

A Guide for Organizing Job Fairs for Persons with Disabilities: Partnering to Bridge the Employment Gap



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**Supported By
UNPRPD Programme,
International Labour Organization (ILO)**

November 2024

Document Overview:

This guide serves as a comprehensive strategy for organizing inclusive job fairs aimed at enhancing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. It provides a detailed framework on partnership building, planning, resource mobilization, job matching, event operations, and post-event follow-up, with the goal of promoting disability-inclusive employment across Bangladesh.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose of the guideline

Employment enables social inclusion for persons with disabilities and makes a significant contribution to the country's growing economy. To expand employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and strengthen connections with employers, the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) has successfully organized several job fairs for persons with disabilities in partnership with development partners, employers, employers' associations, NGOs and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs). OPDs may benefit from this guide by gaining a deeper understanding of the job fair organizing process, which could enhance their participation and improve their opportunities for connecting job seekers with potential employers.

The UNPRPD (United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) Programme supported by ILO, focuses on capacity building of OPDs in facilitating skills and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. To strengthen the capacity of OPDs to effectively participate in organizing an impactful job fair, BBDN is developing this guideline in collaboration with Access Bangladesh Foundation.

The guideline for organizing an inclusive job fair will help organizations of persons with disabilities understand how different networks function. It will clarify the roles of key stakeholders, such as employers, disability expert organizations, job seekers with disabilities, NGOs, INGOs, and the private sector. By understanding how these components interact, organizations can form partnerships that empower persons with disabilities to secure employment. This guideline covers every aspect of the job fair, from initial planning and resource mobilization to job matching, event execution, and post-event follow-up.

By following this guideline, organizations can:

- ✓ Arrange an inclusive and accessible job fair for different types of job seekers with disabilities within their locality and districts
- ✓ Enhance awareness and understanding of the capabilities and potential of persons with disabilities among employers
- ✓ Facilitate meaningful job placements for job seekers with disabilities in suitable roles
- ✓ Promote an inclusive workplace culture that promotes diversity and inclusion.

Importance of organizing a Job Fair for persons with disabilities

Many organizations host job fairs to facilitate connections between employers and job seekers but persons with disabilities do not feel comfortable and are less likely to be selected in such environments, that are often not accessible to them.

Organizing job fairs exclusively for persons with disabilities can play a crucial role in bridging the gap between job seekers with disabilities and employers. The importance of organizing such event is given below-

- Offer a platform for job seekers with disabilities to showcase their skills, abilities and potential to employers
- Raise awareness among employers, guests and relevant stakeholders on the capacities of persons with disabilities
- Promote the importance of employability skills (CV writing, interview techniques, corporate grooming etc.) among job seekers with disabilities
- Facilitate networking between job seekers and employers, with a view to building relationships for future employment opportunities

- Provide employers with opportunities to learn through knowledge exchange, interacting directly with persons with disabilities and attaining insights about the business case for inclusive employment
- Celebrate disability inclusion

Create a common platform towards collective support

A common platform facilitates collaboration among key stakeholders, ensuring the availability of essential services and resources for both job seekers with disabilities and employers. Key stakeholders include job seekers, employers, employers' associations, OPDs, disability-focused organizations, development partners, CSOs, the private sector, and media partners.

While each stakeholder plays a distinct role, their efforts are more effective when coordinated through this platform. It allows for resource sharing, unified coordination, and a collective approach to overcoming challenges, making the job fair more inclusive. The platform-building process begins with identifying stakeholders through research and consultations. Organizers should then act as the central body, defining roles and facilitating ongoing communication to ensure a shared focus on empowering job seekers with disabilities.

Make the process more accessible and inclusive

To make the job fair process more accessible and inclusive, organizers should begin by engaging all relevant stakeholders, including OPDs, persons with disabilities, disability-focused organizations, CSOs, and employers, to ensure their active input and participation from the outset. During the planning phase, committees should be formed with representation from key stakeholders, especially OPDs and different types of persons with disabilities. These committees should prioritize making the candidate registration form accessible and comprehensive so that candidates' interests and priorities should be clearly identified. They should also emphasize the need to host the event in an accessible venue with the necessary accommodations like sign language interpreters, and the availability of accessible materials. Additional support to job seekers and employers should be provided during pre-interviews to make the process smoother. Lastly, post-event follow-up should include feedback mechanisms and continuous support for both job seekers and employers to promote long-term success

Chapter 2: Partnership Building

Stakeholders involved in the job-fair and their role in the process

Multi-stakeholder approach is important for organizing a successful job fair for persons with disabilities. At the beginning of the job fair's preparation, stakeholders should be identified and onboarded and have their roles clearly defined.

Type of Stakeholders	Roles in the Job Fair Process
Organizers	● Coordinate with stakeholders and lead different steps of the job fair ● Prepare a detailed plan with budget to organize the job fair ● Identify potential donors, employers' associations, chambers, employers ● Arrange meetings in regular intervals with other stakeholders

Type of Stakeholders	Roles in the Job Fair Process
	• Form different committees related to job fair • Invite guests, employers, OPDs, CSOs, job seekers in the job fair event • Evaluate the job fair with feedback from relevant stakeholders • Follow up with employers and employees with disabilities
Job Seekers with disabilities	• Complete candidate registration form • Collect up to date information on the job fair • Actively participate in job readiness interventions like career counselling, corporate grooming and interview skills • Participate in pre-interview and job fair
Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)	• Identify and provide potential job seekers with disabilities list • Mobilize job seekers by registering in the job fair candidate form and provide family counselling • Actively engage in job fair working committees • Provide technical support and Work as Resource Partner to ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodation to different types of disabilities in every step of the job fair • Participate/Co-facilitate side events in the job fair • Follow up support with newly employed persons with disabilities to understand their challenges and needs • Provide support to employees with disabilities for job retention
Employers	• Engage and ensure direct involvement in the job fair working committee • Provide job vacancy information specifying required skills, qualifications, salary, number of vacancies, accessibility and reasonable accommodation facilities in the workplace etc • Pre-select candidates from the job-matching list • Arrange pre-interview for pre-screening and pre-selection / appointment of candidates • Set up booth at the job fair • Arrange on-spot interview during the job fair event • Provide appointment letters and make commitments to recruit persons with disabilities • Arrange need-based on the job support
Employers' Associations and Chambers of Commerce	• Encourage their member organizations to create employment opportunities for persons with disabilities • Monitor the participation of member organizations • Become sponsor in the job fair
Training Institutes	• Provide list of graduates with disabilities • Provide market-demanded employable skills training

