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TIMOR-LESTE – AUSTRALIA

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Microenterprise as an Employment Opportunity for People with Disabilities in Timor-Leste

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Introduction

- ▶ Total people with disabilities in Timor-Leste: 38.118
- ▶ Disability Barriers
- ▶ Timor-Leste Constitution (article 16/21)
- ▶ Human Rights /UNCRRP
- ▶ Disability and Employment in Timor-Leste

Objective

- ▶ Understanding the Discovery employment process.
- ▶ Finding an appropriate strategy to introduce Microenterprise to some organizations of people with disabilities (OPDs) to underpin the implementation of Microenterprise as a pathway of employment for people with disability in Timor-Leste

Methodology

- ▶ Literature Review
- ▶ Inclusion and exclusion criteria of research methodology
- ▶ Semi-structured interview with people with disabilities

Findings-Benefits

- ▶ People with Disability have a greater interest in self-employment, and that training for small business start-up has been highly beneficial for them because the training can assist in identifying and determining how to capitalise on suitable business prospects in order to enhance self-employment
- ▶ Microenterprise should be recognised as a viable employment alternative for persons with disability because it can enable them to enhance their work quality of life.
- ▶ Involving small business as employment opportunity can help individuals with disabilities achieve more independence also providing financial benefits, autonomy, and a sense of self-worth.

Findings- benefits

- ▶ Developing a small business enterprise fosters a strong sense of personal achievement, satisfaction in contributing meaningfully to society
- ▶ Small business enterprise arrangements were not simply economic activities performed alone but also facilitated community participation and social interactions among people with disabilities and society
- ▶ The businesses did not always generate significant revenue, they provided a crucial social role as a business owner, decreased social isolation, and increased individual choice and control

Findings - barriers

- ▶ Multiple studies have revealed that People with Disabilities frequently choose self-employment mainly because of a lack of adequate alternative work opportunities
- ▶ Microenterprise is not generally promoted now, and more has to be done to facilitate it to be considered alongside more typical daytime commercial activities
- ▶ Lack of access to business expertise and resources
- ▶ Lack of capital investment, difficulty in financing, training of employees, and marketing and distribution of products

Conclusion

Even though there is a guarantee for PwD to work on an equal basis as others in a productive and inclusive work setting, as stated in UNCRPD article 27 (UN General Assembly, 2006), the percentage of people with disability entering to the workforce is still low due to many reason. Therefore, microenterprise is a strategy to provide a viable job opportunity for People with Disability in developing countries, such as Timor-Leste, because they prioritise individual qualities, talents, interests, and encourage people to use the accessible resources to gain financial and social independence.

Microenterprise Stages

- ▶ Discovery
- ▶ Exploration
- ▶ Creation
- ▶ Operation

Recommendation

- ▶ Organizations of people with disabilities to consider Microenterprise within their project
- ▶ Skills development training for people with disability
- ▶ Government, Civil society and Development sectors to consider improving economic empowerment for people with disabilities



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Questions & Answers Session