Accelerating Disability Inclusive Formal Employment in Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda: What are the Vital Ingredients?

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Summary

Globally, disabled people are disproportionately excluded from the workforce. For the general population, it is recognised that having a job is closely linked to better health, wellbeing, self-esteem and to social inclusion. Disabled people are known to be disadvantaged in all these arenas and being employed may be a powerful route out of exclusion. The Inclusion Works programme (2018–2022), funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), aims to improve employment rates for people with disabilities in Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda. The Inclusion Works consortium, led by Sightsavers, involves 12 partners, and aims to innovate, trying new interventions in combination in the four countries to increase the participation of people with disabilities in formal employment in both the government and private sectors.

This Working Paper provides an overview of disability as a concept and relevant global treaties and statistics, including evidence of trends and complexities in promoting disability inclusive employment broadly and with some focus on formal employment specifically. We describe the current situation in each of the four focus countries, demonstrating the similarities and differences between them. We then discuss some promising interventions that have been tried, usually on a small scale, in diverse settings, and which may be applicable in our four focus countries. Finally, we present the potential interventions that will be trialled in the Inclusion Works programme, using an innovation-driven, adaptive management approach.

The initial phase of the programme included a variety of evidence collecting and participatory planning exercises, which generated a multi-pronged strategy for interventions with four distinct stakeholder groups, although with different emphasis in each country: people with disabilities seeking employment; disabled people's organisations (DPOs); employers; and policymakers. Interventions with these groups have been tried before but not in a systematic coordinated and collaborative way, nor focusing on formal employment, where disabled people's participation is lower than in other work settings. The programme aims to trial and demonstrate whether such a strategy can work, and how.

This paper sets out the background evidence, thinking and rationale behind this strategy, and aims to stimulate discussion about disability inclusive employment in general, and how to increase participation rates of disabled people in formal work in particular. Can a combination of interventions with different stakeholders achieve what individual approaches have not? How will these impact on disabled people's wellbeing? Although the Inclusion Works programme focuses on only four low-income or lower middle-income countries, many of the dilemmas they face are common in all types of economies. Thus, it is anticipated that the debates and possible solutions will have resonance and application more broadly, and that the paper will contribute to global discourses on disability inclusive employment.

Keywords: disability, formal employment, inclusive, low- and middle-income countries, participation, wellbeing.

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Acronyms

AAPD	American Association of People with Disabilities
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADDA	Agency for Disability and Development in Africa
ASCEND	Association for the Comprehensive Empowerment of Nigerians with Disabilities
CDSK	Cheshire Disability Services Kenya
CFI	Center for Financial Inclusion
CODO	Coalition of Disability Organisations (Nigeria)
COTU-K	Central Organization of Trade Unions (Kenya)
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DFID	Department for International Development
DPO	Disabled people's organisation
DPOD	Disabled People's Organisations Denmark
DTDA	Danish Trade Union Development Agency
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FKE	Federation of Kenya Employers
FUE	Federation of Uganda Employers
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
JONAPWD	Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (Nigeria)
LMICs	Low- and middle-income countries
NCAPD	National Coordinating Agency for Population and Development (Kenya)
NCDW	National Council of Disabled Women (Bangladesh)
NFOWD	National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (Bangladesh)
NGDO	National Grassroots Disabilities Organization (Bangladesh)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NUDIPU	National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda
KEPSA	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KNCHR	Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
PFP-IDE	Professional Fellows Programme on Inclusive Disability Employment
PPP	Purchasing power parity
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WHO	World Health Organization

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Glossary

DPOs: Disabled people's organisations. These may be specific to impairment types (e.g. deafness, mental health, physical disabilities, parents of disabled children, etc.) or generic, including people with one or more impairments. DPOs exist at the local, national, regional and global levels.

ICF – WHO (2001). International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health. Geneva: WHO. This model proposes a combination of medical and social model perspectives, producing an interactive and relational definition of disability that is widely used.

SDGs: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030. Disability and inclusion are mentioned in many of the SDG indicators, which is a new development, as these aspects were not explicitly mentioned in previous development agendas, including the SDGs' predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals.

UNCRPD: The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The international disability rights treaty was launched in 2007 and has been signed by over 180 countries to date. This treaty has had a major influence in increasing recognition of people with disabilities and the extent to which they are denied the rights that other citizens routinely have.

WGQs: Washington Group sets of questions. These are a suite of questions developed to promote the collection of disability disaggregated data at the population level. This is being promoted for use in big surveys and censuses, as well as in research and intervention contexts. There are short, long and extended sets, and a children's version. An employment-related version is in development.

WHO: World Health Organization. The WHO is the main UN body addressing disability issues; however, there are currently moves to ensure that other UN bodies also play a role in advocating for people with disabilities and influencing various sectors to be disability inclusive.

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1   Introduction

Globally, disabled people are disproportionately excluded from the workforce. For the general population, it is recognised that having a job is a strong route to moving out of poverty, and to improved health, wellbeing, self-esteem and to social inclusion.

This introduction will explain and explore some key understandings in relation to disability and how its conceptualisation has shifted over time, as well as discussing the difficulties of defining who is disabled, and how they can be recognised and counted. We address the increased recognition of disability as an area needing attention in international development, as well as the relatively new concept of 'disability inclusive development'. This overview provides a background for the subsequent discussion about the situation in our four focus countries: Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda. We explore various interventions to improve disability inclusive employment that have been tried in diverse global contexts. Finally, we consider which of these new and innovative combinations might be appropriate for piloting in the Inclusion Works Programme, funded by the Department for International Development (DFID).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN 2015) emphasise improving the lives of everyone and 'leaving no one behind'. People with disabilities are one of the largest minority groups who are currently left behind, though their wellbeing and inclusion is now rising up the development agenda. As a group, people with disabilities have been consistently marginalised and disadvantaged, and have largely missed out on the benefits of recent development progress, which has gradually reduced inequality and poverty and improved services across sectors (DESA 2013; Hamel, Tong and Hofer 2019). The power issues, which contribute to and maintain disabled people's exclusion and which are often driven by stigma, are now being recognised (Grech 2015).

So how large is this minority group? Disability statistics are notoriously inaccurate, but the best estimates are that 10–15 per cent of any population will be identified as having a disability (World Health Organization (WHO) and World Bank 2011). Figures are often disputed and vary across contexts for a range of reasons, including: differences in conceptualisation and language about disability and difference; the impact of negative stereotyping on reporting; varying methods of identification; and dispute about severity cut-off points (Washington Group on Disability Statistics 2016). Suffice to say that in every community, there are a significant minority of women, men, girls and boys who could be identified as disabled, and they are likely to be disadvantaged by their disability. The label 'disabled' (whether they self-identify or not) will almost certainly affect their wellbeing and opportunities in significant ways across the life course. This almost universal negative impact also intersects in complex ways with other aspects of identity and personal situation such as gender, age, rural or urban residence, education, ethnicity, faith, and socioeconomic status.

Ideas about disability – such as who people labelled as disabled are, how they can be identified, and how they can be included in all aspects of community life – have shifted radically in the past 30 years or so (Oliver and Barnes 2012; Shakespeare 2014). Definitions of and language about disability have also changed. Disability is now seen as a complex interactional and relational concept, not as a fixed identity wholly located within individual people, but the outcome of various aspects of their situation (Thomas 2004). This approach moves away from purely 'individual' or 'medical' models of disability, which view people as 'abnormal', in need of fixing, incapable, dependent and burdensome. These older 'traditional' approaches see disabled people as beneficiaries of assistance (often attracting pity) rather than as potential contributors and active members of society. In contrast, 'social' and 'human rights' models see people with impairments (that is, their health-related difference) as ordinary citizens with the same rights as others and as having the same life aspirations and

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potential contributions to make as their family members and peers (Meekoshka and Soldatic 2011).

One of the major concerns of disabled people in many contexts is their economic position (Coleridge 2007). They are consistently shown to be poorer than non-disabled people, although of course there are exceptions (Groce *et al.* 2011; Banks, Kuper and Polack 2017). One of the main causes of this relative poverty is not lack of access to work of any kind, but particularly lack of access to steady, reliable jobs with a regular income and protected conditions, such as in the formal sector. Disabled people may be trapped in a vicious circle of poor access to services such as health (both general health services and impairment-related needs such as assistive devices) and education. In combination with stigma and discrimination and decreased social capital, these disadvantages reduce their chances of securing employment (Hanass-Hancock and Mitra 2016; Emerson *et al.* 2011). Additionally, they may have extra living expenses, such as health and care costs, or travel expenses (because public transport is not accessible). This may then be more complex than a simple downward circle of disadvantage; however, there is currently little in-depth research evidence about this, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) (WHO and World Bank 2011; Groce and Kett 2014).

This paper focuses on the issue of disability inclusive employment, particularly in the formal sector in LMICs. It is part of the activities of a DFID-funded programme, Inclusion Works, of which the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) is one partner in a consortium of 12 organisations. Led by Sightsavers, these partners are working together over three years (2019–22) to explore solutions, innovate, and generate evidence about ways to increase the inclusion of people with disabilities in formal employment in four countries: Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda.

The next section presents an overview of the issues around employment of disabled people before moving on to our four focus countries. We then discuss the types of approaches and strategies that have been tried in various settings, and consider which of these will be tried and combined in the Inclusion Works programme.

2 Key issues in global development of inclusive employment

Almost all jobs can be performed by someone with a disability, and given the right environment, most people with disabilities can be productive.
(WHO and World Bank 2011: 235)

Work is universally recognised to be an important aspect of life, providing social benefits as well as economic ones and, as a consequence, having positive impacts on individuals' health and wellbeing (International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015). Being employed or self-employed and thus having a regular income provides security and the ability to meet one's basic needs, as well as using any disposable income to make choices about spending that will improve quality of life more broadly.

