

NEWSLETTER

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TOWARDS THE SDG GOAL OF DISABILITY INCLUSIVE GROWTH



HIGHLIGHTS



MOU Signing with the International Labour Organization



Strengthening Collaboration with Grameen Phone



Sensitization Session & Deep Dive Training



Spot interview

EDITORIAL

The Bangladesh economy is constantly evolving and changing, and the year 2023 is no different. However, in the first half of this year, the BBDN team, in collaboration with our valued members, partners, and stakeholders, has embarked on a journey filled with innovative initiatives. These endeavors have yielded tangible results, created job opportunities, and fostered a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for persons with disabilities.

In this edition, we are thrilled to showcase the inspiring stories, remarkable achievements, and impactful initiatives that have marked our journey until the mid of 2023.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have supported us on this journey. Together, we are making a difference, and the BBDN team is excited to see what the future holds as we continue to empower persons with disabilities in the world of business.

ILO and BBDN Join Hands for Inclusivity



■ The Memorable moment of the MOU signing with the distinguished Guest

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) came together to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on March 23, 2023, with the aim of sharing the goal of inclusivity and empowerment. The MoU signing ceremony was graced by distinguished guests from both organizations, including Mr. Tuomo Poutiainen, the Country Director of the ILO Country Office for Bangladesh, and Mr. Ardashir Kabir, Chairman of BBDN.

Murteza Khan, the Chief Executive Officer of BBDN, presented an overview of the MoU, underlining its significance

in enabling both parties to identify and develop new areas of intervention in disability inclusion by jointly mobilizing resources. Following the overview, the signing ceremony featured an open discussion where BBDN members and partners, including representatives from the World Bank, GIZ, BASIS, BRAC, CDD, BSCAN, Carers, and CSR Centre, actively contributed their insights to foster greater collaboration among key stakeholders.

Mr. Salahuddin Kasem Khan, Chairman of the Advisory Council at BBDN, highlighted the remarkable journey of the private sector in Bangladesh

towards inclusivity over the past 15 years in his speech. Mr. Monsur Ahmed Choudhury, a prominent figure in the disability movement of Bangladesh and Trustee of BBDN, acknowledged the momentous milestone and the potential that will be featured through this MOU.

Mr. Ardashir Kabir expressed his appreciation for the partnership between ILO and BBDN, recognizing its capacity to make a lasting positive impact. Mr. Tuomo Poutiainen shared the vital role of the MoU in social protection, employment generation, and skills development for persons with disabilities.

Mr. Gunjan Dallakoti, SME Development Specialist at ILO, concluded the ceremony with a heartfelt vote of thanks, expressing optimism about the potential of the MoU and commending BBDN for its praiseworthy endeavors in fostering employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

This partnership between ILO and BBDN marked a significant step towards making a tangible difference in the lives of persons with disabilities, promoting a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

Strengthening Collaboration: BBDN and Grameen Phone Explore Opportunities for Inclusion



■ With the CEO of Grameen Phone Yasir Azman and Deputy Director Farhana Islam At GP House

To strengthen collaboration with Grameen Phone, the BBDN team,

led by the esteemed BBDN Trustee Rupali Chowdhury (Managing Director

of Berger Paints Bangladesh Ltd.) carried out a meeting at GP House with Grameen Phone's CEO, Yasir Azman, and Deputy Director Farhana Islam on March 21, 2023.

It is worth highlighting that Grameen Phone has been a valued general member of BBDN since its inception. The purpose of the meeting was to explore job opportunities for persons with disabilities at Grameen Phone and to discuss the possibilities of their onboarding at GP Academy. During the meeting, the BBDN team also extended an offer of available inclusion services that Grameen Phone can access under the membership program.

■ Sensitization Session with Mutual Trust Bank Foundation

Mutual Trust Bank Limited is one of the reputed banks in Bangladesh, and they continue to contribute significantly to the banking sector of the country. Realizing the importance of inclusive banking and inclusive employment, they have been associated with BBDN as founder members since its inception.

As part of promoting disability inclusion in MTB, Mutual Trust Bank Foundation planned to arrange a series of sensitization sessions with the technical support of the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network. In line with this plan, the initial session took place on February 1, 2023, with the esteemed presence of Mr. Syed Mahbubur Rahman, the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Mutual Trust Bank Limited. Subsequently, another session was convened on April 17, 2023, with the esteemed presence of Mr. Rias Uddin Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director of Mutual Trust Bank Ltd. (MTB). The



session was graced by the attendance of MTB employees representing various levels of employees within the bank.

The primary objective of this session was to raise awareness and foster inclusivity and accessibility within the banking sector. The aim was to encourage banks to create a more inclusive environment, benefiting

both their employees and customers. The training enlightened the participants to have a better understanding of advancing disability inclusion in the banking sector, which is a commendable step towards creating a more equitable and accessible banking system in Bangladesh. The session was led by a team of experts from BBDN and B-Scan.

