**Disability Inclusion
Practice Note
Working Draft for BOS**

Inclusive Human Resources Common Services
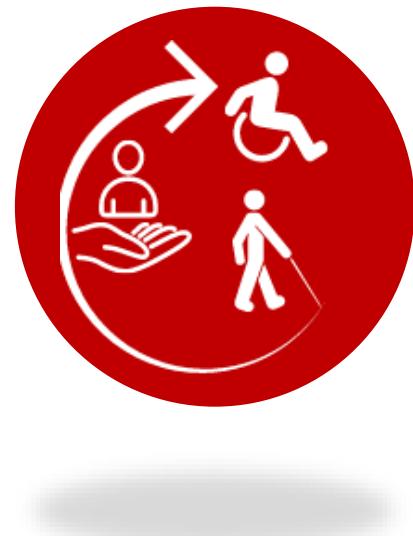
**Attracting, Engaging, &
Recruiting Persons with Disabilities through
the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) 2.0**

UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GROUP

DISABILITY
INCLUSION
STRATEGY

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Executive Summary

The United Nations is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion and is taking concrete steps to create a work environment that is open, inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities and staff with dependents with disabilities. This is being addressed in accordance with the general principles[1] of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) launched in 2019. UNDIS is a system-wide mechanism for sustainable and transformative progress on disability inclusion[2] through all pillars of the UN's work. Together, these efforts are also central to achieving the promise set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind.

Persons with disabilities are the largest minority group in the world, representing an estimated 15 per cent of the world's population, or approximately 1 billion people. About 80 per cent are of working age.[3] They are a diverse, heterogeneous population that face discrimination and barriers that make it more challenging for them to access equal work opportunities. However, hiring persons with disabilities has shown to provide numerous benefits. These benefits include improvements in cost-effectiveness, turnover and retention, reliability and punctuality, staff loyalty, inclusive work culture, innovation, productivity, work ethic, safety, ability awareness, agency image, and diversity, and satisfaction of beneficiaries.[4]

The Business Operations Strategy 2.0 (BOS) provides a channel for UN Country Teams (UNCTs) to advance the inclusion of and access to persons with disabilities and put the measures in place to provide decent and productive work opportunities.

This Practice Note focuses specifically on attracting, engaging, and recruiting persons with disabilities [i] into the UN's 131 Country Teams through the BOS as a first step. The timeline to incorporate these services is from January 2021 to December 2023.

Recognising this is only a part of fostering an inclusive and accessible work environment for persons with disabilities and staff with dependents with disabilities, BOS will take steps to develop new services, for example, around the promotion and retention of persons with disabilities, in the future.

Introduction & Background

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

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[1] https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-3-general-principles.html

[2] Disability inclusion is an essential condition to upholding human rights, sustainable development, and peace and security. It is also central to the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind.

[3] https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/disability-and-work/lang--en/index.htm

[4] Lindsay, S., Cagliostro, E., Albarico, M., Mortaji, N., & Karon, L. (2018). A systematic review of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. Journal of occupational rehabilitation, 1-22.

Persons with disabilities represent 1 billion people (about 15% of the population)[5] They are more likely to experience adverse socioeconomic outcomes[6] and are often denied the right to decent work. Statistics show that the unemployment rates of persons with disabilities are higher, and their exclusion from the labour market represents a significant waste of potential, resulting in an estimated loss of GDP between 3 and 7 per cent.[3]

The BOS is a crucial component of the SG's efforts to reform business operations, also called the 'efficiency agenda.' It is a strategic framework for operational collaboration at the country level and plays a crucial role in integrating and scaling common services and practices across agencies to promote the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The BOS allows UNCTs to collaborate on joint operational requirements and scale services with high-efficiency impact. All 131 UNCTs are required to develop a BOS to engage in this collaborative agenda.

The UNDIS affirms that "the full and complete realisation of the human rights of persons with disabilities is an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms."[7] The Strategy was the result of a process launched by the SG to make the UN system more accessible to persons with disabilities and mainstream their rights. It consists of a system-wide policy and accountability framework and covers operations and programmes. The policy establishes the highest levels of commitment and a vision for the UN system on disability inclusion. The UNCT Accountability Scorecard comprises 14 indicators within four core areas, and some specifically address internal operations (e.g., indicator 6, 7, 12, and 13).

BOS 2.0 is a critical enabling framework for UNCTs to promote the inclusion of and access to persons with disabilities across operations and implement UNDIS at the country level.

