-esteem, isolation, anxiety or speech development level). 2. Answering open-ended questions 3. Difficulty of generalization and abstract thinking. 4. The time management difficulties, disproportionately lengthy answers.<sup>78</sup> Accordingly, mobilizers are undergoing a brief orientation on how to communicate, ask questions (which are, in some cases, rated as inappropriate and thus, altered), to use realistic and correct terminology to describe the situation and evaluate the visible and somewhat hidden needs of persons with disabilities or their families. During this process, they are in constant contact with the support team and, if necessary, additional consultations are provided.

### General Advice on Effectively Interviewing Persons with Disabilities<sup>79</sup>

- Choose a familiar and comfortable place to conduct the interview
  - The place should not include distraction (noise, TV, and so on);
  - Ask the close person to introduce you to the respondent in advance
  - Take time to talk to the respondent and introduce yourself
  - State the goal of your visit
  - State the meeting expectancy
  - Answer the respondent's questions before you start the interview
- 
- If necessary, involve the family member
  - Consult a family member to support the respondent, but refrain from answering for the respondent. Relative helps persons with disabilities to understand the questions, but does not respond for him/her.
  - Do not talk about the respondent in the third person tense in his presence. Even when you are addressing a parent or guardian to the question, use the first person tense. Sometimes, involve the guardian directly: could you answer this time, please...

78 Baxter, Vanessa. Learning to Interview People with a Learning Disability. Researcher, Essex Social Care, Chelmsford. Retrieved from:<http://ssrg.org.uk>; Nind, Melanie. Conducting Qualitative Research with People with Learning, Communication and other Disabilities: Methodological Challenges. ESRC National Centre for Research Methods. Retrieved from: <http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk>

79 Conducting an Interview. Source: <http://www2.open.ac.uk/students/skillsforstudy/conducting-an-interview.php>. Visited on: 07.10.2015; McNamara Carter. General Guidelines for Conducting Research Interviews. Source: <http://managementhelp.org/businessresearch/interviews.htm>. Visited on: 07.10.2015

- Protect the privacy and anonymity - explain these terms during the interview
- If the respondent seems concerned or asks for termination of the interview, do not proceed with the inquiry / questions
- Do not use the degrading terms such as «disabled», «crippled”, etc.
- After filling out the questionnaire, give the respondent opportunity to ask additional questions

During the meeting with the people with disabilities, community mobilizers briefly recite the project and try to interest them. Booklets distribution with contact information of the community mobilizer and other responsible agents is possible for the greater efficiency. After filling out the questionnaire the information is summarized in a database. The information is often verified with the community mobilizers. Typically, this refers to the open questions that are difficult for the beneficiaries as well as the community mobilizers, who find it difficult to properly convey the needs of the beneficiaries. Accordingly, the process is coordinated by the support team. As mentioned above, the questionnaire is not a static document. Some of the pre-designed questions will prove to be very important, and some – not useful in generating information. Accordingly, improved version of the questionnaire is based on the feedback from the mobilizers and the first group of beneficiaries (see. Appendix 1 and 2).

### 7.4. Support of Participation of Persons with Disabilities

The project beneficiaries face number of inequalities (persons with disabilities face number of specific challenges that are not problematic for the rest of the group, for example, adapted transport, exclusion from the community life). This is invisible, institutional discrimination. Therefore, their participation should be promoted and encouraged and this encouragement has to go beyond the incentives offered in scope of the project for everyone. For example, a business plan, which is implemented by a person with disabilities or includes her involvement, may be given extra points during the evaluation. Quotas is a fairly common method to avoid discrimination - population of persons with disabilities is estimated and any project activity has to proportionally involve people with disabilities.

For example, persons with disabilities comprise 10% of the community and 100 beneficiaries are to attend a training, 10 slots have to be allocated for persons with disabilities. If 10 business plans (out of these 100) are to be financed, 1 plan has to involve person with disability. Accordingly, the final distribution of employment in the community reflects the real situation. Otherwise, the extra



challenges and a lack of competence, which only surfaces with people with disabilities, unfairly reduce their chance to participate.

The project discussed the idea of quotas and voted against it; the support team proposed another way to promote and creation of employment opportunities. We suggested to award extra points to the business plans, represented by persons with disabilities, in case when two equally valid business ideas were presented. This idea was unanimously approved by the team. This was followed by the community awareness raising and deliberate attempts to seek to employ and train people with disabilities. The number of persons with disabilities who attended the training increased, as opposing to the previous practice of their family members attending the training and submitting application, even when the business idea belonged to the persons with disabilities.