Beyond the financial benefits, employment gives people opportunities to feel included in and contribute to community life and to use their abilities, leading to social recognition, self-esteem and fulfilment (WHO and World Bank 2011; Lamichhane 2015; Saleh and Bruyère 2018). Having work enables greater aspirations and independence, especially for young people, for whom work is a central aspect of developing an adult social identity and 'becoming somebody' (Langevang and Gough 2012; Santuzzi and Waltz 2016). For people with disabilities, being unable to find decent and meaningful work is just one of a complex network of confounding factors that contribute to the cumulative disadvantage they experience (WHO and World Bank 2011).

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Access to work is enshrined in the United Nations (UN) Declaration of Human Rights (1948) (article 23) as a basic right, which, for people with disabilities, is reinforced in the much more recent UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (UN 2006: article 27). This key treaty:

> **… recognises the right of people with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities.**
> (*ibid.*: 19)

The aspects related to equality, choice, decent and safe work, training and provision of adaptations and accommodation are all important. The UNCRPD has also made a substantial contribution to broader discussions about workforce participation (Greenberg 2012).

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN 2015) also espouse an inclusive approach to work (SDG 8, specifically target 8.5, and SDG 10). It is useful for advocacy purposes to have these specific mentions about employment for disabled people included in the global goals. They highlight by implication the particular difficulties for many disabled people in finding secure livelihoods, decent work, and fair treatment in the workplace. The disability movement as represented by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and others was very instrumental in the inclusion of a disability perspective in the SDGs. However, arguably, people with disabilities are still not as visible as they could be on global agendas (Wolbring *et al.* 2013).

In addition, other key documents, published by the WHO, ILO and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the disability arena have collated data or suggested approaches to improving employment rates among people with disabilities, (WHO and World Bank 2011; ILO 2015; 2016; Mont 2004; 2014). These organisations have also produced guidelines for different audiences: for policymakers, a useful summary of the key principles for writing and adopting equal employment opportunities; for employers, about skills development, on legislation (ILO 2007), microfinancing (*ibid.*), making businesses inclusive (ILO 2014), vocational rehabilitation (ILO 2004), skills acquisition, and community-based rehabilitation (ILO 2008). Furthermore, regional UN bodies and some national governments have provided data and structures to support increased employment of people with disabilities. For example, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (2016) and the European Union (EU) Council Directive (2000/78/EC) have established a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation. Several of the large international NGOs working on disability have also produced practical resources about inclusion in general and about livelihoods and work specifically (Van Ek and Schot 2017; Handicap International 2006; CBM 2012).

Notwithstanding these positive developments over the past ten years, the concept of 'inclusive employment' is still relatively new. Historically, disabled people have mainly been offered limited, low-status work opportunities, within segregated or 'protected' settings such as the now largely discredited 'sheltered workshops'. The idea that people with disabilities can and should be part of the mainstream workforce is recent, building on the new conceptualisation of disability mentioned above (social model), which promotes an inclusive approach across sectors (e.g. inclusive education and health as well as employment). The right to work is too often denied to people with disabilities and this lack of access is unevenly weighted against particular groups. For instance, there is often poorer access to work for disabled women compared to disabled men, for those with poorer education and those with particularly stigmatised impairments such as intellectual, communication and or psychosocial

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difficulties (Emerson 2007). Despite global treaties and national policies, people with disabilities often have limited opportunities for: education/training, accessing information about work, inclusive recruitment practices, entering the labour market on an equal basis, decent and meaningful work,[1] choice of work, promotion, and career progression. Difficulties achieving truly equitable and inclusive labour markets appear to be almost universal (Abidi 2010; Abidi and Sharma 2014; WHO and World Bank 2011). There are numerous barriers that perpetuate this negative picture, but more optimistically also some potentially successful approaches to facilitating change.

2.1   Accessibility as a key issue in ensuring inclusion

Comprehensive accessibility is fundamental as a guiding principle for the full inclusion of people with disabilities. This is because impairments are less disabling if communities are accessible and barriers to inclusion are removed. Addressing a range of different types of disabling barriers and ensuring comprehensive access plays a significant role in creating opportunities for people with disabilities to participate. Often, there is a misperception that the main barriers are physical ones; however, there are in fact four different types of barriers: physical/ environmental; communication; policy; and attitudinal.

People with disabilities often report that attitudes are the most disabling and intractable barrier to full inclusion. For example, a subtly undermining comment from an employer is difficult to identify clearly as disablist and is unlikely to be brought to justice, but will dissuade the disabled person from pursuing employment (CBM 2012).

Light for the World, in its resource 'Towards Inclusion', refers to the ACAP framework: access, communication, attitude, and participation (Van Ek and Schot 2017). This proposes an innovative non-technical approach to measuring organisations' inclusive practices and to promoting improvements where needed. It is comprehensive, so it draws attention to the more invisible aspects of discrimination and negative attitudes, which a focus on the purely physical and environmental aspects of accessibility would miss.

There are other resources for identifying barriers and ensuring good practice (Handicap International 2006; Baart and Maarse 2017). The provision of accessible adaptations needs to be addressed generically, in anticipation of people needing them, but also at an individual level when someone's specific needs are assessed. The concept of 'reasonable accommodation' is important here, as it is a legal term, laying down that adaptations and special provisions should be made for people as far as is reasonably possible. Thus, in most countries, legislation stipulates that employers should provide necessary adaptations to enable people with disabilities to join their workforce, if they have the required skills for the job (Wilson-Kovacs *et al*. 2008).

Although in the 1990s and 2000s there was some recognition of the difficulties facing people with disabilities in getting into work and the link with increased poverty among this population, employment has become much more of a focus since the UNCRPD (2006), and with the gradually increasing awareness of the economic and social disadvantages experienced by

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[1] 'Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men' (ILO website)

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many people with disabilities. Increased participation in the workforce is now seen as a major route out of poverty and towards social inclusion for disabled people globally.

2.2 Statistics on disability and employment

Although it is recognised that there are considerable problems with defining types and severity of disability, and identifying people and counting the numbers accurately in many contexts, we know that approximately 15 per cent of the global population has a disability, although figures reported in many countries are lower than this, for various reasons.

Figures for employment rates for the general population are often inaccurate or ambiguous due to varying definitions of work; figures for people with disabilities are even more so or even non-existent. While it is clear that the proportions of adults with disabilities in work globally are consistently lower than those for their non-disabled compatriots, in many countries we do not know accurately how many people with disabilities are working in which sectors or industries, nor the distribution of men and women, or of people with different impairments (Heymann, Stein and Moreno 2014). Nor do we know about more subtle aspects such as recruitment and retention patterns or career progression trajectories for different subgroups of people with disabilities. This is probably because the idea of inclusive employment and the need to monitor patterns is new, and thus collecting such data has not been common or statutory for employers or governments. Also, because most people with disabilities (especially in low- and middle-income settings) work in the informal sector, by definition collecting data is challenging (Buckup 2009; WHO and World Bank 2011).

World Bank estimates for disability employment in the global South are 58.6 per cent for men and 20.1 per cent for women (WHO and World Bank 2011). An analysis of 51 countries surveyed by the WHO shows an average 44 per cent employment rate for people with disabilities versus 75 per cent for those without (2011) (OECD 2010, cited in Tripney *et al*. 2015: 11).

Additionally, we know anecdotally but there is also increasing evidence that employment rates vary considerably across impairment categories and according to severity and duration of disability (World Blind Union 2004; WHO and World Bank 2011). There is evidence, for example, that individuals with mental health difficulties or intellectual impairments experience the lowest employment rates (Thornicroft 2006), and that those with more significant impairments have most difficulty finding work (Tripney *et al*. 2015). However, it is important to remember that some disabled people may not be counted in census statistics (if hidden) or may not be registered as looking for work, and so will not be counted in the numbers as unemployed. This itself will be affected by cultural factors, especially if the level of stigma is such that disabled people do not see themselves as able to work (WHO and World Bank 2011). Clearly then (although there is patchy or missing data), there is an 'employment gap', with disabled people generally less likely to be employed and earning less when they are (ESCAP 2016). Mizunoya and Mitra (2012) found that in 9 out of 15 countries studied there was an employment gap, but that interestingly, the countries with no difference in employment rates between disabled and non-disabled people were mainly low-income countries (e.g. Zimbabwe). The gap was more noticeable in middle-income countries, thus raising the possibility that as countries' economies develop, disabled people are disproportionately more left behind – a phenomenon now termed the 'disability development gap' (Groce and Kett 2013).

An additional problem is that employment statistics are doubly imprecise: they are often incomplete or poor quality, and standard measures of employment reflecting advanced economies' labour market conditions translate poorly to developing countries. Varying degrees of underemployment, vulnerable employment and informal self-employment muddy

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official 'unemployment' statistics. Only a minority of people (including people without a disability) earn their livelihood through formal employment. In Africa, in the poorest countries, up to 90 per cent of people engaging in various forms of necessity entrepreneurship are in the informal sector (African Development Bank *et al.* 2012). The absence of welfare provisions condemns them to vulnerable forms of work. Official unemployment numbers are particularly low in the poorest countries, where social security systems are rudimentary or non-existent, and where there are no benefits attached to being counted as unemployed (Flynn *et al.* 2016: 16–21).

Although, as with any employees, productivity and training-related differences can explain some wage disparities, research in the United Kingdom has determined that fully half of this wage gap cannot be explained by differences in productivity and human capital, while research in the United States shows that 44 per cent of the per-hour pay difference experienced by workers with disabilities cannot be explained by observable differences in human capital, training, and experience. Discrimination in pay is compounded by discrimination in other areas, such as career advancement, although more research is needed in this area (Heymann *et al.* 2014: 6–8). Tripney *et al.*'s (2015) review confirmed this, showing that people with disabilities had difficulty both getting into and staying in work.

There is a further data gap that would consider the overarching economic impact of disabled people being lost to the labour market – that is, their potential contribution is both mainly absent and not measured. One estimation put this loss of income at 5–7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) (Heymann *et al.* 2014). It is also important to consider and accurately measure the impact that employing more disabled people would have on the need for public finance support through social protection (disability allowances), and other support and benefit costs, so reducing governments' dependency ratios.

