

Roadmap to Bridging the Gap between Government & Private Sector to support Persons with Disabilities

Bangladesh Business and Disability Network

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Background	4
National Action Plan to Implement RPRD 2013	5
Employment Status of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in Bangladesh	5
Barriers for Employment and Entrepreneurship for Persons with Disabilities	6
Negative Attitude	6
Accessibility problems	6
Extra Costs of Disability	7
Lack of inclusive Labour Market in Bangladesh	7
Inadequate Access to the Skills Training	8
Unfavourable recruitment process	8
Business case for employing persons with disabilities	8
Barriers for Entrepreneurship	8
Lack of appropriate Social Protection for economic empowerment of persons with disabilities	9
Bangladesh Business & Disability Network – an introduction	9
Aim of the roadmap	10
Work areas for engagement of Private Sector in National Action Plan for Disabilities	11
Existing Good Practices of BBDN	12
Inclusion services	13
Advocacy and Research	13
Awareness raising	13
Development of an Inclusive Labour market:	14
BBDN’s Achievements – at a glance:	14
Stakeholders Engagement	15
Government of Bangladesh	15
Private sector	16
Civil Society Organizations	16
Trade Union	17
Academia:	17
Media	18
Conclusion	18
Roadmap to implement National Action Plan for Disabilities (2018)	20

Executive Summary

Bangladesh is one of the forerunners in South Asia to have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), including the Optional Protocol of the CRPD, and has enacted the 'Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013 (RPPD Act 2013)'. The RPPD Act 2013 specifically states that person with disabilities will enjoy the right to employment in both the public and private sectors with reasonable accommodation made for them. In 2018, the Government of Bangladesh has drafted a National Plan of Action to implement the Disability Rights and Protection Act 2013, which is in line with the UNCRPD. The Government is also committed to empower the Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to have a stronger voice in shaping the policies that affect them. The Government has also established a number of committees and a National Coordination Council for co-ordination of the actions of different ministries. Policies (such as, inclusive education policy) have been developed to ensure inclusion of the persons with disabilities in every aspect of the society.

According to National Survey on Persons with Disabilities (NSPD) 2021, only one third (33.78 percent) of the persons with disabilities aged 15-64 year are employed; 47.59 percent are men and 12.80 percent women, 35.55 percent in the rural area and 25.95 percent in the urban area. Majority of the persons with disabilities (15-64 years), who are in employment, are mainly self-employed (54.42 percent), followed by 'household or family business' (18.14 percent), and 'private organizations' (16.37 percent).

Bangladesh Business & Disability Network (BBDN) is a unique network of employers and employers' associations formed in collaboration with disability-focused Organizations, NGOs, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), CSOs and development partners. The Network was founded as a non-profit trust by the Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2016, with the aim of facilitating the development of a more disability-inclusive labor market system in Bangladesh.

BBDN can play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between Government (Ministries involved in implementing Action Plan for Disabilities) and business sector (Federations of chambers, associations and individual employers)—for piloting inclusive labour market and economic empowerment of persons with disabilities.

This roadmap specifically highlights those areas where BBDN as a private sector focal point can work with state parties (Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Skills Authorities), a vast network of private sector entities and organizations of persons with disabilities, Disability expert

organizations as well as with the development partners to ensure 'Right of Employment' for persons with disabilities in the country.

After careful review of the RPPD Act 2013 and the National Plan of Action 2018, the BBDN has identified specific work areas for the private sector/employers to contribute towards achieving these national commitments.

With the proposed inclusion of BBDN in the National Coordination Council and National Implementation Committee, the Government of Bangladesh will have easy access to a group of private sector leaders willing to jointly undertake initiatives for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in private sector jobs.

Background

‘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’ (UNCRPD 2006). Disability is spread worldwide. One in every ten people has a disability and four of every five persons with disabilities live in developing countries (WHO & The World Bank 2011; ILO, 2011).

In Bangladesh, based on different definitions and criteria, different sources provide varying disability prevalence rates i.e., 9.01% in the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (BBS 2010) and 1.4% in the National Census of 2011. The latest figures issued by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) in National Survey on Persons with Disabilities (NSPD) 2021 reveals following statistics on prevalence of disability in Bangladesh:

Indicators	Both	Male	Female
Persons with at least one disability (based on types defined in the Persons with Disability Rights and Protection Act, 2013 of Bangladesh)			
Total	2.80	3.28	2.32
Area			
Rural	2.89	3.44	2.35
Urban	2.45	2.69	2.20
Disability by category			
Autism or autism spectrum disorder	0.05	0.06	0.04
Physical disability	1.35	1.66	1.03
Mental illness leading to disability	0.29	0.33	0.24
Visual disability	0.46	0.49	0.43
Speech disability	0.32	0.37	0.27
Intellectual disability	0.22	0.24	0.19
Hearing disability	0.36	0.37	0.34
Cerebral palsy	0.08	0.08	0.07
Down syndrome	0.04	0.04	0.04
Deaf-blindness	0.02	0.03	0.02
Multiple disability	0.35	0.39	0.31
Other disability	0.05	0.07	0.03

Bangladesh is one of the forerunners in South Asia to have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) including the Optional Protocol of the CRPD in November 2007. The country has enacted the ‘Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013 (RPPD Act 2013)’, and developed a National Skill Development Policy – both of which are important steps in creating access of its population with disabilities to skills training and employment. The RPPD Act 2013 specifically states that people with disabilities will enjoy the right to employment in both the public and private sectors with reasonable accommodation made for them (Article 16, Clause 9). Moreover, the Act further declares that a person who has acquired disability while in employment, has the right to continue work/employment or be compensated (Article 16, clause 10). The RPPD Act 2013 paves ways to taking steps by all in addressing

inaccessibility of various kinds, although a study indicates the need for more clarity in regard to some of the provisions e.g. on who should be responsible for rehabilitation of the concerned person with disability, and standard and quantum of compensation etc. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) also reserves 10 per cent quota for orphans and people with disabilities for non-cadre service government jobs for 3rd and 4th class employees, and 1% quota for people with disabilities alone for 1st and 2nd class jobs of the republic. (Note: Recently as a result of public protest, the 1% quota for persons with disabilities in 1st class Government jobs has been abolished). Although in recent years the Government's recruitment of people with disabilities has increased particularly in the education & social services sectors, both these quotas remain unmet.

UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Parties to the convention are required to promote, protect, and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy full equality under the law. The convention was the first U.N. human rights treaty of the twenty-first century. The text was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006, and it came into force on 3 May 2008. As of January 2023, it has 164 signatories and 186 parties, 185 states and the European Union (which ratified it on 23 December 2010). The convention is monitored by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for which annual Conferences of States Parties to the CRPD have set guidelines since 2008. Government of Bangladesh ratified UNCRPD on 30th November 2007. The Ministry of Social Welfare in the Government of Bangladesh coordinated all actions and prepared a report on implementation of UNCRPD submitted to the Office of High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR).

National Action Plan to Implement RPRD 2013

In 2018, the Government of Bangladesh has drafted a National Plan of Action to implement the Disability Rights and Protection Act 2013, which is in line with the UNCRPD. The Government of Bangladesh is also committed to empower the Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to have a stronger voice in shaping the policies that affect them. For this, the OPDs are given various types of facilities in relation to inclusion of their representatives in different committees irrespective of welfare or planning or policy making meetings. The Government of Bangladesh has also established a number of committees and a National Coordination Council for co-ordination of the actions of different ministries. Policies (such as, inclusive education policy) have been developed to ensure inclusion of the persons with disabilities in every aspect of the society. For effective implementation of the policy commitments, the government is committed to further strengthen the

role of these committees. The Government of Bangladesh is committed to empower the persons with disabilities by providing special quota in the government services.

