# Service supplier: Development and implementation of a digital employment platform to support access to employment of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh

**Introduction**

Leonard Cheshire (LC),a UK based charity, founded in 1948, has been working globally to enable Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) to improve their quality of life through education, employment, advocacy and research. LC has reached 50,000 PwDs, with more than 38,000 placed either into wage employment or self-employment in the past 9 years through different initiatives. It operates through building local partnerships with key stakeholders, ensuring sustainability and local ownership.

In Bangladesh, Leonard Cheshire has been implementing inclusive education and livelihoods programme since 2006 collaborating with a wide range of stakeholders. Leonard Cheshire has enabled over 3,000 children with disabilities to access education and over 6,000 persons to be employed.

**Background: Innovation to Inclusion (i2i) programme**

The Innovation to Inclusion is a three-year programme designed to develop, test, validate and share learning from interventions that will directly improve access to waged employment in the private sector for women and men with disabilities. It will demonstrate the potential for change by identifying the most successful interventions that strengthen the disability ecosystem. The programme will be implemented in Bangladesh and Kenya, starting in 2019. The programme will address barriers to employment within the Private Sector in both countries.

i2i will be delivered through a consortium, bringing together a diverse and complementary group of partners, each of whom have sufficient expertise. The consortium is led by Leonard Cheshire (LC), and includes Action Network for the Disabled Kenya (ANDY), Bangladesh Business and Disability Network, CBM, European Disability Forum (EDF), International Labour Organization (ILO), London School of Tropical Health and Medicine (LSTHM), Global Disability Innovation Hub (GDIH), Plan International and the World Bank.

The consortium will be supported by implementing partners, including at least 20 disabled Peoples’ Organization (DPOs), 80private companies, relevant government agencies in the implementing countries and software company Benetech. The programme will also be advised by international experts from Accenture and key academic institutions.

**Technology**

It is estimated that approximately nine percent of the total population i.e. more than 14.5 million people, including 3 million children, are disabled in Bangladesh. By 2030, the total population is grow from 160 to 206 million (DFID 2017) so this is likely to be an increasing number. The World Bank expected to in 2011 projected that 16.2% of working age people had disability in Bangladesh. Using an expanded measure of disability, the prevalence amongst adults was seen to be even higher, at 19.6 percent.

The persons with disabilities particularly women with disabilities experience abuse, neglect and hostility at the family, community and societal levels. In most cases, persons with disabilities are denied not only social and political rights but also basic human rights. They are often denied education, health care and job or employment opportunities.

The government has set a good number of appropriate policies. The government has been initiated development initiatives for the wellbeing of the persons with disabilities. NGOs and DPOs have also been trying something good for them. Through these initiatives, changes have been started but a bit slowly. Still, they have been facing enormous difficulties.

It is thought technology can play a vital role for enhancing opportunities for the persons with disabilities. Therefore, technology is considered as an integral part of i2i. Series of consultations were arranged with relevant stakeholders during the co-creation phase of the programme where everyone suggested to create an in country online platform for persons with disabilities. It was shared that appropriate data is a huge problem for Bangladesh. Moreover, mobility is another major barrier for them. Considering the dire need, creating or upgrading or linking an in country online career advice platform is being considered. I2i has envisioned the role of a job matching platform within the digital pathway to support PwD to access and retain employment.

**The supplier**

The i2i Programme is looking for a supplier who will work in upgrading and/or developing an existing job matching platform, to adapted to the needs of people with disabilities in Bangladesh. The aim of this platform would be to facilitate the access to private-sector employment for PwD through mainstream platforms.

**Objectives**

* To facilitate access to employment for PwD through online services and engagement strategies.
* To develop an accessible employment platform for PwD based on WCAG 2.1 standards.
* To increase the availability of inclusive jobs for PwD through creating a platform where inclusive employers can advertise jobs.
* To raise awareness of the i2i programme amongst existing and prospective employers.

To achieve these objectives the following areas of work have been scoped:

1. **Developing an existing employment platform to make it more accessible and inclusive**, including specific data points capturing. This platform must be able to match candidates to their skills, knowledge and abilities.
2. Make the necessary adjustments to ensure that the platform is compliant with international accessibility standards, particularly Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 (AA).
3. Review and update the registration process to include profiling of people’s needs.
4. Adjusting the employers’ user interface to adapt it to the needs of the employers participating in the i2i Programme. This might include, for example, extra sections where employers can indicate to whom their jobs are accessible to.
5. Crating different level of admin to allow DPO and i2i partners to access data regarding their own candidates.
6. Adjusting candidate profile and reporting tools to ensure that relevant data can be extracted for reporting by the I2i partners. (it is possible that all the necessary data already exist in the correct form).
7. Contributing, with the help of other partners, to the engagement of PwD and employers through digital marketing strategies, like social media marketing, Led-Display, billboards, cable TV ads, digital advertising and newsletters.

**Deliverables**

* An accessible and inclusive online employment platform for persons with disabilities and inclusive employers.
* A digital engagement and marketing strategy to support the registration of persons with disabilities and employers.

**Platform sustainability**

I2i is a three-year programme to develop sustainable innovative solutions which are expected to last beyond the duration of the programme. The platform will need to be supported by a sustainable business model after the programme ends.

The i2i programme will fund the cost of adapting the platform to the needs of PwD. The supplier will keep running the platform in the same way it currently does.

The business model is not limited to this option and other options can also be considered. We would welcome proposals from the supplier based on their experience with previous requests.

**Assignment Schedule**

The i2i is a three-year project due to end in March 2022.

We would expect to have a working prototype of the platform by the end of March 2020 to allow candidates to begin to register and use the platform. By March 2021 the i2i is expected to report on the first batch of candidates that have successfully been paced in waged-employment in Bangladesh.

Expression of interest:

Please submit an expression sending it to angel.perez@leonardcheshire.org In your Expression of Interest, please propose a timeline for delivering this work, showing the start date, various stages of consultation & drafting, finalisation and delivery.

The Expression of Interest should include:

* Your track-record, including recent projects, and your experience of delivering work similar to this project in scope or focus.
* A project proposal and diagram.
* Confirmation of timeline for delivering this work.
* Budget for the project, with a breakdown of daily rates in Pounds Sterling. Please clarify whether VAT will be additional.
* Rational for intellectual property and licensing during and after the project.

Contract: Contractual obligations will be defined through a standard supplier agreement, outlining deliverables, timelines, payments.

Deadline for submissions: 16th of December 2019

If you have any queries, please contact Angel Perez (Angel.Perez@leonardcheshire.org).