A Road Map for Inclusive TVET 'Going for the Gold Standard':

Strategies for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Technical, Vocational Education and Training

September 2021

Contents

Acronyms

CI	Cognitive Impairment
CRDP	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
HI	Hearing Impairment
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LI	Learning Impairment
MDA	Ministries and Development Agencies
NTA	National Training Agency
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
PI	Physical Impairment
SkYE	Skills for Youth Employment
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
TI	Training Institution
VI	Visual Impairment

1   Introduction

Inclusion of Persons with Disability in TVET – Going for Gold

> ***People with Disabilities have the right to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education, and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others...***

The 'Skills for Youth Employment in the Caribbean' (SkYE) programme is funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The 'SkYE' programme is a 4-year programme which started in July 2018 and scheduled to end in June 2022. The SkYE programme aims to develop a more productive, better trained, and inclusive workforce across St Vincent & the Grenadines, St Lucia, Dominica, and Grenada. The objective of the programme is to develop skills relevant in the marketplace among young people (aged 15-30) in the Eastern Caribbean. The development of these skills will promote greater youth employment, greater productivity, and greater inclusiveness in the labour market. This inclusion will include better training and employment access for disadvantaged youth and people with disabilities. The programme is also intended to help improve the quality, reach and sustainability of technical and vocational education/training in the four focus countries.

SkYE is committed to working with young persons with disabilities to secure their rights to inclusion in education/training and enhance their opportunities for significant employment.
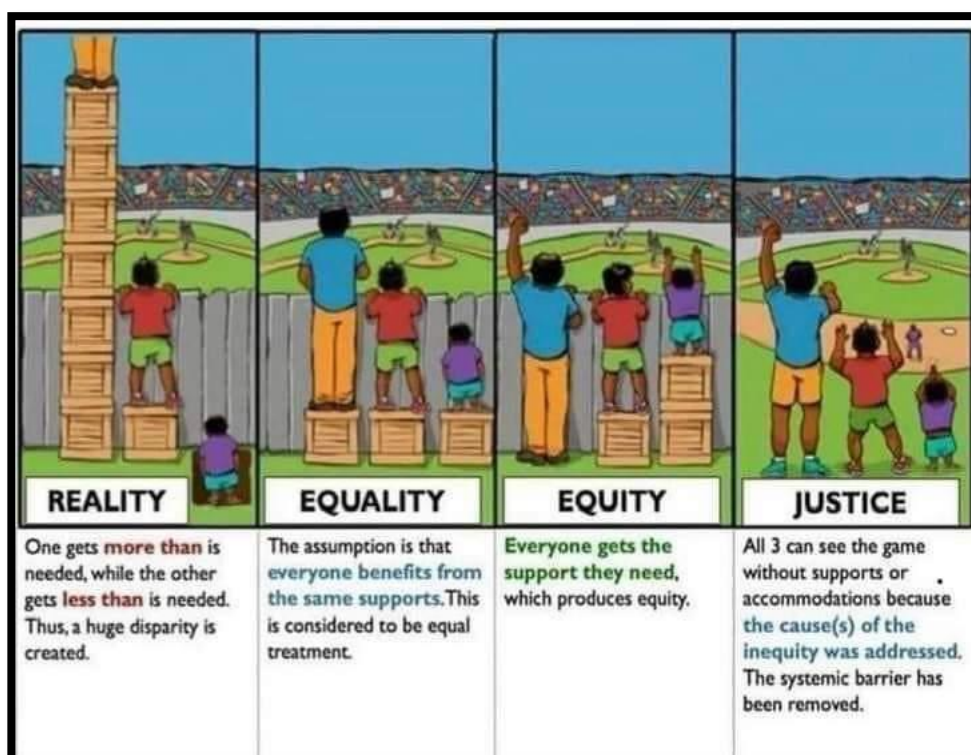
Figure 1: Moving from Reality to Rights

To support this, the project sought through a participatory process to engage stakeholders in a four-part working session. These sessions provided participants with the opportunity to gain increased understanding of persons with disabilities. Additionally, it gave the participants the opportunity to explore their own perceptions and that of their respective agencies towards persons with disabilities and discuss the barriers which did not allow for equal participation of persons with disabilities in education, social life and employment.   Participants focused on what support is needed to achieve equity in both the TVET System and the workplace.

A key output of this assignment is a series of Strategic Road Maps to Inclusion for each of three participating SkYE stakeholder groups (NTAs/ Training Providers/ and Employers). This activity builds on the work which SkYE has already started with the inclusion of young persons with disabilities in training opportunities across the programme.
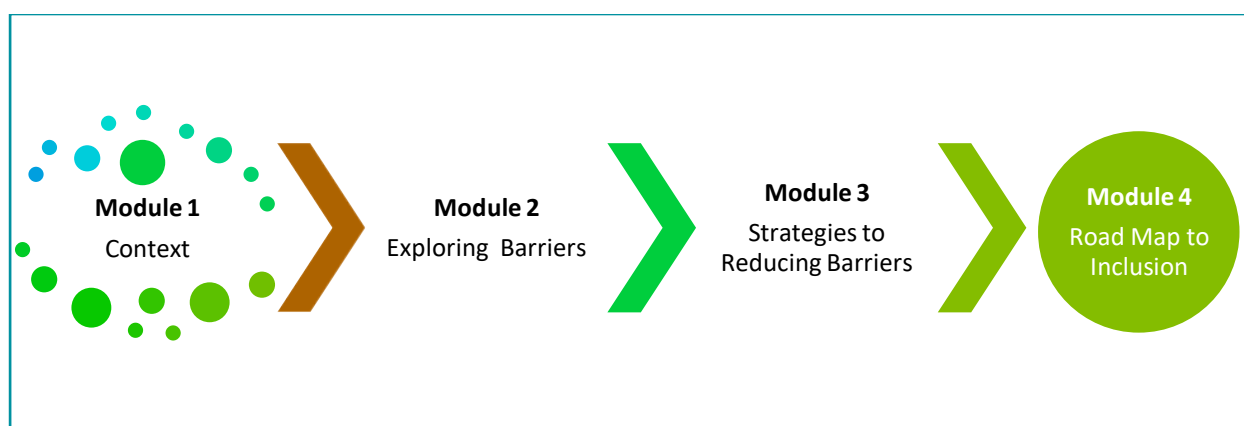
Figure 2: Collaborative Process in Development of Road Map to Inclusion

