

DISABILITY SERVICE PROVIDER PERSPECTIVE – BUILDING PATHWAYS TO INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT



Cheshire Disability Services has

supported people with disability in Port Moresby for over 60 years. Originally known as 'Cheshire Homes', the organisation began as a residential care facility and has evolved into a multi-service provider. While residential support continues, growing demand from communities led the organisation to extend its services – including into home-based and community outreach settings.

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

Employer name	Cheshire Disability Services PNG
Employer description	Non-profit disability service provider with 60+ years of experience, based in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
Key equity and accessibility elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Voices program that supports people with disability to build skills and connections • Engagement with people with disability and potential employers to promote equitable employment opportunities – including facilitating employment entry tests for employers to use in recruitment processes; matching candidate profiles to an employer's work opportunities; supporting candidates and employers in the recruitment process; and partnerships with employers

The organisation's services now include rehabilitation, inclusive early childhood education, community-based rehabilitation, and respite care. Physiotherapy services are provided free of charge, and the organisation also responds to referrals from hospitals and schools.

Through their **Young Voices** program, Cheshire Disability Services also has an important focus on employment support. This program brings young people with disability together for monthly sessions designed to build advocacy skills, practical capabilities, and self-confidence.

The program participants are grouped according to their interests and abilities and participate in training across broad skill sets – including communication, computing, gardening, carpentry, bookkeeping, sewing, financial literacy, and health education. The program provides space for young people with disability to explore their individual strengths and develop their own personal goals related to employment.



"We help them to fully understand their roles and why they are here. We encourage them to never give up on who they are," says Rose Letero, the Young Voices Coordinator.



The Young Voices program fosters peer connection and mutual encouragement through the sharing of personal experiences. It also encourages leadership and advocacy from within. One longstanding participant in the program, Fraser Paul, was recently nominated by his peers to serve as Chairperson. In this role, he represents his peers and supports the coordination of the program's activities.

Cheshire Disability Services supports people with disability in the employment recruitment process by engaging with them and potential employers. This engagement is done in four main ways:

- 1. Facilitating employment entry tests for employers to use in recruitment processes**

Cheshire Disability Services facilitates entry tests for people with disability, on behalf of companies seeking to employ them. These tests are focused on basic literacy and numeracy and are designed to meet the accessibility requirements of the candidates.

- 2. Matching candidate profiles to an employer's work opportunities**

Cheshire Disability Services supports people with disability in the process of developing resumes for job applications. The resumes are kept on file and used by Cheshire Disability Services to match individuals to job openings as they arise. When contacted by employers with employment opportunities, Cheshire Disability Services identifies candidates whose profiles align with the available roles.

- 3. Supporting candidates and employers in the recruitment process**

Cheshire Disability Services works with the candidate and the potential employer to discuss the candidate's skills, goals, and availability related to the job opportunity. They prioritise open dialogue and shared understanding about the type of support the candidates may require. They find out if the employment opportunity will be accessible and inclusive for a person with disability. The final hiring decision rests with the employer, but Cheshire Disability Services offers support in the process.

This engagement with candidates and employers has reportedly contributed to effective recruitment outcomes and positive experiences in the workplace.



Young Voices program member Rafael at Cheshire Disability Services.

"They come and tell us that they're happy with the work that they are doing. I asked them how other staff treating you and all that. Staff are really good. They're very friendly. They interact so well, and they have that understanding," says Rose. "You know, they're like 'now we are working... this is our dream come true'."

- 4. Partnerships with employers**

Cheshire Disability Services has developed a partnership with the retail company Brian Bell, through which nine people with disability have taken up roles in the company's departments including sorting and packing; reception; human resources; and customer service. According to Rose, the Young Voices Coordinator, the company approached Cheshire Disability Services to better understand how to support employees with disability, and their staff made efforts to foster an inclusive workplace culture.

Cheshire Disability Services Program Manager, Joe Hanuma, noted that this partnership with the retail company Brian Bell has prompted wider interest among other employers.

"Brian Bell, is one of our partners ... We have nine of our young voices who are currently employed by them ... And I believe that [they] are doing wonderful, extremely well."



Lessons learned



Links to the EmployAbility Toolkit

Focus on opportunity and strength

The employment related support offered by Cheshire Disability Services recognises the importance of drawing on the interests, strengths, and goals of people with disability; incorporates social connections and experience sharing; and promotes leadership and advocacy by people with disability.

