Network workshop in Tokyo

On December 2, 2014, supported by the ILO office in Japan, the Network held a workshop to discuss challenges facing the private sector in employing people with disabilities in Japan. The workshop was a part of the Conference on Vocational Rehabilitation for People with Disabilities, held by the Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly, Persons with Disabilities and Job Seekers (JEED) annually.

Ernst & Young Japan, Axa Life Japan and Dow Automotive Systems Pacific presented their current inclusion practices and discussed experiences, challenges and solutions within the Japanese context.

The workshop provided participants with concrete evidence of the positive impact of disability inclusion on staff diversity and on success in accessing new markets and products. Lessons learned also included the importance of top level commitment to the issue and involvement with community initiatives that benefit people with disabilities.
Network Activities

Establishing a national network in Peru

Hosted by L’Oréal Peru, the Network held a meeting in Lima, Peru, last December 9, 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together the private sector, public authorities and disabled persons organizations to exchange ideas on how to better promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in the Peruvian labor market, with a view to establish a Peruvian business and disability network.

Attended by over 60 participants, the event gathered multinational companies present in Peru, as well as small and medium local enterprises, representatives from the disability community and the public sector.

Participants discussed the many challenges facing companies in hiring people with disabilities, being the general difficulty in finding candidates with disabilities with minimum qualifications the biggest challenge for all.

Participants came to a general agreement that establishing a business and disability network in Peru would be the best way to promote dialogue among all involved in fostering disability inclusion in the Peruvian labor market. Following the meeting, many companies expressed their wish to commit to such an initiative and the next steps to create the Peruvian network are already being taken.

Member News

Sodexo: Tackling misconceptions

Last December 3, Sodexo collected stories from around the world, inviting everyone to take a closer look at what disability really is about. “Take a closer look at disabilities” was a communications campaign to support Sodexo’s employees with disabilities and challenge misconceptions and clichés associated with disability.

At Sodexo, ensuring people with disabilities are respected is a key component the company’s diversity and inclusion strategy. As such, Sodexo is engaged in improving the quality of life of employees with disabilities by providing them an inclusive and adapted work environment where they can thrive and reach their full potential. This commitment makes Sodexo stronger, more innovative and better at serving their 75 million consumers worldwide.

An interview with Stefan Tromel, Senior Disability Specialist at the ILO and Yann Gontard, Sodexo Central Europe CEO of On-Site Services, about why companies should include people with disabilities into their workplaces was published on The Quality of Life Observer.

Sodexo’s employees with disabilities and challenge misconceptions and clichés associated with disability.

AXA: Creating a disability DNA in Spain

AXA has already discovered that the benefits of an inclusive culture go far beyond compliance with legal requirements. The main goal now is to expand the recruitment and development of employees with disabilities, rooting disability into the company’s DNA.

From experience, AXA Spain has learned that awareness and exposure to people with disabilities are the most critical factors in achieving effective inclusion, so last year the company implemented a number of initiatives in order to reach its goal.

Formal training on how to identify and overcome unconscious bias was provided to each employee of AXA Spain. Furthermore, every time an employee with disabilities joins AXA, additional training on diversity for managers and all team members was also provided. Along the year, the Diversity Team also conducted many awareness-raising activities, from visits to a guide-dog school to workshops, where all participants could experience the barriers people with disabilities have to overcome in the workplace.

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"We are determined to continue and improve even more our expertise in supporting and developing our employees with disabilities."

Nadia Bertaggia,
Sodexo Italy
**Member News**

**Accor: Celebrating the 2014 International Day of Persons with Disabilities in India**

**Getting creative at Ibis Hotel Jaipur**

The Ibis Hotel Jaipur organized a painting workshop with additional creative activities in partnership with Disha Foundation, an NGO & education centre for students with disabilities. The staff invited 15 young people with disabilities to share breakfast and lunch with them at the hotel and participate in painting and dancing. The experience was enriching for the participants and staff alike. During the event, Accor found a real commitment from employees and managers, who now plan on adding persons with disabilities to their workforce in 2015.

**Ibis Delhi Airport welcomes a new team member**

On December 3, 2014, the Ibis Delhi Airport team had an additional reason to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Neha Sharma, basketball silver medalist during the 2011 Paralympics in Athens, Greece, joined the Front Office Department through Noida Deaf Society, an NGO which empowers people with disabilities to be independent.