2   Disability & Education – Caribbean Context

There is a demonstrated link between poverty and disability where Persons with Disabilities are more likely to be found among the poorest quintiles in society in both high- and low-income countries. In the context of low-income counties, persons with disabilities are greater in number[1]. A greater proportion of poor households had members with disabilities in Dominica. Specifically speaking, 23% of poor households, 15% of non-poor households and 18% of all households (Dominica Country Poverty Assessment (CPA) 2002 Vol. 1, p.62). Poor households in the British Virgin Islands (BVI) were more likely to have someone considered disabled or sick. Statistically represented as 8% for poor and 3% for non-poor households (BVI CPA 2002 Vol. 1, p.47).[i] For Jamaica, a quarter of the persons with disabilities were poor compared to one-fifth of non-PWDs in 2012 (Gayle-Geddes, 2015).

Persons with Disabilities and their households are more likely to remain poor due to higher living costs, unpaid caring responsibilities and entrenched systemic attitudinal, institutional, and environmental barriers. These barriers have had an impact on their opportunities to participate in economic, social, and political activities[2]. Persons living in poverty are more likely to have a disability or become disabled due to poorer access to healthcare, low quality housing, reduced access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Almost 70% of young adults with disabilities have not participated in education and training beyond the secondary level. For those who have done so they have attended training in standalone facilities operated by non-government or faith-based organisations. With limited resources the training is in specific areas and not always the most marketable.

During the workshops held to feed into this strategy paper trainers, assessors and verifiers confirmed that there was minimum inclusion of persons within the TVET system. Adjustments were made where there was a specific project funding for the adjustments which need to be made, but there was no system wide effort to ensure access to training for persons with a range of disabilities.

Almost 80-90% of persons with disabilities are unemployed or outside the work force. Most of those who have jobs receive little or no monetary remuneration.[3] The International Labour Organisation (ILO) indicates that *'...by becoming more inclusive of trainees with disabilities in their programmes, TVET systems can enhance the productivity and earnings of disabled workers.'*

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[1] WHO, World Report on Disability, June 27, 2018, http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/.

[2] See Lena Morgan Banks and Sarah Polack, The Economic Costs of Exclusion and Gains of Inclusion of People with Disabilities, *CBM, International Centre for Evidence in Disability and London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine*, 2014; Rebecca Yeo and Karen Moore, Including Disabled People in Poverty Reduction Work: 'Nothing About Us, Without Us, *World Development*, Chronic Poverty and Development Policy, 31, no. 3 (March 1, 2003): 571–90, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0305-750X(02)00218-8 and Sophie Mitra, Aleksandra Posarac, and Brandon Vick, Disability and Poverty in Developing Countries: A Multidimensional Study, *World Development* 41, no. C (2013): 1–18.

[3] World Bank, 'Disability and inclusive development: Latin America and the Caribbean', 2004

3   The Case and Opportunity for Inclusion

Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a critical link in the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the economic landscape. Research has shown that 70% of the young persons with disabiliites can be gainfully employed if they have access to training and an appropriate school-to-work transition programme.   Globally, there is increased interest in TVET and skills development to ensure a worforce which reflects changing work opporunties. Both the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities makes clear in both the articles for education (Article 24) and employment (Article 27) the pivotal role that access to vocational education is to the inclusion of persons with disabiliites.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006. States are required to ensure that persons with disabilities can access general tertiary education, **vocational training**, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on equal basis with others (Art. 24), and to enable them to have effective access to **technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training** (Art. 27).

In the Eastern Caribbean, there is an increased understanding of the importance of vocational training. This is attributed to the fact that more and more employers posess an insatiable appetite for employees who have 'skills' and not a traditional 'university degree'. The infrastructure for vocational training at all levels, including but not limited to the phsyical aspect, course content and systems, is now being built out in much of the Eastern Caribbean countries. The TVET system within the four targeted countries for SkYE has a unique opportunity to leapfrog over the lessons and experiences of other countries and create an inclusive vocational training environment.

The adjustments which likely will need to be made to ensure the inclusion of trainees with disabiliites in the TVET system will enhance the learning environment for all trainees.

Research has shown that employing persons with disabilities has positive impacts on an enterprise including, increased motivation, productivity, profitability, increased ability to find and retain talent and reduced recruitment costs.