■ Meeting (Exchange Sharing) with Tangail Chamber of Commerce and Industries



As part of making the private sector sensitized towards disability inclusion, the Bangladesh Business & Disability Network organized an exchange sharing meeting titled, "The Role and Actions of Stakeholders in Creating Employment for People with Disabilities in the Local Labor Market" with the Tangail Chamber of Commerce & Industry on February 14, 2023, under the Futuremakers Bangladesh project funded by Standard

Chartered Bank Foundation. The primary purpose of this meeting was to create awareness among the business community about disability and create employment opportunities for persons with disabilities at the local level.

Mr. Alhaj Lion M. Shibli Sadiq, senior vice president, Tangail Chamber of Commerce, and Industry, presided over the whole program. Mr. Shibli pointed

out that to create a smart Bangladesh, persons with disabilities should be integrated into the mainstream economy and invited all the attendees to work together to create employment for persons with disabilities.

Around 50 representatives from different business associations in Tangail District, BISCIC, directors of the Tangail Chamber of Commerce and Industry, private employers, and local representatives from the mass media attended the meeting. Mr. Mahar Ali Mollah, Deputy Inspector General, Office of the Deputy Inspector General, Tangail, Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments, was present as a special guest. Representatives from Sightsavers, Bangladesh, Bangladesh Business and Disability Network, and Tangail DPOD also were present in the meeting. The meeting was a kick-off to reach out to the local employers at Tangail for creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

■ BBDN and BYLC Collaborate for Inclusive Leadership

On March 22, 2023, the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) and the Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre jointly hosted a half-day Sensitization Session on Disability Inclusion at BYLC's premises. This session was led by a team of experts from BBDN and was attended by a bunch of young professionals from the Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC). BYLC has recently become a Resource Member of BBDN. BYLC is a registered non-profit, non-partisan youth leadership training institute in Bangladesh dedicated to fostering connections among young individuals from diverse backgrounds, equipping them with essential leadership skills, and facilitating their access to job



■ Facilitators and Participants in a frame BYLC's premises

opportunities and entrepreneurial ventures.

The session proved to be highly interactive and aimed at dispelling

stereotypes, promoting open dialogue, and fostering a collective commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion.

■ Otto International Embarks on a Journey Towards Promoting Disability Inclusion



■ Facilitators and Participants in a frame at Otto International's premises



■ Part of the Participants during the Session

Otto International, a renowned global sourcing services provider with over 50 years of industry expertise, has

recently become a General Member of the Bangladesh Business & Disability Network (BBDN). This

partnership signifies a significant step forward in Otto International's commitment to promoting disability inclusion within its organization. To strengthen the collaboration, on May 09, 2023, the Bangladesh Business & Disability Network (BBDN) held a day-long session on disability for Otto International employees at Otto International's office in Uttara, Dhaka. The session included a deep-dive training for senior management-level staff and a sensitization session for mid-level staff. Approximately 30 employees participated in the sessions, which aimed to support Otto International's journey towards disability inclusion.

Following the success of the May 09th session, another sensitization session was held on May 24, 2023, to further reinforce Otto International's journey towards disability inclusion. This time, around 12 mid-level employees participated in the sessions. These sessions proved to be highly interactive to the participants, making them feel the importance of disability inclusion in the workplace.

■ A Step Towards Inclusive Hiring at Fakir Fashion Limited

In a remarkable step towards fostering inclusivity and diversity in the workplace, the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) organized a half-day Sensitization Session on the Inclusive HR Process on June 15, 2023. This enlightening session, held at the Fakir Fashion Limited premises, aimed to raise awareness and equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary for embracing diversity within their organization. Around 20 dedicated participants enthusiastically joined the session, reflecting Fakir Fashion Limited's commitment to creating an inclusive and diverse workplace. The event was marked by engaging discussions, insightful presentations, and interactive activities, all geared towards breaking down barriers and biases related to disability.



■ Facilitators and Participants in a frame at Fakir Fashion Limited premises

■ Team Group's Commitment to Disability Inclusion; Successful Spot Interview for Diverse Talent



■ Part of Spot Interview



■ Part of Spot Interview

Team Group, a founding member of the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN), has continued its journey to make significant strides toward disability inclusion. From the very inception of their journey, Team Group has shown remarkable dedication to creating an inclusive workforce within their organization. In the initial efforts to promote the inclusive workforce, Team Group conducted two spot interviews with the close support of BBDN, resulting in the successful hiring of approximately

50 employees with disabilities into the Team Group.

Buoyed by the success of the previous spot interviews, Team Group conducted another spot interview to hire potential candidates from a diverse group of disabilities on March 29, 2023, with the collaboration of BBDN. This time, 43 talented candidates with diverse disabilities welcomed in the interview, with the invaluable support of B-SCAN and three OPDs from Manikganj, Narayanganj, and Tangail.

Team Group has successfully shortlisted 25 candidates out of a pool of 43 candidates through the spot interview process. To ensure a thorough evaluation, two interview panels were assembled. Each panel consisted of a representative from Team Group's HR department and representatives from the BBDN. Together, they assessed the candidates' skills, abilities, and overall suitability for the available job positions.



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