*Extra points were awarded to the business plans, represented by persons with disabilities, in case when two equally valid business ideas were presented.*

You may choose either way; involvement of persons with disabilities is not a guarantee of financing a business idea. This is just one of the criteria, which gives priority to two equally strong business ideas. The Quota system also involves competition, in this case among the people with disabilities. The priority is given to a business plan that engages persons with disabilities and defines his roles and responsibilities. It is unacceptable for people with disabilities to participate «formaly», for extra points or for the purpose of rendering charity („ let her sit, doing nothing, but she will receive a small compensation anyway). The project aims at strengthening and employment of persons with disabilities and increasing their independence.

### 7.5. Meeting Persons with Disabilities and Their Families

The support group and community mobilizers may need to meet persons with disabilities in order to provide them with additional information. A call for this meeting should include all persons with disabilities mentioned in the database; parents/guardians may attend when beneficiaries are children or have severe intellectual or multiple disorders. Many of the persons with disabilities have difficulties moving long-distances and a meeting / meetings should be accordingly held close to their place of residence. Sometimes the only available place is in the yard. For example, instead of the second floor of the school, community mobilizers (despite the availability of otherwise well-equipped offices) met potential beneficiaries in the yard. If a person with disabilities is not able to independently engage in the project, a guardian / relative may participate instead. A guardian should try to plan the business idea to effectively involve persons with disabilities.

#### General Tips<sup>80</sup>

##### How to Secure an Adapted Meeting Place

- Meeting place should be located on the first floor / have ramps
- The door must be wide enough to enable a person to move in a wheelchair (min. Width = 85 cm)
- Doors should have a low threshold (max. Height = 2 cm)
- Space between furniture should be wide (min. 100 cm)
- The room should be well lit, with minimum brightness, taking into account needs of people with visual impairments
- Items (inventory, equipment) should be approachable for people that are standing or seated
- Room should be echo-free, taking into account needs of people with hearing impairments
- Room needs to be removed from the noise source

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80 Parsa, Partnors (2013). Universal Design: Inclusive Tourism Toolkit

## 7.6. TOT

The support team and trainers need to meet before the training takes place. Inclusion of persons with disabilities should be discussed during this meeting, in order to prepare in advance for making training space socially and physically assessable. Trainers' training / workshop should provide the following information: concept definitions and inclusion models; Positive examples of involvement of persons with disabilities; Social and physical environment analysis; Activity analysis and adaptation: dividing activities in smaller sub-activities, tailored to the individual needs of the person; Individual characteristics, needs and skills; Positive communication models. As a result, trainers undergo advance preparation to adapt their training program.

*It is important that information collected by the community mobilizer gets properly delivered to the trainers to allow them form realistic expectations.*

The TOT must involve the community mobilizers. The support team must facilitate exchange between these two actors (trainers and community mobilizers). It is important that information collected by the community mobilizer gets properly delivered to the trainers to allow them form realistic expectations. The following exercise is useful in that regard: community mobilizers receive overview of a few cases (the material is prepared in advance), which describe the history of a person's disability and special needs. The dilemmas are highlighted (concerning education, work, personal factors, or, in general, integration in the society). Community mobilizers get familiar with the cases, and describe the beneficiaries to the group of trainers. They have to persuade trainers to involve these beneficiaries in the training. Attention is paid if the mobilizer uses the positive terms used to describe a person and how valid her argumentation is. The task helps the community mobilizers develop the ability to constructively discuss disability and persons with special needs, and provides the trainers with a feedback opportunity.

### 2. DURING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

#### 7.7. Ensuring Accessible Environment and Activities, Considering Individual Needs

After exposing specific needs of beneficiaries, the trainers and support team decide how to adapt the environment in the most efficient and, at the same time, less expensive way. The trainers and project administration must be prepared for a physical / social environment adaptation or activity adjustment, a process which requires certain changes. For example, if the beneficiaries with visual impairments are unable to fill in the different documents, they must be given assistance.

All of the activities and documentaion carried out during the project must be adjusted formally and contentually (see. Appendix 3 and 4).

#### 7.8. Additional Training for Stakeholders

In addition to the people involved in the project, employment of people with disabilities depends on many agencies. Promoting their sustainable employment is impossible without participation of the agencies, such as the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Science, Department of Employment and Social Services Agency and other employment agencies, which are represented in the target municipalities. Also, it is important to engage the local government and employers. Accordingly, it is necessary to arrange a few meetings to present the project, highlight employment of persons with disabilities and discuss the role and commitments of the stakeholders and ways to make their activities inclusive. For example, three local government workshops were carried in scope of the project, aiming to



include disability-friendly activities in 2016 budget; discussing rights of persons persons with disabilities; considering international and domestic obligations.

