

Employment Opportunities for
Persons with Disabilities in
Bangladesh: A Study in the Ready
Made Garment and Leather
Industry

2016

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Foreword



The readymade garment (RMG) industry in Bangladesh is responsible for 81.7% of all exports worth a value of over \$25.49bn of exports in 2014-15 financial year. It is therefore the biggest potential provider of employment in the country. The RMG sector alone provides employment to around 4.2 million Bangladeshis, a significant proportion of them being women from the lower socio-economic background. The leather industry is another major employer in Bangladesh and is ranked fifth as an export earner for the country and employs about 558,000 people. Though the RMG industry has been successful in providing a level field for women in employment, the same is not the case with another marginalized population segment – Persons with disabilities.

Because of the enormous employment potential they provide, both these sectors can become a game-changer for improving the quality of life of persons with disability in Bangladesh.

It was against this background that the SACDIR undertook the project on ‘Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh: A Study in the Ready Made Garment and Leather Industry’ aimed at analysing the barriers and opportunities for developing inclusive employment policies for persons with disabilities.

The study was supported by GIZ, Bangladesh and CBM Country Coordination Office Bangladesh. Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID), Dhaka, was the implementing partner for this project. The main focus was on building an evidence base in order to implement larger-scale, sustained and more effective interventions for inclusive work force and thereby improving livelihood options of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh.

The study report focuses on three dimensions to contextualize the employment opportunities of persons with disabilities: First, it provides a background and overview of the current scenario of work status and livelihood of persons with disabilities both at global and national level. Secondly, the report highlights the evidence collected from RMG and Leather factories in Dhaka. Despite the barriers and challenges people with disabilities face in seeking employment, the changing attitudes in the society and strong political will and committed

civil society organisations shed a ray of hope. Finally the report concisely brings out recommendations, at policy, industry and civil society levels.

I am sure that the findings in this document can help the key stakeholders including the Government, to design new strategies to enhance employment opportunities for Persons with Disabilities that will go a long way in contributing to the efforts of Bangladesh in achieving the sustainable development goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G.V.S. Murthy', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Prof. GVS Murthy

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Acknowledgements

This report is an outcome of the study undertaken to identify employment opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in the Ready Made Garment (RMG) Industry and leather industry in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Study was commissioned by GIZ, Bangladesh and CBM BCO, in order to know the status of employment opportunities in the ready-made garment and leather industry in Bangladesh.

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We are greatly indebted to all the employees with disabilities and the employers of the RMG and leather industry who participated in the study and gave us their valuable time and inputs and helped us in completing this study.

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Acronyms

Sl. No.	Acronyms	Expansion
1	BGMEA	Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association
2	CBM BCO	CBM Bangladesh Country Coordination Office
3	CRP	Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed
4	CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
5	CSID	Centre for Services and Information on Disability
6	DPO	Disabled People's Organization
7	FGD	Focus Group Discussion
8	GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
9	ICT	Information and Communication Technology
10	ILO	International Labour Organsiation
11	IDI	In-Depth Interview
12	IIPHH	Indian Institute of Public Health, Hyderabad
13	KII	Key – informant Interview
14	PHFI	Public Health Foundation India
15	RMG	Ready- made Garments
16	SACDIR	South Asia Centre for Disability Inclusive Development and Research
16	SHG	Self Help Group

Executive Summary

Background

Bangladesh has a large Ready-Made Garment (RMG) and Leather industry. These sectors employ a significant proportion of the working population in urban areas of Bangladesh. However, there is insufficient evidence on the numbers of Persons with Disabilities getting employment opportunities in the various industrial sectors including ready-made garment and leather industry in Bangladesh. There is a need to identify the various barriers faced by persons with disabilities in accessing employment opportunities in these factories so that steps could be taken to redress these barriers. Therefore the present study was undertaken to ascertain the employment opportunities, livelihood options and barriers to employment and employability for persons with disabilities, specifically in the RMG and leather industry in Bangladesh.

The study was conducted by South Asia Centre for Disability Inclusive Development and Research (SACDIR), PHFI and the Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID), Dhaka, Bangladesh in collaboration with GIZ, Bangladesh and CBM Country Coordination Office, Bangladesh (CBM BCO).

Aim

The main aim of the study was to explore potential, opportunities and barriers for persons with disabilities to earn their livelihood and to suggest and recommend regarding the future development of an inclusive labour market in Bangladesh.

The Specific Objectives of the study were:

- Identification of the current status of employment opportunities and barriers to inclusion for persons with disabilities in the garment and leather factories in the Greater Dhaka Division of Bangladesh
- Analysis of measures taken by different stakeholders for disability inclusive employment in Bangladesh.
- Exploring links between organizations based in communities where persons with disability stay and markets to understand the situation of persons with disabilities in the labour market.
- Identifying livelihood opportunities and existing barriers to the inclusion for persons with disabilities in the informal economies.
- Providing specific recommendations for future development of an inclusive labour market in Bangladesh.

Methods:

A qualitative approach was deployed as an overarching methodology to collect the primary data for this study. Key Informant Interviews, In Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions were conducted with various stake holders including persons with disabilities both male and female, DPOs, Employers, co-workers from the RMG and Leather factories representatives from skills building institutes and Government officials. The RMG and leather factories were purposively selected from the Greater Dhaka Division. Thematic analysis was conducted with the data from the IDIs and FGDs.

Results:

There was a marked improvement in the employment status of persons with disabilities with opportunities opening up in private sectors such as RMG and Leather industries and self-employment due to persistent efforts by the Government of Bangladesh and Civil society organizations. Despite legislative and policy steps by the Government of Bangladesh towards advancing the rights of persons with disabilities there was a strong perception from most of the respondents that there were many gaps in the implementation of policies which ensure the employment for persons with disabilities.

Some of the key hurdles for improving the employment opportunities for persons with disabilities were a lack of clear organizational policies in the private sector in the RMG and Leather industry, negative perceptions regarding the skills and abilities of persons with disabilities, attitudinal, environmental and institutional level barriers and non-provision of health benefits and insurance and incentives.

Prevailing political will on the part of Government of Bangladesh, presence of committed civil society organizations, and active disabled peoples' organizations provide an opportunity to develop initiatives for inclusive employment for persons with disabilities.

Recommendations:

Some of the key recommendations at various levels, for realizing the employment potential of persons with disabilities through making a change to the ecosystem in which persons with disabilities live in Bangladesh are:

- **Government:**

Improve the compliance to the national and international conventions by honoring the right to employment in government and private organizations and monitor the effective implementation of job reservations.

- **Manufacturing Units**

All manufacturing units should follow an established policy for recruitment and employment of persons with disability and ensure that there is wage parity and provision of health insurance and other incentives.

- **Civil society organizations:**

Developmental NGOs should play a key role in advocacy for increasing awareness and empowering persons with disabilities in society for addressing negative attitudes and realizing constitutional rights; work with the industry in evolving inclusive policies and collaborate with National Skills Development Council for inclusive employment opportunities.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Section 1.1: Background and Rationale for the Study

Globally there is an increased demand and emphasis on making employment and education sectors, amongst others, more inclusive. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disability (CRPD) also highlights this (CRPD, 2006).

The demand for making employment more inclusive calls for a series of actions in terms of workplace modification – making the workplace more inclusive, bringing in required structural changes, having laws and legislations for affirmative action including reservation of positions for Persons With Disabilities in the various employment sectors, additional provisions for Persons With Disabilities in terms of transportation facilities, health care services, insurance, addressing training needs of Persons With Disabilities, addressing the attitudes of co-workers etc.

One of the primary steps, towards making employment more inclusive, is to assess the existing situation in the key sectors of employment, focusing on existing laws and regulations and how well they are implemented and enforced. This situational assessment provides scope for recommendations and making necessary changes for further improvement and progress in this area.

The readymade garment industry in Bangladesh is responsible for 81.7% of all exports worth value of over \$25.49bn in 2014-15 financial year (BGMEA, 2015). It is therefore the biggest potential provider of employment in the country. The RMG sector alone provides employment to around 4.2 million Bangladeshis, significant proportion of them being women from the lower socio economic background (Ahamed, 2012). The leather industry is another major employer in Bangladesh and is ranked fifth as an export earner for the country and

employing about 558,000 people (Paul, 2013). Though the RMG industry has been successful in providing a level field for women in employment, the same is not the case with another marginalized population segment – Persons with disabilities. Although, the garment industry brings in the highest revenue, the working conditions in this key sector, were far from satisfactory. Compliance with international standards and guidelines in terms of building infrastructure norms, work space per individual, working environment, rights of the workers, their health and work place safety measures were hardly adhered to before 2013(Ahamed, 2012). However, the 2013 Savar Building collapse or the Rana Plaza incident which housed many RMG factories and had a death toll of more than 1100 people, in the SavarUpazila of Dhaka, changed the situation with positive benefits due to political pressure and the requirement of international brands / buyers(BBC, 2013)

After the Rana Plaza incident in Dhaka in 2013, there is an increasing demand from the various stakeholders including the development partners both locally and internationally to look at the conditions prevalent in the RMG and leather industry in terms of work environment, working conditions, accessibility issues, health care facilities, wages etc.

