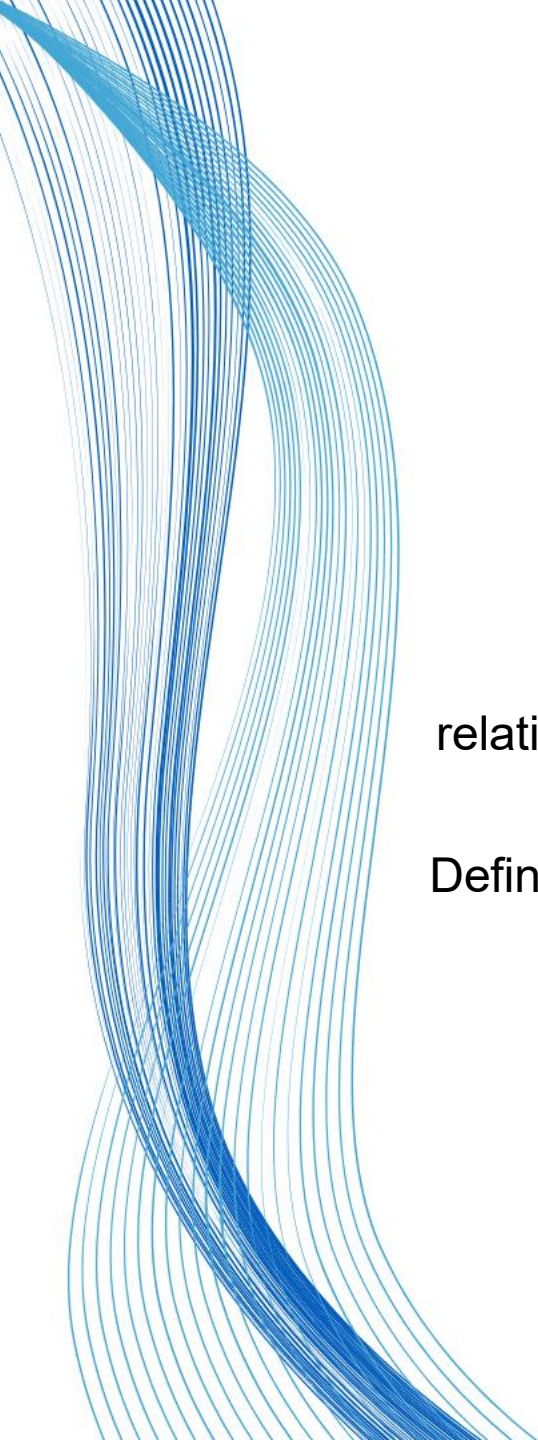




Moving from ‘talking at to working with’

Re-framing the 4 Essential Dynamics of Private Sector Engagement

Amplifying the impact of the Jakarta Declaration by building respectful, productive relationships with people in business as definitive stakeholders, valued service users, expert advisors, potential allies, partners, investors

Definitive stakeholders are those who possess both formal power and the legitimacy to make critical demands

Only the employer has the power to say:

‘Yes – I will employ this person’.

By Susan Scott-Parker OBE



Re-imagining 'Engagement' with the Private Sector



- » Jakarta Declaration stakeholders have the potential to transform the life chances of disabled people by reframing our understanding of the term “private sector engagement” – as they move from campaigning *at* business to learning *from* & working productively *with* people in the business community as:
- » Definitive stakeholders
- » Valued Service Users
- » Expert Advisors
- » Potential Allies, Partners, Joint investors.

We no longer generalise about 1.3 billion individuals with disabilities

Why do we still generalise about APAC's 600 - 700 million individuals in business?

1. Campaigns *at* the private sector thereby become more effective:



- » When we start with a respectful, in depth understanding of our target audiences – i.e. when we start with the knowledge that people in business usually have the same assumptions regarding ‘disability’ as their families, friends, local media, wider community.
- » When we adopt best social marketing practice and make it easier for the well- intentioned business leader to change than not to change.
- » When we encourage people in business to challenge societal norms by learning directly from both disabled people and from their private sector counterparts.
- » When advocates get a better balance of ‘carrot & stick.’ Disability equality related regulations can only have the desired impact when they are credible to both people in business & people with disabilities.
- » Such regulations must be meaningfully enforced to be credible to both parties.

