

FINAL REPORT



Applying design thinking to develop new service models for inclusion of working age persons

with disabilities in community and labour market in Kyrgyzstan



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Applying design thinking to develop new service models for inclusion of working age persons with disabilities in community and labour market in Kyrgyzstan

Final Report

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Protellus – Karg & von der Heyde GbR

Bishkek, February 2023

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Abbreviations

EU	European Union
ICF	International Classification of Functioning
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MLSMM	Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration, Social Security and Migration
NGO	Non-governmental organisations
OPD	Organisation of Persons with Disabilities
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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Executive Summary

This report presents the results and the process of “Applying design thinking to develop new service models for inclusion of adult persons with disabilities in community and labour market in Kyrgyzstan”. The process included a research phase as well as a Design Thinking Workshop, both aiming at understanding and mapping different perspectives and needs of constituents and stakeholders working on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market and the social protection system in Kyrgyzstan.

Based on six identified challenges and problem statements, four prioritized prototypes were developed. It is recommended to pilot these four approaches and to further explore their potential for upscaling and mainstreaming in standard service provision of relevant institutions in close collaboration with organisations of persons with disabilities and social partners:

Figure 1: Four approaches developed during the workshop

<p>Approach A.1</p> <p>Awareness training for disability inclusion within economic units (private and public).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Mandatory training units for employers, managers and staff▶ Creation of awareness on the topics of disabilities and inclusion, and the legal situation <p>Key Partners: MLSMM, OPDs, Development partners, business associations, private and public employers</p>	<p>Approach A.2</p> <p>Fairs and public awareness raising campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Organization of public job fairs, including cultural activities created by persons with disabilities▶ Creation of awareness campaigns on social media and mass media <p>Key partners: MLSMM, Development partners, OPDs, NGOs, business associations, private and public employers</p>
<p>Approach B.1</p> <p>Participatory implementation of audit of physical access for persons with disabilities to public institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Creation of a standing accessibility commission▶ Revision of existing construction norms and involvement in future construction / renovation processes <p>Key Partners: the Ministry of Transport and Communications, MLSMM, OPDs, Development partners, NGOs, OPDs, Architects, Construction companies</p>	<p>Approach B.2</p> <p>Labour market inclusion services for persons with disabilities (supply side) and companies (demand side)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Services for employers: information, training, advice and recruitment▶ Services for persons with disabilities: information, training, advice, job coaching, assistance during conflict resolution, search for job <p>Key partners: MLSMM, Development partners, OPDs, business associations, NGOs, Employment services</p>

1. Introduction

Social protection in Kyrgyzstan covers a broad range of risks and receives government funding but effective coverage remains low, at 41.7% of persons covered with at least one social protection program¹, leaving many without access to social protection. The overall public social protection spending at 10.3% of Gross domestic product (excluding health) – the highest among the countries in Central Asia – is not meeting the requirements of effective coverage and adequacy, particularly for certain groups of the population, such as persons with disabilities.

Social protection services and labour market policies for vulnerable groups, including for persons with disabilities, are not fully meeting the rights and needs of unemployed and job seekers. These shortcomings have led the Government to adopt several interventions aiming to strengthen the overall social protection system; to make social protection schemes comprehensive and efficient, to boost their adequacy and sustainability, and to explore ways for progressive extension and improved financing. As per different estimates, 80–85% of people with disabilities of working age do not have a job and are excluded from the labour market.

Disability inclusion is high on the Government's agenda. In 2019 the Kyrgyz Republic ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) to improve their standard of living, promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Disability inclusion is prioritised in the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2040 and the National Development Programme until 2026. The Government drafted the National Programme “Inclusive Country” for 2021–2024 to enhance disability inclusiveness in the environment, institutions and services.

In order to boost Government's efforts to design, cost, implement and monitor effective disability-inclusive social protection schemes and services, thus improving the overall system and enabling full participation of people with disabilities in the community, increasing their skills and access to employment opportunities and labour market, International Labour Organisation is, with the support of the European Union, implementing the project named the Disability Inclusive Social Protection System with key interventions:

- Improvement of public finance management of social protection schemes for persons with disabilities and increasing the capacity of the staff of the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration (MLSSM), to develop evidence-based proposals and investment case for budget revision to the Ministry of Finance;
- Assessment of types of services required by persons with disabilities for labour market inclusion;
- Design and costing of key services that integrate social protection and employment schemes and measures for persons with disabilities;

¹ <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/WSPDB.action?id=19>

- ▶ Building the capacity of social protection departments and public employment offices to deliver new service models;
- ▶ Building the capacity of organisations of persons with disabilities and social partners to monitor the implementation of disability-inclusive social protection and labour market service models.

In order to support the design of social protection and labour market services for inclusion of persons with disabilities, a participatory and inclusive design thinking methodology and process were applied in the period from September to mid-December 2023 which resulted with four prototypes of services identified by persons with disabilities, activists and public servant experts.

This report presents: i) the methodology that leads to the service design as its co-creative and inclusive approach ensures that services are tailored based on the needs, rights and capabilities of service users and service providers, can be adapted based on changing contexts and are sustainable; ii) key challenges identified by persons with disabilities and experts working in public social protection and employment services; and iii) prototypes of services that address these challenges that are easy to implement with low investments which can by large be made within existing budgets.

2. Service Design Methodology

The service design process was structured in three phases: (1) desk review and stakeholder interviews, (2) design thinking workshop, (3) validation workshop.

2.1 Desk review and stakeholder interviews

A desk review of existing policies and documents was conducted to develop a status quo analysis of the legal situation regarding inclusion in society in general, social protection and the labour market in particular in Kyrgyzstan.

Group Interviews with representatives of different stakeholder groups were conducted to deepen understanding of rapid desk review and identify the main challenges.

2.2 Design Thinking Workshop

Design Thinking is a **human-centred approach** which aims to create innovative solutions for complex challenges based on real human needs. In order to ensure the development of solutions which serve the real needs of persons affected by the challenge, inclusion of persons with disabilities was essential. Therefore, not only a co-creative but also inclusive setting and experience were crucial for the successful implementation of the workshop.

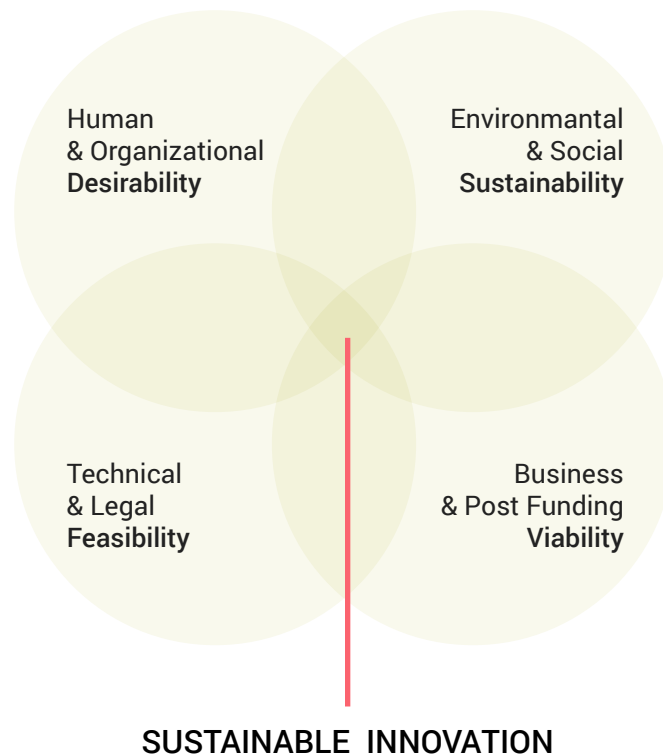
A diverse group of representatives from different stakeholder groups participated in a 3-days Design Thinking Workshop: persons with disabilities, representatives of Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPD), trade unions, employer's associations, the MLSSM and the local departments of public employment services and social protection came together to tackle the main challenges identified. More than twenty participants worked on two different initial design challenges in two **multi-disciplinary teams**. The high diversity of participants was important to include as many different and relevant perspectives and know-how regarding the topic as possible – as they are both relevant for the creation and validation of solutions to existing challenges regarding inclusion of persons with disabilities.