> **Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation [sic] (OECD) countries, as a whole, spend about 10% of their total social spending on disability benefits. Reducing these expenditures by increasing spending on labour market integration and other work-related benefits can be ultimately less costly and more effective.**
>
> (Heymann *et al.* 2014: 4)

Buckup's study for the ILO on the 'price of exclusion' in ten low- and middle-income countries underlines the broader consequences for people with disabilities as well as society, with economic losses related to the exclusion of people with disabilities from work falling between 3 and 7 per cent of GDP. Thus, 'It makes economic sense to create an environment that is supportive for people with disabilities' (Buckup 2009: 51) because 'people with disabilities are less productive not because they are "disabled" but because they live and work in environments that are "disabling".'

Overall then, evidence on this topic is rather sparse, especially in relation to global South contexts, although it is slowly increasing. There is more in the literature about the difficulties facing people with disabilities for getting into work than there is rigorous evidence of numbers in work, the distribution across types of work, pay scales, etc. or on interventions that have worked to improve the situation.

However, this rather negative situation is set to change, as there are numerous initiatives in train that will improve the data, both about disabled people's lives more generally and their employment situation. The Washington Group sets of questions, which identify people's level of functional difficulty, and indicate a risk of disability (short set, extended set, and currently in development an employment set) are now increasingly being used by governments, NGOs and others. There are also a number of audit and evaluation tools that measure accessibility

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or inclusion within organisations (for use in business and NGO contexts) and are beginning to be used more widely (e.g. Light for the World's Inclusion card, BenchmarkABILITY®; ILO 2011).

In the corporate sector, the New York state comptroller Thomas DiNapoli is putting pressure on major corporations to embrace inclusion. In a recent (2019) letter to 49 company chiefs in the city, he asked them to measure/report on their inclusion performance (Brodey 2019). He recommends they use the Disability Equality Index (DEI), an initiative from a not-for-profit business disability inclusion resource Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD).

Thus, although good comprehensive data are missing, anecdotally it is clear that people with disabilities globally have difficulty securing employment, particularly in the formal sector. In most countries (high, middle and low income), most people with disabilities who work do so in the informal sector (for example, working very locally for themselves or their family in small businesses, or doing casual agricultural work or petty trading). Formal waged or salaried work is much more difficult to find. It is also accepted that this difficulty is usually exacerbated for women with disabilities compared to their male counterparts, although this varies according to context. It is also seemingly universally difficult for those with particularly stigmatised impairments (such as cognitive/intellectual and psychosocial/mental health impairments) to find work (Rohwerder 2015). Finally, there is a close link between poor access to work and having had limited or no school education and thus lower socioeconomic status (OECD 2010). So, for the many people with disabilities who did not enrol in or complete school, or who come from poor families, it is much more difficult to find decent, secure work.

3   Introduction to the country profiles

There are some similarities between the four Inclusion Works countries: Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda. Yet they are also different in some key ways, both from the economic development, business and employment perspectives and also in relation to their activities, awareness and action towards becoming disability inclusive across all sectors. The next section provides a detailed overview of each country and in relation to employment and disability inclusion.

3.1   Bangladesh

Bangladesh has a population of 165 million people (World Bank 2019a). It was ranked 142 out of 187 countries on the HDI (2014). In 2014, its income per capita was $1,088 and the poverty rate was 31.5 per cent (UNDP 2018). However, progress is in evidence, as the proportion of people living below the national poverty line dropped from 31.5 per cent (2010) to 24.3 per cent (2016) (Asian Development Bank (ADB) 2019). Economic growth in 2016 was 7.11 per cent and in 2017 the labour force was estimated at 66.64 million people. The unemployment rate is currently 4 per cent. The labour force participation rate is 56.5 per cent, with the average between 1990 and 2018 being 56.99 per cent (Global Economy 2018).

3.1.1 People with disabilities in Bangladesh

Data on disability prevalence in Bangladesh is limited (Disability Alliance on SDGs 2017). Disability is not included in any routine data collection or surveillance system in the health sector (WHO 2015). Doctors are not well trained on appropriate identification of disabilities and many people with disabilities may have been wrongly categorised or excluded. The education sector is also lacking significant initiatives for identifying children with disabilities (CRPD Alternative Report Platform 2019).

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The estimates of prevalence that do exist vary dramatically. The 2011 census reported disability prevalence to be 1.4 per cent (1.3 per cent female, 1.5 per cent male). An estimate based on data from household income and expenditure surveys also reported a prevalence of 1.4 per cent (Leonard Cheshire 2018). The Ministry of Social Welfare's Disability Detection Survey estimated in 2016 that 0.94 per cent of people had a disability. The 2010 Household Income and Expenditure Survey reports just over 9 per cent prevalence. This variation in prevalence may be linked to geography, with one estimate suggesting that 6 per cent of people in rural areas have a disability compared to 4 per cent of people in urban areas (Ali 2014). Some estimates also differ in terms of gender, with males having lower prevalence (8.83 per cent) compared to females (10.76 per cent) (Tareque, Begum and Saito 2014). The World Report on Disability, using World Health Survey data from 2002 to 2004, estimated disability prevalence in Bangladesh at 31.9 per cent (WHO and World Bank 2011). The alternative CRPD report from 2019 estimated that around 24 million people have a disability in Bangladesh. Reported data on disability rights is based on sample surveys or micro-level initiatives generally undertaken by NGOs in their areas of operation. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies have yet to conduct any comprehensive national mapping of people with disabilities (CRPD Alternative Report Platform 2019).

3.1.2 Inclusive employment: barriers faced by people with disabilities

Significant barriers to employment for people with disabilities in Bangladesh include negative stereotypes based on prejudice and ignorance. In addition, people with disabilities may face barriers in accessing education at higher levels, reducing their opportunity to qualify for some jobs. Despite a public sector employment quota decreeing that 10 per cent of positions should be made available for people with disabilities, actual employment rates remain low. In the private sector, companies were found to employ people with disabilities. However, explicit employment policies for people with disabilities are rare. With regard to the not-for-profit sector, several NGOs include people with disabilities in micro-credit and non-formal income-generating schemes. In addition, several centres exist to assist persons with disability in Bangladesh to access non-formal income generation (Danish Bilharziasis Laboratory 2004). However, there is a general lack of knowledge about employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the country (Titumir and Hossain 2005).

For women with disabilities, perceived 'inefficiencies' (compared to women without disabilities and particularly men with or without disabilities) are barriers to employment. Social norms in Bangladesh dictate that men are preferred for employment over women. Women with disabilities are not regarded as having the capacity to work and are usually expected to stay at home and do domestic chores or not participate in work at all. The lack of inclusive transport and physical accessibility issues are also barriers to the inclusion of women with disabilities in the workforce (Quinn *et al*. 2016).

3.1.3 The disability movement and inclusive employment

Information on the disability movement's involvement with developing inclusive employment in Bangladesh is limited. The National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) is a national disability think tank that was established in 1991. Its main activities focus on safeguarding, promoting the rights of people with disabilities, and lobbying for improved legislation. It has nearly 400 member organisations and liaises with relevant government bodies and NGOs to formulate coordinated action plans for establishing equal rights and participation of people with disabilities. It works at the interface between government and non-government institutions in this field (NFOWD 2018). It implements a programme with the Access Bangladesh Foundation called Promoting Employment and

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Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities in Accordance with the CRPD and SDGs (Access Bangladesh Foundation 2019). However, its impact is not clear.

The National Grassroots Disabilities Organization (NGDO) and the National Council of Disabled Women (NCDW) are also involved in the disability movement. NGDO is a national-level network of more than 100 grassroots DPOs with more than 25,000 members, working to promote the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities. It works in 23 out of 64 districts in Bangladesh. ADD International has been facilitating its networking wing. NGDO has built good linkages with government, civil society organisations (CSOs), NGOs and the media. NCDW works to strengthen grassroots disabled women's organisations in the country, focusing on justice. It has worked in collaboration with NGDO, with people with disabilities, lawyers and other members of the community in seven districts (NGDO, NCDW and BLAST 2015). It is not clear if or how either organisation is working to improve inclusive employment.

3.1.4 Partnerships for inclusive employment

Limited information was found detailing partnerships for inclusive employment in Bangladesh. However, a market-responsive inclusive skills training programme was identified in Bangladesh's 7th Five Year Plan. It promises to engage public training institutions from three ministries, nine industry associations, the Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation, and Bangladesh Bank Small and Medium Enterprise Department, to train 260,000 people in the first phase. The programme will work in six priority sectors and aims to include people with disabilities. In three phases, the ten-year programme will train about 1.5 million people in 15 priority sectors through support for 30 Centres of Excellence and 15 Industry Skill Councils. All skill development activities will be coordinated under a National Skill Development Authority, with finance to be mobilised and disbursed through a National Human Resources Development Fund (Government of Bangladesh Planning Commission, General Economics Division 2015). Outcomes of this are yet to be seen.

3.2 Kenya

Kenya is a lower middle-income, multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-religious country, with a young (an estimated 40.1 per cent are aged 0–14 years) and mainly rural population (27 per cent lived in urban areas in 2018) (LO/FTF Council 2017). It is estimated that 20.9 per cent of the population live in extreme poverty (Hamel *et al.* 2019). Underemployment rather than unemployment is the main challenge in Kenya as a result of the large numbers who work in the informal sector (83 per cent of the labour force), which does not provide decent work (Kamau *et al.* 2018; LO/FTF Council 2017). The job-creating potential of the formal sector is low despite it having high growth and high productivity sectors; in 2016 only 16.8 per cent of the workforce was in formal employment (Handjiski *et al.* 2016; Ndekei and Jairo 2017). Women are more likely to be excluded from jobs, particularly better-quality, wage-paying jobs, and to experience sexual harassment in the workplace (Timmis 2018). The private sector accounted for 68 per cent of total wage employment in 2015, and the public sector 32 per cent (LO/FTF Council 2017). In 2014, the community, social and personal services sector had the highest share of wage employment (37 per cent), followed by the agriculture sector (14 per cent), manufacturing (12 per cent) and the trade and hotel/restaurant sector (12 per cent) (*ibid.*).