Within the textile, garment and leather industry, RMG and Leather industry have similar situations. Exploring / assessing the situation in terms of inclusiveness in these sectors and also looking at opportunities and barriers for inclusion in these areas would be timely in order to give meaningful recommendations for the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disability Act 2013.

In this context, this study was envisaged to obtain a qualitative insight into the potential employment opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in the RMG and leather industry in Bangladesh, the potential barriers and facilitators that the Persons with Disabilities face in terms of employment in this sector.

Section 1.2: Aim and Objectives of the Study.

Aim

The main aim of the study was to explore potential, opportunities and barriers for persons with disabilities to earn their livelihood and to suggest and recommend regarding the future development of an inclusive labour market in Bangladesh.

The Specific Objectives of the study were:

- Identification of the current status of employment opportunities and barriers to inclusion for persons with disabilities in the garment and leather factories in the Greater Dhaka Division of Bangladesh
- Analysis of measures taken by different stakeholders for disability inclusive employment in Bangladesh.
- Exploring links between organizations based in communities where persons with disability stay and markets to understand the situation of persons with disabilities in the labour market.
- Identifying livelihood opportunities and existing barriers to the inclusion for persons with disabilities in the informal economies.
- Providing specific recommendations for future development of an inclusive labour market in Bangladesh.

Section 1.3: Current status of work and livelihood of Persons with Disabilities at global level

Globally data on the employment of Persons with Disabilities are not systematically available in many nations. In low and middle-income countries, the availability of data continues to be limited, despite improvements since 2010 (WHO, 2011). And in many of these countries, a significant proportion of people work in the informal economy, and so do not appear in all labour market statistics, nor are they covered by employment legislation.

CRPD and various conventions of ILO provide legal frameworks to develop and enact national legislations and policies, for the promotion of employment for persons with disabilities. Some of the key international legislation on employment and persons with disabilities are:

Table 1. Key international legislation on employment and persons with disabilities

Article 27 of the CRPD - 2006
ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation (No. 195) - 2004
ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181) - 1997
ILO Convention No. 159 – 1983
ILO Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Recommendation (No. 168) - 1983
ILO Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 155) - 1981
ILO Human Resources Development Convention (No. 142)- 1975
ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) - 1958

Source: **Global Status Report on Disability and Development | 2015**

(Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015)

However, the status of employment amongst persons with disabilities across the countries leaves much to be desired at the levels of policy and implementation. Data from several countries show that employment rates for persons with disabilities are below that of the overall population with the employment ratio varying from lows of 30% in South Africa

(Mitra, 2008) and 38% in Japan to highs of 81% in Switzerland and 92% in Malawi (WHO, 2011).

Data from the World Health Survey conducted between 2002 – 2004 in 51 countries, shows employment rates of 52.8% for men with disability and 19.6% for women with disability, compared to 64.9% for men without disability, and 29.9% for women without disability. According to a study conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in 2010, working-age persons in 27 countries with disabilities experienced significant labour market disadvantage and worse labour market outcomes than working-age persons without disabilities (WHO, 2011).

Persons with Disabilities experience environmental obstacles that make physical access to employment difficult. Some may not be able to afford the daily travel costs to and from work (European Commission, 2008). There may also be physical barriers to job interviews, to the actual work setting, and to attending social events with fellow employees (ILO, 2006).

In a study conducted by the South Asia Centre for Disability Inclusive Development and Research (SACDIR) amongst Persons with Disability employed in Information Technology and Information Technology enabled Sectors (IT and ITeS), 72 percent of the 147 employees with disability that were interviewed, stated that their impairment had at least a mild effect on their activities of daily living (SACDIR, 2014). In the same study, a majority of the employers stated that they encouraged applications for all the positions from persons with disability, but only around 4 percent of the employers interviewed were aware that their company had a written policy on employing persons with disabilities. Access to and within the work place, communication and training opportunities were highlighted as critical barriers. Attitude of co-workers was also mentioned as a serious barrier (SACDIR, 2014).

The report titled 'Decent work for Persons with Disabilities: promoting rights in the global development agenda' published by the International Labour Organization in 2015, states that even now a majority of the countries do not have reliable updated scenario of the labour market situation of Persons with Disabilities, and wherever data is available, it is usually from disability specific surveys and not a household survey or general population survey (ILO, 2015).

Therefore it is evident that despite international legislative support for the employment of persons with disabilities, the implementation is inadequate. There is a need for a systematic collection of data on the employability of persons with disabilities-both in organized and un-organized sectors- which can inform policies and contribute to better implementation of developmental programs.

Section 1.4: Work and livelihood issues of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh

The population of Bangladesh is 152,518,015 according to the recent population and housing census 2011 conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS, 2011). Estimates on the prevalence of disability vary from 1.41% (National census,2011) to 9.01% (Household Income & Expenditure Survey) conducted by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in 2010 (BBS, 2015). The World Bank in 2011 projected that 16.2% of working age people had disability. Using an expanded measure of disability, the prevalence amongst adults was seen to be even higher, at 19.6% (Sida, 2014). This translates to 16-24 million individuals with disability in Bangladesh.

The enormous magnitude of persons with disability warrants special attention from the policy makers to ensure that the developmental benefits reach them to achieve international developmental goals (Hussain, 2008). It is increasingly apparent that persons with disability not only have a valuable contribution to make to the national economy but that their

employment also reduces the cost of disability benefits and may reduce poverty (ILO, 2001). Realizing the need to address this concern from a holistic, rights based perspective, the Government of Bangladesh initiated measures to protect and safeguard the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities and ensure their participation in the national and social programs for their general welfare.

However, despite proactive measures by the government, there are considerable gaps in the inclusion of the persons with disabilities both in the government and private sectors. The existing laws and policies in Bangladesh relating to the rights of persons with disabilities do not adequately protect the right to equality and nondiscrimination against, persons with disabilities with regard to employment (Mostafa, 2013).

The Government of Bangladesh has declared a compulsory 10% job quota for people with disabilities and orphans jointly but fails to specify a percentage for each group in particular, making it meaningless for persons with disabilities in terms of employment rights. It also declared a 1% quota for persons with disabilities in the Bangladesh Civil Services (BCS). However, this declaration is not being implemented properly by local and department level as it is evident in the share of persons with disability in the publicsector employment in Bangladesh is less than 1percent although they represent more than 10 percentof the total population (Jalil, 2012). Individuals who gain employment often find themselves in a working environment that is unfriendly and unsuitable with regard to their disability(Mostafa, 2013).

In Bangladesh the acceptance and importance of individuals in the family as well as the community is primarily dependent upon his or her economic status and contribution.

Unemployment is a major national problem in Bangladesh. According to studies conducted to assess the situation of employment of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh and factors

influencing them, studies have shown that persons with disabilities are at a greater disadvantage, experiencing significant difficulties in securing governmental and non-governmental jobs compared to those without disabilities. Access to economic opportunities for persons with disability is limited in Bangladesh and this is compounded by lack of employable vocational skills among persons with disability. This can be partly attributed to the policy barriers and negative attitudes of the employers. A significant proportion of employers lack confidence in the capabilities and potential of persons with disabilities. Many persons with disabilities suffer from the lack of technical help and assistance regarding employment opportunities, which prevents them from gaining access to information concerning where and how to find a job or increase their skills where necessary (CSID, 2002; Jalil, 2012).

Analysis of data from the Census 2011 and the Household Income & expenditure surveys by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2010) showed that only 53.6% of men with disability compared to 78.8% of males without a disability were currently employed. Differentials in women with or without a disability were much lower (5.03% versus 8.11%). Persons with disability encounter difficulties to access the 10% jobs earmarked for them in the public sector in the third and fourth grade jobs and 1% for the first or second grade jobs (Jalil, 2012). However there is no mandate for securing guaranteed employment in the private sector for persons with disability. This has a profound impact on employment rates among persons with disabilities, as the private sector especially the garment sector is the biggest employer in Bangladesh.