One of the main goals of the Design Thinking workshop was to **build empathy** for challenges and needs of persons with disabilities – so that all participants, with or without disability, could generate user-centred solutions. This goal was achieved in two stages. First, an immersion session was successfully co-created and conducted during the first day of the workshop with the goal to immerse into an approximate experience of encountering barriers as a person with certain disabilities. Second, interviews with persons with disabilities focusing on their personal experience with barriers and inclusion in the labour market and the social protection system were conducted.

Another key element of the Design Thinking approach is its **agility** which inter alia means integrating feedback from stakeholders affected by the solution and its potential implementation and constantly adapting solutions. Therefore, the solutions generated during the Design Thinking workshop were not only revised during the workshop itself but also presented by the end of the workshop to different experts and stakeholders who were invited to give feedback. In the last phase of the process (4), further feedback was included.

The specific approach followed in this project builds on the **Sustainable Design Thinking Methodology** as it is developed and applied by Protellus Agency. It is grounded on a holistic and flexible understanding of the Design Thinking process and the inclusion of the different dimensions of sustainability as defined by the United Nations (2015)². The goal of Sustainable Design Thinking is to create solutions which meet the sweet spot between desirability, feasibility, sustainability and viability (see *Figure 2*).

Figure 2: Sustainable Innovation Definition Diagram as suggested by Protellus GbR



The following six phases of Design Thinking were applied during the workshop:

Box 1: Six Design Thinking stages

- Stage 1: Understanding the challenge and the general topic
- Stage 2: Building empathy for the users
- Stage 3: Defining a focus to work on
- Stage 4: Generating solutions
- Stage 5: Creating prototypes
- Stage 6: Collecting feedback on the ideas from the users and experts

² <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

During **Stage 1**, the results from project phases (1) desk review and stakeholder interviews as well as an overview of the context were presented to the participants at the beginning of the Design Thinking Workshop. Building on this common ground, the participants were divided into two groups with two different Design challenges (see *Figures 3 and 4*). Both Design challenges were derived from the stakeholder consultations. After teaming up, the teams had initial conversations about their Design challenges and shared their related experiences and know-how using a story-telling method.

During **Stage 2**, the focus was on two methods. First, an immersion session during which participants had an opportunity to spend some time in situations with persons with different types of impairments aiming at the simulation experience of interaction between different types of disabilities with the physical environment. Second, interviews with persons with disabilities were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the emotions and experiences of persons affected by barriers in society in general, social protection and the labour market.

During **Stage 3**, insights from Stage 1 and Stage 2 were condensed, structured, and prioritized problem statements were agreed upon. The results are summarized in Chapter 3.2. During Stage 3, both teams focused on the creation of specific solutions for two specific problem statements.

Two focus questions were formulated based on these two problem statements per team (see *Figures 3 and 4*).

Figure 3: Design Challenge & Focus questions – Team A



Figure 4: Design Challenge & Focus questions – Team B



During **Stage 4**, broad approaches and specific ideas were generated and discussed to tackle the challenges formulated within the two focus questions per team. At that stage, the teams moved from the problem space to the solution space. Brainstorming methodologies such as Object Brainstorming, Brainwriting, Superman Brainstorming and Brainstorming by Building were used to unleash creative potential and to enable participants to think outside the box. Since two different focus questions were discussed, the teams split up into two sub-teams at this point (Team A.1, Team 1.2, Team B.1 and Team B.2). By the end of this stage, the teams focused on a selection of ideas.

During **Stage 5**, the teams further prototyped their four selected ideas. A broad range of materials was used to visualize, explore and communicate the ideas selected during Stage 4.

As mentioned above, **Stage 6** was carried out during the presentations of the results by the end of the workshop as well as during the validation workshop.

3. Project Results

3.1 Brief review of relevant key legislation and policies

According to the data of the National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyzstan, as of January 1, 2021, some 198,000 persons with disabilities were registered in Kyrgyzstan, that is about **3 per cent of the total population**. More than 165,000 of the total number of people with disabilities are adults. Over the past five years, the number of registered persons with disabilities has increased by 10.5 per cent.

The *Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic* prohibits discrimination based on disability. Specifically, Article 16 states that no one shall be discriminated against because of their sex, race, language, **disability**, ethnicity, belief, age, political and other opinions, education, background, property and other circumstances. The Constitution also states that every person has the right to work (Article 42), the right to social protection in old age and in case of disability (Article 53), the right to health care (Article 47), and the right to education (Article 45), (Republic of Kyrgyzstan 2016).

*The Law on the Rights and Guarantees of Persons with Disabilities*³ stipulates that the right of persons with disabilities to **social protection** arises from the moment the relevant authorized state body establishes a disability group. The government guarantees the following types of social protection: cash benefits; home-based services; community-based services, residential care; provision of assistive devices; all types of rehabilitation; and additional social guarantees designed by and delivered at the local level.

*The Law on State benefits in Kyrgyz Republic*⁴. Monthly disability benefits are assigned to 1) children with disabilities up to 18 years; 2) persons with disabilities who acquired disability in childhood of groups I, II, and III; and 3) persons with disabilities of groups I, II, and III who do not qualify for contributory benefits.

*National legislation concerning social insurance*⁵ stipulates that the eligibility for disability pensions depends on the age of the insured person and the length of their insurance contributions at the time of disability. One year of insurance contributions is required for those under 23 years of age, two years for those aged between 23 and 26 years of age, three years for those aged between 26 and 31 years of age, and five years for those 31 years of age and older.

*The Labour Code*⁶ guarantees the **right to work** in the open labour market, in specialized organisations, workshops, and on sites employing persons with disabilities, as well as engagement in individual entrepreneurial activity. In addition, the law prescribes job quotas

3 The Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On the Rights and guarantees of persons with disabilities” dated April 3, 2008 No. 38.

4 The Law of the Kyrgyz Republic «On State benefits in Kyrgyz Republic» dated July 28, 2017 No. 163.

5 The Law of the Kyrgyz Republic «On state pension social insurance».

6 Labor Code of the Kyrgyz Republic dated August 4, 2004 No. 106. Chapter 25 Features of labor regulation of working persons with disabilities.

for persons with disabilities of at least 5 per cent of the number of employees (where the number of employees is at least 20 people) in the public sector. Further provisions for workers with disabilities ensure that:

- (i) Persons with disabilities who have been assigned a quota job are exempt from recruitment tests (Article 104,5).
- (ii) Employees who experience an accident during work resulting in a disability and must take up a lower-paid job due to the disability are entitled to full remuneration in accordance with the previous job (Article 112, 4b).
- (iii) Persons with disabilities have the right to work for employers under mainstream working conditions (Article 497).
- (iv) Economic units with more than 20 employees must maintain an employment quota of persons with disabilities of 5% (Article 500).
- (v) Employees in disability groups I and II enjoy reduced working hours of 36 hours per week instead of 40 hours per week (Article 503, 4).
- (vi) Participation of persons with disabilities in overtime and weekend work is possible only with their consent, provided that a medical certificate does not prohibit such work (Article 503, 5).
- (vii) In the case of company staff reductions, persons with disabilities will not be dismissed (Article 503, 9).

Kyrgyzstan does not yet have a systematic monitoring system for compliance with a quota system. Moreover, the quota schemes are not enforced and monitored by the labour inspectorate or by the prosecutor's office. Labour market policies are underfunded and do not have a significant impact on promoting the employment of persons with disabilities or employment in general.

Furthermore, the Kyrgyz Government ratified the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD) on 16th May 2019. (OHCHR n.d.) However, the government did not ratify the optional protocol of the convention. The optional protocol establishes a mechanism for persons with disabilities who allege their rights under the convention have been denied, to submit complaints to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

International social security and labour standards are among the commitments that the Government of Kyrgyzstan and its social partners aspire to. Kyrgyzstan has ratified eight⁷ out of ten fundamental conventions, three governance priority conventions, and several technical conventions⁸. The standards and guiding principles set out in Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951, No. 100, Employment Policy Convention, 1964, No.122, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983,

7 Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No.29), Freedom of Association and Right to Organise Convention, 1948, No.87, Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No.98), Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951, No. 100, Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957, No.105, Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958, No.111, Minimum Age Convention, 1973, No. 138, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999, No. 182.