3.2.1 People with disabilities in Kenya

As elsewhere, there is a lack of reliable data on disability in Kenya, and estimates range from 3.5 per cent in the 2009 census to 10.3 per cent (World Health Survey 2002–2004), using the Washington Group Questions (Sightsavers 2018; Leonard Cheshire 2018). According to the 2009 Population and Housing Census (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) 2012),

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67 per cent of people with disabilities lived in a poor household compared to 52 per cent of people without disabilities (Leonard Cheshire 2018). Lack of access to employment contributes higher poverty rates among people with disabilities (Opoku *et al.* 2016).

People with disabilities in Kenya face stigma and discrimination that leads to enduring and humiliating stereotypes and prejudice, seeing them as a curse and a burden on society, as well as undermining the human rights principles that are key to inclusion (Sightsavers 2018; Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) 2016; Kabare 2018). Stigma excludes people with disabilities from economic and social activities, thus trapping them in a cycle of poverty (Jillo 2018; Bunning *et al.* 2017). People with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, with albinism, and women and girls, older people, children and youth with disabilities, are particularly affected by stigma and discrimination (CRPD 2015; KNCHR 2016).

Kenya has 'adopted a progressive legislative and policy framework suitable to address economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights of persons with disabilities', including ratification of the UNCRPD in 2008 (Sightsavers 2018: 1). The most recent disability legislation is the Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Act, 2019, which seeks to align the previous Persons with Disabilities Act 2003 with the UNCRPD and the 2010 Kenyan Constitution (Sightsavers 2018). However, the country has faced challenges implementing many of the provisions in legislation and policies (*ibid.*). The Kenyan government has created policies and legislation that aim to enhance the right to work of people with disabilities (Khaemba *et al.* 2017).

Employment rights in the Persons with Disabilities Act 2003 include prevention of discrimination, provision of reasonable accommodation, and a 5 per cent employment quota in both the public and private sectors (ADDA and CDSK 2017; KNCHR 2016). It also offers incentives for compliance (Opini 2010). The Employment Act 2007 (revised edition 2012) recognises disability and outlaws discrimination on grounds of disability in employment for employees and prospective employees in the public and private sectors (Public Service Commission 2018).

However, the impact of these policies and legislation with regards to improved access to work and employment opportunities has been minimal, which is largely attributed to 'inadequate enforcement mechanisms by the government' and the 'failure by public and private sectors to consider persons with disabilities on impartial basis for employment opportunities' (Khaemba *et al.* 2017: 1).There is also a lack of clear budget allocations to guide employment strategies for persons with disabilities (Khaemba *et al.* 2017).

3.2.2 Inclusive employment: barriers faced by people with disabilities

There is little data on employment rates for people with disabilities in Kenya (ADDA and CDSK 2017). The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics noted that 'persons with disabilities are more likely to experience disadvantage, exclusion and discrimination in the labour market' than persons without disability, and that persons with disability are disproportionately affected by unemployment (KNBS 2012: 24). When people with disabilities are in work, 'they are often found outside the formal labour market performing uninspiring low-paid and low-skilled jobs, offering little or no opportunities for job promotion or other forms of career progression' (*ibid.*). Ebuenyi *et al.* (2019: 1) estimate that the 'employment rate for persons with disabilities is about 1 per cent compared to 73.8 per cent for the general population'. Very few people with disabilities are in formal employment despite the 5 per cent employment quota (Mueke 2014). Safaricom, which the government has highlighted as a good practice employer, only had 2.4 per cent of employees with disabilities (129 people) in 2019, although it plans to meet the 5 per cent quota by March 2021.

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The 2009 census found that men with disabilities (14 per cent) were more than twice as likely as women with disabilities (6.6 per cent) to have worked for pay (KNBS 2012). According to the 2007 national survey, people with disabilities living in urban areas also had more access to paid work (25 per cent compared to 9 per cent in rural areas) (NCAPD and KNBS 2008). Furthermore, the extent of access to employment also 'varies with type of disability, severity of disability, and education attainment' (Khaemba *et al*. 2017: 3). People with disabilities who are in work were found to be poorly paid and to experience discrimination (Khaemba *et al*. 2017).

People with disabilities face several barriers to formal employment. Employers mentioned that candidates with disabilities rarely apply for jobs, while research with people with disabilities found that self-stigma and poor perceptions about their abilities, self-worth, and ability to compete in the job market with non-disabled workers were holding them back from applying for jobs (Mueke 2014; Opoku *et al*. 2016). Stigma, low expectations, and lack of support from family and communities impacts on employment opportunities as it contributes to self-stigma, often meaning that people with disabilities were unable to acquire the skills that would make them employable (Opoku *et al*. 2016). The challenges in accessing education mean they often lack the high formal qualifications and skills needed for formal sector jobs (Khaemba *et al*. 2017; Opoku *et al*. 2016). However, even those with university education or other qualifications struggle to find employment due to employer attitudes (KNCHR 2014; 2016). The exclusion of people with disabilities also contributes to their lack of networks, contacts or social and interpersonal skills, which constrains their ability to find employment (Mueke 2014).

Stigmatisation and false assumptions by employers about the capacities of people with disabilities to deliver within the workplace, in addition to concerns about the cost of accommodations, have been found to be a major barrier to formal employment (KNCHR 2014; Wanjala, Njoroge and Mathews 2016; Maina 2016; Opini 2010; Ebuenyi *et al*. 2019; Khaemba *et al*. 2017). Employers also expressed some concerned about negative reactions from co-workers, customers and clients (Ebuenyi *et al*. 2019; Mueke 2014). Employers had also reported complaints from other staff and supervisors about people with disabilities relating to poor performance, skill and job requirement mismatch, and poor social skills (ADDA and CDSK 2017).

Poor monitoring and enforcement structures also contribute to non-compliance with the 5 per cent quota for employment of people with disabilities (Khaemba *et al*. 2017). Awareness of the legislation on inclusive employment and disability in general is low (Ebuenyi *et al*. 2019; ADDA and CDSK 2017). Companies' human resources (HR) policies often do not encourage employment of people with disabilities, and many feel there is a lack of technical support from disability organisations/experts (Mueke 2014). Employers are more likely to employ people with disabilities if they know them or are familiar with their disability through prior experience, or sometimes for reasons of charity or corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Brodey 2019; Ebuenyi *et al*. 2019; ADDA and CDSK 2017).

The mode of dissemination of information on new job opportunities has been found to be limiting and inaccessible, as many advertisements are via print or social media, which many people with disabilities may not be able to access (KNCHR 2016). Employment is also hindered by inaccessible public transport (Opoku *et al*. 2016; KNCHR 2016). The difficulties and costs of getting to work can often result in people with disabilities giving up formal work (KNCHR 2016).

Access to employment is also hindered by physically inaccessible workplaces, as well as lack of accessible communication within the workplace (Khaemba *et al*. 2017; Opini 2010). While parts of a building may be accessible, other important spaces such as toilets may not be

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(Maina 2016). Reasonable accommodation is often lacking, which means people with disabilities do not get the basics to enable them to communicate with colleagues (ADDA and CDSK 2017; Ebuenyi *et al.* 2019). This can result in them feeling isolated and opting to leave work (KNCHR 2014).

Abuse and discrimination at work is also an issue. About 91 per cent of people with disabilities interviewed by Maina (2016: 96) cited high levels of negative jokes toward them, '84.8% cited that they are assigned more difficult duties; 83% indicated that they are made to do unpleasant or hazardous jobs while 76.1% cited that there are cases of threats and verbal abuse toward them by their employers, supervisors and fellow employees'. About 72% of respondents reported that they were bothered, tormented or troubled to a great extent because of their status at work (*ibid.*). Some of those interviewed reported being given a light workload, which made them feel bad about themselves. Most of this abuse and harassment goes unreported and unpunished (*ibid.*).

3.2.3 The disability movement and inclusive employment

The disability movement in Kenya has done some work on inclusive formal sector employment, including: supporting the preparation and placement of people with disabilities into job opportunities and working with employers; acting as a broker between companies and skilled young people with disabilities; and publishing policy papers on promoting the right to work and employment for people with disabilities (Khaemba *et al.* 2017; Baart and Maarse 2017).

3.2.4 Partnerships for inclusive employment

Mueke (2014) suggests that private sector involvement in inclusive employment in Kenya could be promoted through partnerships with learning institutions, employers, employees and organisations of disabled people, with market-driven programmes and individual and employer responsibility. Some such partnerships already exist – for example, the EmployAble programme, which partners NGOs, DPOs and mainstream technical and agricultural training institutes, and the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) (Baart and Maarse 2017; ADDA and CDSK 2017). The programme has succeeded in supporting people with various disabilities, including deaf-blindness, into formal sector employment (Baart and Maarse 2017). Other partnership activities include: the Disability Inclusiveness: Demand and Supply Approaches to Employment Opportunities conference; the Professional Fellows Programme on Inclusive Disability Employment (PFP-IDE); and the Private Sector Strategic Partnership in Kenya (DFID 2018). Umbrella employers' organisations such as the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), the FKE, and the Kenya Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion have raised awareness of disability inclusion through awards and work with the National Council for Persons With Disabilities (FKE 2012). The Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU-K) has also worked on disability issues (COTU-K 2019).