Read more about the opportunities and strengths that people with disability draw on in PNG – and the importance and relevance it has to our work for inclusion and accessibility in PNG workplaces.



WHAT STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES DO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY DRAW ON IN PNG?

Develop inclusive recruitment processes – and seek support to apply them

Cheshire Disability Services supports people with disability in the recruitment process by engaging with them and potential employers – including through matching candidates to employment opportunities; and facilitating open dialogue about requirements and expectations related to accessibility and inclusion in the workplace.

Learn about the challenges that people with disability face when they seek to enter the workforce in PNG – and the practical things that hiring organisations can do to make the recruitment process more accessible and inclusive.



RECRUITMENT



TARGETED HIRING STRATEGIES

There are a range of different service organisations and advocacy networks that are actively working to promote inclusion and accessibility in PNG – they have valuable experience, services, and resources that you can draw on as you develop recruitment processes specific to your organisation. Read more about them and other ways to engage.



WAYS TO ENGAGE

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FROM INCLUSIVE EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT



At the University of Goroka, inclusive education is supported through a purpose-built system. The **James Aiwa Special Education Centre** provides access and assistance to students with disability across a wide range of academic programs.

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

Employer name	University of Goroka
Employer description	Public university offering inclusive higher education, with a dedicated Special Education Centre for students with disability
Key equity and accessibility elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision and coordination of inclusion and accessibility measures that support students with disability at the university • Support for students with disability to transition from university study to employment – using Industry Training (IT)

At the James Aiwa Special Education Centre, students are enrolled in the University of Goroka's regular courses and supported to participate on an equal basis. As of 2025, nine students with disability are enrolled and receiving support from the Special Education Centre. A total of twenty students with disability have graduated through the centre since its establishment.

The support provided by the Special Education Centre is tailored to individual needs. The centre provides screen reader software, magnification tools, and keyboard training. The centre works with university lecturers to support them in providing accessible learning materials to students – including the use of transcription applications. The centre has coordinated the construction of accessible pathways and the procurement of accessible furniture and workstations.

The centre also supports students beyond the classroom – towards transition into employment. This support includes preparing recommendation letters, communicating with potential employers, and advocating for students to access industry placements.

An example of this support for students transitioning

“Where we can't provide something ourselves, we connect with service providers who can,”
says Joe Kuman, James Aiwa Special Education Centre Coordinator.



Damien Steven at the University of Goroka.

to work is the experience of **Damien Steven**, a graduate of the Bachelor of Business Accounting program. Through the Special Education Centre he accessed assistive technology, academic support, and campus accessibility improvements throughout his student experience.

"From my education journey, I faced many challenges, but I did not give up during my study... I was born with disabilities, so it's normal to me," says Damien Steven.

Like all final-year students at the university, Damien was required to complete **Industry Training (IT)** – a six-week placement intended to prepare students for professional life. With support from the centre and coordination with the University Bursary Division, Damien was accepted to complete his IT within the university's finance team.

"When I wanted to do my practical, the finance division at the university accepted me to do my IT with them... I was happy that I'm with them, giving what I've been learning in the university and working with them again," explains Damien Steven.

Following his graduation, Damien was offered a casual position with the university's finance team. Damien's role and responsibilities in the team were agreed according to a process of mutual respect, open communication, and practical adjustments.

Damien first worked to support student registration, which required frequent movement across campus. After discussion with his supervisor, he transitioned into the **payroll team**, where the role aligned with his skills and his mobility requirements. In this role, Damien manages multi-year payroll reports for the university.

"... now I'm working with the payroll team. And I was happy when they accepted me to be with the division," says Damien Steven.



Lessons learned



Links to the EmployAbility Toolkit

Connect with inclusive education providers to find candidates that match employment opportunities

The James Aiwa Special Education Centre connected a qualified graduate with an employment opportunity.

There are a range of different service organisations and advocacy networks that are actively working to promote inclusion and accessibility in PNG – they have valuable experience, services, and resources that you can draw on as you develop recruitment processes specific to your organisation. Read more about them and other ways to engage.



WAYS TO ENGAGE

Adjust work roles to suit both employees and employers

The James Aiwa Special Education Centre supported the process of making adjustments to the role that suited both employer and employee – a process based on dialogue and responsiveness.