8 Full list of conventions ratified by Kyrgyzstan https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11200:0::NO:11200:P11200_COUNTRY_ID:103529

No.159 are of particular importance for Kyrgyzstan's on-going education, employment, and social protection policy reform. Importantly, Kyrgyzstan is one of 60 countries that are members of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Global Initiative Building Social Protection Floors for All⁹. These countries are supported to implement national social protection systems, including floors, guided by ILO social security standards.

In addition to a rather comprehensive legal framework, which requires further alignment with principles of UNCRPD and international social security standards, the Government is revising the policy framework to set the implementing and financing priorities in social protection and disability inclusion in the medium-term. The key overarching policy is the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018–2040¹⁰ and the related National Development Programme of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2026¹¹ providing guidance for specific objectives within sectoral policy documents. Both have identified a comprehensive social protection system addressing risks over the entire lifecycle, maintaining basic living standards and protecting disadvantaged groups of the population as a priority.

The National Programme states that an assessment of the social protection system is to be carried out and a comprehensive social protection strategy is to be developed, covering all elements of the system, including remuneration, social insurance, state benefits, social services and promotion of employment. The need to establish a just and effective social protection system that would guarantee everyone basic levels of social protection, especially with respect to defined social risks (disability, old age, loss of a breadwinner, loss of work (unemployment), temporary disability, work injury, illness, occupational disease, death) has also been recognized.

3.2 Identified challenges

This section presents six challenges identified in the course of the phases (1) desk review and stakeholder interviews and (2) Design Thinking Workshop. Based on phase (1), an initial set of recommendations concerning framework amendments has been developed and is included in this Chapter. The approaches developed during the workshop are elaborated on in Chapter 3.3.

9 Global Flagship Programme Building Social Protection Floors for All <https://www.ilo.org/secsoc/technical-cooperation-projects/building-social-protection-floors-for-all/lang-en/index.htm>

10 Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic "On the national development strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic through 2018–2040" No. 221 dated 31 October 2018.

11 Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic «On the national development programme of the Kyrgyz Republic through 2026» UP No. 435 dated 12 October 12.

Figure 5: Six challenges identified during the project

<p>Challenge 1:</p> <p>Low awareness about disability rights within the mainstream society including economic units and understanding of legal obligations; economic units are not motivated to employ persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>Challenge 2:</p> <p>The majority of in-built environments including public institutions/ offices and public transportation are not accessible for persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>Challenge 3:</p> <p>Many persons with disabilities have been excluded from mainstream society for many years. This includes little to no access to education. As a result, they lack basic literacy, numeracy, and soft skills.</p>
<p>Challenge 4:</p> <p>The current system of classification of disability is based on the charity/medical model of disability. It does not empower persons with disabilities to become active members of society as described in the social and human rights model of disability.</p>	<p>Challenge 5:</p> <p>Funding for services for persons with disabilities is scarce. In addition, no holistic system is in place that facilitates the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market.</p>	<p>Challenge 6:</p> <p>Social protection schemes and occupational safety and health practices are insufficient to protect workers against accidents that lead to a disability or to compensate them in case of disability.</p>

Challenge 1: Low awareness about disability rights within the mainstream society including economic units and understanding of legal obligations; economic units are not motivated to employ persons with disabilities.

During the stakeholder interviews, the **lack of awareness on the demand side of the labour market was discussed**. This lack of awareness is a bottleneck for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market. It was stated **many employers do not practice the employment quota**. This is due to a **lack of knowledge of the legal obligations** and a lack of skills and services to include employees with disabilities. The employer associations and their members are mostly unaware of the UNCRPD and its ratification by the Kyrgyz government. Further, it was claimed that **co-workers** of persons with disabilities will have **negative attitudes**, which is another bottleneck to successful inclusion in the labour market.

Moreover, the **lack of knowledge among employers regarding the creation of inclusive working environments**, inclusive job advertisements, recruitment and placement was identified. Further, the potential of social media campaigns and digitalization in general for awareness raising was discussed. A lack of job offers for persons with disabilities was broached as well as the unwillingness of employers to hire persons with disabilities rooted in fears and doubts. Even in cases where workers with disabilities are already employed, the attitudes towards disabilities of their co-workers lead to feelings of isolation and exclusion.

The design and implementation of inclusion and diversity policies by economic units is the key recommendation stemming from the consultative process. An inclusion and diversity policy is a suitable tool for economic units whose management is aware of disability inclusion. However, initial awareness and skills training is necessary for those companies that do not display this kind of awareness. Thus, **mandatory training programmes about the UNCRPD and national legislation** and on how to include workers with disabilities should be developed for employers and managers and tailored for all employees.

Furthermore, **awareness materials** about the inclusion of persons with disabilities, such as handouts, brochures, posters, radio, and TV ads, should be produced and distributed for broader awareness among society in Kyrgyzstan. Training and awareness materials must be created in close cooperation with OPD.

Challenge 2: The majority of in-built environments including public institutions/ offices and public transportation are not accessible for persons with disabilities.

Public infrastructure is not compliant with UNCRPD Article 9¹² which stipulates that States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications. In cases where these obstacles exist, the government should take appropriate measures to remove them.

Public offices and public transportation are not accessible for many persons with disabilities. The **inaccessible physical environment** is a bottleneck for access to social services and employment. Representatives of employers further stated that the physical infrastructure of offices and factories is not yet accessible for persons with disabilities.

The infrastructure of public offices doesn't match the needs of persons with disabilities, even when supposedly barrier-free facilities have been constructed (e.g. ramps which are too steep). Other missing facilities mentioned were lifts, elevators, rails, guiding systems on the floor, the accessibility of websites of public offices, dispatch windows too high, sanitary utilities and smooth pavement in front of the building. There is a lack of compliance with existing construction norms and rules concerning accessibility standards. The lack of empathy, awareness and know-how among architects and construction companies who construct public facilities have been proposed as one set of challenges. Another problem is that there is no clear updated legal guidance and standards on the accessibility of buildings. This is compounded by the fact that there are no compliance mechanisms in place. Further, there is a **lack of involvement of persons with disabilities or OPD in the construction process**.

Similar challenges have been identified in terms **of accessibility of information, electronic and other communication technologies**.

The key recommendation stemming from discussions is that **persons with disabilities must be meaningfully involved** in the development, planning, budgeting, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of all measures and interventions concerning accessibility of physical environment, transportation, communication and service delivery. This would entail the involvement of persons with disabilities in revisions of by-laws/procedures for accessibility in construction and electronic communication services and setting up a compliance monitoring mechanism.

The Kyrgyz Government is driving the digitalisation of services to increase coverage. To **ensure that digital services are accessible for persons with visual impairment**, the government should include persons with visual impairment in designing and testing these services. Therefore, OPD representing persons with visual impairment would be appropriate cooperation partners.

¹² <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-9-accessibility.html>

Furthermore, **public employment and social protection office staff must be made** aware of their obligation as duty bearers to include persons with disabilities in their service delivery. Therefore, in close cooperation with OPDs, all employment and social protection office staff must have access to disability-inclusive awareness seminars. Thirdly, the provision of personal assistants should be improved. Many persons with disabilities are homebound due to the inaccessible physical environment, society's attitude, or a lack of soft skills¹³ to interact with mainstream society. **Providing services of personal assistants for persons with disabilities is a solution to support them in accessing the social protection system and employment offices.** Personal assistants can also accompany persons with disabilities during the first weeks of new employment to ensure that the placement period is smooth and that co-workers and the management are sufficiently aware of a new co-worker with disabilities. While personal assistants can support persons with disabilities by creating better access to public services and to the labour market, importantly, they are not to communicate or act on their behalf.

Lastly, when **developing a pilot of a public office that is accessible and has an accessible connection to an accessible transport system** can potentially become a role model and example of accessible and disability-inclusive service delivery in Kyrgyzstan.

Challenge 3: Many persons with disabilities have been excluded from mainstream society for many years. This includes little to no access to education. As a result, they lack basic literacy, numeracy, and soft skills.

Many persons with disabilities experience a life of exclusion that leads to limited interaction with mainstream society. In many cases, interaction with mainstream society is in the form of charity and support services recipients.

Persons with disabilities do not only need the right skills or knowledge to find employment but also soft skills such as self-confidence, social interaction, communication skills and knowledge about the world of work.

