

## PACES Newsletter No. 6

Issued: 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2021

The overall aim of the PACES project is to progress and set up a programme of initiatives in universities in Egypt and Morocco to support the modernization of higher education by developing Accessibility Centres (static, mobile and virtual) that will enable students with disabilities (SwD) to access Assistive Technology (AT) and support services such as counselling and peer support. Through these centres SwD and the Employer/HEI network SwD will be able to gain employability and transition skills in order to move forward into employment. All project partners have learned many lessons and aim through this new project to increase the scale of access to HE and employment opportunities for students with disabilities throughout Egypt and Morocco.



This newsletter issue address the work group Number 1 about the Research, Innovation & Education that took place during the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference for Persons with Disabilities under the slogan of the role of entrepreneurship, aCcessibility cEntres and assistive technologieS towards full inclusion (IC-PACES) that held in a Hybrid Edition (On-Campus & Online) at AASTMT's Alexandria Main Campus on Saturday and Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2021: (IC-PACES 2021).

**PACES Project is Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European**

## Research, Innovation & Education work group during IC-PACES Conference

**Date of event: Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2021**

The aim of this work group (Round Table Discussion) is to discuss and exchanging ideas to Come out with Recommendations & Strategies to be followed towards SwD & PwD's FULL INCLUSION.



<b><u>Time:</u></b>	<b><u>12:01 PM (58 Minutes)</u></b> The round table started on Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> of March at <b>12:01 PM</b> and ended at <b>12:59 PM</b> .
<b><u>Place:</u></b>	<b><u>RIC:</u></b> The discussion was held offline in the Regional Information Center RIC in AASTMT, Alexandria and online through Zoom Platform.
<b><u>Zoom:</u></b>	<b><u>Meeting ID: 924 6003 8194</u></b> Zoom Meeting Link <a href="https://zoom.us/j/92460038194">https://zoom.us/j/92460038194</a>
<b><u>Notes:</u></b>	<b><u>Sign Language:</u></b> The session was translated in Sign Language for PwD that have a hearing impairment.
<b><u>Moderator</u></b>	The round table was managed and moderated by: <b>Prof. Dr. Sanaa Haroun, Director of TICO Office – ASRT, Fayoum University, Egypt.</b>
<b><u>Recording Link</u></b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/8iBD67vAHG0">https://youtu.be/8iBD67vAHG0</a>

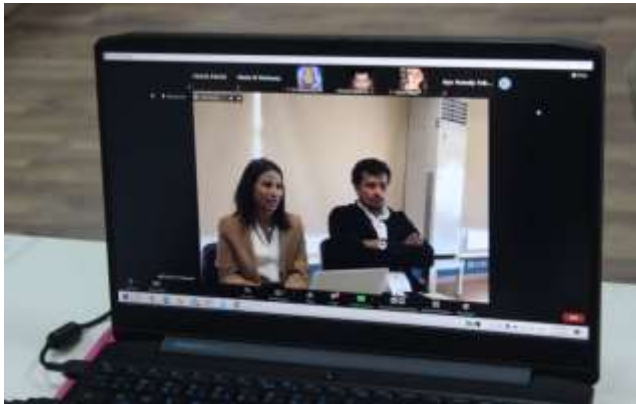
### Members of the group discussions were;

1. Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna, Vice Dean of Student Affairs, AASTMT.
2. Ms. Amena Elsaie, Cofounder of Helm.
3. Mr. Ahmed Elbana Cofounder Nomad Divers.
4. Dr. Abdullah Sherif & Dr. Nada Mostafa College of Language and Communication, AASTMT.
5. Professors from College of Engineering & Technology (CET), College of International Transport & Logistics (CITL), College of Language and Communication (CLC), AASTMT.
6. Students with/without disabilities from CITL, and CLC at AASTMT.
7. Students with disabilities from Faculty of Specific Education, Fayoum University.
8. Parents of Students with disabilities.
9. Other relevant and interested stakeholders.
10. Other participants through Zoom.