Read more about practical ways that employers can engage with people with disability to agree on roles and responsibilities that meet both the requirements of the individual and the employing organisation.



JOB CUSTOMISATION AND CO-DESIGNING WORK



PERSONALISED SUPPORT AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES

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EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

– PROMOTING AN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACE THROUGH WORK EXPERIENCE INTERNSHIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

 The Stanley Hotel & Suites offered a select number of work experience internships for candidates who identified as people with disability.

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

Employer name	The Stanley Hotel & Suites
Employer description	Hotel in Port Moresby; operating since 2016; around 500 employees; with nearly 400 accommodation rooms and 5 food and beverage outlets
Key equity and accessibility elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing work experience for candidates identifying as people with disability through an equitable internship recruitment strategy; including strategic integration in teams; and an employee buddy system for on-the-job mentoring • Partnering with community through Cheshire Disability Services PNG • Ongoing approach to enhance accessibility – features include accessible bathrooms on ground and upper floors; on-site wheelchair for guest and employee use; planning for ramps

To select the interns, the hotel used a recruitment process that prioritised applicants' motivation, attitude, and perceived fit with organisational values, over formal qualifications. As Director of Operations, David Hannan, explains:

Two interns, Regina and Sharon, who identify as Deaf or hard of hearing, joined the team. They worked in hands-on roles across public service and housekeeping, while also gaining exposure to managerial and administrative operations – providing them with insight into the hotel's work across multiple departments.

To support them through their work experience, the hotel implemented a buddy system, matching the interns with a team leader. The team leader served as a supervisor and was selected for their positivity, and mentoring ability.

“So we make an effort to ensure that we just hire the best person for the job. It doesn't matter where they're from... It's not just capability, it's actually their motivation and enthusiasm for the job.”



Sharon and Regina pictured with their workplace buddy and supervisor at The Stanley Hotel & Suites.
(Source: Cufa Facebook page)

Their role was to provide ongoing guidance, share information about workplace processes, and help the interns feel welcomed and included in the team. This approach reportedly helped the interns quickly become familiar with their roles and feel valued in a short period. Team members saw firsthand that Sharon and Regina had specific responsibilities and were completing their duties alongside everyone else. By being part of the team, day in and day out, their presence and interactions contributed to a shift in attitude about the participation of people with disability in the workplace.

The management team found that the internship initiative served as a prompt for reflection on inclusion and accessibility in the hotel. Efforts to increase accessibility had already been made – accessible bathrooms were available on the ground and higher levels, and a wheelchair was kept at reception. However, it became clear that there were still areas where accessibility could be improved. Some areas, including staff movement pathways and guest dining areas, were not optimally accessible for people with disability. The hotel is planning to build additional ramps – accessibility improvements that would benefit everyone.

Efforts to promote inclusion are also reflected through community partnerships. The Stanley Hotel & Suites has a long-standing relationship with Cheshire Disability Services PNG – the hotel regularly donates lost property and clothing items for their clients.

The internship initiative reinforced interest in deepening that partnership into recruitment pathways. Hannan explains:

“So we got a good relationship with [Cheshire Disability Services PNG] ... that could be another avenue for employment for us too. They have the Young Voices program. They have great talent.”

The hotel also hosts the annual **National Disability Forum**, which brings together hundreds of participants and provides visibility and leadership on inclusion and accessibility.

“We definitely got the opportunity to get some more interns, which is great. The feedback we had from the previous interns, not just from the interns themselves, but from our fellow employees around them, it was a great experience,” says Hannan.



Lessons learned



Links to the EmployAbility Toolkit

Use organisational values in recruitment

By focusing on motivation and enthusiasm as key job requirements, The Stanley Hotel & Suites avoided common recruitment barriers experienced by people with disability.

Read more about using organisational values in recruitment – and the importance and relevance this has to our work for inclusion and accessibility in PNG workplaces.

RECRUITMENT

Read more about ways to build an understanding of inclusion and accessibility into your organisational values.

ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

Develop induction support systems for employees

The buddy system used by The Stanley Hotel & Suites matched interns with trusted leaders who offered consistent, informal training.

Learn about the challenges that people with disability face when they enter a new workplace – and the practical things that organisations can do to make the induction process more accessible and inclusive.