Higher education is often not affordable for persons with disabilities. Discounts often do not apply to online learning even though online learning is a driver for inclusion. Around 80-85% of persons with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan are unemployed even though they are often motivated to work. At the same time, online learning opportunities can be a driver for educational inclusion.

Recommendations based on desk review and stakeholder interviews concern the imperative to provide persons with disabilities with the necessary skills to engage in the labour market. Soft-skills training includes awareness about rights, selecting the right job, preparing a CV and application letter, preparing for a job interview, effective communication, and collaboration with co-workers. Since many persons with disabilities have never had the opportunity to access basic education, it is crucial to develop basic literacy and numeracy courses for adults with disabilities. In addition, completing a **basic literacy and numeracy course** opens the door to more **technical skills training**. Further, hard and **soft skills training** for persons with disabilities should be offered. According to the representatives of the OPD, they could, together with other civil society organisations, roll out these courses in all seven regions of Kyrgyzstan.

¹³ This is due to denial of access to mainstream education or education at all which results in insufficient socialization during childhood, teenage years, and adulthood. However, it is important that personal assistants do not act or advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities but assist them when requested.

Challenge 4: The current system of classification of disability is based on the charity/medical model of disability. It does not empower persons with disabilities to become active members of society as described in the social and human rights model of disability.

The current classification of disability in Kyrgyzstan is derived from the Soviet Union. Persons with disabilities are medically assessed and categorised. **The categorisation severely limits their access to the labour market** and implies that they require care and charity. Persons with disabilities in groups I and II are unable to work and experience negative attitudes from the population, including employers.

Three groups with differing degrees of disability have been established for the assignment of disability benefits and pensions. Persons with disabilities in Disability Group I require assistance and care from another person and are usually assessed as unable to work. Persons with disabilities in Disability Group II can perform some self-care and are mobile with the assistance of others or when using technical assistance devices and are often assessed as capable of performing work activities in specially created working conditions with the use of assistive devices, in a specially equipped workplace, and/or with the assistance of others. Persons in Disability Group III are assessed as having the ability to perform work activities independently, without assistance and the need for adjustment of working conditions. The causes of disability and assignment to the groups, as well as the onset of disability, are established by the Physical Disability Board of Review.

Table 1: Overview of the current disability classification system

Group	Work status	Practical ability to work	Care needs
Group I	unable to work	unable to perform any work	permanent care
Group II	unable to work	can work under certain conditions	significant care
Group III	able to work without assistance and adjustments	able to work independently	rehabilitation according to needs

The existing system disability classification system is not based on the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) as it neglects the need of an individual to participate in society without barriers. Within the ICF, a person’s disability status is determined based on three domains: (i) *body functions and structures* which are influenced by impairments, (ii) *activities* influenced by activity limitations such as difficulties executing activities, and (iii) *participation*, which describes involvement in all areas of human life.¹⁴

14 WHO. 2002. *Towards a Common Language for Functioning, Disability and Health – ICF*. Geneva: WHO.

In addition to this, the current system is not compliant with the UNCRPD. Based on the UNCRPD, persons with disabilities are rights holders and entitled to, among many others, the right to education, work and independent living. However, many are unaware of their rights and do not have access to public services that enable them to enjoy their rights.

Recommendations based on desk review and stakeholder interviews concern the necessary **shift from the current charity approach to a social and human rights-based approach**. According to the representatives from the OPD, the disability classification system must be adapted to the UNCRPD. Public institutions must offer access to services relevant to the needs of persons with disabilities and employers and enable persons with disabilities to access work and live an independent life.

Challenge 5: Funding for services for persons with disabilities is scarce. In addition, no holistic system is in place that facilitates the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market.

On the one hand, persons with disabilities lack access to the formal labour market (labour market supply-side). On the other hand, companies lack the willingness and the skills to employ persons with disabilities (labour market demand-side). Therefore, a need for an agency to interface between the demand- and supply-side of the labour market is identified. **The existing public employment services do not cater sufficiently for persons with disabilities and do not provide services for employers to enable them to employ persons with disabilities.**

During the interviews, it was stated that while the employment quota of 5% for employers in the public sector with 20 or more employees is a good start to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market, the leverage to motivate, offer support and or ensure compliance of economic units to implement it, is lacking. A working group in the MLSSM has been established to review the employment quota. Moreover, it was claimed that there is **no governmental support mechanism for companies** to employ persons with disabilities. Most businesses do not apply such a quota voluntarily.

Another problem identified during the interviews was that not all companies make social insurance contributions for their workers, thus resulting in informal employment. There seems to be a considerable gap between laws and regulations and compliance with them.

Persons with disabilities often lack funds for a decent life and, thus, often cannot cover their basic needs. As cash benefits are too low, they should be enabled to generate additional income. Further, employment reduces social isolation for persons with disabilities.

Recommendations based on the desk review and stakeholder interviews concern mechanisms to promote the employment quota. Representatives from the OPD stated that the **employment quota mechanism can be complemented with either incentives or penalties** in case of (non-) compliance. Disability employment quota-compliant companies could, e.g. be recognised for their legal compliance and be awarded recognition as champions of inclusive employment.

To tackle the need for a consistent and effective interface between demand- and supply-side of the labour market, the code should introduce **financial sanctions to encourage employers to comply with the employment quota**. Those who do not comply must make financial contributions to a public office coordinating employment services for persons with disabilities. **Public employment centres should use the contributions to support the demand (companies) and supply side (persons with disabilities) in the labour market (see Chapter 3.3, approach B.2 for more details).**

Further, **compliance with obligatory social contributions must be monitored by relevant government offices.**

Insufficient funding is a bottleneck for disability inclusion. It has been carefully signalled that the government might not have the funds to move forward with all its plans concerning creating more inclusive social protection and inclusive labour market access. Therefore, the Government could conduct budget reviews of all programmes that are contributing to finance schemes for persons with disabilities to increase the effectiveness of investments as well as **promote the efforts by the government towards the international bi- and multilateral community** has the potential to fill funding gaps.

Challenge 6: Social protection schemes and occupational safety and health practices are insufficient to protect workers against accidents that lead to a disability or to compensate them in case of disability.

Until today, there is no return-to-work programme for workers in Kyrgyzstan that experience an accident and acquire an impairment. These workers need access to a service that facilitates their occupational rehabilitation and creates awareness on the side of the employer to keep employing the workers on the same job and same wage.

Recommendations based on the desk review and stakeholder focus on the need for access to services that facilitate proper rehabilitation and ensure persons with impairments can return to their workplace. While reducing the risk of an accident leading to impairment is important for employees, **access to rehabilitation** is crucial in case such an accident occurs anyway. The MLSMM mentioned the “social fund” providing funding for OPDs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide services to persons with disabilities. This could also include occupational rehabilitation services and awareness raising for employers. These services can be offered if the current provisions in case of occupational injury were brought in line with international social security standards. Under this system, workers who experience an accident will receive access to health, rehabilitation and training services. In addition, the employer could receive guidance and **training** on how to include the worker with an impairment, how to improve accessibility, and how to adjust the workplace (reasonable accommodation). Representatives from OPD stated that they could facilitate these services.

3.3 The four developed approaches and their potential impact:

During the Design Thinking Workshop, a variety of ideas and approaches was generated and discussed while addressing the focus questions the teams had defined (see the full list of ideas in Annex A.1). Further in the workshop, the four teams focused on the development of four inclusion approaches based on key ideas.

Figure 1: Four approaches developed during the workshop

<p>Approach A.1</p> <p>Awareness training for disability inclusion within economic units (private and public).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mandatory training units for employers, managers and staff ▶ Creation of awareness on the topics of disabilities and inclusion, and the legal situation <p>Key Partners: MLSMM, OPDs, Development partners, business associations, private and public employers</p>	<p>Approach A.2</p> <p>Fairs and public awareness raising campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Organization of public job fairs, including cultural activities created by persons with disabilities ▶ Creation of awareness campaigns on social media and mass media <p>Key partners: MLSMM, Development partners, OPDs, NGOs, business associations, private and public employers</p>
<p>Approach B.1</p> <p>Participatory implementation of audit of physical access for persons with disabilities to public institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Creation of a standing accessibility commission ▶ Revision of existing construction norms and involvement in future construction / renovation processes <p>Key Partners: the Ministry of Transport and Communications, MLSMM, OPDs, Development partners, NGOs, OPDs, Architects, Construction companies</p>	<p>Approach B.2</p> <p>Labour market inclusion services for persons with disabilities (supply side) and companies (demand side)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Services for employers: information, training, advice and recruitment ▶ Services for persons with disabilities: information, training, advice, job coaching, assistance during conflict resolution, search for job <p>Key partners: MLSMM, Development partners, OPDs, business associations, NGOs, Employment services</p>

Approach A.1

Awareness training for disability inclusion within economic units (private and public).