3.3 Nigeria

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse country (World Bank 2019b) whose 182.2 million people account for 47 per cent of West Africa's population. It has one of the largest populations of young people in the world (UNDP 2016; World Bank 2019). The population is split equally between those living in urban and rural areas. There are 97.1 million people of working age and 5 million aged 65 years and older. In 2016, Nigeria had a Human Development Index (HDI) score of 0.527, ranking 152 out of 188 countries, thus categorised as 'low' human development (UNDP 2016). Between 2005 and 2015, Nigeria's HDI value increased by 13.1 per cent (World Bank 2019b).

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Nigeria has made some progress in socioeconomic terms recently, but its human capital development remains weak due to under-investment (the country was ranked 152 out of 157 countries in the World Bank's 2018 Human Capital Index). Nigeria faces massive developmental challenges, including the need to reduce dependency on oil and diversify the economy, address insufficient infrastructure, and build strong and effective institutions, as well as issues around governance and public financial management systems. Inequality in terms of income and opportunities has been growing rapidly and has adversely affected poverty reduction (World Bank 2019b).

Over half of the population live in multidimensional poverty and 30 per cent live in severe multidimensional poverty; more than half of the population (53.5 per cent) live below the income poverty line (purchasing power parity (PPP) $1.90 a day). Of those in employment, 72.3 per cent are classed as 'working poor' (earning $3.10 a day or less (PPP). Gross national income (GNI) per capita was reported to be $5,443 in 2011 (PPP). GDP per capita was $5,639 (PPP). In terms of income inequality, the Gini coefficient is 43.0. The expected years of schooling is 10 and the adult literacy rate is 59.6 per cent. Life expectancy is 53.1 years. The adult mortality rate (per 1,000 people) is 346 for females and 379 for males. There is a north–south divide, with the north falling far behind in terms of economic development (World Bank 2019b). Poverty incidence in the south of the country ranges from 8.1 to 36.9 per cent, while in the north it ranges from 78.4 per cent to 97.7 per cent (Sowunmi *et al*. 2012). Stability is also an issue, with the Boko Haram insurgency remaining a threat in the north east (ILO 2016).

3.3.1 People with disabilities in Nigeria

There are no credible and robust disability statistics available for Nigeria (Amusat 2009). Prevalence rates range from as low as 2 per cent (Leonard Cheshire 2018) to 10 per cent (Haruna 2017). Estimates of the number of Nigerians with disabilities range from 14 million (Smith 2011) to 25 million (Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) 2017). Increased disability prevalence in Nigeria is independently associated with female gender, advanced age, arthritis, stroke and diabetes (Abdulraheem, Oladipo and Amodu 2011). It is estimated that 61 per cent of people with disabilities in Nigeria have a single impairment; the remaining 39 per cent have multiple disabilities (Smith 2011).

3.3.2 Inclusive employment: barriers faced by people with disabilities

As in Kenya and Uganda, people with disabilities in Nigeria are especially vulnerable to discrimination and disadvantage in employment, experiencing unequal employment opportunities, limited rights to work and low job security. Being well-educated does not overcome this discrimination. Most employers are uncomfortable employing people with disabilities due to the belief that they will be unable to perform their roles and/or that it would be too expensive, due to fear and stereotyping (Ofuani 2011). When people with disabilities do find work, they struggle to be promoted or reach management level within organisations (Ihedioha 2015).

The lack of accessible buildings and transport networks in Nigeria form major barriers to employment. Challenges facing people with disabilities are exacerbated by poor and inadequate transport. Road environment and vehicle design are the main mobility challenges. Improvements are needed in accessible transport infrastructure, disability awareness for public transport staff, vehicle design and disable-oriented mobility planning. An estimated 80 per cent of people with disabilities are reliant on public transport (Ipingbemi 2015). Despite this high reliance, Nigeria's public transport system (along with most public spaces) remains inaccessible to people with disabilities (Umeh and Adeola 2013).

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Insecurity caused by Boko Haram attacks, natural/human-made disasters, and electoral violence has contributed to increases in the number of internally displaced people (many of whom have disabilities). This impacts negatively on their socioeconomic wellbeing, although there is limited research on this (Badmus Bidemi 2017). Other barriers faced by people with disabilities who want to work include negative attitudes and a lack of relevant policies (Ihedioha 2015). People with disabilities in Nigeria often have reduced access to education, which narrows employment opportunities. However, even when they have good education, they may struggle to find work due to others' negative attitudes. For those who do find work, they regularly experience denial or limitation of their rights. Negative attitudes of colleagues can impact on their work performance. In some instances, people with disabilities are only given certain roles due to stereotypes about their capabilities. Also, women with disabilities encounter additional problems in finding employment due to societal norms restricting their job options (Eleweke and Ebenso 2016). A major barrier to work is the lack of assistive materials and/or devices. Lack of accessible toilets in workplaces is also a challenge (Ihedioha 2015).

3.3.3 The disability movement and inclusive employment

There is limited information available on the disability movement and inclusive employment, despite Nigeria having a plethora of DPOs that operate at national, state and local levels. Some organisations adopt a charity/welfare approach to disability issues and have little understanding of a rights-based agenda or the social model of disability, resulting in ineffective advocacy and campaigning strategies and confusion over representation of people with disabilities. The lack of unity within the movement has had a negative impact on advocacy and lobbying (Lang *et al*. 2011). Most DPOs cater for the needs of single-impairment groups (Umeh and Adeola 2013). Nigerian DPOs in general have focused on tackling relatively low-key issues, rather than dealing with deep-seated institutional and attitudinal barriers. The Nigerian disability movement has so far failed to successfully drive forward a rights-based approach to disability (Lang *et al*. 2011). DPOs in Nigeria are criticised for being too focused on immediate financial support. There are also criticisms that there are only a few DPOs operational in the north of the country (Eleweke and Ebenso 2016).

In addition to individual DPOs, there are two competing national umbrella bodies – the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAWPD) and the Association for the Comprehensive Empowerment of Nigerians with Disabilities (ASCEND) (Lang and Upah 2008). ASCEND started as a movement for the empowerment of Nigerians with disabilities and is now an advocacy platform and a socio-political group that aims to integrate people with disabilities within society generally, and in politics. JONAPWD is regarded as the official body in Nigeria addressing rights of people with disabilities, and acts as a conduit between the government and disabled citizens. However, JONAPWD has been criticised in some quarters for lacking strategic planning and transparency (Umeh and Adeola 2013).

The Coalition of Disability Organisations (CODO) is another umbrella organisation. In 2012, CODO was supportive of the strikes/protests called by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and civil society groups (Adelaja 2012). However, the relationship between people with disabilities and the trade unions is not clear, as it is argued that in Nigeria, disability issues have so far been of low priority to trade unions (Harrison-Obi 2019).

As well as the umbrella groups and DPOs, there are international NGOs focusing on delivery of services to people with disabilities. However, their geographical coverage is limited, particularly in rural areas (Lang and Upah 2008).

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3.3.4 Partnerships for inclusive employment

There are several examples of partnerships for inclusive employment, although evidence is lacking with regards to their effectiveness. For example, in some states, the government, in partnership with CBM, has implemented community-based vocational rehabilitation projects. The CBM project, Services for People with Disabilities, supports about 100 people a year through vocational training and small loans or grants to set up their own small business. However, there has reportedly been a lack of commitment by the government to provide the necessary staff and resources to ensure the functioning of these centres (Ofuani 2011).

The Special Target Enterprises Development and Monitor Initiative is a partnership between the Anambra State Government and UNDP Nigeria. It aimed to empower participants with disabilities with vocational skills in four areas: shoe-making, tailoring, hairdressing and computer application/management (UNDP 2015). However, its effectiveness is unknown. This kind of approach, which arguably 'pigeon-holes' people with disabilities into specific occupations, has been widely criticised as not being truly inclusive.

Accion Microfinance Bank has partnered with the Center for Financial Inclusion (CFI) to launch the People Living with Disabilities loan product under the auspices of the Central Bank of Nigeria. CFI also partners with the government and central bank to provide ongoing support for developing disability inclusive institutions (Dave and Riecke 2016).

3.4 Uganda

Uganda has a young and mainly rural population (an estimated 47.4 per cent of Ugandans are aged 0–14, while 23.8 per cent lived in urban areas in 2018) (Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA) 2019). Having a young, fast-growing population creates increased pressure for jobs (LO/FTF Council 2016). In Uganda, 21.4 per cent of the population lived below the national poverty line in 2016/17, with poverty concentrated in rural areas (Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) 2019). A recent report found that the labour market is struggling with low skills and low-productivity jobs (DTDA 2019). The informal sector provides most employment in Uganda, as the formal sector does not create enough work to meet the increasing size of the labour force (LO/FTF Council 2016; DTDA 2019). Access to formal employment is particularly limited in rural areas and small towns (Byiers *et al.* 2015).

> **[The] … scarcity of job opportunities has led to rural-urban migration, high competition in the labour market and the emergence of a bulging underemployed and unproductive work force.**
>
> (LO/FTF Council 2016: 9)

However, waged and salaried work makes up a growing proportion of the total Ugandan workforce, rising from 17 per cent in 2011/12 to 20 per cent in 2016/17 (DTDA 2019). The 2016/2017 Manpower Survey found that there were more men in the formal sector than women (56 per cent versus 44 per cent) (UBOS 2018b). Most formal sector employers are in the private sector (77 per cent) and the majority are education related (87 per cent public sector and 54 per cent private sector) (UBOS 2018b). However, 33.5 per cent of formal sector employees are in the public sector and 66.5 per cent are in the private sector (UBOS 2018b). According to the 2016/2017 Manpower Survey, most formal sector employees worked in education (66.7 per cent), followed by: public administration (8.5 per cent); manufacturing (7.9 per cent); trade and repairs (3.7 per cent); accommodation and food services (3.6 per cent); human health and social work activities (3.2 per cent); and financial and insurance activities (1.7 per cent) (UBOS 2018b).