INDUCTION

There are a range of different service organisations and advocacy networks that are actively working to promote inclusion and accessibility in PNG – they have valuable experience, services, and resources that you can draw on as you develop recruitment and induction processes specific to your organisation. Read more about them and other ways to engage.

WAYS TO ENGAGE

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EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

– ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

IN THE WORKPLACE



Brenda Lombange is a Community-led Monitoring (CLM) Program Officer and Team Lead at the Key Population Advocacy Consortium (KPAC) in Papua New Guinea. She identifies as a woman with disability and has a background in community-based health programs.

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

Employee name	Brenda Lombange
Role and background	Community-led Monitoring (CLM) Program Officer (Team Lead) at the Key Population Advocacy Consortium (KPAC), Papua New Guinea
Key equity and accessibility elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal experience as woman with disability in leadership role • Open communication in recruitment processes • Accessibility in the workplace

Brenda experienced significant challenges in the workplace early in her career, including stigma and inappropriate assumptions that limited her access to meaningful employment.

In some of her first work roles, Brenda was subjected to workplace harassment. In some roles, her basic needs to do the work were not met by her employers – such as being seated close enough to hear team discussions or having colleagues communicate with her directly. Brenda felt that the scope of duties in these early roles was limited to administration tasks, and that she was not provided with sufficient opportunity in her early roles to expand her skills or take on greater responsibilities. She also faced structural barriers, including limited public transport options that made it difficult for her to commute to work.

Despite the significant challenges she had faced in workplaces, Brenda was determined to move forward in her employment experience. She is the main provider for her two children and supports aging family members. The responsibility she feels for her family continues to be a significant driving factor in her efforts to invest in her career.

Brenda decided she wanted to move into frontline community work. To prepare for this new chapter in her career, Brenda applied for a scholarship to study through the **Australia Awards PNG program**. She won a scholarship and undertook her training at the Canberra Institute of Technology in Australia.

“That’s where I built up my self-worth there,”
says Brenda.



Brenda Lombange at her office at KPAC PNG in Port Moresby.

Brenda became more confident in speaking about her disability. She began disclosing her disability in job applications and interviews so that any necessary adjustments could be discussed early. This allowed her to enter new roles with clarity and confidence. Brenda explains:

"In all my letters when I apply for job, I always say, 'I'm a woman with disability.' And then when I wanted to come for the job interview, they were really considerate about the accessibility. And they made those reasonable accommodations."

Brenda joined her current employer, the Key Population Advocacy Consortium (KPAC), in 2022. In the recruitment process, she openly communicated her needs for support and personalised adjustments in the workplace, which allowed her and her employer to discuss the relevant requirements and to start the working relationship with mutual understanding.

"I'll prove you I can do it. ... I want to show them it's like not looking at my disability, but looking at my ability," says Brenda.

At KPAC, Brenda found that her needs were acknowledged and supported. The office is located close to accessible transport, and her working hours allow for flexibility. Brenda elaborates:

"Working here in our new office is more accessible. Now I'm close to the kitchen. I can just stand up and go to the kitchen and make my coffee... It's easy to go to the bathroom. Come in here and it's just a small step. It's easy to catch a taxi. If not, it's just a small walking distance. It's just stress free."

As a CLM Program Officer and Team Lead, Brenda coordinates community-led monitoring work across partner organisations. She plays a central role in organising data collection; guiding team planning; and providing technical expertise as a consultant.

"... I love my job. I love my work. People here, community, my work – and [I know] they're going to be supportive," says Brenda.



Lessons learned



Links to the EmployAbility Toolkit

Explore workplace adjustments that support inclusion

Brenda's experience at KPAC highlights how flexible work hours, accessible buildings, and a supportive organisational culture contribute to inclusive and accessible workplaces for employees.

Read about the process of making adjustments to the workplace that can support employees with disability to do their best work.



**PERSONALISED SUPPORT AND
ACCOMMODATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES**

Encourage open communication in recruitment to build mutual understanding

Brenda and her employer communicated openly in the recruitment process – they discussed needs and requirements, which helped them to start the working relationship with mutual understanding.

Read about how to integrate principles and standards of open communication during recruitment processes.



ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION

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EMPLOYEE AND FREELANCER PERSPECTIVE – ON EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A DEAF WOMAN



Clare Guria proudly identifies as a Deaf woman. She shares her experience as an intern in the PNG workforce; a PNG Australia Awards alumna; an entrepreneur; and advocate for inclusion and accessibility.

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

Employee name	Clare Guria
Role and background	Freelance graphic designer, PNG Australia Awards alumna, and inclusion and accessibility advocate based in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
Key equity and accessibility elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible communication – including communicating with teammates and clients • Work experience internships as turning points in the pathway to employment • Developing skills for freelance work and self-employment

Clare Guria's first work experience was an internship with PNG Power Limited. In this internship, she was supported to work flexibly across design and production tasks – this matched her interest in creative projects. When she thinks back on the experience of working with her team in this first internship, she remembers one particular teammate who made an effort to communicate clearly with her. This teammate's effort to include her in the workplace through communication made a lasting difference to Clare.

Clare later studied in Australia at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) as a PNG Australia Awards scholar, completing a Bachelor of Design (Honours). During her studies, Clare accessed support through QUT's disability support services and became part of a strong Deaf community, which she emphasises helped build her confidence and self-advocacy.

After completing her studies and returning to PNG in 2021, Clare sought employment. She encountered multiple barriers. She found that while some employers expressed interest in her job applications based on her qualifications, they appeared to lose interest and willingness to engage after they became aware that she identified as a Deaf woman.

"That [Australia Awards] experience gave me so much confidence in myself... I was willing to take risks and go after what I wanted," says Clare.

Clare recalls:

"[The] first employer was like: 'She had a very bright qualification, let's call her in for an interview.' But then when we're in the interview room and they found out I can't hear... they kept telling me, 'Well, we'll get back to you.'"

Clare decided to directly contact the CEO of Paradise Foods Limited, a PNG company, to enquire about temporary roles for persons with disability. Clare expressed her drive to work and described her interests in creative projects. As a result of the communications that followed, she was offered an internship at the company – in a role that supported the marketing team with design and social media tasks.

"I told him I had no experience but was eager to learn... That experience encouraged me to keep going," says Clare.

The internship experience became a turning point for Clare. While she continued to encounter barriers to securing long-term employment, the experience boosted her confidence and led her to consider new ways that she could apply her skills.

Clare says:

"So, while those doors were closing on me, I thought if they can't give me [a job], I can create a job for myself. Then I started freelancing."

Clare began taking on short-term contracts that she obtained through word-of-mouth referrals and from promoting her design work on social media. Clare now works as a freelancer with a range of organisations in PNG – including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and organisations implementing international development programs. Her work has been used for



Clare Guria, freelance designer and advocate, pictured during her interview in Port Moresby.

the development of digital media, printed reports, campaign design, and awareness raising content – including her own YouTube channel where she teaches sign language.

Communicating with teammates was one of the most consistent challenges Clare faced in workplace settings. Her spoken voice was not always understood, and few teammates knew sign language. To be understood in the workplace, she often relied on text-based communication – including hand-written notes, direct message texting, and email.

"[Communication] was tough but manageable with effort," reflects Clare.

In her freelance work, Clare has developed ways to communicate effectively with her clients. She mostly communicates in text through digital platforms and occasionally uses captioning or text-to-speech applications in meetings.

Clare advocates for greater accessibility in communication – including building capacity to use basic sign language in the workplace. She uses her social media platforms to raise awareness of inclusion and accessibility issues relevant to people in the Deaf community, as well as to encourage the recognition of sign language as an official language in PNG.

“Sign language is my first language. I want people to recognise that and learn some basics to communicate,” says Clare.

Clare continues to go after what she wants. She is preparing to begin a Master Degree in Science in Secondary Education for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology in the United States. She hopes to return to PNG to work in education – and in so doing, to support others in the Deaf community to pursue their own goals.



Lessons learned



Links to the EmployAbility Toolkit

Offer work experience internships and entry-level opportunities for people with disability

Clare’s work experience internships were turning points. They contributed to a boost in self-confidence; enhanced skills for communicating in teams; the addition of projects to her professional portfolio – elements that she built on to access further opportunities through freelance work. Clare engaged with her employers – through a process based on open communication, they agreed on roles and responsibilities for the internship that benefited both parties.

Read more about strategies for inclusive hiring and job customisation – including as they relate to work experience internships for people with disability.