Tackling Challenge 1: „Low awareness about disability rights within the mainstream society including economic units and understanding of legal obligations; economic units are not motivated to employ persons with disabilities.“

Description:

Developing disability awareness among employers is crucial to achieving sustainable inclusive employment. Employers, including senior management, the human resource department and all staff, must be aware of the rights of persons with disabilities, develop positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities and learn how to interact with persons with disabilities. Therefore, **mandatory sensitivity training** for companies given by specialists could be introduced. The main goals of these training units are to create awareness on the topics of disability and inclusion, learn about the stipulations of the UNCRPD and the Labour Code and co-create ideas on how to be more inclusive internally.

The training must be customized for specific professions and feature positive case studies and practical tips on how to include persons with disabilities. Different stakeholders should be involved in the (development of the) training, e.g. psychologists. The training effect should be evaluated regularly.

Potential supporters:

Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration (as the lead Ministry), development partners, public institutions & government, public sector, private sector, business associations and individual companies.

Responsibilities and Tasks:

The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration could take forward the following responsibilities:

- Create public campaigns on the topic of inclusion into the labour market;
- Organize fair, invite relevant stakeholders;
- Conceptualize highlights of the fair, invite stakeholders to co-create programs;
- Ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities in the conceptualization and program.

Risks & Mitigation Strategies):

- Lack of willingness to accept training on the side of employers (*Mitigation Strategy: Fines for employers that do not comply. The fines should be collected by the employment offices and used to finance services for persons with disabilities and employers.*)
- Lack of financial resources to implement awareness trainings (*Mitigation Strategy: Lobbying among development partners.*)
- Lack of MLSSM support for making disability-inclusive awareness training for companies (*Mitigation Strategy: Lobbying among development partners.*)

Potential Impact – Society in general:

- Improved awareness among mainstream society concerning labour rights of persons with disabilities;
- Increased productivity, effectiveness and economic well-being;
- Increased number of persons with disabilities in the labour market;
- Increased know-how and qualification within companies.

Potential Impact – Persons with disabilities:

- A supportive working environment;
- Persons with disabilities feel included and as valued part of staff;
- Reduced prejudice of staff towards them;
- Improved relationships and mutual understanding of persons with disabilities and the rest of the staff;
- Inclusion in the labour market & protection of their labour rights;
- Increased self-esteem, less isolation from mainstream society.

Costing

Two different scenarios for awareness training are presented: a half-day in-house seminar and a three-day workshop.

Table 2: In-house seminar and workshop costing

A half-day in-house seminar					
				TOTAL	USD 930
Item	Amount	Units	Unit cost	Total cost	
Preparation time for three representatives from OPDs ¹⁵ for two days.	6	Workdays	USD 70	USD 420	
Seminar implementation time for three representatives from OPDs for one day.	3	Workdays	USD 70	USD 210	
Transportation reimbursements for OPD representatives.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Personal assistants.	6	Workdays	USD 40	USD 240	
Transportation reimbursement for a personal assistant.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
A three-day workshop for 30 participants: It is assumed that the three-day workshop is held at a hotel or conference centre.					
				TOTAL	USD 4,550
Item	Amount	Units	Unit cost	Total cost	
Preparation time for three representatives from OPDs for two days.	6	Workdays	USD 70	USD 240	
Seminar implementation time for three representatives from OPDs for three days.	9	Workdays	USD 70	USD 630	
Transportation reimbursements for OPD representatives.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Personal assistant.	6	Workdays	USD 40	USD 240	
Transportation reimbursement for a personal assistant.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Rent for conference room.	3	Days	USD 200	USD 600	
Catering for participants 40 participants for three days.	120	Meeting package	USD 20	USD 240	
Transportation reimbursement for participants.	40	Transportation reimbursement flat rate	USD 5	USD 200	

¹⁵ Whenever representatives of OPDs are to be included, it would ideally be representatives with different impairments to reflect a variety of disabilities.

Approach A.2

Fairs and public awareness raising campaigns

Tackling Challenge 1: "Low awareness about disability rights within the mainstream society including economic units and understanding of legal obligations; economic units are not motivated to employ persons with disabilities."

Description:

Increasing public awareness concerning the abilities, needs and rights of persons with disabilities is crucial for initiating disability-inclusive development. This approach intends to organize a series of activities on awareness raising on the inclusion of persons with disabilities for both employers and the general public. First, the organization of **fairs on job vacancies** could be one main activity. A special "feature" of this fair could be cultural activities such as theatre or fashion shows which showcase cultural outputs of persons with disabilities, are created by them and which may create awareness on the topic of inclusion. Guests of the fair could be politicians and decision-makers, employers, managers, entrepreneurs and the general public.

Second, **campaigns in the media** about the topic of inclusion could be created. Media Channels for these campaigns could include bloggers, ads, news, social media and national TV channels.

Potential supporters:

Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration (as the lead Ministry), OPDs, NGOs, development partners, business associations, companies.

Responsibilities and Tasks:

The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration could take forward the following responsibilities:

- Create public campaigns on the topic of inclusion into the labour market;
- Organize fair, invite relevant stakeholders;
- Conceptualize highlights of the fair, invite stakeholders to co-create program;
- Ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities in the conceptualization and program.

Risks & Mitigation Strategies):

- Lack of funding for fair (*Mitigation Strategy: Lobbying among development partners*);
- If fairs and public awareness campaigns are not incorporated into a social protection framework and "just" a one-off stand-alone activity – if the measure is taken only for the improvement of the public image – the effectiveness of the measure is at risk (*Mitigation Strategy: Embedding public awareness in ecosystem of other measures / social protection reforms*).

Potential Impact – Society in general:

- The managers/ entrepreneurs/ employers find necessary staff among persons with disabilities (match-making).
- A better understanding of managers/ entrepreneurs/ employers on the topic of inclusion is created.

Potential Impact – Persons with disabilities:

- Learning about job opportunities;
- More social recognition for their cultural outputs.

Costing

The following costing estimations¹⁶ are done for three different elements: a one-day cultural activity, a three-day job fair and a radio or television show.

Table 3: Cultural activity costing

				TOTAL	USD 4,630
Item	Amount	Units	Unit cost	Total cost	
Preparation time for three representatives from OPDs for 2 days.	6	Workdays	USD 70	USD 420	
Implementation time for three representatives from OPDs.	3	Workdays	USD 70	USD 210	
Transportation reimbursements for OPD representatives.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Personal assistant.	6	Workdays	USD 40	USD 240	
Transportation reimbursement for a personal assistant.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Rent for conference room.	3	Days	USD 200	USD 600	
Development of promotional material for TV.	1	Promotional clip	USD 700	USD 700	
Clip promotion (three minutes) on national and regional TV in the afternoon.	2	Rotations	USD 700	USD 1,400	
Development of promotional material for radio.	1	Promotional advertisement	USD 600	USD 600	
Advertisement promotion on national and regional radio.	2	Rotations on national and regional TV	USD 100	USD 200	
Radio talk shows on national and regional radio.	2	Radio talk shows	USD 100	USD 200	

¹⁶ For all costing estimations in this report, the unit costs used represent average values.

Three-day job fair: It is assumed that the three-day job fair is held at a hotel or conference centre.