**Campaigns *at* business always have greater impact
when we open doors to respectful working *with* and learning *from*
*people in business as ‘valued definitive stakeholders’***

2. Learning *from* people in business as our ‘valued Service Users, our valued Clients’ so we can shape more fair and efficient job markets

We start by asking business to build our capacity to provide services that meet *their* legitimate needs & expectations as employers, as well as those of disabled people – because making it easier for employers, as our high value service users, to employ disabled people, always make it easier for people with disabilities to access meaningful jobs and careers.

Conversations with business leaders move from “you need our sensitisation training” to :

- » “Help us understand your reality –so we can offer more relevant advice, suitable candidates, business relevant support.....
- » “How can we make it easier for you to recruit and retain disabled talent?”
- » “How satisfied are your managers with the services that help your managers retain employees when they acquire their disabilities in work?”
- » What would you do if your job was to help local employers to define and deliver good practice, as they become more disability confident ?

3. Learning *from* people in business as expert advisors builds our capacity to drive system change together- as we ask:



- » Help us to understand how you and your industry peers (retail, banking, garment manufacturing ...) deploy HR technologies so that we can advise disabled talent how to successfully navigate your online recruitment processes- while we help you remove any disability specific obstacles they might encounter.
- » Please explain how you manage physical access to your warehouse facilities -so we can tailor our factory access audit and FM training manual to meet your needs.
- » What would you do in my shoes, and it was your job to triple the numbers of disabled people employed next year in your industry? Where would you start? Who do I need to know?
- » How could we leverage the collective influence of your National Employer Federations to encourage the government to remove obstacles in their control, such as providing more accessible public transport... making it easier for you to employ more people with disabilities?

4. Working *with* Business, leveraging their collective influence as potential Allies, Partners, Co-funders can drive systemic change as we:



- Encourage the startup of National Business Disability Networks, which make it easier to collaborate with multiple businesses as potential allies of persons with disabilities and their advocates.
- Build the capacity of OPDs to partner with employers to encourage the public policy reforms which make it easier to employ more disabled people, welcome more disabled customers - while as responsible corporate citizens they enable implementation of the CRPD at local level.
- Routinely capture case studies of responsible businesses investing in their communities as allies and raise the profile of these examples across business, the public sector and the disability community.
- Encourage businesses to shape their ESG/CSR investments in ways which encourage, even require, mainstream labour market and economic empowerment programmes such as TVETs, Digital Hubs, Apprenticeships to *also* serve disabled people as valued trainees, apprentices, entrepreneurs, business owners, suppliers, women entrepreneurs
- Convey our high expectations of both the private sector and people with disabilities : i.e.' Imagine the impact if together we factored targets for disabled youth into the specific, auditable KPIs agreed for your PPP's support for local Tech Ecosystems in Africa'
- Collaboratively audit every significant Public Private Partnership to identify opportunities to amplify ROI by ensuring each initiative also benefits people with disabilities

Imagine the long- term impact when we bridge the gap between people in business and people with disabilities!



- » Just as people in the private sector need to become more **Disability Confident** as they begin to understand the impact of disability on their business and the markets in which they operate- and learn that meeting the legitimate needs and expectations of people with disabilities also benefits the economy
- » So people with disabilities and their allies need to become more **Business Confident** as they begin to position people in business as critically important stakeholders- and learn how that meeting their legitimate needs and expectations as valued service users and potential allies is also benefits people with disabilities
- » The **Business Disability Partnership Agenda**- launched by Business Disability International, the ILO Global Business and Disability Network and the United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK) , at the Global Disability Summit 2025- sets out some first steps for OPDs worldwide wanting to partner more productively with the private sector.
- » **Public policy makers need to prioritise how to resource and incentivise this re-framing of business engagement** – as together we enable the contribution of hundreds of millions, on a fair and equal basis, to local, regional and global economies.

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