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3.4.1 People with disabilities in Uganda

Mirroring the global data reliability problem, disability prevalence figures in Uganda range from 12.4 per cent (aged 2 and above) (2014 census) to 16.5 per cent (Omona, Asiimwe and Andrew State 2017; UBOS 2018a). It is estimated that 57 per cent of people with disabilities lived in a poor household compared to 45 per cent of people without disabilities (Leonard Cheshire 2018). One of the contributing factors to increased levels of poverty among people with disabilities is the lack of job opportunities open to them (Nyombi and Kibandama 2014). This in turn means that:

> **[the] … incomes of people with disabilities are often less reliable and stable than those of people without disabilities.**
>
> (Peer Research Group 2016: 25)

Due to limited awareness about disability among communities, people with disabilities continue to face both stigma and discrimination, which limits their participation in all aspects of life (National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU) 2014). Women and girls with disabilities are noted to face double discrimination and be at higher risk of abuse, violence, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 2016; Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) 2016). People with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities, albinism, dwarfism, and deaf-blind people are disproportionally affected by stigma (CRPD 2016; UBOS 2018a).

Uganda has a strong policy and legislative framework for disability, which includes various policies and initiatives to promote the right to work of people with disabilities (UBOS 2018a; Leonard Cheshire Disability and Inclusive Development Centre (LCDIDC) 2016). However, implementation has been a challenge and these laws have not been fully translated into practical outcomes (Griffiths *et al*. 2018; Nyombi and Kibandama 2014; Bekoreire *et al*. 2012).

The People with Disabilities Act (2006) makes provisions for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against people with disabilities and towards equal opportunities, including in employment. These include tax incentives and the ability to determine a quota, although this has not been set and the tax incentives have been repealed in favour of 'special grants' (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; NUDIPU and UMWA 2018; Nyombi and Kibandama 2014). There is a new draft People with Disabilities Bill, 2018, which has been criticised for not domesticating the UNCRPD, which Uganda ratified in 2008 (Adude 2019). There is no direct reference in the Ugandan legislation regarding reasonable accommodation by employers (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016).

In addition, mainstream employment legislation and policies have provisions for disability inclusive employment. The Equal Opportunities Act (2006) and the Employment Act (No. 6) (2006) both prohibit discrimination against people in employment based on disability (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; NUDIPU and UMWA 2018). This is both in relation to gaining employment and while in employment (Nyombi and Kibandama 2014). The National Employment Policy for Uganda (2011) aims to promote disability inclusive employment (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 2011). The 2011 Employment Regulations have several provisions concerning people with disabilities (NUDIPU and UMWA 2018). The 2017 Disability Inclusive Planning Guidelines provide multi-sectoral guidance on disability inclusion in planning, including in relation to employment (National Planning Authority (NPA) 2017).

3.4.2 Inclusive employment: barriers faced by people with disabilities

As noted already, data on employment is scant but shows that Ugandans with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed than their non-disabled peers, especially youth and women

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(Leonard Cheshire 2018). Most people with disabilities who work do so in the informal sector, in poorly remunerated, hazardous and precarious jobs (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016). The 2016/2017 Manpower Survey disaggregated by disability and found that only 1.3 per cent of the formal sector workforce were people with disabilities, with most concentrated in the arts, entertainment and recreation sectors (UBOS 2018b). Few employers keep records of employees with disabilities (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016). Research suggests that men, those with mild-to-moderate disabilities, and those with physical disabilities have better chances of getting employed than others (Hartley *et al.* 2017; ADD International 2011; Leonard Cheshire 2018). Discrimination in recruitment and selection processes, exploitation, earning less than other employees, and being employed in the lowest status jobs are all common experiences for people with disabilities (Nyombi and Kibandama 2014; Bekoreire *et al.* 2012; ADD International 2011).

The barriers noted earlier are evidenced in Uganda (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016). Stigmatisation and discrimination from families, employers and wider society are significant blocks to formal employment for people with disabilities (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; FUE and NUDIPU 2017a). One result of this is internalised or self-stigma, which leads to low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence among people with disabilities and affects their ability to find employment (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; Ghore 2016). Both employers and DPO representatives felt that people with disabilities do not apply for jobs in the formal sector, as many had never been encouraged to see themselves as employees and are not presented with the same career development opportunities as their non-disabled peers, by their families, the education system, or employers (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016).

Another barrier is the actual and perceived skills and education levels of people with disabilities and the challenges they face in gaining the qualifications and skills employers were looking for. However, graduates with disabilities or people with disabilities with demonstrable skills were still found to have difficulties getting work (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; NUDIPU and UMWA 2018). Having low expectations of people with disabilities' qualities and experience means that some employers limit disabled people's opportunities to demonstrate their potential and abilities (ADD International 2011). In addition, the perceived cost of employing people with disabilities was raised as a concern by some employers, especially for those starting out or for small and medium enterprises (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; Bekoreire *et al.* 2012; ADD International 2011). The myths surrounding employing people with disabilities often result from lack of interaction and experience working with them (Khamisi *et al.* 2017). Previous relationships between employers and individuals with disabilities can play a part in promoting employment among disabled people (Hartley *et al.* 2017). Employers who had experiences with employees with disabilities found that:

> **… they were loyal and hard-working employees and that they are just as productive as non-disabled employees.**
> (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016: 15)

Research indicates that while most employers know that legislation includes elements protecting people with disabilities from discrimination, very few know the details of the People with Disabilities Act (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; Griffiths *et al.* 2018: 2,10,13). The 2016/2017 Manpower Survey found that most workplaces did not have a disability policy, especially in the private sector (only 4 per cent did) (UBOS 2018b). Some private sector employers were aware of elements of the business case for disability inclusive employment, including how it could contribute to a positive image for the company (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; Hartley *et al.* 2017). Employers have noted that they need more awareness and practical support to become disability inclusive employers (ADD International 2011).

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Employers also mentioned that their vacancies were open to anyone who meets the criteria for the job or that they had equal opportunities practices; however, most said that they very seldom interview people with disabilities and a few said they had never interviewed an applicant with a disability, which they attributed to people with disabilities not applying for jobs (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; FUE and NUDIPU 2017a). Despite this, companies were generally found to be reluctant to apply affirmative policies or practices in recruitment, although some did indicate on the job adverts that people with disabilities with the required competencies were strongly encouraged to apply, while others deliberately recruited people with disabilities through specific requests to DPOs and training institutions (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; FUE and NUDIPU 2017b). However, most job vacancies are not advertised in formats accessible to all (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016). In addition, research carried out by ADD International found both private and public sector employers discriminating against people with disabilities at the interview stage (NUDIPU 2016).

Physical access and access to information in workplaces were found to be challenging for people with disabilities who were in work (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016). Very few employers provide reasonable accommodation (FUE and NUDIPU 2017a). Nyombi and Kibandama (2014) suggest that the requirement under the Disability Act for employers to ensure that their premises are accessible for people with disabilities is probably the most challenging requirement for employers in Uganda because few were willing to improve their premises and instead preferred to screen out people with disabilities at the recruitment stage. In addition, transport to and from the workplace is often challenging for people with disabilities due to the cost and lack of accessibility (Bekoreire *et al.* 2012).

Another factor contributing to the low numbers of people with disabilities in formal employment is that as a result of stigma and discrimination, people with disabilities have faced abuse and discrimination while at work from employers and colleagues alike (UBOS 2018a). Abuse ranges from psychological to sexual abuse (Bekoreire *et al.* 2012).

3.4.3 The disability movement and inclusive employment

The disability movement in Uganda has done some work on inclusive formal sector employment, including: carrying out research and publishing policy papers; linking people with disabilities to potential employers; creating databases of disabled job-seekers; providing employers with training; providing people with disabilities with training; and engaging in partnerships to promote inclusive employment (DPOD-NUDIPU 2016; NUDIPU 2016; ADD International 2011; Segawa 2019).

3.4.4 Partnerships for inclusive employment

There are several existing partnerships to promote inclusive employment in Uganda, including between the FUE and NUDIPU, the umbrella organisation for DPOs in the country (FUE and NUDIPU 2017a; 2017b). They have engaged in a variety of activities, including co-hosting a forum for chief executive officers (CEOs) to discuss Enhancing Inclusive Employment of People with Disabilities in Uganda, and the Make 12.4% Work initiative supported by the international NGO, Light for the World, which asks businesses and mainstream organisations to sign up to be role models for disability inclusion. People with disabilities form a pool of Disability Inclusion Facilitators and the project has developed an app to support its work. Other partnership opportunities include: the Labour Advisory Board, comprising government officials, representatives of employers and employees, and one representative of people with disabilities; Ugandan trade unions, who have trained disability champions; the Professional Fellows Programme on Inclusive Disability Employment (PFP-IDE); the Ugandan Human Resource Managers' Association; and the Platform for Labour

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Action (Government of Uganda 2006; DTDA 2019; NIPSA 2018; Mogensen and Frederiksen 2016; DPOD-NUDIPU 2016).

3.5   Commonalities and divergencies between the four country contexts

It can be seen from the overview of the four countries that there are many similarities and recurring themes between them, and indeed this was revealed during the co-creation activities carried out in the first year of the Inclusion Works programme. During participatory design workshops, desk-based situational analyses, and the more focused labour market analyses (which included detailed discussion with people with disabilities and their representatives and employers), there was much commonality in people's concerns and aspirations.

However, because the political economies of the countries differ, the types of industries that might be early adopters or already are pioneers in inclusive employment are varied (e.g. Safaricom in Kenya), and indeed the most prominent employers are different. For example, in Bangladesh, there has been rapid industrialisation and there is the very productive and fast-moving readymade garment industry, whereas Uganda has yet to develop large-scale manufacturing industry. So formal employment opportunities will be different across the four countries.

There are also differences in other key factors such as access to health care and the availability of assistive devices, the extent to which disabled children go to school and progress to college or university, gender aspects, and the role of faith and ethnicity. The influence of negative stereotyping and discrimination within each culture has many similarities. Lastly, in each country there is disability legislation and recognition of the UNCRPD, and evidence of rights-based arguments, but in some (such as Uganda and Bangladesh) this is relatively well-established, whereas in others (such as Nigeria) this law is a very recent development. In all four countries, a 'policy implementation gap' is evident between the aspirations of legislation and policies and the day-to-day experiences of people living with disabilities.