4   The Strategy

The workshops provided the opportunity to explore and arrive at consensus on the barriers to inclusion in the vocational training system. Participants then presented suggestions and possible steps for reducing barriers. They also highlighted challenges to overcoming barriers including the need for a commitment at the top of the stream of the system. For this reason, the strategic plan simultaneously recognises that there is a need for a commitment at the highest level of the technical vocational training system and the need for a single strategy document which recognises responsibilities at the various levels in the TVET system. The relevant government ministries and related agencies must establish their own commitment to inclusion. Additionally, they must demonstrate this commitment by ensuring resources are readily available. However, this strategy does require that training providers be themselves ambassadors of this change; that they are convinced of the gains to inclusion. The strategy assumes a partnership with potential employers and disability organisations.
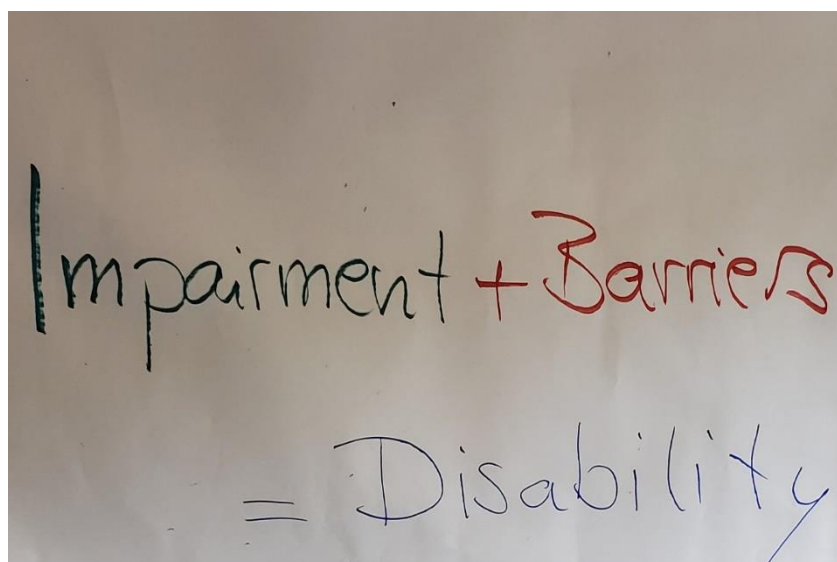
Figure 3: Image Developed and Shared by Consultant during Workshops

The proposed road map is designed to address the barriers which persons with disabilities face (such as attitudinal, institutional, and environmental) when attempting to access services in all areas. The intention is to create a path which incorporates the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the technical vocational training system by removing and/or reducing barriers. The mission is to provide opportunities for training of persons with disabilities by ensuring an environment with miniscule restriction. This will achieve the vision of truly inclusive TVET.

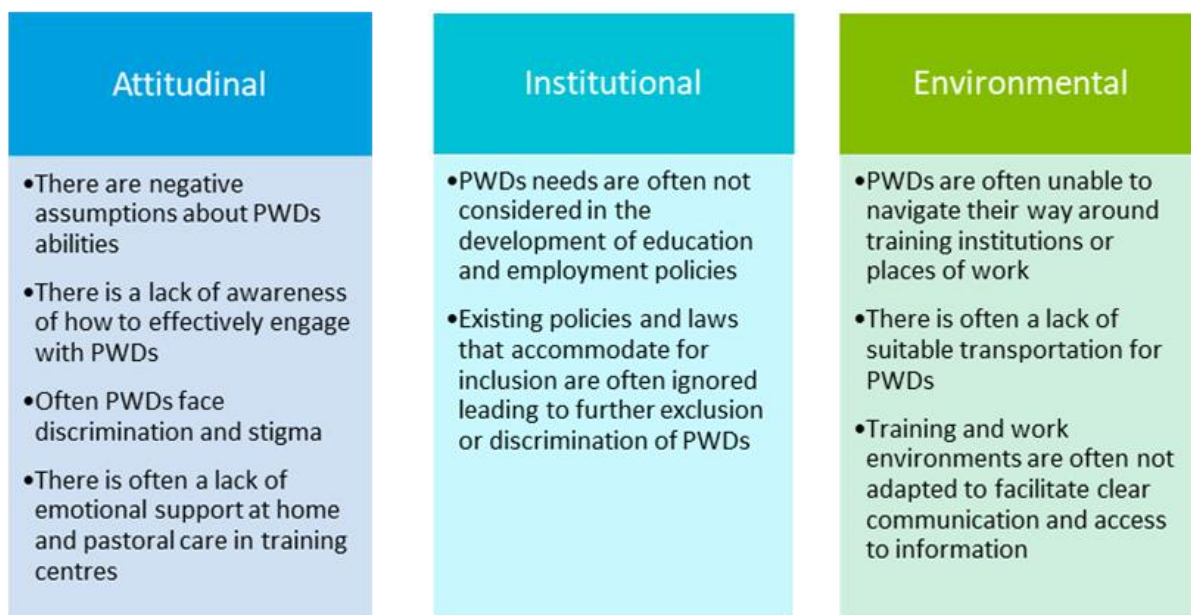| Attitudinal	Institutional	Environmental
• There are negative assumptions about PWDs abilities • There is a lack of awareness of how to effectively engage with PWDs • Often PWDs face discrimination and stigma • There is often a lack of emotional support at home and pastoral care in training centres	• PWDs needs are often not considered in the development of education and employment policies • Existing policies and laws that accommodate for inclusion are often ignored leading to further exclusion or discrimination of PWDs	• PWDs are often unable to navigate their way around training institutions or places of work • There is often a lack of suitable transportation for PWDs • Training and work environments are often not adapted to facilitate clear communication and access to information

Figure 4: Some barriers faced by PWDs in accessing training and employment

The strategic road map builds towards achieving three service levels. Each service level will be instrumental in moving the technical and vocational system a step closer to universal access and opportunities for inclusion of all persons with disabilities. Universal access in this instance must be granted regardless of their choice of study. The 'ladder' of the service levels and the targets will be introduced in section 4.2, this serves as an effective tool to build out inputs, identify outputs which will lead to the desired outcome of universal access. Participants were asked to test the service ladder and provide feedback for a final product.