Employment Status of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in Bangladesh

According to National Survey on Persons with Disabilities (NSPD) 2021 released in December 2022, only one third (33.78 percent) of the persons with disabilities aged 15-64 year (i.e., working age) are employed; 47.59 percent are males and 12.80 percent females, 35.55 percent in the rural area and 25.95 percent in the urban area. 4.80 percent of children with disabilities aged 5-17 years are involved in child labour; 6.71 percent among males and 2.04 percent among females. Most of the persons with disabilities (15-64 years), who are in employment, are mainly self-employed (54.42 percent), followed by 'household or family business' (18.14 percent), and 'private organizations' (16.37 percent). Only 2.66 percent of the persons with disabilities received some training, mainly on computer skills (35.61 percent), work in the readymade garments sector (15.24 percent) and 'handicraft or cottage work' (12.36 percent). Based on these statistics, following key policy messages are derived:

- There is a major gap in employment opportunities for persons with disabilities
- Women with disabilities are largely excluded from employment (only 12.80 percent employed).
- Gender disparities exist in labour market for persons with disabilities
- Children with disabilities work for contributing to their family income
- 'Self-employment' is a preferred sector for employment among persons with disabilities
- Training facilities for persons with disabilities are inadequate

Barriers for Employment and Entrepreneurship for Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities face many challenges due to varied reasons including poverty and lack of access to mainstream economic activities. Drivers of poverty include exclusion from work and other livelihood activities and disability related direct costs. There is a demonstrated link between poverty and disability. Persons with Disabilities are more likely to be found among the poorest quintiles in society, in both high-income and low-income countries, although in greater numbers in the low-income context.

Prospects for economic development in Bangladesh are promising, with the impressive growth performance of the nation's GDP and per capita income in recent years. In Bangladesh, entitlements include a disability-targeted, means-tested cash transfer of BDT 750 per month (this has been increased by BDT 100.00 p/m in the proposed Annual Budget of the Government of Bangladesh 2022- 2023). People with disabilities enjoy the advantage of 5% reservation at training institutes.

Direct costs are particularly challenging to quantify as most common methods do not capture unmet costs (Mitra et al. 2017). Some studies faced challenges of capturing these unmet costs, as individuals (respondents of the study) often were not aware of the goods and services they required. Research is also needed to explore the impact of interventions designed to lessen costs: there is currently very limited evidence on the effectiveness of livelihood interventions (e.g. job training and matching), social protection or disability-inclusive policy and planning (e.g. inclusive skills development, physical and non-physical accessibility, transportation, communication) amongst people with disabilities (Banks et al. 2017; Saran, White, and Kuper 2020).

Negative Attitude

Lack of cooperation in the workplace makes persons with disabilities reluctant to participate in teamwork. Negative attitude of the colleagues creates barriers to sustain in the same job. While there is a favourable policy for persons with disabilities to identify a buddy to offer any support to them during any emergency evacuations or other need in many workplaces, some enterprises lack having the policy in place or there is an absence of the practice. One of the major reasons for persons with disabilities to discontinue their job is due to unavailability of any support mechanism.

Accessibility problems

People with disabilities face several problems in accessing information, services, and opportunities for their social and economic wellbeing. Major accessibility problems are linked with transportation and physical mobility, digital / information accessibility, access to buildings and public facilities, and soft-barriers i.e., attitudes and behaviour of the community towards accessibility.

Unavailability of accessible transport keeps persons with disabilities out of the labour market. Some national level organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) in Bangladesh have been doing advocacy for introducing accessible transport at least in the city. It was not introduced till now, which not only reduces the mobility of persons with disabilities but also keeps them out of work. Costs also increase if a person with a disability is compelled to use any taxi or rented transport. Persons with visual impairment rely on public transport or on friends or family to provide them the support. Persons with disabilities reported that they also bear extra transport costs for assistance, depending on the time and distance. The data from the informal interviews with OPD representatives suggest that the cost of transport is very high with most spent-on taxis. It was also reported that people with mild and moderate disabilities do not necessarily have higher transport costs when they get access to public transport.

Information and digital accessibility are other areas which require urgent attention. The A2i programme has made some progress in this regard – however, it needs to be further scaled up and to be mainstreamed in public policy.

Accessibility to public buildings and service facilities are also important elements to ensure equal opportunities for people with disabilities. In this regard, the Government has already initiated some affirmative actions - but there is still a large gap that needs to be filled.

Extra Costs of Disability

The extra costs of disability address both indirect and direct costs. Indirect costs include necessary earnings that persons with disabilities incur because they face barriers to engage in employment. They also include costs borne by family members who may choose flexible work hours with less duty necessary to provide care to a family member with a disability. Direct costs are those expenses people make because they have a disability. The largest extra costs are for personal assistance services and health care, where out-of-pocket costs for people with a disability are more than twice as high as those without a disability (Kennedy, J., Wood, E.G., & Frieden, L. 2017).

Studies show that persons with disabilities in Bangladesh face direct and indirect costs like other low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) (Banks et al, 2022). The costs of healthcare have often been identified as a large source of direct costs in both high- and low-income settings (Mitra, Findley, and Sambamoorthi 2009; Mitra et al. 2017), although is likely to be more impoverishing in many LMICs where health Financing systems to offset individual spending are nascent. Similarly, transportation, accommodations at work and school, and indirect costs such as foregone earnings by people with disabilities and their households have been noted in other settings (Hanass-Hancock et al. 2017; Palmer et al. 2015; Mitra et al. 2017).

Lack of inclusiveness in the Labour Market in Bangladesh

An inclusive labour market is a labour market that allows and encourages all people of working age to participate in paid work and provides a framework for their development. Productive employment and decent work are central to enabling persons with disabilities to participate fully and equally in society and to enjoy an adequate standard of living. Persons with disabilities generally fare worse than persons without disabilities in the labour market due to lack of inclusive labour market. Factors which affect inclusive labour markets are lack of alignment of labour laws with principles of inclusiveness, inadequate monitoring and inspection of labour market to allow equal opportunities and working conditions, reporting on inclusive human resource policies by factories, and lack of sectoral analysis from inclusion perspective. Although comprehensive data sets that are fully comparable across countries and time are lacking, data from around the world provide enough evidence of a clear disability gap in employment. Backup (2009) have reported that factors such as lack of adequate transportation or physical accessibility coupled with lower levels of education are mainly absent to support persons with disabilities to have equal access to employment and occupations.

Inadequate Access to the Skills Training

Lack of access to the skills training is a major barrier to promote an inclusive workforce due to many reasons e.g., lack of access to the information, training methods, accommodation in the neighbouring communities of the training institutes, commuting from and to the residence and the training centres, inaccessible pedestrians for wheelchair and white cane, inaccessible built environment of the training institute, and overall support from the family & society. Majority of training institutes offer training courses in traditional skills which are 'supply-driven' instead of customizing training to latest demands of the job market. Lack of career counselling and vocational guidance and inadequate industry-institute linkages also affect the prospects for employability of people with disabilities.

Inaccessible recruitment process

Persons with visual impairments face difficulties when the job vacancies are not announced in an accessible format. There is an enormous need to address the requirement of persons with visual impairment and low vision. They are mostly out of waged employment due to a lack of confidence from the employers, lack of knowledge and skills on digital accessibility, which influences the HR managers not to include persons with visual disability. Persons with hearing and speech impairment also face numerous challenges to get access to employment due to a lack of skill to use sign language. Persons with autism, intellectual disability were also not found in the mainstream labour market as reported by the professionals from the relevant institutes. Although they have introduced modern training methods, techniques for special educators, it was not possible to create employment opportunities.