An initial three disability inclusion practice notes were developed to drive implementation of UNDIS and promote disability inclusion in UN operations through the BOS in the following areas:

1. Physical Accessibility of Premises
2. ICT/Digital Accessibility
3. Inclusive HR Services: Engagement and Recruitment of persons with disabilities

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[5]"Factsheet on Persons with disabilities," UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs website.
[6] World Bank Group, Disability Inclusion Webpage
[7] United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy

1 Physical Accessibility **2 ICT/Digital Accessibility** **3 Inclusive HR Services**
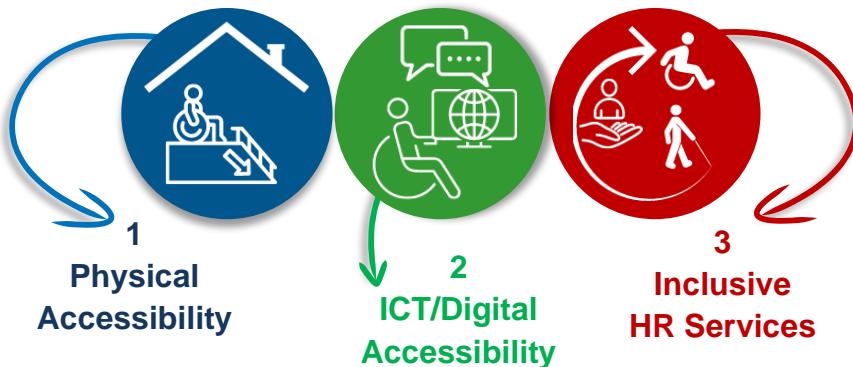
The disability-inclusion common services in each of these areas complement one another (i.e., inclusive HR Common Services complement, Physical Accessibility, and ICT/Digital Accessibility Common Services) and should be implemented together. It is envisioned that all entities at the country level will engage in these common services. However, the common services may start with just a few entities and expand over time to cover more.

Objectives of the Inclusive HR Common Services

The Inclusive HR Practice Note's main objectives is to support UNCTs attract, engage, and recruit persons with disabilities across UN operations. These objectives entail:

- Ensuring the UN is a welcoming place of employment for persons with disabilities (e.g., culture, knowledge, language),
- The UN takes steps to actively identify and recruit persons with disabilities (e.g. partnering with specialised recruitment firms, holding job fairs),
- Persons with disabilities understand the opportunities to work for the UN and how to apply (e.g., providing specialised support and training to potential applicants, for example on writing a CV or interviewing), and
- The processes and procedures are in place to appropriately onboard employees with disabilities (e.g. reasonable accommodation policy and procedures are in place).

From the outset, it is important for UNCTs to follow a human rights-based approach to disability, which implies that all people are active subjects with legal claims and that persons with disabilities need to participate in all spheres of society on an equal basis with their peers without disabilities.

Key Stakeholders and partnerships

UNCTs must engage and consult with persons with disabilities, including staff with disabilities and staff with dependents with disabilities, their representative Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and local experts to ensure these common services achieve the intended result to increase the number of persons with disabilities working for the UN at the country level.

Implementation of the Inclusive HR Common Services

Table 1 outlines the Inclusive HR Common Services and expected outputs: Table

Table 1: Inclusive HR Common Services & Expected Output

Category	Common Service	Description	Output
Recruitment Services	Identify and Engage with Persons with Disability & Disability Experts	This common service is focused on identifying and engaging persons with disabilities (staff and from the local committee), their representative organisations (OPDs) and disability experts (e.g. universities) to provide guidance across all aspects.	Map key experts and local groups; Establish partnership(s)
Recruitment Services	Mapping of Disability Inclusive HR Practices	This service maps current HR policies and practices on disability inclusion among participating entities in consultation with disability experts.	Assessment completed by participating entities
Training	Orient Staff on Disability Inclusion & Reasonable Accommodation	This service provides an orientation to UN operations staff on disability inclusion concepts and practices (e.g. reasonable accommodation, inclusive management training, return to work planning), which can be jointly coordinated with Programme Management Teams.	Operations Staff have completed disability inclusion orientation
Recruitment Services	Joint UN Career Fair & Trainings for persons with disabilities	This service reaches out to the disability community and supports and encourages them in applying for UN positions. This will include hosting career fairs, providing interview skills training to potential candidates, and CV writing support. These activities should disability-inclusive, as opposed to disability-specific.	Host annual career fair; Support and guidance provided to at least 20 persons with disabilities to apply for UN positions each year
Recrui	Hire Persons with Disabilities	This service hires and onboards persons with disabilities, providing them with	Hired at least two work employees (including interns,

| tment Servic es | reasonable accommodation in line with the entities' policy. | JPOs and consulta nts) |