A meeting was held with the employers, who are operating in the target regions. They reviewed existing legislation and discussed successful models of disability employment.

The parents of children with disabilities also attended a special workshop; parents learned how to use the services available for their children (for example, inclusive education in public schools) and plan the day so that they could attend the business trainings.

### 7.9. Constant Monitoring

The support team must constantly monitor involvement of persons with disabilities and provide consultation, in order to ensure their participation. Thus, a group of experts carried out field visits to assess the business plan proposed by/involving people with disabilities. The monitoring included evaluation of the environment where the business was to be implemented, including potential safety hazards and considered individuals' specific needs. They also assessed whether the beneficiary was able to perform the proposed work or if they had enough commitment / responsibilities. The monitoring results were shared partner organizations (Attachment 5 - Monitoring form).

Constant involvement not only provides monitoring to those already involved in the project activities, but serves future inclusion of new beneficiaries. Thus, it is necessary to cooperate with the community mobilizers and scheduling new meetings with persons with disabilities, who were not included in the first trainings.

### Challenges Discovered

- A monthly consultation visit revealed that parents of children with disabilities were not adequately involved in the process of the business trainings. They were taking care of their children and had no time for other activities. Accordingly, they attended a workshop on the following topics: legislation and the UN Convention, child-rearing approaches, existing services, stress management and activity planning. At the end of the training, the participants noted that they do not allocate enough time for the development and personal growth. They concluded that their children had to get involved within the existing services and parents could use free time for employment.
- Persons with hearing loss could not get involved in the training problem, because they did not know sign language and thus had less-developed communication skills. The following solution took place after consultation with the Zugdidi municipality organization «Atinati»: these beneficiaries could apply for internship to acquire the practical skills needed for work.
- An interview with one of the beneficiaeries revealed that he hoped to be able to write a business plan; unfortunately, despite his enthusiasm, he did not attend the trainings as the training room was not wheelchair accessible. Accordingly, his wife attended the trainings and sharing knowledge with him at hine, Everyone should have the opportunity to get new skills and engage in activities that are offered in the community, hence, after a discussion with the administration of the project, «World Vison Georgia» decided to rent a space adapted for wheelchair users. Project manager of the «Atinati» assisted in locating such space and as a result, more accessible training room was rented, enabling 2 beneficiaries to attend the business trainings.

### 3. AFTER PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

#### 7.10. Accounting

Summarized statistics should be gathered towards the end of the project: how many persons with disabilities expressed the desire to attend the training, how many attended and how many got to write a the business plan and how may were finances. Also, in cases when funding was available, how was a person with disability involved in the activity, whether she had a prominent role and suitable responsibility.



## Success Story:

Mrs. Mzia

*The supporting team met Mrs. Mzia during the field monitoring visit. Her business plan involved expanding a cake bakery. She required additional equipment, such as refrigerator, because at the moment, in spite of increasing orders, she could not meet the demand – she had no place to store cakes. During the training Mrs. Mzia learned that the project may involve persons with disabilities and was very happy for the opportunity, because her husband, Mr. Shota suffered from spine injuries. He returned to his village during the August 2008 war to save his family and got wounded. He has hard time moving since then. Until 2008, Mr. Shota led an active life, was busy selling various goods and unemployment causes him great stress. Mrs. Mzia decided to use her husband's skills and involved him in her potential business as a cake container maker. During the monitoring, supporting team members noted that Mr. Shota had the potential of claiming more responsibilities. Consequently, Mr. Shota was entrusted with customer relationship management and finances, according to the supporting team recommendation. Mrs. Mzia's idea was funded and now she is preparing to expand the production of cakes.*

# Appendix



## Appendix 1. Disability Needs Assessment Questionnaire (Version #1)

1. Village: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Person with disabilities name/last name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Contact information: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Cell phone #: \_\_\_\_\_
5. In case of children, family member/guardian's contact information: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Sex: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
9. ID number: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Has person with disabilities been given a status and pension?  
(Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_
11. Is the family registered by the Social Service Agency as socially vulnerable family  
(below the level of poverty)?  
(Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_

12. Type of disability:

		Moderate	Severe	Profound	Unknown
1	Multiple disabilities (Intellectual + physical disability)				
2	Visual Impairment (despite using glasses)				
3	Hearing impairment (despite using hearing aid)				
4	Walking/Standing (gross motor) related challenges				
5	Learning or intellectual disorders				
6	Self-Care challenges (dressing/ bathing)				
7	Speech and Communication disorders				

13. Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

14. Is a person with disabilities using specially designed technical items, such as: wheelchair, crutches, hearing aid device and etc. (Please, specify)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2. Disability Needs Assessment Questionnaire (Version #2)

### Part 1. Information about a person with disabilities

1. Name/Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Address (city/village): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Has person with disabilities been given a status and pension?

(Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Does the Ministry of Education and Science have an inclusive education multidisciplinary team conclusion on special education needs?

(Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Type of person's disability:

## Appendix

		<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Severe</b>	<b>Profound</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Multiple disabilities (Intellectual (mental) + physical needs)				
2	Visual Impairment (has difficulties despite using glasses )				
3	Hearing impairment (has difficulties despite using hearing aid)				
4	Walking/standing (gross motor) challenges				
5	Learning or intellectual (mental) needs				
6	Self-Care needs (dressing/ bathing)				
7	Speech and Communication challenges				

Note: In case of speech and hearing impairment, please, indicate whether a person knows the sign language

Yes/ No

10. Diagnosis (According to form -100):

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11. The frequency of help the person needs daily, in below mentioned fields:

	Does not need	Needs sometimes	Needs constantly	Comment
Communication				
Self-Care				
Social Relationships				
Civic Engagement				
Academic skills				
Self-management				
Working activities				
Leisure				
Health and Safety				

12. Information about education

School	Graduated	Still in School	The institution where a person is currently studying/graduated: Name, address, contact information
Elementary, Primary, Secondary			
Vocational			
Higher Institution			

13. Information about work experience

	Specify the place of employment	Specify the position
Seeking for job		
Working in a private company		
Working in a public agency		

**Part 2. Information about family member/relatives**

Who is the closest person for the person with disabilities/guardian?

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Family member/assistant/parent/guardian/spouse's name and last name:

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Family member/assistant/parent/guardian/spouse's contact information:

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Is the family registered by the Social Service Agency as socially vulnerable family (below the level of poverty)? (Yes/No)

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Respondent's name and last name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship with the person with disabilities \_\_\_\_\_

Date of filling in the document \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information \_\_\_\_\_

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In the framework of the project, what project/service can the beneficiary be part of / be redirected?

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**Part 3. Additional information**

(The following should be filled in by the specialist for the referral purposes)

1. Does a person with disabilities need any specially designed technical items, such as: wheelchairs (mechanical/electric), crutches, Hoover cane (for blind) , walker (walking frame), prosthetic, hearing aid, implant, computer programs, audio-books, materials printed in Braille, and etc. (please, specify)

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2. Does the person need a special service/support, such as physical rehabilitation, speech therapy, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility trainer, sign language interpreter, massage, early intervention (age 0 -7), daycare center, Inclusive education, Social enterprise, and etc.? (please, specify):

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3. Does the person need an intensive treatment course? (specify):

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3	Experience management	Evaluate if the environment assessment has been done properly, completely and adequately? How realistic is it to start a business in this environment?	0-10	10	6		
4	Environmental analysis	Evaluate, how well the environment matches/ helps business idea to be properly implemented. Does the particular idea raise chances of successful business?	0-10	21	12		
		Evaluate, if the proposed idea is in line with the sector's future development perspective	0-6				
		Does the business correspond to the environment? Does the environment support such business?	0-5				

5	Resources description	<p>Evaluate, what tangible resources does the beneficiary have to implement the planned business idea? How useful this resource is and is it sufficient for the implementation in a long term perspective?</p> <p>Evaluate, how properly the relevant resources are determined? Are given resources adequate? (power, quantity, specifics)</p>	0-8	16	10		
6	Business analysis marketing plan	<p>Evaluate, how well the beneficiary pictures ways of selling the goods/service?</p> <p>Evaluate, how well the price of goods/service is defined and how competitive it is. In terms of defining the self-value, how realistic is it?</p>	0-10 0-5	15	9		
7	Financial Planning	<p>How well the presented budget responds the requirements of the project budget.</p> <p>Is production sales and earnings adequate based on planned business.</p>	0-15 0-10	25	13		

8	Sustainability	Properly assesses the risks related with business (Market Supply, food supply and environmental risks) and provides the risks from out/to prevention measures (eg. Insurance)	0-10	15	9	
		Evaluate the potential of the beneficiary's business performance in the future.	0-5			
		How many people get the monetary benefit from presented product?	0-11			
		How adequate income is in relation to the work done?				
		Are the calculations provided of the beneficiaries' salaries, honorariums? How adequate is the number of people employed in a particular business?				