Type of Stakeholders	Roles in the Job Fair Process
Government agencies related to persons with disabilities and employment	• Coordinate with other government agencies particularly Ministry of Social Welfare and Ministry of Labour and Employment, NGOs, and employers to promote job fair. • Launch public awareness campaigns to highlight the capabilities and potential of persons with disabilities and encourage employers to hire them.
Vendors	• Provide logistical support (booth setup, food arrangement, venue preparation, promotional materials etc.) • Support in documentation • Support in sign language interpretation
Donors	• Provide financial support to organize the job fair • Provide technical support to onboard different employers and stakeholders
Media	• Promote the event • Raise awareness through publishing news on the capability of persons with disabilities • Cover the event and share success stories

Importance of Engaging OPDs in the Job Fair Process

Engaging OPDs in the job fair planning process is key to ensuring inclusivity, effectiveness, and sustainability. OPDs offer valuable insights into the challenges and needs of persons with disabilities, guiding organizers to create accessible events. By involving OPD representatives in all committees, organizers can ensure venues, tools, publications and promotional materials are accessible and equipped with necessary accommodations.

OPD members can act as Resource Partners during the event, assisting job seekers and facilitating networking for inclusive recruitment practices. Post-event, they help gather feedback and assess accessibility measures, ensuring continuous improvement. OPDs also support sustainability by building partnerships with employers, raising awareness, and encouraging inclusive hiring practices. They can prepare candidates for future job fairs by identifying market demands and developing their skills.

Understanding the Needs of Employers and Job Seekers

A successful job fair requires understanding both employers' needs and job seekers' capabilities. Employers seek candidates with practical skills, relevant qualifications, and specialized training and soft skills. Organizers should conduct market analysis to align job fair offerings with these needs. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions play a vital role in bridging this gap by equipping job seekers with skills in high-demand sectors such as ICT, retail, and hospitality etc.

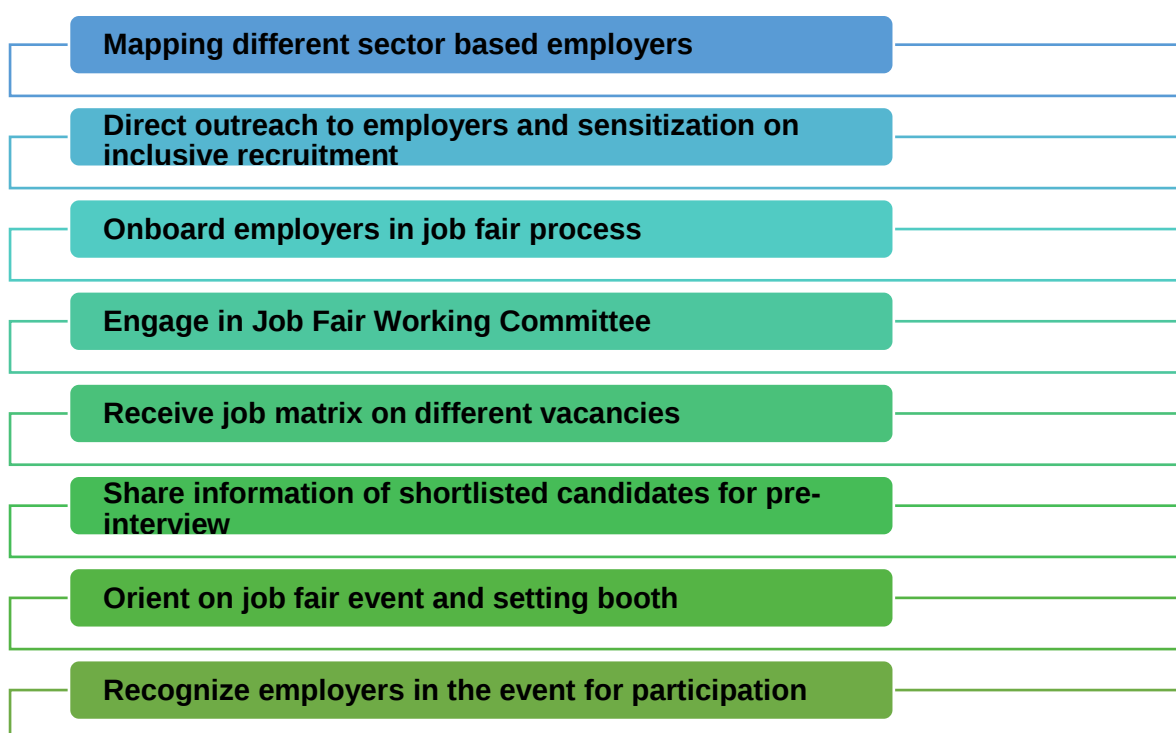
Job seekers with disabilities prefer accessible facilities, such as ramps, accessible seating, and accommodations like sign language interpreters or screen reading software. These measures allow them to showcase their skills fairly. They also seek reasonable workplace accommodations, such as adjustable tables and ensuring a safe and inclusive work environment.

Partnership with Stakeholders and Resource Mobilization

Strategic partnerships and resource mobilization are essential for a successful job fair. Organizers should engage OPDs, employers, associations, CSOs, training institutes, and media from the outset. Stakeholder mapping helps identify potential partners, while regular meetings ensure commitment. OPDs mobilize job seekers and maintain accessibility standards, and donors can provide financial backing. Training institutes offer technical support, and media partners promote the event. Effective resource mobilization ensures the job fair's smooth execution and its impact on all participants.

Engage with employers and associations

Developing strong partnerships with employers and associations is crucial for a successful job fair. The following steps are necessary to effectively engage employers-



BBDN's Approach to Ensure Meaningful Engagement of Employers and Associations

BBDN is a unique network of employers and employers' organization dedicated for creating a more disability inclusive workforce in Bangladesh. Since 2017, BBDN has organized job fairs for persons with disabilities, creating a crucial platform that connects candidates with different sectors' employers. The network's member organizations are from different sectors such as Readymade garments, Hotels, Banks, Multinationals, Retail, NGOs and OPDs.

As part of its approach, BBDN initiates the job fair process by formally reaching out to its member organizations by sending a formal letter for expressing interest in hiring persons with disabilities, inviting them to participate actively in the job fair.

Additionally, BBDN collaborates with industry bodies, such as Chambers of Commerce & Industries, with a view to promoting the job fair among the member organizations of chambers and industry associations.