Business case for employing persons with disabilities

Global opinion on what constitutes fair and ethical treatment of people with disabilities is changing fundamentally as evidenced by the fact that 181 countries have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Disability is now understood to be an employment, consumer, and human rights priority. Employees, job seekers, customers, civil society, regulators, and public policymakers are increasingly aware of this shift. Expectations of responsible business are changing accordingly. Businesses which anticipate these changing expectations by delivering disability confident best practice, will be better placed to realize all human potential. They will minimize legal and operational risks while benefiting from recognition as responsible companies. Following factors can help businesses to understand why it is important to adopt inclusive business approaches:

- Between 15-18 percent of any country's population will have a disability.
- There are more than 1.3 billion people with disabilities worldwide and the population is growing as we age and with advances in medical science.

- 80 percent of people with disabilities live in the developing world.
- 1 in 3 people aged 50-64 will have a disability.
- 1 in 5 women worldwide will have a disability.
- Most disabilities, nearly 80 per cent, are not immediately visible.
- Anyone who reaches 70 years of age is likely to experience at least 10 years of disability and/or chronic health conditions.
- People with disabilities probably work for you. 10-12 percent of the workforce of any large organisation is likely to have lived experience of disability.
- At least 1 in 3 people either has a disability themselves or has a person with a disability in their immediate circle.
- People with disabilities worldwide are at least twice as likely to be unemployed as their non-disabled peers, often significantly more.

Disability-confident employers provide every employee, including those with disabilities, with the tools and flexibility that they require if they are to realize their potential. A disability-confident business is able to unlock business improvement and innovation by creating a more accessible, efficient and disability-confident workplace while enhancing employee engagement and wellbeing.

Making a business case to include a person with a disability must be built on more than it is the right of a citizen as per any national legislation or international standard to do. Different market researches have shown that employing persons with disabilities has positive impacts on an enterprise including increased motivation, increased productivity, increased profitability, increased ability to find and retain talent and reduced recruitment costs.

Barriers for Entrepreneurship

While self-employment and managing family businesses are the two top employment choices for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh, still there is a lot to be done to create an enabling business environment for the disabled persons. Lack of business training, simplified access to finance, business registration process, banking procedures, and getting multiple approvals from different Government institutions makes it very difficult for persons with disabilities to adopt entrepreneurship. A one-window facility where all formalities for business registration and access to finance could be addressed for persons with disabilities will be a great support.

Saptarshi Dhar and Tahira Farzana (2017) in their study titled 'Entrepreneurship with Disabilities in Bangladesh: An Exploratory on Their Entrepreneurial Motivation and Challenges' illustrates that entrepreneur with disabilities in Bangladesh, social inclusion and acceptance, economic empowerment, breaking the social and family barrier and lack of job opportunity in the traditional

workforce are the key motivational drivers for embracing entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurial challenges include personal, environmental, financial, operational, infrastructural and informational constraints. The paper also suggests a strategic framework for overcoming the challenges faced by entrepreneurs with disabilities in Bangladesh.

Lack of appropriate Social Protection for economic empowerment of persons with disabilities

Social protection is concerned with protecting and helping those who are poor, vulnerable, marginalised or dealing with risks. The risks can affect individuals or households and can be associated with life cycle stages. Social protection has been increasingly stressed by policy makers in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) as a strategy for poverty reduction for all vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities. The employment gap between persons with disabilities and those without is a gap that is broadening. It is particularly marked between persons with disabilities in low skilled, manual occupations and their more privileged counterparts in professional occupations. Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) are one key component of broader activation strategies to promote the employment of persons with disabilities through changes to the disability-related social protection system and wider labour market policies. At the moment, Bangladesh social protection for persons with disabilities is mainly providing survival level income support without any focus on economic empowerment of persons with disabilities.

In Bangladesh, entitlements include a disability-targeted, means-tested cash transfer of BDT 750 per month, available to people with disabilities in households with an annual income below BDT 24,000. Persons with disabilities may also access a 5% reservation at training institutions. There are different models of inclusive social protection in practice.

- High income countries use a combination of cash transfers and social insurance to offer social protection to people with disabilities throughout their life cycle.
- There are three specific schemes for people with disabilities in work.
- First, disability pension for those who are unable to work. It can also be termed as an income replacement scheme.
- Second, the scheme is to compensate for the extra cost of disability. This type of benefit can be offered to anyone with a disability and will help them in fulfilling their extra cost.
- Third, the benefit supports family members who give up work to take care of a person with a disability.

Bangladesh Business & Disability Network an introduction

Bangladesh Business & Disability Network (BBDN) is a unique network of employers and employers' associations formed in collaboration with disability-focused Organizations, NGOs, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), CSOs and development partners. The Network was founded as a non-profit trust by the Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2016, with the aim of facilitating the development of a more disability-inclusive labor market system in Bangladesh.

The employers represented at BBDN include those in the Ready-made garment, Knitwear, Textile, Leather & Footwear, Banking, Retail, and Telecommunications sectors to promote accessible and inclusive workplaces since its inception in 2016. BBDN intends to increase its membership among employers to continue its programme. This will not only strengthen the capacity of the programme but also create an enabling environment to promote a disability inclusive labour market in Bangladesh.

The BBDN Board of Trustees, which consists of senior corporate leaders and experts from the disability field, are involved in the key decision-making process and guidance to achieve the organizational goals.

In addition to working with its members, BBDN conducts regular engagement with the employers' associations on various matters, while also having access to policy makers and government bodies related to inclusive skills and employment in collaboration with BEF; which is an official in-country constituent of the ILO that represents employers next to the workers' and government representatives.

Multiple development partners have been actively supporting and resourcing BBDN to achieve the various objectives of the network. Among them, ILO, the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), European Union, Kingdom of the Netherlands and Government of Canada are mentionable.

Aim of the roadmap

Development of an inclusive labour market is a response to the requirement of fostering access of persons with disabilities to employment. It is beyond the right of persons with disabilities to have access to the labour market. There are evidences to make it a business case in the private sector. It requires the development of solutions for the potential employers, strongly supported by enhancing the required competencies of the supply side, i.e. persons with disabilities to get them eligible for prospective workplaces.

Bangladesh Business & Disability Network (BBDN) can play a pivotal role on bridging the gap between Government (Ministries involved in implementing Action Plan for Disabilities) and business sector (Federations of chambers, associations and individual employers) – for piloting inclusive labour market and economic empowerment of persons with disabilities.

This roadmap specifically highlights those areas where BBDN can work with state parties (Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Skills Authorities a vast network of private sector entities and organizations of persons with disabilities, Disability expert organisations as well as with the development partners to ensure ‘Right of Employment’ for persons with disabilities in the country.

Work areas for engagement of Private Sector network in National Action Plan for Disabilities

Upon detailed examination of the National Action Plan for Disabilities (2018), BBDN has identified the following major areas for engagement of the Private Sector and would like to offer its collaboration with relevant Ministries in the Government of Bangladesh to collaborate and work together on such areas.