**Showcasing talent at the Sofitel Mumbai BKC**

Sofitel Mumbai BKC celebrated talent by organizing a painting exhibition to showcase works of disabled artists from the Indian Mouth & Foot Painting Artists Association (IMFPA). Talents from Melody Marvels, an ensemble of musicians with disabilities, energized the audience with electrifying music and foot tapping songs. The Mouth and Foot Painting Artists Association (MFPA) is an international community of artists with disabilities, wholly owned and run by the artists themselves. Over 800 MFPA artists, who were either born without or lost their hands due to an accident or illness, continue to inspire millions of people the world over with their amazing ability to create beautiful art.

**Lunch at the Grand Mercure Bangalore**

Guests from the Spastic Society of Karnataka joined the Grand Mercure Bangalore team for lunch at the occasion of the International Day of People with Disabilities. The lunch gave an opportunity to the hotel team to interact with the students and understand their needs.

**Grand Mercure’s head of Human Resources also visited the Spastic Society’s Vocational Skills Training Centre in Indiranagar, Bangalore, to learn more about the vocational trainings the students are receiving.**

**Qaderoon Business Disability Network: Networking in Saudi Arabia**

With the goal to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in Saudi Arabia, the Delta Foundation in cooperation with Masel Group organized an awareness raising campaign in Belgrade’s public transport.

**Qaderoon signs a memorandum of understanding with Jeddah Chamber of Commerce.**

**Delta Holding: Awareness-raising in Serbia**

With the goal to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in Serbia, the Delta Foundation in cooperation with Masel Group organized an awareness raising campaign in Belgrade’s public transport.

**An additional campaign aiming to increase the understanding of the challenges and barriers persons with disabilities face on a daily basis was also launched on Facebook.**

**According to the 2011 census, there are 571,780 persons with disabilities living in Serbia, or 8 per cent of the entire population. As many as 70 per cent of the total number of persons with disabilities are under the poverty line, and only 13 per cent of them are employed.**

**Amarai with workers with disabilities, shared its efforts in rehabilitating persons with hearing impairment for the job market.**

**The meeting also included a presentation by the Ministry of Labor. The presentation explained the ministry’s recent initiatives to employ more persons with disabilities. Qaderoon members, partners, NGO representatives, and guests attended the meeting.**

**Ashok Talukdar, 27 years old, currently employed in Novotel Kolkata Hotel and Residences as a housekeeping associate has lived with a disability for the past 10 years of his life.**

In 2005, his knee was shattered when he fell off a running train, and accident that marked a turning point in his life. After the accident, Ashok’s family surrounded him with moral support and helped him exercise and stay upbeat. His extreme determination and several years’ hard work bore fruit and he was eventually back on his feet.

Today, Ashok thrives in his job. Novotel Kolkata is proud to have Ashok in the team for his remarkable determination and diligence.
**Upcoming Events**

**Network meeting in Shanghai, China on July 10, 2015**

Full-day meeting with the goal to establish a Chinese business and disability network. Hosted by L’Oréal China.

**When:** July 10, 2015, 09:00 – 17:15

**Where:** L’Oréal Training Centre, No. 658 Zhaojiabang Road, Shanghai

For more information write to us at businessanddisability@ilo.org

**Save the date: Network meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil on August 20, 2015**

Full-day meeting where experiences on disability inclusion in Brazilian and multinational companies will be presented and discussed. Hosted by GPA Brazil, a subsidiary of Network member Casino.

**When:** Thursday, August 20, 2015, 09:30 - 16:45

For more information write to us at businessanddisability@ilo.org

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**Resources**

ILO Global Business and Disability Network country profiles on disability and employment

Fruit of extensive research being carried out by the Network, the country profiles contain an overview of disability related laws and information in regards to employment at the national level. They are available online on www.businessanddisability.org.

The purpose of the country profiles is to provide employers with key information to assist them in complying with national legislation and becoming more disability inclusive. Information includes: a brief overview of the country’s current disability situation, main statistics, description of the main national laws related to disability and employment, placement agencies and training institutions that can assist with finding suitable candidates with disabilities; and information on company practices on disability inclusion in each country.

This initiative was developed with the support of Accor Hotels, Casino Group, Ernst & Young, Orange, Serasa Experian, the International Disability Alliance and Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations.

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**Member News**

**Blue Ribbon Employers’ Council: Helping the Job Search**

In 2014, the Blue Ribbon Employers’ Council (BREC) organized several inclusive job fairs for their members. Through these job fairs, 520 persons with disabilities obtained employment, and 65 new employers joined BREC, totaling its membership base to 255 members.

Most of the fairs have exclusively targeted jobseekers with disabilities with considerable success. Together, the fairs and other BREC activities have generated job opportunities for an estimated total of about 1,700 people with disabilities. In addition, because training centers have taken part in the fairs, people with disabilities have also been linked to vocational training opportunities.