By facilitating these connections, BBDN ensures that the job fair attracts a broad spectrum of potential employers committed to inclusive recruitment.

Chapter 3: Planning and resource mobilization

A quick supply and demand analysis

The organizers may need to conduct a quick supply and demand analysis based on location and opportunities. The supply side includes job seekers with disabilities, parents/caregivers, technical training centers, OPDs, CSOs etc. whereas the demand side includes employers, associations, chambers etc.

- Begin by analyzing the pool of potential job seekers with disabilities, including their qualifications, skills and employment expectations. Collaborate with OPDs and community partners to gather relevant data on job seekers.
- Conduct a demand analysis by engaging with employers through consultation meetings to identify the types of positions available, required qualifications, and any additional skills or attributes they are seeking in candidates.
- Compare the job seekers' skills and qualifications with employer needs to identify any gaps in training, skills development or expectations to facilitate targeted skill-building initiatives or connect candidates with relevant training providers or OPDs before the event.

Identify existing resources and challenges

It's crucial for organizers to assess both existing resources and potential challenges early in the planning process. A thorough mapping of current resources is key to understanding what's available and what needs to be acquired. Organizers should start by conducting a supply and demand analysis, which will help them identify resources, gaps and necessary tools for a successful event. For instance, having a list of registered job seekers or employers is a valuable resource that can be refined and updated. Connections with OPDs, disability-focused organizations, CSOs, vendors, training institutes and experienced staff are also significant assets that can be leveraged to ensure the job fair's success. This stakeholder mapping can serve as a foundation to build partnerships and mobilize resources.

Key challenges, such as selecting an accessible venue, ensuring a sufficient pool of skilled job seekers with disabilities, mobilizing job seekers, conducting a proper job matching and engaging with employers who may not yet be fully committed to inclusive hiring practices need to be addressed with proactive planning and coordination between resource partners.

Planning of job fair period: (outline of 3-4 months' plan)

Timeline	Activities
3-4 Months before	○ Conduct detailed planning for the job fair, book an accessible venue and set clear objectives ○ Conduct supply and demand analysis ○ Develop a budget and identify necessary resources ○ Mapping key stakeholders- potential employers, training institutes, OPDs, NGOs, donors, chambers of commerce, and relevant partners ○ Form working committee, ensuring representation from OPDs, persons with disabilities, employers and relevant stakeholders ○ Outreach to potential sponsors and donors for resource mobilization

Timeline	Activities
2 months before	○ Finalize job seekers' registration forms and job matrix for employers ○ Conduct meeting with potential employers and collect job matrix ○ Develop promotional materials with objective, date and confirmed employers ○ Begin promotional campaigns through media and social channels to attract participants for registration ○ Conduct mobilization of job seekers through OPDs ○ Arrange regular meeting of Working committee ○ Form Job Matching Committee with OPDs, persons with disabilities and resource partners ○ Confirm participation of employers ○ Secure an accessible venue through accessibility audit ○ Secure commitments from donors and sponsors
1 month before	○ Organize job readiness workshops (career counseling, interview skills, resume writing) for job seekers, if possible in advance or during the job fair ○ Regular meeting between Organizing and Job Matching Committee ○ Finalize the event schedule with committees ○ Confirm guest participation for Opening and Closing event. ○ Coordinate with media to promote the job fair ○ Finalize logistics (booth setup, promotional materials, on-site accommodations for disabilities) ○ Confirm participation of guests and send official invitations ○ Follow up with sponsors, partners, and other supporters.
1 Week before	○ Organize a final review meeting with all committees to ensure readiness and confirm event logistics ○ Check the accessibility status of the venue ○ Confirm sign language interpreters ○ Follow up and ensure participation of the guests ○ Prepare materials for the event (program schedule, feedback forms, banners, t-shirts etc.)

Formation of committee and meeting frequency

At the initial stage the organizers should form a working committee to find out specific roles and distribute accordingly. Ideally two or three committees may be formed. More than that can create bureaucratic complexity. Suggested committees are as follows-

Job Fair Working Committee

This is the Supreme Committee of the Job Fair, led by a designated convener chosen in the inaugural meeting, oversees the event's strategic direction. This committee will be a mixed group of organizers including OPDs, persons with disabilities, employers and resource

partners. The working committee may form various sub-committees such as job matching committee and logistics committee etc.

The Job Fair Working Committee has several key responsibilities to ensure the event's success.

- Prepare concept note, finalize venue, and engage with potential sponsors for support.
- Hold regular meetings either in-person or online to maintain communication among committee members once or twice a month
- Arrange meetings with employers to participate in the fair
- Finalize outreach plan (social media, face-to-face via OPDs) to encourage job seekers to attend the fair.
- Ensure the presence of chief guests and special guests
- Assist in preparing promotional materials
- Ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodation in the overall job fair process
- Finalize a documentation and feedback analysis plan of the event

Job Matching Committee

The Job Matching Committee, appointed by the Working committee, is responsible for several key activities:

- Collect the candidate database and the job matrix from employers.
- Match employer requirements with the candidates' skills, educational qualifications, and interests.
- Short-list candidates whose profiles align with the employer's needs and reach out to them to confirm their interest in the specific roles.
- Share the list of selected candidates with employers for final shortlisting.
- Contact the shortlisted candidates to participate in pre-interviews and the job fair event

This process ensures that the right candidates are aligned with the right job opportunities, streamlining the selection process for employers. Preparation of database according to different types of job seekers with disabilities

Logistics Committee

A dedicated sub-committee should be formed to manage the logistical arrangements of the Job Fair which shall be led by the lead organization organizing the job fair. They will be responsible for coordinating with secondary target groups of the event and carrying out the following activities:

- Contact and liaise with venues, vendors, and media outlets.
- Coordinate the development and distribution of all Job Fair-related materials, including flyers, posters, banners, booklets, and stationery.
- Oversee the design and production of promotional items such as pens, t-shirts, caps, and other event essentials.
- Draft and send out invitations, letters, and other communication materials to key stakeholders.
- Ensure all necessary materials and equipment are delivered to the venue a day prior to the event.
- Ensure that employer booths are set up with accessible spaces to accommodate participants with disabilities.

Modality of Meetings

Committees can hold meetings in-person, remotely, or in a hybrid format. While in-person meetings are often the most effective for collaboration, virtual meetings can help reduce costs and ensure value for money. Hybrid meetings, although sometimes less efficient due to technical issues, can be used to maximize participation when necessary.