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### The axes and summary of the round table discussions were;

- Spreading awareness among students (high school and university students) on how to deal with students with disabilities. This can be achieved through many orientations and trainings seminars on this topic. Moreover, students with disabilities should engage in such trainings to learn to express themselves and to deliver their needs to their colleagues and teachers/professors. Additionally, Ms. Amena Elsaie shared *the UN quote “Nothing about Us without Us”*



- Students without disabilities should be taught how to deal normally with their colleagues (SwDs) without being sensitive and overprotective.
- Students with disabilities have physical and emotional needs should be understood by their teachers and colleagues.
- Some members of the group learnt basic sign language but with no practice this skill can fade.
- PwD with hearing impairment if they use sign language from early age they will rely only on the

sign language and will not use other abilities such as reading lips or using available relevant assistive technologies.



- Providing tools that help and facilitate the educational process for persons with disabilities in general, such as accessibility center in many universities.



- Members of the workgroup acknowledged the existence of some acts of bullying against students with disabilities especially in basic education stage (high schools). After that, they discussed how to prevent such issues in schools.

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- Dr. Ahmed Mehanna discussed that the Egyptian Ministry of Education should target this issue strategically by introducing new courses focusing on how to deal and include students with disabilities and respect the other.



- The participants discussed the **Law No. 10 of 2018** issued by the Egyptian Parliament for rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- The moral images of the child will remain with him until he grows up therefore, the moral implantation begins in earl life.
- All platforms must be exploited to discuss these issues for example Cinema, TV drama, Media, Talk Shows & Mosques/Churches.



- One of the objective of PACES Project Final Conference (**IC-PACES**) is to use the conference as an awareness campaign towards the rights of Students with Disabilities.
- Statistically one of each 7 people worldwide is PwD.



- Hamza a SwD from AASTMT shared his opinion: *“It is crucial that the persons with disabilities should feel comfort and acceptance within themselves and not to underestimate their capabilities/capacities because this will reflect on how persons without disabilities will view and treat them. Family is the first supporter”*.

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- Sohail a SwD from Fayoum University shared his opinion: *“We were ignored in the college until some lecturers started to teach sign language through the Accessibility Center of Fayoum University”*.
- Another SwD from Fayoum University expressed his point of view: *“Unfortunately, society used to ignore me until I graduated. I can say from my personal experience that I believe that providing appropriate education skills for free, such as computer skills, will help and facilitate my entry into the labour market.”*



- Mr. Ahmed Elbana pointed out that engineering graduation projects should tackle new technologies such as AR & VR to educate the

students with disabilities in new ways. He also expressed his experience with his Startup that he includes persons with disabilities to try new adventures such as diving.

- College Professors should encourage students on tackling new projects that tackle problems with high values such as technologies to serve PwD. Also, the students should be compensated and rewarded when they engage in such projects.
- Engage all stakeholders towards the UN SDGs Sustainable Development Goals.



### **Recommendation of the round table:**

1. Spread awareness among students/teachers/staff on SwD & PwD.
2. Students/teachers/staff shall learn basic sign language and practice it whenever possible.
3. PwD with hearing impairment shall learn using assistive technologies from early age to fit with any community of people whether they know or don't know the sign language.
4. Accessibility Centers should be integrated in all educational campuses for schools and universities.

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5. Egyptian Ministry of Education should introduce Ethical Courses from early education stages to teach students how to include their colleagues with disabilities.
6. All media platforms should aware the audience on the rights of PwDs.
7. **“Dialogue in the Dark”** shall be spread across Egypt to increase the awareness and empathy for PwD.
8. Awareness through training is a strategical way to spread inclusion in the community.
9. PwDs need to believe and start to prove themselves and present their talents to end the stereotypes against them.
10. Provide Internships and scholarships for SwD.
11. Adapt the Universal Design concept in developing courses in different colleges.
12. Engage all stakeholders towards the UN SDGs Sustainable Development Goals.



**PACES Project team members would like to thank the below students for their contribution and their volunteering work for their participation in organizing the work group, (Round Table Discussion), during the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference for Persons with disabilities: The role of entrepreneurship, aCcessibility cEntres and assistive technologIes towards full inclusion (IC-PACES Conference).**

- |                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| - Abrar Meshref   | - Maryam Abu Halima    |
| - Ahmed Eissa     | - Mohamed El-Fakharany |
| - Aya Abu Halima  | - Muhammed Abuhashim   |
| - Aya Ahmed       | - Muhammed Ismail      |
| - Karim Elsaadany | - Nourane Elhagar      |
| - Lioura Elshazly | - Rowan Eissa          |
| - Mahinour Qamara | - Sammar Farrag        |



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