

PACES Newsletter No. 9

Issued: 7th of April 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 4 about The Role of Entrepreneurship to Support the PwD that took place during the 2nd 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 6th & 7th of March 2021: (IC-PACES 2021).

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The Role of Entrepreneurship to Support the PwD work group during IC-PACES Conference

Date of event: Sunday 7th 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.



<u>Time:</u>	<u>10:30 AM (87 Minutes)</u> The round table started on Sunday 7 th of March at 10:30 AM and ended at 11:57 AM .
<u>Place:</u>	<u>RIC:</u> The discussion was held offline in the Regional Information Center RIC in AASTMT, Alexandria and online through Zoom Platform.
<u>Zoom:</u>	<u>Meeting ID: 928 9329 1809</u> Zoom Meeting Link https://zoom.us/j/92893291809
<u>Moderator</u>	The round table was managed and moderated by: Mr. Wael El-Desouki Bedda, Director of AASTMT Entrepreneurship Center
<u>Recording Link</u>	https://youtu.be/N4QShhp0-zc

Members of the group discussions were;

1. Dr. Ahmed Saada, Minister of Social Solidarity Advisor for Support Civil Work and Health Support Affairs.
2. Ms. Eglal Chenouda, Executive Director SETI Center-Caritas Egypt Board Member National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPD)
3. Eng. Amal Mobadda, Chief Fundraising Officer, Misr Elkheir Foundation.
4. Mr. Hany Ayaad, Head of Operation, AASTMT Entrepreneurship Center.
5. Dr. Jane G. Hanna, Head of Mashreq Tours Incubator.
6. Ms. Ayah Selim, Events Manager, AASTMT Entrepreneurship Center.
7. Mr. Attef Aly, AASTMT
8. Eng. Mahmoud Allam, Youth Incubator
9. Mr. Mohamed Attyia, PwD & AASTMT graduate.
10. Dr. Raafat Abbas, Vice President of MSMEDA (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency) - Via Zoom.

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11. MP. Ghada Mahmoud Ali, Member of Egyptian Parliament - Via Zoom.
12. Ms. Yasmine Fakhry, Community-Based Protection, UNHCR Alexandria Field Office - Via Zoom.
13. NGO members.
14. Students with and without Disabilities from AASTMT.
15. Entrepreneurs with disabilities.
16. Other relevant and interested stakeholders.
17. Other participants through Zoom.

The axes and summary of the round table discussions were;

- Dr. Raafat Abbas shared that “MSMEDA has launched many programs and initiatives such as **Generate Your Business Idea** in cooperation with the **British Council** and **KAB Know About your Business** in cooperation with the **International Labour Organization** to serve and include PwD” He added also that: “MSMEDA has initiated many job and employment fairs to serve the Egyptian youth including PwD”.
- The participants ensured that tailored trainings can facilitate finding jobs for PwD and financial trainings can ease PwD to start their startups.

- Dr. Raafat Abbas suggested that “*There should be initiatives from the Eco-System both institutionally and systematically to support the PwD*”.



- MP. Ghada Ali expressed that: “*The entrepreneurship can serve PwD on two aspects. Firstly, entrepreneurs should be trained during Design Thinking workshops on serving PwD and that they should tackle PwD challenges. Secondly, PwD’s should be integrated into the national Egyptian economy by being trained in economic thinking, how to take loans, how to establish projects, and how to license companies*”.



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- The Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Youth and the Enterprise Development Authority should collaborate on PwD employment, and there should be transparent statistics that can reflect the impact of this collaboration.



- MP Ghada Ali suggested to “Create an integrated platform for persons with disabilities and support its deployment on all Egyptian institutions websites platforms”.
- Ms. Eglal Chenouda requested “Attention and focus on supporting and rehabilitating people with intellectual disabilities, not only those with mobility disabilities, as well as training and integrating their families”.



- Eng. Amal Mobadda requested “To adopt the expression of persons with disabilities not any other expression such as People with special abilities or needs because PwD is the expression adopted by the Egyptian Law”.
- Ms. Yasmine Fakhry shared “Egypt always opens its door to foreign refugees such as Italians, Greeks and Armenians from the late nineteenth century and to Syrians and Iraqis today. Egypt has more than a million refugees, but the registered number of refugees with UNHCR is only 280,000. Therefore, she requested also on Refugees PwD inclusion and to facilitate trainings that build social and entrepreneurship skills such as resilience”.
- The participants discussed that Egypt is very easy for informal jobs seekers for the refugees although it is relatively hard to get an official work permit. Also, the refugee rights for inclusion was discussed especially if he/she is PwD with no family members due to the long migration journey and the circumstances of the country he/she coming from it, whether it was a war or something else.



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- Dr. Ahmed Saada requested “*The Entrepreneurship ecosystem must be modified and adapted to integrate and include PwD*”.



- The participants argued and concluded that according to latest statistics 1.5 to 2% of the Egyptian population are people with mental disabilities.
- Mr. Attef Aly suggested that: “*There must be companies specified in searching for and focusing on developing a PwD's talents, such as singing, into an entrepreneurial business that a person can earn a living from*”.



- The discussion ended with an entrepreneur (PwD) shared his personal experience on how he built his startup (Market – grocery) in his village from bootstrapping to getting seed fund until he successfully managed to hire his family and neighbour in his small business.

Recommendation of the round table:

1. Providing institutional support (institutionalization) for initiatives for persons with disabilities from various bodies and institutions and Inclusion of various stakeholders involved (Engagement system Eco).
2. Focusing on the role of entrepreneurs towards persons with disabilities, and they can present it as solutions to the challenges they face in various aspects of life.
3. Create an integrated platform for persons with disabilities and support its deployment on all state's institutions' websites and platforms.
4. Establishing a database for people with intellectual disabilities that clarifies their mental capabilities and the types of jobs suitable for this capacity in various institutions and also the necessary training to do this work.
5. Developing rehabilitation programs for persons with disabilities that are inclusive of all aspects, not only educational, but also psychological, mental, physical and others disabilities.

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6. Identify the talents of some persons with disabilities and develop them through specialized programs, each of them according to his talent.
7. Directing the minimum wage and the percentage of 5% of workers in companies with disabilities to a special fund at the Ministry of Social Solidarity and later directed to support persons with disabilities through specialized programs.
8. Establishing a specialized business incubator for persons with disabilities to support them in becoming entrepreneurs.
9. Allocating a percentage of the funding directed by government agencies and organizations to support entrepreneurship to be provided to persons with disabilities who are entrepreneurs.
10. Communicate and collaborate with the Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Social Solidarity regarding the integrated platform implemented from the Ministry of Communications for Persons with Disabilities.
11. Including the families of persons with disabilities in programs and initiatives, so that they can be their main supporters.
12. Focusing on the accessibility of various entrepreneurship programs offered by various institutions to be accessible and accessible to the inclusion of persons with disabilities
13. Coordination with cooperative societies in various governorates and the financial and non-financial services they provide to the pioneers in Business.

14. Working on the presence of persons with disabilities in senior and leadership positions in various institutions and focusing on stories and success models from them.



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 2nd International Conference for Persons with disabilities: The role of entrepreneurship, Accessibility Centres and assistive technologies towards full inclusion (IC-PACES Conference).

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|-------------------|------------------------|
| - 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 |
| - Marwa Muhammad | - Wessam Eldidi |

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