Strategic Priorities

1. Build Awareness and Acceptance – Attitudinal Barrier
2. Provide Bridges to Learning - Institutional Barrier
3. Ensure Reasonable Accommodation to Support Learning – Environmental Barrier
4. Register, Train, Assess & Certify

4.1   Strategic Priority 1: Build Awareness and Acceptance – Attitudinal Barrier

The first building block for an inclusive learning environment needs to be acknowledging the negative perceptions and the understanding of what inclusion means. This strategic priority is aimed at firstly, understanding the social model of disability and then addressing misconceptions. Lastly, it is aimed at making clear what inclusion is and what it is not. It is important to understand that an inclusive learning environment is one in which people with and without disabilities participate in training sessions together and interact on an equal basis. It is not where separate training spaces are created at a training institution and trainees with disabilities are assigned to specific labs, to undertake a limited and pre-determined area for skills training.

Strategic Imperative: *Removal of negative attitudes and stereotypes which may exist amongst System Leaders, Principals, Instructors Assessors and Students.*

Objective: *Achieve Commitment to a System wide Inclusive Vocational Training*

Actions Include the following:

1. Orientation for System Leaders, Ministries and Development Agencies (MDAs) and Principals – Understanding Disability
2. Orientation of Instructors, Administrators, Assessors – Understanding Disability
3. Extended Workshops for Principals & Instructors
4. Orientation sessions for all trainees and all parents (with and without disabilities)
5. Including disability awareness sessions at the start of each school year

4.1.1 System Leaders: Ministries and Development Agencies, Principals & Board Chairpersons

Raising awareness at this level is important to ensure the sustainability of an inclusive programme. Sessions should range from basic introduction to disability; to type of disabilities; and previous and past disability models. Sessions must also include highlighting the CRPD as the watershed in the shift towards inclusive rights. Sessions will also focus on exploring the barriers to disabilities, the individual attitude towards disability and the environmental barriers both internal and external to the TVET system.

The case for inclusion should be tabled during the initial orientation sessions. This is to allow MDAs to see the case within the context of the country's ratification of the CRPD; their stated policy of access to education for all and or similar commitments. For example, in St Vincent and the Grenadines the Ministry of Education and National Reconciliation states that an element of its mandate is *'to provide all persons of the state lifelong learning opportunities appropriate to their developmental needs'.* So, the case for an inclusive approach in the vocational system must pivot on this commitment and demonstrate that this is necessary to fulfil the Ministry's mandate. For the other territories it is much the same. In Dominica the mission for the ministry with responsibility for education and vocational training is '*... to educate and prepare all students to live productive lives in a complex and changing society'.*

4.1.2 Instructors, Assessors & Verifiers

The session with the staff should start with exploring reservations and perceptions of having persons with disabilities in the organisation. Addressing myths of inability to learn effectively, requiring assistance, distracting other trainees and slowing down the pace of learning. The session would benefit from having any instructor who has had trainees with disabilities in their programme.

The orientation sessions should include sharing the past and current disability models, appropriate language, types of disabilities and what to expect. The benefits of diversity in the learning environment are varied. One such benefit was highlighted where an Instructor in the TVET system in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines shared the extent to which her sharing with her deaf trainees how a task could be accomplished helped the other students. The other students in the programme were classified as 'vulnerable youth'. They had challenges with following instructions, but the videos also helped them.

Initial orientation sessions will need to transition to specific training on inclusive education and foundation sign language. Orientation sessions will also need to include understanding and working with trainees who may have psychosocial issues and or require unique accommodation to integrate them into a 'non-disabled space'.

4.1.3   Orientation and Ongoing Sessions for Trainees and Parents

Trainees and Parents without disabilities: Technical and Vocational Education is only now slowly coming into its own. The perceptions have been that pursuing vocational training was something that happened if you were unable to succeed in the 'traditional post-secondary' school system. Introducing the commitment to an inclusive technical and vocational learning environment could trigger concerns for parents and participants who already have perceptions of persons with disabilities as 'slow' and 'unable to succeed'. Preliminary sessions and ongoing dialogue with this group of stakeholders is pivotal to the inclusion agenda.

Trainees with Disabilities and Parents/Care providers: The stigma of disability and the exclusion that has been consistently demonstrated will leave some incoming trainees and their parents apprehensive about any inclusion initiative. A trainee with a disability may have reservations about the extent to which they will be comfortable. This is especially true if the trainee had graduated from a segregated learning environment where her/his peers were all students with disabilities. Parents will have similar reservations such as concern for their safety, possible bullying and the needs of their child with a disability not being understood or treated fairly in an inclusive setting.

4.2   Strategic Priority 2: Provide Bridges to Learning – Institutional Barriers

Strategic Imperative: *A Diversity Policy which embodies the vision of inclusive vocational training and the resources to remove the institutional barriers to realise the vision.*

Objective:

Actions Include the following:

1.   Diversity (Disability Inclusion) Policy

2.   Identifying a Disability Champion

3.   Establish a Disability Students Services Office

4.   Establish & Monitor Service Ladder Status

5.   Earmark budget for incremental changes to the physical environment

6.   Percentage of budget allocated to achieve reasonable accommodation in specific TVET Labs (National Decision)

7.   Reasonable accommodation across the training facility (National Decision)

8.   Working Relationship with a Potential Employer for Internships

9.   Partnership with individual Employers for employment opportunities

10.   MOU with umbrella employee federations/organisations

4.2.1   Diversity Policy

The Diversity (Disability) Policy will establish the specific action items built around the strategic priorities for an inclusive vocational learning environment.