Ref #	Description	Proposed Action from BBDN
1.	Committee formation	BBDN would propose to be included as ‘Private Sector Member’ in the two high power committees (National Coordination Committee and National Executive Committee)
2.	Committee meetings	BBDN will participate in national committees and will provide inputs for effective engagement of private sector in actions to support Persons with disabilities
3.a	Rights of Persons with Disabilities – To survive and grow	Undertake measures for persons with disabilities to survive and grow in ‘workplaces’ and making workplaces more inclusive and supportive for Persons with disabilities by offering them equal opportunities
3.b	Legal recognition in every sphere of life, and access to justice	Undertake measures to include Disability-sensitive clauses in National Labour Laws in line with RPPD Act 2013 and ensure access to decent employment for persons with disabilities
4.	Health & Rehabilitation Services	Undertake measures to adequately cover workers with disabilities in all prevailing measures related to accessing good healthcare & Rehabilitation services – including Enterprise-based Clinics, Insurance, company-run hospitals, prevention and cure of work related injuries, accident and diseases, workplace adjustment and Return To Work (RTW)
5.	Social participation and family formation	BBDN will undertake awareness raising of Employers to encourage/support their workers with disabilities for social participation. BBDN will work with the family of persons with disabilities to support and engage with them in different forms of economic activities and general awareness raising for other people /actors to support them in spending culturally appropriate social and active economic life.
6.	Accessibility	Accessibility is already one of the core areas for BBDN. BBDN

Ref #	Description	Proposed Action from BBDN
		will undertake all measures to encourage Employers to make their workplaces accessible for persons with disabilities and for becoming equal opportunity employers. BBDN will also continue to organize a national Award for best 'Equal Opportunity Employers' to encourage employers.
7.	Sharing Information and Communication Technology	As part of accessibility support, BBDN will continue to take necessary measures for making 'Employment and Business-related' information to reach persons with disabilities – by adopting disability-sensitive communications, disability-friendly websites, and providing disability-friendly IT equipment for workers with disabilities who are in need.
8.	Mobility	BBDN will support private sector companies to develop assistive technologies and assistive devices for local manufacturing and provision on low-cost for working persons with disabilities.
9.	Education and Training	BBDN already undertakes a number of measures for education, training and jobs-facilitation for persons with disabilities. BBDN will expand this work in collaboration with relevant Ministries – particularly, Ministry of Youth and Ministry of Labour & Employment – to create enabling environment for training and jobs-facilitation of persons with disabilities
10.	Employment	BBDN will continue its efforts for access to decent employment for persons with disabilities by enabling persons with disabilities to compete in open competitions for jobs; create enabling environment for persons with disabilities to establish self-employment activities (training, access to finance, business incubation, etc); formation of Cooperative Societies for persons with disabilities; Return to Work (RTW) for disabled workers due to workplace accidents; School-to-work transition; job-fairs; access to online/platform jobs; and improving working conditions for employed persons with disabilities
11.	Social Security	BBDN will take necessary measures in collaboration with ILO and relevant Ministries to establish at least one national Social Security programme for persons with disabilities to protect them against unemployment and provide them with support to establish small businesses or access labour market and become self-sustained citizens.
12.	Natural disaster, Risk, and Humanitarian Emergencies	Engage/fund raise from the private sector in such emergencies to respond to the vital needs of people with disabilities.
13.	Sports, Cultural Activities, Recreation, and Tourism	BBDN can study the disability-culture of the context to identify the signs of inequalities and discrimination deeply rooted in social belief, norms and values. Such norms govern the attitude of the society or particular groups as invisible threats to mainstreaming the development initiatives. BBDN can invest to understand/observe the physicalization process of such inequalities in the context. Develop different cultural intervention- tools to raise public awareness to emberking the barriers from deep. BBDN Promote inclusion in the tourism sectors from both

Ref #	Description	Proposed Action from BBDN
		employment and service angle. Also can support/sponsor persons with disabilities who build careers in the sport sector.
14.	Raising Awareness	BBDN will undertake measures to create awareness among Employers and workers in all workplaces to ensure dignity and self-esteem of persons with disabilities in workplaces as well as within their families and in their societies
15.	Language and Communication	BBDN will promote use of sign language in those workplaces where persons with disabilities are employed.
16.	Organization and Self-help Groups	BBDN will strengthen/colabourate active national OPD platforms for promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities in the Skills and employment system. Capacity building of the local OPDs to work with regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Support/organise self-help groups for co-operative business/ entrepreneurship within the extended resource capacity.
17.	Detection	BBDN can engage/ collaborate in the process of labour force survey
18.	Research	BBDN will partner with public/private universities or relevant institutes to regularly undertake research on different dimensions of right to employment and entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities and to identify international best practices for enhancing employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for persons with disabilities

Existing Good Practices of BBDN

BBDN has systematically gathered its learning about what works well and what does not by conducting necessary research, developing strategy documents and co-creating a roadmap that identifies the way forward to ensuring broad based inclusive employment.

BBDN is a Member of Generation Unlimited (GenU) Bangladesh Steering Committee. GenU was launched globally in 2018 and in Bangladesh in 2019 as a Public Private Youth Partnership, bringing together leaders from government, UN agencies, the private sector, academia, civil society organizations, and young people with an ambitious goal of enabling 17 million opportunities for youth in relation to skilling and employment, entrepreneurship and youth engagement for social impact. BBDN is engaged with GenU Bangladesh to ensure that young people with disabilities can access quality skills development, are included in the mainstream job market and have an influential voice in decision making. GenU is a partnership steered by young people, who viscerally understand the challenges they face and have the ambitions to come up with the most relevant solutions.

Inclusion services

Disability inclusion is a process that requires attitudinal and behavioural change alongside adaptations to build an enabling environment, in an effort to overcome the soft and hard barriers that people with disabilities face. BBDN offers inclusion services to the employers and other

stakeholders such as technical training centres. BBDN supports the organization to develop their own disability inclusion action plan and provide appropriate technical support services to execute the plan; which differs from organization to organization depending on the internal mandate. In-depth disability inclusion training, accessibility assessment of the built environment, policy adaptation for disability and gender inclusion, candidate mobilization, job-matching and on-going consultancy are some of the key areas of intervention.

Advocacy and Research

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of the programs and initiatives of BBDN helps to systematically understand the gaps and needs related to moving disability inclusion forward in a holistic manner. On one hand, this exercise feeds into refining methods of service delivery, while on the other hand, it serves as a basis for evidence-based advocacy with stakeholders.

BBDN represents the collective voice of employers in the policy discourse related to disability inclusion. This is best exemplified in the role the network has played to gather recommendations for making amendments to the Labour Act, in an effort to make it more aligned with the needs of people with disabilities. In addition, BBDN has advocated for a range of other issues such as effectively operationalizing the tax incentive for inclusive employers, analysing the provisions in the 8th five year plan and generating discussion around inclusion amongst SMEs etc.

Awareness raising

Historically, disability has been approached through a charity, welfare or medical lens. With the advent of the UNCRPD, it is increasingly positioned as a rights-based social issue; which is further reflected in the SDG goals. Disability is increasingly seen as a skills and employment related matter both from a diversity and inclusion as well as an occupational health and safety perspective (as indicated by the recent launch of the Employment Injury Scheme trial in the RMG sector of Bangladesh). Many businesses have already successfully created inclusive workforces while others aim to initiate the journey; however, it is often unclear how to proceed. BBDN collaborates with its members, to create awareness among the business community to adopt a positive attitude towards persons with disabilities – both if they approach for jobs or for doing joint business. Also, to create an enabling environment for persons with disabilities working in their enterprises by improving accessibility, working conditions, and inclusive environment in the organization.

Development of an Inclusive Labour market:

The BBDN got ample opportunities to work closely with the representatives of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) through different projects. It has also found that applying a twin track (Disability specific & Mainstreaming) approach is essential to have access to persons with disabilities (women, men, boys and girls) to employment by removing/ reducing existing barriers. Connecting

with the related actors is a prerequisite for ensuring an inclusive labour market, which requires time and patience from both the supply and demand side.