				TOTAL	USD 7,330
Item	Amount	Units	Unit cost	Total cost	
Preparation time for three representatives from OPDs for two days.	6	Workdays	USD 70	USD 420	
Job fair implementation time for three representatives from OPDs for three days.	9	Workdays	USD 70	USD 630	
Item	Amount	Units	Unit cost	Total cost	
Transportation reimbursements for OPD representatives.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Personal assistant.	6	Workdays	USD 40	USD 240	
Transportation reimbursement for a personal assistant.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Rent for conference room.	3	Days	USD 200	USD 600	
Development of promotional material for TV.	1	Promotional clip	USD 700	USD 700	
Clip promotion on national TV.	2	Rotations on national TV	USD 700	USD 1,400	
Development of promotional material for radio.	1	Promotional advertisement	USD 600	USD 600	
Advertisement promotion on national and regional radio.	2	Rotations on national and regional TV	USD 100	USD 200	
Radio talk shows on national radio (see table below for detailed costing).	2	Radio talk shows ¹⁷	USD 1,240	USD 2,480	

¹⁷ See the table below for details.

Radio or television talk show: It is assumed that the talk show is a one-off event prepared by OPDs in collaboration with MLSSM and two more stakeholders.

				TOTAL	USD 1,240
Item	Amount	Units	Unit cost	Total cost	
Preparation time for three representatives from OPDs, including script drafting, briefing of moderator and talks show participants.	12	Workdays	USD 70	USD 840	
Transportation reimbursements for OPD representatives.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Personal assistant for persons with disabilities.	6	Workdays	USD 40	USD 240	
Transportation reimbursement for a personal assistant.	6	Trips	USD 5	USD 30	
Fee for radio station.	1	Show	USD 100	USD 100	

Approach B.1

Participatory implementation of audit of physical access for persons with disabilities to public institutions.

Tackling Challenge 2: „The majority of in-built environments including public institutions/offices and public transportation are not accessible for persons with disabilities.“

Description:

Public infrastructure is often not accessible for persons with disabilities. To ensure that new buildings and renovations of existing buildings consider necessary accessibility standards, representatives of OPDs must actively participate in the processes concerning construction.

This approach is a package of measures which aims at implementing physical access for persons with disabilities at public offices. First, existing construction rules regarding accessibility should be revised in cooperation with OPD. If necessary, new construction norms and rules should be incorporated. Second, sanctions in case of non-fulfilment could be introduced or incentives for fulfilment of construction norms. Third, an inventory list of existing public institutions regarding their level of accessibility should be developed. Fourth, OPDs must be involved in a) the construction of new buildings and b) the renovation of existing buildings. Their involvement must be guaranteed during development, planning, budgeting, and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of construction and renovation projects - in a standing accessibility commission. The involvement of persons with disabilities in the whole process guarantees that accessibility standards are incorporated into construction projects and makes it possible for OPDs to point out accessibility gaps and misconduct of public planning offices and construction companies. It is vital that persons with various impairments participate during the whole process.

Potential supporters:

State Agency for Architecture, Construction and Public Utility, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration (as the lead Ministry), NGOs, OPDs, volunteers (persons with disabilities), local self-governance, municipalities, architects, construction companies, Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Finance, Parliament, Cabinet, development partners.

Responsibilities and Tasks:

The State Agency for Architecture, Construction and Public Utility could take on the following responsibilities:

- Inclusion of persons with disabilities into supervision process;
- Strict reporting of constructions / compliance according to SniP.

Risks & Mitigation Strategies:

- Bureaucracy leading to long procedures and pre-implementation phases and a lack of implementation (*Mitigation Strategy: Monitoring by OPDs and use of complaint mechanisms*);
- Weak control of compliance with existing construction laws (*Mitigation Strategy: Monitoring by OPDs and use of complaint mechanisms*);
- Distrust of persons with disabilities towards authorities because of experiences of rejection, refusal and sanctioning (*Mitigation Strategy: Authorities must include OPDs in planning, developing, budgeting, implementing as well monitoring and evaluation of all activities related to persons with disabilities*);
- Lack of funding particularly for the renovation of existing buildings (*Mitigation Strategy: Lobbying among development partners*);
- Corruption in the public institutions (*Mitigation Strategy: OPD work with Ombudsman*).

Potential Impact – Society in general:

- Other groups with accessibility issues, e.g. parents with strollers or elderly people profit from increased physical accessibility to public institutions.

Potential Impact – Persons with disabilities:

- Improved accessibility to public services for persons with disabilities.
- Increased welfare of persons with disabilities.
- Increased access to the labour market for persons with disabilities due to accessible employment centres.

Costing

Table 4: OPD participation in construction and renovation costing.

This costing estimation foresees the participation of three OPD representatives with different impairments participate in the development, planning, budgeting, implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the construction or renovation project.

				TOTAL	USD 3,180
Item	Amount	Units	Unit cost	Total cost	
Participation of three OPD representatives for two days during the developing phase of new buildings or renovation of existing buildings.	6	Workdays	USD 70	USD 420	
Participation of three OPD representatives for three days during the planning phase of new buildings or renovation of existing buildings.	9	Workday	USD 70	USD 630	
Participation of three OPD representatives for one day during the budgeting phase of new buildings or renovation of existing buildings.	3	Workdays	USD 70	USD 210	
Participation of three OPD representatives for three days during the implementation phase of new buildings or renovation of existing buildings.	9	Workdays	USD 70	USD 630	
Participation of three OPD representatives for two days during the monitoring and evaluation phase of new buildings or renovation of existing buildings.	6	Workdays	USD 70	USD 420	
Transportation reimbursements for OPD representatives.	30	Trips	USD 5	USD 150	
Personal assistant.	16	Workdays	USD 40	USD 640	
Transportation reimbursement for a personal assistant.	16	Trips	USD 5	USD 80	

Approach B.2

Labour market inclusion services

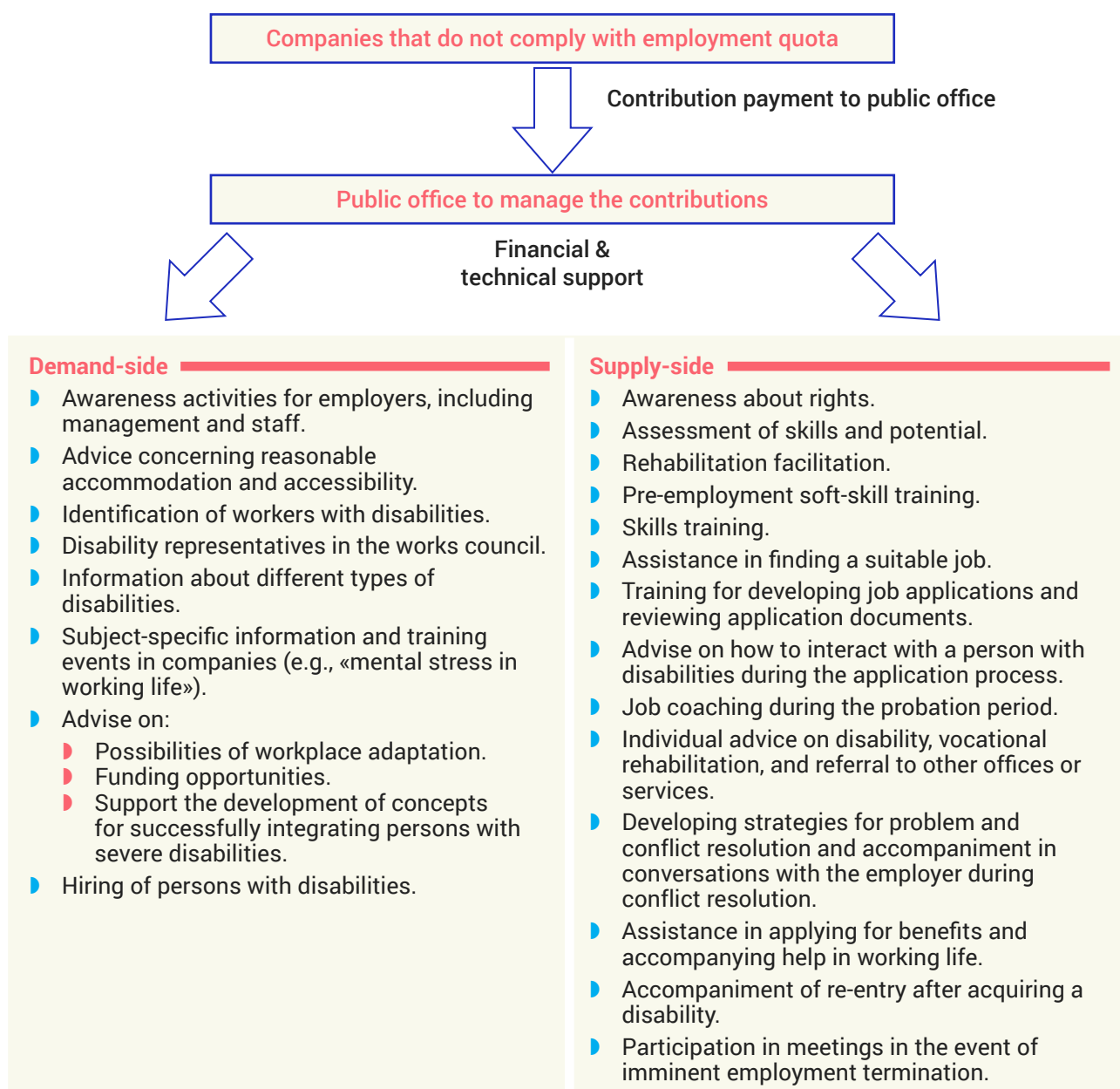
Tackling Challenge "Funding for services for persons with disabilities is scarce. In addition, no holistic system is in place that facilitates the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market."