The common services are recommended to be implemented in sequence and would follow the order in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1: Inclusive HR Common Services in the suggested order of implementation

Cost Factors

UNCTs implementing Inclusive HR Services may consider budgeting an initial amount of $20,000 USD to get started. While costs will vary greatly country to country, this is proposed as an initial minimum amount to begin these services. DCO CBS will learn from UNCTs that undertake these services to develop a more detailed evidence-based estimate in the near future. Country Teams shall initially seek the necessary resource mobilisation and cost-sharing for services and improvements. If the funding is not available locally, additional resource mobilisation sources will need to be identified.

BOS Stages for implementing these Common Services

Before implementing these Common Services staff from participating agencies working on these Common Services, watch the [UN System-wide Disability Orientation 101 video](#) and review the [ILO's Infostory on the 'Win-win of disability inclusion](#).' These materials provide an introduction to the basic concepts and approaches to disability inclusion and the recruitment and hiring of persons with disabilities.

UNCTs should also review how the UNDIS UNCT Accountability Scorecard applies to operations at the country level, which may [be found in the BOS Library](#). For example, UNCTs are asked to develop UNCT-wide policies, such as adopting a non-

discrimination employment statement that explicitly refers to persons with disabilities as part of indicator 12 on employment and keep records of reasonable accommodation requests as part of indicator six on accessibility.

The following outlines the steps UNCTs may take to implement these Inclusive HR Services.

1. **Kick-off:**
   a. Understand key terminology and basic concepts and approaches to disability inclusion.
   b. Become familiar with the resources, webinars, and materials on disability inclusion in the BOS digital library.
   c. Become familiar with relevant national legislation regarding employment, labour, and non-discrimination. The UNCT should be aligned and meet or exceed the laws and requirements.
   d. Determine the participating and hosting agencies for this service.
   e. Engage with the OMT HR working group to plan how to create a baseline of current HR practices for persons with disabilities and opportunities for this common service (refer to the Inclusive Employment Self-Assessment Template in the Annex in the Digital Library for more details).
   f. Begin to identify and engage with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, disability experts, CSOs working to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, and labour s they can play an important role in identifying and motivating qualified persons with disabilities to apply.

2. **Stock-take:**
   a. Map the current HR practices related to disability inclusion (either using the Inclusive Employment Self-Assessment found in the BOS Digital Library or your own version).
   b. Review the ways the UNCT agencies' already engage with persons with disabilities (including staff and dependents of staff) and their representative organisations.
   c. Identify agencies specialised in the recruitment of persons with disabilities and determine if there are any existing talent pools (local or international – e.g., groups in colleges and universities) that reach, include or are focused on or led by persons with disabilities that could assist in recruitment. This can also include identifying training establishments that train persons with disabilities on technology and other skills.
   d. Find out what the [reasonable accommodation](#) policy is for each entity.

3. **Opportunity Analysis:**
   a. Discuss creative or innovative ways to attract, engage, involve, and recruit persons with disabilities.
   b. Identify additional benefits and qualitative outcomes that could be expected at the country level from these common services and include them in the BOS narrative.
   c. How will these common services affect programmatic or non-programmatic needs and services? Include in the BOS narrative.

4. **Cost-Benefit Analysis**:
These common services are exempt from CBA (Cost-Benefit Analysis) in the BOS platform. The focus should be on qualitative and social impact benefits.

5. **Planning Framework**:
   a. Prioritise the activities to implement each common service with the highest reach, impact, and depth of implementation within a BOS cycle.
   b. Identify how Inclusive HR services will be organised, implemented, monitored, evaluated, and reviewed.
   c. Establish the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that could be used as common measurement metrics.
   d. Create the baselines and targets for these services.
   e. Determine how much funding is required in your country's context and the level of UNCTs engagement and costs needed.
   f. Identify existing and potential funding opportunities to leverage for the implementation of the proposed plan.

6. **Implementation Plan**:
   a. Establish a detailed list of activities that need to occur to implement this service.
   b. Define a roadmap, timeframe, and detailed timeline for implementation of inclusive HR practices.
   c. Establish time durations for each activity are.
   d. Finalise the budget for each activity.
   e. Determine the risks and assumptions and propose risk mitigation approaches.
   f. Formalise your network and partnerships with experts (e.g., inclusive HR experts) and groups working to advance the right of persons with disabilities to employment (e.g., OPDs, CSOs, NGOs, and Ministries or government agencies that cover labor and employment).