BBDN's Achievements – at a glance:

- 130+ individual companies have received various degrees of disability inclusion services through BBDN.
- Over 620+ corporate officials and 540+ TVET professionals have received In-depth disability inclusion training from the network.
- 37 companies have taken paid membership with BBDN in addition to 17 other types of organizations
- BBDN successfully organized 4 physical and 2 online (during pandemic) job fairs and few spot interviews for the youth with disabilities; the online fairs were the first of their kind for people with disabilities. From online and off-line job fair format the network was able to confirm 500+ Jobs for youth with disabilities where 30% were female. The i2i and Inclusion Works Programs BBDN has been involved with collectively delivering over 1000 jobs, apprenticeships and internships across Bangladesh and a few African countries.
- BBDN has facilitated the process of piloting and launching a Digital Employment Pathway (DEP) for youth with disabilities locally with Bdjobs.com as part of the i2i program funded by FCDO.
- Over 8000 job seekers with disabilities are registered in the DEP where they can navigate and apply for jobs available in the Bdjobs portal and employers can search through the database of candidates with disabilities.
- With the close support of Bangladesh Employers' Federation, BBDN continues its policy advocacy initiative with the relevant ministries of the Government. The National Strategy for Return to Work & Rehabilitation, Synchronization of Bangladesh Labor Act with The Rights and protection for persons with disabilities Act 2013, and National Roadmap for Private sector employment are key areas, in addition to representing the voice of employers in key government interactions such as national budget reactions and discussions.
- BBDN has engaged with Sector associations as target stakeholders to broaden the reach of the network. BBDN has signed a number of MOUs with different Employers' Associations to strengthen its engagement with the private sector including the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) and Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), while other MOUs are in active discussions.
- BBDN has, so far, successfully engaged with the private sector in Bangladesh to take the disability inclusion agenda a step forward. In recognition of this, for the year 2021, BBDN won

the Zero Project Award in the category of Innovative Practices in Employment from the Business Sector.

To promote an inclusive labour market following roles were identified by the respondents during the workshop and survey:

Stakeholders Engagement

Whenever there is any initiative for employment in the private sector or industry, a certain number of stakeholders must be engaged to interact jointly and address national issues in a collaborative manner. It is difficult to meet all the needs to make access to persons with disabilities in employment without the combined efforts of related actors. In the following lines, key areas are identified to engage different stakeholders by BBDN for promoting the National Action Plan for Disability.

Government of Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh leads the process for implementing the National Action Plan and guides all stakeholders according to its national policies. Government also needs to identify the prevalence rate of persons with disabilities including the working age population with disabilities based on a nationwide survey. The Ministry of Labour and Manpower is responsible for creating employment and ensuring rehabilitation if any worker suffers an accident. A connection can be formed between the BBDN and the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Additionally, the BBDN needs to be connected with other ministries that have been engaged in capacity building and creating employment opportunities. Establishing relations with the ministries of commerce, youth development, and NSDA are important to implement this roadmap by the BBDN and key stakeholders. BBDN will coordinate with Government of Bangladesh on following areas:

- To recognize the role of people with disabilities alongside the other agencies to further the roadmap because when we move to the education process, social mobilization process, or awareness raising process, then we can inform them so that they can get in touch with the appropriate sector for their needs.
- It would be a significant accomplishment if a 10% quota were implemented in the business sector similarly to the Government.
- Implementation of BNBC 2020 for every infrastructure.
- Implementation of the Tax rebate needs to be encouraged.
- It is important to connect disability issues with the ongoing 8th five-year plan of the Government of Bangladesh, the national job strategy, and with the SME policy 2019.
- Accessible transport needs to be launched.

- Global harmonize accessible symbol/ signage for product and services are available
- Inclusive Banking policy and strategy Initiatives should be taken by Bangladesh Bank and must push the agenda across the Banking & finance sector.
- Introducing an accessible digital transaction system and national currency with braille marks by the central bank.
- Review of existing policy is required with the lens of social and economic entitlements of persons with disabilities with the provision of penalty in case of violations of human rights.
- Employment support scheme for business and for persons with disabilities

Private sector

BBDN will actively engage with Private Sector for the following interventions:

- Accessible information centres may be established and functional for job seekers with disabilities.
- Inclusive HR Policy is required for the employers
- Workplace needs to provide reasonable accommodations as per the individual requirement.
- Job matching for persons with disabilities and create opportunities based on the nature of job requirements.
- Create opportunities for internship, apprenticeship for competent job seekers with disabilities.
- Providing assistive technology to employees with disabilities as CSR activities within the organization premises.
- Establishment of new options/ factories for assistive technology.
- Creating provision for workplace adjustment, occupational health & Safety, return to work etc.

Civil Society Organizations

A number of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have accumulated a wealth of experience in supporting persons with disabilities – which can be helpful for BBDN to support the National Action Plan for Disabilities. For example, CRP has a pioneer role in rehabilitation, re-skilling and job inclusion of persons with disabilities.. Hence, creating access for persons with disabilities to public and private run skills development centres is necessary. The private sectors may also reach a certain quota of their workforce by the persons with disabilities gradually on an incremental percentage till 2030.

- CSOs will facilitate training on inclusive skills development
- Conduct advocacy with the government and private entities to create an inclusive workplace.
- Campaign for awareness building.

- Bridging gaps between public and private sector.
- Initiate programmes on promoting access to assistive technology.
- Provide guidance to the government, academia, and employers on how to make websites accessible to people with all types of disabilities.
- Arrange training on assistive technology.

Trade Union

Trade Unions can also play an important role in creating an enabling environment for persons with disabilities in workplaces and mass awareness among workers to support persons with disabilities in their workplaces, families, and society at large. BBDN will interact with Trade Unions on following interventions.

- Raising voice for protection and ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities
- Negotiate with the employer for creating job opportunities for competent people irrespective of ethnicity, gender and disability

Academia:

Academia can also play an important role in shaping the future attitude of young women and men towards addressing challenges faced by and to undertake a handful of research on issues faced by persons with disabilities in their economic empowerment. BBDN will interact with Academia for the following activities:

- Conduct research and need assessment of the persons with disabilities in line with the barriers of inclusion and how to overcome common barriers.
- Identify the benefits of including persons with disabilities at the individual level, society and to the nation's economic development
- Development of training tools, assistive devices, software as per the requirement of persons with disabilities.
- Development of inclusive curriculum for all.
- Creating an inclusive learning environment.
- Raising awareness, educating people with disabilities, and providing skill training are essential.

Media

Being fourth pillar of State, media has an important role to play for creating mass awareness on challenges faced by persons with disabilities in self-reliance and on developing public behaviour towards persons with disabilities BBDN will interact with media for following objectives:

- Conduct need assessment for inclusion in the formal sector

- Campaign for promoting inclusive labour market based on the research, evidences and good practice

Stakeholders Recommendations

BBDN organized a validation workshop on developing a roadmap on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the mainstream labour market of Bangladesh. Following are key messages from different stakeholders:

- World Bank: The government body should be connected to this roadmap. Probable authorities for the linkage are the NSDA, the Directorate of Training and Technical Education, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women's Affairs, and the Ministry of Industries. Also, to consider the role of people with disabilities alongside the other actors in the roadmap because they are the ultimate beneficiaries of it.
- Directorate of Social Science: Consider the 10% quota in the private sector similarly to the government.
- BRAC: Focus on skill-driven training and work on creating evidence that people with disabilities can work if they get a job. Because there is a perception within the private sector that people with disabilities can't do jobs like non-disabled employees and whenever the private sector can see the benefit of diversified employment and be convinced, then they will be interested in hiring people with disabilities. People with disabilities may require more time to adjust in the workplace than people without disabilities, but once they adjust and take it seriously, it works better for any organization.
- Sight-savers: Mainstream persons with disabilities in the national job strategy, the eighth five-year plan of the government, and the 2019 SME policy for the roadmap. People with disabilities are more dedicated, more honest, and more productive at work.
- IDA: While preparing the roadmap, consider articles 9, 24, 27, and 28 of the UN CRPD Convention and the Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013.
- Ministry of Labour & Employment (MOLE): The Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013 and the Disability Rule 2015 may be considered as guidance for preparing the roadmap. The Ministry of Labor and Employment is responsible for handling two activities in the National Plan of Action, i.e., providing a standard of work and ensuring rehabilitation if any worker is injured.
- Chairman, Advisory Council of BBDN: There is a mismatch between global and national data on people with disabilities. The Ministry of Labor and Employment should allocate 10% of their workforce participation fund to people with disabilities to help with rehabilitation, employment,

and training. The SEIP training program of the Finance Ministry should also consider the training of persons with disabilities.