Defining necessary process documentation

Process documentation is essential for ensuring the smooth execution and sustainability of a job fair. The first step is to create clear process descriptions for each step of the event, from planning to post-event follow-up. This involves outlining the steps for every task, specifying the responsible persons or teams, establishing timelines, and identifying the necessary tools or platforms (such as online registration forms). Using standardized templates and forms is also crucial; by employing consistent formats for candidate registration, employer job matrix, and feedback forms, organizers can streamline operations and avoid discrepancies throughout the event.

Tracking milestones and progress is another key aspect of maintaining proper documentation. This includes setting SMART objectives for activities like the number of registered candidates, confirmed employers, and completed interviews, and utilizing tracking systems such as Excel or Google Sheets to regularly update and monitor progress. Both digital and hard documents should be made readily available to the organizing team and volunteers, with shared drives (e.g., Google Drive) being used for easy access and organization.

Collecting post-event feedback from team members, job seekers, and employers will help improve future events. Finally, safeguarding all process documents, such as candidate databases, employers' information, event schedules and financial records, is critical. These records should be archived and stored both digitally and physically, with backup copies to prevent data loss. By maintaining detailed and organized process documentation, job fairs can be run more efficiently and evolve into a sustainable model for inclusive hiring.

Budgeting

A well-structured inclusive budget is essential for a successful job fair that welcomes candidates with different types of disabilities. During the initial planning, the organizing team must develop a comprehensive and tentative budget that prioritizes reasonable accommodations to make the event accessible for all. A budget breakdown with particulars is attached as an annex.

A disability-inclusive budget might allocate budget for accessible communication materials like flyers with image descriptions and promotional videos with captions and sign language interpretation. It would also include accessibility measures during the event, such as ramps, wheelchair accessible booths and washrooms, along with reasonable accommodations like sign language interpreters and screen readers to ensure all participants can engage fully with the event.

The following strategies can be followed during budgeting-

- Develop an itemized budget that covers all essential aspects, including venue rental, catering, stall decoration, transportation, event materials (flyers, banners, invitations) and media outreach.
- Ensure that the budget accounts for the scope of the event, including the expected number of participants, scale of activities, and logistical needs.

- Prioritize budgeting for accessibility features such as portable ramps, sign language interpreters, and assistive technologies to ensure full participation of job seekers with disabilities.
- Set aside a portion of the budget as a contingency fund to cover unforeseen costs or last-minute adjustments, ensuring that critical elements like accessibility and volunteer support are not compromised.
- Providing remuneration for the Job Matching Committee is crucial to recognize and honor the time and commitment they invest in matching job opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Before finalizing and implementing the plan, review the budget to ensure financial feasibility. Regularly assess whether the allocated funds are sufficient to complete all planned activities without compromising the quality of the event.

Chapter 4: Job Matching Work

Effective job matching is critical to the success of the job fair, ensuring that job seekers with disabilities are connected with suitable employment opportunities.

Communication with the Employers'

Establish effective communication channels with employers early in the planning process to discuss their involvement in the job fair. Emphasize the objectives of the event, the business case for recruitment persons with disabilities, and the positive impact inclusive recruitment practices can have on their organizations.

A dedicated team should be assigned to manage employer outreach, ensuring communication is flexible to suit the employers' preferences, whether through physical meetings or remote platforms. Initially, individual meetings with employers should be scheduled according to their availability and preferred location. Additionally, organizers can coordinate a group meeting with like-minded employers to foster collaboration and share objectives.

Consistent follow-up is essential to confirm employer participation, receive job matrices, acquire updates on shortlisted candidates, organize pre-interviews and provide updates on event logistics, schedules, and their specific roles in the job matching process.

Job vacancy collection

Request employers to provide detailed job vacancy information through a job matrix form (Attached at Annex B). This should include job titles, descriptions, required skills, qualifications, salary, benefits and accessibility facilities.

Ensure job descriptions clearly state the tasks involved and the required skills, enabling better matching of candidates based on their abilities and qualifications. The job matching committee will coordinate with employers and collect the job vacancies in the job matrix format.

Engagement with HR (and involvement in the Committee)

Engage the Human Resource (HR) departments of participating employers early in the planning process. Invite them to join the Job Fair Working Committee, ensuring they are involved in critical decisions related to planning and decision-making.

Provide in-person or remote briefing sessions for HR professionals on inclusive hiring practices, disability etiquette and the modalities of the job fair. This will help ensure they

provide the job matrix appropriately and approach the recruitment process with an understanding of the diverse needs of candidates with disabilities.

Identification and mobilization of job-seekers with disabilities

Identifying and mobilizing job seekers with disabilities is crucial for the success of the job fair. Collaborating with local OPDs, self-help groups, and community networks can help reach potential candidates through existing communication channels. The information of candidates can be collected through Google Forms (Attached at Annex A). Awareness campaigns on social media, community outreach, and radio should provide clear, accessible information about the event and job opportunities. Career counseling, either individually or in groups, can assist candidates in identifying their strengths and job preferences. Parental or caregiver counseling is also essential to address concerns about safety and independence. Offering need-based soft skills training will enhance employability, and partnerships with OPDs, development agencies, and training providers can help facilitate this.

Candidate shortlisting and Skill matching

The Job Matching Committee oversees the candidate shortlisting and skill-matching process through these key steps:

- Review candidate profiles using the job matrix provided by employers, ensuring alignment with required skills, qualifications, and interests.
- Maintain organized databases (e.g. MS Excel, Google Sheets) to track and manage candidate information, ensuring easy sorting and secure access.
- Promptly inform shortlisted candidates of matched job opportunities, confirming their availability for pre-screening and on-the-spot interviews during the job fair.

Pre-interview

To facilitate a smooth recruitment process and exchanging appointment letters in the job fair, provide a list of shortlisted candidates to the employers well in advance. Ensure that employers are fully briefed on the candidates' skills, qualifications, and relevant details. Coordinate with employers to schedule pre-interview dates and communicate these dates to the candidates. Ensure candidates are informed and ready for their pre-interview appointments. Additionally, inform employers about the accessibility and reasonable accommodations needs required by the candidates, such as sign language interpretation or screen reading software.

Selection for appointment

After pre-interviews, employers will make their final selections for appointments. The Job Matching Committee needs to maintain clear communication with employers to receive their decisions on the selected candidates. After receiving the information, update the successful candidates about their appointments, providing detailed instructions on the next steps, such as attending the job fair event, signing employment contracts and any additional interviews that may be required. During the job fair, organize a formal session where employers will present appointment letters to the selected candidates. This session should highlight the significance of inclusive hiring practices and celebrate the achievements of the newly appointed candidates.