Globally there is a need for more research, including research done in partnership with organizations of persons with disabilities, to address knowledge gaps concerning employment and people with disabilities. The focus should be on the changing nature of work and whether new barriers are being created for persons with disabilities (CCD, 2013).

Section 1.5: National Legislations and International Policy Documents and employment of persons with disabilities

1983 to 1992 was the UN "Decade of Disabled Persons". In 1987, a global meeting of experts to review progress recommended that the UN General Assembly should draft an international convention on the elimination of discrimination against persons with disabilities. Draft convention outlines were proposed by Italy and subsequently Sweden, but no consensus was reached. Many government representatives argued that existing human rights documents were sufficient. Instead, non-compulsory "Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities" were adopted by the General Assembly in 1993. In 2000, leaders of five international disability NGOs issued a declaration, calling on all governments to support a Convention. In 2001, the General Assembly, following a proposal by Mexico, established an Ad Hoc Committee to consider proposals for a comprehensive and integral convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, based on a holistic approach. Disability rights organisations, including the International Disability Alliance as coordinator of an ad hoc International Disability Caucus, participated

actively in the drafting process, in particular seeking a role for disabled persons and their organisations in the implementation and monitoring of what became the Convention (United Nations, 2006).

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Parties to the Convention are required to promote, protect, and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and ensure that they enjoy full equality under the law. The Convention has served as the major catalyst in the global movement from viewing persons with disabilities as objects of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing them as full and equal members of society, with human rights. It is also the only UN human rights instrument with an explicit sustainable development dimension. The Convention was the first human rights treaty of the third millennium (United Nations, 2006).

The text was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006, and opened for signature on 30 March 2007. Following ratification by the 20th party, it came into force on 3 May 2008 (CRPD, 2006). As of April 2016, it has 160 signatories and 163 parties, including 162 states and the European Union (which ratified it on 23 December 2010 to the extent responsibilities of the member states were transferred to the European Union) (United Nations Treaty Collection, 2016).

The first comprehensive disability legislation was adopted by the Parliament of Bangladesh on April 4, 2001; Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act-2001. This Act was introduced to protect and safeguard the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, ensure their participation in the national and social programmes and their general

welfare. Bangladesh adopted the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for persons with disabilities in 1993. In 1995 the National Policy for the Disabled was approved by the Government. Complying with the principles enunciated by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Bangladesh government updated the Disability Welfare Act and passed the Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013 on 9th October 2013, to promote the implementation of global standards for the inclusion and complete and effective participation of persons with disabilities. The aim of the Act is to guarantee the educational, physical and mental improvement of disabled persons and to support their participation in social and state activities by removing all types of discrimination (Hyder, 2015). The law also mandates the issuing of national identity cards, enrolment in regular schools, reservation of seats on all forms of public transportation, accessibility provisions in all public places (including retrofitting), equal opportunities in employment, and protection of inherited property rights.

Bangladesh has a Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013 and Neuro-developmental Disability Protection Trust Act 2013. Other relevant legislations and policies include: the Lunacy Act of 1912; Disability Policy of 1995, Disability Welfare Act of 2001, Social Safety Net Program of the Government of Bangladesh since 2003; National Building Code of 2008, Right to Information Act of 2009, National Education Policy of 2010, National Disaster Action Plan of 2010, Information and Communication Technology Policy of the Government of Bangladesh of 2010, Women Development Advancement Policy of 2011, and the National Child Policy of 2011.

Bangladesh put increased impetus into its efforts and initiatives to improve the situation of the person with disabilities. There are comprehensive laws and policies in Bangladesh which directly cover the issues of disabilities and provisions related to non-discrimination, best

interest, equal treatment, service provision etc. for the persons with disabilities and these are spread across various different laws and policies which predate the CRPD.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) chalk out the issues of development and rights of the persons with disabilities more elaborately than any other global development framework, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The disability inclusive Global Goals have significant relevance for Bangladesh which has nearly 16 million persons with disabilities. Bangladesh needs to take advantage of the current situation that has been created regarding the inclusion of disability in the SDGs, and translate that into concrete actions for advancement of its citizens with disabilities. A comprehensive, right-based instead of welfare-based, strategy is warranted to ensure that those parts of SDGs including their targets that are concerned with the persons with disabilities are achieved in time. This strategy should be aligned with the national strategy for implementing the SDGs (Haque, 2015).

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Study design

A qualitative research approach was deployed as an overarching methodology to collect the primary data for this study.

Study Area:

The primary data collection was conducted at the Greater Dhaka division of Bangladesh. Purposive sampling strategy was used to select the RMG and Leather factories situated in the Greater Dhaka Division. CSID, the implementation partner for the research study, took lead in identifying the field sites. The field sites covered both semi-urban and urban areas of the Greater Dhaka division of Bangladesh.

Tools used:

In accordance with the exploratory aim of the research study, qualitative approach was identified as most appropriate methodology to collect the primary data. Therefore, Key Informant Interviews, In Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions were deployed for the data collection. Separate topic guides for each category of respondents were designed and administered. A semi-structured Interview Guide was used for Key Informant Interviews / In Depth Interviews (Tools used are included as part of Annexure).

The details of the respondents, method used to collect data and the number of interview and FGDs conducted in given below:

Table 2. Data collection tools and respondents

Sl.no	Respondents	Methods and Number	
1	Persons with disabilities (both female and male and people with all types of impairments) employed in selected garment and leather factories.	In Depth Interview	FGD (8 participants in each FGD)
		20	8
	Persons with disabilities (both female and male and persons with all types of impairments) not employed, but linked to DPOs.	2	2
2	Coworkers of persons with disabilities employed in factories	2	2
3	Employed persons with disabilities	20	
4	Teachers/instructors/decisions makers related with education and skill development institutes for persons with disabilities	10	
5	Key Government Officials, DPO leaders, heads of NGOs working for the cause of disability	9	
6	Employers / managements who have employed persons with disabilities in their factories	10	
7	Employers / managements who have not employed persons with disabilities in their factories	7	

Overall a total of 152 persons (person units) were interviewed as part of this study.

Secondary data sources: Published reports, relevant articles in journals and study reports were used to review the global and Bangladesh scenarios of employability of persons with disabilities.

2.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection Personnel:

The field staff for data collection was locally recruited by CSID based on their skills in qualitative research and prior experience. To the extent feasible, Persons with Disability (both female and male) were recruited and trained for collection of primary data. Three Persons with Disabilities (males) were recruited as part of the field data collection team. The Field team consisted of 6 interviewers and 2 field supervisors and an overall study coordinator. A two day orientation workshop was conducted for the field staff and supervisors by SACDIR with the help of CSID before the commencement of the data collection. The participants were trained in conducting an in-depth interview and focus group discussions. Mock focus group discussions and interviews were conducted with the data collection staff as a part of the orientation. The interview guides were piloted and finalized before the commencement of the data collection.

Profile of the FGDs and IDIs:

All general guidelines were followed during the conduct of FGDs and IDIs. Field supervisors from CSID monitored the data collection process to ensure the quality of data. For FGDs, a moderator, a note taker and a facilitator were present. All the interviews were conducted in Bangla and were audio recorded after taking a written informed consent in Bangla from the participants.

Data Analysis:

All the interviews and FGDs were first transcribed into Bangla and then translated into English. A content analysis workshop was conducted by SACDIR with the support of CSID, with the field staff and supervisors. Thematic analysis was conducted with the data from the

IDs and FGDs. Initial a-priori codes were developed from the interview guide. The codes were refined in discussions with the researchers who conducted the interviews. Nvivo 10 software was used to code the interview transcripts. Emergent codes were identified through an iterative engagement with the data.

Chapter 3: Results

The results from the analysis of semi-structured, in-depth interviews and FGDs conducted with various stakeholders are organized into four key themes. The results are substantiated with data excerpts as required.

I. **Current status of employment of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh:**

Most of the respondents across the stakeholders interviewed in the research study have mentioned that there was a marked improvement in the employment status of persons with disabilities.

- Eighty percent of respondents stated that persons with disabilities were now able to find employment as against the prevailing situation ten years ago. Education status and training were identified as determining factors of type of employment. According to a respondent in an FGD:

“Those who have good education can work in better positions. Comparatively less educated persons with disabilities work in small shops. Many of the female persons with disabilities work in Garments. Some have their own home-based tailoring shops”

(Respondent, FGD with persons with disabilities employed in factories).

- Almost all the respondents interviewed (90 percent) for the study unanimously mentioned that a majority of the persons with disabilities were keen to work and were exploring possibilities to work either in the institutional settings or self-employment.