The work on this must be consultative and the relevant government ministry and development agency(ies) (MDAs) must be drivers of this process. Training Institutions, specifically those funded in part or totally by the state receive ultimate 'governance' from the relevant MDAs and any existing or emerging national qualification board. This process requires that the MDA(s) work in collaboration with training providers, representatives of the community of persons with disabilities and relevant non-government organisations to shape a national policy position for inclusion of trainees with disability in the vocational training landscape. This policy position could be an element in an overall national policy on disability and must be included in the policy position and vision.

The areas for consideration in a Diversity Policy could include a commitment to:

- Innovative technology to advance digital accessibility;
- Review of entry requirements for training to ensure access by all who are eligible;
- Providing training for the TVET workforce to effectively teach trainees with disabilities and trainees without disabilities.

Through the Diversity Policy the TVET system will commit to partnerships with NGOs for persons with disabilities (DNGOs), employers and umbrella organisations to ensure that opportunities are created for the employment of graduates of TVET Programmes. The Diversity Policy will also provide a framework for engagement of international development partners focused on committing to the disability inclusion agenda.

A Diversity Policy for the TVET system, is a policy for improving and expanding technical vocational training for marketable skills.

4.2.2 Disability Champion(s) & Disability Students Office

It is important to identify a Disability Champion who is a member of your team. An option would be to have a Disability Champions Team, which could then include an Instructor, an Administrator, and an Assessor/Verifier. He/she or they will consistently promote awareness of all issues relating to persons with disability in the workplace and the improvement of employment policies, programmes and procedures for onboarding and retaining persons with disabilities. They will hold the enterprise accountable to their commitment of their inclusion agenda, assess where the training institutions (TI) are on their drive to achieving the gold standard of inclusion at the workplace. They will lead in building the bridge which connects the training institution to potential employers and the NGO community which advocates and/or provides services for persons with disabilities. The Disability Champion/Champions will require exposure to good practices for both training and employment of persons with disabilities. The work of the Champion should form a part of her/his performance appraisal and adequate time should be allowed for her/him to 'champion inclusion'.

The gold standard will be establishment of a Disability Students Office, similar in concept to that established at the University of the West Indies at both its Mona (Jamaica) and St. Augustine (Trinidad and Tobago) campuses. This need not be an office operated initially on each campus but established to serve all potential and enrolled students throughout the TVET system in any given country.

4.2.3 Inclusion Service Ladder

The Inclusion in Vocational Training Service Ladder (IVTSL) is a tool to establish where your organisation sits on the continuum to inclusion of persons with disabilities in vocational training. The tool was drafted prior to the start of the workshop but received significant input from participants, specifically as they shared barriers and presented options and what is a likely starting point. See Appendix 1 for the IVTSL.

The IVTSL is your starting point. You will then build your detailed action plan. This plan is built from your overall vision statement.   The vision for your overall system could be that in *five years the vocational system will be available to persons with all categories of disabilities. We will make all reasonable accommodations and adjustments to the curriculum and assessment to ensure universal access.* The importance of the IVTSL is that it allows you to first set a goal and then establish the steps to get to each level and monitor your progress. The plan is built around what is to be done to remove the institutional barriers to inclusion in the vocational training system. Box 1 below is an extract from the ILOs *'Inclusion of People with disabilities in Vocational training: A practical Guide'*.

Box 1: What does a disability inclusive vocational training system look like?

Inclusive vocational training systems have the following characteristics:

- The **inclusion** of people with and without disabilities in **one overall system**.
- The **involvement of disabled people** in all aspects of that system, including design and development of programmes and the hiring of disabled people as trainers and teachers in these programmes.
- A **barrier-free environment** – one that eliminates all barriers, including physical, learning, social and psychological. Infrastructure is designed and built with accessibility for disabled people in mind and existing facilities are renovated. Accommodations are made, systems made accessible to all people, including people who are blind or deaf, and transport made accessible.
- A **market-driven approach** that ensures the quality of training and maximizes employment outcomes and the active involvement of employers to ensure that skills are developed in line with their needs.
- **Teaching staff and disability specialist support staff who adapt instructional methods and techniques** to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities, develop the vocational competencies they need.
- **Adequate resources** to support the training of all types of students.
- **Adequate preparation** of people with disabilities to ensure that they succeed in vocational training. This includes children with disabilities attending and succeeding in their basic education and building linkages between secondary schools and vocational education and training systems.

The IVTSL provides a range of indicators tied to the 4 strategic priorities and they also support the path to achieving the characteristics contained in Box 1 above. While there are discrete service levels it will be possible for the vocational system in each country to have achieved recognition for some Service Level 2 indicators while not having the results for all the Service Level 1 indicators. In addition, an individual training provider, both independent and dependent on funding outside of state resources, can undertake some activities independently.

4.2.4   Funding Inclusion

There will be initial capital outlay for inclusion of persons with disabilities at training institutions. This is a primary reason why this strategy emphasises the need for engagement and full buy in from the state. Training providers saw this as important in moving towards inclusion. While acknowledging that small changes can be made with minimal capital outlay, all training providers in attendance at the focus groups have indicated that this would be a challenge within their existing structure and in the absence of additional (donor) funds.