## Appendix 4. Business plan application form for medium-scale business

### 1. Information about an applicant (s):

(In case of group project, please, indicate each member's contact information)

Name/last name : \_\_\_\_\_

ID Number/IDP registration number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex:  Female  Male

Social status :  Internally displaced  Local community representative  
 other (please, specify)

Person with disability :  Yes  No

### 2. Please, describe your experience with donors and other financial institutions:

(credit history)

Have you ever received grant or credit?

Grant  Credit

Year/Duration	Donor organization	Amount of money	Purpose

*Please, submit the bank transcript / grant agreement or any other document that can serve as a proof.*

### **3. Short description of business**

(Please, describe what kind of business you intend to start and how will you implement the plan)

**4. Please, describe where you want to implement a business plan**

(Please, describe the state of the business idea, where and on whose territory do you intend to start a business, please, specify if it is a private or taken on lease)

**5. Please, describe your product/service**

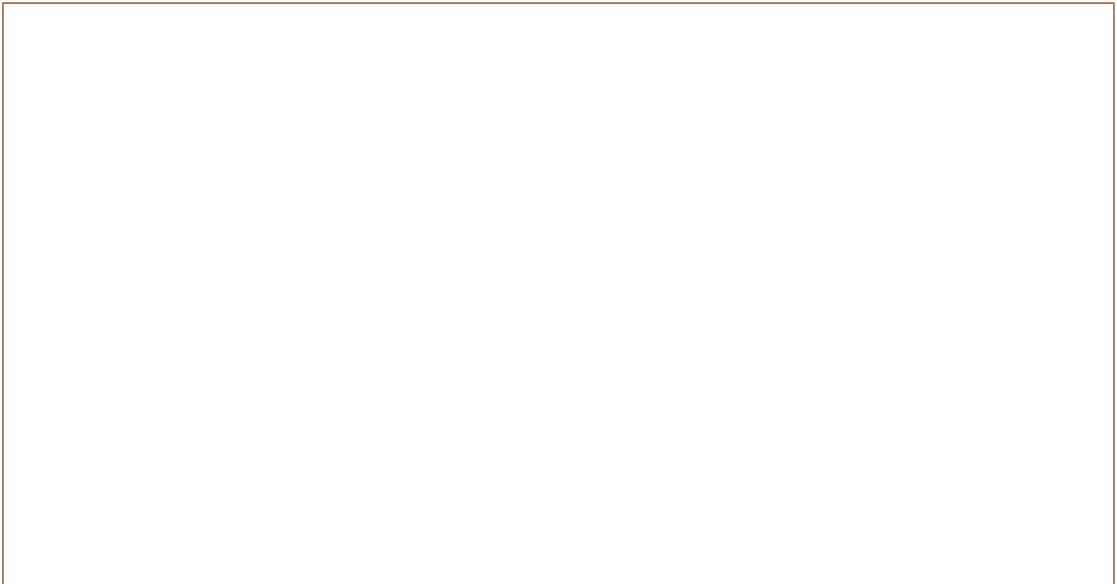
(Please, specify what kind of service or product do you intend to offer and where the goods will be sold)

**6. Promotional premise**

(Environmental conditions? knowledge/ experience? Resource? Connections that will help you with this business)

**7. Please, introduce the detailed business**

(Discuss the methods, technologies that you plan to use for the implementation of your business)



### 8. Existing resource description

Please, describe in details the resources that you have for the implementation of the business idea: material (installation, equipment, facility, transportation and etc...) non-material resources (education, experience, permission, license, patent and etc...)

The copies of documents of capital actives proof should be attached to the project proposal (land, the facility ownership claim document or long term lease agreement. In case of equipment – the proof of the ownership and etc...) Also, submit the document which can serve as the specific business related education and experience proof as an attachment (Diploma/certificate and etc.)

### 10. Description of the necessary resource

Please, describe in details what resources you need to start your business (material, non-material). Explain the need of it.



**12. With whom do you intend to implement the project?**

(With family members, local community representatives; indicate their role. Is a person with disabilities involved in it, how? Author of the idea and executor, equal partner in business, responsible for performing any component of the business idea or other, please, specify.)