II. Change overtime:

For questions on how the employment opportunities for the persons with disabilities have evolved over time in Bangladesh, most respondents attributed this change to proactive and persistent initiatives of the Government and the civil society organizations. The overarching perception was that there were many gaps and that much was still pending to be achieved.

- Interviews with both the persons with disability and the employers showed that nine out of 10 respondents opined that there was a significant improvement in employment opportunities for persons with disabilities with a positive trend over a period of 10-20 years. In-depth interviews with government officials indicated that, there has been a significant increase in the awareness levels of issues related to persons with disabilities among the general population and their attitude and thinking towards persons with disabilities has improved.

“During recent years, this rude attitude has somewhat improved. People are more aware and their way of thinking towards persons with disabilities is more positive. The government’s role has played a good part. However, a lot more has to be achieved if we have to improve the status of the persons with disabilities” (In-depth interview with a Government Official).

- About 90% of the respondents including persons with disability, managers from manufacturing units and key personnel from the Government sector agreed that the increased awareness on disability had resulted in changing attitudes towards persons with disability especially over the past five years. The employers are now reposing more faith in the abilities of the persons with disabilities.

“The situation is improving. The number of the persons with disabilities at the workplace is increasing day by day; now their mentality is changing. They now are confident to give jobs to the persons with disability” (Interview with a Supervisor in a garment factory).

III. Organizational policies:

There are no clear organizational policies in the private sector in the RMG and Leather industry for employment of persons with disabilities, provision of health benefits and insurance and incentives. Negative perceptions regarding the skills and abilities of persons with disabilities have been identified as the key barriers amongst the factories that have not employed any person with disabilities.

- Only a quarter of the RMG factories (2/8) and none of the leather units (0/2) had a systematic process in place with written policy guidelines on employment for persons with disability.
- Only one of the 12 units assessed had a specified recruitment policy for persons with disability.
- 40% of the RMG units assessed (4/10) stated that they made intensive efforts to find and employ persons with disabilities. Most of them have an MOU with an NGO that trains persons with disabilities and all of them recruit persons with disabilities. Sometimes, if the persons with disabilities working in their respective factories, recommend other persons with disabilities, they are also given jobs.
- Though there is a strong perception among persons with disability that nothing concerning persons with disability should be done without their active involvement, it was observed that only in one unit did the selection panel comprise of a representative who had a disability.
- 70% of the RMG units exposed persons with disability joining employment to an induction orientation.
- 80% of the RMG stated that they administered sensitization packages to all employees about the needs and support for co-workers with disability. During the general orientation, specifics about how to deal with persons with disabilities do's and don'ts are discussed. The orientation includes sensitizing co-workers towards the special needs of persons with disabilities, additional time requirement for them in certain situations like eating food etc., not being able to achieve the same targets as co-workers, support to be given to persons with disabilities during situations of emergency as in fire etc.
- Less than half the units interviewed provided health insurance or accident benefits from the units to persons with disability. None of the factories mentioned about provision of disability specific health support to persons with disabilities.

- Wage parity was reported by 90% of managements of RMG. One unit stated that they gave a higher compensation package to persons with disability. This is unique even in the global context.
- Most of the manufacturing units gave more leeway to persons with disability in completion of specific tasks and permitted them to take more breaks during the working hours.
- Interviews with 7 managers from RMG units that did not employ any person with disability revealed the extent of negative and mistaken perceptions regarding the skill and potential work outputs of persons with disability in their minds. This needs active intervention to redress this perception.
- Senior executives who were interviewed in the NGO, DPO sector and the Government were more pragmatic in their assessment of the employment of persons with disabilities. The respondents identified various sectors such as leather industry, food processing industry (for packaging and storage); RMG (in all the sectors: admin, design, quality section and IT section); pharmaceuticals, telecommunication, dairy and poultry business, mobile repairs, self-employment, production of handicrafts, tailoring shop, boutique shops etc. They opined that the type of disability determined the job prospects, as did the skill mix of a person with disability. They also endorsed that employment opportunities for persons with disability showed a positive trend over the past decade and that more and more women with disability were also finding jobs.
- Institutional support has been mentioned as one of the key enablers for the persons with disabilities who were employed.

“We get additional 1000 taka per month in which 500 taka is for the transport and 500 taka is for the lunch. The general workers do not get it.” (Interview with a person with disabilities working in a garment factory)

IV. Barriers that impact employment prospects for persons with disabilities

- Interviews with the NGO and DPO partners and government representatives highlighted barriers in employment opportunities for persons with disability. In their perception, apart from lack of institutional policies for the employment of persons with disabilities, attitudinal, environmental and institutional level barriers were limiting their employment in the RMG and Leather Industry. Transportation, accommodation, low salaries, living costs in cities, access, attitude of co-workers; lack of awareness among employers, lack of

accessible infrastructure and negative perceptions about the ability of the persons with disabilities were highlighted as barriers. One of the respondents from the DPO mentioned particular challenges faced by persons with disabilities in the leather industry:

“In the leather industry, there are no training facilities. Persons with disabilities need special support facilities and need some flexibility in terms of work hour and leave. Employer’s reluctance to recruit persons with disabilities is a major problem. In recruitment process, persons with disabilities are rejected because of their disabilities. Even there is a case where persons with disabilities were not even considered as a candidate at a government agency. Accessibility and lack of support facilities are other barriers” (Key informant interview, DPO member).

- Environmental barriers were identified as a key factors across the factories that determine the willingness to recruit persons with disabilities.

“Most of the factories don’t have accessible infrastructure for the persons with disabilities. Second issue is the attitude of employers and coworker”(Interview with a DPO member).

- Despite legislative and policy steps by the Government of Bangladesh towards advancing the rights of persons with disabilities, there are gaps in implementation. Most of the factories in the RMG and Leather industry that participated in the study were found to be lacking in clear policies and guidelines for providing employment for persons with disabilities.

- Political will on the part of Government of Bangladesh, committed civil society organizations, and active Disabled Peoples’ Organizations (DPOs) provide an opportunity to develop initiatives for inclusive employment for persons with disabilities.

Section 3.1: Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of this study is that it represents persons with disabilities who have a mild to moderate disability and are generally mobile. The sample of the study only included persons with disabilities who were employed in RMG and leather sectors. This has, therefore excluded persons with disabilities who were employed in other sectors. The severely impaired persons were totally excluded.

Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations

Section 4.1: Conclusions

The study was unique as it was able to capture perceptions from persons with disabilities, policy makers, NGO representatives and employers of manufacturing units engaged in the readymade garment and leather industry in Bangladesh at the same point in time.

It was heartening to see that the various stakeholders who were concerned with persons with disability including the disabled emphatically stated that they were witness to a positive trend regarding employment opportunities over the past decade. This is a recent phenomenon and the credit for this would go to concerted efforts of all the stakeholders.

There were significant concerns that need to be addressed. There was no policy regarding employment opportunities being mandated for persons with disability in the private sector especially when the private sector like RMG or leather industry is an overwhelming employer in the Bangladesh context.

The need for adequate sensitization of senior management of the private sector as well as employees at manufacturing units was borne out by the study. Since the study was qualitative in nature, all outputs cannot be numerically quantified but the overwhelming sentiment in this regard could be adequately captured.

Key stakeholders had identified barriers to enhance the employment opportunities and to increase employment rates for persons with disabilities. Though some are directly related to the overall socio-economic development there are many domains which are modifiable and

can yield good returns like improving transport facilities, subsidizing travel to and from work, developing a standardized orientation package for employers.

Most of the units included in the study did not have a formal written policy on recruitment policies or strengthening an enabling environment for their employees with disability.

Section 4.2: Recommendations

Based on the study findings and review of secondary data, a concerted effort has been made to suggest pragmatic and achievable steps at various levels, for realizing the employment potential of persons with disabilities. These would impact on increased productivity and improved quality of life by making a change to the ecosystem in which persons with disabilities live in Bangladesh.

Government:

1. Improve the compliance to the national and international conventions by honoring the right to employment in government and private organisations:
 - a. Delineate specific percentage of job quota for people with disabilities. At the moment the 10% job assurance clubs persons with disability and orphans together. The rationale behind this is not clear because in a wider context, orphans along with other groups like abused children, street children etc. are a marginalized group but clubbing these two groups would not help in building advocacy for either. Moreover, if the quality of life has to improve, there should be affirmative action for persons with disability to also target better skilled jobs in higher grades.
 - b. Monitoring effective implementation of compulsory 10% job quota for people with disabilities in government sector. There should be a roster system so that

positions earmarked for persons with disabilities should not be filled up by others without any disabilities. Such a system is followed in many other countries including India.