Chapter 5: Pre-Event Interventions

Checklist/To-do list

The checklist is attached in Annex C.

Venue selection

When selecting a venue for a job fair, it is essential to ensure that both capacity and accessibility needs are fully met. The following criteria should be met to select a venue-

- Must comfortably hold the targeted attendees, allowing sufficient space for job seekers with disabilities, employers, caregivers, volunteers and resource partners.



Photo: Candidates with disabilities and their parents gathered at Job Fair

- Sufficient room for employer booths, interview spaces, and side events or there can be open space outside the venue where the booths can be installed.
- Must have step-free or ramped access, with wide doorways and hallways that meet accessibility standards.
- Accessible washrooms with handrails, proper height sinks, and wheelchair accessibility should be available.
- Clear and easy-to-read signs, including tactile or Braille signage, to guide people through the venue.
- Adequate lighting, avoiding glare or shadowed areas. The stage or a speaking area must be accessible via ramps or lifts.
- Centrally located, with good transport links to make it easier for participants from various regions to attend.

- Emergency exits must be clearly marked and accessible, with evacuation plans in place for persons with disabilities.

Outreach and Promotion

Strategies for attracting Job Seekers with Disabilities:

- Collaborate with local and national level OPDs, NGOs, disability-focused organizations and networks to reach potential employers and job seekers
- Use social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube etc. to promote the event.
- Ensure posts are accessible by using alt text for images, video captions, and audio descriptions.
- Use hashtags like *#InclusiveEmployment*, *#PersonswithDisabilitiesJobFair*, *#Inclusivity* etc.
- Create event brochures, flyers, and posters in accessible formats such as Braille, large print, audio versions, and sign language videos.
- Collaborate with employees with disabilities, disability advocates, and community leaders to spread awareness.
- Post the event on job boards, university career services websites, and disability employment platforms such as job search websites (In Bangladesh: *bdjobs.com*) and local university, training institute portals and job boards.



Photo: Flyer of Job Fair

Strategies for attracting Employers:

- Partner with chambers of commerce and industries, business associations, and industry groups to promote the event among their members.
- Create a LinkedIn campaign targeting HR professionals and business leaders, sharing posts about the importance of disability-inclusive hiring.
- Offer partnership or sponsorship packages for companies to increase visibility during the event.
- Collaborate with media partners for event coverage, and ensure they promote disability-inclusive hiring in their reports.
- Use a countdown campaign with regular updates on participating employers, guest speakers, and event highlights to maintain excitement and anticipation.

Coordination of employers' participation

- Regularly communicate with employers regarding the event schedule, booth setup details and required logistics.

- Coordinate with employers to engage in event day activities such as receiving CVs, interacting with candidates and conducting on-the-spot interviews.
- Assist employers in organizing on-the-spot interviews and guide them through the process of selecting candidates
- Communicate with employers to facilitate the issue of appointment letters to selected candidates during or immediately after the job fair. It is important to have at least a few appointment letters handed out during the job fair to showcase the successful job matching process.

Capacity Building of Job-Seekers with disabilities for participating in pre-screening and interview

Given the practical challenges in providing capacity-building sessions to every candidate, a more scalable approach involves empowering individual OPDs and support groups to assist candidates within their local communities. By focusing on training and equipping OPDs with the necessary knowledge and resources, they can offer localized support tailored to the specific needs of candidates in their area. This approach ensures that job seekers receive the guidance they need while leveraging the expertise of local organizations that are best positioned to understand their unique circumstances.

To address this, OPDs should be provided with training on how to conduct workshops, offer career counseling, and facilitate mock interviews in their communities. This localized capacity-building can be supported by the central organizing body through resource-sharing, training materials, and tools that can be adapted to different regions. By building the capacity of OPDs, the support network becomes more sustainable, ensuring that job seekers with disabilities across various areas receive the necessary preparation for job fairs.

Volunteer Engagement

Onboarding and training volunteers, particularly from OPDs, universities, and youth groups can provide crucial support during the event. The effective strategies for volunteer engagement are as follows:

- ❖ Partner with OPDs, university based disability forums and youth-led organizations to onboard enthusiastic volunteers.
- ❖ Clearly define volunteer roles and responsibilities to help them build skills in event management, communication, and disability support. (Roles of Volunteers is attached at Annex F)
- ❖ Conduct orientation sessions focused on disability inclusion, covering topics such as inclusive communication and assistance for different types of persons with disabilities (e.g. physical, visual, auditory, neurodevelopmental).

- ❖ Orientation on the specific duties that volunteers will perform, such as assisting with registration, guiding job seekers to employer booths and supporting throughout the day
- ❖ Assign team leaders or coordinators to manage small groups of volunteers, facilitating smooth communication and effective task delegation.
- ❖ Hold a briefing session on the day of the event to reinforce roles and responsibilities, stressing the need for professionalism and respectful interactions.

Procurement

The procurement process for the job fair involves acquiring essential materials and equipment to ensure a successful and inclusive event. This includes ordering promotional materials such as banners, posters, festoons as well as essential items like booths, tables, chairs, and office supplies. If catering services are required, it is crucial to consider dietary restrictions to provide appropriate meal options for attendees. Transparency in the procurement process is essential. All related bills and vouchers should be kept for compliance purposes, ensuring accountability and proper record-keeping. The list of procurement items is attached at Annex E.

Ensure Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation

It is essential to conduct a final accessibility check and ensure that reasonable accommodations are in place during the job fair event.

- Assign a dedicated team that ideally includes occupational / physio therapists and disability experts from OPDs and Resource Partners to perform a comprehensive accessibility audit of the venue.
- Inspect all entrances, exits, washrooms and seating areas to confirm that they are free from obstacles and accessible for persons with disabilities.
- Confirm the availability of sign language interpreters for the event day to facilitate effective communication for candidates with hearing disabilities
- Ensure that all event schedules and brochures are provided in accessible formats, including Braille and audio versions, to accommodate the diverse needs of all participants.

Media Engagement

Media engagement is crucial for extending the reach of the job fair to a broader audience.

- Outreach to national electronic and print media, including newspapers, radio, TV channels, for covering the employment of persons with disabilities.
- Prepare a press release clearly outlining the event's purpose, details (date, time, location, number of candidates, confirmed job) and quotes from guests and employers.

