

Training Report



Empowering Change: Understanding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Saturday 27th July 2024

Hotel Mehran – Karachi

1. Introduction

In contemporary society, integrating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles is imperative for all organizations, especially those committed to supporting individuals with disabilities. DEI is not merely a set of guidelines but a transformative framework that nurtures inclusive environments, ensures equitable opportunities, and celebrates diverse experiences.

Diversity involves recognizing and valuing the range of differences within a community, including aspects such as race, gender, age, sexual orientation, and disability. Equity focuses on providing fair treatment and ensuring equal access to opportunities by identifying and eliminating historical barriers that have led to inequality. Inclusion is about creating environments where all individuals and groups are not only welcomed but also respected, supported, and valued.

For organizations that support individuals with disabilities, the application of DEI principles is crucial for several reasons:

Enhancing Organizational Effectiveness: Embracing diverse perspectives enables organizations to gain a deeper understanding of and respond to the unique needs of the disabled community. This broader insight can significantly improve the quality of services and support provided.

Promoting Fair Opportunities: Equity ensures that individuals with disabilities have equal access to opportunities and resources. This involves actively working to dismantle obstacles and create pathways for advancement, thereby addressing and correcting past inequities.

Fostering a Supportive Environment: An inclusive culture fosters a sense of value and support for every individual, which enhances engagement and leads to improved outcomes across the organization.

Overall, DEI is a practical approach that not only enhances organizational effectiveness but also amplifies the impact of efforts dedicated to supporting individuals with disabilities.

2. Core Objectives

Develop a Core Understanding of DEI: Participants will acquire a comprehensive understanding of the concepts of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and their significance for organizations working with individuals with disabilities. This foundational knowledge will emphasize the importance of these principles in creating inclusive and equitable environments.

Link DEI to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Attendees will examine how DEI practices align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those aimed at reducing inequalities and fostering inclusive societies. This exploration will highlight the broader impact of DEI efforts on global initiatives.

Apply DEI Principles in Disabled People Organizations (DPOs): Participants will learn practical methods for applying DEI principles within Disabled People Organizations. This includes enhancing organizational practices, advocating for better support, and creating more opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The focus will be on actionable strategies to advance DEI in their specific contexts.

Engage in Interactive Learning: The workshop will feature interactive discussions and activities designed to illustrate effective strategies for implementing DEI in organizational policies and practices. These hands-on experiences will provide practical insights and develop skills for applying DEI concepts in real-world scenarios.

The training session aims to equip social cohesion officers with a clear framework to identify problems, diagnose underlying causes, and develop strategies to help communities overcome challenges and work productively.

3. Methodology

The workshop employed the following methodologies:

- **Brainstorming Activity:** Participants shared their ideas and perspectives on DEI concepts, fostering an initial understanding of the subject matter.
- **Peer Learning Methods:** Participants exchanged knowledge and experiences, learning from one another's insights and viewpoints.
- **Group Work:** Participants engaged in collaborative exercises, which helped build team-building and socializing skills while promoting a deeper understanding of DEI principles.
- **Individual Presentations:** Participants articulated their knowledge and understanding of DEI concepts, which facilitated individual reflection and comprehension.

4. Proceedings

Opening & Welcome: Ms. Syeda Imsaal Zehra from the Social Awareness and Advocacy Program (SAAP) introduced herself, welcomed the participants, and announced the start of the workshop on Empowering Change: Understanding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).



Presentation on Key Terms: The first session aimed to familiarize participants with the three fundamental terms of DEI and their interconnections. The session began with a brainstorming activity where participants shared their interpretations of "diversity." The facilitator encouraged active participation, engaging even those who were initially reserved. This activity provided insight into participants' existing knowledge of DEI concepts.

Following the brainstorming, the facilitator delivered a PowerPoint presentation explaining the terms "Diversity," "Equity," and "Inclusion" with various examples. Participants asked pertinent questions, demonstrating their engagement and interest. After the presentation, participants were divided into five groups for a collaborative activity.



Group Discussion and Presentations: Each group received a handout detailing different types of inclusivity for persons with disabilities and was tasked with discussing strategies for promoting inclusivity. The groups had twenty minutes to discuss and ten minutes to present their findings. Participants actively engaged in the group work, sharing their perspectives and insights. The facilitator visited each group to provide guidance and support.

Each group delivered insightful presentations and addressed questions from other participants. The group activity facilitated mutual listening and respect for diverse perspectives, enhancing the overall learning experience.



Chief Guest Address: Mr. Ghulam Ahmed Mohiuddin, Additional Secretary and Director General of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD), delivered a compelling address. He outlined the operations of 62 institutions under the DEPD and discussed the Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018. This legislation established the DEPD to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Mr. Mohiuddin highlighted the DEPD's responsibilities, including overseeing rehabilitation, education, vocational training, developing special education curricula, producing Braille and sign language materials, training educators and rehabilitation professionals, and managing a comprehensive disability database. Mr. Farman Ali Tanwari, Regional Director of the DEPD, was also present.



Vote of Thanks: Tasneem Abbas Zaidi, Chairperson of SAAP, expressed gratitude to all participants for their involvement. The event was further honored by the presence of Dr. Umme Rahil, Vice Chairperson of SAAP, Ms. Naurin Shivji, CEO of Zhavia Healthcare, and Mr. Muhammad Ali Sheikh, a distinguished entrepreneur.



5. Conclusions

The workshop significantly enhanced participants' understanding of DEI, enabling them to reflect on and expand their previous knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Participants demonstrated exemplary attitudes, showing active engagement and cooperation throughout the session. Their responsiveness reflected both their interest in the content and the high quality of the training provided.

Participants highly valued the facilitator's efforts, the quality of the session, and the interactive methodology. They acknowledged that the training would positively impact their ability to contribute to society. The effective transfer of knowledge made the learning process easier and more impactful.

Feedback indicated that the workshop's learning environment was highly satisfactory. Participants appreciated the group exercises and recognized that the skills and knowledge gained would enhance their effectiveness as citizens.