- c. Implement the job reservation for persons with disability in the private sector. There is a demand for this from the NGOs, DPOs and persons with disability as the employment potential in the private sector is significantly higher than what is available in the government sector.
- d. Apart from the tax rebates provided to private sector employers that recruit persons with disabilities through the schedule 10 of the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act (2013), incentives such as certificates of recognition and acknowledgement in the government circles including websites could promote employment for persons with disabilities.
- e. Mainstream gender into all the skill building and employment initiatives for the persons with disabilities. The garment industry has created jobs for women from rural and poor families in Bangladesh and thus contributed to improved family incomes. If the same were to be extended to women with disabilities it would go a long way in ensuring gender equity.
- f. Evolve a system for legislative support to penalize those in violation of the policy. This could be in the form of increased taxes or monetary fines which could be used to support employment for women with disability or other persons with disability.

- 2. Develop framework for inter-sectorial coordination within various government departments and collaboration with civil society organisations, DPOs, Skill

development institutes and organizations such as Bangladesh Employers' Federation for formulating inclusive development and employment policies

3. Develop a database for the persons with disability at the national, sub-regional and regional levels through the involvement of DPOs, for evidence based policy making and effective implementation of the development initiatives. The database on workers should categorically mention how many were persons with disability.

Manufacturing Units

1. All manufacturing units should be made to use an established policy for recruitment and employment of persons with disability.
2. Developmental NGOs should help the industry in preparing advocacy kits and to organize national and regional workshops for orienting the senior management from manufacturing units on the needs of persons with disabilities.
3. Factory owners should be encouraged to invest in preparing a standardized induction training facilitation guide for persons with disabilities, which could be used by all units.
4. Efforts should be made to include a person with disability on the recruitment panel. It is preferable that this representative is a woman with disability.
5. Contributory health insurance cover should be provided to all persons with disability at employment.
6. Wage parity should be ensured and monitored such that persons with disability and women are not disadvantaged.

7. Recognition mechanisms to work output of persons with disability can be supported.

This could be in the form of additional incentives or career pathways.

Civil society organizations:

1. Advocacy for increasing awareness in society for addressing negative attitudes, which act as barriers for employment of the persons with disabilities.
2. Empower the persons with disability with awareness on constitutional rights such as the Article 15 (d) that secures the social security for persons with disabilities.
3. Ensure effective implementation of Rights & Protection of persons with disabilities Act that guarantees rights such as, education, equal opportunities in employment, reservation of seats in public transport facilities, safe and secure accessibility to all public places, and protection of inheritance and property rights.
4. Capacity building for DPOs to create awareness among the persons with disability for claiming their rights for skill development and employment opportunities.
5. Develop community based monitoring systems through the involvement of DPOs for monitoring and compliance with policies for inclusive employment in the public and private sectors.
6. Proactive role by representatives from civil society organisations and DPOs in National Skills Development Council for inclusive employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through increasing their access and privileges and participation in skills development programs.
7. Civil society organizations should advocate for developing policy guidelines for inclusive employment for the private sector including the RMG and Leather Industries.

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Annexures

Annexure 1: Case Studies

Case study1:

The following is an illustration of an NGO initiative as a best practice for improving employment opportunities of the persons with disabilities through skill building, advocacy and networking.

Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP):

Persons with disabilities in employment, representatives of a leading NGO, CRP were interviewed. CRP established in 1979 is one of the most respected organisations in Bangladesh, which is involved, in residential vocational training center for disabled women and girls. Through Advocacy and networking activities CRP promotes improved co-ordination among many organisations and government. They work at the community level too by raising awareness and publicity campaigns to inform the population about relevant issues. Their community initiatives focus on breaking down the barriers, superstitions and stigmas which prevent disabled people from enjoying equal rights and opportunities. Some of the key Initiatives undertaken by CRP to promote rights of persons with disabilities are: Skills training / skills development, job placement, training facilities, awareness programmes – yard meetings for creating awareness, liaising, advisory services to the factories, MOU with factories, counseling, and advocacy for employing persons with disabilities. Advocacy with governments for more inclusive training for DPO members; training in ICT; scale up the programs to rural areas. Generate more employment through skills training. Create a social movement for inclusive development; overcome attitudinal barriers, Create SHGs and in turn income generation activities; some positions designated for persons with disabilities – and will not be filled by non-persons with disabilities.

First Inclusive Job Centre in Bangladesh

A first of its kind, an Inclusive Job Centre (IJC) was established in Mirpur in September, 2015. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed among Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP), Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The objective of the Inclusive Job Centre is to facilitate skills training and increase employment and career opportunities in the Ready-Made Garments (RMG) industry for persons with disabilities. The key roles of the Inclusive Job Centre consists of functioning as a platform for advisory services, information sharing, capacity building, and job-search based on individual needs and competencies and to establish a referral network. These activities are backed by the expertise of professionals from NGO partners in the field of disability inclusion. The key objectives to establish the inclusive job centre are to identify persons with disabilities for skills training, to link them with referral network, to improve disability inclusiveness in factories, and to promote inclusive workforce in the RMG sector.

Brief narratives of success stories of two individuals working in ready-made garment industry sector

Case study 2: Social barriers couldn't stop Rashida from working

[Ms. Rashida: Physically disabled; Square Fashion Ltd]

Persons with Disabilities remain not only in a socially and economically marginal position in the society but also face barriers that resist them from moving away from their disadvantaged position – yet Rashida has struggled through all those barriers to work in the Square Fashion Ltd (a leading apparel industry in Bhaluka, Bangladesh) and has become the only earning member of her family.

Rashida is 23 and is eldest among the 4 of her siblings. Her physical disability was quite a matter of worry for the poor family. Initially her family did not want to send her to school. She was always discouraged by her parents that she would not be able to travel to the school as the nearest school was quite far from home. Nevertheless, after years of argument and persuasion, she was able to convince her parents and was sent to school along with her younger sister. After completing her primary school (Class V), her father got sick which seriously hampered their family income. It was quite difficult for the family to bear the educational expenses for two children. Ultimately, she had to drop off the school and her younger sister was sent to high school as they thought she (younger sister) would have a better chance to build a career as she didn't have any disabilities.

Dropping off from school had made her mentally weak and she started losing confidence in herself. For years, she stayed back at home doing nothing but helping in household chores. One day another disabled person from her village informed her that there is an organization called CRP who work with disabled people, train them and help those getting jobs. Again, her father resisted her from going to CRP partly because he had no idea of what CRP is and partly because he was not confident to send her to the far away city of Dhaka. Yet Rashida once again convinced him and came to CRP. After a couple of months of training in garments related trades, she tried for jobs but couldn't get one. Finally, with the help of CRP she got the opportunity to work at Square Fashion Ltd. who recruit disabled workers regularly from CRP. Since then, Rashida has been working there for 7.5 years in the Sample Section. Now she is the only earning member of the family. Besides her family expenses, she also takes the responsibility of bearing the schooling fees of two of her youngest sisters.

Rashida endorsed that the working environment in Square was good. Managers, supervisors and co-workers are very cooperative. As Square regularly recruits Persons with Disabilities, management commonly sensitize all workers about the rights and facilities needed by the

Persons with Disabilities. After orientation, she was placed in the Sample Section. Management instructed all her co-workers and supervisors to help her in work and teach her everything. Of course initially the supervisors were not happy to have her as they had to achieve daily targets and they were not sure if she could work as much as a non-disabled worker, remembered Rashida. But overtime, she was able to prove her capacity and now everyone is happy. Supervisors don't give her high targets and co-workers also help her in her works if the task is difficult for her. Everyone is proud of her performance. She is even appreciated for the struggle she went through and yet having come this far with her career.

There is limited infrastructural facility at the workplace. There is ramp for wheelchair persons, but no other special facilities are there. There is separate toilet for women but not specialized for persons with disabilities. But still she did not complain. She has no problem in using regular toilets. She works at the ground floor and doesn't need to climb stairs. Management also has allowed flexibility for her lunch break. She can leave early and come back late. Authority has adjusted her seat height, so that she can work comfortably.

Rashida said she wants to continue to work for 10 years. After that, she wants to go back home and start a small business. Though rural people are conservative and don't support women to do business, yet she wants to try, and wishes to run a family business with her younger brother.

Case Study 3: Working is not easy for Ranju

[Md. Ranju: Multiple (Speech, hearing and intellectual) disability; FB Foot ware Ltd]

Ranju has multiple (speech, hearing and intellectual) disability. It is not surprising that he was not given the opportunity to go to school. He can only write his name but that is how far he could go. The poor parents didn't see it useful to invest in his education. Then again, schools in the rural areas don't even have any system to facilitate children like Ranju.