4   Which strategies might work? What are the vital ingredients?

So, what are the vital ingredients which might work singly or in combination to achieve disability inclusive employment? The Inclusion Works programme will explore the effectiveness of various combinations of approaches in the four countries over the next three years. It is, of course, unlikely that one approach or combination will be a panacea, but there are some that have been tried out on a small scale but not consistently, and not in combinations with others. The aim is to normalise an inclusive approach so that the general expectation is that people with disabilities will be employed in the mainstream job market and regarded as a valuable part of the workforce across a range of industries, both in the government and private sectors.

The types of interventions that have been shown to be successful (at least to some extent) can be grouped into three broad categories:

> legal, policy and regulatory
> supply side – with disabled people, their organisations and allies
> demand side – with employers and their organisations.

We now discuss some of the pros and cons of each, with some examples, although again good evidence of successes and failures is often lacking (Tripney *et al.* 2015).

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4.1 Legal, policy and regulatory interventions

Countries that have signed and ratified the UNCRPD are committed to institutionalising this commitment and incorporating its principles into national laws and policies. However, the extent and speed at which this happens and, moreover, whether these initiatives result in changes on the ground is hugely variable across regions and countries. There has been relatively little research on this, though anecdotally there are many examples of treaties, laws and policies not being actively implemented and there being little sanction for lack of compliance. Regulation is important not only to ensure that people with disabilities have more inclusive access to work opportunities but also to ensure that the work they do is 'decent' and not risky or exploitative.

Fisher and Purcal (2017) explore different levels of policies that aim to change attitudes to people with disabilities – often the most intractable problem. They analyse the evidence of the effectiveness of these programmes. They conclude that policies that focus only on the individual and/or organisational levels will not be sufficient and that systematic/structural change will only come about with overarching government-level actions; thus, the three levels are equally important, and need to be symbiotic and mutually reinforcing.

Saleh and Bruyère's (2018) important work addresses how policies can leverage employers' interests to further address inequalities. They discuss employers' policies and practices, which were demonstrated in their research to facilitate recruitment, hiring, career development, retention, and meaningful workplace inclusion, and aim to synthesise existing international literature on employment rights for people with disabilities from the employer perspective. They emphasise that regulatory environments which tackle negative attitudes, while at the same time supporting educational and training initiatives, are a critical first step. However, they argue that this will not be sufficient without other interventions that engage other parts of the system.

4.1.1 Disability quotas within workplaces

Some governments have attempted to encourage employment of disabled people through using quota systems, stipulating that employers over a certain size should employ a set percentage of people with disabilities. However, evidence of effectiveness is currently lacking. Many countries have employment quotas for people with disabilities; yet there is much debate about whether this is a good approach, and the way that it is conceptualised is sometimes flawed. Quotas often seem to be more of a stick than a carrot. There may be a fine for non-compliance, which sometimes employers would rather pay than comply, as they believe the potential costs of compliance to be more expensive than the fine (WHO and World Bank 2011). Some DPOs see quotas as demeaning and not really embracing a truly inclusive approach.

So here, there is a fundamental misunderstanding about how inclusion should be operationalised. Interestingly, the United Kingdom (UK) government has, under pressure from the disability movement, removed quotas in favour of anti-discrimination laws. They recognise that change by this route may be slower but that the benefits and value of employing disabled people will be better understood in the long term. Similarly, some other countries have chosen an affirmative action approach, including Portugal, Israel, and Brazil.

Also important at the policy and legislation level is the relationship between national social protection systems and levels of payment for work. If the level of any benefit offered to support disabled people is very generous, then this can disincentivize job-seeking, or if the regulations make working part-time not possible or not worth it, this is also unhelpful. Social protection schemes need to be designed to support the very poorest and those who cannot work because of the type or severity of their impairment, and those who are carers, but

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without reducing motivation to work for those who can but may not be able to do so full-time. However, in our four focus countries, the likelihood of an over-generous welfare system is low, and the lack of any significant safety net often condemns people to engaging in risky work that is neither safe nor decent.

Overall, the evidence suggests that being in work is a healthier option for most individuals, in relation to physical and mental wellbeing, household finances, self-esteem and social status (WHO and World Bank 2011). The OECD (2010) reports that if people with disabilities start to receive benefits, they often remain on them, and then this can be regarded as a 'medicalisation' of their situation – that is, they are not sick, but their disability is being treated like sickness, and pathologises their differences, harking back to a medical approach to disability. Interventions which adapt and improve the social protection system can therefore have a crucial impact on the numbers of people seeking work (OECD 2003; 2008). Disability allowances need to provide a safety net to protect and support people, including supplementing earnings when disabled people cannot earn enough to meet their basic needs.

4.2 Supply-side interventions

Schemes working directly with disabled people in order to maximise their chances of employment in competitive markets are common. These include skills development or specific job training (across a range of industries and settings). However, they have typically trained people in a limited range of occupations (thus reducing choice and reinforcing stereotypes), have focused mainly on manual, craft and low-status work, and have not been well matched to the needs of employers and gaps in the labour market. Collaborating with technical, vocational and educational training (TVET) colleges where young non-disabled people go has become more popular, but more work is needed to ensure that these institutions have the knowledge and skills to be sufficiently inclusive in their approach.

Several organisations are promoting capacity building of disabled people in business skills, for example:

> **Increasingly, the need for understanding and using diverse market opportunities and accessing formal employment has become more apparent. This has meant an increase in business training as part of skill development training to ensure people with disabilities are able to understand and react to market demands.**
>
> (Andrae and Smith 2016: 3)

Increasing 'soft skills' for employment (such as building self-confidence, literacy and CV writing, communication and interview skills, team work, etc.) has also been identified as necessary, and there are examples of 'one-stop' job shops that provide this training as well as matching people to jobs. Ideally, these would be part of mainstream career services rather than a specialised disability focused service. Working alongside DPOs and other self-help groups that can build up social support networks, and positive self-identity of disabled people as an employable group with skills to offer, has also been tried, though evaluations are rare. For example, this is often part of the community-based rehabilitation approach (WHO *et al*. 2010).

Despite the potential for supply-side measures to help some people to overcome a lack of specific skills or employability barriers, one risk with such approaches is that they prepare people for jobs that remain hard or impossible to find. Where it is jobs, rather than skills, that are missing, TVET has negligible employment impacts (Flynn *et al*. 2016: 22–33). Even disabled people with enhanced skill sets will (in most low-resource countries) compete in

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labour markets that are already saturated with a supply of qualified job-seekers who are chasing a small number of 'decent' work opportunities.

Gender aspects also need to be addressed, as the needs of women and men with disabilities may be very different in terms of support. In some settings there are very traditional gendered expectations about what work men or women can do. These may be particularly disadvantageous to women who are often more marginalised and excluded from the workforce. Families, educators and employers can unwittingly reinforce such ideas, unless stereotypes are challenged and a more gender-equitable approach is adopted whereby women are encouraged and supported to enter a broader range of jobs if that is what they want to do (Tefera *et al.* 2018). Interventions which include families of disabled people are also important, as they may be influential in deciding whether and what kind of work someone aims for. Families' emotional and financial support for the disabled person embarking on a new course of training, an apprenticeship or a job is essential. Again, evidence is weak, but community-based rehabilitation approaches often incorporate this aspect.

4.3   Demand-side interventions

Evidence about what works best in relation to increasing knowledge, awareness and confidence in inclusive practice among employers is also weak, although there are numerous anecdotal or individual cases of success, but usually on a small scale. Interventions focus mainly on three aspects: attitude change, incentivising employers, and practical changes in the workplace to make it more inclusive.

4.3.1 Attitude change

As already discussed, negative attitudes, entrenched beliefs and assumptions leading to discriminatory acts are a major barrier to people with disabilities gaining employment. Therefore, interventions to tackle these are necessary. However, the best way to do this is still unclear, as achieving actual changes in behaviour is difficult (Cross 2011; Rohwerder 2018).

Social diffusion and contact theories have had some attention recently, with evidence that once a non-disabled person spends time with disabled people, their attitude becomes more positive and stigma is reduced. Thus, real, meaningful and personal experiences can be powerful. This provides fundamental support for the idea of inclusion, because as well as the marginalised group benefiting, so do those in the 'mainstream' who learn about the benefits of diversity and get to know disabled people as individuals (Werner and Scior 2016; McConkey 2015; Rohwerder 2018). Interestingly, Walker and Scior (2013) show that the contact does not necessarily have to be direct, and that interventions such as showing a film to an audience can also change their opinion. As another study notes, 'Anecdotal evidence suggests that employing a disabled person in itself changes attitudes within that workplace. In the United States, companies already employing disabled people are more likely to employ other disabled people' (WHO and World Bank 2011: 32).

Another approach which has potential, but again where there is little systematic evidence, is the impact of role models and champions. This could be led by DPOs, which could identify disabled people who are successfully in employment, publicise their success and help them act as mentors to others. We still need to know more about what the best drivers of attitude and behaviour change are. The relationship between giving information (e.g. about disability and what inclusion means) and actual changes in behaviour is not clear.

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4.3.2 Employment practices

As we have shown, there are various barriers to inclusive practice in the workplace, which employers may need to change, including the different stages of employing someone: the way jobs are advertised, the recruitment process, as well as support for people once in work. While demand-side approaches at the macro level focus on increasing the number of available jobs (that is, decreasing the length of the 'queue' for a job), at the micro level, with respect to job-seekers with a disability, demand-side approaches aim to ensure that they do not perpetually remain at the 'back of the queue'.