The most effective strategy in placing this on the agenda of the government would be to underscore that any steps to make learning more inclusive and beneficial to trainees with disabilities is a gain for all trainees. As underscored by the ILO in their guide *'A major consideration is: How does information become knowledge and when does it develop into a skill?'*   A trainee with a disability may not, because of a specific impairment or a lack of one or more senses, be able to move the

knowledge shared to a skill. The task then would be to break down the training for them to ensure that they can acquire the knowledge, store it, retrieve it or use it. Breaking this down for your trainees with a disability is a clear gain to other trainees who may have an unidentified challenge, and this would result in a boost in their information. Just as employers look at the 'win win' to their bottom line for hiring persons with disabilities it is the same for the TVET system. The perceived initial cost capital outlay benefits the learning process for all trainees.

4.3 Strategic Priority 3: Environment for Learning – Environmental Barriers

The third barrier to inclusion which the overall implementation plan for inclusion will need to address is the removal of environmental barriers. Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation (RA) goes beyond the built environment and includes the curricula, assessment, general accessibility and methods of providing for reasonable accommodations and the availability of equipment and devices. While addressing the attitudinal barriers can be championed at all levels of the TVET eco system the leadership for addressing the environmental barriers must start at the apex of the system.

Strategic Imperative: *Ensure Reasonable Accommodation to Support Learning*

Objective: *Achieving Universal Access to Vocational Training*

Actions Include the following:

1. Physical environment adjustments to include a specific disability group
2. Expanding access to additional training areas to increase options for trainees
3. Aids and Aides to support a single disability group
4. Aides to support persons with hearing and learning impairment
5. Adaptation/teaching aids to support multiple impairments

4.3.1 Reasonable Accommodation – Physical Environment

On the service ladder this may start with addressing the basic entry to the training institution and making the specific labs accessible for a trainee with a physical disability. It would progress to ensure she/he is included in and able to interact/consult and socialise with her/his peers. The decisions on adjustments to the physical environment will be guided by the stages set out to achieve full inclusion.

If the intention is to initially offer access to a specific disability group in two of the most market driven training courses, then the system would begin to make those adjustments. However, it is important to not just focus on the area where the course content is delivered but also to spaces where students interact outside of learning space.

4.3.2   Reasonable Accommodation: Beyond the Physical Environment

Efforts to assess reasonable accommodation can take place at two stages. There are obvious changes which will need to be made to the learning material, the provision of devices to provide support to the Deaf, and the process of assessment. The technology that is supporting us now as schools respond to the COVID 19 global pandemic underscores how possible it is to include trainees with disabilities in the TVET system.
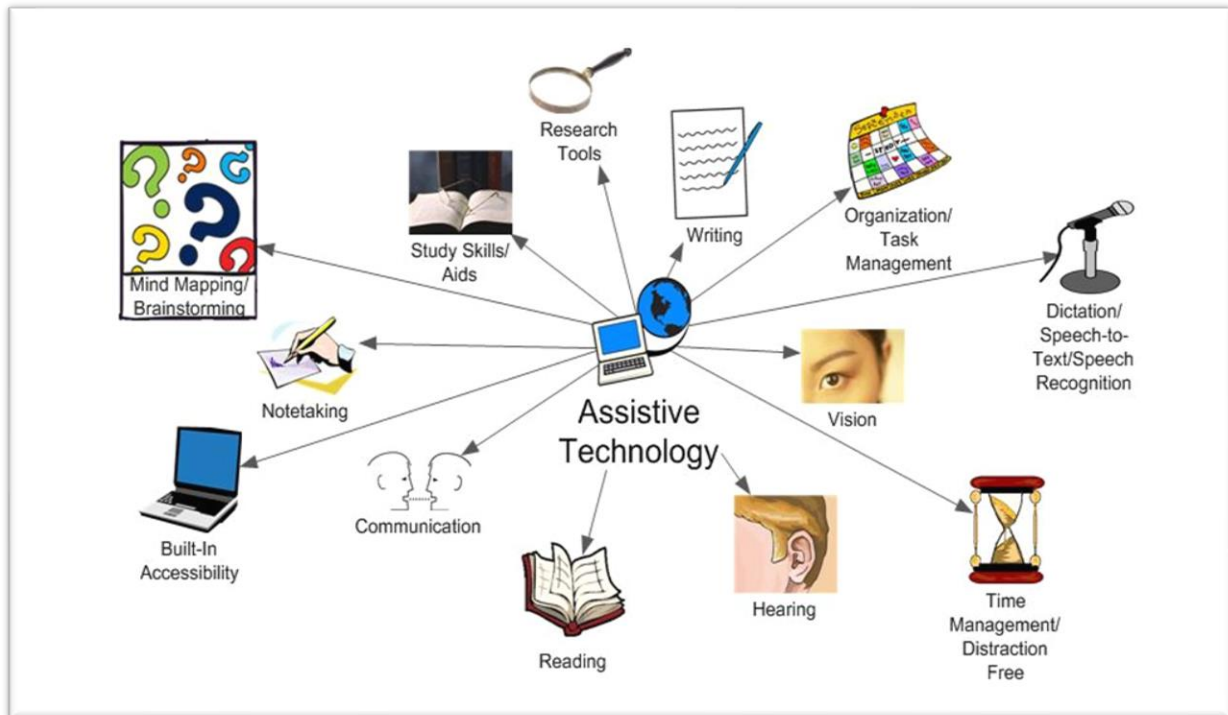
A second stage for assessing the need for assistive technology or the approach to how content is delivered would be during the intake period, which must happen with adequate time to make any additional accommodations for trainees with disabilities. Section 4.4 presents possible tools to use to determine these additional accommodations. Importantly, this stage involves the trainee sharing what they see as barriers to their inclusion and sharing options to remove these.