**13. Organizational structure**

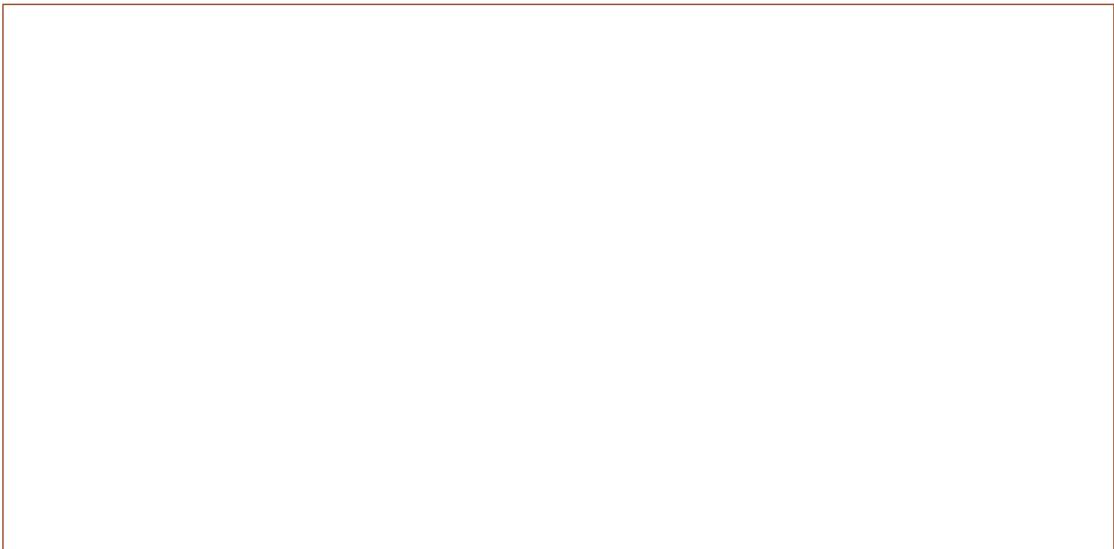
(Please, describe how many people will be employed in your business, their commitment and responsibilities distribution)

**14. Description of commitments of person with disabilities**

(if a person with disabilities is somehow involved in it, shortly describe the responsibilities)

**15. The monitoring and safety of person with disability**

(if a person with disabilities is involved in the business, describe how will it be supervised, who will be responsible for his/her safety, how will the involvement process be implemented and etc.)





**17. Market Analysis**

Submit the detailed market analysis: where do you intend to sell your production/service? For how much? Who will be the consumer of your goods, specify what will be the advantage of your production/service?

**18. Post-development perspective description**

Describe the following perspectives of your business development



**20. Sustainability**

Identify the potential risk analysis and describe the ways of risk reduction





**22. Produced goods indicators**

Goods/Service	Income from sale(GEL)	Cost of the goods sold	Gross profit	Profitability (%)
Total				

**23. Salaries (for 3 years)**

The position of employee	Name/last Name	Unit price	Quantity	In total per year

**24. Business Income Statement**

	Planned				
	2015	2016	2017		
Proceeds					
Cost of products sold					
Gross profit					
Indirect costs (salaries)					
Gross profit					
VAT					
Income Tax					
NET profit					
Other expenditures					
Retained Earnings					

Name/Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5. Preliminary Field Monitoring Report

Project	LIFE GEORGIA	Community	
Project #:		Applicant's Name	
Donor		Applicant's # :	
Date:		Average score	
Location:		Business category	
Presented : (Name/Organization/ position)			

### 1. Participants:

#	Name	Organization	Position	Cell #	E-mail
1					
2					
3					

### 2. Reason

### 3. Goal

3.1.

3.2.

3.3.

**4. List**

	Name	Description
	Location	The location from business plan matches the location identified in application form and is adequate for presented activities
	Facility/Other	The facility described in business plan application form is in working conditions and adequate submitted activities.
	Equipment for business	Equipment described in business plan application is in working order and adequate for the activities
	Experience	The applicant's business plan is as described in the application; May submit experience evidence (produced material, Service, etc.).
	Potential employees/partners (if exist)	The employees there are actually possible and have the capacity to fulfill the business plan application form requirements, partners understand their role and partnership
	People with disabilities (if exist)	The environment and the activity is accessible and the person has relevant skills, to execute a business plan described in the application form. The safety is ensured.
	Other	

**5. Non-existing conditions short description****6. Additional Comment Recommendation****7. Photo materials**

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# Employment of People with Disabilities

Toolkit