- Use social platforms like Facebook, Youtube, LinkedIn etc for announcements and provide live updates during the event
- Invite reporters from different print and electronic media outlets to cover the event on-site and conduct interviews with employers and candidates
- Keep track of media coverage by documenting the published articles and broadcasted news for reporting.

Final Follow-Up

The Job Fair Working Committee should carry out final follow-ups with all stakeholders to ensure their participation and engagement in the fair:

- Reach out to employers to confirm their participation, booth setup, and the list of available job opportunities.
- Verify the participation of distinguished guests and speakers
- Ensure the side events related materials are fully prepared and facilitators are well prepared
- Follow up with registered job seekers through OPDs and Resource Partners to confirm their readiness and address any questions they may have.
- Confirm arrangements of sign language interpreters and screen reading software
- Communicate with team leaders of volunteer groups, OPDs and resource partners to ensure a smooth flow during the event.
- Conduct a final review of logistics with the team, volunteers, and venue staff to ensure that all aspects are ready for the job fair.

Booth set-up for employers and organizations

Employers' booth should be setup in a way that provides a comfortable space for both employers and job seekers.

Booth Size: Each booth should ideally be 8x8 feet (2.4x2.4 meters). This provides enough space for interaction, displays, and seating while maintaining accessibility.

Backdrop: Each booth should have a backdrop featuring the organization's visibility. The backdrop can include key information such as the organization's name, job openings and benefits working with them. The banner should be large and easily readable, with contrasting colors.

Signage: Clear and visible signage should be placed on top or at the front of each booth with the company's name to ensure easy identification.

Decoration and Branding

- A standard table (6x3 feet) should be placed at the front of the booth for promotional materials, application forms, and other resources.

- Two to three chairs should be available—one for the representative and one or two for job seekers.
- Organization’s brochures, flyers, or other printed materials should be placed on the table.
- List of available job openings at the booth, either printed on a board or banner. This will help candidates quickly identify relevant positions.

Employer’s Representatives: At least two representatives should be present at the booth throughout the event to engage with job seekers, answer questions, and collect resumes.

Chapter 6: Event Day Operations

Assist in registration and information desk

To ensure effective assistance for job seekers with disabilities, the registration and information desk should be placed in an accessible location with clear signage for easy navigation. Trained volunteers should be stationed at all entrances to welcome participants and, if necessary, guide them to the registration desk. At the desk, volunteers must provide respectful and personalized support based on individual needs, including assistance with completing registration forms.

Ensure facilities for the participants (includes entertainment)

To provide a comfortable experience for all participants, the following facilities and amenities should be ensured:

- Washrooms: The venue should have separate washrooms for male and female participants, with at least two fully accessible washrooms available for persons with mobility impairments and wheelchair users. These restrooms should be equipped with features such as grab bars, non-slip flooring, and wide doors to accommodate wheelchairs, providing enough space for easy maneuvering and ensuring the comfort and safety of all users.
- Resting Areas: Designated zones with comfortable seating should be available for attendees who may need breaks during the event.
- Refreshments: Food and beverage stations should be set up in easily accessible locations to accommodate all participants. To promote inclusivity, entrepreneurs with disabilities or their caregivers or family members who are involved in food-related businesses can be invited to manage these stations, creating a supportive and empowering environment.

Facilitate/Co-facilitate side event/seminar

A side event or seminar should be organized to sensitize employers, media, job seekers and other relevant stakeholders. Topics such as inclusive employment practices, the importance

of digital skills, existing skills development opportunities, employable skills, workplace modifications, and success stories from persons with disabilities who were hired during previous job fairs can be discussed. The session should feature expert speakers in disability inclusion, pro-disability employers, OPD representatives and persons with disabilities.

The format should be interactive, incorporating panel discussions and Q&A sessions to encourage participant engagement, dialogue, and facilitate knowledge sharing among stakeholders.

Assist in on-spot interview and selection

In the event day, job seekers will submit their CVs directly to their preferred job vacancies. Employers will review the CVs against their requirements and can conduct on the spot interviews with shortlisted candidates. Volunteers from OPDs and organizers must be available to assist with coordination, guide candidates to their interviews, and support them in completing any necessary forms.

Guest event

Invite distinguished guests, including government officials, corporate leaders, employers and OPD representatives, to share their perspectives on empowering persons with disabilities in the workforce. Develop keynote speeches as well as plans for panel discussions and success story presentations to showcase the positive impact of the job fair. Ensure guests participate in key activities, such as the exchange of appointment letters and the recognition of employers who have demonstrated a strong commitment to disability-inclusive hiring practices.

Exchange appointment letter

To facilitate the exchange of appointment letters, organizers must coordinate with employers over job matching and selection of candidates. Employers should be requested to bring appointment letters to the event or provide appointment letters based on the on-the-spot interviews.

A dedicated session is to be organized where guests, employers, partners and attendees gather for the formal exchange of appointment letters. Employers, alongside distinguished guests, can present the letters to newly hired candidates. Each appointee should be called forward individually, with a brief introduction of their disability and assigned role, formally recognizing their employment. This session serves to highlight the success of the job fair and reinforce the commitment to disability-inclusive hiring practices.

Employers/Stakeholders Recognition

Employers who have actively engaged in the recruitment and hiring of persons with disabilities, as well as Resource Partners should be publicly recognized.

The session should include presenting certificates, plaques, or tokens of appreciation to the employers and resource partners. A brief mention of their contributions, such as their efforts in organizing the job fair, contributions in job matching work or support training and awareness

initiatives, can be made. This public recognition will not only celebrate their efforts but also encourage other stakeholders and employers to adopt inclusive practices in their own organizations.

Networking

Networking is an integral aspect of the job fair, as the entire event serves as a platform for connecting employers, job seekers with disabilities, OPDs, and relevant stakeholders. Throughout the event, participants should have opportunities to engage in conversations, exchange contact information, and explore potential collaborations. OPD representatives and job seekers are encouraged to interact with employers, promoting discussions on inclusive employment practices. Organizers should actively facilitate these interactions, ensuring meaningful discussions that can lead to future job placements, training opportunities, or partnerships supporting disability inclusion in the workforce.

Documentation

To ensure the job fair's outcomes are thoroughly captured and analyzed, a comprehensive documentation mechanism should be established. A dedicated team to be responsible for recording key metrics such as the number of participating job seekers and employers, interviews conducted, job offers made and feedbacks. This data will be compiled into a detailed post-event report, highlighting the event's success and identifying areas for improvement.