At 16 years of age, an acquaintance of his family took him to FB Foot ware Ltd. at Gazipur. As he had no physical impairment, he was recruited in the Lasting Section. The Lasting Section deals with Lasting Operation, which is one among the most important processes of footwear manufacturing operation under leather industry. This is the process when the upper and the sole are attached and the shoe is completed. The quality and durability of the shoes are determined by this operation. As this is a crucial operation, several skilled operators are required to perform various activities involved in lasting. Hence, a Lasting operator would be a multi-skilled operator capable of operating the various machines used in lasting process and also skillful to perform various specialized tasks.

Working at the factory is not easy for him. He mentioned a few challenges he faces at workplace. Though co-workers are supportive, yet they sometimes make fun of him and speak ill words. This is despite the fact that his supervisors and management have instructed everyone to be cooperative and friendly to him. However, the problem with co-workers has become less intense over time. Communication, however, is still a big problem. As he cannot speak or hear, the only way to communicate with him is sign language and not many of his co-workers are accustomed to that. But once he understands the instruction, he can do the task very well, he mentioned confidently. Now, as he is working here for 4 years, many of his co-workers and supervisors can communicate with him easily.

However, he mentioned that, other than such mental support, there are no other special facilities for disabled people like him. There is no official sign language interpreter or any other communicable method of notice and instruction setting. He has to rely on someone else to get notices and instructions. Moreover, he mentioned that because of his disabilities, his salary and other financial benefits like annual increment rates are lower than others.

People with mental, speech and hearing disabilities are socially vulnerable and prone to bullying. Even travelling to workplace from home is a hassle to him. Yet he believes, rather than being a burden on the family, he would continue to work and will not bother about any trouble or barrier. He suggested that people of the society and co-workers should be made aware about people like him. They have their own worlds, have their distinctive capabilities and limitation. If everyone can understand these, life of Persons with Disability would be much easier. Only then they can become socially and economically empowered.

Annexure 2: Informed Consent Form

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are from the Center for Services and Information on Disability (CSID), Dhaka, Bangladesh. We are collaborating with South Asia Centre for Disability Inclusive Development & Research (SACDIR), which is setup as a center for excellence of the Public Health Foundation of India, based at Hyderabad, India, for conducting a study on “Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh.

We are undertaking this research to understand the views and perceptions regarding barriers and opportunities of employment for persons with disabilities in the garment and leather factories in the Greater Dhaka Division of Bangladesh. This research wants to ascertain what barriers exist ranging from physical access, communication, skill-sets required for the job, etc. We also want to ascertain if persons with disabilities who are employed, as to why they were employed and factors that have promoted employment for persons with disabilities in your work place.

We want you to help us with this research by participating in an “in-depth” individual interview and/or focused group discussions on this issue. We envisage that this will take 30 minutes for an interview and 45 minutes for a focus group discussion. We seek your permission and consent to collect this information from you.

In case you are a person with disability we would like to document your experience as a case-study and seek your permission to take some photographs which will be appropriately masked to hide your identity. The information so collected will be treated with confidence and we will maintain privacy and will not reveal the name of either the individuals or the company to anyone. The collected information will be solely used for research purposes so that it will help us in formulating appropriate policies for persons with disabilities and to make our society and work place more inclusive.

While seeking your time voluntarily, we will not be in a position to compensate financially or otherwise for the time you spend for this research with us. Your decision not to consent for this research for any reason is totally acceptable to us and non-participation will not in any way, be held against you.

Thanking you

Sincerely,



Dr. G.V.S. Murthy

Director, South Asia Centre for Disability Inclusive Development & Research

Name of the Respondent:	Signature of the Respondent:
Name of the Witness:	Signature of the Witness:

Annexure 3: Participant Information Sheet

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are from the Center for Services and Information on Disability (CSID). We are conducting a joint research study with South Asia Centre for Disability Inclusive Development & Research (SACDIR), which is set up as a center for excellence of the Public Health Foundation of India, based at Hyderabad, India. We are undertaking this research to understand the views and perceptions regarding barriers and opportunities of employment for persons with disabilities in the garment and leather factories in the Greater Dhaka division of Bangladesh. This study wants to ascertain what barriers exist ranging from physical access, communication, skill-sets required for the job, etc. We also want to ascertain if persons with disabilities who are employed as to why they were employed and factors that have promoted employment in your work place. The research will be carried out using standard research techniques like individual interviews, focused group discussions and case studies within human resources department, representatively selected members in your company and case studies of persons with disabilities who are employed.

The information so collected will be treated with confidence and we will maintain privacy and will not reveal the name of either the individuals or the company. The collected information will be used for research purposes so that it will help us to formulate appropriate policies and recommendations for more inclusive employment practices for persons with disabilities and hence to make our society and work place more inclusive. We request you kindly to let us know if you are happy to participate in this research. Research outcomes will be shared with your organization if requested. Please also inform us if you do not want to participate in this research. Participation in this research is totally voluntary.

Thanking you

Sincerely,



Dr. G.V.S. Murthy

Director, South Asia Centre for Disability Inclusive Development & Research

Annexure 4: Semi-structured Interview Guide

Questionnaire to be administered to persons with disabilities that are employed in Factories

Title of the Study: Employment Opportunities for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh.

To assist us in the collation and analysis of responses, please provide us with the following information. All the information provided by you will be kept confidential and no names of any persons will be used anywhere.

Name:

Date of interview: / /

Contact details: Phone No.:

Email:

Designation in Organization:

Time of interview: Start Time: End Time:

Organization Name:

Type of Organization: Garment Factory Leather Factory Any Other

If any other, specify _____

Gender: Male Female

Age group: <35yrs. 35 – 49yrs >=50yrs.

Education:

Under Graduation (Completed)

Graduation (Completed)

Post-graduation (completed)

Any other

Barriers that you face at workplace

Structural barriers

Access related barriers

Attitudinal barriers from co-workers

Attitudinal barriers from supervisor / employer / management

Any form of harassment faced?

Any facilities / incentives provided to you as a PWD in the organization?

Additional allowance
Flexible working hours
Additional holiday
Subsidy in transportation / food

Any disincentives due to being a PWD
Salary cut / lower wages
Extra working hours

How do you balance your work and home / family responsibilities?
What support mechanisms do you have at home?
What support mechanisms do you have at workplace?

Are you updated about the laws and regulations in relation to persons with disabilities and employment / workplace?

If yes, what do you know of your rights?

Infrastructure and Attitude (Accessibility)

Is the place of work user friendly to persons with disabilities:

Has ramps: Yes=1; No=2

Has elevators: Yes=1; No=2

Has sign language interpreter in office for sign language users: Yes=1; No=2

Has writing & signage accessible to persons with visual impairment (in Braille): Yes=1; No=2

Are there accessible toilets for persons with impairment (both women and men): Yes=1; No=2

Is there a separate toilet for men and women: Yes=1; NO=2

Have any other structural modifications / adjustments done to accommodate the employees with impairments? Yes=1; No=2
If yes, specify_____

Any assistance in transportation / travel to work place being provided to employees with impairments? Yes=1; No=2 -----→ if skip to que.no. 34.

If yes, what assistance / arrangements have been made?

Do you think other employees of your institution are supportive to persons with disabilities in their work
Yes=1; No=2

If yes,please specify

Policy / Advocacy

Does the factory / company have any written policy document for employing persons with disabilities? Yes=1; No=2

If yes, what proportion of posts is reserved for the employees with disabilities?

Are any specific efforts made to find and employ persons with disabilities?
Yes=1; No=2

If yes, specify what efforts are made_____

Does the unit provide any orientation to persons with disabilities when they join the unit?
Yes=1; No=2

If yes, describe the orientation

Are other employees sensitized to the special needs of persons with disabilities? Yes=1; No=2

If yes, specify_____

Do PWD get the same pay and allowances as all other employees or do they get any extra allowances?

Get the same pay & allowances-1; Get lower pay & allowances-2; Get higher pay & allowances-3; Others (Specify)-4-----;

Are PWD given adequate breaks during working hours?

Same breaks-1; Longer breaks-2; More frequent breaks-3; Others (Specify _____)-4

Recruitment Process

Are announcements for jobs made in such a way that they are accessible to people with disabilities? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Are people with disability part of the interview panel for recruiting people with disability? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Health Benefits / Insurance

Does your organization provide any health insurance to your employees? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Are the health insurance benefits extended to the employees with disability in the organization? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Is there provision for a health care facility (a clinic outpost / on call doctor / first aid unit) in your organization? Yes 1, No = 2;

**Annexure 5: Semi-structured Interview Guide to be administered to Trainers /
Instructors/ Training Centre Managers of persons with disabilities**

Title of the Study: Employment Opportunities for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh.