Description:

This prototype mentions a public office coordination employment for persons with disabilities that also coordinates and funds services for persons with disabilities. Such an office does not exist yet and needs to be developed. This could be in form of a subdivision of the existing public employment centre or in form of a new agency, as practiced in

Germany¹⁸ and Pakistan¹⁹. The labour code introduces financial sanctions to encourage employers to comply with the employment quota. Those who do not comply must make financial contributions to a public entity coordinating employment services for persons with disabilities. The public office should use the contributions to provide support services for the demand side (companies) and supply side (persons with disabilities) of the labour market.

Figure 6: Approach B.2: labour market and inclusion services



18 Federal Republic of Germany (2019). Neuntes Buch Sozialgesetzbuch vom 23. Dezember 2016 (BGBl. I S. 3234)

19 Government of Pakistan (1981). Disabled Persons' (Employment and Rehabilitation) Ordinance, 1981.

Potential supporters:

Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration (as the lead Ministry)²⁰, organisations of persons with disabilities, development partners, NGOs (example: Solidarity), civil society, employment services, business associations.

Responsibilities and Tasks:

- State: Generate statistics on persons with disabilities, Training, Employment, Funding
- NGOs: Looking for funds required for training and further employment;
- OPDs: Training Providers;
- Bi- and multilateral donors: funding, technical support.

Risks & Mitigation Strategies:

- Corruption (*Mitigation Strategy: work with Ombudsman*)

Potential Impact – Society in general:

- Increased practice of inclusive values in mainstream society.
- Companies develop inclusive practices.
- Companies receive support to recruit persons with disabilities.
- Companies fulfil the employment quota.

Potential Impact – Persons with disabilities:

- Professional development;
- Finding employment;
- Achievement of financial independence;
- Inclusion into social / work life.

Costing

The costing scenario for labour market inclusion services is based on the assumption that a person with disabilities is seeking employment and an employer is seeking persons with disabilities for employment. Both sides need services to ensure successful and sustainable matchmaking.

²⁰ As all of the approaches crosscut the responsibilities of most ministries, it's considered to be important to assign a lead ministry in this matter in order to make the progress as effective as possible. It is suggested that the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration could take on this lead, as the main driver is to include persons with disabilities into the labour market.

Table 5: Job centre costing

It is assumed that a case worker of a local job centre needs ten days to meet the job seeker and employer and arrange necessary service providers to ensure successful and sustainable matchmaking.

				TOTAL	USD 10,640
Item	Amount	Units	Unit cost	Total cost	
A case worker at the job centre	10	Workdays	USD 12	USD 120	
Interventions for job seeker (person with disabilities) [e.g. awareness of rights, rehabilitation, pre-employment training, skills training]	2	Interventions	USD 930 ²¹	USD 1,860	
Provision of reasonable accommodation	1	Reasonable accommodation	USD 500 ²²	USD 500	
Interventions for employers [e.g. awareness training, inclusive recruitment]	2	Interventions	USD 930	USD 1,860	
Accessibility assessment ²³ at an employer (two representatives from the employer side and two representatives from OPDs)	1	Accessibility assessment of workplace	USD 200	USD 200	
Accessibility improvement at an employer	2	Accessibility improvements of workplace	USD 800 ²⁴	USD 1,600	

21 Costing based on half-day seminar costing under Approach A.1.

22 Costing based on Job Accommodation Network (no date). Costs and Benefits of Accommodation. Link: <https://askjan.org/disclaimer.cfm> (accessed 22.12.2022) and Accessibility.com (no date). Average Costs of Reasonable Accommodations in The Workplace. Link: <https://www.accessibility.com/blog/average-costs-of-reasonable-accommodations-in-the-workplace> (accessed 22.12.2022)

23 An assessment tool based on national accessibility standards must be developed.

24 Costing based on rough estimation of expenses for building a ramp.

4. Recommendations for next steps and options for integration of developed approaches into policy and legal frameworks

Approach A.1

Awareness training for disability inclusion within economic units (private and public).

Recommendations for next steps

1. Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (ODP) with the skills to provide awareness training must be identified.
2. A standard content framework for disability awareness training for companies must be developed in collaboration with OPDs.
3. The awareness training must be implemented in collaboration with OPDs. Therefore, a mapping of OPDs, the awareness training service they provide, and their charges must be mapped.
4. Funding for the awareness training units must be set aside and timely wired to service delivery OPDs.
5. Business associations must be engaged to promote the usage of the awareness training units.
6. An impact evaluation after a year of awareness training units delivered to companies should document the change and progress towards must inclusive employment opportunities within companies.

Options for inclusion of the developed approaches into policy and legal frameworks

Mandatory awareness creation seminars and workshops must be provided for all business associations, employers, and staff to support the successful inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market. The mandatory seminars and workshops must be anchored in the law concerning persons with disabilities under chapter five concerning “Occupational health and safety and work”. In addition, the labour code should feature a new chapter about persons with disabilities.

Approach A.2

Fairs and public awareness raising campaigns

Recommendations for next steps

1. The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration (MLSSM) could facilitate and promote the campaigns.
2. The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration (MLSSM) could initiate a pilot job fair and find a fitting partner for the organisation, planning and conduction of the job fair.
3. ILO in cooperation with UNESCO and national stakeholders could engage national and regional media, including television and radio in a dialogue concerning pluralism, diversity and disability inclusion.
4. To follow-up on the inclusive process so far, workshops should be held to develop content for national and regional media, including television and radio that reflects pluralism and diversity and showcases the importance of disability inclusion.

5. OPDs and non-governmental organisations could be engaged to share information about the campaigns and act as technical resources during the campaigns.
6. National influencers could be engaged. They should be made aware of the importance of disability inclusion and encouraged to discuss the topic on their social media channels.

Options for inclusion of the developed approaches into policy and legal frameworks

In line with UNESCO's Declaration of Sofia (UNESCO 1997), national and regional media, including television and radio, must reflect the countries' pluralism and diversity. Therefore, media outlets must be held responsible for featuring news and entertainment pieces concerning persons with disabilities. This must also be reflected in the national broadcasting law which is currently under debate. In addition to this, media outlets must present information in easy-to-understand formats and Sign Language. This should be incorporated into the law concerning persons with disabilities under Chapter 6 "Cultural and Educational Integration into Society".

Approach B.1

[Participatory implementation of audit of physical access for persons with disabilities to public institutions.](#)

Recommendations for next steps

1. The Ministry of Transport and Communications should host a standing accessibility commission.
2. Members for the standing accessibility commission should be recruited from OPDs, architect associations, civil engineer associations, and the Ministry of Transport and Communications. All members of the standing accessibility commission must have the equal right to vote for or against decisions made by the standing accessibility commission.
3. The Ministry of Transport and Communications must make funding for the standing accessibility commission available.
4. The standing accessibility commission should develop a list of requirements for accessible buildings.
5. The standing accessibility commission should develop a priority list of public buildings that are in most crucial need of becoming more accessible for persons with disabilities.
6. The standing accessibility commission in collaboration with architects and civil engineers should develop accessibility solutions for the buildings on the priority list.
7. All accessibility improvements should be publicly tendered.