- A2i Program: The IT sector would be a great sector for the employment of people with disabilities. Collaborate with A2i regarding the employment of persons with disabilities. Make the e-commerce platform accessible to spread entrepreneurial opportunities to entrepreneurs with disabilities. Promoted e-commerce platform called "Actshop" (actshop.gov.bd), a number of entrepreneurs have already joined the platform.
- B-Scan: A) this year's census had a separate question for people with disabilities, but those who took the survey did not ask this, so a sizable portion of the disabled population was not included in this survey. b) For the first time, there is a separate survey for people with disabilities using the Washington Set Up question, and the result is 2.8 percent. Here, the survey was conducted across a variety of disciplines, and in one discipline, it was seen that 73 percent of disabled people have no job. C) The ten percent quota is not only for disabled people; orphans are also included here, so the disabled have to compete with them to take this ten percent quota, which is very challenging. D) In terms of the employment of disabled people, all possible sectors should be considered rather than just the RMG sector. e) In terms of employment, all forms of disability should be considered, rather than just mild ones.
- The Clifton Group: Create a pressure channel to get the immediate effect of this roadmap project. The government would put pressure on Business Associations to keep a minimum percentage of people with disabilities during the recruitment process. Then Associations would put pressure on the factory owners. Finally, a strong circular may be sent to the senior manager and other authorities responsible for recruitment of persons with disabilities, stating that if there are any candidates with disabilities during the recruitment, they will be given priority.
- The Urmi Group: Recommended two important things in terms of accessibility: to follow the National Building Code (BNBC) during construction, and to contact RAJUK, as they are the authority for approving any building design and everyone is bound to follow their guidelines. Also to consider the role of the buyer in the roadmap, as buyers have an influential role in garment factories.
- Manusher Jonno Foundation: The Government should enact legislation requiring all businesses to hire persons with disabilities based on their qualifications and potential.
- Trustee of the BBDN: Hiring people with disabilities whenever skilled and trained candidates are available is the best way we can mainstream them into society. Create evidence regarding the cause of the dropout, as there are some examples of dropouts. Initiate a conversation between

the training authorities and the private sector about need-based training and create an effective database for selection, then it will create huge possibilities.

- NSDA: The NSDA has created 10 guidelines to consider the needs of people with disabilities; the issues of marginalized populations and persons with disabilities are addressed excessively in their national skill development policy, which is just waiting for the approval of the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the governing body. Issues of people with disabilities Government's priority, and they would establish as many competence standards as possible within the policies concerning people with disabilities.
- BSRM: Organize the roadmap document according to task. This way, it will be easy to understand and will give a clear idea of how much has been achieved and how much is still needed to achieve.
- BGMEA: Do not create pressure on the private sector as it will not be a good thing for people with disabilities. Create skilled candidates and create a network with the private sector. It should not be like that a person with disabilities should work under CSR activities, and we need to create awareness on it.
- The Ananta Group: Make people with disabilities aware of the garment sector as they have a negative mindset about the garment industry's work.
- Trustee, BBDN: Link all relevant ministries with the labour and employment ministry. The people with disabilities should not expect anything over the night. Bangladesh is not developing very quickly, it needs more time, so we should keep our patience.

Conclusion

Persons with disabilities are moving forward socially and economically despite many barriers existing in the society. All related actors need to be more focused, determined and aspire to make the labour market more inclusive. Efforts to empower persons with disabilities through education and training and the provision of accessible public environment and transport, would promote both self and waged employment and thereby improve socio-economic inclusion.

BBDN can play an important role in bridging the gap between Government and Private Sector to implement the National Action Plan for Disabilities – by actively engaging Private Sector in different activities. It was reported by stakeholders that the private sector will only go for inclusive employment after observing the benefit of hiring people with disabilities. Although it takes some time to establish trust among the persons with disabilities regarding the workplace environment compared to persons without disabilities. As job seekers with disabilities get fewer opportunities, they try to contribute as per their highest ability. When employees without disabilities usually observe the efforts, a kind of positive attitude is formed amongst all employees in the workplace.

In terms of employment of persons with disabilities, we should not only think about the garment sector; all sectors should be made suitable for them. Additionally, while offering work, the employers need to accommodate all forms of disability rather than just mild ones. It is the number one driver of mainstreaming of people with disabilities as there is a shortage of skilled human resources. In addition, there was a big mismatch between the trained candidates and the employer. There is also a requirement of evidence-based information to mainstream people with disabilities. Hence, training authorities and the private sector employers need to work together to identify need-based training and create an effective database for selection, which may generate a good balance between demand (potential employers) and supply side (job seekers with disabilities).

Close monitoring by the BBDN and learning from the implementation of activities by the relevant actors may help the sector with innovation, which may help to reach the unmet targets. It is essential to create skilled candidates and create a network with the private sector as there are quite a good opportunities for persons with disabilities but there is a mismatch. Development of necessary skills of persons with disabilities can ensure supply in the private sector.

Roadmap to implement National Action Plan for Disabilities (2018) (2023-2030)

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
1.	Committee Formation			
a.	BBDN would propose to be included as 'Private Sector Member' in the two high power committees (National Coordination Committee and National Executive Committee)	Proposal to be approved by BBDN Board of Trustees. BBDN to send letter.	MoSW, BBDN board	November, 2023
		Meetings with Ministry of Social Welfare to initiate dialogue.	Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare	May, 2024
		Orientation on BBDN's proposed Roadmap	Ministry of Social Welfare	July, 2024
		MOU between MoSW and BBDN – and notification of BBDN's appointment on Committees (opinion from Saad vhai)	Ministry of Social Welfare and BBDN Executive Council	December, 2024
2.	Committee Meetings			
a.	BBDN will participate in national committees and will provide inputs for effective engagement of private sector in actions to support Persons with disabilities	Selecting 1-2 members from BBDN to represent in National Committees	BBDN board	Nov, 2023
		TORs for participating BBDN members	BEF, MoSW	May, 2024
		Information sharing for participating members	BBDN board	Jan, 2025
		Regular briefing to BBDN Board	BBDN board	Jan, 2025 (onwards)
3.	Right to survive & grow			
3.a	Undertake measures for persons with disabilities to survive and grow in 'workplaces' and making workplaces more inclusive and supportive for Persons with disabilities offering them equal opportunities	Create dignified job/employment opportunities for people with disabilities	BBDN team, BEF, ILO, Chambers, Associations, Employers	Regular task
		Job placement support to people with disabilities in different sectors/industries	same	Regular
		Connect people with disabilities with skills training and career boosting programs	Public and private TVETS	Regular
		Support organizations to adapt necessary policy and practice for reasonable adjustment and workplace modification.	Resource members, UN-Habitat, IAB	Regular
		Organize awareness sessions with co-workers	Employers	Regular