The American India Foundation (2014) looked at best practices in inclusive employment in India – surveying 105 small, medium and large private companies across a range of sectors and industries, although they were only hiring people with visual, hearing or 'orthopaedic' impairments. They identified successful strategies which included: involvement of top management; sound and supportive HR practices; efforts to create an ethos of inclusion; collaborating with the ecosystem to develop capacities of people with disabilities and address any concerns; providing training (e.g. on sign language); seeking out technical support (e.g. from NGOs); and making conscious efforts to seek out youth and women from lower socioeconomic groups. They showcase the 12 best examples. Key observations were that often companies had moved from an initial CSR approach to inclusion, to embedding it within HR practices more widely. There was also an emphasis on finding the best fit for the individual. Sometimes companies start by employing people from just one impairment group (for example, Lemon Tree Hotels, which began by just employing deaf people). This kind of selective approach is potentially problematic as it inevitably leaves some people at the 'back of the queue', although it could be more positively (but perhaps controversially) regarded as a form of 'progressive realisation'.

4.3.3 Employers' provision of practical assistance in the workplace

A common worry for employers is an anticipated increased cost of employing someone with disabilities and yet they may not have accurate information about what these costs would really be. Some adaptations maybe actually be cheap or free, such as adjusting the arrangement of furniture in a room, or working on the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of other employees through awareness programmes, buddying schemes, etc. Flexible working patterns, such as allowing disabled people to work part-time if necessary or flexible timings to allow for transport constraints or attendance at rehabilitation appointments all form part of an inclusive ethos.

Schemes which clarify the need for and support the provision of costly items such as some assistive devices, adaptations to the physical environment (including bathrooms and communal areas, appropriate furniture and equipment and adaptations to tools and machinery, computer software, etc.) are helpful, as they legitimise the disabled person's needs and increase understanding of what accessibility and inclusion mean in practice. Some schemes may provide external support to the employer to meet these costs. In some countries, the government helps employers with these costs to encourage their compliance with CRPD and local antidiscrimination laws. These might be in the form of tax breaks, or (working in collaboration with NGOs, DPOs and international NGOs) advice and funding for accommodations and modifications (WHO and World Bank 2011). Again, the extent to which such schemes shift employers' willingness to employ disabled people is unclear (Tripney *et al.* 2015). The UK's workforce accommodations scheme Access to Work is an example, and:

> **Every Member State of the European Union provides some form of grant or subsidy to employers for reasonable accommodations, and half of all EU Member States have a dedicated authority for the purpose.**
>
> (ESCAP 2016: 26)

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4.3.4 Employers' forums and organisations

Employers are increasingly getting together to share experiences and motivate each other to understand the arguments for inclusion (both the business case and the human rights imperative) and the practicalities of it. In the UK and globally, the Business Disability Forum has worked in innovative ways with employers, rather than directly with disabled people, to change employers' practices and make it easier and more rewarding to do business with and employ disabled people (Business Disability Forum website).

Many countries have similar organisations: Australia, Germany, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and the United States (WHO and World Bank 2011: 250). In the Asia Pacific region, there are a number of employers' networks – for instance, in India, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka (ESCAP 2016).

4.3.5 Supported employment

Whereas historically, when people with disabilities were employed, this was often in segregated or 'sheltered' environments, the contemporary and inclusive approach is 'supported employment', which can be packaged in various ways. The idea is that someone can be placed in a work context with appropriate support and will learn 'on the job'. Thus, individual coaching, mentoring, supervision and other needs such as assistive devices and transport are provided to enable the people to adapt and perform in the work environment. This has been used particularly with the most marginalised groups – those with cognitive and mental health impairments (Schneider 2003; WHO and World Bank 2011). However, there is no clear evidence about the cost effectiveness of this nor indeed in-depth exploration of the perspectives of either employees or employers.

'Social firms' are a related approach – companies working in the commercial market, but with a social objective, employing people who are otherwise marginalised. They are popular in Europe, particularly in Italy and Germany, but again evidence of their impact is not clear (Secker, Dass and Grove 2003). It is argued that these can produce social returns on investment, increase people's wellbeing, and save money on social and health care support that would otherwise be needed (Warner and Mandiberg 2006; WHO and World Bank 2011).

In Singapore, Genashtim Innovative Learning is a for-profit social enterprise that provides globally targeted online learning services for executive education and language proficiency, as well as remote PC support and surveillance. Many (80 per cent) of their staff have a disability, and the enterprise promotes inclusion that goes beyond CSR. The enterprise emphasises the contribution made by their workers given the right working environment (ESCAP 2016).

In India, Kulkarni and Scullion (2015) studied agencies involved in the 'talent management' approach, including during recruitment and pre-employment, ongoing employment, with employers and policymakers. They argue that:

> **… people with a disability are an underutilized human resource and that utilizing their abilities should be a key part of an inclusive approach to talent management… A key finding of the study is the preference of agencies to engage in non-traditional and ad hoc approaches to build and showcase underutilized talent of those with a disability.**
>
> (Kulkarni and Scullion 2015: 1169)

Again, in India, a model employer for equal opportunities for people with disabilities is Mphasis, a global service provider delivering technology-based solutions to clients across the world and across industries, including banking and capital markets, insurance, manufacturing and communications. The company clearly signals its inclusive approach in its practices – for

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example, in recruitment drives, provision of assistive devices and transport, flexible working hours, etc. It has a ringfenced fund to support workplace solutions and accommodations for employees with disabilities (WHO and World Bank 2011).

In summary then, although systematically collected evidence is rare, some key approaches and themes are emerging. Groysberg and Connolly (2013) recommend some key practices that organisations can adopt to instil an inclusive culture:

> measure diversity and inclusion
> hold managers accountable
> support flexible arrangements
> recruit and promote from diverse pools of candidates
> provide leadership education
> sponsor employee resource groups and mentoring programmes
> offer quality role models
> make the Chief Diversity Officer position count.

They also emphasise that it is important that senior management are dedicated to diversity, as this models an approach throughout the organisation and helps them to attract and nurture a diverse workforce and culture (Groysberg and Connolly 2013).

Similarly, Sightsavers supports the work of the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) in India, proposing:

> **… a course of action which is built on a strong cross-disability rights-based movement driving a multi-pronged, multi-sectoral approach toward addressing inequalities to break the cycle of poverty and disability.**
> (Abidi and Sharma 2014)

All of this is very much reflected in/consistent with the perspectives expressed during the Inclusion Works labour market assessments, which were completed for each country during the co-creation phase. The preliminary work for these assessments sought to understand how the demand for and supply of skills comes to market, how the market is regulated, and what gaps or opportunities emerge from conversations with job-seekers, employers, and government agencies.

They revealed a stronger than expected interest from many (but not all) employers to be inclusive of disability in their workforces. Equally, though, there was consistent concern about the challenges in attracting applications from people with disabilities, despite efforts to reach out to them. Underpinning this are two related but contrasting factors:

> employers lacking disability employment confidence
> prospective employees lacking employment readiness and feelings of low self-worth (self-stigma).

The 'missing middle' here appears to be a 'convenor' and capacity-building intermediary to help overcome these challenges. There is a need for a link between supporting functions of the labour market system, strengthening regulatory/enabling rules and regulations, and (for example) integration of existing provisions such as access-to-work initiatives, which would make it easier for employers to say yes to disability inclusion and for job-seekers to access employment. This missing capacity-building/convening function is thus a primary focus of the Inclusion Works intervention plan.

The innovation here is to work on a combination of different aspects of the system simultaneously, forging links and promoting collaboration between them. The Inclusion Works

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programme involves many different partners in a consortium, contributing different strengths to the overall goal of improving opportunities for inclusive employment. It appears that single-strand interventions cannot work well alone, but a carefully crafted combination might? The way that the different pathways to inclusion can complement and support each other will be revealed as we observe and interrogate what happens during the intervention.

5   Conclusions

We have seen that our four focus countries, although very different, have many similarities in terms of barriers to inclusive employment. They vary in their journey towards being disability aware and inclusive, both generally and in relation to employment. This is related to interlinked social, cultural, political and economic factors in each setting and how the disability agenda is playing out. However, there are some potentially effective interventions that have shown promise in these or other countries, usually on a small scale and with rather scant robust evidence of effectiveness. However, this gives us some steer about what might work, especially if used more systematically and in creative combinations that are well matched to specific country contexts.

Thus, the programme will be trying out different combinations of the three types of interventions described in section 5, depending on local context in each country but essentially with some attention to each of the three major pathways, as follows.

> Policy level – change and implementation of disability legislation, working with governments and other key agencies to promote understanding of disability rights, antidiscrimination law, provision of services, grants and support for change, rewards for inclusive practice, etc.
> Supply side – work with disabled people and their organisations (DPOs) on job-seeker assistance, training and skills development, assistive technology provision, mentoring, human rights advocacy work, etc.
> Demand side – work with employers and their organisations to understand the business case, change attitudes, promote inclusive workplace practices (such as reasonable accommodation) with HR departments, etc.

Over the next three years, we will see which combination of these approaches begin to improve the chances of people with disabilities getting into, staying in and progressing in formal sector employment. We hope to have some useful and interesting cases to report, which will be able to inform similar initiatives elsewhere and contribute to a global agenda for equality and disability inclusion in employment and across other sectors.

The paper has provided an overview of global perspectives on disability and employment and some of the key trends and challenges to achieving positive change in this arena, as well as providing detailed information on each of the four focus countries. A recurring theme is the lack of robust, population-level data on the prevalence of disability and employment-specific statistics, as well as a lack of detailed qualitative evidence about what people experience when they try to find work in the formal sector. There is also a lack of evidence about the contribution that could be made by using different approaches at each of three levels: (1) policy and the structural system; (2) employers and their organisations; and (3) people with disabilities and their organisations. The Inclusion Works programme is unique and innovative; it will intervene at all these levels and collect data about how successfully they intersect to bring about change. We hope to identify successful ways to accelerate disability inclusive formal employment in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, and Bangladesh, by demonstrating the effective ingredients.

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