To assist us in the collation and analysis of responses, please provide us with the following information. All the information provided by you will be kept confidential and no names of any persons will be used anywhere.

Name:

Date of interview: / /

Contact details: Phone No.:

Email:

Designation in Organization:

Name of the Training Organization:

Time of interview: Start Time: End Time:

Gender: Male Female

Age group: <35yrs. 35 – 49yrs >=50yrs.

Education:

- Under Graduation (Completed)
- Graduation (Completed)
- Post-graduation (completed)
- Any other

Total number of trainees in the training centre (approx.):

Number of Male Trainees:

Number of Female Trainees:

Have you enrolled any people with impairment/s in your training centre? Yes=1; No=2

Skip: if No, go to que. No. 25.;

If yes, how many? (number)

How many males? (number)

How many females? (number)

Types of impairments that the trainees in your training centre are having:

Physical impairment: Yes=1; No=2

Speech impairment / sign language users: Yes=1; No=2

Visual impairment: Yes=1; No=2

Hearing impairment: Yes=1; No=2

Intellectual impairment: Yes=1; No=2

Autism: Yes=1; No=2

Any other: Yes=1; No=2

If yes, specify _____

Training / skills development related Information

On what issues is training given on a regular basis?

Vocational skills -1 ; garment industry related work -2 ; leather industry related work
-3 ; any other

If any other, please specify _____

Duration of the training (In number of days / months) _____

Cost of the training programme

Free;

Sponsored by Govt. / any other agency;

self-sponsored / paid

Partially sponsored

Currently are all the necessary skills required by Persons With Disabilities to work in the
garment sector are being imparted?

Yes -1; No -2

If no, what improvements should be made in skill development?

Are Persons With Disabilities involved in training as resource persons?

Are there any criteria for selection of persons with disabilities for training? Yes ; No -
2

If yes, what are the criteria?

Do PWD get the same facilities as all other employees or do they get any extra facilities? Yes -1 ; No -2

If yes, what facilities do they get the criteria?

Infrastructure and Attitude (Accessibility)

Is the training place user friendly to persons with disability:

Has ramps: Yes=1; No=2

Has elevators: Yes=1; No=2

Has sign language interpreter in office for sign language users: Yes=1; No=2

Has writing & signage accessible to persons with visual impairment (in Braille): Yes=1; No=2

Are there accessible toilets for persons with impairment (both women and men): Yes=1; No=2

Is there a separate toilet for men and women: Yes=1; NO=2

Have any other structural modifications / adjustments done to accommodate the trainees with impairments? Yes=1; No=2

If yes, specify _____

Any assistance in transportation / travel to work place being provided to trainees with impairments? Yes=1; No=2 ---> if no, skip to que.no.

If yes, what assistance / arrangements have been made?

Opportunities and Barriers faced by persons with disabilities to get employed

What do you think are the job opportunities for persons with disabilities in the garment / leather industry?

What do you think are the barriers for persons with disabilities in the garment / leather industry?

What are your linkages with DPOs (Organizations of People with Disabilities) to enrol people with disabilities in trainings and assist them to get suitable employment?

Policy / Advocacy

Does the training organization has any written policy document for engaging persons with disabilities? Yes=1; No=2

Do you know of any policies / Acts / Rules / Regulations related to employment of Persons With Disabilities in the garment industry?

Recruitment Process

Are announcements for trainings made in such a way that they are accessible to people with disabilities? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Are people with disability part of the interview panel for enrolling people with disability in trainings? Yes = 1, No = 2;

**Annexure 6: Semi-structured Interview Guide to be administered to Employers
(Owners/HR Head / HR Executive of Garment Factory / Leather Factory)**

Title of the Study: Employment Opportunities for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh.

To assist us in the collation and analysis of responses, please provide us with the following information. All the information provided by you will be kept confidential and no names of any persons will be used anywhere.

Name:

Date of interview: / /

Contact details: Phone No.:

Email:

Designation in Organization:

Time of interview: Start Time: End Time:

Organization Name:

Type of Organization: Garment Factory Leather Factory Any Other

If any other, specify _____

Gender: Male Female

Age group: <35yrs. 35 – 49yrs >=50yrs.

Education:

Under Graduation (Completed)

Graduation (Completed)

Post-graduation (completed)

Any other

Total number of employees in the Organization (approx.):

Number of Male employees:

Number of Female employees:

Have you employed any people with impairment/s in your organization? Yes=1; No=2

Skip: if No, go to que. No. 25.;

If yes, how many? (number)

How many males? (number)

How many females? (number)

Types of impairments that the people employed in your organization are having:

Physical impairment: Yes=1; No=2

Speech impairment / sign language users: Yes=1; No=2

Visual impairment: Yes=1; No=2

Hearing impairment: Yes=1; No=2

Intellectual impairment: Yes=1; No=2

Autism: Yes=1; No=2

Any other: Yes=1; No=2

If yes, specify _____

Infrastructure and Attitude (Accessibility)

Is the place of work user friendly to persons with disability?

Has ramps: Yes=1; No=2

Has elevators: Yes=1; No=2

Has sign language interpreter in office for sign language users: Yes=1; No=2

Has writing & signage accessible to persons with visual impairment (in Braille): Yes=1; No=2

Are there accessible toilets for persons with impairment (both women and men): Yes=1; No=2

Is there a separate toilet for men and women: Yes=1; NO=2

Have any other structural modifications / adjustments done to accommodate the employees with impairments? Yes=1; No=2

If yes, specify_____

Any assistance in transportation / travel to work place being provided to employees with impairments? Yes=1; No=2 -----→ if no, skip to que.no. 34.

If yes, what assistance / arrangements have beenmade?

Have you received any complaints from persons with disabilities or others regarding discrimination (teasing, ignoring, undermining, scolding, threatening, being peevish etc)

Yes=1; No=2 -----→ if no, skip to que.no. 38.

If yes, How did you deal with it

Do you think other employees of your institution are supportive to persons with disabilities in the work

Yes=1; No=2

If yes,please specify

Policy / Advocacy

Does the factory / company have any written policy document for employing persons with disabilities? Yes=1; No=2

If yes, what proportion of posts is reserved for the employees with disabilities?

Are any specific efforts made to find and employ persons with disabilities?

Yes=1; No=2

If yes, specify what efforts are made_____

Does the unit provide any orientation to persons with disabilities when they join the unit?

Yes=1; No=2

If yes, describe the orientation

Are other employees sensitized to the special needs of persons with disabilities? Yes=1;

No=2

If yes, specify_____

Do PWD get the same pay and allowances as all other employees or do they get any extra allowances?

Get the same pay & allowances-1; Get lower pay & allowances-2; Get higher pay & allowances-3; Others (Specify)-4-----;

Are PWD given adequate breaks during working hours?

Same breaks-1; Longer breaks-2; More frequent breaks-3; Others (Specify _____)-4

Recruitment Process

Are announcements for jobs made in such a way that they are accessible to people with disabilities? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Are people with disability part of the interview panel for recruiting people with disability? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Health Benefits / Insurance

Does your organization provide any health insurance to your employees? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Are the health insurance benefits extended to the employees with disability in the organization? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Is there provision for a health care facility (a clinic outpost / on call doctor / first aid unit) in your organization? Yes = 1, No = 2;

Annexure 7: Topic Guides for Focus Group Discussion and in-depth interviews

Study on Employment Opportunities for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh.

FGD Topic Guide: Persons With Disabilities Employed in Factories

Date of Interview: dd / mon / year

Name of the Moderator / Interviewer:

Start Time:..... End Time:.....

General details and rapport building questions:

Self introduction and introduction of the participants

Describing the purpose of the study / purpose of the FGD

Reinforcing confidentiality and consent.