4.3.3   Reasonable Accommodation: Assessment & Testing

The ILO 2013 Practical Guide makes clear that *'strategies for accommodating trainees with disabilities during assessment and testing need to be structured so that trainees with disabilities are treated fairly and the content of skill they are expected to know or demonstrate is not compromised."* A TVET Instructor during the online workshops shared her concern that, despite best efforts to use alternative means to demonstrate competence and the ability of her three trainees with disabilities to 'imitate', she was unsure how they would do when being assessed when they would need to demonstrate what they had acquired and not just imitate from a video. Recommendations for adjustments do include adjusting for the environment, performance and flexibility in the time frame to complete a test.

4.4   Strategic Priority 4 – Register, Train, Assess & Certify

This is where you want to 'arrive'. This is the point when you have stepped through the door of inclusion and you are ready to recruit, provide training and assessment of trainees with disabilities.

Strategic Imperative: *Persons with Disabilities are trained and certified with marketable skills.*

Objective: *Increased Economic Inclusion of Young Persons with Disabilities.*

Actions Include the following:

1. Review Entry Requirements

2. During Recruitment Establish Reasonable Accommodation Needs.

3. Ensure information about course offerings are accessible to students

4. Deliberate and targeted recruitment for a marketable skill for a specific disability group

5. Instructors equipped to deliver in an inclusive learning environment.

4.4.1   Recruitment and Entry Requirements for Trainees with Disabilities

Recruitment of persons with disabilities will require a deliberate programme. The message must state clearly that persons with disabilities may apply. The recruitment tools, application forms will need to be accessible to persons with disabilities. If you rely primarily on the printed media to promote your programme then it will exclude persons who are blind if your forms are only in hard copy, this will include persons who are blind or have a physical impairment which limits their ability to complete a written form.

When promoting your programme, remember that the community of persons with disabilities is not homogeneous. It must also be made clear what types of persons with disabilities you are ready to provide training to. It would be appropriate to connect with organisations which represent persons with disabilities. All recruitment must be 'accessible'. The most likely source of trainees will be from a range of state and private sector secondary schools established to provide 'special education'. These are usually in a non-inclusive environment. Early collaboration with these schools will allow the training provider to give guidance on entry level requirements. Additionally, early collaboration will establish possible pre-vocational training to ensure matriculation into the technical and vocational system.

4.4.2   Establishing Accommodation Needs

Table 1 presents a sample of possible questions which could be used during intake to identify if accommodations are required for a potential trainee. This is extracted from the ILO's Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Vocational Training: A practical Guide (2013). However, these questions are sample question and would vary guided by the known impairments of each applicant. The ILO Practical Guide provides a wealth of information on options for accommodation guided by the type of impairment. The guide provides strategies for trainees with visual impairments, trainees who are Deaf or hard of hearing, trainees with psychosocial disabilities and trainees with learning/cognitive impairments that affect how they process information.

Table 1: Sample Questions During Recruitment to Determine Reasonable Accommodation Needed

[4]

Can be used at initial interview of applicants.				
Suggested script: Let's talk about how you and I can make the experience in our programme (or training institution) a positive one for you. [Describe the programme, especially what specific things trainees are expected to do. Perhaps take the trainee on a tour or show a video.] Now let's spend some time on some questions that will help you and me decide if you need any accommodations and what they would be, so you may have success in our programme. Note: Depending on your community and your training situation you may want to add questions about transportation Add other questions as you gain experience that will help you plan for accommodations and meet the needs of entering trainees with disabilities.				
Yes	**No**	**Questions**	**Prompts and ideas to get the conversation going**	**Action Taken**
		During presentations and lectures, what will help you receive and identify important information?	Possible prompts: A recorder, a note taker, a computer	
		Can you take notes?	How can we help with this? Possible prompts: As above	
		During presentations and lectures, are any of these things a problem for you to grasp – what the trainer is talking about, things said by other trainees, information displayed or projected at the front of the room, others?	What should we do, so you do not have a problem? Possible options …giving you a seat up front help, getting notes or presentations prior to class, getting a summary of key points in writing or verbally	

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[4] Adapted from: Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Vocational Training: A practical Guide, International Labour Organisation, 2013

Yes	No	Questions	Prompts and ideas to get the conversation going	Action Taken
		During demonstrations, are you able to see/hear and follow what is being done?	What can we do, so you do not have the problem? Possible options…sitting in the front of the room, using a special hearing device called a loop, making sure the instructor is facing you, having the instructor describe what he or she is doing while demonstrating, etc. (depending on the issue involved)	
		Can you answer questions in class? Do you need an accommodation to do that?	What can be done? Possible options…can you write your answer and someone else can read it… extra time to answer	
		The training programme requires that you (describe anticipated tasks/performance areas that the programme requirements, including physical requirements – lifting, bending, standing, operating specific pieces of equipment, etc.	Accommodation prompts and options will depend on the task and the persons' limitation related to their impairment and the vocational training.	
		Do you need any help, or are there aspects of the training that will require an accommodation?		
		Would you like to sit in a certain place in classrooms?	How does that help?	
		Do you like to work in a group?	If not, what can be done to make you feel comfortable to work in a group?	

| | | Do you need accommodations to take tests? What are they? | How can we address this?