7. **Sign Off**:
   a. Review the details of the plan, ensuring there is an owner for each common service and action.
   b. Determine any final recommendations or suggestions for quality assurance before submission in consultation with disability experts and organisations.
   c. During the BOS sign-off, brief the UNCT on these particular common services, outlining how they contribute to the UNDIS, improve the UNCT's social impact, and the advancement of the 2030 agenda.

8. **BOS reporting and review:**
   a. Review the targeted activities' implementation, timeframes, and report on efficiency gains, challenges, and lessons learned.
   b. Setting a minimum of bi-monthly or quarterly internal reviews is recommended to achieve the set targets.
   c. Identify ways to increase the reach and impact of these services within the UNCT and persons with disabilities

Enabling factors and potential constraints

Numerous factors will enable the realisation of the inclusive HR Common Services. They include:

- The UNCT's ability to garner support and buy-in from key stakeholders and decision-makers to participate in these Common Services.
- Working closely with persons with disabilities (including staff with disabilities and staff with dependents with disabilities), their representative organisations and disability experts across all aspects.
- Working together across the UNCT and participating agencies to leverage existing knowledge, experience and resources.
- Implement the inclusive HR services together with the Physical Accessiblity and ICT/Digital Accessibility common services. The physical accessibility common services will provide the infrastructure required to support persons with disabilities to work on the premises. ICT/Digital Accessibility will provide the necessary ICT Digital facilities for persons with disabilities.

Here are some potential constraints you may face implementing the inclusive HR common services:

- Securing funding, particularly if the activities involve significant scale and resources. UNCTs are recommended to prioritise the approaches and practices that will make the most considerable impact in terms of inclusive HR common services for disability inclusion. By implementing a gradual strategy, UNCTs may generate greater awareness, prioritisation, and thus more support with time.
- A lack of locally available expertise (including both persons with disabilities and those working in this sector) to guide the UNCT. In that case, the UNCT should refer to the technical guidance provided with this Practice Note and reach out to the Disability Inclusion Support team and BOS Task Team in New York should you have further questions.

Other resources being developed to support UNCTs with implementation of the inclusive HR Common Services by BOS support team in New York include a knowledge sharing platform, the establishment of an international network of colleagues working on the disability-inclusive Common Services and an expert group coordinated by New York. The platform will enable UNCTs to share resources and expertise. It will help capture and disseminate promising practices and success stories and ensure UNCTs have access to the most relevant and updated strategies, practices, and technical guidance available on disability inclusion in the applicable areas. The expert group will provide additional support and guidance. When seeking support, UNCT colleagues should first contact the Regional BOS coordinator responsible for your country.

Sustainability and replicability

Many of the actions that will need to be taken to create changes in HR approaches outlined in this this Practice Note will take time to generate systemic change. They will require on-going monitoring, evaluation, and follow-through to ensure persons with disabilities are not only recruited, but are provided with the necessary

accommodations, mentoring, and enabling environment to ensure a successful onboarding.

As the UNCT takes steps to improve inclusive HR services, it will become an example of what is possible and will have the potential to share knowledge and influence with other local partners, including governmental, multilateral, and the private sector to take similar actions.

As country teams develop HR disability inclusion practices, other agencies, programmes, funds, and teams could replicate this service. UNCTs can also set a precedent, high standards, and an example for local partners, governments, and other stakeholders to strengthen their work in this area and advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities leading by example.

Developed through a private-public partnership on disability inclusion, the resource and learning platform (mentioned already above) will also enable UNCTs to share experiences that can foster replicability.

Additional Resources

Additional resources related to this common service are available in the BOS 2.0 Digital Library. Some of the key resources for this Practice include:
1. Inclusive HR Common Service Additional Resources Doc
2. For information on how to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all see this document.
3. [List the final links of the documents that will be available in the Resource Library]

Conclusion

Attracting, engaging, and recruiting staff with disabilities is fundamental for the UN to become an inclusive organisation and realise the framework laid out by the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, CRPD, and other guiding frameworks. Only by making the UN inclusive of and accessible to everyone will it live up to its commitment to inclusion and diversity and to leave no one behind.

Acronyms

BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
INGOs	International Governmental Organization
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
OMT	Operations Management Team
OPD	Organisations of Persons with Disabilities
PRODOC	Project Document
RFP	Request for Proposal
SG	Secretary-General
SPTF	Special Purpose Trust Fund
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDIS	United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WBG	World Bank Group