In addition, high-quality visual documentation, including photos and videos, should be captured to support future reporting and promotional efforts. Organizers should engage a professional communication agency to document key moments, ensuring the visuals align with the job fair's objectives. This content will be used for post-event reports, media promotions, and social platforms to showcase the event's success and commitment.



Photo: Candidates with disabilities sharing his informaiton with employers

Media promotion

Organizers should engage with local, national, and online media outlets to cover the event, sharing stories of success and emphasizing the importance of disability-inclusive hiring practices. Press releases should be prepared in advance with information about the job fair, its objectives and participant details should be made available. Additionally, social media platforms can be used to amplify coverage, posting live updates, interviews with participants and key moments from the event to reach a broader audience.

Chapter 7: Post-event follow-up

Feedback collection and analysis

Gathering feedback from job seekers is crucial for understanding the event's impact. Since collecting evaluation forms directly can be challenging, volunteers should conduct informal interviews with job seekers during the fair. This feedback should focus on their experiences with accessibility features, interview opportunities, interactions with employers and their overall impressions of the event. Analyzing this feedback will help organizers identify specific areas for improvement and ensure that the needs of job seekers with disabilities are adequately addressed in future events.

Communicate with employers to provide further recruitment support

Maintaining communication with employers after the job fair is essential for providing ongoing recruitment support. This follow-up should include reaching out to gather feedback on their experience, assess any additional needs, and explore opportunities for hiring persons with disabilities. Continued assistance can be offered in areas such as job matching, CV sharing as well as provide technical support for workplace adaptations, disability awareness training, and connecting employers with OPDs and relevant organizations.

Post-employment follow-up and support

After employment, it is essential to provide follow up support to newly hired employees with disabilities to ensure their smooth integration into the workplace. This support can involve regular communications over phone with both employers and employees to identify and address any challenges related to accessibility, productivity, or team dynamics.

Organizers can offer practical guidance to employees on overcoming workplace challenges, such as strategies for navigating their environment more effectively and improving productivity. Additionally, organizers can assist employers by facilitating connections with OPDs for workplace accommodations and disability inclusion training for staff.

After Action Review (analysis of expectations vs outcomes)

An after action review, which involves analyzing expectations versus outcomes after organizing a job fair, process starts by comparing the initial objectives such as the number of expected participating job seekers with disabilities, employers, job placements, and the level of inclusivity in comparison to the actual results. Organizers should examine whether expectations around accessibility, job matching, job placement and participant engagement were met, fell short or exceeded. Factors such as the effectiveness of communication, media promotion, venue accessibility, and the diversity of job opportunities can be evaluated through FGD and KIIs with key stakeholders like job seekers, resource partners and employers. An after action review can improve future events making them more efficient, inclusive, and aligned with the expectations of job seekers with disabilities and employers.

Reporting to stakeholders

Reporting to stakeholders after organizing a job fair for persons with disabilities is key for transparency, accountability and continued collaboration. The report should provide a comprehensive overview of the event, including key metrics such as attendance numbers, candidate registration number, employer participation, job matching status and the overall accessibility of the fair. It should also include insights from collected feedback, highlighting both successes and areas for improvement. Sharing stories of positive outcomes, such as job placements and partnerships formed with employers that contributed to the impact of the event. The report should also outline any challenges encountered and propose recommendations for future events.

Find approaches to include underrepresented groups

To ensure the inclusion of underrepresented groups of persons with disabilities as well as those from remote areas and women with disabilities, several strategic approaches can be adopted-

- **Networking with OPDs:** Collaborate with OPDs that work directly with underrepresented groups of persons with disabilities, such as intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and deaf blindness. These partnerships can help identify potential candidates and offer targeted support to ensure their participation in the job fair.
- **Online Participation Support:** Provide virtual access for participants in remote areas who may face challenges attending in person in the job fair. Offering online meeting platforms will allow them to join the job fair, engage in activities and participate in on-the-spot interviews.
- **Engaging Women-Led OPDs:** To ensure women with disabilities can participate actively, onboard women-led OPDs to assist in mobilizing women from various communities. This will encourage greater participation and provide a more inclusive environment for women with disabilities.

Chapter-8 Conclusion

Factors influencing the success and credibility of a Job fair

The success and credibility of a job fair for persons with disabilities depend on several key factors:

Diverse Participation: A successful job fair requires a wide range of job seekers with disabilities, ensuring diversity across types of disabilities, skill levels, and geographical areas. Strong participation from employers, OPDs, government agencies and job seekers with disabilities, committed to inclusive hiring also enhances the event's credibility.

Employer Engagement: Active involvement from employers, including job matrix, pre-interviews, setting up booths, on-the-spot interviews and job offers, increases the likelihood of job placements.

Accessible Venue and Resources: Organizing the event in an accessible venue with reasonable accommodations (e.g., sign language interpreters, wheelchair accessibility, and assistive technology) ensures that all participants can engage fully.

Media Outreach: Strong media coverage before, during, and after the event enhances the credibility of the fair. This includes news media and social media platforms, emphasizing the importance of disability inclusion.

Effective Communication: Clear, accessible communication with all stakeholders, including employers, job seekers, and volunteers before and during the event is essential for smooth coordination and high participation.

Post-Event Follow-up: Tracking employment outcomes, gathering feedback from stakeholders, and sharing the results through post-event reports contribute to the ongoing credibility and improvement of future job fairs.

Challenges of stakeholder engagement in the job fair

Engaging diverse stakeholders such as OPDs, employers and development partners in a job fair for persons with disabilities involves several challenges:

- Stakeholders like employers, OPDs, development partners and job seekers may have varying objectives. Employers may focus on filling specific roles, while OPDs prioritize showcasing the potential of job seekers with disabilities. Aligning these different goals to create mutual benefit can be difficult.
- OPDs often face resource constraints, such as insufficient funds, limited outreach capacity, or a lack of personnel to mobilize and prepare job seekers with disabilities. This can hinder their full participation and engagement in the job fair.
- Organizing a fully accessible job fair ensuring accessibility and reasonable accommodations, such as assistive technologies, interpreters, and accessible venues, requires significant financial investment. Limited funding can make it difficult to address all accessibility needs and provide adequate support to all participants.
- Encouraging employers to adopt inclusive hiring practices remains a major challenge, especially as most of them are unfamiliar with the business case for inclusive recruitment.
- Coordinating with stakeholders, such as Working committee members, Job Matching Committee members, resource partners, development partners and OPDs can be challenging. Different timelines, priorities and approaches can result in misalignment, affecting the event's overall success.
- A recurring challenge is the gap between the skills of job seekers with disabilities and the specific requirements of employers. This can lead to frustration among both job seekers and employers if suitable matches are not found.
- Ensuring that all event logistics are fully accessible, from registration to interviews, often requires technical expertise and additional resources. A lack of thorough

planning or budget allocation for accessibility can result in barriers for job seekers with disabilities.