Options for inclusion of the developed approaches into policy and legal frameworks

Within the Ministry of Transport and Communications, a standing accessibility commission must be established to implement the above-mentioned tasks concerning accessibility provisions in new buildings and renovations. The commission should be established through a ministerial decree that gives the commission the power to participate in all construction projects and the right to advise about accessibility provisions. Furthermore, the law concerning persons with disabilities must mention the commission in chapter seven about infrastructure.

Approach B.2

Labour market inclusion services

Recommendations for next steps

1. Before a national roll-out, the labour market inclusion office concept should be piloted at a public employment office in Bishkek.
2. A public employment office in Bishkek should facilitate a pilot model.
3. Service delivery agents such as OPDs must be identified.
4. Based on the ideas developed in this project and presented in this report, a concept model should be tailored to the structure of the selected public employment office in Bishkek. Persons with disabilities represented through OPDs must play an active role in this process.
5. Training for caseworkers that manage clients on supply- and demand-side must be implemented, e.g., in the job training or university courses.
6. Business associations and OPDs should communicate and promote the labour market inclusion office concept in the kick-off phase and subsequently.

Options for inclusion of the developed approaches into policy and legal frameworks

Labour market inclusion services for supply- and demand-side must be included in the disability law under chapter five concerning “Occupational health and safety and work”. In addition to this, the labour code should feature a new chapter concerning persons with disabilities that reflects the stipulations of the law regarding persons with disabilities and the UNCRPD.

5. Conclusion

From both what was observed during the workshop process and based on the feedback of the participants, it can be derived that, on the one hand, the Design Thinking process was an opportunity for persons without disabilities to learn more about the problems and barriers of persons with disabilities as well as about national laws and their partial non-compliance. On the other hand, it was valuable for persons with disabilities to make their voices heard about the barriers they confront and to jointly work on solutions with different stakeholder groups. Therefore, it is concluded that the Design Thinking process was not only an opportunity to co-create ideas for solutions responding to a complex challenge in Kyrgyzstan, but the participative process itself was a good opportunity for the participants to experience an inclusive environment and empowerment or know-how transfer. Therefore, it is recommended to further work in inclusive and co-creative settings on the challenges mentioned in this report.

During the intervention, six challenges that hamper persons with disabilities' access to social protection services were identified. These challenges act as a bottleneck to the inclusion of persons with disabilities into the labour market. The challenges identified show that despite a relatively comprehensive policy framework for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, very disability-inclusive development has been limited in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the inherited classification of persons with disabilities into Disability Groups I, II and III is a significant bottleneck to the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities. The classification system is not aligned with the UNCRPD and the social and human rights model of disability. Therefore, the classification does not empower persons with disabilities to become active subjects with rights equal to others.

Four options for the inclusion of persons with disabilities were developed with stakeholders from OPD, BA and MLSSM to overcome the identified challenges. The challenges range from solutions that tackle specific barriers such as insufficient awareness of companies (A.1) and inaccessible physical environments (A.2) to a holistic framework for labour market inclusion (B.2). Especially option B.2 supplied with sufficient funding has potential to become a game-changer for persons with disabilities and businesses. In summary, according to ILO representatives, all four approaches are low-cost approaches and can be implemented with slight adjustments and within existing financial resources for a pilot run. In the long run, if the developed approaches are to be spread out, additional funding needs to be acquired.

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A.1 A list of all ideas generated during the Design Thinking Workshop

During the Design Thinking Workshop, a variety of ideas and approaches was generated and discussed while addressing the focus questions the teams had defined. The Ideas which were discussed the most thoroughly are marked in bold in the following list:

A list of all ideas generated during the Design Thinking Workshop:

- ▶ **Sensitivity training** for co-workers given by specialists with the goal to create awareness and co-create ideas on how to be more inclusive internally (>Different stakeholders should be involved in the training, e.g. psychologists)
- ▶ **Fairs on job vacancies** including cultural activities developed by persons with disabilities, e.g. theatre on the topic of inclusion, fashion show
- ▶ **Campaigns in the media:** Bloggers' activities / advertisements / news / social networks / National TV channels (KTRK, ELTR, etc.)y could organize this exhibition
- ▶ Higher discounts at universities for persons with disabilities
- ▶ Promotion of distant learning at universities
- ▶ Quota for persons with disabilities (e.g. 10%) at universities
- ▶ **Individualized trainings, studies and job offers at public office coordinating employment services based on individual abilities and skills**
- ▶ **Promotion of new job opportunities in the field of digitalization or remote jobs for persons with disabilities on the side of the public office coordinating employment services**
- ▶ **Individual consultations by public office coordinating employment services for development/trainings with persons with disabilities in order to reveal hidden talents**
- ▶ **Creation of additional income streams (see above) for persons with disabilities so that persons with disabilities can be independent from cash benefits and pensions**
- ▶ Additional specific training for persons with disabilities offers by OPDs and NGOs
- ▶ Generate national records / statistics of persons with disabilities
- ▶ Creation of booklets concerning disability-inclusion for legislators
- ▶ Conduction of public discussions on the topic of disability-inclusion
- ▶ **Introduction of a quota for persons with disabilities on political decision-making boards**
- ▶ **Strengthen State control over compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
- ▶ **Strict control of compliance with 5% employment quota by a special unit**
- ▶ **Policy approach: Incentive and/or sanction system for employers regarding the fulfillment of a quota**
- ▶ **Policy approach: Giving work permission for persons with disabilities in group 1 given that there are persons with disabilities in group 1 who are able to work**

- ▶ **Policy approach: Increase cash benefits in general + adaptation due to inflation and rising living costs**
- ▶ **Policy approach: Budgeting of cash benefits regarding individual circumstances and costs; based on the fulfillment of basic human needs**
- ▶ **Policy approach: Introduction of an obligatory quota for persons with disabilities in the private sector + strict control of compliance + incentive or sanction system**
- ▶ **Policy approach: Introduction of tax incentives for private employers to hire persons with disabilities**
- ▶ **State control of compliance with national construction standards (SNiP)**
- ▶ **Participatory revaluation and adaptation of national construction standards for public buildings (examples: accessible ramps, lifts, rails, guide system for visually impaired persons floors, dispatch windows low enough to reach for persons in wheelchairs, smooth pavement in front of the buildings, special sanitary equipment, etc.) + persons with disabilities and other stakeholders are to be involved**
- ▶ **Creation of national inventory list of public buildings: which building meet which standards and which requirements are not met in which building?**
 - ▶ a) Existing buildings should become barrier-free and
 - ▶ b) for new constructions, barrier-free building should be considered at all times – persons with disabilities are to be involved in the planning and monitoring in each step
- ▶ Introduction of evaluation reports on inclusion standards after conduction of every construction work
- ▶ **Creation of incentives for construction companies to consider barrier-free building**
- ▶ Offices in public institutions to receive persons with disabilities should always be on the first floor
- ▶ Provision of separate parking lots for persons with disabilities in front of public institutions
- ▶ Barrier-free (re)design of authorities' websites in cooperation with experts
- ▶ **Inventory list of inaccessible bus stops, inaccessible sidewalks and other public infrastructure facilities in terms of accessibility**
- ▶ Sensitivity training on inclusion and barriers for staff at public institutions so that they help persons with disabilities, e.g. to move around within the buildings
- ▶ Sensitivity training on participatory approach for authorities so that they include NGOs working in the field of disability & inclusion to campaigning / informative meetings, etc.
- ▶ **Reduction of complexity of bureaucratic procedures, e.g. for the classification into a disability group by the medical commission**
- ▶ Eliminate fee for classification into a disability group
- ▶ **Policy approach:** Reduce unnecessary bureaucratic procedures such as having to reconfirm the status of disability in the case of non-curable impairments
- ▶ Collaboration with volunteers in order to find personal assistants
- ▶ **Policy approach:** Create easier access to personal assistance
- ▶ **Policy approach:** Introduction of quota for persons with disabilities to work at the State Agency for Architecture, Construction and Public Utility
- ▶ **Policy approach (see above):** raise cash benefits including a budget for mobility

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