Options could include test questions in a different format, more time, someone, or thing to record your answers | |

It is important that during this review to assess needs that no assumptions are made about what is needed.

4.4.3   Instructors Equipped with Skills to Deliver in an Inclusive Learning Environment

Section 4.3 (ii) did speak to the need to review and revise the assessment process. Emphasis here is on the importance of providing training for TVET instructors to deliver content to trainees with a range of disabilities. The system may start with a focus for example on how to accommodate trainees who are deaf and so sign language becomes a part of the training and/or there are special workshops for trainers.

Presenting material to trainees with learning and cognitive impairments, e.g. trainees on the autism spectrum, will require the development of additional skills for the TVET instructor.

SkYE has committed to being a part of this and has already provided workshops for instructors on the 'how to' for delivering content to trainees with disabilites.

However, there will be overall a need to prepare instructors to manage possible psychosocial issues which may emerge for a trainee with a disability. Inclusion is important, but for the Caribbean region it is still relatively new. There are emotional hurdles which trainees will experience which cannot be ignored. This does present another gain for the all trainees in an inclusive session as there could be other students who may also have psychosocial challenges which have gone unnoticed.

5   Closing

SkYE in seeking to build on their experiences of training and seeking employment opportunities for young persons with disability were cognisant that while their efforts were commendable there was need for a structured approach to achieve some level of sustainability and increase the opportunities for vocational training and skills development for persons with disabilities. The participatory approach to developing that road map has meant that there is already a core of possible champions who will be deliberate in their efforts to ensure inclusion in the workplace. The workshops held in July and August 2021 with public and private sector training providers, instructors, assessors and MDAs across four countries provided an opportunity to introduce disability concepts, discuss individual and organisational barriers to inclusion in the TVET system. The extent to which the inclusion of trainees in the TVET system will improve the overall delivery of training was explored. The workshops also provided an opportunity for participants to share their lessons from inclusion because of pilot programmes. Their experiences along with global good practices were fed into this strategy.

Best efforts will now be made to keep that core of participants who are also architects of this road map as a working group that will support the efforts to 'step through the door to inclusion. It is intended to establish a working group of national agencies/national assessment entities for the TVET, principals and leaders of technical institutions providing TVET training, and this will be done across all four territories. The strategy map must be seen as a working document as lessons are experienced, they are added to expand the options to removing barriers to inclusion.

Appendix 1: TVET Inclusion Service Ladder

TVET Service Ladder – Building a Framework for Accountability for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in TVET						
	Service Level 1	**Score**	**Service Level 2**	**Score**	**Service Level 3**	**Score**
TVET Stakeholders sensitized – Principals, Instructors etc. (Attitudinal)	Brief Disability Awareness Workshop		Extended Workshop - What does the CRPD mean		Annual workshops for TVET Stakeholders.	
	Champion Confirmed & Data collected on Disability Landscape		Person(s) Disabilities invited to share journey and make recommendations		TVET Graduates as Instructors	
System Wide Commitment (Institutional)	Principal & Board make a commitment. Goal & Targets set including time frame.		Instructors, Assessors, Verifiers review and sign off on targets.		Goals & Targets Achieved. New Goals set to increase access.	
	Funding found internally and/or targeted sponsors		Joint initiatives to mobilise CSO, IDP and State funding. The Ministry with responsibility for TVET is onboarded.		Established % of Budget earmarked to ensure Reasonable Accommodation	
	Working Relationship with a Potential Employer for Internships		Partnership with individual Employers for employment opportunities		Formal MOU with umbrella employers' organisations and/or region wide and major in-country employers	
	Instructors for targeted subject area (s) trained		Instructors for more than one vocational area trained		All Instructors prepared to deliver all vocational areas to any student with an Impairment.	
Curriculum and Learning Aides (Environmental)	Conduct environmental scan to prepare for student intake and assess adjustments needed for single entry in market driven area		Conduct environmental scan and prepare for more than disability in more than one area of study			
	No adjustments needed to include student with a physical impairment (PI)		Aides available to support hearing impaired (HI) and visually impaired (VI)		Revamp content and content to meet the learning needs of an expanded range of impairments	
Building Adaptations (Environmental)	Access to select classrooms/labs, select toilets for persons with physical impairment (PI)		Access to select classrooms/labs, select bathrooms accessible for a range of impairments. PI, HI, VI		Access to all classrooms/labs, bathrooms accessible for persons with disabilities PI, HI, VI	

TVET Service Ladder – Building a Framework for Accountability for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in TVET					
PWD Students – Single Disability through to more a larger range (Inclusion)	Review Entry Requirements and match with likely achievement levels.		Revamp entry requirements and assessments for agreed categories of applicants with impairments		Universal Access	
	Persons with a single impairment enter a designated training area.		PWD with Visual and Hearing Impairments (VI, HI)		PWD with Learning Impairment (LI) & Multiple Impairments (MI)	
Scores for Each Level						
Maximum Score						
Your Score						
Score for each category a '1' if yes. Then multiply your score by the level. Therefore, if you are at Service Level 1 then it 1*1; if you are at Service Level 2 and you score for an activity then it is 1*2						

Prepared By:		Date Prepared		Accepted By:	
Next Steps:					
Goals		**Who Leads**	**State target should have designated time frame**		**Resource Needs**
Goal 1:			Target 1		
			Target 2		
			Target 3		