These challenges require strategic planning, resource allocation, and continuous collaboration among all stakeholders to ensure a successful and inclusive job fair.

Ongoing efforts to continue the legacy

To ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of the job fair, establishing strong networks through continuous collaboration with OPDs, employers, government bodies, and development partners is essential for an inclusive employment ecosystem for persons with disabilities.

Regular tracking and reporting of key successes, such as job placements and employer partnerships and employer recognition help sustain momentum and create an opportunity for onboarding new employers, donors and supporters. Capacity building training and awareness programs for both employers and job seekers, enhances the effectiveness of future job fairs.



Photo: Guests, Resource Partners and Organizers of the Chattogram Job Fair 2024.

Scaling the job fair model by partnering with government agencies, local employers and development organizations to replicate the event without donor support in various regions ensures broader access to employment opportunities for persons with disabilities from different parts of the country. Additionally, advocacy with policymakers for inclusive employment policies strengthens long-term employer commitment to hiring persons with disabilities. Together, these efforts contribute to the lasting success and credibility of the job fair as a model for promoting inclusive employment

Annexure

○ Annex A: Candidate Registration Form

Questions	Response
1. Full Name	
2. Age	
3. Sex	
4. Contact Number	
5. E- mail	
6. Do you have Disability ID card / Golden Citizenship Card?	
7. Type of Disability	
8. Type of Device Use - where applicable	
9. District you are currently living	
10. Purpose of attending the fair	
11. Highest Level of Education Attained	
12. Subject/Group of Obtain Degree (Bangla, English, Accounting, Economics, Diploma in Civil Engineering, Science, Arts etc.)	
13. (a) List of Training and Skills	
13. (b) List of Technical Skills	
14. Years of work experience	
15. Please mention your previous job experience- organization, position and duration	
16. Preferred job location	
17. Preferred work type	
18. Preferred work role	
19. Describe your strengths	
20. Did you get referred to the Job Fair by self or by any organization?	
21. If referred from any organization Please write the organization name.	
22. Consent to background checks or other pre-employment screenings and sharing data for recruitment purposes.	
23. Submit your CV Word/PDF	

○ Annex B: Job Matrix form

Questions	Response
Company Name: Form Filled By: Designation: Mobile Number: Email: Date:	
1. Position Name	
2. Level of Employment (Entry, Junior, Mid, Senior)	
3. Contractual or Permanent	
4. Key Responsibilities and Tasks	
5. Vacancy Forecast	

Questions	Response
6. Location	
7. Base Monthly Gross Salary and other benefits if any	
8. Required Qualifications and Experiences	
9. Abilities required (Intellectual/Physical)	
10. General Skills (Soft Skills)	
11. Technical Skills (Hard Skills)	
12. Working Hours	
13. Transportation	
14. Accommodation and Reasonable Accommodation in place	
15. Career Growth Opportunities	
Remarks	

○ **Annex C: Checklist of the event**

SI No.	Task	Responsible	Date completed/ status
1.	Select a suitable date for the Job Fair		
2.	Secure an accessible venue		
3.	Parking / transportation logistics		
4.	Event speakers confirmed		
5.	Volunteer rehearsals scheduled		
6.	Invite list compiled		
7.	RSVP process defined		
8.	Invitations composed/printed with schedule		
9.	Invitations sent		
10.	Print advertising		
11.	Radio / television advertising		
12.	Media advertising		
13.	Event signs / signage		
14.	Promotional gifts for candidates		
15.	Plaques/Gifts for Employers and Resource Partners		
16.	Decorations / floral		
17.	Booth		
18.	Seating		
19.	Tables		
20.	Food / menu / dietary concerns addressed		

SI No.	Task	Responsible	Date completed/ status
21.	Beverages		
22.	Additional staff		
23.	Security / first aid		
24.	Registration area and process		
25.	Guest and participant feedback		
26.	Final Pre-event meeting		

○ **Annex D: Tentative budget item**

Items	Breakdown Items
Venue	• Venue rent • Equipment rent • Additional furniture
Venue decoration	• Lighting equipment • Additional signage • Additional decorative items
Food/beverages	• Food item • Tea/Coffee • Drinking water
Event programming	• Sound system • Video documentation • Sign language interpreter • Remuneration for Resource Partners engaged in Job Matching • Conveyance for candidates
Communications/Logistics	• Banner • Flyer • T-shirt • Pen • Event materials • Schedule
Advertising/Marketing	• Social Media • Print & Electronic media

○ **Annex E: Tentative procurement items**

- ✓ Event banners- backdrop, X-banners, Posters, festoons
- ✓ Event brochures
- ✓ Customizable ID cards for volunteers
- ✓ Standard booth for employers
- ✓ Office supplies- Pen, paper, marker, highlighter etc.
- ✓ Audio-visual equipment's- microphone, speakers, projects,
- ✓ First aid box with kits
- ✓ Catering services- food, beverage and others
- ✓ Plaque or certificates for Employers
- ✓ Additional furniture's-tables, chairs

✓ Additional decoration items-lighting, fans etc.

○ **Annex F: Role of volunteers**

Categories	Descriptions
Registration Assistance	○ Help with the check-in process for job seekers and employers. ○ Distribute event materials. ○ Collect registration forms and ensure accurate data entry ○ Make timely announcements regarding important events and call candidates for on-the-spot interviews.
Guiding Job Seekers	○ Assist job seekers in locating employer booths. ○ Provide information about event layout, schedule, and resources available. ○ Answer questions and direct individuals to appropriate areas.
Support for Employers	○ Assist employers with setting up their booths and materials. ○ Provide up-to-date information on the event ○ Support during on-the-spot interview
Accessibility & Technical support	○ Assist individuals with disabilities in navigating the venue. ○ Help set up and manage audio-visual equipment for presentations.
Event cleanup	○ Assist in the breakdown of booths and cleanup of the venue after the event concludes. ○ Ensure that materials are properly stored or disposed of.
General Support	○ Provide general assistance to event organizers as needed. ○ Be available for any unforeseen tasks or needs that arise during the event.