Icebreaking questions:

Type of Factory: Large Unit / Small Unit

Total no. of employees in the factory and male female ratio of employees

Nature of work of each of the participants and number of years of experience in the current job

- a. Opinion of respondents about current status of employment opportunities for People with Disability in Bangladesh. Probe about –
 - a. Any changes noticed by participants over a period of time.
 - b. Types of impairments
 - c. Types of jobs
- b. How supportive are organizations / employers towards People with Disability?
- c. Attitude of employers about persons with disabilities / problems faced while joining the job...
- d. Attitude of co-employees about persons with disabilities
- e. What are some of the major constraints that people with disability face in relation to employment - probe regarding opportunities, access to work place, employee friendly atmosphere, discrimination, and special consideration etc., problems faced while joining the job...
- f. Any changes noticed by participants over a period of time.
- g. Any organization policies regarding reservation of jobs for people with disability
- h. Categories of people with disability employed in the organization and rationale for the same
- i. Perceived physical and structural barriers faced by people with disability in their workplace– Probe on female and male specific / general – seating arrangements, availability of ramps, elevators, accessible toilets, signage, speaker phone availability;

- j. Perceived barriers faced by persons with disabilities in accessing their workplace – Probe about transportation, timing of work, transportation allowances / subsidies; incentives...
- k. Communication and information barriers faced by persons with disabilities during recruitment – Probe about advertisements, notifications,
- l. Communication and information barriers faced by people with disability in their workplace.
- m. Perceived advantages and disadvantages of having people with disability in the organization – focus on work; no wasting of time; skilled in certain areas of work;
- n. Any other barriers faced by people with disability in relation to their work – probe for harassment, discrimination – lower wages, ignoring, violence arising out of the impairment condition.
- o. Structural adjustments done by the employer to accommodate people with disability in their organization -reasonable accommodation facility, universal design, modification in machinery,...
- p. Awareness about Govt. policies, laws and regulations in relation to provisions / rights of people with disability at workplace
- q. Recommendations from respondents regarding further improvement of workplace and access to workplace – be it providing transportation, flexible timings, providing medical care, insurance specific for disabled people, workplace arrangements etc., any special trainings required;
- r. Any health issues that restrain persons with disabilities to access and attend to work
- s. Any additional leaves allowed for persons with disabilities
- t. Are persons with disabilities able to get a similar work output like persons without impairments?

Any policies related to evacuation in situations of accidents

Annexure 8: Study on Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh.

FGD Topic Guide: Persons with Disabilities not employed in factories / DPO members

Date of Interview: dd / mon / year

Name of the Moderator / Interviewer:

Start Time:..... End Time:.....

General details and rapport building questions:

Self introduction and introduction of the participants

Describing the purpose of the study / purpose of the FGD

No. of years since the DPO is established

No. of members in the DPO

DPO registered or not

Nature of work done by the DPO – focus areas: livelihood, health, education etc.

Current Status of Employment Opportunities and Barriers

- a. Opinion of respondents about current status of employment opportunities for People with Disability in Bangladesh.
- b. Which are the different sectors wherein there is a potential for employment? - opportunities in garment industry? Opportunities in leather industry?
- c. In what ways are DPOs helpful for persons with disabilities?
- d. What do you think are the different barriers for persons with disabilities to get employed in garment industry?
 - a. Policy level issues
 - b. Institutional level / organizational / management level issues
 - c. Attitudinal issues
 - d. Skills / training related issues
 - e. Accessibility issues
 - f. Opportunities
 - g. Harassment
 - h. discrimination
 - i. Any other issues
- e. How supportive are organizations / employers towards people with disability?
- f. Attitude of employers about persons with disabilities
- g. Attitude of co-employees about persons with disabilities
- h. Any changes noticed by participants over a period of time.
- i. Any organizational / governmental policies regarding reservation of jobs for people with disability, that they know of?
- j. Categories of people with disability employed in the organization and rationale for the same

- k. Perceived physical and structural barriers faced by people with disability in their workplace– Probe on female and male specific / general – seating arrangements, availability of ramps, elevators, accessible toilets, signage, speaker phone availability;
- l. Perceived barriers faced by persons with disabilities in accessing their workplace – Probe about transportation, timing of work;
- m. Perceived advantages of having people with disability in the organization – focus on work; no wasting of time; skilled in certain areas of work;
- n. Awareness about Govt. policies, laws and regulations in relation to provisions / rights of people with disability in relation to workplace
- o. Recommendations from respondents regarding further improvement of workplace and access to workplace – be it providing transportation, flexible timings, providing medical care, insurance specific for disabled people, workplace arrangements etc., any special trainings required;
- p. Any health issues that restrain persons with disabilities to access and attend to work
- q. Are persons with disabilities able to get a similar work output like persons without impairments?

Annexure 9: Study on Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh.

FGD Topic Guide: Coworkers of Persons With Disabilities Employed in Factories

Date of Interview: dd / mon / year

Name of the Moderator / Interviewer:

Start Time:..... End Time:.....

General details and rapport building questions:

Self introduction and introduction of the participants

Describing the purpose of the study / purpose of the FGD

Type of Factory: Large Unit / Small Unit

Total no. of employees in the factory and male female ratio of employees

Nature of work of each of the participants and number of years of experience in the current job

Current Status of Employment Opportunities and Barriers

- a. Opinion of respondents about current status of employment opportunities for persons with disability in Bangladesh.
- b. How supportive are organizations / employers towards persons with disability?
- c. Attitude of employers about persons with disabilities
- d. Attitude of co-employees about persons with disabilities
- e. What are some of the major constraints that people with disability face in relation to employment - probe regarding opportunities, access to work place, employee friendly atmosphere, discrimination, special consideration etc., problems faced while joining the job...
- f. Any changes noticed by participants over a period of time.
- g. Any organization policies regarding reservation of jobs for people with disability
- h. Categories of people with disability employed in the organization and rationale for the same
- i. Perceived physical and structural barriers faced by people with disability in their workplace– Probe on female and male specific / general – seating arrangements, availability of ramps, elevators, accessible toilets, signage, speaker phone availability;
- j. Barriers faced by persons with disabilities in accessing their workplace, as perceived by coworkers – Probe about transportation, timing of work; communication and information barriers;
- k. Perceived advantages of having people with disability in the organization – focus on work; no wasting of time; skilled in certain areas of work;
- l. Any other barriers faced by people with disability in relation to their work – probe for harassment, discrimination, ignoring, violence arising out of the impairment condition.

- m. Structural adjustments done by the employer to accommodate people with disability in their organization
- n. Awareness about Govt. policies, laws and regulations in relation to provisions / rights of people with disability in relation to workplace
- o. Recommendations from respondents regarding further improvement of workplace and access to workplace and making the working environment inclusive and also disabled friendly – be it providing transportation, flexible timings, providing medical care, insurance specific for disabled people, workplace arrangements etc., any special trainings required;
- p. Any health issues that restrain persons with disabilities to access and attend to work
- q. Any additional leaves allowed for persons with disabilities– should they be allowed or not?
- r. Are persons with disabilities able to get a similar work output like persons without impairments?

Annexure 10: Photographs taken during data collection and also during the Orientation and Content Analysis workshop.

Picture 1. Inaugural meeting of GIZ, CSID and SACDIR representatives at CSID office during the Orientation workshop: Executive Director, CSID, Mr. JahaurulAlam (2nd from right), Dr. Anisuzman from GIZ (3rd from right), Dr. Srikrishna (4th from right) and Dr. NandaKishore (5th from right) from SACDIR and other members of CSID



Picture 2. Dr. Anis from GIZ explaining a point during the Orientation workshop.



Picture 3. Mr. Nabi, one of the Interviewers from CSID, conducting a mock interview and others observing him.



Picture 4. Ms. Sayema, study coordinator from CSID, making a point during the Orientation workshop



Picture 5. Dr. Nanda Kishore from SACDIR, explaining a point to the team members during the Orientation Workshop



Picture 6. Dr. Srikrishna from SACDIR orienting the team during the Orientation workshop



Picture 7. Facilitators and participants during the orientation workshop at CSID Office, Dhaka.



Picture 8. A mock in-depth interview done by the field staff of CSID after the Orientation Workshop



Picture 9. A focus group discussion in progress among Persons with Disabilities.



Picture 10. A focus group discussion with members of a female Disabled People's Organization.



Picture 11. An In-depth Interview with a Manager of a Ready-Made Garment factory.



Picture 12. A focus group discussion with persons with disability employed in a Ready-Made Garment Factory.



Picture 13. An In-depth Interview with a Manager of a Ready-Made Garment factory.
A meeting with a Disabled People's Organization



Picture14. An In-depth Interview with a Manager of a Ready-Made Garment factory.
An In-depth Interview with a Manager of a Ready-Made Garment factory



Picture14. Interviewer from CSID taking a written consent for an In-depth Interview with a Supervisor in a Ready-Made Garment Factory.



Picture15. A focus group discussion with persons with disability employed in a Ready-Made Garment Factory



Picture 16. Persons with Disability employed in a Ready Made Garment Factory, pose after a focus group discussion



Picture 17. An in-depth interview in progress with a Co-worker of Persons with Disability from a Ready-Made Garment factory