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
		and relevant people		
3.b	Undertake measures to include Disability-sensitive clauses in National Labour Laws in line with RPRP 2013 and ensure access to decent employment for persons with Disabilities	Undertake assessment of labour law from disability perspective	MoLE, BEF, ILO, NCCWE, OPDs	May, 2024
		Identify gaps for alignment with RPRP	MoLE, BEF, NCCWE, OPDs	Jan, 2024
		Develop a draft of legal amendments in BLA	MoLE, BEF, NCCWE, OPDs	May, 2024
		Tripartite dialogues to develop consensus on amendments	MoLE, BEF, NCCWE, OPDs	July, 2024
3.c	Undertake measures for persons with disabilities to form / join employee resource group (ERG) at workplaces and become active members to express their special needs and co-create appropriate solutions for existing problems	Study on existing trends of participation in Internal resource groups such as ERGs has been formed including employee with disabilities	BEF, Employers, Employees with disabilities of the organization,	Jan, 2025
		Identify gaps and causes for inadequate participation	BEF, NCCWE, OPDs	Mar, 2025
3.d	BBDN will form a national forum of Enterprises/business who employed 5 or more persons with disabilities and work as a employers resource group	Develop TORs for Forum	BBDN	Jul, 2024
		Approval by BBDN Executive council	BBDN	Aug, 2024
		Establish secretariat under the advisory council and governance mechanism	BBDN	Oct, 2024
		Launch the forum with membership and incentives package	BBDN	Dec, 2024
4.	Health & Rehabilitation			
4a.	Undertake measures to adequately cover workers with disabilities in all prevailing measures related to accessing good healthcare & Rehabilitation services – including Enterprise-based Clinics, Insurance, and company-run hospitals, prevention and cure of work related injuries, accident and diseases, workplace adjustment and Return To Work	Study on current trends for medical and rehabilitation service for worker with disabilities, identify challenges and draft recommendations	ILO, GIZ, MOLE, DIFE	March, 2024
		Develop a guideline/resource on occupational health and productivity at workplace for professionals/workers employers.	Same	March, 2024
		Engage relevant Government and non-government partners for roadmap on medical & rehabilitation services	MOLE, DIFE, MoSW, MoHFW, BEF, UN-habitat, PMO office,	Jun, 2024

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
	(RTW)		Ministry of Planning	
		Dialogue and consensus on roadmap for improving medical and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities Joint implementation committee to review healthcare initiatives for persons with disabilities	Same	Sep, 2024
		Resource mobilization and capacity building of business/enterprises to facilitate and upgrade medical and rehabilitation services	Same	Jan 2024
4b.	Return to Work (RTW) for workers with disabilities due to workplace accidents;	Collaborate with Business Associations for contacts of disabled workers due to workplace accidents	BEF, Brands, GiZ, BBDN Resource Members,	Jan, 2024
		Identify cases where support is required for rehabilitation	Same	Jun, 2024
		Collaborate with resource members to assess status of disabled workers to see possibility of their RTW with rehabilitation and workplace modifications.	Same	Jun, 2024
		Support rehabilitation of disabled workers	Same	Jun 2024
4c.	Improving working conditions for employed persons with disabilities	Assess Labour Force survey (disability data) to identify decent work situation for persons with disabilities	DIFE, MOLE, ILO, GIZ, UN-Habitat	Jul, 2024
		Develop Policy Brief for improving working conditions of persons with disabilities		Dec, 2024
		Advocacy with Govt and private sector for improving working conditions		Jan, 2025
		Capacity building of OPDs to advocate for improving working conditions for persons with disabilities		Jun, 2025
5.	Social Participation			
5a.	BBDN will undertake	Develop concept note and	BBDN network	Jun, 2025

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
	awareness raising of Employers to encourage/support their workers with disabilities for social participation.	contents for awareness raising (policy brief, PPT, audio-visual products)	Employers	
		Identify priority list of employers to reach out	Same	Jun, 2025
		Organize events and share information	Same	Jun, 2025
		Review and improve strategy for scaling up awareness raising	Same	Jun, 2025
5b.	BBDN will work with person with disabilities and their family to engage them in different forms of economic activities and general awareness rising for other people /actors workers to support them in spending culturally appropriate normal social and active economic life.	Support people with disabilities and their families to business initiative	OPDs, Local stakeholders	Jan, 2025
		Link people with disabilities within the market value chain.	Same	Jan, 2025
		Support/linkage entrepreneur with disabilities to access financial products	Same	Jan, 2025
		Engage/capacity building of OPDs for supporting people with disabilities and their families in the process.	Same	Jan, 2025
6.	Accessibility			
6a.	BBDN will undertake all measures to encourage Employers to make their workplaces accessible for persons with disabilities and for becoming equal opportunity employers.	Develop contents for awareness raising of employers (user manual, learning tools, policy briefs, PPTs, audio-visuals)	Resource members, IAB, UN Habitat	Dec, 2023
		Mobilize expert and technical resources (e.g.; IAB, Bscan, Summit Alliance port etc.) to support private sector in accessibility compliance and establish few model examples.	Resource members, IAB, UN Habitat	Jan 2025
		Increase organizational collaborations UN (UN Habitat) government (DIFE or relevant agencies) BBDN resource members & OPDs to support planning and implementation of accessible workplace and urban living for people with disabilities.	Resource members, IAB, UN Habitat	June 2026

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
		Identify list of priority sectors (Economic Zones, Ports, EPZ etc) employers to raise awareness and promote existing resource in the network.	Resource members, IAB, UN Habitat	Jul 2026
6b.	BBDN will also continue to organize a national Award for best 'Equal Opportunity Employers' to encourage employers.	Develop / improve criteria for awards	BEF, Resource member, ILO	Dec, 2024
		Arrange sponsors and judges panel	Same	Dec, 2024
		Organize awards ceremony	Same	Dec, 2024
		Review and improve award process.	Same	Dec, 2024
		Organize promotional activity to impact others in the community.	Same	Dec, 2024
7.	Sharing information and communication technology			
7a.	As part of accessibility support, BBDN will continue to take necessary measures for making 'Employment and Business-related' information to reach persons with disabilities – by adopting disability-sensitive communications, disability-friendly websites, and providing disability.	Support to adapt disability sensitive website for jobs and entrepreneurship info	BBDN, BASIS, A2I	Jan, 2027
		Develop a mechanism for provision of disability-friendly IT equipment/services to employers and workers	BASIS, A2i	Jan, 2027
		Support and develop accessible career counselling hub for jobs and entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities.	ILO, BEF, Resource members	Jan, 2027
		Build capacity of Employers and Entrepreneurs to adopt new products and strategies for information sharing with persons with disabilities	ILO, BEF	Jan, 2027
8.	Mobility & Productivity			
8a.	BBDN will support private sector companies to develop assistive technologies and assistive devices for local manufacturing and provision on low-cost for working persons with disabilities.	Support to workplace adjustment and assistive technologies and devices solution to business	Development partners, Business Associations, Donors	
		Establish a directory of all private companies who produce assistive technologies and devices	Same	Jan, 2027
		Support provision of assistive technologies for disabled workers	Same	Jun 2027

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
9.	Education and training			
9a.	BBDN will continue its efforts for access to decent employment for persons with disabilities by promoting tax regime as well as enabling their enrolment into skills training.	Develop Policy Brief for Government and private training providing institution to consider '5%' enrolment for persons with disabilities.	OPD, ILO	March 2023
		Established BBDN Skills and training institution for people with disabilities	NHRDF, BEF	Jan, 2027
		Support/Develop inclusive course curriculum, learning materials, tools and human resource for learners with varied needs.	Resource member, DTE, ILO,	Jan, 2027
		Establish 'Career counselling and support' desks for persons with disabilities in Dhaka as Pilot	Resource member, DTE, ILO,	Jan, 2027
9b.	Create enabling environment for persons with disabilities to establish self-employment activities (training, access to finance, business incubation, etc);	Study to identify key challenges for persons with disabilities to start self-employment activities	SMEF, Financial institutes, OPDs	Dec, 2024
		Develop Policy Paper to create enabling environment for persons with disabilities for self-employment activities	SMEF, Financial institutes, OPDs	Dec, 2024
		Advocacy events with key stakeholders (Govt and private sector)	SMEF, Financial institutes, OPDs	Dec, 2024
		Establish a monitoring mechanism to review progress	SMEF, Financial institutes, OPDs	Dec, 2024
		Capacity building of key stakeholders on enabling environment	SMEF, Financial institutes, OPDs	Dec, 2024
9c.	Support information/capacity building on Cooperative business/Societies for persons with disabilities;	Mapping study to identify sectors where persons with disabilities are concentrated;	ILO, SMEF, OPDs, Co-operative Department	Jan, 2026
		Collaborate with cooperatives department for registration of cooperatives for persons with disabilities	Same	Jan, 2026
		Training of persons with disabilities on cooperatives (purpose, benefits, process)	Same	Jan, 2026