TARGETED HIRING STRATEGIES



JOB CUSTOMISATION AND CO-DESIGNING WORK

Get ready for interviewing candidates by reading the section on interviewing.



INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

Make communication accessible

Communicating with teammates was one of the most consistent challenges Clare faced in workplace settings. The willingness of her teammates to reach out to her and use a range of communication methods made the workplace more inclusive. Clare has multiple ways to communicate effectively with her clients – including the use of digital platforms; and captioning or text-to-speech applications.

Read more about how to integrate principles and standards of accessible communication – and how this can promote inclusion in PNG workplaces.



ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION

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EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

– REJOINING THE WORKFORCE AFTER ACQUIRING DISABILITY



Nelsie Kofiaba had been working as a high school teacher for over a decade when her life changed suddenly. She survived a motor vehicle accident and sustained a physical injury that required a long period of recovery.

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

Employee name	Nelsie Kofiaba
Role and background	Teacher (language, literature, and geography) and advocate in Eastern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea
Key equity and accessibility elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal experience of re-entering the workforce after acquiring disability – including the navigation of systemic and attitudinal barriers Leadership in advocacy for women and girls with disability

Returning to the workforce after more than a year of hospitalisation proved more difficult than Nelsie expected. She recalls:

Nelsie was ready and motivated to work. She sought support from her employer to continue her career; but she experienced systemic and attitudinal barriers that prevented her from returning to her job. She spent months trying to find a way back into the classroom.

Nelsie noticed that there were significant barriers for people with disability trying to enter and navigate the workforce – including workplace (school) infrastructure that was often not accessible. Nelsie explains:

While she was offered a position at a school in Goroka, the reception she received was discouraging.

Return to work experiences like Nelsie's (characterised by stigma, discrimination, and inaccessible infrastructure) can exclude people from rejoining the workforce after acquiring disability, even when they are qualified and ready.

"I couldn't get back to the teaching field after acquiring my disability... I tried, but I couldn't, due to certain barriers."

"In terms of support in a school, most of the schools that we have in the country are not user-friendly ... even for students."

"...the headmaster just saw the wheelchair and he just made some unfriendly comments. And from then, I resisted not to give another try. I felt so embarrassed," she recalled.



Nelsie Kofiaba at her work desk.

Throughout the challenges she experienced, Nelsie found strength in her support network. Her family encouraged her to stay connected to her profession.

"My children missed me teaching," she shared. "My parents said, 'No, you can't resign. You cannot just give away your career like this. You have all the right to go back to work, so let's try, let's give a try.'"

While she explored options for re-entry into teaching, Nelsie also developed new ways of working. She began offering informal services like typing, editing, CV writing, and printing – skills that helped her support herself and stay connected to education and communication work. She intends to register as a small business.

Although she once hoped to return to teaching, Nelsie said her passion has shifted to disability rights advocacy. She has founded an association for women and girls with disability. Drawing on her own lived experience, her work spans local, provincial, and national levels, with a focus on promoting awareness of the rights of people with disability and the intersecting challenges of gender-based violence. Nelsie explains:

"Many of our women have actually acquired disabilities as a result of violence. And when they go back to their homes, they are repeatedly being abused by the immediate family, by their community members. And so, we have to help them as an advocate, I have to help them understand that they have the same rights as another person."

Nelsie now focuses on supporting others who are facing similar challenges to the ones that she faced, particularly in rural communities where people with disability are often excluded. She believes that exclusion occurs when the rights of people with disability are not upheld.

"We all have the same right, but when the right support is not provided, then we are not included, we are excluded. We are segregated from the community. We are segregated from the daily activities," she explains.

Nelsie emphasises the need for disability rights to be realised in all areas of life – not just workplaces but also homes and communities across PNG.



Lessons learned



Links to the EmployAbility Toolkit

Explore workplace adjustments that support inclusion

When employing organisations do not have the policies and procedures in place, employees with disability returning to work can experience exclusion.

Social stigma and discrimination experienced in the workplace make returning to work difficult or prohibitive for people with disability.

Read more about policies and processes that can support people with disability who want to return to work.



SUPPORT FOR RETURN TO WORK

Through modelling inclusive values and leadership, there are practical ways we can break down attitudinal barriers and promote inclusion and accessibility in PNG workplaces.



ORGANISATIONAL VALUES



LEADERSHIP

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