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
		Capacity development of Private Sector to collaborate with cooperatives for persons with disabilities	Same	Jan, 2026
9d.	School-to-work transition; job-fairs; access to online jobs platform.	Establish process for 'school to work' transition of learners with disabilities with TVETS and employers.	TVETs, Employers, Associations, OPDs	March, 2024
		Capacity building of OPDs to organize effective job fairs and career counselling	Same	March, 2024
		Develop fund raising/resource mobilization strategy to organize and or support job fair.	Same	March, 2024
		Develop guidelines/ model for organizing effective job fairs at national and regional levels.	Same	March, 2024
10.	Social Security			
10a.	BBDN will take necessary measures in collaboration with ILO and relevant Ministries to establish at least one national Social Security programme for persons with disabilities to protect them against unemployment and provide them with support to establish small businesses or access labour market and become self-sustained citizens.	Collaborate with ILO for study to assess existing social security schemes for persons with disabilities and identify need for most important need for social security	ILO, MOLE, GIZ	Jan, 2026
		Consultation to develop consensus on new social security scheme	ILO, MOLE, GIZ	Jan, 2026
		Undertake feasibility study for new social security scheme with help of ILO	ILO, MOLE, GIZ	Jan, 2026
		Develop design of new social security scheme including employment and livelihood spectrum with help of ILO	ILO, MOLE, GIZ	Jan, 2026
		Capacity development of relevant institution	ILO, MOLE, GIZ	Jan, 2026
11.	Natural Disasters, Risks, and Humanitarian Emergencies			
11a.	BBDN will engage to fund raise from the private sector in such emergencies to respond to the vital needs of people with disabilities.	Develop emergency respond fund with private sector and strategy to responds through network.	BBDN advisory council, resource members	Need basis
		Develop strategy and process to support persons with disabilities with	Same	Jan, 2026

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
		setting priorities in association with resource members.		
		In case of emergency, collect all necessary information about losses incurred to persons with disabilities	Same	Need based
		Post-Disaster Situation Analysis on livelihood and employment for Persons with Disabilities and those who Acquire Disabilities, to Design an appropriate project and implement it.	Same	Need based
		Organize briefing for private sector on losses	Same	Need based
12.	Sport, cultural activities, recreation, and tourism			
12a.	BBDN can study the disability-culture of the context to identify inequalities and discriminatory behaviours and its signs of physicalization process in socio-economic context. Design and develop different targeted/public awareness raising tools to embarking the barriers from deep.	Conduct Study on business/organizational culture to understand the need and scopes of interventions for promoting disability inclusive practices across the system.	Department of anthropology and psychology	Jan, 2028
		Support Business to adopt/develop disability inclusion strategy and indicators within the operations.	BEF, ILO, FBCCI	Jan, 2028
		Organize awareness campaigns and events, such as Disability Awareness Month or specific days, to educate employees about various disabilities, their challenges, and the importance of inclusion.	Associations, BBDN business members	Jan, 2028
		Networking and leadership training for private sector and employers on behaviour change and affirmative action.	Same Same	Jan, 2028
		Established and support Employee Resource Group (ERGs) composed of employee with disabilities and their alias.		Jan, 2028

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
12b.	BBDN Promote inclusion in the tourism sectors from both employment and service angle.	Study to assess current status of opportunities for persons with disabilities in hospitality and tourism sector	ISC of truism sector, Le-meridian, PFDA,	Mar, 2023
		Identify specific areas to support persons with disabilities to participate in hospitality and tourism sectors.	Same	Mar, 2024
		Develop private sector strategy and organise network to facilitate persons with disabilities to participate in hospitality and tourism sector.	Same	Mar, 2024
		Capacity development of employers and businesses in tourism sector to be accessible in terms of service and employment.	Same	Mar, 2024
13.	Raising Awareness			
13a.	BBDN will undertake measures to create awareness among Employers and workers in all workplaces to ensure dignity and self-esteem of persons with disabilities in workplaces as well as within their families and in their societies	Develop contents (paper, PPT, audio-visuals)	BBDN, ILO, Employers	On going
		Engage electronic, print and social media.	BBDN, Employers,	On going
		Organize specific agenda based advocacy events with stakeholders	Including government agencies.	On going
		Target individual employers.	Sectorial employers	On going
		Engage with Federation of Chambers and employers' associations to influence leadership for inclusive policy and championing.	BEF, FBCCI, Regional chambers, Associations	On going
		Review and update targeted materials.	Resource members, OPDs, BBDN	On going
		Prepare resource pool and engage people with disabilities.	Resource members, OPDs	On going
14.	Language and communication			
14a.	BBDN will promote use of sign language in those workplaces where persons with disabilities are employed	Develop contents and products on commonly used signs in workplaces	BBDN resource members, SDSL, Institute of modern language	Jan, 2027
		Develop brief version of training on sign language	BBDN resource members,	June, 2027

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
		for workplaces	SDSL, Institute of modern language	
		Capacity development of selected workplaces to promote sign language	BBDN resource members, SDSL, Institute of modern language	June, 2027
15.	Organization and Self-help Groups			
15a.	BBDN will strengthen active national OPD platforms for promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities in the Skills and employment system.	Strengthen OPDs in skills and employment platform who are willing to work with private sector	ILO, Development partners, OPD networks	Jan, 2024
		Develop a charter (rights, authority, privileges) of joint working to support persons with disabilities for skills and employment	ILO, Development partners, OPD networks	Jan, 2025
		Develop a database/roster of persons with disabilities along with their existing qualifications, skills, and experience and preference for jobs or self-employment	ILO, Development partners, OPD networks	Jan, 2025
		Provide necessary support/linkage for skills development and career growth	ILO, Development partners, OPD networks	Jan, 2025
15b.	Capacity building of the local OPDs to work with regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry.	Develop contents and information package on OPDs working with Chambers (paper, PPT, audio-visual)	National OPD network, ILO, Local chambers, FBCCI	Jun, 2024
		Organize events	Same	Jan, 2025
		Review and improve	Same	Jan, 2025
		Joint committee of Chamber and OPDs	Same	Jan, 2025
15c.	Support/organise self-help groups for co-operative business/ entrepreneurship within the extended resource capacity.	Identify self-help groups of persons with disabilities	National /local OPD networks, Resource members, private sector (eg. BSRM)	Jan, 2025
		Identify areas of collaboration where private sector can support	Same	Mar, 2025
		Develop a strategy for joint working with self-help	Same	Jun 2025

S.#	Proposed Action	Tasks	Stakeholders	Timelines
		groups		
		A joint committee of collaboration and coordination	Same	Dec 2025
16.	Detection			
16a.	Engage/ collaborate in the process of labour force survey	Collaborate with BBS for sharing of update information on persons with disabilities in labour market	BEF, ILO, MoLE MoSW, BBS, Ministry of Planning, Disability Expert Org.	Jun, 2024
		Translate statistics into policy messages for private sector	Same	Jan, 2028
		Communicate evidence-based policy messages on persons with disabilities to Private Sector	Same	Jun 2028
17.	Research			
17a.	BBDN will partner with public/private universities or relevant institutes to regularly undertake research on different dimensions of right to employment and entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities and to identify international best practices for enhancing employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for persons with disabilities	Develop a network of universities, research institutions, Disability expert org and inclusion scholars to work for generating/innovating knowledge in the field of disability inclusive skills, employment and associated areas.	GBDN, ILO, Universities, Disability expert org/Development partners.	Jan, 2029
		Identify thematic areas for joint collaboration		Jun, 2029
		Support university initiatives on persons with disabilities through private sector interventions		Dec, 2029
		Award best performing universities for contribution towards employment and entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities		Jun, 2030